

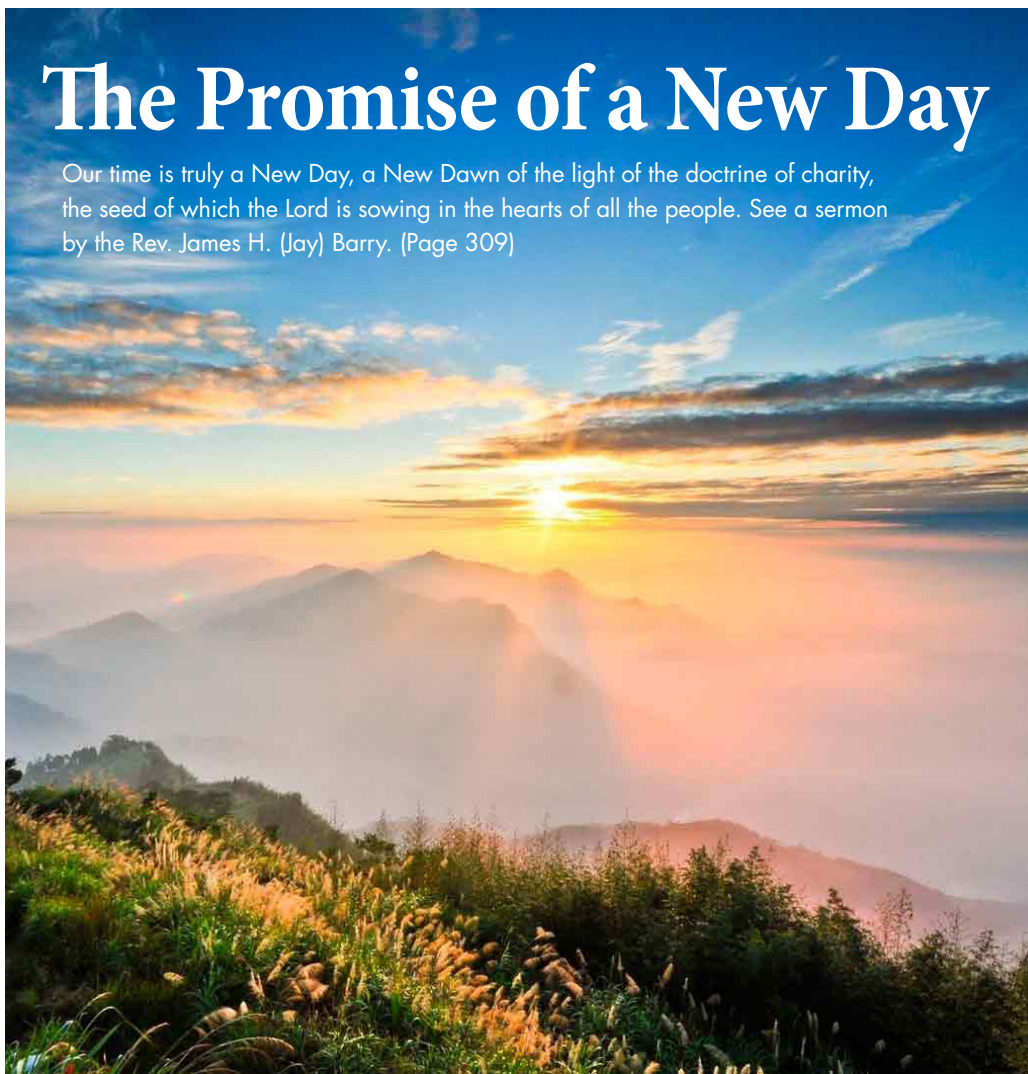
NEW CHURCH *Life*

A bimonthly magazine devoted to the teachings revealed through Emanuel Swedenborg, as they apply to life.

JULY/AUGUST 2014

The Promise of a New Day

Our time is truly a New Day, a New Dawn of the light of the doctrine of charity, the seed of which the Lord is sowing in the hearts of all the people. See a sermon by the Rev. James H. (Jay) Barry. (Page 309)



Note: There is no extra cost for the use of color on the front page.

NEW CHURCH LIFE (USPS 378-180)

PUBLISHED BIMONTHLY BY

THE GENERAL CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM

Bruce Henderson, Editor

Rev. Walter Orthwein, Spiritual Editor

SUBSCRIPTION: \$30 TO ANY ADDRESS. To order: 267-502-4990 or susan.wright@anc-gc.org.

Postmaster: Send address changes to: New Church Life, PO Box 708, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

e-mail: datacenter@anc-gc.org

New Church Life

A bimonthly magazine devoted to the teachings revealed through Emanuel Swedenborg, as they relate to life.

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IN THIS ISSUE

Every morning we get to experience “The Promise of a New Day.” In a sermon with that title, the Rev. James H. (Jay) Barry talks about the New Dawn of light we are given by the Lord in His revelation, and how it nurtures our faith, our charity and our daily lives. It is a hopeful vision for a world in darkness. And we honor the Lord’s covenant with us – and this vision – by carrying an attitude of faith and love into each new day. (Page 309.)

One of the strange stories in the New Testament is about “Legion and the Pigs” in *Mark* 5, where a man is possessed by demons, which then enter into swine before being cast out. The Rev. Solomon J. Keal describes in a sermon how this relates to our own lives – how we can be infested with false ideas and negative emotions, but can be delivered by the Lord. (Page 315)

A report on the Bryn Athyn College commencement includes lengthy excerpts from a fascinating address by alumnus Colin Cole, an inspiring valedictory by Hyunook Suh, and a touching Farewell from President Kristin King. (Page 322) See a listing of the graduates and special awards in Church News, which also includes the Academy Secondary Schools commencement, photos from both graduations, and links to enjoy huge collections of photographs – before, during and after the ceremonies. (Page 360)

The Rev. Les Sheppard was a very popular second-career minister, who spent most of his career in Australia, but was also much loved in Bryn Athyn and Sarver, Pennsylvania. He passed on to the spiritual world in May. You can read a poignant memorial address by the Rev. Ian A. Arnold (page 329) and further tributes in Life Lines. (Page 374)

Morna Hyatt was a remarkable woman, the very model of a New Church teacher during an incredible 67-year career – mostly in the Academy of the New Church Girls School, as teacher and principal. Her nephew, the Rev. Eric H. Carswell, nicely captures her spirit and devotion in a memorial address. (Page 333. You can also read a tribute in Life Lines, page 376.)

The Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss Jr. reports on an episcopal visit to South Africa this spring, with a lot of exciting developments from Clermont and Westville to Kainon and Buccleuch. The trip afforded him and his wife, Teresa, an opportunity to build social and working relationships in this part of the Church. (Page 341. Also see photos, page 364.)

In *Introducing Our Ministers*, the Rev. Todd J. Beiswenger tells his own story about “Lessons from Fathers” on his circuitous road to the ministry. This has led him and his family to what he calls “the best posting in the General

Church” – the Hurstville Society just outside of Sydney, Australia. (Page 343)
In a sermon, *Mastering the Basics*, Todd talks about how many professionals master their talents through thousands of repetitions – and how this is also the process for mastering our spiritual development. (Page 349)

There is good news from Theta Alpha International, telling of its commitment to keep the organization going, with some critical new changes. All of this will be voted on at the important annual meeting at Charter Day in October. (Page 355)

Church News includes: pastoral changes throughout the Church; a report from Chancellor Brian Keith about Dr. Kristin King agreeing to stay on as President of Bryn Athyn College; reports on the Bryn Athyn College and Academy Secondary Schools commencement exercises, with lists of graduates and awards; the 100th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone at the Bryn Athyn Cathedral; a visit to Bryn Athyn from two former U.S. Presidents – Thomas Jefferson and James Madison – with the Williamsburg Foundation, where they spoke in the Cathedral about the importance of freedom of religion in the birth of America, and Jefferson expressed his personal appreciation for Swedenborg; and the 60th anniversary of a race in England in which Roger Bannister first broke the barrier for the four-minute mile, with the Rev. George Dole one of the runners pushing him to his record. (Page 359)

Next issue: We hope to present a complete report on the Ministers’ Meetings which took place in Bryn Athyn in late June.

OUR NEW CHURCH VOCABULARY

Part of a continuing series developed by the Rev. W. Cairns Henderson, 1961-1966.

APPROPRIATE

To appropriate is to make one’s own from freedom according to reason. The relation of the term to eating and drinking gives us the essential idea. By these processes man, from appetite, takes in, prepares, absorbs, assimilates and builds into the structure of his body the nutritious elements in what he swallows. Spiritually, he appropriates whatever he absorbs from love and builds into the structure of his mind and life. Thus whatever he wills, thinks, does and says from love he appropriates, both good and evil, and those things are said to be appropriated by him. However, that only which is appropriated in freedom remains. (See *Brief Exposition 69; Divine Providence 138*)

Editorials

THE AUTHORITY OF THE WRITINGS

The New Church is not an authoritarian church. In fact, the Writings speak negatively about a “sphere of authority” because it takes away freedom. (*Arcana Coelestia* 1507) And believing things just because someone in authority says to believe them is a merely natural faith. (*Ibid.* 8078.3)

But this is speaking of *human* authority – the kind some human beings impose upon others. Such authority is likely to be tainted by the love of dominion, and its wisdom is constrained by the limits and flaws of human reason.

The authority the Lord wields by means of His Word is different. It is an expression of Divine love, and respect for our freedom, rationality and conscience is inherent in it. Its purpose is to preserve order and protect us from disorder. The Lord’s wish to be obeyed is entirely free of the selfishness, capriciousness and short-sightedness which are apt to taint human authority.

The Lord’s authority is exercised by means of His Word; and in the New Church this especially means the Writings. Note the word “author” in “authority.” In acknowledging the authority of the Word, we are acknowledging that the Author of it is Divine. And this is something we are free to do or not do. It is a matter of personal choice and conscience. “Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely,” says the Lord. (*Revelation 22:17*)

But while everyone is free to accept or not accept the authority of the Writings, it is legitimate for a group of people who do choose to accept it to get together and form a church organization in which acknowledging that authority is the basic organizational principle. This is what the General Church stands for, so it is assumed that those who choose to be members of it share its view of the Writings.

It was for the sake of freeing themselves from what they saw as the heavy-handed human authority of Convention’s leaders that the founders of the General Church left that organization and started a new church body – one in which their belief in the authority of the Writings would be the norm.

Far from being contrary to each other, the two principles upon which the

General Church was founded – the authority of the Writings and freedom – are closely joined. The principle of freedom was viewed as having Divine authority behind it *because* it was derived from the teaching of the Writings, which were viewed as having Divine authority.

Thus the very principle of freedom which is occasionally cited as a reason not to view the Writings as authoritative, was actually written into the DNA of the General Church by the Author of the Writings Himself.

Human authority can be oppressive and stifling, but wise and freely accepted authority is actually liberating. It creates a space within which human thought, debate and exchange of ideas can be carried out in an orderly manner and brought to a peaceful conclusion. A “space” implies *boundaries* by which the space is defined. This is what an authority that all can agree upon provides.

Take *Roberts Rules of Order*, for example. Acknowledging their authority is not *contrary* to a free, open and fair debate, with the possibility of a settlement all can live with, but is *necessary* to make such an exchange of ideas and peaceful resolution possible. The Church’s “rules of order” are derived from the Word and the doctrines drawn from the Word, which church members have agreed to accept as authoritative.

Every use is subject to misuse. Every good and productive thing has its shadow side – some destructive perversion and misapplication. But the negative aspect does not negate the validity and usefulness of the thing itself. Just because some authority is bad does not mean that all authority is bad.

The answer to fake charity is not to reject charity altogether, but to embrace true charity. The answer to oppressive external order is not anarchy, but the spiritual order that comes from within, from love. The answer to pseudo-science is real science. The answer to pseudo-marriage is real marriage. The answer to the pseudo-religion of idolatry is real religion based on worship of the Lord.

It is the same regarding authority. The only real escape from the tyranny of flawed human authorities is in acknowledging the supreme authority of the Divine. This is why totalitarian regimes relentlessly persecute religion; the rulers can’t tolerate the existence of any authority higher than themselves.

Human authority comes from without. Divine authority comes from within. The commandments of the Word come to us at first from without, from a book. But they are meant to be raised up into the light of reason, and finally loved. And then they are written on our heart, and speak to us from within.

“The authority of the Writings” may seem to be a cold, restrictive, even intimidating formula. But it is really just a way of saying their Author is the Lord, that it is He who is speaking to us in them. Acknowledging the authority of the Writings is an expression of the affirmative attitude with which we must

approach them in order to be enlightened by them.

The more we take the truths revealed in the Writings to heart, the more they will speak to us from within. Their Author will then not be commanding us from without, as a stern master, but from within, as a friend, through the voice of reason and conscience.

Our affirmation of “the authority of the Writings” then will not be hesitant or begrudging, but as gladly given as the willingness of sheep to follow the voice of their shepherd as he leads them to new green pastures. “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.” (*John 10:27*)

(WEO)

TRUST AND OPTIMISM

Edmund Burke, an 18th century member of the British Parliament who favored the cause of freedom in America and France, wisely observed at the end of the French Revolution: “The effect of liberty is that men may do whatever they please. We should wait to see what it pleases them to do before we risk congratulations.”

Looking at the free world today we see great progress in science, technology, medicine, business, but not so much with the human spirit. We have natural freedom and we have spiritual freedom – great opportunities and responsibilities – but have we earned anyone’s congratulations?

It is easy to be discouraged – about a world morally adrift without a spiritual compass, about struggles in our own lives, about the lack of growth of the New Church as an antidote to the evil all around us. But the Lord is not discouraged; neither should we be.

There is nothing new about despair over the state of the world and the inner state of man. In the aftermath of World War I – so horrific that it was called “the war to end all wars” – the great Irish poet William Butler Yeats wrote his own apocalyptic vision, *The Second Coming*, which includes these memorable lines:

*Things fall apart; the center cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.*

This brief poem is filled with obscure images, and scholars still argue over their meaning, but Yeats clearly believed that the world was badly in need of the Second Coming promised in the *Book of Revelation*. He dared to hope that the world was transitioning from chaos to a new age of hope and peace.

We know that the Second Coming had already occurred in heaven in

1757, and that the world still is dealing with the fallout of the Last Judgment, with wars and terrorism and inhumanity, and a culture largely turning its back on God and religion: “mere anarchy loosed upon the world.”

The Word, of course, also is filled with violence, cruelty and despair, but ends with the Holy City New Jerusalem descending from God out of heaven. It always offers hope, and counsels trust and patience in following the Lord.

All of the Word, of course, is rooted in ancient peoples and symbols but speaks to our own lives today. That includes Abraham, Moses, the prophets and the disciples, but also their opposites. With the revelation given to us in the Writings we are assured that even when we let a bit of Herod or Judas or Jezebel into our lives – and let the Lord down – He never stops loving us or trying to raise us up into heaven.

How could we not be trusting and optimistic – especially when we understand the workings of Divine providence and the reality of the Lord’s unconditional love for us?

Peace holds within itself trust in the Lord, that He governs all things and provides all things, that He leads to an end that is good. (*Arcana Coelestia* 8455)

We are told in the Writings that if we could see the workings of Divine providence in our lives – and in the course of the world – it would look like scattered heaps of materials for building a house. Some things connected, some not. Bits of pattern here, chaos there. But the Lord looks at any stage of our lives and sees how the pieces fit together, like a beautiful home, constantly changing and improving.

In his 1927 Pulitzer Prize-winning classic, *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*, Thornton Wilder tried to make sense of the random victims of a rope bridge collapse in 18th century Peru. It’s the kind of why-does-God-let-it-happen question that haunts anyone – from the untimely death of a friend to hundreds of victims of a plane crash or a hurricane.

Wilder was puzzling over whether God really does have a plan for all of us, but without sure knowledge of providence his speculation fell short. However, he came up with a better explanation in a book 40 years later, *The Eighth Day*, and we all can relate to its image. It is the story of a good and decent man whose life is ruined by bad luck. Wilder offers the hopeful image of a tapestry, showing an inspiring work of art on one side, but a tangle of threads and knots on the other.

In his own 1980 best-seller, *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*, Rabbi Harold Kushner concludes: “Wilder offers this as an explanation of why good people have to suffer in this life. God has a pattern into which all of our lives fit. His pattern requires that some lives be twisted, knotted, or cut short, while others extend to impressive lengths, not because one thread is more

deserving than another, but simply because the pattern requires it. Looked at from underneath, from our vantage point in life, God's pattern of reward and punishment seems arbitrary and without design, like the underside of a tapestry. But looked at from outside this life, from God's vantage point, every twist and knot is seen to have its place in a great design that adds up to a work of art."

That is a good image of the way providence works. The Lord sees the "tapestry" of our lives, and His unconditional love and providence effect every stitch in what is potentially a heavenly portrait. Especially when we understand how His providence is in every moment of our lives – also in every event on earth, and in every phase of the development of the Church – we should not allow ourselves to get caught up in the knots and apparent chaos underneath and be discouraged.

We need to use our freedom to choose wisely and cooperate with the Lord as best we can. We need to remember that no matter what is happening around us the Holy City New Jerusalem is still descending into a needy world. We should live with trust and optimism – seeking the tapestry that He sees.

*God be merciful unto us and bless us;
and cause His face to shine upon us;
that Thy way may be known upon earth,
Thy saving health among all nations.*

(Psalm 67: 1,2)

(BMH)

NEW CHURCH VIRTUES: UNITING CHARITY AND FAITH

Faith, at its best, is like gazing at a treasure of gold shining on the sunlit sand beneath the crystal water of a warm sea. The waters of the "sea" are the spiritual truths gathered together in the Lord's Word. The "gold" is Divine love and its offshoots of human charity. This is what faith sees, and sees from: love. "Faith is the eye of love, since it is from love through faith that the Lord is seen – love being the life of faith." (*Arcana Coelestia* 3863.12)

We see the Lord in the Word, and in nature, but we see Him in a most living and human way in the love and wisdom of our fellow human beings. It is this goodness in others that spiritual charity seeks to support and strengthen. And since it comes from the Lord, loving the neighbor means loving what is from the Lord in others. Thus faith in the Lord and charity toward the neighbor make a one. "In the highest sense the Lord alone is the neighbor." (*Arcana Coelestia* 2425.3)

Without faith, charity would have no eye to instruct and guide it; it would be blind and indiscriminate. The deeper truths of faith revealed for the New

Church make a more spiritually discerning charity possible. They enable us to “do good to everyone according to his quality,” which is important because “doing good to the evil is doing evil to the good, for thus the evil are given the means of doing evil to the good.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 3820)

The mistake so prevalent in the world around us is to make *natural* good deeds the all of charity. Natural works of charity (the “benefactions” of charity – giving to the poor and so on) should be done, but in thoughtful ways appropriate to the quality and needs of the recipients. To be discriminating in this way doesn’t indicate a lack of caring; it is *because* parents love their children so much that they do not give them everything they ask for.

Because each person’s spirit is clothed with a natural body, so charity includes material aid. The spiritual law that “there is power in ultimates (or outmosts)” reinforces this truth. Spiritual charity is not a substitute for natural charity, but the soul and director of it.

Charity and faith are like two sides of the same coin – or two streams flowing from the same fountain. This fundamental truth was spoken by the Lord during His life in the world when He said:

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” (*Matthew* 22:38-40)

The whole Word of God is summed up and concentrated in these two great commandments. And our human relationships with one another are further linked to our relationship with the Lord in the new commandment He gave us: “Love one another as I have loved you.” (*John* 13:34; 15:12)

It is the good in us that the Lord loves and seeks to strengthen; and it is the good in others that we are to love and seek to strengthen. This is why charity must be joined with the faith that enables us to see the goodness of the Lord, for the strengthening of that goodness is the supreme object of charity toward the neighbor.

Just as the natural sun’s light carries its warmth to earth in it, so true faith has charity in it. We speak of “doctrines” and “teachings” and “truths,” but these things are not (or should not be) cold abstractions; genuine doctrine has life in it, love in it, and its purpose is to guide us in bringing forth the good of life in practice.

“All genuine truths of doctrine proceed from good, and are goods.” (*Apocalypse Explained* 401.25) Doctrines *are* goods! The soul of doctrine is warm, life-giving, beautiful. This is why genuine faith (expressed in doctrines) and charity (love expressing itself in good works) are inseparable.

