



Mini Course Line-Up for Convention 2023

Mini Courses will be held in three time slots that have four courses running concurrently—two in-person only, one in-person and livestreamed, and one fully virtual on Zoom.

Mini Courses are small group offerings for attendees to learn about a topic that is presented by someone from the Swedenborgian Church of North America or an invited guest. We are excited to be able to offer a variety of formats this year for our hybrid convention. Once registration for Convention has closed, you will get more information on how to join them, both in-person and virtually.

There are three formats for Mini Courses

- In-person for on campus attendees only
- Hybrid style meetings that are also streamed so that people can attend and participate both in-person and virtually
- Fully virtual on Zoom (on campus attendees will need to log in to Zoom on their own device to participate in this course)

These three time slots have four courses running concurrently—two in-person, one livestreamed, and one fully virtual. Virtual attendees will be able to choose between the live streamed and fully virtual sessions, while the in-person attendees will be able to attend any of the courses being offered.



Monday, July 3 at 9:30 AM ET

The Gay Talk

Diana Logan Boggs & Rev. Rich Tafel

This course will be in-person and livestreamed.

The Gay Talk is an informal conversation. We'll discuss some of the questions many have, but often don't ask about the Queer Community. What do the letters in the acronym mean, the difference between gender and sexuality, how does one handle someone who is coming out, and how to create and communicate an inclusive and embracing community? All these topics and more will be touched on. There is a period of Q and A, with the option to ask anonymous questions. There are no wrong questions. This is meant to be a judgment-free environment for group discussions and reflections where we all can learn from one another and

enrich ourselves doing so. This talk is about sharing with you the tools and the vocabulary to continue to have these conversations in your ministries in a helpful way.

Diana is a transwoman educator from rural Ohio, where she currently resides. She primarily works in history, as well as Queer education



and activism. Diana organized her area's first ever Gay Pride event; she then developed The Gay Talk to help break down barriers through learning and non-confrontational communication.



Rev. Tafel is the pastor of the Church of the Holy City in Washington, D.C. He is a strategist who works at the intersection of faith, business, and politics to build bridges bringing together unlikely coalitions to solve some

of the world's greatest challenges.

New Stained Glass: Reimagining Sacred Space—Welcoming Diverse Ministries

Shalonda Ingram

This course will be fully on Zoom and available to everyone anywhere.

Many churches struggle with low

Continues on page 58

Contents

Convention 2023	
Mini Course Line-Up	53
Editor's Corner	54
Letters to the Editor	54
Message from the President.....	55
Goin' Home to the	
Most Ancient Church.....	56
Engaged Swedenborgianism.....	61
New Church Visionaries	
Lecture Series	62
Music and Video in	
Worship and Small Groups	64
Passages.....	66
What's Happening.....	67
Purley Chase Seeks	
Programme Director	68

Editor's Corner



Looking Forward to the Summer Season

Have you registered for Convention 2023 yet? What are you waiting for?

In May, I always start to get really excited for the summer—planning of our individual vacations and our large church family gatherings are underway, and it's exciting. Convention this year is local for me, and I am really looking forward to having both of my kids there. I encourage everyone to take advantage of the discounted youth rates; it is a great deal. Supporting the kids and teens in attending these large church gatherings is one of the most important things we can do for our Swedenborgian Church family.

I know for our family, and many others, attending Sunday services is difficult. The kids are involved in all sorts of sports and activities that take place on Sundays. It is just the reality of

Letters to the Editor

Swedenborg v. Buddha

Are the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772) compatible with the writings of Siddhartha Gautama Buddha (sixth century, B.C.)? This is a question I pondered as I read Dru Johnson's piece in the March issue of *the Messenger*, which referenced the great Buddhist Thich Nhat Hanh (1926–2022).

Dru and I both belong to the Swedenborgian Society of the East Bay, in California. For those unfamiliar with the Bay Area, it is a hot bed of global spiritual cross currents from Swedenborgians to Satanists. However, due in part to a heavily weighted Asian population, the spiritual practices of Buddhism are a main thread in the tapestry of Bay Area religious

Continues on page 60

our family lives. (Though with Zoom church we are able to attend church on the way to some of these activities!) Does this mean we don't prioritize church? I certainly don't think so. What works best for us is to prioritize the large gatherings. The bonds that are formed in these events are lifelong, they withstand the trials of distance and time.

So bring the kids to Convention (convention.swedenborg.org/), send them to a retreat (swedenborg.org/events-activities/youthretreats/), or attend one of our family camps (www.almontretreats.com or fryeburg.org). Most of these events have discounted rates, scholarships, and even travel assistance for youth—why wouldn't you take advantage of these?

Registration for all of these events is open now. I hope to see many of you there—my kids do too!

—Beki Greenwood

Messenger@Swedenborg.org

the Messenger

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Editor, design, and production: Rebekah Greenwood

Copy editing and proofing: Rudy Caseres, Robert Leith, Brittany Price, & Trevor

Standing Committee for Communication and Information: Holly Bauer, Rev. Kevin Baxter, & Tara Conkling

Editorial Advisory Committee: Dr. Rebecca Esterson, Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence, & Herb Ziegler

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Editorial Email: messenger@swedenborg.org

Editorial, Business, and Subscription Address:
The Messenger, Central Office
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Tel: 617.969.4240

Central Office Email: manager@swedenborg.org

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Submissions are accepted at any time.

Submissions must be received by the 15th of the month to be considered for the next issue.

The opinions and views expressed are those of the authors, not of *the Messenger*, the Standing Committee for Communication and Information, or the Swedenborgian Church.

Submission Deadline Reminder

Time-sensitive articles submitted to *the Messenger* must be received by the **15th of each month** to be considered for print in the following issue.



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Message from the President

From Standoffish to Relational: Our Interfaith and Ecumenical Adventures

The Year of Regeneration: 2022–23

More than a hundred schisms ruptured American Christianity in the nineteenth century, and Swedenborgians published more words per capita than any other tradition, eagerly contrasting the Swedenborgian view against mainstream doctrine. Swedenborg himself set the tone. The final work off his pen—his massive summa, *True Christianity*—organizes each chapter around a major doctrinal category with an overall strategy pitting what the old church says against what the New Church says. He was enduring the only heresy trial in Sweden’s history while writing this book, and he was not holding back. Leaders in the earliest Swedenborgian church movement greatly prized this one book because it provided a way to help Christians in other denominations see a new and better system of thought for how to understand the Christian faith.

Interestingly, though, Swedenborg’s influence in the nineteenth century extended far beyond Christian doctrine: “Of all the unconventional currents streaming through the many levels of American religion during the antebellum half-century, none proved attractive to more diverse types of dissenters from established denominations than those which stemmed from Emanuel Swedenborg. His influence was seen everywhere: in Transcendentalism and at Brook Farm, in spiritualism and the free love

movement, in the craze for communitarian experiments, in faith healing, mesmerism, and a half-dozen medical cults; among great intellectuals, crude charlatans, and innumerable frontier quacks.” So wrote the esteemed Yale historian Sydney Ahlstrom in his landmark book, *A Religious History of the American People* (1979) that won *The Christian Century* Award as that decade’s most outstanding book on religion.

