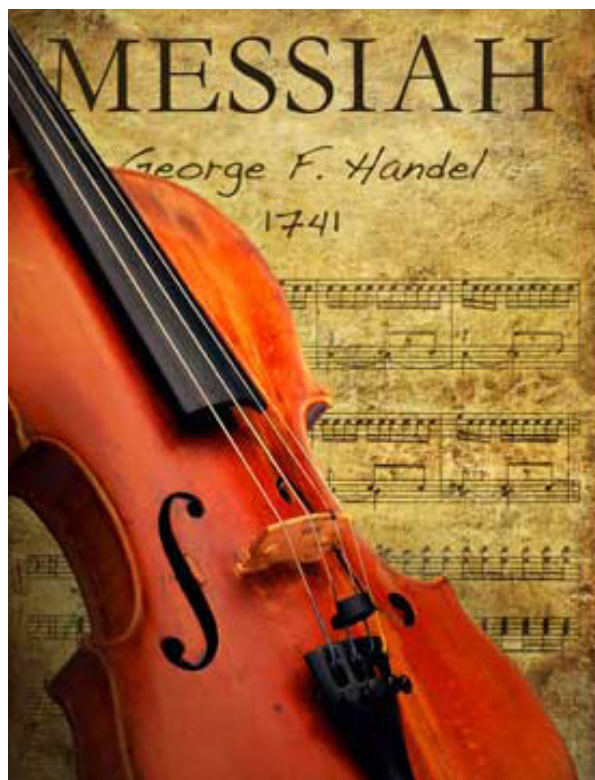


NEW CHURCH *Life*

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

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2016



The Miracle and the Theology of Handel's Messiah

Part of the magic of Christmas is hearing Handel's glorious Messiah. The Rev. Dr. Erik E. Sandstrom traces its history, its connections to Swedenborg, and intriguing echoes in the Writings. (Page 551)

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

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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

The Word is filled with references to mountains and fields, forests and trees rejoicing, singing, clapping hands and repeating “the sounding joy.” We know that inanimate things do not do these things but in a Christmas sermon, “Every Stone Shall Cry,” the Rev. Jeremy F. Simons explains that “every part of creation is connected together in a beautiful and miraculous way” and the Lord’s coming on earth “affects even the physical world itself.” (Page 526)

As the Rev. Kurt Hy. Asplundh was teaching religion to sixth graders in the Bryn Athyn Church School just before Christmas last year he began to take notice of all of the foreshadowing in the *Books of Kings* – and elsewhere in the Old Testament – about the coming of the Lord in the Christmas story. He describes all of this in “A Horn of Salvation in the House of David.” (Page 532)

In his Charter Day Cathedral address, “This Changes Everything,” the Rev. Stephen D. Cole explains that the establishment of the Academy of the New Church marked a revolution and that we are all called to the challenge to be agents of change – to keep transforming and improving the Academy, even as it transforms our lives and the lives of its students. (Page 538)

The Rev. Norman E. Riley is fondly remembered as a man whose love for the Word shaped every facet of his life – as pastor, teacher, husband, father and friend. In a touching memorial service the Rev. Walter E. Orthwein pays tribute to Mr. Riley through the guiding loves of his life: the Word, the New Church, the world of nature and its spiritual significance, and the joy of life. (Page 545)

One of the highlights of the Christmas celebration for many people is hearing – or singing – Handel’s magnificent *Messiah*. The Rev. Dr. Erik E. Sandstrom offers a scholarly appreciation for both the miracle and theology of this beloved masterpiece – including its connections to Emanuel Swedenborg and fascinating echoes in the Writings. (Page 551)

Steve David offers an impressive update of the continuing development of the New Christian Bible Study website, which includes an impressive number of translations and languages and increased opportunities for people all over the world to explore the Word and discover its spiritual meanings. There is great potential here to introduce people to the new revelation, but also for New Church people to get involved in meaningful ways. (Page 567)

Church News includes:

- Highlights of Charter Day including the Cathedral address by the Rev. Stephen Cole, Distinguished Alumni and Outstanding Volunteers for the Academy Secondary Schools and Bryn Athyn College; the banquet and Theta Alpha luncheon programs
- A report on the recent meetings of the General Church Board
- The West Africa regional clergy meeting
- A special program at the Kainon School in South Africa on Living Gratefully
- New live streaming of Academy Secondary Schools chapel services
- A new translation of *New Jerusalem* as part of the New Century Edition
- A last update on the Boynton Beach Retreat, with a new substitute presenter

This end-of-year issue also includes the Annual Report of the Secretary of the General Church, the Directory of Clergy throughout the Church (active and retired), and the Index for *New Church Life* for 2016.