In the New Jerusalem, the Lord joins together what man has put asunder: charity and faith.

(WEO)

Letter to the Editors

A 'Garland' of Inclusivity?

To The Editors:

A lady in Bryn Athyn has written to me in response to my letter in the March/April 2014 *New Church Life, A Crown and a Garland*. She does not agree with me, saying that a garland more accurately encompasses the way we are supposed to live, reaching out to all regardless of their beliefs, and building up a feeling of inclusiveness with them. This view, of course, lies behind the idea that “crown of churches” should be changed to “garland of churches.”

To emphasise her view she quotes the following passage: “The church of the Lord is not here, nor there, but it is everywhere ... where people live according to the precepts of charity. Hence it is, that the church of the Lord is scattered through the whole world, and yet it is one; for when life makes the church, and not doctrine separate from life, then the church is one; but when doctrine makes the church, then there are many.”

I think there are two issues here. The first is whether “crown of churches” should be translated as “garland of churches.” The second is why, which is tied in with the quotation above. Why should the New Church take an inclusive approach to other faiths, whether organizational or private, on the grounds of that quotation?

As to the first, I think my letter clearly showed that we would be changing the meaning of the Lord’s Word if we changed the translation to “garland of churches.”

As to the second, I can quite see the emotional appeal of making all religions inclusive to the New Church – of having a “garland” and basing the appeal on that quotation.

Of course I agree with the quotation as it is written. However, although it is true, the number is talking about the spiritual state of charity. If we are all in that spiritual state then of course it is the life that makes the church, and that where people live according to the precepts of charity the Lord is there and the church is one. But I would ask whether we and others are living according to the precepts of charity.

Charity is a spiritual state; it means regeneration, and in fact it is a celestial state. So what is charity? Is it not being in a state of good, dependent upon acknowledging that the Lord God Jesus Christ is the one God, the Lord in His Glorified Divine Human, and shunning evils as sins against Him?

To me these are prerequisites to being in a state of charity. These cannot apply to anyone of other faiths who do not accept this and make it one with their lives. Only those who are in the spiritual state of charity can be in the so-called “garland approach” and it is most presumptuous to assume that just because we are members of the New Church we are in this state, and that we have the effrontery of reaching out to others to join us in our high and mighty state. The Word clearly states that those in a state of charity are averse to those who are not.

It seems to me that by using the quotation above we are assuming that everyone is in that spiritual state of charity; or alternatively, we are not seeing charity as a spiritual state, but as a general, natural external state of feeling well-disposed toward others.

There are pages and pages on charity in the Concordance, but a few are worth mentioning. I quote them here, with my comments in italics:

“Charity is the Celestial, and all the good of charity is the Celestial.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 353)

“That charity is extinguished with those who have separated faith and set it above charity is described by Cain killing his brother Abel.” (*Ibid.* 329) (*The inclusive garland approach ignores this and other like passages which clearly show that we cannot include them in the garland and they cannot be part of the universal church.*)

“Unless the will and understanding are in concord, so as to make one, the man is not regenerated; that is, unless good and truth, or what is the same, charity and faith are one, for charity is of the will and faith of the understanding.” (*Ibid.* 2975) (*Again, the garland approach, in relation to the universal church, can only be considered in terms of the regenerate man. Only then is there charity, and for a person to be regenerate, one must acknowledge and love the Lord God Jesus Christ in His Glorified Divine Human and shun evils as sins against Him. How can this apply to other religions? Surely the passage quoted by my correspondent can only apply to true charity, to the celestial state, to the regenerate man?*)

“The essence of charity toward the neighbor is the affection of good and truth, and the acknowledgment of self as being evil and falsity; nay, the neighbor is good and truth themselves, to be affected with these is to have charity; the opposite to the neighbor is evil and falsity. To these, He who has charity is averse.” (*So surely what the Word is showing is that charity is a state of regeneration and that anyone in the state of charity is averse to those who are not. Surely this means that we should not be inclusive of other religions or have a garland approach?*)

“There are spurious charity, hypocritical charity, and dead charity . . . Genuine

charity which is alive does not exist unless it makes one with faith and unless both conjointly look to the Lord, for these three, the Lord, charity and faith, are the three essentials of salvation, and when they make one, charity is charity, faith is faith, and the Lord is in them and they are in the Lord. But when these three are not conjoined together, charity is either spurious, or hypocritical or dead . . . As concerns charity in particular, it can be conjoined to any heretical faith; as to the faith of the Socinians, to the faith of enthusiasts, to the faith of Jews, yea, to the faith of idolaters, and by all of them it may be believed to be charity, because in its outward form it appears like it, but still, it changes its quality according to the faith to which it is adjoined.” (*True Christian Religion* 450) (*This is a clear warning that what may appear to be charity is not, and we should clearly not be trying to include such in our beliefs.*)

“All charity which is not conjoined with faith in one God in whom is the divine trinity, is spurious, as is the charity of the present church, whose faith is in three persons of the same divinity in successive order . . . thus in three gods, to which faith charity can be adjoined, but never conjoined, and charity merely adjusted to faith is merely natural and not spiritual, wherefore it is spurious charity. It is the same with the charity of many other heresies, as that of those who deny the Divine trinity, and therefore only approach God the Father . . . It is called spurious because it is like offspring from an unlawful bed.” (*Ibid.* 451) (*No. 452 defines hypocritical charity and No. 453 defines dead charity.*)

“The former church adjoins charity to faith as an appendix, but not as saving, and thus makes religion; but the New Church conjoins faith in the Lord and charity toward the neighbor as two inseparable things and thus makes religion.” (*Ibid.* 647)

OUR NEW CHURCH VOCABULARY

Part of a continuing series developed by the Rev. W. Cairns Henderson, 1961-1966.

AS OF SELF

This is one of the most distinctive terms in our New Church vocabulary. It refers to a faculty of willing and acting, not implanted in man but continually adjoining with him, which is Divine in origin, inspiration and power, but human in use. The exercise of this faculty consists in acting entirely as of one's self, but acknowledging that any good and truth resulting are from the Lord. The faculty is given in order that man may not be an automaton, but may have freedom and thus love God; and the disclosure of its existence shows how man can be responsible for his regeneration although he cannot do any good of himself. (See *Brief Exposition* 69)

Boynton Beach Retreat, 2015

The 2015 Boynton Beach Retreat will be held January 18 – 22, 2015. Once again we have lined up a great list of speakers:

Back by popular request is **Dr. Greg Rose** of Bryn Athyn College. His topic will be: *Culture and Politics: Arab and American*.

- **The Rev. Jeremy Simons**, retired pastor of the Bryn Athyn Church and Chaplain of the Bryn Athyn Cathedral, will be joining us for the first time.
- **The Rev. Dr. Thane Glenn**, one of the popular teachers of “Rookie Religion” at Bryn Athyn College, will also be a first-time presenter.
- The banquet speaker will be a long-time friend and presenter at the Retreat, **the Rev. George McCurdy**.

On one afternoon we will offer a short optional program, “How to tweak your memory of sermons and lectures for key information,” presented by Phoebe Simons Tucker. Hopefully, Karen Lehne again will be available for Tai Chi sessions.

This year’s main programs will be held in the Duncan Center’s beautiful chapel, just across the driveway from the former venue.

We have kept the fees unchanged for the past couple of years. Last year we knew we were doing a little “deficit spending” but felt our reserves were as high as they needed to be. This year costs for the Duncan Center, the banquet and travel all have risen. Thus we are forced to raise the basic fees to \$225 until October 15, and \$250 thereafter. We have reserved all 40

guest rooms at the Duncan Center for this year’s event.

Registration materials will be sent out later this summer. If you have questions or a name to add to our mailing list please contact us at the email address below. Mark your calendar now.

Bob Brickman, Director

BBRetreat@newchurchboyntonbeach.org | 561-278-6037

Some have asked about availability of Jonathan Rose’s presentations at the 2014 program. He has taped and edited them. The Rev. Kenneth Alden has made them available to anyone wishing them at:

www.newchurchboyntonbeach.org/resources/BoyntonBeachRetreat_materials.html

A copy of Dr. Kristin King’s banquet speech is also available at: <http://www.brynathyn.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/KK-BAC-Boynton-Beach-Address2014.pdf>

The Promise of a New Day

The Rev. James H. (Jay) Barry

Lessons: *Psalm 143; Matthew 9:18-22; Arcana Coelestia 1577*

*Let the morning bring me word
of your unfailing love. (Psalm 143:8)*

These are comforting words indeed. For those who have been awake in the night, sometimes through lonely dark hours of uncertainty, fear and expectation, the first bird sounds and the glow of morning light brings hope, relief and new energy.

The day is coming—the darkness is ending!

The spiritual parallel couldn't be clearer: the darkness of despair and dawn of spiritual light in the human mind – the promise of hope after a time of hopelessness. This explanation seems obvious, but the Heavenly Doctrines add a new dimension: when you think of dawn, think of the dawn of love, and when you think of darkness, think of faith that sustains until the way becomes clear. (See *Apocalypse Explained* 444.7) Love and faith – day and night – these are the two poles of human experience we will explore.

The Scriptural context is from *Jeremiah*: “The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous branch to spring up for David, and He shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days, Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety.” (*Jeremiah* 33:14-16)

The prophet is clearly speaking of the coming of the Lord when he speaks of “a righteous branch to spring up for David.” Jeremiah continues with a cryptic statement that only the internal sense can explain:

Thus says the Lord, if any of you break my covenant with the day and My covenant with the night, only then could My covenant with my servant David be broken, so that he would not have a son on his throne. (*Ibid.* 33:21)

Faith itself is a belief
in love. . . . You cannot
have faith in God
unless you love God.

“My covenant with the day and My covenant with the night” refers to the Lord’s promise to give us the dual capacity of receiving love and faith, two essentials of spiritual growth. It has a special emphasis on the word “covenant,” which is an eternal promise.

There is also a nuanced emphasis on the night for the Lord says: “My covenant with the night.” This special emphasis underlines the protection He gives us when faith is all we have; when everything seems dark, when we are just holding on, waiting for the good to appear. “My covenant with the night” references the Lord’s protection over us when we can’t see what the outcome will be, and yet we trust that the Lord will bring what is good out of a difficult situation.

Stating that the Lord has a covenant with the day and the night clarifies that love and faith are essential, they are promised to us as our connection with the Lord Himself, and that they are changeable and variable. Finally, the phrase ends with a clear admonition that when we lose our love and faith, when we choose to disbelieve in His love or care, then we lose our connection.

We naturally go through different states of mind. In some states we connect with our purpose in life and know what we are doing. Conversely there are states when we are lost to varying degrees and are trying to find a way back to what feels right.

Some of it has to do with finding a balance between the external needs of our life, and tending to the internal, the inner needs of our souls which need equal care and cultivation. It may be some comfort to know that though it is healthy spiritual practice to try to achieve a balance between the internal and external, we will never be perfect in this.

The internal and the external man have never been united in anyone – for it never has been possible for them to be united – except in the Lord; and this is the further reason why He came into the world. With people who are regenerate the internal and external appear to be united, but in fact they are the Lord’s, for the things that are in agreement are the Lord’s and the things that are not belong to man. (*Arcana Coelestia* 1577)

The fact that we will never get this internal-external balance right – even though it may appear at times that we can – is a good thing, for it helps us turn our eyes inward to a larger field of spiritual growth and development: the cultivation of love and faith.

Though we are going to talk about faith, it should be known that love and faith cannot be separated: “those who are in love, are also in faith.” (*Ibid.* 34) Faith itself is a belief in love, even if love (or your true love) seems a million

miles away. This definition of faith makes sense: if you love someone, you have faith in that person and you either believe in his or her abilities or are willing to extend a chance. You are willing to have faith that he or she will come back when you say goodbye. Faith is entirely dependent on love.

In a larger context, you cannot have faith in God unless you love God. This also is where some of us fall short, for true love of God is dependent on a new understanding of God. This is where the teachings of the New Church are very important: they make God understandable for those who depend on a full understanding of Scripture to believe. (See *Arcana Coelestia* 3236)

For New Church men and women, it is not enough just to believe; it is not enough to take someone else's word for it. Like Thomas, the doubting disciple who did not believe it was the Lord who was standing before him after crucifixion and resurrection – so much so that he had to place his fingers in the wounds still present in the Lord's resurrected body – *we need to understand the nature of God*.

To be spiritual we want to understand the connection between God and all things in nature, and we want to understand how God is present in us, and in each other. Especially in the New Church we want to understand the relationship between the historical Jesus and the Divine human of the Lord, who is present with us in each moment of our lives.

It is not enough just to believe. We need to touch the Lord with our minds, probe His wounds with our understanding, and be moved to change when we understand His work of Redemption, so that when the Lord appears before the eyes of our spirits we can be true believers and declare, as Thomas did: “My Lord and my God.” (*John* 20:28)

Real faith is dependent upon love, but it possesses us when we are separated from love, as day is separated from the night. We can begin to see faith when we have to look within to find the answers. Even when we don't see the way things will work out for the good, even when we don't expect things to work out, and even when we don't think things will ever work out again, to have faith means that we believe the Lord can make it possible, and we believe

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Our time is truly a New Day, a New Dawn of the light of the doctrine of Charity, the seed of which the Lord is sowing in the hearts of all people. If we accept the full import of the Heavenly Doctrines, we must accept this hopeful vision also.

in the good which the Lord will bring from all situations.

Preserving our covenant with the night means we are willing to have faith that the Lord will make a situation right, if we just believe and then act right without expecting to see the result. Faith is as connected to love as night is connected to day, but it is also distinct, seemingly separate, and that is why faith is imaged as “the night,” for it can feel like a time of darkness when we are in it.

In the deepest hour of the night, all is still and dark for a time. How many of us have been awake at that hour contemplating an unresolved problem or situation, anguishing over how

to approach a solution, or analyzing ourselves critically, sometimes without mercy, in the light of a situation in which we are involved? But soon, the dawn comes.

The spiritual meaning of dawn is represented by the morning, but it is not dependent at all upon the earth rotating on its axis. It is an internal state when we allow love to enter us slowly, sometimes as softly as the diffusion of light on the eastern horizon.

I can illustrate this with a story of a son who was estranged from his father since his youth. After decades of little or no communication between them, and after the son had married and moved across the country and begun to raise a family of his own, his father expressed a desire to visit the son and his family one Christmas.

During their time together, the son had the occasion to watch his Dad unobserved. He was getting old, seated by the Christmas tree and attending to his grandchildren with such delight, care and devotion. For the first time, the son felt something unfamiliar, completely different – he described it to me as the first time he felt love for his Dad.

That moment was the dawn of love in their relationship, and from that time forward their relationship changed and grew into something that enriched both of their lives. This is what the internal dawn is like – and it takes many different forms from individual to individual.

When we learn to love others more fully, a change is required in us – to turn our hearts in a new direction. The turn is away from separation, isolation

and darkness, toward the source of light and love. “This was why the Lord was called the Morning, the East, and the Dawn” in the Word. (*Arcana Coelestia* 920)

And He shall be like the light of the morning when the sun rises, a morning without clouds, like the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain. (*II Samuel* 23:4)

Blow the trumpet in Zion, and sound the alarm in My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming. Like the morning clouds spread over the mountains, a people come, great and strong, the like of whom has never been seen. (*Joel* 2:1).

Thus the Lord wants us to experience a dawn of love in our own hearts, but He is also bringing the light of dawn to a larger group as well.

We can experience the dawn of the Lord’s love in a church movement like our own. For example, if we did not have a group of men and women in the 19th century who read the Heavenly Doctrines, understood what they were saying and were moved by them, we would not be here today, not one of us. It was a work of love.

Our church movement, even through all of the changes that have taken place in 120 years – and will take place in the generations ahead – owes its allegiance in some part to the men and women who not only understood the Writings, but loved the Lord in them, devoting their lives and fortunes to the task of seeing our church developed and nurtured throughout the world.

We can continue their work by directing our good will toward the minds and hearts of our brothers and sisters, and to our children’s minds and hearts. This is the field in which we work as parents and guardians, so the next generation might know the Lord, and know where to find Him during their lives, and pass this on to the next generation.

But larger still is the Church worldwide: the New Church in the universal sense. The light of the Second Coming is the spiritual light which illuminates the minds of men and women of good will around the world, in all cultures. This dawn of love and faith is little by little growing in the hearts of people around the world. Though world affairs make it appear that we are in times of great darkness, the dawn is surely coming; this also is the promise of the New Church.

Our time is truly a New Day, a New Dawn of the light of the doctrine

Real faith in the global sense is realizing that the Lord is working tirelessly in the hearts of all people for the good of all people, now and for the generations to come.

We can best honor the Lord's covenant by carrying an attitude of faith and love into each new day each day, and in all things we do.

of Charity, the seed of which the Lord is sowing in the hearts of all people. If we accept the full import of the Heavenly Doctrines, we must accept this hopeful vision also. Therefore, *real faith in the global sense* is realizing that the Lord is working tirelessly in the hearts of all people for the good of all people, now and for the generations to come.

Faith and love are internal, deeper than the struggles to get our external house in order. Love and faith are deep within, the repositories of the Lord in us. He has promised us, in a covenant as sure as His covenant with Abraham, to protect us in faith and in love, to guide during the darkness of faith, and share with us the joys of love, imaged in the "covenant of the day and night" in *Jeremiah*.

We can best honor the Lord's covenant by carrying an attitude of faith and love into each new day, every day, and in all things we do. This is beautifully expressed in a Sanskrit poem from the 5th century:

Look to this day!
For it is life, the very life of life.
In its brief course lie all the verities and realities of your existence:
The bliss of growth, the glory of action, and the splendor of achievement.
For yesterday is but a dream,
And tomorrow is only a vision.
But today, well lived, makes every yesterday a dream of happiness,
And every tomorrow a vision of hope.
Look well therefore to this day!
Such is the salutation of the dawn!

– Kalidasa, Hindu poet, 5th C. CE.

Therefore, the *Psalm* says it well: "Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love." This is a message of hope that things work out in the end, a message that good will come from the nights of loneliness and despair, and that the Lord will guide our efforts as long as we hope for the best in all things.



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Externalize the Lies: Legion and the Pigs

The Rev. Solomon J. Keal

Lessons: *Mark* 5:1-20; *True Christianity* 614, 530;
Divine Providence 320; *Psalms* 27:11-14

*Then He asked him, "What is your name?"
And he answered, saying,
"My name is Legion; for we are many." (Mark 5:9)*

Have you ever felt like you have way too many problems and issues to handle? Does it sometimes feel like you work on one area of your spiritual life, and then some other area comes around and bites you? Two steps forward and three steps back. Sometimes it can feel like we're not just battling one or two personal demons, but we're battling all the forces of hell at once.

We often struggle in many areas of our life at once. Issues in our relationships, our families, our work, our health, our finances, our spiritual growth. Sometimes it can feel like we're failing at everything, all at once. Have you ever felt like that? Have you ever felt like Legion has got you? And what can we do about it?

This is an amazingly powerful story describing how we can be possessed or obsessed with false ideas and negative emotions. We can let lies and negativity control us. In general the analogy in this story is fairly simple: the Lord has the power to cast hell out of us. Without the Lord, we are enslaved in our own negativity. But there are some fascinating details to this story that help bring the process of our spiritual liberation into more clarity.

You might have some questions or confusion about aspects of this story. For example: why are the evil spirits sent into pigs? In every other exorcism recorded in the *Gospels*, Jesus simply casts out the demons. It's a one-step process. But here, it seems to involve more than one step – into the pigs first.

So let's work our way through the story. What we're specifically looking for is, why did Legion get sent into the pigs? Why is this a two-step exorcism?

This is an amazingly powerful story for describing how we can be possessed or obsessed with false ideas and negative emotions. We can let lies and negativity control us. The Lord has the power to cast hell out of us. Without the Lord, we are enslaved in our own negativity.

And what does that mean in our lives? What is this story telling us to do when we feel overwhelmed by our problems?

This man was possessed by demons. The teachings for the New Church tell us that the demons who possess us are the evils and falsities, or the destructive behaviors and lies that can sometimes rule our lives. For example:

- Loving ourselves more than anything or anyone else
- Or wanting to do things that we know are wrong and harmful (*Lord* 48)
- Or loving the material things of the world more than anything else (*Apocalypse Revealed* 458)
- Or our obsessions with false ideas that we believe to be true (*Apocalypse Explained* 586.6, 659:6, 1001)

These could take many different forms for each of us: greed, vanity, arrogance, pride, addiction, dishonesty, ingratitude, criticism, being judgmental, infidelity, lack of trust in God, coveting – the list will be different for each of us. But one thing that will probably be the same for each of us is that our struggle with these things is hard, intense work.