But what you don’t see in that quote is Sweden-

borg’s influence among Christian denominations in the dynamic marketplace of Christian ideas as schisms continued to disrupt and reorganize Christian movements. The Swedenborgian church movement could have empha-



AN ACTUAL SCENE AT ONE OF THE SESSIONS OF THE PARLIAMENT.

sized many other books among Swedenborg’s writings, but they emphasized *True Christianity* because it is the book that was aimed directly at the “old” churches, and the American Swedenborgian church received a very large percentage of its members from those fleeing the mainstream denominations for Swedenborg’s “new church” approach. Swedenborgians were in the thick of the fight and style of schism-making and of being standoffish in relation to the other denominations. Swedenborgianism even suffered its own dramatic schism that brewed for a quarter-century before becoming *a fait accompli* in 1890.

Now, famously, a Swedenborgian had an

Continues on page 63

The Incredible Journey of Goin' Home to the Most Ancient Church

BY ROXANNE GRACE SPERRY

Swedenborg wrote about Enoch and the people of Enoch as knowing and being in relationship with God through intuition, symbols, and possibly instinct. The Enoch were a people who did not rely on doctrine yet wrote the stories to be told for future generations to preserve our relationship with God. This was necessary as heavenly intuitive thoughts faded away and the understanding of symbols was lost. Although the Ancient Word exists in pure form in heaven these ancient doctrines have been changed over time here on Earth.

For some, there is a strong desire to go home to the Most Ancient Church. But where will you go? In ancient Egypt, the heart was considered the seed of life where the soul, emotion, reason, and the seat of intelligence reside. This cardiocentric hypothesis was not limited to ancient Egypt and travels back to a prehistoric cave painting where a heart is depicted in a woolly mammoth. It was not until 550 B.C. when Pythagoras developed the cephalocentric hypothesis that the soul resides in the brain. Interestingly, the Bible does not reference the brain once but does reference the heart eight hundred and twenty-six times according to *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*.

Do we live in a world where the cardiocentric hypothesis has been subjugated to the cephalocentric hypothesis? Perhaps the Most Ancient Church is waiting to be excavated like an ancient city buried deep within our heart. Will we find our way home by going on an incredible journey from the brain to the heart? Who and what will we encounter on the pilgrimage of "The Incredible Journey of Goin' Home to the

Most Ancient Church"?

Set against the nostalgic and hauntingly beautiful melody of the Dvorak's "New World Symphony," "Largo" are the lyrics to "Goin' Home" written in 1922 by Dvorak's student William Arms Fischer.

Goin' home, goin' home, I'm a goin' home;
 Quiet-like, some still day, I'm jes' goin' home.
 It's not far, jes' close by,
 Through an open door;
 Work all done, care laid by,
 Goin' to fear no more.
 Mother's there 'spectin' me,
 Father's waitin' too;
 Lots o' folk gather'd there,
 All the friends I knew,
 All the friends I knew.
 Home, I'm goin' home!

Nothin' lost, all's gain,
 No more fret nor pain,
 No more stumblin' on the way,
 No more longin' for the day,
 Goin' to roam no more!
 Mornin' star lights the way,
 Res'less dream all done;
 Shadows gone, break o' day,
 Real life jes' begun.
 There's no break, there's no end,
 Jes' a livin' on;
 Wide awake, with a smile
 Goin' on and on.

Goin' home, goin' home, I'm jes' goin' home,
 Goin' home, goin' home, goin' home!

This song has become a hymn often sung at funerals. Echoing throughout this hymn is a knowing: a confident expectation for the joy of goin' home contrasted against a life already lived that was not an easy life. An earthly life filled with work, fear, fret, and pain.

This life of uncertainty was a life without a clear direction, "stumblin' on the way." The only thing certain about this life was life itself. "There's no break, there's no end, Jes'a livin' on."

Goin' home is a longing among sentient beings. Returning to the place of origin is a spiritual journey, something more than a desire for a deeper understanding and acceptance of the self. Goin' home is regenerative and a time when "Real life jes' begun."

Learning from the Animals

But ask the animals, and they will teach you; the birds of the air, and they will tell you; ask the plants of the earth, and they will teach you; and the fish of the sea will declare to you. Who among all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of every human being (Job 12:7-10).

Even within the animal kingdom some must return home to ensure the continued regeneration of their species. This homing instinct is known as *natal philopatry* (philopatry; the prefix *phi-* from the Greek *philos* "beloved," and the Latin *patria*, which means "homeland") and is found in Atlantic Puffins, sea turtles, and Pacific Salmon among other species. Let us not forget the countless stories of lost pets finding their way home after being lost. Sheila Burnford's novel *The Incredible Journey* is the story of a Bull Terrier, a Siamese cat, and a Labrador Retriever who embark on an arduous three-hundred-mile journey to find their way home for the good of love, to be united with their beloved human guardians.

Continues on page 57

Incredible Journey

Continued from page 56

This bond between nonhuman and human was so strong for these animals they were committed to enduring incredible hardship to again be home with their humans; hence “*The Incredible Journey*.”

As Christians, are we prepared for “*The Incredible Journey*” of “*Goin’ home*” to the Most Ancient Church? Like Bodger the old English Bull Terrier, Tao the seal-point Siamese cat with sapphire blue eyes, and Luath a Labrador Retriever with brown eyes and fur of reddish gold, we can go home to the one who loves us. We can go home to our shepherd who waits for us “*through an open door*.” And like the animals we can find our way home through the awakening of our intuition and instincts. By letting go of empirical proof rooted in the material and entering into the faith of the intangible I suggest we begin “*The Incredible Journey of Goin’ Home to the Most Ancient Church*.”

For the Good of Love the Sabbath

I never fully understood or appreciated the meaning of the Sabbath until I was graced with reading Abraham Joshua Heschel’s novella *The Sabbath*. Now I claim the Sabbath as part of my Christian heritage. Like the animals that must return home to their habitats to regenerate the species and to thrive, I must find my way home to my Christian habitat, the Sabbath.

And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head” (Matthew 8:20).

In this verse, Jesus speaks of habitats that exist in an earthly place. Jesus, the Son of Man, has no place to lay his head. Most bible commentaries interpret this verse as Jesus separating the wheat from the chaff. This verse is

a warning to those who may follow Jesus with intentions of gaining wealth and grandeur by being his disciple. A disciple of Jesus will have less than the animals and the birds. They will be impoverished and homeless. But this interpretation is not congruent with Matthew 11:28–30,

Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

The Son of Man, Jesus, has no habitat, no place to lay his head, yet he will give us rest? If God is to provide a habitat for the fox and the birds, then surely he will provide a habitat for The Son of Man. Is Jesus telling us where he is by telling us where he is not? How can Matthew 8:20 and Matthew 11:28–30 provide us with a consistent message? Perhaps the answer lies in the mystery of the Sabbath as it has been revealed to me by Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel.