OUR NEW CHURCH VOCABULARY

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

HOLY

This term is properly predicated of that which flows into man through heaven from the Lord. Strictly speaking, therefore, the Lord Himself is not holy but Divine, and the holy is that which proceeds from Him. The Lord Himself is above the heavens, for He is the Divine Man in the midst of the spiritual sun; the Divine which proceeds out of that sun from Him in the angelic heavens is what is called holy. (See *Arcana Coelestia* 9956, 10472)

Editorials

‘HARPS OF GOLD’

*It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth,
To touch their harps of gold.*

Angels are depicted in several places in the Word as playing upon harps. This isn't to be taken literally, although I suppose there are harp players among the musicians in heaven just as there are on earth. But the spiritual meaning of "playing on a harp" is to express with joy the truth that the Lord is God – as when the angel appeared to the shepherds and proclaimed: "For unto you there is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:11)

Angels are simply people who, during their lives on earth, went through the process of spiritual regeneration, and now serve the Lord in helping others to follow the path of life that leads to heaven. They play upon our affections and thoughts, attuning them to heaven's harmonious blend of love and wisdom, so that the music of heaven may resound on earth.

Heaven is distinguished into two kingdoms, which the Writings call "celestial" and "spiritual." These correspond to the two parts of the human mind, the will and the understanding – the first being especially responsive to Divine love and goodness, the second to wisdom and the truths by which love makes itself known. It is angels of the lower or "spiritual" heaven, closer to earth, who are said to play upon harps.

Truths are distinct, particular, "discrete" – like the strings of instruments such as harps, which represent an affection for truth, or worship of the Lord from that affection.

Good, on the other hand, is more flowing and "continuous," and worship inspired by it is represented by wind instruments, the sound of which has a more "celestial" quality.

Although a harp is a stringed instrument, and thus belongs to the "spiritual"

class of instruments, the sound it makes when the strings are strummed has a soft, flowing, peaceful quality about it. Remember how David soothed Saul's troubled breast by playing upon a harp.

One truth alone does not constitute wisdom any more than one note makes music, or one string a harp. So the angel who announced the Lord's birth to the shepherds was joined by "a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

"Praise the Lord with the harp," the Psalmist says. "Make melody to Him with an instrument of ten strings." The number "ten" signifies *all*. (*Doctrine of Life 61*) Love and a desire to do good gathers all truths together and orders them, building a "harp" in our minds so that we might "play skillfully" and "sing a new song" to the Lord. (*Psalm 33*)

The phrase "harps of gold" in the Christmas carol is not found in Scripture, but it is appropriate because "gold" in the Word represents love, and "harps" represent the truths expressive of love. And these two symbols, harps and gold, do appear together in the vision of the "twenty-four elders" worshipping the Lord, "each with a harp, and golden bowls full of incense." (*Revelation 5:4*)

Those who love good, love the truths that teach it – especially truths about the Lord, who is the Source of all goodness. "Playing on harps of gold" is a beautiful and poetic way of describing the delight the angels feel in communicating to others the love and thanksgiving they feel toward the Lord for being the Savior of the world. It is the joy of their life. In fact, it *is* their life.

To "touch" spiritually means to communicate. The angels desire nothing more than to share with others the truths that have brought them such joy – for, as they say: "Love consists in feeling the joy of another as joy in oneself." And is not that very saying a note from a golden harp that touches us? (*Angelic Wisdom Regarding Divine Love and Wisdom 47*)

Just as the strings of a harp must be connected at each end to the frame of the instrument, so truths must be attached to good; spiritual and natural good. A good will – a desire for what is true and right, useful and kind – forms the mental framework upon which the truths of faith are strung, connecting our earthly lives here below with the life of heaven above; and with the Lord, who *is* the life of heaven.

The Lord's ways are higher than our ways, and His thoughts than our thoughts. But He "bowed the heavens and came down." He humbly accommodated Himself to our low, natural condition, and "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." (*Psalm 18:9; John 1:14*)

He was meek and lowly in heart. He came, not to be served, but to serve others. He bends to the weak and fallen in order to bend them to Himself. The bruised reed He does not break, but gently bends. He reaches out even to those

who have made their bed in hell and spares no effort to lift them up.

The angels, following His example, also bend down to be with us even in our low states of contrariness, doubt and despair – to touch and awaken whatever there is of innocence in us. They know that the Lord in His providence preserves grains of goodness in everyone, and they are very good at finding them.

It is important to remember that the angels were once earth-dwellers like us, and that if we look to the Lord and respond affirmatively to the truths of His Word, then we can join with them as instruments of His peace when they bend near the earth to touch their harps of gold.

(WEO)

THE CALL TO HUMILITY

We live in a culture that glories in power and scorns weakness. A man who projects confidence and strength is hailed as a hero; a humble man may be seen as a wimp. But we pray that all power be given to the Lord: “For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory.” And what does the Lord require of us but “to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God.”

The Lord asks us to humble ourselves before Him not to exert power over us but because this is the way we open ourselves to be lifted by Him into heaven. His love flows only into humble, repentant hearts that shun evil and willingly follow Him. But it isn’t always easy to answer the call to humility.