It's no accident that this story contains strong emotional language. Words like: *crying out with a loud voice, cutting with stones, implore, torment, begged earnestly, violently, fled, afraid, plead, begged, proclaimed, marveled*. This story describes the intensity of our spiritual struggles, when we are battling our demons.

The man lived in the tombs, or in the cemetery, the place where dead people were buried. This describes when we have come to a place in our life where the true ideas that *used* to serve us are dead, because we are in a bad place. (*Apocalypse Explained* 659:6) This might be related to our historical or traditional faith, when the truths we know might have meaning for someone else – our parents maybe – but to us they are dead. They don't help us. We don't see any life in them.

“Love the Lord?” How will that help me fix this problem? “Love my

When we allow the Lord into our lives, we sometimes fear that we will lose something, that we'll have to give something up. We've gotten used to the lies we tell ourselves.

neighbor?" What if my neighbor is driving me crazy? These truths are dead to us.

This is also represented by the fact that this man was naked. Clothing represents the truths that protect us. (*Ibid.* 240) We are vulnerable without truths. We can easily be convinced by lies, unless we are clothed and protected with truth. This is something that changes for this man by the end of the story. So he was naked, and living in the tombs. He had no truths to protect him. No truths which felt alive.

He was also supposed to be chained up, but he kept breaking out of his chains. Chains represent having our actions bound to what is true and good. (*Arcana Coelestia* 9852, 9879) But in the state described by this story, we keep breaking away, failing in our own attempts to govern ourselves, backsliding into our evils, breaking our own chains and shackles that we've used to try to keep us on the straight and narrow. Our behaviors are out of control. The man kept breaking his chains and shackles.

It also says that he was cutting himself with stones. In this state, any truths that we still know and believe seem harsh and painful, like they are cutting into us. "The love of self is a hellish love." Ouch! "Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye and not the plank in your own eye?" (*Matthew* 7:3) Ouch! "Why should I focus on helping *other* people? Then I won't be happy!" Ouch! The evil spirits in our mind try to use these truths to hurt us – cutting ourselves with stones.

But then the Lord comes into our lives. He comes to us in a boat on the Sea of Galilee. A boat represents that the Lord comes to us in the doctrines of faith which rest on the vast sea of spiritual knowledge. (*Apocalypse Explained* 514.20) In other words, the Lord comes to us in the Word.

But when we are in a bad place, we often don't want help; we don't want to be fixed. "Spiritual work is painful! I don't want to face that harsh reality. I don't want to read the Word. I don't want to go to Church. I don't want to pray."

"What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God that You do not torment me." (*Mark* 5:7) At first we reject the Lord from our lives. We don't believe that spiritual life can save us. This, of course, is

This is the first step in our repentance and spiritual reformation: self-examination. It is allowing the Lord's Divine Truth to give us perspective on our false ideas and destructive behaviors.

just one more of the demons, the false ideas, telling us lies. Some part of us might recognize that the Lord is what we need, and we might feel mentally humbled, like this man bowing before the Lord. But it's not a worship of adoration, it's a worship of fear. "Don't make me change! Change hurts. It would be easier just to stay this way." It's like the children of Israel wanting to go back to the slavery they were used to, rather than face the wilderness of change.

So the Lord begins to cast out the demons: "Come out of the man, unclean spirit!" But then He stops and asks: "What is your name?"

"What is your name?" This is where we begin to see why this is a more involved exorcism. This isn't just a simple one-step casting out. There's a bit more of a process. Before we can have our demons removed, we have to name them. The Lord wants us to name our problems. "I'm *feeling like* nobody loves me. I'm *thinking that* I've got it worse than anyone else."

Like Adam naming the animals, when we name things we have power over them. Like the fairy tale of the villain Rumpelstiltskin, who lost his power when someone discovered his name. If we name things, we begin to see them for what they really are. *Why* do I feel so horrible? I need to name it. Self-examination.

Sometimes when we find ourselves in a bad mood and we can't pinpoint why, or how we got there, it can help to think back through the day or the week, and take note of the negative things that could have contributed to our bad mood. Once we add them up, we often realize *why* we feel so horrible, and we can feel a little better because now at least we *understand* why we feel this way. We've named our problems, and that has taken away some of their power. And so the Lord asks us, "What is your name?"

And the man answers: "My name is Legion; for we are many." (See *True Christian Religion* 533, Chadwick translation) A legion was a unit of Roman soldiers. It varied in number over time, but it was always several thousand men. How is it possible that thousands of evil spirits could possess one person?

Well, in our case, we often have thousands of false ideas and lies that torment us in our minds: "If I just had more money, then I'd be happy. The only reason I'm so miserable is because my family makes me miserable. I don't have time to focus on spiritual things. I'm not lovable; that's why no one loves

me. The thing that's wrong with this relationship is that person. This world is getting worse and worse. Life isn't fair. I've got it worse than anyone else."

The list could go on and on. Thousands of false ideas. A legion of lies whispering in our ear, keeping us trapped in the wilderness, away from having good relationships with other people. "My name is Legion."

"And he begged Him that He would not send them out of the country." It often feels like these voices in our head are *our* voices. So the thought of just taking them away, just casting them out, feels like it would destroy us. What will be left of me if I get rid of these ideas? These are ideas I've always had. It feels like we will literally go "out of our mind" if we give them up, like the evil spirits didn't want to go out of the country.

When we allow the Lord into our lives, we sometimes fear that we will lose something, that we'll have to give something up. We've gotten used to the lies we tell ourselves. We've gotten used to the destructive behaviors we find ourselves in. We feel like we will be destroyed if they are cast out of us. There won't be anything of us left.

So Legion begged the Lord to send them into the pigs. Now here is where we get to the answer. Why was Legion cast out into pigs? We know from the Writings of Swedenborg that pigs or swine represent evil loves. (*Apocalypse Explained* 659:6; *Arcana Coelestia* 1742:3)

This would have been well known at that time. Pigs were unclean animals (*Deuteronomy* 14:8), as can be seen several times in the Bible. For example, "Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces." (*Matthew* 7:6) And also the story of the Prodigal Son, who at his lowest point would have eaten the slop of pigs. (*Luke* 15) Pigs were identified with what was evil.

When the Lord sends the evil spirits into the pigs our false ideas are externalized. The Lord's Divine Truth gives us perspective on our own demons. We see the lies as if from outside, like the man saw the evil spirits in the pigs. We see them for what they really are – something that will try to pull us down, like the pigs running violently down into the sea. (*Apocalypse Explained* 538:13, 659:6; *True Christian Religion* 614)

When we don't *identify* with the voices in our head, it is easier to determine

Once we've turned to the Lord – in our self-examination, in our repentance – the Lord can be with us, along with all of His goodness and truth. We can experience the freedom and peace that the Lord's life brings.

The Lord's truth helps us to externalize the false ideas and lies in our heads, so that we can see them for what they really are – pigs that are trying to drag us down.

whether what they say is true or false. We have outside perspective. This is the first step in our repentance and spiritual reformation: self-examination. (*Ibid.* 525-527, 614). It is allowing the Lord's Divine Truth to give us perspective on our false ideas and destructive behaviors, and to be able to see that they are not

actually part of us, but are simply controlling us. Externalize the lies.

There are many ways of externalizing the lies – doing the work of self-examination. It could take the form of journaling, praying to the Lord, talking with the Lord, sharing in small groups, doing a 12-step program, meditating, reflecting, talking with a close friend or family member, talking with a counselor, minister or therapist. But however we choose to do it, it's a very important first step in our spiritual reformation, and our liberation from our destructive behaviors. (*Ibid.* 614) And it is portrayed by the Lord casting Legion into the pigs – externalizing the lies and false ideas that haunt us and control us.

This was an amazing event. Two thousand pigs is a lot of pigs. And all of them running down the steep hills of that region into the Sea of Galilee was not something that would go unnoticed. So when the people from the nearby towns heard about it and came to see what happened, they saw this demon-possessed man “sitting and clothed and in his right mind.” (*Mark* 5:15)

The Writings say that sitting before the Lord means being with Him, and willing and acting from Him. (*Apocalypse Explained* 687.17) And being clothed means that we've now learned truths that can really protect us. (*Ibid.* 240) These are truths like: these lies aren't me; they are from hell. Once we've turned to the Lord – in our self-examination, in our repentance – the Lord can be with us, along with all of His goodness and truth. We can experience the freedom and peace that the Lord's life brings.

And the man wanted to go with Jesus, but Jesus said no. He said, “Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you.” (*Mark* 5:19)

True Christian Religion 530 says that the four basic steps of repentance are to “examine ourselves, recognize and admit to our sins, pray to the Lord, and begin a new life.” The Lord helped this man see his demons for what they really were: lies, destructive behaviors; pigs that were pulling him down. This was his

self-examination. He then acknowledged that, and prayed to the Lord, sitting in front of Him and asking to go with Him.

But the final step is to start a new life. And this doesn't mean dropping our current life and getting a new one, like leaving Decapolis and going across the sea to the Holy Land. This means starting a new life within our current life. We need now to live out our new faith and love within our current day-to-day, amidst the rest of our problems, with our own effort. And so the man didn't go with the Lord, but he did bring the Lord to the people of that region, by proclaiming all that Jesus had done for him. He began a new life.

So one of the important messages that we can take from the story of Legion and the Pigs is the importance of self-examination – being able to externalize the lies. Recognizing that our false ideas and destructive behaviors are not us; they are simply hell trying to control us. We can let the Lord send them back to where they belong.

The Lord's truth helps us to externalize the false ideas and lies in our heads, so that we can see them for what they really are – pigs that are trying to drag us down. But they are not actually part of us. And if we get help from the Lord in prayer, in reading His Word, and with support from the people around us, then we can work through those steps of repentance. We can experience the Lord's forgiveness, mercy and compassion. And we can begin a new life – a life in our right mind, proclaiming the great things that the Lord has done for us.

“For false witnesses have risen against me, and such as breathe out violence. I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.” (Psalm 27:12,13)



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Bryn Athyn College Commencement

The Bryn Athyn College of the New Church commencement address was presented by **Colin Cole**, who received an Associate Degree from the College in 1989. He went on to earn a BA in Economics from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and a Master's in Theoretical Computer Science from DePaul University in Chicago in 1996. He has worked for Microsoft for the past 17 years as an Architect Director. He also has qualified for the Boston Marathon next year. He lives in Glenview with his wife and three children. Following are major excerpts from his address:



Bryn Athyn College
commencement
address was
presented by **Colin
Cole**, Architect
Director for Microsoft

Although some of you think you're finishing college today, college never really ends.

In my early days working at Microsoft, I had my hand in product development, building software, with products called BizTalk Server and Microsoft SOAP toolkit. Today I specialize in cloud computing, specifically with Microsoft's cloud platform: Microsoft Azure.

This is a world-wide group of 11 (and growing) large datacenters, placed strategically around the world, where companies can literally run their business with technology that can scale elastically. We do massive scale computing. Azure was the host site for the Sochi Olympics for all of the internet event broadcasting by NBC. The U.S. vs. Canada hockey game actually broke the record for the largest-ever live streamed event over the internet.

The computer industry has always been one of constant change. Cloud computing ushers in this change more rapidly than before. The challenge is that it's predicated on the notion of continuous innovation. We continually innovate the platform. Every 30 or so days we announce a slew of feature enhancements and updates. I am constantly learning; probably 50% of my time is spent studying/learning stuff I didn't know today, but will need to be an expert in tomorrow.

This is not just true with my industry. Pretty much every job requires a ton of on-the-job learning. One of the most important aspects of what you're



“I think you are set for success, whatever you decide to do with your lives... you all have a competitive advantage by attending and graduating from Bryn Athyn College.”

walking out with today is a brain that’s been trained to learn. In many fields, the skills you need to do the job, you learn on the job. If you’re wondering what skills you might have that can be applied to something, don’t be dismayed. You have some. First and foremost it’s the ability to learn. College never ends.

Here’s my little observation from 17 years at Microsoft: brains or genius are not a substitute for hard work. Genius is a subjective term and we’re all actually quite smart in our own way – but not all of us work hard. Advice: Work hard – constantly educate yourself.

A couple of years ago I had the privilege of taking a business school class at Harvard University on launching new ventures – essentially start-ups. Awesome class. One of the core tenets we learned is that a startup company is basically a series of experiments, most of which won’t work. But never think of them as failures. Each thing you learn that doesn’t work out means you’re one step closer to something that will work. A job or a career is no different.

Here’s a quick practical tip. Once you figure out your field – and many of you may have done this already – be a subject-matter expert in something. It doesn’t matter if you have experience. Create an online presence that demonstrates this. This is more important than a résumé. It shows passion, collaborating with other people in your field, and that you’re already involved in the field and have some knowledge. Don’t wait for someone to give you that first break; assume the position and jump right in.

I think you are set for success, whatever you decide to do with your lives. In fact, I believe you all have a competitive advantage by attending and graduating from Bryn Athyn College.

My upper educational path started right here. Discounting people I met – including my wife at the University of Illinois – in terms of raw content I would not trade the time spent in Bryn Athyn College classrooms with anything I learned at any other school.

What you folks don't realize is that you've learned a set of New Church principles – call it ethics, life skills, a spiritual foundation – that organizations really do value and which will help you succeed in your chosen career.

While I was only here for two years, this school had a profound impact. When you look back at your educational life with some time to reflect, most of us can think of a few teachers or a class that really influenced your path. Mine happened right here. *Divine Love and Wisdom*, class 1 and 2. Prescott Rogers was the teacher. I truly believe that class made my brain start functioning at a different level.

That class, and others uniquely taught here – and here only – put life in a different context and positively altered everything after that.

So where's this competitive advantage? Well, it's pretty simple. The world is changing. Business is changing. People are getting fed up with corporate fraud, discrimination, pollution, etc. Companies/organizations are reacting to this. Most companies are promoting a culture of diversity and inclusion – which is fantastic. Much as diversity is valued, quality character is highly valued now and considered good for business.

Microsoft is famous for a very tough review model. You get ranked against your peers based on your impact to the business. Employees have never liked it so it was changed. Now we're reviewed on examples of what we did that made other employees successful, and how we reused work from other employees. We changed the review model to promote helping, not directly competing.

What you folks don't realize is that you've learned a set of New Church principles – call it ethics, life skills, a spiritual foundation – that organizations really do value and which will help you succeed in your chosen career.

An example: Everybody talks about everybody else at work. In the New Church we know that "thou shalt not murder" extends to murdering someone's reputation. What I've observed is that people who refrain from such discussion and only make positive comments end up being trusted and relied upon in a different way.

Another interesting teaching that's always stuck with me is that the angels in heaven do not take credit and want success for others before themselves. They delight in the success of others. Translate this to the working world: someone gets a promotion you thought should have come your way. Even though you may be disappointed, tell yourself you should be happy for that person, then make yourself happy. Focus on others first. You'll get yours.

I can't emphasize enough how valuable this base philosophy is and how much it can help you – will help you – in any job, because what you've been

learning drives a positive attitude, which is invaluable. Most other people really do want to work and build teams with nice, friendly, positive, easy-to-get-along-with people. This isn't a substitute for hard work, but combine the spiritual best practices you learned here with a little work ethic – that's gold.

That's what I mean by a competitive advantage. Because you really understand these life skills – this attitude thing – at a deeper level, you're in a better position to apply it and truly benefit.

The cliché in these kinds of speeches is to tell the graduates to go out and do something useful and meaningful, and make the world a better place. I'm not going to do that, because given what I know this school is all about, I suspect that's already in your plan. What differentiates you is that I believe you're ready and uniquely qualified to actually execute on that mission.

Congratulations, Class of 2014, and good luck!

Valedictory

The valedictorian for the Bryn Athyn College graduates was **Hyunook Suh** from Asan, South Korea, who graduated *cum laude*, with an Interdisciplinary Degree in Mathematics and Philosophy. Following are excerpts from his valedictory, which was greeted with a standing ovation:

The Academy of the New Church and Bryn Athyn College were founded 137 years ago on the profound truth that a spiritual education is foundational to human happiness and flourishing.

Today, we have gathered to celebrate the enduring success and importance of the Academy and the College's mission by honoring the achievements of 47 extraordinary individuals.

As graduates of Bryn Athyn College, we possess the technical skills, the broad, interdisciplinary perspective and the creativity that come from a stellar liberal arts education.

However, what truly distinguishes us is that the College's spiritual education has laid the foundations of virtue and character within the hearts of every graduate. Within the hearts of every graduate, you will find engraved the truth and wisdom of the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. You will find a



What truly distinguishes us is that the College's spiritual education has laid the foundations of virtue and character within the hearts of every graduate.

–Hyunook Suh



You have shown us that love transcends all boundaries, that charity transcends all boundaries, that truth and virtue are welcome everywhere.

love for the Lord and a love for the neighbor.

Throughout the years we have been here, we have been the recipients of angelic love, support and guidance from faculty, staff and the community at large. We have forged lifelong friendships, developed new interests and discovered the amazing potential we each possess.

Four years ago, I left home in Korea and arrived to a new home. . . . I am sure the entire class shares my sentiment when I say that graduating from Bryn Athyn feels like leaving home.

Beloved President King, beloved deans, beloved faculty, beloved staff, beloved family, beloved friends and beloved members of the community here and abroad, the Class of 2014 is truly grateful for your love, your compassion, your support and your guidance.

You have shown us that love transcends all boundaries, that charity transcends all boundaries, that truth and virtue are welcome everywhere.

Therefore, as we begin new chapters in our lives, we will be faced with many great challenges. The most important of those challenges will be to preserve and nurture the truths and virtues the College's spiritual education has instilled in us.

The greatest gift we can give to this beloved college, that has given us so much, is to form within our hearts a permanent abode for the truths and virtues we have learned and developed here. Let us become men and women of character; let us form model families; let us become virtuous citizens. Now that we have received our diplomas, let us dedicate ourselves to this noble task.

We have learned and experienced here that love transcends all boundaries; that charity transcends all boundaries; that virtue and truth transcend all boundaries. Accordingly, so long as we remain true to the values we have learned here, doors will open before us, opportunities will come to us, and we will be welcomed wherever we may go.

I am very confident that the hand of God that brought us here will lead us to even greater achievements.

Farewell to the Graduates of 2014

President Kristin King

In just a few moments you will walk out the doors into your new roles as graduates and alumni. We've held you here, captive, for the past hour with some parting thoughts about growth and potential.

We heard about planting and harvests, about a tiny mustard seed growing into a mighty tree, about new life springing from a fallen grain of wheat. A thing can seem to die or be lost, when really it is being reborn, transformed, multiplied.

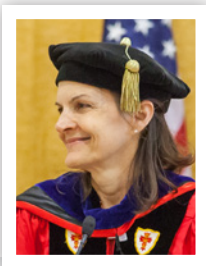
We heard about innovation and flexibility, about the need to respond to a constantly changing world and to workplaces that reinvent themselves continually. We heard about false endings

(your education isn't really over), and false starts (those *seeming* failures that teach us what we need to learn to keep advancing in a good direction).

With a well-trained mind, we can keep learning across careers and time. What better training ground for life than Bryn Athyn College where your engagement with ethics, academics, life skills and spirituality has sown the seeds for ongoing transformation?

Your valedictorian spoke about leaving home to come here; then finding home; and now leaving again. He celebrated the talents and accomplishments that have transformed you as *individuals*. But more importantly, he celebrated the spiritual foundation you *share* as Bryn Athyn College graduates: the virtue and values, the call to become men and women of character.

Four years ago, most of you had left home to launch your college career at Bryn Athyn. I addressed you at Glencairn and spoke of what the next four years might hold in store. About the need to be open-minded, to get ready for change, and to make the most of the incredible power of liberal arts education grounded in New Church teachings. We talked then about what it means to be human and eternally developing.



With a well-trained mind, we can keep learning across careers and time. What better training ground for life than Bryn Athyn College where your engagement with ethics, academics, life skills and spirituality has sown the seeds for ongoing transformation?

*—Kristin King, President,
Bryn Athyn College*

Your college experience isn't for four years, it's for a lifetime. And the good you do out there, throughout your life, expands the boundaries and identity of Bryn Athyn College.