To understand who God is, is to understand who God is not. To understand where God dwells, and where you shall dwell, is to understand where God does not dwell. God cannot be confined to space. “There is no quality that space has in common with the essence of God. There is not enough freedom on the top of a mountain; there is not enough glory in the silence of the sea.”¹ The Most Ancient Church will not be found in a place; she waits to be rediscovered in eternity. She waits longingly for you as a bride waits for her groom. Her veil is made of sunshine and her wedding garment is sewn together out of lace woven from the beauty of nature. Her crown is encrusted with royal gems of wisdom. She carries a bouquet of myrtle plucked from paradise. Her betrothal is the hope she

lives in to be united with you on the Seventh Day. The dowry that waits in your union with her is a second soul, a supernal soul, the teaching of heaven’s angels.

The Habitat of God, The Son of Man, Jesus Is Our Dwelling-Places

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going (John 4:1–4).

I will preface this section by telling you that all of what I am about to say is a humble reiteration of the beautiful and masterful messaging of Rabbi Heschel. Imagine a palace in time to take your first step on your *Incredible Journey*. You were not made for the Seventh Day. The Seventh Day was made for you. But you are the architect of this palace in time where the Bride of the Most Ancient Church waits for you. The Seventh Day Palace is built on rest not labour. The air is perfumed with joy; neither sadness, nor anger can burden the atmosphere. Only as God can be defined by what and who he is not, the Holy Glory of the Seventh Day can only be experienced through abstinence from all that is tiresome and disheartening. Even grieving must be suspended on the Seventh Day. However, because God’s purpose and the purpose of the Church are to bring life to this world and the world to come, all laws of abstinence must be set aside to save a life, even that of a non-human.

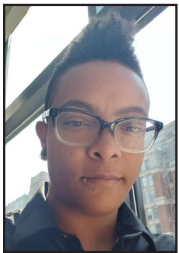
On the Seventh Day, Heaven and Earth kiss and all of creation pulses with the beating heart of the divine. This is the foretaste of the world

1 *The Sabbath*

Mini Course Line-Up

Continued from cover

attendance and underutilized facilities. We revitalize and transform these spaces into community places through collaborative engagement and mindful transition from historic domination models towards equitable, welcoming, and functional environments. We practice equanimous placemaking as a community of practice that includes artists, enterprise development practitioners, equitable labor efforts, social leaders, and spiritual leaders who share a commitment to collective wellness. In our experience, over time, a community of practice emerges, with each entity deeply engaged in their respective unique ministry. The diversity of each leader's capacity supports and sustains the evolution from Space to Place.



People and organizations partner with my entities to turn ideas into reality, ground their strategy in what become ongoing relationships, and discover how to elevate diverse voices at all levels. We specialize

in elevating community, embedding new economic energies, and delivering long term transformation. From this perspective, we revitalize hyper-local engagement of underutilized spaces by leveraging existing systems and collective practices to co-create transformational opportunities that foster empowerment.

The Basics of Church Archives

Pastor Robbin Ferriman & Sue Ditmire

This course will be in-person on campus.

Learn how to organize and preserve your old church records. See step-by-step the process involved and the fun of discovering the history and story of your church. What should you save and what should you get rid of? If you don't have space or want the trouble of

doing all that work, what then? Learn where and how these documents can be safely stored and preserved. Learn how to do the work of collecting, sorting, and cataloging these important documents, sermons, and photos.



Pastor Robbin Ferriman: Researching my family genealogy is a hobby of mine, which has led me to volunteering, then ultimately working at the Piatt Castle, in West Liberty, Ohio. I began learning and working in the archives, then went

on to be a historical interpreter, assisting with public and educational programs and events, as well as assisting with archaeological digs on the Piatt property. I am currently organizing the archives at the Johnny Appleseed Museum.

Sue Ditmire has been a Swedenborgian since 1972. First a member of Kemper Road Center.

Then, after a move to New Jersey, a member of the Church of the Holy City in Wilmington, Delaware. Now she has retired and relocated to Urbana, Ohio, where she is now a member of the Swedenborgian Church of Urbana. For several years she was the secretary for the local Board of Education. She is one of the original founders of the Swedenborgian Community Online. Now Sue has dedicated her retirement to securing and working on the history of the Swedenborgian Church of North America. She is the chair of the Library and Documents Committee and is overseeing the new management our archival material.



Exploring the Optimism in Daoism and Confucianism

Rev. Junchol Lee

This course will be in-person on campus.

In this Mini Course, Rev. Lee will present sample texts from the Scriptures of Daoism and Confucianism exploring the optimistic understanding of human nature and the possible reasons. To enhance the understanding of the participants, he will include a brief explanation on the historical and

cultural background in which Daoism and Confucianism were born. In addition, there will be some cross references with Swedenborgian beliefs.

After his ordination in July 2000, Junchol served many committees of the Swedenborgian Church of North America including Executive Committee of Council of Ministers (six years), Ministry Support Unit (three years), Committee of Admission into Ministry (seven years), the General Council (one year), and served SCYL as the Youth Chaplain for seven terms. He has offered Mini Courses during Convention and delivered lectures at the Almont Summer Camp for many years. Junchol is deeply interested in the spiritual aspect of education for all Swedenborgians and finding ways to connect people with the teachings of Emanuel Swedenborg. Currently he is serving the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church as Senior Pastor.



Monday, July 3 at 3:00 PM ET

Saving Swedenborgian Stories: Planning and Implementing a History Project

Gail Rodgers McCormick

This course will be in-person and livestreamed.

Whether you belong to a flourishing society or have connections to one that long ago dissolved, it is never too early or late to document its history. This Mini Course will help those considering a history project to identify goals, plan the scope, locate resources, and choose how to disseminate your work. Gail will discuss these issues using documentary examples and character sketches from her own decades-long research of the 150-year history of the New Jerusalem Society of Frankford (Philadelphia). Methodology will include providing a broad historical context for your story and considering how the past can inform the present.

Gail Rodgers McCormick is a retired local

Continues on page 59

Mini Course Line-Up

Continued from 58



history librarian, archivist, and historical/genealogical research consultant. She has been researching the history of her grandmother's childhood church, the New Jerusalem Society of Frankford

(Philadelphia), for many years. Her book *Charity, Change, and Community: Frankford's Swedenborgians and Their Circle, 1817-1971*, will be published this spring.

Acknowledging Truth, Honoring Landscapes

Shalonda Ingram

This course will be fully on Zoom and available to everyone anywhere.

A Land Acknowledgment is a formal statement that recognizes the history and legacy of colonialism that impacted Aboriginal and Indigenous Peoples, their traditional territories, and practices. An acknowledgment is a simple, powerful way of showing respect and a step toward correcting the stories and practices that erase Peoples' history and culture and toward inviting and honoring the truth. During this sacred time, we'll explore our relationships to lands that we originated on, occupy, and our opportunities to practice regeneration. We will hold space for one another as we discern how land and our relationships to it operate in our daily lives.