Consider the many examples in the Word of people asked to change their lives to serve Him:

- Moses became the greatest leader in the Old Testament but he was a simple man tending his father-in-law’s flock when the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a burning bush, which was not consumed by the fire. He was called by the Lord to appeal to the Pharaoh and lead his captive people out of Egypt. Moses protested that he was not the man for the job. “They will not believe me, nor harken unto my voice.” But the Lord gave him signs and said He would teach him what to say. Moses reluctantly agreed, changed his life, and came to be the great leader of the Children of Israel.
- The young child Samuel heard his name called in the night and went to the elderly priest Eli, whom he served. Eli said he had not called and by the third time realized it was the Lord calling Samuel. He told the boy that if he heard the call again he should say, “Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth.” In the morning Eli summoned Samuel to ask what had happened in the night, then said: “It is the Lord; let Him do what seems to Him good.” So Samuel willingly accepted his role, knowing that the

Lord was with him. And all of Israel knew that he was called to be a prophet of the Lord.

- Isaiah was terrified by a vision of the Lord on His throne and felt unworthy. A seraphim flew to him and placed a live, burning coal on his mouth, saying, “Thine iniquity is taken away and thy sin purged.” Then Isaiah “heard the voice of the Lord saying: Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Isaiah knew that what he was being asked to do would not be easy, but he readily answered: “Hear I am. Send me.”
- In one of the most beautiful stories in the Word, the Angel Gabriel surprises the virgin Mary with startling news: “Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women.” Mary is understandably troubled but the angel tells her, “fear not,” that she has “found favor with God” and would bring forth a son and call His name Jesus. She did not understand since she “knew not a man,” but was assured that “the Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee.” Mary did not protest that she was not worthy but said simply: “Behold the handmaiden of the Lord. Be it unto me according to Thy Word.” And when she visited her cousin Elizabeth, also unexpectedly with child (John the Baptist), she humbly accepted her role: “My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. For He has regarded the low estate of His handmaiden. . . . For He that is mighty hath done to me great things, and holy is His name.”

These are inspiring stories of men and women putting their own egos aside when called by the Lord and answering the call to humility. We are likewise called – not as dramatically but every bit as purposefully – knowing that as we walk humbly with the Lord He is always with us.

As the Rev. W. Cairns Henderson wrote in a *New Church Life* editorial in 1970: “The truly humble man is neither cringing servile before his God nor fawningly subservient to other men. It is part of his humility to compel himself to do good, to obey the Lord’s commands, and to speak the truth; and he who does this can act no otherwise but with confidence, decision and vigor, which yet are not grounded in self. Indeed, it is the truly humble man who alone walks the earth with dignity; for his head is uplifted to the Lord and his is the full stature of a man. It is the humble man, the man of the earth, with whom the Lord dwells on high.”

That is living justly, loving mercy, walking humbly with God. That is strength.

(BMH)

BORN TO BE A MESSENGER

Guest Editorial: Pastor's Message in *The Bryn Athyn Post*

The Rev. Solomon J. Keal

Assistant to the Pastor, Bryn Athyn Church

I like to reflect on the fact that the word “angel” means “messenger.” When the Writings tell us that we are all born to become angels, we often think about that in terms of the fact that we are born to live in heaven. (See *True Christian Religion* 612) But we can also think about it in terms of what an angel is: We are all born to be messengers.

With that in mind, we can ask ourselves: what is the message that we want to be carrying in our lives? What is the message that we send with our words and actions? This kind of thinking can help us to examine our own lives and think more purposefully about what we say and do, and work on the reformation needed to grow into the angel (messenger) we want to be.

But we can also think about *other people* as messengers in our lives. This year, many General Church societies are doing the *Mindful Communication Challenge* Journey series. The first week is called, “Am I listening?” A big part of our spiritual growth is learning how to listen more carefully to the Lord's Word, and also to other people's words.

One way that I've found to help me do this is to remember that everybody in my life is a potential messenger (angel). I can ask myself: what is the message that this person is bringing into my life today? Maybe it's a message of love and compassion, because that person is reminding me about my good qualities when I'm feeling discouraged. Maybe the message is that I need to keep practicing forgiveness, and this person is giving me the opportunity to do so.

Maybe the message is about gratitude, because of something that someone has done for me. Maybe the message is about persistence, because I see someone who somehow keeps going while facing difficult challenges. Maybe the message is about self-examination because I see myself reflected in someone else. Maybe the message is about compassion for others because I see someone who is in need of care and love:

When people who are perceptive have feelings of compassion they know that they are being alerted by the Lord to offer help. (*Arcana Coelestia* 6737)

Whether I'm reading the Word or interacting with the people in my life, I can ask myself: what is the potential message (angel) that the Lord is putting right in front of me?

For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. (*Psalms* 91:11)

Letter to the Editors

Letters may be sent to the Editors of *New Church Life* at
Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009
or e-mailed to Bruce.Henderson@newchurch.org.