Four years later I get to say farewell. We are proud of you and *happy* to see you set forth, and also utterly sad to lose you. You leave a gigantic hole in our hearts. So along with everything that has been said about what you have gained and what you will accomplish and how you will grow, let me say something about loss and leaving, and about a different sort of transformation and recovery.

Your days of being a college student are indeed over. You are leaving something behind *in order* to move forward. You will lose things and leave things throughout your life – it is the nature of being human and moving forward. But don't lose the opportunity to be enriched and refocused through apparent loss and endings. When we lose something we have the blessing of knowing, sometimes for the *first* time, how meaningful it is and how much we have been shaped by it.

Sometimes when something disappears physically from our life, it pervades our spirit and raises our standards and consciousness. We then have the opportunity and the privilege to carry on that good influence through how we live our lives.

Not everything was great about your education here. But the *good* stuff is the best there is, and it will last a lifetime if you know how to keep planting it wherever you go. Take the values, and the lessons learned, and your well-trained minds, and your striving hearts, and plant *those* things in the communities where you live, and the workplaces where you step up to make a difference.

Don't waste energy trying to fit *in*, or trying to stand *out*. Just go calmly about the business of stepping *up*, doing the right thing, practicing your values, promoting the greater good. There will be plenty of opportunities. If you do this, your Bryn Athyn College years, far from being lost or over, will become increasingly valuable through time, because your education will take root in *you*, and flower in your thoughts and loves, and bear fruit in your actions.

Your college experience isn't for four years, it's for a lifetime. And the good you do out there, throughout your life, expands the boundaries and identity of Bryn Athyn College. So be active citizens and alumni, and reach back to help future generations of students do the same.

On behalf of the faculty, staff, and administration, farewell and best wishes. We love you. We will miss your faces on campus and your voices in the hallways and classrooms. But this sense of loss also strengthens us, reminding us of the talents you have and the good you will do.



Les and Bev
Sheppard

Memorial Service for the Rev. Leslie L. Sheppard

May 18, 2014 ~ The Rev. Ian A. Arnold

Just two days after Les's passing, and at his and Bev's home in West End, I was leafing through his Bible. It's not that I hadn't held it in my hands before but this time I felt freer to browse it more closely. In places it is heavily marked and annotated, and one of those places, marked as heavily as anything else in it, are the verses from *Matthew* 16: 24-26:

Then said Jesus unto His disciples, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Les treasured his Bible. I was going to say that next to Bev it was the love of his life. But no, it was the underground water reservoir and system from which he drew, not just in his relationship with Bev and his family, but in all things and people he was involved with.

Born into Methodism, with his mother having particularly strong Methodist convictions, Les developed an attachment to the Bible from early on. That attachment was always there and was given scope to come to the surface and to blossom and flower once he became involved in church leadership and

Les treasured his Bible. It was the underground water reservoir and system from which he drew, not just in his relationship with Bev and his family, but in all things and people he was involved with.

as a pastor.

It's what a lot of people remember about Les's ministry, here in Brisbane or in his church travels and work across Australia, also in England and in America: his focus on the Bible, his love for it and our need to read it. Ten or more years ago he campaigned on behalf of the *One Year Bible*, divided into 365 sections. The idea was to read it all the way through in one calendar year; and quite a few of us signed up for it.

We never know, do we, what is beneath the surface in other people's lives. Here was Les, product of a Technical School secondary education; not shy of getting his hands dirty; passionate "rev head;" world traveller at a time when we were agog at inter-continental travel, so rare was it in those days; entrepreneurial, man of the world and successful businessman. But ticking away there, all the while, was this love, this fascination, this attachment of his to the Word of God, here in the Bible.

There was a time in his life, as I can remember, when Les tried to hold it at arm's length, to ignore it, to push it out and away from the immediacy of his everyday life, interests and concerns. But he didn't succeed. In the end it won him over completely and became emphatically and obviously center stage for him. As in this past year or so, when he couldn't read it himself, he loved it when others read it to him. He knew it well and if distressed about not being able to read it himself he found reassurance in being told that it was there in his mind and memory anyway.

In the words of the Doctrines of the New Church, "People have communication with heaven through the (Lord's) Word." (*Sacred Scripture* 113) Again, when a person reads the Word sincerely and prayerfully, "the angels attach themselves to the (teachings) and take delight in them." (*Arcana Coelestia* 9152) And that's really beautiful. I believe Les was in heaven when he was reading the Word or listening to it read to him.

Talk of heaven, of course, was an absolutely constant theme for the Lord Jesus Christ. He all the time spoke in similes about it, comparing it, for instance, to a grain of mustard seed which starts out so small but grows so large. As to who is greatest there He pointed to the forgetfulness of self, or innocence, as seen in little children. And He talked about it as His "Father's house" where,

if we want it, a place is prepared for us all.

He warned one young man of the danger of his attachment to the things of this world and urged him to let go of them. Then, He said, “You will have treasure in heaven.” (*Mark* 10:22) And it is a similar theme here in these words in his Bible which Les so heavily marked.

My own experience is that passages in the Bible which unusually or persistently catch my attention – as this one did for Les – are ones that speak to me of some issue I need to attend to, mirroring back to me some inclinations, or even faults and shortcomings in myself, that I need to face up to and overcome.

We all know Les was upfront, incisive, strong when it came to his agenda, never short of a strong opinion and readily directive. But as I reflect on these markings here in his Bible I get a very real sense of Les working through these words of our Lord in relation to his own life: denying ourselves, taking up our cross, and losing our life to find it.

What, I have asked myself, did these words mirror back to Les? He knew full well that the life we are to lose – as we have the opportunity to do in this world and as an essential part of our being heaven-bound – is the life of self-promotion and self-interest, ego driven, controlling and way, way, too much focused on life in this world and getting on here. It is a battleground and I very much have the impression that, within, it was for Les also – perhaps even intensely so. A real battlefield: Les wrestling within himself with these traits identified by the Lord; denying ourselves, taking up our cross, and losing our life to find it.

And let’s hang on to this, friends: if as a minister or pastor you are not, yourself, out on that battlefield, struggling and wrestling, conscious of your vulnerabilities and of the inclinations that throw a dark shadow over you, you cannot effectively convey the significance and importance of it to others, or come alongside of them in their struggles and battles.

Les did both, because he could, indeed, speak and preach on these verses

Les could speak and preach on these verses and what they mean from the heart. And he was remarkably and reassuringly sensitive and compassionate when he could see those around him involved in the battle. He never stood apart, frowned, or judged. He was never shocked – just accepting of where people found themselves.

and what they mean from the heart. And he was remarkably and reassuringly sensitive and compassionate when he could see those around him – young people, especially, or older people – involved in the battle. He never stood apart, frowned, or judged. And, such is my conclusion from knowing him for many years, he was never shocked – just accepting of where people found themselves. Almost certainly from reflecting on himself, as from anything else, he was too aware of our human weaknesses to be otherwise. And we loved him for this.

Well done, Les for helping us feel there is hope for us.

Well done, for bringing God down out of the sky into our experiences of life as they unfold for us.

Well done, friend, for connecting us with a God of compassion, patience and understanding; and for doing it from a conviction that came from deep within you and from your heart.

New Church Journey Program - 2014-15

What Would Love Do?

This year's New Church Journey Program, *What Would Love Do?*, is based on the parable in Matthew 25 about different kinds of neighbors and how we are to respond to them. Official launch dates throughout the Church are October 5, 2014, and February 1, 2015.

This seven-week series, designed for small groups, was prepared by Sasha Silverman and the Rev. John Odhner in General Church Outreach. It is described as "a thoughtful and compassionate exploration of New Church teachings on loving the neighbor."

The Journey Program is designed to help participants with their spiritual growth by applying the Lord's teachings to everyday life. Each session provides a clear approach for reading, discussing and celebrating spiritual transformation.

It includes a framework for supporting individual study, community worship, small group meetings and community service.

Visit <http://bit.ly/WWLDProgram> to learn about resources and materials for the program, and how to get involved.



Memorial Address for Morna Hyatt

May 23, 2014 ~ The Rev. Eric H. Carswell

One of the powerful and oft-repeated teachings in New Church doctrine is that lasting happiness and a life of useful service are intrinsically intertwined. It is true of this world and it is true in every heavenly community. For some in this world, their dedication to the useful service before them endows them with an apparently unending storehouse of energy and focus. The prophet Isaiah states:

Even the youths shall faint and be weary,
And the young men shall utterly fall,
But those who wait on the LORD
Shall renew *their* strength;
They shall mount up with wings like eagles,
They shall run and not be weary,
They shall walk and not faint. (*Isaiah 40:30-31*)

Some may have an energy that seems to be fueled primarily by the near-term success of their work, the praise they receive, and their sense that everyone else is taking a similar share of what needs to be done. For others, they seem

to do what they do because they're committed to it. Their desire to accomplish effectively the goals before them seems to be the source of their motivation. What others say or do appears to have little effect on their effort and attention.

The education of children and young people has been the primary focus of this Church for more than a hundred years. Generations of parents and teachers have recognized the effect for good that education can have for children and young people – particularly education that recognizes that human development is a process and that the best way we can serve the Lord in His work is to guide those children and young people wisely from where they are, step-by-step, toward something better.

This is an education that realizes that mere external behavior is not the goal. The goal is providing settings in which a young person comes to make better choices for her or himself. Choosing a better life, a more useful life, is the source of lasting happiness.

We have gathered to acknowledge and celebrate the life of Morna Hyatt. Her dedication to a life of useful service, and particularly to the uses of New Church education, has influenced many lives for good, and through them, still countless others.

Morna Hyatt was born February 22, 1918, to Hubert and Carina Hyatt. She was born here in Bryn Athyn, and before she turned two her family moved into the newly constructed Alnwick Road home just down the hill from this Cathedral. She would live in this home for the next 80-plus years of her life.

She was the second of 10 children and eventually had seven sisters and two brothers. Morna was 19 years old when her youngest sibling was born, and for some of the younger ones she was more like an additional mother figure than a sister. In addition, the house was also home to her Grandmother Hyatt, who lived with them until her death in 1952.

Reflecting back on her life at age 90, Morna recalled noticing the differences between her and her siblings. Her older sister, Lyris, apparently started reading at a very early age and was much more interested in reading than Morna, who saw herself as a doer. Apparently some of her siblings were less concerned about cleanliness and neatness than she would have preferred. When sharing a bedroom with up to three sisters, she even marked off her space so that at least it might have a semblance of order. Some younger siblings were more outgoing or less timid than Morna saw herself at that age. For example, she cites avoiding using the telephone because the timing of ringing up the operator and then picking up the earpiece struck her as daunting.

Morna grew up in a home that held family worship every night in her parents' bedroom, led by her father unless he was out of town, in which case her mother led it. In reflecting on her commitment to the New Church she said that she thought it was so much easier to be happy in our religion with

its emphasis on a loving God. She didn't remember ever having gone through a seriously negative period, partially, she said, because, "My father believed in the New Church and he was a down-to-earth, sensible person."

Morna said that school work, starting in elementary school, came so easily for her that it took her a long time to realize that some things, like playing the piano or learning how to dive into a pond, took effort and attention to achieve. She remembers younger siblings learning how to skate backwards with grace, but over and over again other people's explanation of how to do it didn't work for her.

As an upper elementary school student Morna had a fond imagination that she would someday be a farmer's wife. She was given an alternative idea as an eighth-grader after she made some comment in class and the teacher said to her, "You're going to be a teacher." While Morna was pleased with this personally, socially it made her uncomfortable at that age because she had the impression that teachers were "stuffy" and "goodie-goods." Obviously her later life was not ruled by this concern.

As a high school student she had a clear sense that at least one of the teachers thought that "girls should learn how" and "boys should learn why." She didn't accept this idea. Her math skills were evidently strong enough that she spent her sophomore year of math working on her own. Apparently a number of the girls in her class knew her capability and regularly phoned her for help.

She decided to have a math club. Two of its rules were: "You had to try all of the problems yourself before getting help," and "Refreshments had to be served." In Morna's day girls didn't take math after sophomore year of high school. Timid or not, Morna was the Factores (Girls School student government) President her senior year.

When Morna was 17 she awoke one wintry night to the noise of sirens because de Charms Hall, the elementary school building, was on fire. She wrote up this experience at the time, stating that after initially being inclined to go back to sleep, "All of a sudden it came over me like a dash of cold water. That was our school burning! And here I had thought of going back to bed. How lazy!"

She and a sister dressed and prepared to go see what was happening. On

Her dedication to a life of useful service, and particularly to the uses of New Church education, has influenced many lives for good, and through them, still countless others.

A person who knew Morna for decades at the Academy observed that she was “one of the single most memorable, charitable, intelligent, industrious, useful people I’ve ever been privileged to know and associate with. I always imagined her passing into God’s Kingdom without needing a stop in the spiritual world.”

going out of the house Morna wrote that her mother said “not to get killed unless we could do some good by it.” This concept of being of use and the usefulness of things was important to her. Concerning many natural objects she had a sense that whoever was going to use something should have it.

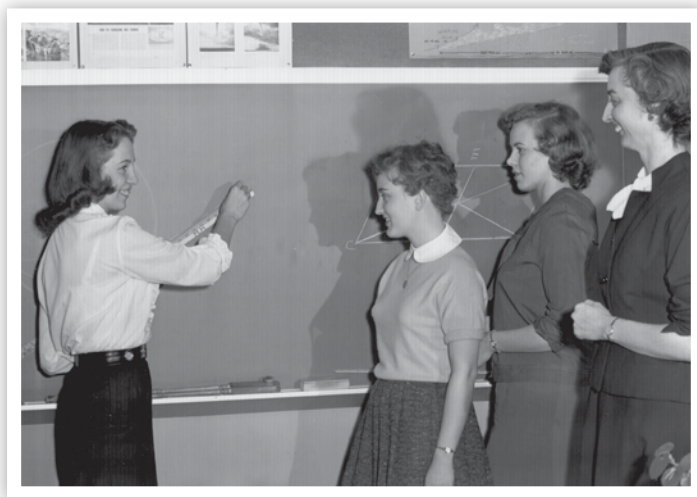
After graduating from high school in 1936 Morna went on to a four-year degree program at the Academy of the New Church College, now Bryn Athyn College. The only education training available was for teaching at the elementary level. As she progressed toward graduation she realized she would be the only graduating senior that spring. She talked to all the powers-that-be about graduating with the two-year students – significantly to avoid having to give the valedictory, but to no avail. She did give a valedictory talk – a copy of it exists today, typed on little more than one side of a three-by-five card.

For the 1940-41 school year, as a new college graduate, Morna taught second grade and had her youngest sister, Nina,

as one of her pupils. Apparently one day at school Nina wanted to sit next to Morna. A classmate asserted that Morna lived at her home and she could always sit next to her, but Nina said that Morna was almost never home.

Morna found this a hard year, with daily opening worship and all the other classes to prepare, and one troublesome boy in particular who needed to be disciplined every day. She wished she had had more practice teaching, or that she had taken advantage of talking to experienced educators about how to teach.

At the end of that year, Morna was invited to teach at the Girls Seminary, now the Academy of the New Church Girls School. She was initially hired to teach English, although she had had no special coursework to prepare her for this, and much to the amusement of her siblings, she was to teach physical education to the Secondary Schools and College women. Knowing the limits of her capabilities in sports, Morna encouraged a very capable young woman to explain the rules of this or that sport and to demonstrate how things should be done.



Miss Morna (far right) with students in 1956. Left to right:
Kerry Pendleton, Anna Kitzelman and Karen Doering.

Happily it was not very many more years before she was able to focus on math, for which she was better suited. If need arose, Morna was quite willing to step in to teach other subjects. In addition to those already listed she taught Geography, French, Latin, Biology, Human Body and General Science.

Continuing her education during the summer, Morna earned a Master's in Teaching High School Mathematics from Columbia University. She also attended several week-long programs at other universities, and was regularly involved in state and national educational and mathematical associations. She also participated in and chaired a substantial number of Middle States accrediting visits to other educational institutions in the area.

In an interview a number of years ago, Morna, with a smile, stated that her chief claim to fame was that she was the one who discovered the Benade Hall fire one night in November of 1948. I suspect that many of us would assign a very different source of fame to her.

Although Morna understood and enjoyed math, she knew that many of the girls she taught did not have the same response. In 1951 she wrote:

For the most part, it is impossible to explain to high school girls what algebra and geometry will do for them. We frequently point out situations in which they will find them useful – if they remember the proper theorem, or think of using x for the unknown. But these applications fall a little flat, because the number of times each situation may arise in any one girl's life is admittedly small. . . The girls feel like [a fictional] pupil . . . who, when told "We are going to prove that the square on the hypotenuse is equal to the sum of the squares on the other two sides," asked, "Is that a likely thing to happen?"

While she understood this perspective, she was confident of the value mathematics could have in students' lives. She stated:

We believe, perhaps old-fashionedly, that mathematics has a value in developing certain faculties of the mind with which almost all are endowed, and which cannot be as well developed without it.

Many students remember her calm patience at explaining and re-explaining math problems that perplexed them even to tears.

In the spring of 1958 Morna returned from taking the AKM sorority on a weekend trip only to learn at nine that Sunday evening that she would be the acting principal of the Girls School, starting first thing the next day. The principal, Miss Dorothy Davis, needed an emergency operation.

While Morna's father had apparently mentioned the possibility of her filling the role of principal someday, it was not one that Morna aimed for. At the time, she was 40 years old and one of the youngest members of the faculty. She described her first experience of the job as being like playing ping pong. Things kept coming at her and she had to respond with no time to do anything else. Morna wrote in an end-of-year report describing the sudden loss of the Girls School principal:

It's like home without Mama, but we are struggling along as best we can. We teachers had all thought our time was fully taken up with our regular jobs, so we have had to cut corners here and there in order to take on all the big and little things that Miss Dorothy did, many of which we did not know about.

Although Miss Dorothy returned briefly, Morna was appointed as the principal of the Girls School early in 1959. One of her sisters described her weekday working schedule as: 7:30 a.m. to 12:50 p.m., when she went home for lunch, returning at 1:30 and working to 6:15. After supper she regularly returned to work from 7:30 to 10 or 10:30. She followed a similar schedule whether she was principal or as a member of the faculty, with many committee responsibilities. But these long hours were not a defense against people. She enjoyed the many connections she had with people, saving countless notes, cards and appreciations.

A 20-something much younger sibling described her with these words:

Morna is good at many things but there is only one thing at which she is really great. When everything breaks loose at once and everybody is flying off the handle or going into shock, she always remains calm and goes steadily about the business of straightening everything out and getting everybody (both students and adults) back on the right track. Her method is so effective because she never tries to smooth things over or have them forgotten. She always tries to get straight to the heart of the trouble and does this with such earnest good feeling and directness that the people involved are often swept along by the spirit and find themselves abandoning their own contributions to the chaos as they, too, search out the cause of the mess and its resolution.

I think that if Morna suddenly found herself on Cemetery Ridge during the Battle of Gettysburg at the height of Pickett's charge, she would say, really wanting to know, "All right, who started this, and why?"

Speaking to parents of girls who would potentially attend the Girls School as dorm students, Morna made the following down-to-earth observation:

We see the disadvantages of the dormitory situation, where one person's injured feelings are multiplied in a chain reaction. The first girl sounds off, and since the quantity of girls in Glenn Hall is in excess of critical mass, this outburst strikes other girls. Each girl hit emits two or more outbursts, and in no time the mushroom cloud hangs over the campus. But I am exaggerating like a teenager.

While she was well aware of the challenges of being a parent, particularly of an adolescent girl, she noted:

Don't be afraid to hold the line in the face of tears and slamming doors. We tend to shy away from doing anything or saying anything that will cause our adolescent children to slam the door between us, either physically or figuratively. But if in handling problems, we are truly looking toward the real welfare of our girls, if we are acting from love for them rather than our own gratification, the door that was slammed shut will open before long, the storm clouds will clear away, and the bonds will be stronger than ever. Some daughters have been known to thank their parents for being strict and not allowing them to do things they have wept to do a few days before. However, most daughters do not put their thanks into words until 10 or 20 years later.

Morna stepped down as Principal of the Girls School in 1971, but resumed the role in 1976 and continued until 1982. She stayed on beyond when she had submitted her resignation because a tumultuous process was going on: discussing whether the Secondary Schools should be united into a single school or remain as two, and also allowing time to find a replacement.