Looking Forward: What is the Future of the New Church?

Rev. Rich Tafel

This course will be in-person on campus.

Two hundred and fifty years ago, Swedenborg described a future spiritual evolution coming into the world he called the New Church. In this Mini Course, Rev. Tafel will look for concrete examples of ways the Swedenborgian movement can be

involved in this ever-evolving spiritual transformation today and into the future. Over the past two hundred years, pieces of this vision have already unfolded. Many Swedenborgians would point to our congregations and church life as examples of our involvement in this new unfolding. Today, it is time for us to take what we know, look back to imagine what the New Church will look like, and reimagine our roles in being useful to this spiritual evolution in our own time. In this class, we will ask questions such as: Where have we seen the New Church unfolding? What areas do we see the New Church unfolding? What role can we play to help participate in this process? What does this mean to our denomination and church life? What does the next level of spiritual evolution look like? Where exactly is the Swedenborgian movement going in the future? New Church members have been fascinated by Swedenborg's vision of a New Church coming into the world for two centuries.

Marguerite Beck Block: A History of the New Church's Storyteller

Rev. Chris Barber

This course will be in-person on campus.



Many people, both in the church and out, have read the influential history book *New Church in the New World*, by Columbia University scholar Dr. Block. None, however, have before given the author and her fascinating life the same kind of attention that she has given our denominations. In this illustrated talk, Rev. Barber will share from the spoils of his years-long research on this complex figure and offer an overview of her life, impact, and the ongoing value of her work, published ninety-one years ago.

Rev. Chris Barber is an ordained priest in the General Church of the New Jerusalem

and is a religion instructor at the Academy of The New Church Secondary Schools. His passion is bringing heaven and earth closer in people's hearts, minds, and lives through the Sacred Scripture and the theology of Emanuel Swedenborg. In his free time, he collects books, writes on matters of local and church history as well as social issues and doctrine, and enjoys watching films. He also currently serves on the board of the Swedenborg Foundation.

Monday, July 3 at 3:00 PM ET

Learning From Our Past, Healing Our Future: A Swedenborgian Perspective on Dismantling Colonial Dominance in Western Christianity

Rev. Shada Sullivan

This course will be in-person and livestreamed.



In this Mini Course, we will take a look at Swedenborgian theology through the lens of the SAAR/CSS/Born Brown-sponsored lecture from Rev. Dr. Randy Woodley: *Learning from Our Past, Healing Our Future: Dismantling Colonial Dominance in Western Christianity*. For the most part, Swedenborgian theology is already post-colonial in many of its ideas. However, Swedenborg was himself a product of the Enlightenment and a default Euro-centric worldview. We will identify and evaluate various strands of traditional Western thinking in Swedenborgian theology and ask the questions: Are they harmful? To what extent? Can indigenous spirituality (as presented by Dr. Woodley) provide a necessary balance? Although not required, either attending the Woodley event or viewing the event video is suggested to enhance your overall Mini Course experience. A recording of the lecture can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/RevDrWoodley>.

Continues on page 60

Mini Course Line-Up

Continued from 59

Rev. Sullivan is the Pastor at The Church of the Holy City in Wilmington, Delaware, co-chair of the Social Justice Committee, and is part of the leadership team of SAAR: Swedenborgians in Action Against Racism. A life-long Swedenborgian who grew up in Australia, Rev. Sullivan now lives in Pennsylvania with her husband and two daughters.

History of the Black Ministers in Convention

Sue Ditmire & Shalonda Ingram

This course will be fully on Zoom and available to everyone anywhere.

Continuation of research after last year's Mini Course. A handout will be provided with information on all the history that has been uncovered including an overview and questions you and your Society and Associations may want to discuss.

An Introduction to Interoceptive Theory

Eleanor Schnarr

This course will be in-person on campus.

This course will explore the interoceptive theory of spiritual experience. We will learn how the physiology and psychology of internals and externals relate to our embodied awareness and sense of meaning and individuality. This theoretical structure will be taught through Swedenborgian ideas of internals and externals relating to embodied awareness, contemplative practice, and metaphorical meaning-making. There will be a take-home art project.

Eleanor Schnarr is an artist and scholar from Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania. Her research area is in the history of Swedenborgian thought



across spiritual traditions with a special emphasis on Śaiva Siddhānta Yoga philosophy. Her artistic career has focused on figurative and abstract works on paper engaging mythology

and neuroscience in her approach to image making. Eleanor has a four-year certificate from the Pennsylvania Academy of the fine arts, an M.F.A. from the San Francisco Art Institute, and is finishing her M.A. at the Graduate Theological Union. She is a lifelong practitioner of Vaasi Yoga and is working towards ordination in the Swedenborgian Church.

Trauma Theory as an Interpretive Lens

Rev. Yung Me Morris

This course will be in-person on campus.

The Bible, like our world, is full of traumatic events. There is story after story of individuals and communities who suffered through one traumatic event after another. Their traumatic injuries led to existential crises that are resolved through stories, songs, and poetry of God's personal interest in their plight, God's deliverance, and God's prescription for a peaceful and just world known as the Kingdom of God. By reading and interpreting the Bible through the lens of Trauma Theory, we are able to derive meaning relevant to all who have experienced physical/emotional/psychological trauma. By seeing and hearing these traumatic stories, those who relate to these experiences may feel seen and heard for the first time. Storytelling, song, poetry, art, and creativity are offered as healing modalities for trauma.

Rev. Yung Me Morris is a first-generation Korean American who was born in Seoul, South Korea. Together with her parents and younger brother, she emigrated to the United States, specifically, Chicago, Illinois, where she grew up speaking

Midwestern English, navigating multiple cultures, and developing a deep abiding love for deep-dish pizza and lasagna. Rev. Morris earned her B.A. and M.A. in Education Ministries from Wheaton College and earned her M.Div. from San Francisco Theological Seminary. She was ordained in the Presbyterian Church (USA)



Letters to the Editor

Continued from page 54

consciousness. It's beyond the scope of this article to dive too deep, but Alan Watts (1915–1973) is widely recognized as a Bay Area resident who helped to popularize Buddhist thought in the Bay Area.

I am going to get right to the point and say there is no compatibility between the two religious schools of Swedenborg and Buddha. Swedenborgianism is born of the Christian tradition, and Buddhism is born of the Hindu tradition. This is not controversial, it is fact. Some will say however that while two schools may be different, (i.e., one Eastern and one Western) they still may complement one another. To this point I have experimented by taking a seated lotus position, and chanting "Love the Lord, and Love the Neighbor" as a mantra, while burning incense. It did occur to me that this attempt at integrating opposite schools of spiritual practices is in vain though. Why?

I see Swedenborgianism as an active spiritual practice, performed by *being in the world* and movement. I see Buddhism as a passive spiritual practice, performed by *sitting in the world* and contemplation. There are many other differences, which I hope to explore in a larger essay, but which are beyond the scope of this letter.