A New Churchman's Concerns

To The Editors:

I would like to take this opportunity to comment on several issues in *New Church Life*, July/August 2016:

The first is in regard to the letter from Martin Klein who takes issue with Peter Boericke on the question of female priests and asks: "With prayer for guidance from the Lord Himself (that is, from the Divine **Word** itself) and months of exacting counsel from the Lord's most dedicated disciples living today, could there be any wiser guidance, in Providence, than that rendered by Bishop Keith?"

Much as the General Church puts great faith, and rightly so, in its bishop and clergy, I am concerned that words such as this can be interpreted by young people, new members and interested persons, as apparently imbuing these persons with special, almost divine powers. The truth is, of course, that these dedicated servants of the Church are, like everyone else, struggling to regenerate and they are subject to errors of judgment like the rest of us.

I would have to ask Mr. Klein why it is that these dedicated "disciples" working from the same Word of the Divine Human are divided on the question of women priests? The answer would seem to me to be that the Word does not directly address the issue and that the answer is subject to interpretation regardless of the prayers offered and the counsel given by our clergy.

Prior to the Bishop announcing that he would seek counsel from his clergy, it might be remembered that a lengthy article by Rev. Bruce Rogers appeared in *New Church Life* against women priests. I was disappointed that much of the article was highly subjective, being based on a personal view of the world. I did not think that Rev. Rogers' statements stood up to rational analysis.

I have just re-read the article by Mr. Boericke and feel that his questions

are valid, and that Mr. Klein has misunderstood him and is now taking what he said out of context. It seems to me that Mr. Boericke was not querying the underlying doctrines on which the General Church is based but the interpretation of doctrine by fallible men and other attitudes which may be counterproductive to growth.

The second issue I would like to comment on is that raised by the Rev. Gerald Waters (May/June 2016 – “*Surely We Are Not Swedenborgians*”) and now responded to in the July/August issue by Heulwen Ridgway and Joseph David. Mr. Waters is concerned about the increasing use of terms such as *Swedenborg* and *Swedenborgianism* rather than the *New Church*, *The New Christian Church* or the *Word*. As he states, the “bottom line is that if we keep stressing the importance of, and belief in, what Swedenborg says or teaches, we will be undermining the growth of the Lord’s New Christian Church on earth . . . “

I completely endorse Mr. Waters’ comments and also those made by Heulwen and Joseph. I would add that we should not use the term “*the heavenly doctrines*” as a pseudonym for “*The Word*.” Increasingly in recent times the former has been used and it is a move away from the strength of using the term “*The Word*.” It implies man’s interpretation and perhaps a desire to make the General Church blend in more with other religions. “*The Word*” on the other hand proudly proclaims the truth, which is the very basis of the General Church: they **are** the Word, they are the Lord in His Glorified Divine Human.

I am, of course, talking about the general descriptor “*the heavenly doctrines*” as a term for the Word as a whole. I recognise that some books of the Word use the term “doctrine” in their titles, but even so, I would suggest they not be given the descriptor “the heavenly doctrines.”

I have been most concerned over many years at the way in which the General Church has been moving away from that very principle of faith that gives it the very reason for its existence. It is this which Mr. Waters is concerned about. It seems to me that our increasing failure to strongly acknowledge the Divinity of the New Word is either from a lack of understanding of what the so-called Writings of Swedenborg really are and a lack of appreciation of our prime belief, or that it is thought that by hiding our light we will blend in with others and so attract more membership.

Whatever the reason, I do hope that the church leadership, which has done nothing for a long time about this, now takes strong action to rectify matters. I hope, too, that many others will express their concern and support for Mr. Waters in *New Church Life* so that perhaps the church will take notice.

The third matter I wish to raise is the review by the Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss Sr. in the July/August *New Church Life* of the book, *The Abridged Arcana Coelestia*, written by Dr. Willard Mansfield.

I have known both Peter and Willard all my life, as their mothers, both Ridgways, were first cousins of my father. As well, Willard's grandfather, "JH", played a large part in bringing the Durban Society into the General Church.

Admittedly I have not read Dr. Mansfield's book, but from reading Bishop Buss's review it seems to me that we need to be very cautious about its merit.

We all know that the New Word is just that: namely the Lord in His Glorified Divine Human. Thus there is an internal sense to every word that is written. That sense is hidden within the literal sense that we read on the pages.

In *Heaven and Hell No. 1* it is stated: "But those who so believe do not know the arcana which lie concealed in every particular of the Word. For in every particular of the Word there is an internal sense which treats of things spiritual and heavenly, not of things natural and worldly, such as are treated in the sense of the letter. And this is true not only of the meaning of groups of words, it is true of each particular word."

In *De Domino (Concerning The Lord)* Preface 9, it is stated: "But they are to be excused who do not know anything about the style of the Word, that there is a spiritual sense within every single word."