As with anyone in an administrative role, while Miss Morna had people who responded very positively to her presence and decisions, others did not. After going into mandatory partial retirement at 70, she continued to teach part time, and then served in the student support program, tutoring in math until 2007 when she was in her late 80s. A coworker and great-niece in that student support program said that Morna's help was essential and still quite effective.

One of the features of Morna's adult life was her love of skiing. A spring break ski trip was a wonderful change from the challenges of principal. Morna skied in Colorado, New England, Switzerland, Austria and elsewhere. She continued skiing into her 80s. She also traveled extensively in this country and across the Atlantic. Many fondly remember her white Oldsmobile convertible that she drove for many years.

Part of the richness of Morna's life, beyond her work at the Girls School,

was her involvement in the lives of her nieces and nephews, great-nieces and nephews, and eventually great, great-nieces and nephews. There are memories of girls playing with dress-up costumes on the third floor of the Hyatt house, while Morna was present but giving the children space to play without intruding. A number of them also remember going to Benade Hall with her as she worked in her office and being allowed to explore.

Many nieces and nephews had their education at the Academy supported by Morna's gifts of "Sons' Stamps" and tuition prepayment certificates. While she was personally frugal in many aspects of life she generously supported a number of nieces and nephews or their children.

Morna was also remembered as someone who consciously practiced saying "Thank you." One grand-niece recalls her saying thank you for everything all the time. It was still a feature of her life through her oldest years.

One great niece recalls asking Morna about her never marrying. She writes:

Once on a work weekend at Kinkykill in the '90s I had the opportunity to sit on the porch and talk with her and I asked her why she'd remained single... and she told me that she'd had opportunities but that none was more tempting than the good life she had. She went on to tell me that while she understood that lots of women felt repressed in her time, she'd always felt free and confident as a woman, and that she was grateful to her parents and family for that; and that lastly she was looking forward to going to the other world where she would meet "him."

A person who knew Morna for decades at the Academy observed that she was "one of the single most memorable, charitable, intelligent, industrious, useful people I've ever been privileged to know and associate with. I always imagined her passing into God's Kingdom without needing a stop in the spiritual world."

Morna has entered into her eternal life with many family and friends to catch up with, and a wonderful new life to explore with her keen attention to detail. For many of us it isn't hard to picture her being quickly welcomed into heaven and coming into an inner beauty that many people recognized within her. It is easy to picture her continuing the useful life that she so enjoyed.

Episcopal Visit to South Africa

The Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss Jr.

My wife, Teresa, and I had the opportunity to visit several General Church congregations in South Africa in May. The purpose of the trip was to establish relationships with colleagues, and to become familiar with the people and activities of the Church in that country. (See photos on page 364.)

The first half of our trip took place in the Durban area. Of the four General Church congregations around Durban we spent time in two, Westville and Clermont, and I visited a third, Impaphala.

Clermont: The congregation has launched a project to expand their church building. Exciting for them is the local energy around the project, plus the fact that other people appear to believe in what they are trying to do. The General Church approved some funds toward this project through the Real Estate Finance Committee, and some private donations have been secured as well. While there, the Rev. Bheki Dube shared the service with me, and hosted Teresa and me afterwards. We were treated to a few songs by their choir – very beautiful.

Westville: Some of you may know that this is the congregation into which I was born, and the town in which I grew up. It felt like a wonderful homecoming, especially meeting up with the people of the congregation, some of whom I went to school with so long ago. It was a wonderfully social week for us, as we got to meet many of the people in the congregation.

The Westville congregation is undergoing a pastoral change, with the Rev. Derrick Lumsden moving in July to the Sower's Chapel congregation in Sarver, Pennsylvania, and the Rev. Malcolm Smith taking over as pastor. They look forward to the arrival of the Rev. Coleman Glenn and his wife, Ann, as he joins the pastoral staff there.

Kainon: Teresa and I had the opportunity to spend time in the Kainon School, which the Westville congregation sponsors. Based in part on an aggressive building project to expand the school, Kainon is thriving! There are more than 200 students, with roughly half in their pre-primary program, led by Daphne Plug, and the other half in the elementary program, led by Jane Edmunds.

We visited all the classrooms, including a Mother's Day tea at the pre-primary. I was invited to lead a faculty session during the week, and a whole-school worship service. I came away with the warm sense that New Church



The Rev. Bheki Dube,
Pastor of the Clermont New
Church, with Bishop Buss

education is alive and well in Kainon.

Bucleuch: The second half of our trip took place in Johannesburg. There are three General Church congregations in the area: Bucleuch, Alexandra and Diepkloof; and a group in Balfour, some distance away. The three local congregations attended a two-day mini-Assembly at Bucleuch, which consisted of Saturday presentations and workshops, and a large Sunday worship service.

I did one of the presentations on “Essentials of the New Church,” and Pastor Mark Allais, together with Heather Allais, led a series of workshops on church growth. The Assembly included a barbecue on Saturday, and a big picnic after church on Sunday, allowing for all the personal interactions that keep the groups connected.

The Bucleuch congregation did a fantastic job of hosting this event. It is a growing congregation with an inspiring vision around racial integration. Not only that, but it stands as a locus of energy for the region, given that Alexandra is without a pastor, and the Diepkloof congregation is displaced from their church building. Hats off to the entire congregation, and to Mark and Karen Allais in particular, for what they are creating together.

Clergy: An important reason for this trip was to establish healthy working relationships with the clergy in South Africa. While in Westville, eight ministers got together for a day and a half of clergy meetings. This was a chance for me to hear from them about their work, to explore some doctrinal subjects, and to discuss country-wide issues before them.

It turned out that many of the retired ministers were not able to make it. While greatly missed, the outcome was that a younger generation of pastors is stepping up to provide leadership to the Church in South Africa.

Outside of the clergy meetings, I had the opportunity to visit with two retired ministers: the Rev. Alfred Mbatha and the Rev. Reuben Tshabalala, both of whom have given many years of dedicated service to the Church.

I also visited with two ministers-in-training: Patrick Mbali, and Mandla Stole. They are engaged in distance learning courses with the Rev. Dr. Andy Dibb at the Bryn Athyn College Theological School, and also receive guidance on preaching and teaching from the Rev. Mark Allais.

The visit to the Church in South Africa provided Teresa and me with a number of great memories, and more importantly, with a set of relationships on which to build in the years to come. We greatly appreciate the work that is happening there, and the graciousness with which we were hosted. We look forward to visiting again!



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The Rev. Todd J. Beiswenger

Lessons from Fathers on the Road to the Ministry

My name is Todd Beiswenger, and this is my life: When I was a kid growing up, it was pretty hard to get one past Dad. I remember that one of my chores for a while was doing the dishes after dinner. Like most kids, I wasn't really happy about this. What bothered me even more was when I was done and my "work" was sent back, because the dishes weren't clean enough. (They weren't.)

I tried, unsuccessfully, to point out that clearly I was not up to this task, that when it came to doing the dishes, I was in fact, incompetent. Dear old Dad disagreed. With a wry smile and a "gotcha" tone in his voice he just said, "You clearly need more practice." It was a warning that if I didn't start doing the dinner dishes correctly, I'd be doing the lunch ones, too.

I think something similar happened to me later in life. But this time it was with my Heavenly Father. I was pretty content – actually quite content with my life. I had a wonderful wife – still do! – was making good money, and had a cool car. All my life's ambitions were basically met. I didn't think my life needed much real change. My Heavenly Father disagreed.

I thought I was a reasonably good person, but looking back, well, it is clear that the "work" I turned in was being sent back, and the only way He was going to save me was by giving me some extra practice at being a decent human

Daily contact with the Word was making a profound impact on my attitudes, desires and behaviors – and that’s what really got me thinking about the ministry.

being. The Lord just had to make me think it was my own idea to make some life changes, and that took some time.

It is true, as the Writings say, that you can only see providence in hindsight. I certainly see it now. For the most part my life has been pretty unremarkable. Dad had found the Writings as a young man, and moved his young family to Bryn Athyn to be part of the New Church.

I was one when we moved from Texas to Bryn Athyn, and had no family in the New Church. I went through almost all the New Church education possible – elementary school, high school and an AA degree from Bryn Athyn College. My grades were probably a little above average, my athletic ability was probably a bit below average, and I managed to get myself into an average amount of trouble. But I loved cars.

Even now it still amazes me that the Lord got me from the auto industry to the ministry. I left Bryn Athyn College to take a year off to save some money to finish my education, and also to take a break from school. It was great. I worked at a car dealership in the parts department. Then I went to Auburn University and got my degree in marketing.

A few months before graduating I managed to get a job with a company that was big in the drag racing scene. Seemed like a perfect fit. It was, and I stayed for just short of 10 years.

Yet during my time there I started to get promptings for change. There were the obvious promptings that my wife would give me, and then there were the ones the Lord was giving me. It seemed He would enlist my friends, family and my employer to send me into the ministry. It would be a surprise to all of us, but clearly a necessity if the “dishes” were ever going to be done properly.

It was February 2005 when my mother passed away. This rekindled my interest in the afterlife, and got me reading a book that Dad gave me, *Messages from the Open Door*. It really started putting into perspective what was important. The common theme throughout the different accounts in the book was: I wish I had known before what I know now. These people were telling me to rearrange my priorities.

Deep down I knew that I needed some change. I thought I’d done a fair job of appearing like a decent person, but I was aware of some of the thoughts and ideas that lay hidden beneath. These were the things that I was now seeing as rather embarrassing – because I thought now my Mom could see the person I really was, which wasn’t who I really wanted to be.



Todd and Jenn Beiswenger with son, Zach

As providence would have it, through a series of events I was given the inspiration to read *Arcana Coelestia*. But after about 30 pages of volume one I realized that I was lost, and wasn't getting anything out of it. I was in Toronto not long after this, and asked my father-in-law (Gordon Jorgenson) if he'd read all of the *Arcana*, and that it was frustrating me that I wasn't getting it. He shook his head saying that he understood my frustration, and about six weeks later they were down visiting us and he gave me a copy of the *Dole Notes*.

It was exactly what my small brain needed. I started reading one chapter per day out of the Word, and the corresponding chapter in the *Dole Notes*. Suddenly, I was getting it, and was able to see how the Word was actually a story about me!

For the first time I was able to see New Church teachings about personal growth and development in simple terms that I could understand. I was also noticing that I was changing. This daily contact with the Word was making a profound impact on my attitudes, desires and behaviors – and that's what really got me thinking about the ministry.

I was thinking that I needed to share these simple teachings that could change lives. I knew plenty of others who needed this same help, and I felt that I was being called to share this with others.

But I had a job, a mortgage and a pregnant wife, whose dream was to be a stay-at-home Mom, and I had promised to make that dream a reality. Therefore, while I was feeling a call to the ministry, I had provided the Lord with a good list of reasons – or as a salesperson would call them, a good list of objections as to why I could *not* be a minister.

Turns out the Lord is a pretty good salesperson, as He took a look at my list and over the course of a couple of years started giving me solutions to overcome those objections. The final one came in 2008.

The "call" kept on coming, so late in 2007 I went to talk with Andy Dibb [Dean of the Theological School] about my interest in being a second-career

I see my job now is to find a way to connect with people where they are, get them to take responsibility for their lives and make some changes.

minister in about five year's time, once they'd put a program together. I'd lined up a job in North Carolina that I was going to take, but in five years I thought I'd like to come to Theological School.

The next thing I know, Andy comes back to me with a financial package that met everything I needed to sign up NOW! I wasn't ready mentally. My mind was in the "I'll do this in five years" mode, but the Lord kept saying, "Do this NOW!" So I did.

In hindsight, it was clearly the best decision, as I got to go through Theological School with a great bunch of guys who really enriched my experience. There were a bunch of us who went through at the same time as second-career men, and having them around certainly kept me sane. I'm very grateful to them, and to the General

Church for the financial assistance that made the career change possible.

Now I work as pastor of the Hurstville Society in southern Sydney, Australia. Jenn and I used to say that we wanted to move south, and we certainly got it! We didn't intend southern hemisphere south, but if I've learned nothing else throughout this journey it is that you'd better be careful what you wish for: the Lord will give it! And much He has given me.

He's certainly given me a great job. My background is in sales and marketing, and for as much as I did enjoy it, the more awakened I became the more I felt that my job simply was making a big deal out of something that just wasn't important. When a customer got upset over an order being a day late, part of me could sympathize, but there was also a part thinking, "There are more important things to worry about."

Nowadays my job is to get people to talk and think about important things. Not difficult things, but simple, life-changing teachings that I hope, like all ministers, will bring people to the teachings of the New Church so they can make better sense of their lives and establish a better set of priorities for themselves.

The trouble is, most people think they know what will make them happy, when in fact they don't. That's what I learned. I thought my own accomplishments would make me happy, but what I learned was that it didn't really matter what I accomplished, but how people were treated.

I see my job now is to find a way to connect with people where they are, get them to take responsibility for their lives and make some changes. Too often the challenge can be that people equate "responsibility" with "blame." I

have no interest in assigning blame, but when we take responsibility for our actions, we gain the freedom to do something different. For me, there is no passage more freeing than *Heaven and Hell* 302:

If we believed the way things really are, that everything good comes from God and everything evil from hell, then we would not take credit for the good within us or blame for the evil. Whenever we thought or did anything good, we would focus on the Lord, and any evil that flowed in we would throw back into the hell it came from. But since we do not believe in any inflow from heaven or from hell and therefore believe that everything we think and intend is in us and from us, we make the evil our own and defile the good with our feeling that we deserve it.

My ministry isn't to make people feel bad about the things they've done, but just to take responsibility for their future actions and accept the consequences that the Lord promises. It really is a wonderful teaching. Every now and again I can see a person light up when he realizes that he doesn't have to carry guilt over his past, or worry about who did or did not do something. But buying into this kind of thinking, and implementing that change into life is much more difficult than getting somebody to give me a credit card for a parts order. It's a challenge to overcome a person's lifetime of beliefs about "the way things really are."

When that connection is made though, there's nothing more satisfying. As a minister I get to be there for people at the most important occasions of their lives. Without a doubt, performing a wedding is the most fun, baptisms are wonderful as I get to take part in a sacrament that brings the family together, and doing a memorial service is a tremendous honor and privilege.

When I'm not doing the Lord's work, it won't surprise you to hear that I still have fun tinkering with cars, and because of the weather in Australia, it is a great place to have a cool set of wheels. I have a '63 Beetle for messing around in and a go-kart I take to the track on occasion. While my life has changed a great deal over the course of my journey from salesperson to minister, I still find that my love for things that go *vroom* is still with me. It's just not as strong as it used to be.

Funny thing is, and I do believe most people know this to be true, our fears of being inferior or our love of being the greatest often get in the way of our better selves taking over. Sometimes we let our circumstances or other

My ministry isn't to make people feel bad about the things they've done, but just to take responsibility for their future actions and accept the consequences that the Lord promises.

people hold us back, when in reality we should be using them as opportunities to sharpen our skills. These are challenges of the job.

Instead of trying to be “better” than another, I needed to put more effort into helping others succeed. Instead of being hurt by others, I needed to see that we’re all going through this process, and if somebody did something to me I learned that the path of regeneration was simple: do what the Lord says and things will be fine.

Sounds easy enough, right?

The challenge is that promoting a church just isn’t the same as selling car parts. People are emotionally attached to their beliefs. In the normal retail world, if you had a car that you weren’t happy with I could present a sales pitch as to why you should buy a car from me. Once we find a car that suits your needs better than what you’ve got, we’ve got a deal. Not so in the church world. I’ve found many people who are unsatisfied with their church, and even when I present them with an alternative that solves their problems they can’t just hand me a credit card to make a transaction.

One of the questions I was given to help with this article was: “What might people be surprised to know about you?” I think the most surprising thing people will learn about me is that I’m a minister! To be quite honest, I have a hard time believing it myself. It certainly wasn’t what **I** had planned for my life. Though I’m quite confident that my wife is much happier with the husband she has today than the one she had 10 years ago. Can’t say I blame her. Things are good these days. I live a blessed life.

Every now and again I look around at my current life and wonder, “How did I get here?” I know the answer: the Lord put me here. He put me here despite me originally not wanting to do this, despite me not measuring up to my own standards, despite my attesting to my own incompetence.

Instead of giving up on me and letting me do what I wanted, He, like my other father, told me that I needed more practice and sent me to regeneration boot camp. And with that, I go back to doing His work, or tinkering on my car, knowing that it is me He’s trying to save, and thanking Him for letting me do this wonderful job in what I believe is quite possibly the best posting in the General Church!

Todd Beiswenger, and his wife, **Jennifer (Jorgenson)**, have an 8-year-old son, Zach. Todd’s Dad, Bob, was in the Air Force, and he was born at Carswell Air Force Base in Fort Worth, Texas. Before graduating from Theological School it was determined that he would be sent to Australia after ordination. However, due to delays in getting the visa required to immigrate, he was posted at Ivyland New Church in Pennsylvania for eight months. Since March 2012 he, Jenn and Zach have happily called Hurstville home. Contact: *todd@hurstville.newchurch.org*

Mastering the Basics

A Sermon by the Rev. Todd J. Beiswenger

Lessons: *I Samuel 17: 1-51; Divine Love and Wisdom 13*

Several years ago I was told this story about a very accomplished kung-fu student who had the unique experience of meeting a kung-fu master from the Shaolin Temple. It is a very rare occurrence to meet a Shaolin master, and the student was very excited for the opportunity. The master didn't speak English, so all communication had to go through a translator. Nevertheless, the student had something he just had to ask, so he said to the translator:

"Please tell the master that I would like to learn some of the special, top secret Shaolin kung-fu." The translator passed the message on and the master responded:

"The master would like to teach you a punch." This was not what the student wanted.

"Please tell the master that I've been practicing kung-fu for 25 years, and that I know how to do a punch. I would like to learn the special kung-fu. The kung-fu that only a Shaolin master can teach." The translator nodded, and seemed to pass on the request. The master then gave a new message to the eager student:

"Show me your punch."

The student sighed, and was clearly disappointed. He knew how to do a punch, but he figured he might as well comply with the request, show the master his punch and then the master would see that he did indeed know this basic move. Then the master would show him the cool stuff! So he asked the master:

"What kind of punch would you like to see? I can do several different kinds!"

The master said he didn't care what kind of a punch. He then lit a candle, and instructed the student to execute the punch of his choice so that when done his hand is exactly one inch from the flame.

The student took the challenge, figuring he'd show an outstanding punch and then they could get on to the business of the secrets of kung-fu. The

We tend to think that just because we know something, we've mastered it. We would never say that just because we can ride a bike that we could win the Tour de France, but often when it comes to spiritual skills we fail to distinguish between competence and mastery.

student then executed a perfect punch. He had perfect balance, speed and control, and his hand stopped exactly one inch from the flame. The master then said:

"Let me show you my punch." The master executed his punch, stopped *two feet* from the flame, and with it a burst of energy was propelled toward the candle, extinguishing it. The student's eyes nearly popped out of his skull, and he said to the master:

"That! Show me how to do that!"

The master said, "That's what I've been trying to do. I wanted to show you a *punch!*"

Sometimes we do the same thing with our spiritual life. We think we know the basics, and to a certain extent we do. Stop doing evil, learn to do good. If I told you today, "Go out and stop doing evil, and learn to do good," most would probably think, "Yep. Got it. No problem."

Like the kung-fu student, we tend to think that just because we know something, we've mastered it. We would never say that just because we can ride a bike that we could win the *Tour de France*, but often when it comes to spiritual skills we fail to distinguish between competence and mastery. The Lord tells us that we aren't supposed to just "know" the Word, to have a competence with it, but we are to meditate on it day and night, never veering to the left or to the right. We are to master it.

Likewise the kung-fu master went on to tell the student that the enemy will not be afraid of the 10,000 different punches you've practiced once, but he will be deathly afraid of the one punch you have practiced 10,000 times. That kind of practice brings mastery.

In your spiritual life, it isn't the 10,000 teachings of the Word you've read once that will impact the hells, but rather the one teaching that you've practiced 10,000 times. When bad times strike, and they will, what is your "go-to" move? When thoughts of doubt, despair and anger come rushing in, what teaching can you execute to diffuse the mental turmoil? You know how to punch, but do you know how to *punch*?