*Michael C. Bloom
Bay Area, California*

**Registration for in-person
convention attendees closes on
Friday, May 14.**

and has served as pastor to congregations, chaplain to patients, and street chaplain to the unhoused. Rev. Morris is currently the interim pastor for Temenos in West Chester, Pennsylvania. ☎

Incredible Journey

Continued from page 57

to come the arrival of “The Most Ancient Church.” For six days we long for and live in anticipation for the Seventh Day. On the sixth day, we will grow anxious and seek perfection in our preparations to enter into the Seventh Day. Our incredible journey into the New Jerusalem of the Most Ancient Church should be done in the spirit of reticence, dignity, awe, and wonder. Do not even try to understand. To seek to understand on the Seventh Day is work, and you must abstain from labour. The angels will be with you and you will know without knowing and you will understand without understanding.

Enter into your journey with all that is your finest. Take with you only your finest thoughts. Dress yourself in your finest garments. Nourish yourself with the finest food. As you enter into eternity, there is only time for the finest. Create the finest environment with the finest beauty. Be prepared to offer the finest hospitality.

Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it (Hebrews 13:2).

Who and What Will You Encounter on Your Incredible Journey?

Earlier I asked the question; “Who and what will we encounter on the pilgrimage of *The Incredible Journey of Goin’ Home to the Most Ancient Church?*” Only you will be able to answer this question for it is your journey. But, before you go on your way, a blessing for you, the eternal time traveler.

May the countenance of God shine upon you and cause your heart to overflow with the warmth of divine love.

May the sun shine upon you and enlighten your mind with the wisdom of the ages.

May your Palace in time be filled

Social Justice Committee

Engaged Swedenborgianism’s Fractal Divine Design

BY DRU JOHNSON

Fractal (mathematics/physics): a pattern made of smaller patterns of exactly the same shape.

Creation began from the highest or inmost things because it began from the Divine, and it proceeded to the last or outermost things and there it came to rest. (The outermost level of creation is the physical world, including our globe of lands and seas and everything on it.) Once all this was finished, then humanity was created, and into humanity was gathered every level of the divine design from first to last. Things on the first level of that design were incorporated into what is inmost in us, and things on the outermost level were incorporated into what is outermost in us. The result is that we have been made embodiments of the divine design (E. Swedenborg, Last Judgement §9).

To me one of the most profound and far-reaching insights that Swedenborg contributed is the metaphor of the “divine design” and the divine design’s metaphorical fractal architecture of reality. What I mean by

“fractal architecture” is that every level of the divine design is built with similarly shaped components of God’s essence love and wisdom. Further, all the realms of reality, taken as a whole constitute what Swedenborg labeled the Grand Human. I think the primary value these metaphors bring us is to remind us that we most fully embody the divine design when we find ways to love our neighbors as ourselves as the Lord commanded. As this fractal architecture directs us to wrestle with again and again, this is not only on the individual level, but on the levels of groups, communities, societies, peoples, and humanity as well. From the bottom all the way up to the very top, God is love, and it follows that at all levels we are called to participate in the divine dismantling of hellish domination systems and transforming according to God’s fractal partnership blueprint. ☸

Dru Johnson (they/them) is a graduate of Pacific School of Religion and The Center for Swedenborgian Studies in Berkeley, California. Dru was especially excited to hear his mentor, Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence, use the phrase “Engaged Swedenborgianism.”

with knowledge and understanding and built on a rock called intuition and instinct.

May you encounter your unmasked self and see who you really are through the eyes of God.

May your soul find their habitat in the eternal oneness of God.

Godspeed on your Incredible Journey. ☸

Roxanne Sperry is a member of the Church of the New Jerusalem in Bath, Maine. Her passion



is identifying unexpected ministries in unexpected places. These ministries include, “The Roadside Chaplain” rescuing people and finding lost souls on the highways and

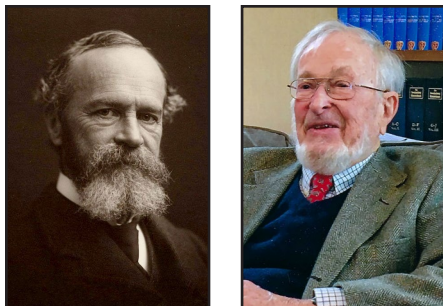
byways of North America, “Disenfranchised Grief in the Veterinary Clinic, at Home and in the Wild,” and “Harp Thanatology, Beauty as the Healing Balm for the Dying.”

Virtual Education Opportunities

Lecture Series: New Church Visionaries

Join us as we continue our seven-part journey to learn about some of the greatest visionary minds of the New Church lineage. The influence of Swedenborgian ideas and spirituality has been one of enormous diversity and dynamism. This free online lecture series is offered by the Helen Keller Spiritual Life Center, an initiative of the Cambridge Society of the New Jerusalem at Swedenborg Chapel, with generous financial support from the Massachusetts New Church Union.

**William James
with Dr. Carl von Essen
May 19 at 7:00 PM ET**



William James (1842–1910), widely considered to be the father of American psychology, was also an eminent philosopher and held chairs in both disciplines at Harvard University. He was introduced to Emanuel Swedenborg by his father, Henry James Sr., a devout Swedenborgian; his godfather, Ralph Waldo Emerson; John Garth Wilkerson, an eminent scholar and biographer of Swedenborg; Charles Saunders Peirce, the brilliant philosopher; and Helen Keller. From his upbringing and the strong influence of his friends and colleagues, William James absorbed and transmitted, knowingly or



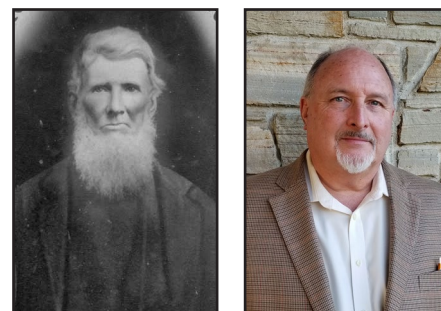
unknowingly, the spiritual emanations of Swedenborg into his respect for religious and mystical experience. The core of shared beliefs, held by William and Henry Sr., was to explore the spiritual side of nature, which, of course, included humanity. James' spirit of universalism was ingrained from these influences. Looking back at his life through the fuzzy lens of historic biography, with its uncertainties, William James, despite his denials, possessed the mystical germ and the remote influence of Emanuel Swedenborg that helped this imaginative genius to explore the spiritual as well as scientific roots of human psychology.

This lecture, entitled "William James: Explorer of Mind and Spirit," will present aspects of James' thought and writing that show the intuitive and spiritual side of this great thinker and his significance for Swedenborgian philosophy. It will focus on James' psychological contributions, particularly the stream of consciousness; experiments with nitrous oxide; panpsychism; pure experience; mystical experience, both spontaneous and induced; and his studies on psychism.