There are also numerous statements in the Word which state that one cannot see the internal sense without enlightenment from the Lord, that is regeneration. See, for example, *Arcana Coelestia* 8106, which states, "the internal sense cannot be comprehended by anyone that is not regenerated." (See also *Arcana Coelestia* 10323, 10551.)

It would appear that Dr. Mansfield, contrary to what the Lord has stated in His Word, has decided which parts of the Word have an internal sense and should be read, and other parts which have not and may be given scant attention or left out. This would seem to be a dangerous assumption for it is not up to man to decide what has an internal sense or not.

In addition, I wonder to what extent this work will discourage others from reading any more than what he has written; will readers of the shortened version ever read the original, longer version given by the Lord? Then, too, there is the matter of the effect it has on the heavens when we read the Word, even if we do not understand it. But the point is that Dr. Mansfield, probably inadvertently, is discouraging people from reading part of what the Lord has given as His Word and which does have a bearing both on what precedes and what follows.

I was also most surprised to read that Bishop Buss seems to think that some parts of the Word are better suited to scholars. I had always been under the impression that every word of the Lord's Word is meant for everyone. We are even told that simple people are often better able to understand than those who are scholarly. This advice, this warning, applies to all Revelation, the New as well as the former.

I certainly acknowledge the work that Dr. Mansfield has put into this abridged version but do want to draw attention to the pitfalls that seem inherent in its publication, to query the use to which the book will be put, and also wish to draw attention to the harm it may cause to the use of the original version. It is perhaps appropriate to remind ourselves that it was on the publication and reading of the full, original version of the *Arcana Coelestia*, that the truths of the New Church were first acknowledged and a new dispensation born.

Name withheld by request from online publication.

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HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is, of course, identical with the One God, Jesus Christ our Lord. It is the proceeding Divine which instructs, enlightens, reforms and regenerates man, and is therefore the Divine truth from which is man's spiritual life. As the Writings point out, therefore, it is not a God by itself, but the operation of the one God in performing these uses. Note that by the Holy Spirit is meant a Divine operation that could not take place before the glorification. (See *Arcana Coelestia* 9818; *Divine Love and Wisdom* 149; *Canons* HS i.)

Every Stone Shall Cry

How the Holy Land Itself Rejoiced at the Lord's Birth

The Rev. Jeremy F. Simons

*Lessons: Deuteronomy 28:9,11-12; Luke 2:1-7, 19:37,38,40
Arcana Coelestia 1447, 6516; Divine Love and Wisdom 345*

Jesus answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out." *Luke 19.40*

The stones did not cry out as the Lord entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Nor did they cry out when the Lord was born on Christmas Day. There were people who did not keep silent but rejoiced at His coming. But on Christmas Day there is a sense in which not only the human race but all of creation rejoices as the God of the universe is born into the world.

The inclusion of all of creation in the joy of Christmas is reflected in the imagery of the messianic prophecies, in many of our Christmas hymns, and in the teachings of the Heavenly Doctrines. Isaiah wrote:

Break forth into singing, you mountains, O forest, and every tree in it! For the LORD has redeemed Jacob, and glorified Himself in Israel. (*Isaiah 44:23*)

We also sing:

Joy to the world, the Lord is come, let earth receive her king . . . while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains repeat the sounding joy.

Mountains, fields, forests and trees can't actually rejoice, sing or repeat the sounding joy. But the truth is that every part of creation is connected together in a beautiful and miraculous way. The Incarnation is not just about us but about the whole world. His coming affects even the physical earth itself.

Our topic on this Christmas morning is the way that the Lord brought salvation to the world as a single entity, the sense in which all of creation participates in the joy of Christmas.

One of our most-loved Christmas hymns is "*Calm on the Listening Ear of*

Night.” Both the words and music were written in the 19th century by people who loved the Heavenly Doctrines, and understood this principle. The hymn describes how Palestine itself welcomed the Lord’s coming and responded to the near presence of heaven when He was born. *“The answering hills of Palestine send back the glad reply, and greet from all their holy heights the Dayspring from on high.”*

In one sense the images of the ancient prophecies are nothing but ways of describing what really only happens spiritually in human hearts. We are told that the Word is about *“such things as belong to heaven, to the church, and to religious belief.”* (*Arcana Coelestia* 2) We read: *“A field cannot rejoice and trees in the forest cannot sing; only something in us can do so, and that something is religious knowledge.”* (*Ibid.* 368)

At the same time all created things are means of fulfilling the Lord’s purposes, and there is actual intention and purpose behind everything that exists and what those things do:

This vast system called the universe is a work connected as one thing from beginning to end because God had a single purpose in creating it: an angelic heaven populated by the human race. All the things that make up the world are means of fulfilling that purpose, because someone who intends an end result also intends the means to achieve it. (*True Christianity* 13)

The fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains did not themselves have any intention of welcoming the Lord, nor did they feel any joy at His birth. But as instruments of the Lord’s intentions and purposes they are part of the joy of their fulfillment, and that joy is both real and tangible. They are affected and become better instruments by His coming.