As a youth, David had mastered a couple of fundamental concepts. The Philistine army was marching forward, continually pushing back the Israelite

army. They were terrified. The Philistines were far more powerful. King Saul was despondent, and didn't know what to do.

When David arrived at the battlefield, he learned that the Philistine warrior, Goliath, had been taunting the Israelites from across the valley, challenging them to a one-on-one fight to determine the victor. The losing nation would become the slaves of the other. On the surface, it isn't a pretty picture.

But David didn't fear Goliath. Why? Because he had mastered the fundamental principle: the battle *is* the Lord's. (1 Samuel 17:47) How many of us act like the Israelites, captivated by fear and doubt, when the battle is the Lord's?

Some of you will nod your heads, yet think, "Yes, but *my* problems are different." Nonsense. I heard a great line from another preacher who said, "We shouldn't be telling God how big our problems are, but we should be telling our problems how big our God is!" He's exactly right. That is mastery. It's a very basic principle: the Lord is infinitely powerful. Therefore the forces for good are infinitely more powerful than the powers of darkness. It really is that simple.

How do you put that teaching into practice in your life? David illustrates it when he chooses his weapon to use against Goliath. If Hollywood were to do this story, the Israelites would have had some untested, super-secret weapon to unleash on the Philistines. It would be like the *Karate Kid* movie in which one of the 10,000 punches that was practiced once brought the victory.

The Word tells us that victory in reality comes by a different means. It comes from mastery; it comes from the one punch practiced 10,000 times. David, a shepherd boy, goes to the skill he's mastered: using the slingshot. When he's had to fight off bears and lions to protect the sheep, it is his expertise with the slingshot that has netted him victory in the past. He knows that the battle is the Lord's, but that he also needs to do his part.

We know what he does next: he gathers five smooth stones. Dr. William Kinter describes them like this in a 1985 *New Church Life* article, *Written by the Finger of God*:

[T]hese stones were not taken from a desert or from a wall or from a stagnant pool, but from a brook. The selected stones signified truths not of the memory alone, not merely from tradition nor from a persuasive faith; but truths perceived in the Word when this is looked to as a source of living intelligence and inspiration –

I heard a great line from another preacher who said, "We shouldn't be telling God how big our problems are, but we should be telling our problems how big our God is!"

In moments [of anger] it won't matter that you once read the third chapter of Lamentations as a kid going through school, but it will matter if you've mastered the idea that all anger comes from hell.

homely truths of common sense rounded out by experience and frequent usage; polished and cleansed by uncounted waves of Divine instruction; truths which belong to the wisdom of a good life, and are collected into the shepherd's bag which we may identify as a personal concept of charity.

Such truth is not mere sentimentality. It is militant, powerful against falsities of evil, penetrating to the very head and principle of falsity; more effective than a whole artillery of theological learning based on a literalistic and pedantic interpretation of the Word. And it cannot be reached by the sword of the Philistine.

These stones are a simple teaching that you have mastered. Feeling unloved? Remind yourself that God loves you – that He loves you all the time, no matter what.

Period. Is that a smooth stone for you? Maybe you're jealous because a friend has gotten a great new, high-paying prestigious job? Or maybe a new house in a great neighborhood? Tell yourself, "Thou shalt not lay up for yourself treasures on earth." Perhaps instead you choose to think about eternal life, and take the opportunity to put the focus back on your spiritual development.

Make these simple teachings a smooth stone for you. Don't just have the teachings rattling around somewhere in your memory banks! Polish them with repeated use. Master them.

In sports, people love the highlight-reel plays, but despite that, games are won and lost based on the fundamental execution of the plays. I'm a big baseball fan. Professional players in the United States can make millions of dollars a year, but no matter their accomplishments, every year at spring training all these millionaire athletes take to the field and practice fundamentals. This is because when the ball is thrown at 90 miles per hour, or is hit at you even harder, you must have the fundamentals mastered so that the reaction is swift and precise.

When you are in the parking lot and somebody swipes that spot you've been searching for, what is your response? When you're stuck in an unexpected traffic jam are you instantly inflamed, or do you have that one teaching you can call on to release the anger and frustration that is pouring in on you?

In those moments it won't matter that you once read the third chapter of *Lamentations* as a kid going through school, but it will matter if you've mastered the idea that all anger comes from hell, and that it is hell that is pouring that emotion into you. Once you realize that it isn't you that is angry,

but hell, then you can close the door to that line of thinking.

As I see it, though, we often leave that line of thinking open because while we've heard the teaching, we haven't mastered it. That's because we're more interested in learning the 10,000 other punches and practicing them once. It seems that's what's been happening for centuries. The Children of Israel lived with lots of rules. There were 613 rules given in the five books of Moses. There were laws on:

- Sacrifices, ordination of the priests
- Tabernacle consecration, alien fire, dietary laws
- Childbirth, skin disease, clothing
- Skin disease, infected houses, genital discharges
- Yom Kippur, centralized offerings, sexual practices
- Holiness, penalties for transgressions
- Rules for priests, holy days, lights and bread, a blasphemer
- Sabbatical year, debt servitude limited
- Blessings and curses, payment of vows

In the New Testament we can read all about how the Pharisees were still intent on enforcing all these rules. But in the end, what was it that the Israelites really got in trouble over? It wasn't failure to take their moldy garments to the priests (see *Leviticus* 13:47-59), but rather it was a failure to master the first commandment: "Thou shalt have no other gods before My face." Pretty simple, right? If they had mastered the first commandment, the Philistines would never have been an issue later on.

For us we might think we've got this commandment mastered because, after all, how many of you have graven images in your homes that you bow down to? I know I don't. Can't say that I ever have had a problem with that one. However, it isn't just about having physical idols that we worship. Mastery is not having any *gods* before Him. You know, the ones like, "I wish I was that famous." Or putting all our efforts into being the "greatest" at something without considering how we are treating people along the way. When we treat others poorly, we are putting something else up as our god, and having other gods before the Lord.

The Israelites failed at mastering this most basic commandment. While

Find your smooth stones. Polish them, use them frequently and you, too, will find that the battles you fight you will no longer fight alone, for the battle is the Lord's.

David managed to defeat Goliath for them, it was not that many years later that King Solomon married foreign wives and allowed the worship of other gods that set up their eventual demise. I'm sure Solomon "knew" the first commandment, but he clearly hadn't mastered it. The Israelites ended up in exile, and having their land taken over by foreign nations.

No doubt some of them were confused as to how this happened. After all, weren't they God's chosen people? Weren't they the ones whom He had done miracles for, the ones whom He had connected with through Moses to lead them into a land flowing with milk and honey? How could this have happened to them? What does the Lord want from them? What does He want from you?

"He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." (*Micah* 6:8)

That's it. Master these basics. Learn how to *punch*. Find your smooth stones. Polish them, use them frequently and you, too, will find that the battles you fight you will no longer fight alone, for the battle *is* the Lord's.

Amen.

OUR NEW CHURCH VOCABULARY

Part of a continuing series developed by the Rev. W. Cairns Henderson, 1961-1966.

BONDS

By these are meant man's affections; not because they are fetters, but because they bind man to what he loves and restrain him from what is contrary, thus keeping him within their bounds. There are said in the Writings to be three kinds of bonds. External bonds are those of civil society – fear of the law and the loss of reputation, possessions and life; exterior bonds are those which come from knowing the truths of faith; internal bonds, which are called also the "bonds of conscience," are affections of good and its truth. The celestial alone have no bonds; they enjoy living perceptions. (See *Arcana Coelestia* 3835, 81)



Theta Alpha International Lives On!

You may or may not be aware that during this past year the TAI Executive Committee has been deliberating on the following proposal, presented at our last annual meeting, in October 2013:

“To continue with the *current* uses of TAI for 2013-14 until the Charter Day meeting in October 2014, at which time we will *either* a) present proposed changes for going forward *or* b) present a proposal to dissolve the organization.”

We are very excited to report that we have chosen the first option – to propose some changes in order to keep Theta Alpha alive.

There has been renewed excitement and energy for Theta Alpha and the uses it serves and can serve. We have a full slate of officers, to be officially elected at our annual meeting on October 10, 2014.

The Executive Committee, along with some members, has brainstormed ideas to help rejuvenate our organization. We'd love to enlist your help also in this process. For example, we can use more women on the Executive Committee. You do not have to live in Bryn Athyn to participate. If you did not receive an “Information and Questionnaire” survey, and would like to let us know of your interest, please contact us. (See information below.)

We are eager to reach out to ALL ages, but especially younger women, who might be interested in supporting our mission. We want to find out how they envision fulfilling Theta Alpha's mission in the future. How can we help them? How would they like to help us?

Some of the changes needed involve amendment of our bylaws. Some major changes include:

In addition to the widely known purpose of TAI – to support New Church education in its many forms – we want to state explicitly that one of our purposes is to support each other in our personal spiritual growth. We believe this has been a tacit purpose in the minds of our members, but was not actually stated anywhere.

Opening up membership to all women who wish to support New Church education, not just General Church members.

Women who are not yet 18 can become associate members.

For more details on proposed bylaws changes, feel free to contact us at

- Theta Alpha International, P.O. Box 154, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009
- E-mail us at ancdaughters@gmail.com
- Go to our Facebook page and post your thoughts (search for Theta Alpha International)

Since we will be voting on these proposed changes at our annual meeting in October, it is important that as many members as possible make it to this meeting. (You need to have **paid your 2014-2015 dues**, or made arrangements with the Treasurer, to be considered a member and vote at this meeting.)

We look forward to seeing you in October!

The TAI Executive Committee

Declarations of Faith and Purpose

THE REV. JEA S. PARK

Seoul, Korea

I believe that there is one God who is the Lord God the Savior Jesus Christ, in whom is a Divine trinity. I love Him for all salvation is from the Lord.

I believe in shunning evil as a sin against the Lord, and to do good because it comes from the Lord. These things should be done by man as if by himself, but believing that these things are done by the Lord through man, which is the saving faith.

I believe that the Lord revealed His thought and will in the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the heavenly teachings of the New Church. These words lead to eternal life because the Word is the light, the way and the life.

My purpose is to teach the people in the Lord's way through New Church teachings, and to lead into His kingdom as many people as possible.

O, my Lord Jesus Christ! You are the Lord and I am Your servant. I pray that your will be done!

THE REV. SEICHI SAKAE

Japan

I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the one God in heaven and on earth, who is the Creator and the Savior. I believe that He came into the world and assumed the Human, endured all grievous temptations, overcame the hells, fully put off the frail human from Mary, glorified His human, and thus became the Divine Human to save the human race, who would have perished miserably by their sins.

I believe that freedom of choice has been restored so that the way to

approach the Lord's Divine Human has been opened. Therefore everyone can be saved if he shuns evils as sins against God and does good from the Lord. These things must be done by a person as if from himself, but it must be believed that they are from the Lord with the person, and by means of Him.

I believe that the Word was with God in the beginning, the true Light which gives light to every man, the fountain of wisdom and the guidepost to eternal life.

I believe in the Second Coming of the Lord, not as the Lord coming in Person on the clouds of the heaven with great glory, but as the revelation of the spiritual sense of the Word.

My purpose is to lead the spirit of the people who consider morality and ethics important to the mind of loving the Lord. I wish to share the blessing of the New Church with as many people as possible. For this purpose I will persevere in my efforts to attain to spiritual perfection.

OUR NEW CHURCH VOCABULARY

Part of a continuing series developed by the Rev. W. Cairns Henderson, 1961-1966.

CELESTIAL

In its broadest usage, this term embraces all heavenly things as distinct from earthly ones. In all other instances it has reference to love and good as distinct from truth and faith. Thus it refers, according to context, to love to the Lord; to the third heaven, which receives that love; to the highest degree of the human mind, which receives the activity of the third heaven; to that kingdom of heaven which is in love; and to the men of the first church, established before the fall, who were regenerated by the implantation of good in the will. There are many compound forms. (See *Arcana Coelestia* 4286, 1096; *Divine Providence* 32; *Arcana Coelestia* 8945, 3240, 5733)

Church News

Compiled by Bruce Henderson

PASTORAL CHANGES

The following pastoral changes have been announced by the **Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith**:

Michael Church, London, England – **The Rev. Alan Cowley** has been called as pastor, after having been appointed the previous year

Sower's Chapel, Sarver, Pennsylvania – **The Rev. Derrick Lumsden**, pastor

Westville New Church, Durban, South Africa – **The Rev. Malcolm Smith**, pastor

Westville New Church, Durban, South Africa – **The Rev. Coleman Glenn**, associate pastor

Dawson Creek, British Columbia, Canada – Visiting pastors from Canada

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania – **The Rev. Pearse Frazier**, pastor

Kempton, Pennsylvania – **The Rev. Lou Synnestvedt**, assistant to the pastor (one-year interim)

Los Angeles, with travel throughout California – **The Rev. Kemenan Atta**, pastor

Caryndale, Ontario, Canada – **The Rev. Ronnie Schnarr**, assistant to the pastor, with traveling responsibilities throughout Canada, especially Dawson Creek

Kumasi, Ghana – **The Rev. Adu Amoako**, pastor

Nteso, Ghana – **The Rev. Edward Akotey**, pastor

Impaphala, South Africa – **The Rev. Phil Xaba**, pastor

Retirements:

The Rev. Chris Bown – from the Pittsburgh pastorate

The Rev. Alfred Mbatha – from the Impaphala pastorate

BRYN ATHYN COLLEGE PRESIDENT

Chancellor Brian W. Keith

The Presidential Search Committee, after an extensive and intensive process, determined that there is no available candidate meeting the criteria for nomination by the Chancellor for the position of President at this time. However, **Dr. Kristin King** has very generously agreed to extend her presidency.

At the May 3 meeting of the Academy Board of Trustees, the Chancellor nominated Dr. King. The Board voted unanimously to elect her as President of Bryn Athyn College of the New Church. This is for a three-year term of office which can be renewed in three-year increments, as set forth in the bylaws.

The Chancellor and Board expressed great appreciation for her leadership of the College and look forward to her continued role in that office.

It is not uncommon for presidential search committees to take much longer than anticipated, and to be able to identify a candidate who is both the best match and available at the needed time. In our case, some potentially strong candidates for the position were identified, who are expected to become available when the need arises in the future.

BRYN ATHYN COLLEGE COMMENCEMENT

Bryn Athyn College of the New Church conferred 47 Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees at its 137th commencement, May 31, 2014. This was the largest graduation class in the history of the College. Of those 47 students, 36% graduated *cum laude* and eight have been accepted into graduate programs, including four in medical school. There were no Theological School graduates this year.

The following countries were represented among the student body of the College this year: United States, Bosnia, Canada, China, Ecuador, France, Germany, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Mexico, Nepal, Republic of Korea, Serbia, South Africa, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom.

See excerpts from the commencement address by **Colin Cole**, and the valedictory by **Hyunook Suh**, plus the Farewell from **President Kristin King**, beginning on page 322.

Bachelor of Arts recipients (* designates *cum laude*) were:

Jacquelynn Acton, West Palm Beach, Florida; **Holly Adams***, Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania; **Veronica Alt**, Pennsauken, New Jersey; **Matthew Bartalini**, Wilmington, Delaware; **Amara Bedford***, Huntingdon Valley; **Michaela Boyesen***, Slatington, Pennsylvania; **Susan Bradley**, Easton, Pennsylvania; **Tania Buss***, Huntingdon Valley; **Jasoleil Cineus**, Yeadon, Pennsylvania; **Andrew Collins**, Exton, Pennsylvania; **Daniel Cook**, Huntingdon Valley.



With the Board of Directors Award for Historic Preservation are, left to right, Drew Nehlig, Jennifer Pronesti and the Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss Jr., with Board member Mary DeNadia.

WILLIAMSBURG VISIT



The delegation from the Williamsburg Foundation in the Great Hall at Glencairn. Thomas Jefferson, on the left in the front row, and James Madison or the right flank Foundation President Colin Campbell and his wife, Nancy. At the far left, in the top row, is Dick Brickman, with his wife, Sally, on row below to his left.

Jefferson and Madison also toured Bryn Athyn College with President Kristin King and Angella Irwin.

BRYN ATHYN COLLEGE COMMENCEMENT

To see the full collection of commencement photos go to www.brynnathyn.edu



Aurora Synnvested and her father, Lou.



Amy Dwyer, Alexandra Elsing, Kelleen (Schauder) Butler, Samantha Crittenden



Nick Tate and Kira Kerr



José Sandino and Megan Reinprecht



Holly Adams, Cree Gurney, Cathleen Curran



Ben Useche



Hyunook Suh, Veeshan Rayamajhee



Amber Cineus



Dr. Martha Gyllenhaal (front left) and Jessica Bostock lead the procession of graduates

PHOTOS: SERENA SUTTON AND JASON BLISS



Senior Class singing their Senior Song



Luke Feng with his parents



Jason Deng, Kieran Jungé, Tino Nakos



Lindsay and Kendra McDonald



Becky and Brian Henderson with daughter Taylor



Freya Simons



Avri DeMaria, Samantha Elsing, Savanna Smith



Darryl Bryant (back row, middle) with his family



Tamar Horan and Emily McQueen



Commencement Speaker Gregg Asplundh with daughters Myrta and Cheyanne



Kainon worship with the Rev. Derrick Lumsden



The chancel at the New Church Buccleuch



The choir at the Clermont Church, singing for Bishop Buss and his wife, Teresa



The Rev. Malcolm Smith, left, and his wife, Abby, with the Rev. Mark Allais



Women at the Buccleuch Mini-Assembly

Ethan Cooper, Bowie, Maryland; **Cathleen Curran**, Jenkintown, Pennsylvania; **Hanna David***, Grove City, Pennsylvania; **Holly Feerrar***, Bryn Athyn; **Jessica Ferrau**, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; **Leah Fisher**, Quakertown, Pennsylvania; **Rachel Gladish***, Tucson, Arizona; **Cree Gurney**, Bryn Athyn; **Travis Hill**, Fort Collins, Colorado; **Karla Hyatt***, Mitchellville, Maryland; **Alyssabeth Knerr**, Easton; **Chloe Kund***, Hatboro, Pennsylvania; **Alexis Leonard***, Beaverton, Oregon.

Danielle Natividad, Tamaqua, Pennsylvania; **Vanesa Ramic**, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina; **Susanie Rampersad***, Houston, Texas; **Veeshan Rayamajhee***, Makawanpur, Nepal; **Megan Reinprecht***, Huntingdon Valley; **Jose Sequeira**, Granada, Nicaragua; **Caitlin Smith**, Centreville, Maryland; **David Steen**, Rochester Hills, Michigan; **Hyunook Suh***, Asan, South Korea; **Aurora Synnestvedt**, Kempton, Pennsylvania; **Nicholas Tate**, Bryn Athyn; **Daniel Triesler**, Dover, Delaware; **Benjamin Useche**, Ridgefield Park, New Jersey.

Bachelor of Science recipients were:

Amanda Arbakov, Warrington, Pennsylvania; **Harriet Baayeh***, Koforidua, Ghana; **Erin Kelleen Butler***, Bryn Athyn; **Samantha Crittenden**, Queens, New York; **Amy Dwyer***, Perth, Australia; **Alexandra Elsing**, Bryn Athyn; **Philip Gyasi***, Tema, Ghana; **Blake McCurdy**, Bryn Athyn; **Ethel Mensah**, Tema, Ghana; **Azarya Tafesse**, Fairfax, Virginia.

Awards and Honors

Spirit of Service Award

Jose Sandino

Academic Awards

Harriet Yabdown Baayeh

Veeshan Rayamajhee

Hyunook Suh

Scholarships

UPS Scholarship: **Minghui Jiang**

Nobre Computer Science Scholarship: **Niraj Khatiwada**

Scholar Athletes of the Year

Greg Synnestvedt and Amy Dwyer

Student Athletes of the Year

Scott Witmyer and Kristina Clark

Samaritan Award

Holly Adams

(See excerpts from the Commencement Address by **Colin Cole**, the Valedictory by **Hyanook Suh**, and the Farewell from **President Kristin King**, beginning on page 322. Hundreds of graduation photos in various categories (thanks to the heroic work of **Serena Sutton** and **Jason Buss**) and a video of the commencement exercises have been posted at www.brynathyn.edu.)