Carl von Essen is a member of the Cambridge Society of the New Jerusalem at Swedenborg Chapel, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He received his M.D. from Stanford in 1952.

Following clinical practice and teaching at medical schools in the U.S., India, and Switzerland, he served with the World Health Organization in Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe. He has written several books on a broad range of topics including angling, spirituality and nature, consciousness, evolution, and ecology.

**John Chapman
with Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence
June 2 at 7:00 PM ET**



During the first half of the nineteenth century, an itinerant nurseryman named John Chapman crisscrossed thousands of miles planting apple orchards from the Ohio River to the Great Lakes. His colorful personality and complex skillset among both White pioneers and Native Americans gave genesis to the legends of Johnny Appleseed. By the turn of the twentieth century and until the 1970s, Johnny

Continues on page 63

New Church Visionaries

Continued from page 62

Appleseed was commonly believed to be an American legend story akin to Paul Bunyan and his blue ox. When a college professor specializing in folklore of the American Midwest explored the stories of the Johnny Appleseed legend, however, Robert Price uncovered a very real historical figure, whom he lays out in *Johnny Appleseed: Man and Myth* published by Indiana University Press in 1954.

The Appleseed version of John Chapman seemed to most a lovable eccentric who possessed no more than what he carried when in fact he owned more than a thousand acres at any one time, which he developed for his client base of settlers across several states in the Westward Expansion. A talkative philosopher full of opinions on botany, politics, and religion, Chapman was especially passionate about his distinctive Swedenborgian Christianity. As the biggest customer for the earliest American Swedenborgian publishing operation, Johnny also ran a widespread lending library whereby he switched new readings for old ones as he traveled around his far-flung land development business.

This talk, titled “Johnny Appleseed: Swedenborgian Missionary and Cultural Icon,” will interpret the cultural narrative around the story of a complex figure in American history who for a time was primarily a colorful yarn for children but who continues to emerge as an American biography with an important tale to tell.

Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence (M.Div., D.Min., Ph.D.) was once founder and director of J. Appleseed & Co., a publishing ministry of the Swedenborgian Church of North America from 1989–2002 that produced thirty-five books and pamphlets on Swedenborgian spirituality. Currently President of the Swedenborgian Church of North

Message from the President

Continued from page 55

inspiration: why not celebrate religious diversity and respect the basic good intentions of the many approaches? A prominent Swedenborgian layperson, the chief justice of the Illinois Supreme Court, who was often on the short list for consideration for the U.S. Supreme Court, had a vision that keeps reverberating down even into our own time. Charles Carroll Bonney proposed adding a Parliament of the World’s Religions for the massive 1893 Columbian Exposition that drew over twenty-seven million people to his own city of Chicago. Bonney and the Swedenborgians are now known today for calling the world’s very first interfaith gathering. The Parliament of the World’s Religions ended up drawing tremendous press coverage and very large crowds to its more than a hundred presentations. As presider, in his opening address he declared, “We meet on the mountain height of absolute respect for the religious convictions of each other.” Revived for its centennial in 1993 the Parliament of the World’s Religions now meets every five years drawing thousands of participants, and Swedenborgians are invited to present every time because it was a Swedenborgian who had the first

America, he has served churches in San Francisco, St. Louis, and Fryeburg, Maine, and as Dean of the Center for Swedenborgian Studies.

Please visit the Swedenborg Chapel Facebook page for information on how to attend these lectures via Zoom: <https://www.facebook.com/CSNJsc/>.



Last Lecture of Series

July 7 at 7:00 PM ET: Dr. Rebecca Esterson on Immanuel Kant

vision for interfaith work.

Then in the mid-twentieth century, the National Council of Churches in Christ arose as a place for Christian denominations to have a structure for common work and vision. Only a smallish percentage of traditions participate (today there are thirty-seven communions), but we were there right from the beginning with official committees and boards established for ecumenical relationships. Despite falling far below the necessary minimum in membership, we were admitted into full membership in 1966 because they were so impressed with our participation and contributions, and we have been faithful and active contributors ever since.

Then in 2001, our denomination voted to support relocating our 135-year-old isolated seminary to join one of the largest interfaith and ecumenical education centers in the world—the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California. For more than two decades now, our faculty and students work shoulder-to-shoulder with scholars and students from many traditions.

The Swedenborgian Church of North America is the only Swedenborgian denomination in the world who has interpreted the concept of “new church” not as a replacement for “the old church” but as a contributing vision for how the human family of spiritual seekers might understand the deep questions of why we are here and where we might be going. The first interfaith gathering, being on the ground floor of the biggest ecumenical organization in the U.S. and putting our educational center into the heart of an interfaith consortium all demonstrate our basic instinct to be connectional, not confrontational, to be humble, not haughty, and finally to be relational, not standoffish.

—Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence
President@Swedenborg.org

Music and Video in Worship and Small Groups

BY KEN TURLEY

This summary review of a Mini Course that was offered at Convention 2022 is for those who would like to explore some of the possibilities of video and online resources for worship and small group discussions, as well as individual spiritual practice. It is particularly geared for those with very basic technological abilities, which is why some very basic instructions have been included. To use online resources in worship or small groups, all you need is a computer with access to the internet, some relatively good speakers, and possibly a larger screen, depending on your particular situation. Most of what we are sharing was created using the simplest, most basic of technology, such as computers with iMovie, iPhones, and Gmail accounts. It was then shared using YouTube and other online resources, and group Zoom meetings. This may involve learning new things, but we are living in a new world where technological advances are occurring at an ever increasingly rapid pace. And if we, as individuals and as a church, are to be participants in, and contributors to that world, it is up to us to be willing to make the effort to learn and change and grow. Consider it an aspect of spiritual regeneration!

An important goal for the Mini Course was to provide the actual experience of using online resources, and to that end participants were presented with an opportunity to do just that. Rev. Ken Turley asked people to have a piece of paper and a pencil at hand (yes, very old school), because following the video he asked some specific questions. He wanted people to have the opportunity to record their spontaneous responses without having to make them public. He offered an opportunity to share in discussion, but

only as people chose to do so.

Participants in the Mini Course engaged with a video available at: <https://tinyurl.com/MusicalMeditations>

The link above is for Musical Meditations New Directions on Rev. Ken Turley's YouTube channel. Rev. Turley selected the video he wanted participants to watch. Just as it began, he pressed pause so as to be ready to press play at the proper time.

In order for them to be able to focus fully on the video, he asked people to sit comfortably, with their feet on the floor, their hands on their knees, and their palms up in an attitude of receptive openness. With deepened breathing, and a calm and open mind, the participants took in the video, which involved music, images, and written text.

After the video was completed, Rev. Turley asked people, without discussion, to answer in writing the following four questions:

1. What was your immediate reaction upon the conclusion?
 - a. Thoughts?
 - b. Feelings?
2. What does your answer above tell you about yourself?
3. How did the video effect you?
 - a. Thoughts?
 - b. Feelings?
4. What can you take from these few minutes that can be useful in your personal life?
5. What can you take from these few minutes that can be useful in your interactions with the outside world?