The best way to understand this may be to grasp what was holy about the Holy Land, since this is the land that is said to be rejoicing at the Lord’s birth.

Although the truth is that there is no such thing as a holy land, because holiness does not truly pertain to any physical object, material things do correspond to heavenly things. This correspondential connection is more

Mountains, fields, forests and trees can’t actually rejoice, sing or repeat the sounding joy. But the truth is that every part of creation is connected together in a beautiful and miraculous way. The Incarnation is not just about us but about the whole world. His coming affects even the physical earth itself.

The reason that all of these things are described in such detail is not just that they make a good story, but because they describe how the Lord is born in His kingdom and in your life.

important and powerful than people would guess. Canaan was holy because it represented the Lord's kingdom, and so this was where the Lord would be born.

The events that happened in Canaan and are recorded in the Word stood for the progress of the human race toward, or away from, the happiness and peace of heaven. Because of this all the parts of that land were given names that related to that progress, as we read:

From the most ancient times all the places there – provinces, and cities, and mountains, and rivers – had been representative of such things as belong to the Lord's kingdom; and the very names that were given them involved such things. For every name given from heaven to any place, and also to any person, involves what is celestial and spiritual; and when it has been given from heaven, it is perceived there. (*Arcana Coelestia* 6516)

This passage says that the names in Canaan were actually given from heaven. This meant that when these names were used, spoken, written or read, they were, and are, perceived in heaven according to their meaning. So the progress of the Children of Israel was perceived as the progress of the Church, and the love to the Lord and the neighbor that the Church stands for.

The truly amazing part is that this set up a miraculous relationship between heaven and the Holy Land. Heaven with its blessings drew near or receded from the Children of Israel according to the angels' perception of what was happening in the land. The effect of this is seen throughout the Old Testament. We read:

The state of the land of Canaan, as described in the Word, was that when the children of Israel lived according to the commandments the earth yielded its increase, likewise the flocks and herds; but when they lived contrary to the commandments the ground was barren, and as it is said, accursed. (*Divine Love and Wisdom* 345)

We also read that:

There was much honey in the land of Canaan at that time, because at that time the Church of the Lord was there. For at that time correspondences exhibited their effects outwardly, since all things of the Israelitish Church consisted of correspondences, which represented and signified things celestial and spiritual. (*Apocalypse Explained* 619.8)

These passages are saying that the land itself actually responded to what was happening in it because of the representative relationship between the Land of Canaan and its inhabitants, and the Lord's kingdom. The rains came, crops grew, flocks and herds, bees and honey multiplied not simply according to the laws of nature but due to the influence of heaven.

The land of Canaan, therefore, with its physical features, flora and fauna, and the patterns of its weather, takes on real importance in the stories of the Word. When characters or groups move around in the land their names and the names of the places are repeated over and over again.

The Christmas story itself dwells on these movements and the names of the places involved. The angel Gabriel visits Mary in Nazareth in Galilee, she then travels to the hill country of Judea; the census takes Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem, where the Lord is born. The shepherds are in the same country, but out in the fields with their flocks. The wise men from the East come to Jerusalem, then Bethlehem, then to their own country by another way. Mary and Joseph flee to Egypt until the death of Herod then return to Israel, and end up in Galilee. Significance is attached to these names in the text, noting prophecies that tell of Bethlehem, Egypt and Nazareth.

The reason that all of these things are described in such detail is not just that they make a good story, but because they describe how the Lord is born in His kingdom and in your life.

Nazareth in Galilee, for example, describes a state of darkness and ignorance, and a longing for the truth. (*Apocalypse Explained* 447.5) A virgin there describes a pure love for the truth. (*Arcana Coelestia* 54) The journey to Bethlehem is about your internal progression from external interests to more interior ones. (*Ibid.* 4585) The escape to Egypt is about your instruction. (*Apocalypse Explained* 654.19) The places stand for the spiritual journey that is involved in the Lord's birth with every person – differently with each one, yet described in a way that applies to everyone.

Nazareth, the hill country of Judea, Bethlehem and its surrounding fields, Jerusalem and other places each played their part in welcoming the Lord into the world. The heavens were actually near to those places as the Lord was born, and in the events that preceded and followed the event. The places

The places [in the Christmas story] stand for the spiritual journey that is involved in the Lord's birth with every person – differently with each one, yet described in a way that applies to everyone.



themselves were affected in the same way that they were affected by the symbolic actions of the Israelites.

The miraculous correspondential relationship between the land itself and the heavens dissipated after the Lord's coming. We are told that "after the Lord had come into the world those representations vanished." (*True Christianity* 109) The reason they vanished was that by His coming into the world the Lord restored love itself on a large scale to the world. He brought a light into the world that did not exist before and that leads people clearly to His goodness. The angels therefore no longer draw near to the symbols so much as to the genuine love to the Lord and charity to the neighbor that they perceive in the human race.