ACADEMY SECONDARY SCHOOLS COMMENCEMENT

The Academy Secondary Schools graduated 57 students on June 7, including 27 from the Girls School (13 with honors), and 30 from the Boys School (7 with honors). The students represented seven states: Georgia, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania, plus one from Canada, and three from China. (A great many photographs, thanks to Serena Sutton, have been posted on Facebook and at www.ancss.org.)

Commencement Address



SERENA SUTTON

The commencement address was given by **Gregg Asplundh**, father of graduating seniors **Cheyenne** and **Myrta**.

Gregg graduated from the Boys School in 1982 and was one of the first winners of the Stanley F. Ebert Award for athletics, scholarship and character. He earned his bachelor's degree from St. Lawrence University. He is a Distinguished Alumnus of the Academy and serves on the Academy Board of Trustees. He is Executive Vice President of the Asplundh Tree Co. He and his wife, **Camy**, have five children – all graduates of the Academy Secondary Schools. They live in Huntingdon Valley.

Gregg spoke from notes so there is no written text. After congratulating the Class of 2014 he paid special tribute to the faculty as the “keeper of the gate” for New Church education, and for stimulating the growth and broadening the horizons for the girls and boys – developmentally, physically, intellectually and most importantly, spiritually. The faculty was given a rousing standing ovation.

Gregg told a story of a health crisis in their family that “opened our eyes to the extreme chill of reality,” but also was reassuring to them because of the tremendous support they received from family and community. It was a time for him and Camy to reflect on their days at the Academy – the truths they learned and the network of support they developed, the teachings about Divine Providence and life after death. That all helped them through the kind of crisis that can strike anyone, at any time. Happily, it has been successfully resolved, and he thanked God and His Threefold Word, their “family strong” culture, and a supportive community – what everyone needs to lean on in

challenging times.

He gave the graduates three keys for success:

- Good open communication
- Good luck – the result of hard work and preparation
- Work hard and play hard to achieve a balance in life

The students' parents, friends and community have supported them through four years of academic excellence, community service, championships on the athletic fields, and wonderful theatrical performances. He assured them that these people will always be there for them, wherever they go – that “I am, you are, together we are the Academy.”

Graduates (* designates those graduating with honors)

Graduates of the Girls School included: **Cheyenne and Myrta Asplundh**, Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania; **Erica Bellinger**, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada; **Isabella Bieker**, Southampton, Pennsylvania; **Amanda Buss**, Bryn Athyn; **Laura Clymer***, Willow Grove, Pennsylvania; **Shannah Conroy***, Huntingdon Valley; **Avri DeMaria**, Huntingdon Valley; **Danae Elder***, Rochester, Michigan; **Samantha Elsing**, Bryn Athyn; **Madison Fisher**, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; **Taylor Henderson***, Hatboro, Pennsylvania; **Tamar Horan**, Bryn Athyn.

Miranda Hyatt*, Mitchellville, Maryland; **Freya Kistner***, Huntingdon Valley; **Kendra Kuhl***, Bryn Athyn; **Lindsay McDonald**, Huntingdon Valley; **Angela Moretti**, Jenkintown, Pennsylvania; **Courtney (Chang) Qu***, Xianyang, China; **Rachael Rose***, Bryn Athyn; **Eryn Simons**, Huntingdon Valley; **Freya Simons***, Mitchellville; **Leanna Smith***, Bryn Athyn; **Savanna Smith***, Mitchellville; **Mackenzie Spire**, Ambler, Pennsylvania; **Brenna Sweeney**, Bowie, Maryland; **Sarah van Zyverden**, Bryn Athyn.

Graduates of the Boys School included: **Jeremy Adams**, Bryn Athyn; **Darryl Bryant**, St. Albans, New York; **Geancarlo Campos**, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; **Ryan Carr***, Huntingdon Valley; **Clay Cronlund***, Abington, Pennsylvania; **Jason Bingkun Deng**, Shenzhen, China; **Chase Edwards**, Huntingdon Valley; **Landon Elder***, Richmond, Indiana; **Yuhao Feng**, Beijing, China; **Austin Garttmeyer**, Holland, Pennsylvania; **Rashee Hall**, Folcroft, Pennsylvania; **Brandon Hill**, Bryn Athyn; **Alexander Hyatt***, Bryn Athyn; **Jared Hyatt***, Mitchellville.

Payton Johnson, Valley Stream, New York; **Richard Junge**, Huntingdon Valley; **Alex and Larson Langlotz**, Huntingdon Valley; **Konstantinos Nakos**, Huntingdon Valley; **Gary Pitcairn**, Meadowbrook, Pennsylvania; **Aidan Pitcairn**, Bryn Athyn; **John Pitcairn III**, Bryn Athyn; **Evans Saso**, East Orange, New Jersey; **Cody Smith**, Bryn Athyn; **Tristan Stevens-King***, Bryn Athyn; **Sean Tate**, Bryn Athyn; **Daniel Uber***, Pittsburgh; **Henry Wadsworth**, Marietta, Georgia.



Tristan Stevens-King and Freya Kistner



Leanna Smith and Avery Philips



Rachael and Barbara Rose



Laura and Wendy Clymer



Jason Deng



Landon Elder

PHOTOS: SERENA SUTTON

Valedictorians

The valedictorians were **Freya Kistner** for the Girls School and **Tristan Stevens-King** for the Boys School.

Graduation Awards

Theta Alpha Gold Awards were presented to **Laura Clymer** and **Leanna Smith**. Boys School Gold Faculty Awards were presented to **Alexander Hyatt** and **Jared Hyatt**, and Silver Awards to **Jason Deng** and **Landon Elder**.

Honorary Diplomas

Honorary Diplomas were presented from the Girls School to **Wendy Clymer** and **Barbara Rose**, and from the Boys School to **Christopher Carr**.

Academic Awards

At the Secondary Schools Awards Night, Academic Excellence Awards were presented to senior **Jared Hyatt** and freshman **Wes Wedell**. The Emilie K. Asplundh Grant for the Performing Arts went to junior **Ian McCollum**. National Merit Scholarship Winners were seniors **Freya Kistner** and **Dan Uber**.

Athletic Awards

Girls School

Sportsmanship award – **Laura Clymer**

Outstanding Female Athlete – **Kendra Kuhl**

Boys School

Payson Lyman Award – **Landon Elder**

Stanley F. Ebert Award – **Shane McCurdy**

ACADEMY BOARD AND CORPORATION ELECTIONS

It has been a while since there have been any reports on elections to the Academy Corporation and Board of Trustees. Here are the results from the past three years.

Board of Trustees

First elected in May 2012: **Lee Asplundh Allen, Brett J. Heinrichs, Eileen R.**

Glenn (partial term; re-elected in 2013)

Re-elected in May 2012: **Gregg G. Asplundh, Charles M. Cole, Leonard A. Gyllenhaal**

First elected in May 2013: **Brian G. Blair, Dr. Phillip W. Feerrar**

Re-elected in May 2013: **Erin Glenn Busby, Eileen R. Glenn, John A. Kern, David M. Kloc, Norman A. Norton**

First elected in May 2014: **Dr. Charles W. Lindsay**

Re-elected in May 2014: **Susan B. McGrath, Lael U. Odhner, Duncan Pitcairn, Joseph D. Seckelman III, John F. Walko**

Academy Corporation

Elected in October 2012: **Susan L. Asplundh, Brian G. Blair, Colin S. Cole, Jessica E. Duda, Dr. Phillip W. Feerrar, Isaac L. Smith, Kyle G. Smith, David B. Tolson**

Elected in October 2013: **Bradley E. Cranch, Andrew L. Davis, Emily V. Genzlinger, Dr. Charles W. Lindsay**

UPON THIS ROCK . . .

This past 19th of June was the 100th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone in the construction of the Bryn Athyn Cathedral. On the Sunday prior to this year's celebration of New Church Day, Bryn Athyn Pastor **Eric H. Carswell** preached in the Cathedral on this memorable event, using the text, "The stone which the builders rejected."



In a report in the *Bryn Athyn Post* leading up to the anniversary, **Stephen Morley**, Director of the Cathedral, wrote:

"Early in 1914, a granite quarry was opened in the woods near Pennypack Creek, not far from where the Cathedral stands today, with the purpose of providing stone for its construction. Nearby, a seven-ton, unhewn block of granite was discovered and chosen to be the building's cornerstone.

"Then, on June 18, 1914, the day before the laying of this very large stone, it was carved with Hebrew words from *Psalms* 118, meaning 'the head of the corner' or cornerstone.

"Edward Kessel, the man in charge of the quarry (and grandfather of **Edward, Carl, Chris and Emily Jane Asplundh** – did the carving. **Bruce Glenn**, in his book about the building of the Cathedral, wrote that Kessel 'was one of those whose work at the Cathedral led him to the faith of the New Church.'

“**Ed and Kirsten Gyllenhaal’s** book about the Bryn Athyn Historic District has a photo of a remarkable wooden crane, about 20 feet tall, that was set up over the site to lower the cornerstone into place.” (Pictures of the cornerstone and crane are featured in the current Glencairn Museum Newsletter and on the Cathedral’s Facebook page.)

Steven also offered excerpts from a lengthy letter written by **Raymond Pitcairn** to his father, **John**, who was traveling in Europe:

“At half past five, with rain threatening, the congregation gathered in Benade Hall’s chapel, which was full to overflowing. The service included singing, readings and prayers. **Bishop W. F. Pendleton** then announced the order of procedure to the cornerstone, which was followed by the choir singing, ‘Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it.’ These words greatly moved the Bishop and the entire congregation.

“Next, he gave an unwritten address explaining the signification of the cornerstone, the frequent use of the words ‘stone’ and ‘rock’ in the Scriptures, and the internal sense of these passages.

“Carrying the Word in his hands, the Bishop, followed by the choir and the congregation, marched out. . . . The group moved slowly and silently down to Alnwick Road and wound up the hill to where the cornerstone hung in a great frame that looked like an ancient gateway. As the congregation approached, a rope was held by several men until a circle had been formed by the people gathered around the huge rock. A small table for the Word stood near the stone.

“The Bishop read several passages from the Scriptures, including from *Psalms* 118, ‘The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.’ The congregation then sang ‘Jerusalem the Golden,’ during which the great stone was lowered by **Edwin Asplundh**. Four men, one at each corner, guided the stone into place and another watched a guiding mark in the stone. By the close of the hymn, the stone was in place.”

After Bishop Pendleton dedicated the cornerstone and pronounced a blessing, “The sun broke through the clouds, shining upon this venerable, white-robed figure with outstretched hands and face upturned toward heaven, and also on the stone and on all those round about. Then all, with thankful hearts, returned in procession to Benade Hall’s Chapel, where the people sang the hymn, ‘O Light Whose Beams Illumine All.’

“The Bishop then pronounced the benediction and closed the Word, and all went out filled with the greatness of the occasion.”

Following a banquet for 250 people, Mr. Pitcairn reported: “All went home deeply moved, feeling that they had participated in a holy and ancient rite, made living in our New and Glorious Church.”

HISTORIC AWARD

The Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia honored the Bryn Athyn Historic District on June 4 with a Board of Directors Award “for exceptional contributions to historic preservation.” (The Bryn Athyn Historic District, a National Historic Landmark, includes the Bryn Athyn Cathedral, Cairncrest, Cairnwood Estate and Glencairn Museum.) The annual Preservation Achievement Awards ceremony – held this year in the Lincoln Ballroom of the Union League in Philadelphia – is the largest gathering of preservationists in the area.

Receiving the award on behalf of the Historic District were the **Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss Jr., Jennifer Pronesti and Drew Nehlig**. The award was presented by Mary DeNadai as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Preservation Alliance. Mary was described by **Brent Pendleton**, co-chair of the Cairnwood Board of Governors, as “our architectural champion in these circles for the past 15 years.”

Brent said this event “was a true milestone for the Historic District, the Academy and the Church. For our team in Bryn Athyn it was amazing to participate with hundreds of Pennsylvania architects and preservationists, where our Bryn Athyn buildings were truly highlighted at the end of the program.”

Brian Henderson, Director of Glencairn Museum, said, “It was humbling to receive this type of recognition as a Historic District from such an august body.”

Jennifer Pronesti noted: “It was an honor to represent the Historic District and the consortium of institutions and organizations that support it at the Greater Philadelphia Preservation Alliance awards event last night. As I chatted with our group after the award ceremony, we agreed that events of this kind remind even those who work in the district every day and interpret it for others, of its regional and even national significance. To be featured prominently among such prestigious award recipients felt quite momentous and inspiring.”

WILLIAMSBURG CONNECTION

The Bryn Athyn Historic District was further honored June 10 by hosting 37 members and donors of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, including its president, Colin Campbell and his wife, Nancy. Included in the group were Bryn Athyn’s own **Dick and Sally Brickman**.



Members of the Williamsburg Foundation

SERENA SUTTON

This visit was part of a larger cultural expedition tour of historic Philadelphia – *Roots of Liberty: From the Declaration of Independence to the Constitution* – led by Colonial Williamsburg’s Thomas Jefferson and Montpelier’s James Madison interpreters. They also visited the Barnes Foundation, Winterthur, Longwood Gardens and Cliveden. The Bryn Athyn Historic District was proud to be included with such prestigious destinations.

While in Bryn Athyn, the group toured Glencairn and Cairnwood, and in the Cathedral was treated to Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison – in period dress and character – discussing the importance of freedom of religion in the birth of America.

Mr. Jefferson emphasized the important distinction between the separation *between* church and state, intended by the founders, and the separation *of* church and state. He spoke of the importance of each individual having the freedom to worship God as he or she saw fit, rather than being compelled to support an official state church.

Mr. Jefferson noted the appropriateness of speaking in the Bryn Athyn Cathedral because man is defined by his spirit rather than the garments he wears. He pointed out that the “garments” of the Cathedral harken back to the Old World medieval style, while the Cathedral itself embodies the spirit and belief of a New Christianity.

He also expressed his appreciation for Swedenborg, noting that he was first drawn to his plans for a flying machine and his contributions to mining. He said he had several of Swedenborg’s theological works in his library, and was especially impressed by “what Swedenborg called the *True Christian Religion*.”

Brian Henderson noted that Bill Barker – the Thomas Jefferson interpreter – who had grown up in the Philadelphia area, expressed his love and appreciation for Bryn Athyn. “When I boarded their bus,” Brian said, “he greeted me by saying, ‘I feel like I am home.’ He also told me that when he heard the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation was planning a trip to Philadelphia, he insisted that Bryn Athyn **MUST** be included in the itinerary.”

(See photos on page 361.)

A LESSON IN HARMONY

During the interlude before the sermon in the Bryn Athyn Cathedral on May 11, the choir sang an original composition based on a teaching from *Arcana Coelestia*.

It was composed for the Cathedral Choir by Beau Mahurin, a former classmate and friend of the Cathedral’s Music Director **Graham Bier**. Mr. Mahurin is not affiliated with the New Church, but was inspired by this passage about truth and good:

One truth does not confirm good, but many truths do so . . . just as one musical note does not produce any melody, still less the full harmony, neither does one truth

achieve anything. (*Arcana Coelestia* 4197:7)

Following this interlude, the **Rev. Eric Carswell** used this passage as the text for a sermon on “Good Things From a Harmony of Many.”

A PLACE IN HISTORY

The Rev. George Dole, a long-time minister in the Convention Church, is a good friend to many in the General Church, known for his doctrinal scholarship, his wise demeanor and his kind presence. But he also had a role in a momentous event – running in the historic race 60 years ago when Roger Bannister broke the four-minute mile. Following are excerpts from an article by Jonathan Crowe in the May 2014 *Messenger*:



Roger Bannister is third from the left at the start of this historic race. George Dole is the runner at the far right. (Photo courtesy of *The Messenger*)

Jonathan Crowe in the May 2014 *Messenger*:

“The weather in Oxford, England, was less than ideal for a record-breaking attempt. Fifteen-mile-per-hour winds, with gusts up to 20 miles per hour, had 22-year-old George Dole wondering if the race at the Iffley Road Track would be cancelled. But the man who was to create history on May 6 had been training in high winds, and he was determined.

“Ten minutes before the gun went off, the flag on top of St. George’s tower fell limp. George took the pole position at 6 p.m. and exactly three minutes and 59.4 seconds later Roger Bannister accomplished his goal of becoming the first person to break the four-minute mile, a record that had previously seemed unattainable. This incredible event is still celebrated 60 years later.

“While he did not win that day, the Rev. Dr. George F. Dole has led a life of useful service as a pastor, an author, and Director of the Swedenborg Foundation. He continues to win the hearts of his students, parishioners, colleagues, countless friends and community members. George returns to Fryeburg (Maine) every August to lecture at the Fryeburg New Church Assembly on the banks of the Saco River. At 82 years old he continues to run on Haleytown Road, and more recently on the new Rail Trail.”

Friends at the Fryeburg New Church Assembly plan to celebrate his achievement with a special three-mile race August 9 on the Rail Trail, for runners and walkers of all ages. Proceeds will support the Assembly, the Fryeburg New Church and the Mountain Division Rail Trail.

The night before this memorial race, Mr. Dole will present a free talk in the Assembly lecture hall about his 1954 race with Roger Bannister.

Life Lines

WELL DONE, GOOD AND FAITHFUL TEACHERS

In a sense we all are teachers. We teach our children. We teach each other by the way we live our lives. We teach what we love. Teaching can be a profession. It is also a way of life.

Within the space of a few weeks in May, we lost four gifted teachers in the Church:

Morna Hyatt, who personified what it meant to be a New Church and Academy teacher throughout a remarkable 67-year career.

The Rev. Les Sheppard, a much-loved teacher and minister, with a special talent for connecting with people, mostly in his native Australia.

Willard Dean (Bill) Thomas, who influenced the lives of hundreds of young men in the Academy Boys School as coach and athletic director.

F. Mason Adams, beloved police chief in Bryn Athyn through a 34-year career, who would not have considered himself a teacher – but everyone else did.

One of my favorite books about teachers is *My Losing Season* by Pat Conroy, which chronicles his basketball career at The Citadel. But it's really the story of a young man learning about himself, and the teachers and coaches who helped him find values and truth in his life.

It is ultimately about those moments of discovery that flash between a teacher and a student – and forever leave a mark on both.

The book is a tribute to a high school English teacher who transformed Conroy's life by opening his mind. "The great teachers," he says, "fill you up with hope and shower you with a thousand reasons to embrace all aspects of life."

We have all known teachers like this who left indelible marks and helped shape our lives – often without being aware of their influence. Such moments often have little to do with history or physics or football, but everything to do with life – especially from a New Church perspective.

Morna Hyatt, Les Sheppard, Bill Thomas and Mace Adams were such teachers.



Morna Hyatt was born in Bryn Athyn in 1918, graduated from the Girls School in 1936 and the Academy College (now Bryn Athyn College) in 1941. She taught mostly in the Girls School over those 67 years, but also in the Bryn Athyn Church School and Bryn Athyn College. She taught math and science to three generations of students, and even some Latin and PE. And she was principal of the Girls School for 18 years, over two separate terms. (A memorial address by the Rev. Eric Carswell appears on page 333.)



In 2006 she set a record that will never be challenged, marching in her 82nd consecutive Charter Day procession. (In the early days, the elementary school children were included, so she started marching in kindergarten.) Even after her retirement she continued teaching part time in Educational Support Services.

The 2007 Senior Yearbook was dedicated to her as “an institution of the institution,” and said in part: “She enjoys teaching with games and seeing students when their eyes light up with understanding. She once said that you shouldn’t cover a textbook; you should uncover it.” The dedication also noted admiringly that she had moved to Cairnwood Village ten years previously “and has faithfully walked to school for chapel every day.”

At the 2005 Charter Day banquet, dedicated to *The Heroes and Heroines of the Academy: Our Teachers*, Morna was honored for her lifetime of service as “one teacher whose whole career stands as a symbol of what being an Academy teacher is all about.” She was given two prolonged standing ovations – waves of affection and appreciation for this dedicated woman who left her mark on countless lives, and will never be forgotten.



I had some kinship with **Les Sheppard**, as we were born in Australia about the same time, yet did not know him well. But everything I knew left me with a smile. As a young man he got his hands dirty in the noisy, intense world of race cars. But he was a good and gentle man, who had a special way with people and always lifted their spirit.



He served most of his career in the Brisbane New Church in Queensland, Australia. But he spent some time in Bryn Athyn, where he was a favorite religion teacher in the elementary school. Boys especially loved that he not only made learning fun, but also loved fast cars and riveted them with tales of race track pit crews.