After giving participants time to complete their written responses, he offered them an opportunity to share and discuss the video and their reactions to it. As an unplanned, but not unexpected part of the experience, there was a

technical problem in the presentation of the video, and it quit and began buffering part way through. As many worship and small group leaders have done, he was forced to deal with technical difficulties in the moment. The group response was to continue the experience with as much of the video as they had been able to see. This resulted in a valuable discussion and overall experience.

The kind of experience that was offered in this Mini Course is something that can be offered in a number of different contexts. Whether it is part of a worship service, or a discussion or study group, or simply personal meditation, the purpose is relatively consistent: to present scripture and correspondence in easily understood language, amplified by the visual imagery, and delivered to both the intellect and the intuition via the relaxing and opening influences of the music. A video like this can be presented beforehand to prepare, afterward to amplify, or even as the scripture reading of a worship service. In the same way, it can be presented to inspire and focus inner meditation and/or group discussion on the topic of whatever specific video is chosen. A musically imaged video can be presented as an anthem, as time for prayerful meditation, or as an introductory amplification of the presented message. And, of course, uses for this kind of resource are only limited by one's own imagination.

An important part of the "Music and Video in Worship and Small Groups" Mini Course was a discussion of the preparation and set up that is necessary to make a good, effective and distraction-free presentation, whatever the setting. First and foremost is taking care of the things that

Continues on page 65

Music and Video in Worship

Continued from page 64

can be done ahead of your presentation, so you don't require your audience to sit through a lot of last-minute adjustments. This includes,

1. **The Environment:** Look at the environment you will be presenting in. Needless to say, you have to have your technology set-up and tested before hand, including at least one practice run-through accessing and displaying your video. You may have to create a seating arrangement so that people will have optimal visual and auditory access to the screen. You may have to ask people to seat themselves for accessibility before you start your event, so you don't have to do it at the time of your presentation.

2. **Questions to ask yourself:**

A. How is the lighting? Is the room dark enough or will you have to adjust the lighting at the time? Are there reflections on the screen from windows or overhead lights? Is the screen large enough for the space and the number of your group and their distance from the screen.

B. How is the audio? Is the volume too loud, too soft, or just right? Are you prepared and able to make adjustments at the last minute if you find it necessary? Perhaps someone is hard of hearing? Is there outside noise that could be a distraction or make it hard for people to hear or concentrate?

C. Are your participants in-person and/or virtual? How are the above concerns for those two very different kinds of participants, and are you prepared and able to make adjustments?

D. If you, as leader, are projecting your image online, how is the projection of your facial image? Are you backlit so you appear as a dark silhouette? Is the front-lighting too bright so you have harsh or shiny reflections? Is your background free from distractions, like busy artwork, messy clutter,

laundry, moving pets or roommates, background noise, etc., etc., etc? Are you familiar and functional with moving in and out of screen-sharing and other functions of Zoom or other group meeting platforms?

3. **Platforms:** Your video presentation will involve using your computer to access your online resource through YouTube, or any number of other websites. Be connected, set-up and ready to press play ahead of time. Don't make the audience sit while you search to get connected to your online resource. If you have virtual attendees, using Zoom, or FaceTime, etc., make sure your screen sharing capabilities are in place and working. Again, practice run throughs before your event are essential.

4. **Context and Transitions** within the overall event: Depending on whether you are making this presentation as part of a worship service, or a discussion group, or a personal meditation, the transition into and out of an online presentation will be very different. Think through how best to make it smooth, and conducive to the overall effect you hope to achieve. Where will the screen be before and after your presentation? Where will you, as presenter, be before, during and after the video? How and from where will you operate the necessary controls to make the presentation and transitions smooth? Where will you keep, and how and when will you access and distribute, any materials or resources you may want your audience to have?

5. **Preparation:** To reiterate, you as presenter *must* prepare and practice before hand. An effective presentation as worship leader or discussion group moderator is not something that just happens. It is not a gift. It is a skill that must be learned and practiced and developed. And as our Mini Course's technical difficulties above clearly demonstrates, even with preparation and practice, unexpected

difficulties, technical problems, and simple mistakes are going to happen. Handle them with grace and good humor, which most often means *just going with it* and making the best out of the situation as it unfolds. But, by all means learn from them. Remember young David when going out to face Goliath. He came with his simple little sling shot. King Saul laughed at him and tried to convince him to put on his armor and use his sword, spear, and shield. David wisely turned him down and went with what he was familiar and well-practiced with. And we know how that worked out for him. It is almost always a mistake to make last minute substitutions or additions of technology or personnel when you have established an effective command over even the simplest technology that you are familiar with.

6. **Finding Resources:** In this Mini Course a couple of hand-outs were circulated that listed online resources for videos and music. There are many, such as YouTube, Soundcloud, and Cricket. If you are willing to invest the time to research, you can find many amazing and inspirational things to share with your group. A listing of available technologies was also offered. But don't be intimidated into thinking you will never be able to have the equipment to do this. Again, remember David and his simple slingshot. Rev. Turley has made a number of very effective videos, recording music, and taking video and photos on his smart phone, and downloading them onto his computer and using the iMovie app that came with his computer. Nothing fancy at all! It merely took time to learn and practice and develop a minimal facility with what was right at hand. With the willingness to experiment and learn, great things can be accomplished. 🙏

Rev. Ken Turley, son of Rev. Cal and Marilyn Turley, was raised in the General Convention

Continues on page 66

Passages

Deaths

Melinda (Mindy) Lee Jester, 67, entered the spiritual world on March 29, 2023, at her home in North Vernon, Indiana, after a nearly year-long battle with bile duct cancer.



Her husband Ralph Rohrer was by her side. Mindy was born on October 29, 1955, the third child of Swedenborgian Margery Jester and Conner Jester of Indianapolis. As a child, Mindy attended church at the Indianapolis Swedenborgian Church until it closed, and then attended the Second Friends, her father's church.

Mindy was an alumna of Indiana University, earning a bachelor's degree in political science and a master's in library science. In 1980, Mindy and Ralph married, and Mindy moved to Hyde Park, Chicago for Ralph's new position as a librarian at the University of Chicago. Mindy joined the Chicago Society of the New Jerusalem Church, then located in Hyde Park adjacent to the University of Chicago campus. She was an active member of the small congregation in the 1980s, playing the organ at services, handling the book-keeping, managing the property, and assisting the elders who were members at that time. During those years, Mindy and Ralph's three children, Frank, Freda, and Karl, were born. Mindy also worked for a local property management company during the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Mindy accompanied her three children to Almont Camp (all Almont Survivors) for more than a dozen years, serving as a dorm mother in the early

years. She regularly attended Convention during the Chicago years and served on denominational committees. After she and Ralph moved to Lafayette, Indiana, in the early 1990s for his work at Purdue University, Mindy served a term on the first Center for Swedenborgian Studies Board following the school's move from Newton, Massachusetts, to Berkeley, California.