For when a person worships the Lord in faith and love for Him, which are internal things, he has no need of the external things serving to mean them; for then those internal things themselves reside with him, and not types and shadows of them. (*Arcana Coelestia* 10637)

Still, the blessings that the presence of heaven brought to Israel have not vanished. The mechanism that made Israel a "land of milk and honey" still operates worldwide. But rather than applying in an openly miraculous manner immediately to the specific symbolic actions of the "*Chosen People*" in the "*Holy Land*" they apply in much subtler long-term ways to everyone in every part of the universe. Simply put, when heaven is more closely joined to the human race, everything works better.

Many of us have concerns about climate change and other aspects of the welfare of our planet and its population. The message here is that everything is affected in a positive way by the Lord's coming.

As we read above:

"This vast system called the universe is a work connected as one thing from beginning to end because God had a single purpose in creating it: an angelic heaven populated by the human race. All the things that make up the world are means of fulfilling that purpose." (*True Christianity* 13)

This applies to climate change, to our efforts against disease and hunger, to every aspect of human life. It is not just that better people will be better stewards of the world and more conscientious players in these struggles, although that is part of it. The closer presence of heaven will literally change the face of the earth – not in any obviously miraculous way, but slowly, according to the laws of nature and the miracles that go on silently and continually everywhere on earth. The universe is a work connected as one thing from beginning to end. The light and love that the Lord brought into the world changes everything.

Nothing is more important in the world, therefore, than for the human race to receive the Lord, to hear and believe His words, to love and obey them on a large scale. We may doubt that this will ever happen, but the confident statements of the prophets reflect the teaching that this really will take place.

You shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace. The mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing before you. And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. (*Isaiah* 55.12)

It is true that heaven and nature sing to receive the Lord at His birth. The hills of Palestine answer the celestial choirs. The palm trees wave in silent praise, as the song of solemn joy sweeps o'er Judah's sacred hills. Had the crowds kept silent, the stones themselves really would have cried out.

A stable lamp is lighted whose glow shall wake the sky
The stars shall bend their voices and every stone shall cry
And every stone shall cry though heavy, dull and dumb
And lie within the roadway to pave the Kingdom come

And every stone shall cry in praises of the Child
By whose descent among us the worlds are reconciled.

(“A Stable Lamp is Lighted” by Richard Wilbur)

The closer presence of heaven will literally change the face of the earth – not in any obviously miraculous way, but slowly, according to the laws of nature and the miracles that go on silently and continually everywhere on earth.



The Rev. Jeremy F. Simons is semi-retired and serves as the Chaplain of the Bryn Athyn Cathedral. Most recently he served as pastor of the Bryn Athyn Church, and has also served in Glenview, Illinois, and Kempton, Pennsylvania. He and his wife, Allyn (Edmonds), live in Bryn Athyn. Contact: Jeremy.Simons@brynathynchurch.org

A Horn of Salvation in the House of David

Foreshadowing of the Christmas Story in the Old Testament

The Rev. Kurt Hy. Asplundh

Blessed is the Lord God of Israel,
For He has visited and worked redemption for His people,
And has raised up a horn of salvation for us
In the house of His servant David.
(*Luke 1: 68-69*)

I have had the good fortune the past few years of teaching religion to the sixth grade at the Bryn Athyn Church School. The sixth-grade religion curriculum in the General Church is a study of the *Books of Kings* (along with some of the historical prophets). It is another fortunate circumstance that this is the curriculum since I'd say those historical books might have been (before I started) the part of the Letter of the Word with which I was least familiar. So I've had a good chance to refresh and catch up.

In my first year of teaching, we were getting close to Christmas and we'd gotten to the 13th chapter of the *First Book of Kings*. I was trying to make some progress in the curriculum before we put things on hold for a week's worth of holiday-focused material before the break. So I printed out a chapter or two that I was simply going to read aloud while the kids attended to whatever classroom handwork they were finishing up.

What actually happens in chapter 13 of *First Kings* is a little too intricate and involved to fully describe in this space. For our purposes, we need only know that a man of God travels "by the word of Jehovah" from Judah to Jeroboam's altar to a golden calf at Bethel:

And [the man of God] called against the altar by the word of Jehovah, and said, "O altar, altar, thus says Jehovah, 'Behold a son shall be born to the house of David, Josiah his name . . .'" (*I Kings 13:2*)

I had reviewed the text a little before reading it out loud in the classroom that day, but it was striking to read those words, in that moment, about “a son born to the house of David” while 11- and 12-year-olds were quietly busy around me with Christmastime preparations. Here I thought we were working our way through the narrative of the dark (and darkening) past of Israel and then something suddenly turns up that sounds a lot like it could be talking about the Lord’s birth into the world (leaving aside the fact that King Josiah is explicitly named in the prophecy). With just this one little nugget in mind, there was a little extra richness added to my own reflections on the Lord’s birth that December.