Friends in Sarver, Pennsylvania, adored him and his wife, Bev, when he

was the pastor of the Sower's Chapel there, before returning to Australia. In addition to leading the Brisbane New Church he was president of the Australian Association. Since 2004 he had lived in retirement in Brisbane with his wife, Beverly (Topham).

A beautiful memorial address by the Rev. Ian Arnold appears on page 329. Here are excerpts from a eulogy delivered by Les' good friend, Dr. Kenneth Barns:

"For many of us, Les was our first introduction to the New Church. Since then, we've grown in the Church, spoken to others, learned from other ministers, and supported each other. So our understanding of the New Church, and what it means to us, have grown since those first moments – those first meetings we had with that ebullient bearded man. And yet, when I think back, there are still some features of Les' approach to religion that are quite distinctive, that are unique to him, rather than to the New Church more generally.

"Les embraced being a salesman and loved motivational writers. I tell friends, 'He sells religion like he's selling a used car,' in the nicest possible way. Like any salesman, Les had unbounded energy, and he would see the good in any situation. He knew the world was full of diamonds, and that we should embrace and enjoy them for what they are and not feel guilty for it. How could a loving God order things otherwise?

"The image Les loved to portray of the origin of the New Church were when the Lord summoned his twelve disciples and sent them out into the spiritual world to preach the gospel anew. Les was always explicit in saying that it was the twelve disciples who were with the Lord in the world, which means that Judas was there.

"There are parts of us that let us down, that we are hurt by, that we are disgusted by, and that we are ashamed of. But Les wanted to reassure us that even our Judas – the part of us that is fallible and weak – is part of what the Lord loves, is part of us that the Lord works with, and is part of us that can be redeemed and serve its role in the Lord's plan for our life.

"He gave us all a vision of this material world, not as the devil's playground, or as the valley of the shadow of death, but instead this world is a wonderful diamond mine. It's a place where we can experience wonderful things, and we should do just that!

"His vision was that all of our experiences that go before us, all of our years in the Lutheran Church, or the Catholic Church, or whatever else we may have done, are things that live in us today. Our past, our mistakes, our learning experiences, aren't things to be shunned and regretted; they aren't things that we should shrug at and say, 'I wouldn't do it again, but I've learned from it: I've become stronger from it.' Instead, they are all things that, as we

grow in the Lord, become more refined and more perfect.

“The New Church has made us – not new people, but better versions of the people we already were. And I am so incredibly reassured that even the most treacherous, Judas-like parts of me are part of the Lord’s plan, and will be rehabilitated and made perfect with the Lord in heaven.

“The Lord gave Les the power of transformation – the ability to transform a guilty pleasure into a diamond, to transform the Christmas story into a tragedy and Good Friday into a celebration, to transform an enemy into a neighbor, and to transform the lowest, meanest part of us into something sublime.”

Les’s son Richard also offered a brief eulogy, including: After his schooling at South Melbourne Technical College, “he became a mechanic for the Ken Tyrrell racing team. Dad loved traveling the world on the Formula 1 circuit. He never lost the love of motor racing or all things fast.”

Richard said he married and moved his family to Brisbane, working as a car salesman for several years. He then decided to join the ministry, training in England and America.

Richard added: “He enjoyed his tie in the New Church and in particular this little church in Rosalie, where he touched and enriched many lives before his retirement.”



Bill Thomas – also known as Billy T. – was a friend since high school. But then he was a friend to everyone. His fun-loving spirit and infectious laugh, his New Church character and integrity, made for easy connections and everyone loved him. He was a wonderful athlete. I played many years of softball and golf with him, but far more than his athletic prowess I admired and respected him as the walking model of a true sportsman.

As Bishop Brian Keith said in his memorial service, Bill spent many years volunteering as a football coach for the unheralded linemen at the Academy, not only teaching them how to serve the team but “showing them how to be the men the Lord intended them to be.” He had an enormous positive influence on countless young men and they are forever blessed to have had him as their teacher.

He came to the Boys School from Pittsburgh, graduating in 1955, and then from the Academy College, where he was the class valedictorian. He – with his wife Phyllis (Stroemple) – made a connection with the Academy and the Church that lasted throughout his life.

He helped coach the football team for almost 30 years and was the Academy athletic director for three years – teaching skills, modeling sportsmanship, and

instilling spiritual and moral values for boys to take with them throughout their lives. They loved him – not just for what he taught them but for the man he was, which really taught them the most.

He took that love of service to the Boynton Beach Society in retirement, where his body had trouble keeping up with his spirit. But he never let anyone feel sorry for him. At this year's Boynton Beach Retreat, when Dr. Jim de Maine was talking about end-of-life issues, Bill joked that this was getting a little close to home – then guffawed and led the laughter, as he always did.

Beyond the football field, Bill spent his lifetime teaching – in the classroom and just with his presence.

Bishop Keith said in his memorial service: “It’s not surprising that the Lord said whoever teaches His ways will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. There is something incredibly powerful about teaching. There is a zeal with teachers which carries over into the next world. Swedenborg saw teachers there in a very high heaven. They had a passion ‘which was almost [their] entire life.’ (*Spiritual Experiences* 1643) This zeal actually comes from the Lord and is that perfect combination of the Lord inspiring a love, and the teacher embracing it and sharing it with students.”

And that was Billy T.



F. Mason Adams – Mace – was something of an anomaly. For 34 years he represented law and order in Bryn Athyn – as a policeman and then chief of police. And he was the funniest man in town.

There was more laughter during the Rev. Jeremy Simons’ memorial address than I have ever heard in the Cathedral – and it was entirely appropriate.

Mace always had a joke and a laugh for everyone – right up to the end of 83 happy years. But there was so much more to him than an endearing sense of humor. He took his police work seriously – keeping the community safe and young people (especially) out of trouble. But keeping things light kept everything better.

His greatest impact as the teacher behind the badge was with young people, who needed both a firm hand and a soft touch. He was incredibly wise in dealing with them, caring and kind and compassionate, but firm when he needed to be – and they all loved him.

But everyone loved Mace. He had graduated from neighboring Lower Moreland High School with, Jeremy noted, “a solid reputation for both humor and industriousness.” Those qualities would serve him well – and all the rest of us – all his life.

After serving in the military police with the U.S. Air Force he joined the

Bryn Athyn police force – and found his home. He soon pulled over a young lady who had caught his eye – not to give her a ticket but to ask her out on a date. He and his beloved Peb were engaged five weeks later and shared almost 60 years devoted to their marriage and family.

It is an amazing demonstration of the Lord’s providence that neither one grew up in Bryn Athyn but became much-loved pillars of the Church and the community. They were both born for service – to family to community – and blessed countless people with their love and caring.

As Jeremy noted, “Mace said his goal was always to be a policeman and still be respected.” And, “In an era when the concept of ‘police brutality’ was invented and opposition to law enforcement was common, Mace inspired the exact opposite in Bryn Athyn. He was uniformly loved and respected.”

He had a purpose that guided his life and he made a difference – with the kind of character that sets an example for everyone, and laughter to lighten our load.

Mace taught us that a teacher isn’t always someone who stands in front of a class but can be anyone who connects through love – who, as Pat Conroy said, “fills you up with hope and showers you with a thousand reasons to embrace all aspects of life.”

(BMH)

HARMONY FOR ONE

Early in May the Rev. Eric Carswell preached a sermon in Bryn Athyn on *Good Things from a Harmony of Many*. By happy coincidence, my wife Carol and I had just experienced the touching power of people joining in harmony for a common good.

Fifty years ago Carol had watched her close cousin, Dan Ebert from Pittsburgh, lead the Georgetown University crew team to the championship in the Dad Vail Regatta in Philadelphia. Dan was both the captain and the “stroke” – the lead rower in an eight-man shell – and his teammates say he is the one who turned them into champions.

Sadly, just four years later Dan died in Vietnam. There, too, he was loved and praised by the men he commanded for his uncommon leadership, character and integrity. One of the athletic fields at the Academy of the New Church, where he graduated from the Boys School in 1959, is named in his honor.

While at Georgetown, his friends and teammates at first thought he was just another good Catholic boy, as they were. They knew there was something very special about him. What was special, of course, was the way he embodied his New Church beliefs in everything he did. One of these men had traveled to Bryn Athyn with him while at Georgetown, and the Church and community



The '64 boat honors Stroke Dan Ebert at his Bryn Athyn grave.

made a lasting impression that he wanted to share.

On this 50th anniversary of their championship, the entire team – with wives, fellow rowers, and the widow of their beloved coach – came back to Philadelphia to be honored for their achievement. But a huge part of their mission was to spend a day in Bryn Athyn – touring the Cathedral, Glencairn and

Cairnwood, but especially to visit Dan's grave in the Bryn Athyn cemetery.

There his seven teammates, plus the coxswain, stood in the order of their boat and faced Dan. Each one spoke directly to him in turn – about how they remembered him and what he has meant to their lives. He had an enormous impact on them, as anyone who knew Dan could understand. As they faced his tombstone, I saw a calm and smiling Dan reflected in their teary eyes, and in the smiles and memories of those who paid deep respect to him and to each other.

The next day we were invited to join them on the Schuylkill River for the Dad Vail races. There was another special tribute at a river-side reception, where Carol took Dan's place in the lineup and was presented with an engraved silver plate in his honor. There were many stories, many laughs, many tears, as we all remembered this great man. Carol spoke very movingly about Dan – for whom our oldest son is named. I talked fondly of him as a teammate at the Academy. They clearly loved connecting Dan with the Church and the Bryn Athyn community.

All of this was a touching, powerful and emotional experience, and we felt privileged to be a part of it, along with Dan's sister, Terry, who flew in from Oregon. This was the first time these men had been together in 50 years to grieve their loss and pay their respects to a man they unabashedly loved. It was very important to them to do this and they came away from it with an even greater appreciation for Dan and his faith. They were very sincere in learning about the Church, and felt they knew Dan even better because of their visit to Bryn Athyn. Many of them bought books in the Cathedral Bookroom to take home with them.

It was poignant as well to see the bond that still exists with this band of brothers. And that is not hard to understand. There are no superstars in rowing; it is everyone working together as one, for a common goal – “good things from a harmony of many.” But they had a leader and they haven't forgotten him.

Somewhere, surely, Dan was beaming, while our eyes were filled with pride – and tears.

(BMH)

OUR NEW CHURCH VOCABULARY

I am glad we're reprinting the Rev. Cairns Henderson's series on *Our New Church Vocabulary*. Our distinctive vocabulary is a big part of the Church's self-identity, and should be preserved.

Every field of discipline has its own distinctive terms. Most Christians speak often of "grace" and "fellowship" and even such obscure theological concepts as "vicarious atonement." Why shouldn't the New Church have its own vocabulary?

Think how many new terms associated with electronic devices have entered into common speech in recent years. Whatever a "hashtag" is I don't know, but it seems to be a brand new term that became universally understood almost overnight. A few years ago virtually everyone in the English-speaking world picked up the warthogese term "hakuna mutata" from *The Lion King* with no trouble at all. The point is that anyone who's interested in the New Church can easily learn its vocabulary.

Not only are special terms not a deterrent to newcomers (or shouldn't be), but they provide a useful introduction to the concepts they represent.

(WEO)

WHY WE HAVE SPECIAL TERMS

New wine needs new wineskins to contain it. The New Church has so many new and distinctive terms because it has so many distinctly new ideas. Most of the special terms we use are known to others, but the meaning they have taken on is quite distinct in the New Church, as well as the frequency with which we use them.

It is common in the church for people to use words such as *conjugal*, *correspondence*, *limbus*, *permissions*, *proprium*, *remains*, *vastation*, and so on. Those words are not *entirely* unknown outside the Church, but others rarely use them while we use them often.

Some of the words in our special vocabulary seem ordinary enough, but what we mean by them is different from what others mean by them. Take *remains*, for instance, a word used often by New Church people. We speak of "remains of innocence," and of the Lord "awakening or stirring up remains" in a person, and of "implanting remains" in children by giving them good experiences and knowledges from the Word. ("Knowledges" – there's another one. How often do others use that plural form of the word?)

Outside the Church, the word *remains* usually refers to a corpse, or some other object left behind (the remains of a meal, for example). A New Church person might use it like that also, but in the context of church talk we mean a good affection or a truth that was deeply impressed upon us in the past,

especially in childhood, which has stayed with us.

“Church talk,” by the way, enters into our everyday speech much more than in most churches because the Church is such a big part of our lives, not just a side interest; and because the doctrines of the Church are doctrines of life, with vital meaning and wide application.

(WEO)

TWO MOST IMPORTANT TERMS

The two most important New Church terms are *the Lord* and *the Word*. People in other churches speak mostly of *God* and *Jesus*, and *the Bible*.

In the New Church we speak of *the Lord* – with a clear understanding that the Lord Jesus Christ *is* God. We also refer to *God*, of course, and occasionally, in certain contexts, to *Jesus* – but mostly just to *the Lord*.

This is in accord with the usage of the Heavenly Doctrine, as explained at the beginning of the *Arcana Coelestia*: “In the following work, by the name LORD is meant the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ, and Him only; and He is called ‘the Lord’ without the addition of other names.” And it is noted that in *John 13:13* that this is what He “commanded” His disciples to call Him, saying: “You call Me Lord, and you say well, for I am.” (*Arcana Coelestia 14*)

It is also in accord with the usage of the Writings that we call the Bible “the Word.” Others also use that term, but not so consistently as we do, or with the significance the term *Word* has for the New Church. The thing that makes it *the Word* is the internal sense, and our use of that term to refer to it is a reminder of that.

(WEO)

BIBLICAL LITERACY

Twenty-five years ago E. D. Hirsch published a popular book, *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know*, and updated it in 2002 with *The New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy*. Each included lists of hundreds of names and terms that every educated person should be expected to know – a baseline of knowledge for functioning effectively in contemporary society.

But a strange thing is happening. As technology and social media expand access to everything we could ever hope to know, cultural literacy is declining. Man-on-the-street TV interviews, for instance, show “educated” college students who can’t name the Vice President of the United States or locate Canada on a map. To them, Jackie Kennedy and Marie Antoinette are just two women in history, irrelevant to their lives.

But as cultural illiteracy increases, Biblical illiteracy is growing as well. With the Bible removed from American public schools and the public square,

and religion generally on the wane in modern society, more and more children are growing up without knowing the Bible.

No longer can we assume that the average child knows about David and Goliath, Jonah and the Whale, Daniel in the Lion's Den, Noah and the Ark. They may be computer literate, but that isn't nurturing their spiritual growth.

In a recent survey, nearly two-thirds of Americans say they believe the Bible holds the answers to life's basic questions. But they don't seem to be reading it – to themselves or their children. Only one-third, for instance, know that Jesus delivered the *Sermon on the Mount*. And 10 percent think that Joan of Arc was Noah's wife. A governor in Texas years ago opposed Spanish instruction in the schools because: "If English was good enough for Jesus Christ, it's good enough for us."

But all is not hopeless. Bible study groups are flourishing, from churches to living rooms and locker rooms. The popularity of such recent movies as *Noah* and *Son of God*, plus last year's TV series on *The Bible*, is encouraging.

In a Gallup Poll this year, 75% of Americans sampled say they believe the Bible is connected to God, 28% claim it is "the word of God and should be taken literally," and 47% believe it is divinely inspired but is not to be taken literally. Just 21% dismiss the Bible as "ancient fables, legends, history and precepts written by man." But that number is growing; in 1976 it was only 13%.

So what can we do about it? Not a lot, it would seem. But the Writings tell us that reading the Word regularly is important not only for our own lives but because of the connection it makes with the angels in heaven. So what we can do to keep the Bible alive – in the quiet of our own lives – turns out to be a lot indeed.

(BMH)

NOTHING WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE

The banner for this year's graduating class at the Academy of the New Church Secondary Schools features the motto, "Nothing will be impossible for you" (*Matthew* 17:20), with an image of the Wright brothers' airplane.

It's an appropriate symbol because the Wright brothers knew a lot of failure before their success at Kitty Hawk changed history.

The context for the motto comes from the story of the disciples who were unable to cast a demon out of a child. When Jesus was able to do so they asked Him why they could not. He told them it was because of their unbelief – that if they had the faith of a mustard seed they could move mountains and "nothing will be impossible for you."

An example of such triumphant faith on a natural level was Thomas Edison, the prolific inventor with more patents (1,093) than anyone in history.

But all of that success, from the phonograph to the electric light, were built on failed experiments, learning from them, and trying again.

When Edison's New Jersey factory was destroyed by fire in 1914, his son said: "My heart ached for him. He was 67 – no longer a young man – and everything was going up in flames." He expected his father to be devastated. But he found him calmly watching the fire, and the next morning, surveying the ruins, his father said: "There is great value in disaster. All our mistakes are burned up. Now we can start anew."

Seeing "value in disaster" is a great lesson in recognizing the good in any situation. Edison wasn't defeated. He could just start anew and embraced the opportunity. We face similar challenges, generally on much lesser scales, throughout our lives. The challenges relate especially to regeneration – a lifetime process that knows plenty of failure. But, if we have faith, we – along with this year's Seniors – can live with the hope that "nothing will be impossible for you."

(BMH)

THE EYE OF A BOILED FISH

"Natural charity, if it is spiritual within, appears to the angels transparent like a diamond. But if it is not spiritual within, and consequently merely natural, it appears to them like a pearl, resembling the eye of a boiled fish." (*True Christian Religion* 459.13)

(WEO)

"TOLERANCE"

Tolerance, a relatively minor virtue, has been elevated to the status of supremacy over all other virtues, to the point where it now seems to be the *only* virtue. This is the definition of a heresy – a truth isolated from other truths and given undue emphasis.

To "tolerate" something used to mean putting up with it even though you disapprove of it. But the meaning of the word has been so twisted in recent years that now disapproval itself is seen as intolerant. Those who hold tolerance (the new version) to be the supreme or only good must therefore view as intolerable anyone who disapproves of just about anything (in other words, just about everyone, since everyone disapproves of *something*). "Tolerance" has thus, ironically, become the excuse for extreme and sweeping *intolerance*.

"Tolerance," as it is understood today, is a cruel and jealous god, demanding that all other standards of right and wrong be sacrificed to it.

(WEO)

PHONE CALLS FROM HEAVEN

Mitch Albom, a well-known sportswriter based in Detroit, Michigan, has become even more famous for books dealing with faith.

It started with *Tuesdays with Morrie*, a poignant memoir of weekly conversations about life and dying with a much-loved college professor and mentor stricken with ALS – Lou Gehrig’s disease.

There have been five more books over the last decade or so – all best sellers – including *The Five People You Meet in Heaven* and my own favorite, *Have a Little Faith*. The latest is *The First Phone Call From Heaven*.

This is the story of the little town of Coldwater, Michigan, where people start getting phone calls from loved ones who have died. The calls seem entirely authentic and convincing to the favored few. The story quickly becomes a media sensation – “proof of an afterlife.”

The book is all about hope – wanting to believe and wanting others to believe, so that everyone’s lives will be better. It is a flawed book, especially from a New Church perspective, but is thought-provoking, readable, popular and has a positive message.

I won’t spoil the outcome for anyone who wants to read it, but it is a potentially useful book, along with all the other books and movies professing to “prove” the existence of heaven. Hopefully they are all sowing seeds for acceptance of true revelation.

Albom is something of an anomaly – a sportswriter also fascinated by faith – and he lives his faith. He has founded seven charities, including the first-ever full-time medical clinic for homeless children in America, and operates an orphanage in Haiti.

He notes at the end of the book: “It is said that the earliest spark for the telephone came when Alexander Bell was still in his teens. He noticed how, if he sang a certain note near an open piano, the string of that note would vibrate, as if singing back to him. The idea of connecting voices through a wire was born.

“But it was not a new idea. We call out; we are answered. It has been that way from the beginning of belief, and it continues to this very moment, when, late at night, in a small town called Coldwater, a seven-year-old boy hears a noise, opens his eyes, lifts a blue toy phone to his ear, and smiles, proving that heaven is always and forever around us, and no soul remembered is ever really gone.”

And at the end of his Acknowledgements, he says: “Finally – and firstly – anything created by my heart or hand is from God, by God, through God, and with God. We may not know the truth about phones and heaven, but we do know this: in time, He answers all calls, and He answered mine.”

(BMH)