In Lafayette, she attended and played organ, piano, and guitar for the Buck Creek United Methodist Church, and began work as a volunteer bookkeeper at the International Center of West Lafayette, home of Purdue University. She moved into the paid position of Co-Administrator and held that job for thirteen years. She enjoyed meeting people from other countries and promoting cross-cultural understanding. She organized language classes, international dinners and food bazaars, trips to local sights, and bus trips to Chicago, which is when she would drop in at the Swedenborg Library for a visit.

Mindy loved to be useful to people. She was active with missions in the churches she attended. She donated her time and money to local food banks and low-cost spay/neuter organizations. With her beloved 1990 Chevy S-10, she was always ready to help friends move. She helped international students navigate life in the US. She sewed caps for cancer patients and sewed masks during the pandemic.

In 2011, Mindy began visiting her newly widowed mother-in-law, Alice, several days a week in North Vernon, Indiana. In 2013, after Alice suffered a broken hip, Mindy moved to North Vernon to stay with her full-time. As Alice declined with age, Mindy cared for her 24/7 until Alice's death in early 2019.

In the fall 2019, Mindy joined the

staff of Jennings County High School's Music department as an accompanist for the choirs, as a music cataloger for the bands, and as a substitute teacher. COVID-19 shutdowns interfered with her work. She found an unexpected joy and excitement in working with the students. She also attended Convention in Valparaiso in 2019, bringing a friend along.

Then, in March 2022, she learned she had a rare, inoperable form of cancer, which reappeared in January 2023. Mindy donated her body to the Anatomical Education Program at Indiana University School of Medicine. She felt the donation was a way for her to continue to be useful and to contribute to society.

Mindy was preceded in death by her parents, and her sister-in-law, Kathy Jester. Mindy is mourned by her husband Ralph, and their children Frank, Freda, and Karl; Her sister Cindy (Gil) Smith and her children Andy, Tim, and Amanda; and her brother Conner with his children Melissa and Erin. She is also mourned by her church family in Chicago. ☪

Music and Video in Worship

Continued from page 65



of the Swedenborgian Church. He performed and taught music in San Francisco and Seattle for many years getting a B.A. in Music along the way. Intending to serve music in the

church, he was ordained in the 1985 and served parishes in Elmwood, Massachusetts, as well as Portland and Fryeburg, Maine, and served as president of the SCNA. Now retired, he continues to compose classical music, write songs, and play original songs and covers in the folk-jazz genre with his wife, Laurie.

What's Happening



Spiritual Sunshine
A Swedenborgian Community Online

SwedenborgianCommunity.org
With broadcasts and written messages most weeks, *Spiritual Sunshine: A Swedenborgian Community Online* is your interfaith-Swedenborgian community—with a presence on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and your favorite podcasting platform. Join us as we seek to empower awareness of and connection to the spiritual sunlight from Divinity within all of us.

Get the Messenger by mail

- US Address – \$25/year
- Canada Address – \$30/year
- Other Address – \$40/year

Visit the website for details or to subscribe to the free online version of *the Messenger*:
Swedenborg.org/news-announcements/newsletter-the-messenger/

SWEDENBORGIANS IN ACTION



AGAINST RACISM

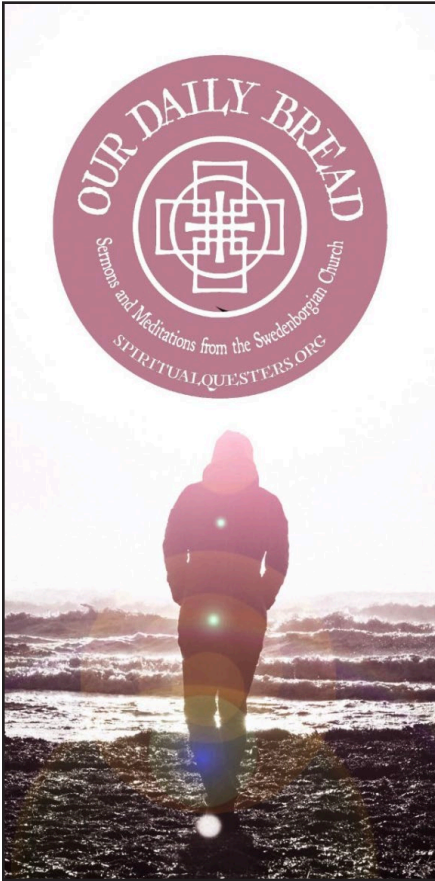
Swedenborgians in Action Against Racism

SAAR has a biweekly email newsletter that provides education around issues central to antiracism, ideas for actions to take, and inspiration to keep at it long-term. Email Rev. Shada Sullivan, revshada@gmail.com to join the email list.

Previous issues of the SAAR Newsletter can be found on our website: swedenborg.org/community/diversity-equity-inclusion/swedenborgians-in-action-against-racism/

Church Calendar

- **May 27–29, 2023: SCYL Retreat**, Allenton, Michigan
- **July 1–5, 2023: Annual Convention**, Bridgewater, Massachusetts
- **July 22–30, 2023: Almont Summer School**, Allenton, Michigan
- **July 29–August 13, 2023: Fryeburg New Church Assembly**, Fryeburg, Maine
- **August 24–27, 2023: Gathering Leaves**, Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania



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Before heading to convention, I need to head under the Sagamore to collect some:

*Jumble by Jason Greenwood
Answers will be printed in the next issue.*

Answers to the April Jumble:
Bases, Steal, Apply, Aptly
When the cubs couldn't find their sox, they went to watch some cardinals and blue jays:
"Play Ball"

About the Swedenborgian Church

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

As a result of Swedenborg's spiritual questioning and insights, we as a church exist to encourage that same spirit of inquiry and personal growth, to respect differences in views, and to accept others who may have different traditions.

In his theological writings, Swedenborg shared a view of God as infinitely loving and at the very center of our beings, a view of life as a spiritual birthing as we participate in our own creation, and a view of scripture as a story of inner life stages as we learn and grow. Swedenborg said, "All religion relates to life, and the life of religion is to do good." He also felt that the sincerest form of worship is a useful life.

Employment Opportunities

Purley Chase Programme Director and Pastoral Support Position

Purley Chase Centre, owned by The General Conference of the New Church, is a retreat and event venue set in the beautiful North Warwickshire countryside in Atherstone, England. We are seeking to appoint an enthusiastic, self-motivated person to become the Centre's next Programme Director.

The ethos of the Centre is rooted in an enlightened and balanced approach to Christ-centred spirituality, aided by insights found in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. We validate all faiths and welcome people of all religions and none. For more information and a job description visit www.purleychasecentre.org.uk.

This is a full-time position and offers a competitive salary depending on experience.



If you would like to apply for this position, please email your CV with a cover letter to Natalie Welch at natalie.welch@generalconference.org.uk

The closing date for applicants is June 1, 2023. Interviews, in-person or online as appropriate, will take place week of June 19, 2023. 📍