So that has led to further study of what other “foreshadowings” to the Christmas story there may be in the *Books of Kings*. Is there more in those historical books that could add further richness and dimension to the familiar advent stories in Scripture?

Another clear example (and a connection that the Heavenly Doctrines make explicit in several passages) is the symmetry we see between the story of the wise men in *Matthew 2* and the visit of the Queen of Sheba. In both cases there was a journey from the east to Jerusalem in search of a fabled king; in both cases gifts were brought that included gold and spices as gifts (see *I Kings 10*); and in the both cases there is a theme of wonder and wisdom: “That wisdom flourished in Arabia, appears from the Queen of Sheba’s journey to Solomon . . . also from the three wise men who came to the newborn Jesus, a star going before them . . .” (*Coronis 41*)

And there are other seeming pre-echoes of the Christmas story to be found in the histories of the *Books of Kings*:

Just as Zacharias, Mary and Joseph were all visited, guided and encouraged by angels, so was the prophet Elijah in his flight from Jezebel to Mount Horeb. [*I Kings 19: 5-8*]

When “horses and chariots of fire” appeared reassuringly “all around Elisha” (*II Kings 6: 17*), it prefigured the “multitude of the heavenly host” that appeared to the shepherds living out in the fields “praising God” on the night that the Lord was born. (*Luke 2: 13-14*)

And although it would bear more study (and more discussion than we can go into here), I believe there are distinct (and maybe even intentional?) connections to be found between Solomon’s prayer of dedication at the opening of the temple in Jerusalem (*I Kings 8: 14-53*) and the words of thanksgiving and praise spoken by Simeon in a rebuilt version of that same temple as he held the Infant Jesus in his arms. (*Luke 2: 25-35*)

Each of these and more could serve well as examples of how all of the stories from the Old Testament, in one way or another, are prophetic of the Lord’s coming into the world and might add depth to our appreciation of the

well-loved stories describing how the Lord's birth took place. Of all of these though, references to King David and to his lineal "house" are the only ones that occur throughout both *Books of Kings* (from the beginning of *First Kings* to nearly the end of *Second Kings*) and also in both the *Luke* and *Matthew* accounts of the Lord's birth.

The epigraph of this article is the opening of the prophetic words spoken by the priest Zacharias after his "tongue was loosed" at the naming of his son John, just months before the birth of the Lord in Bethlehem. What would it have meant at the time (and how might we understand it more fully now) when Zacharias described the miraculous events occurring at that time as a "the Lord God of Israel . . . [raising] a horn of salvation . . . in the house of His servant David"?

As an historical character King David lives on into the narrative of the *Books of Kings*, but only for a chapter and a half. In the first two chapters of *First Kings*, we see David's son Solomon assuming his father's throne and consolidating his reign. But it is only by the appointment of the dying King David, and with David's advice, that Solomon did so.

In this account, we can see acted out in history what we are told in the Heavenly Doctrine about David "especially" representing the Lord as a king of Israel "because he had much care of the matters of the church." (*Apocalypse Explained* 205) It is reported that when news came to him of Solomon's anointing as king (despite the efforts of a rival), David (near death) "bowed himself on the bed" and said, "Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Israel, who has given one to sit on my throne this day . . ." (*I Kings* 1: 48)

Then, just before he passed on, David gave advice to his son, the new King Solomon beginning with these words: "Keep the charge of Jehovah your God, to walk in His ways." (*I Kings* 2: 3) Here we find David setting what will be a hundreds-of-years example as a king in Israel whose most distinguishing characteristic was his devotion to the Lord.

David appears remarkably but briefly in the first few pages of the *Books of Kings* and in verse 10 of the second chapter, it is reported that he "rested with his fathers" and was buried. But that is not the last we hear of David and his legacy in the *Books of Kings* – far from it.

The signal achievement of David's son Solomon's reign was his building of a temple at Jerusalem, a temple that David himself had proposed to build during his own lifetime. In the eighth chapter of *First Kings*, a dedication ceremony is described, where the Ark of the Covenant was moved from the tabernacle and placed in its new sanctuary in the temple. Solomon addressed the people and offered a long prayer to the Lord.

We might say that it was on that day that the kingdom of Israel reached its height, living not just in peace and prosperity but with a temple dedicated

to the Lord at its center. A seven-day feast followed and then Solomon sent everyone home, and although it is said that they “blessed the king” we also read that the people “went to their tents, glad and good of heart on account of all the goodness that Jehovah had done to David his servant, and to Israel His people” (*I Kings* 8: 66)

The building of the temple had been a seven-year project early in Solomon’s reign, which means that David had been gone for at least that long. Yet it is still David, seven or more years later, who is seen as the focus in the kingdom of the blessings the Lord was providing His people.

In the time soon after the death of Solomon, the kingdom was split into two: a northern, 10-tribe kingdom of Israel and a southern kingdom of Judah. Jeroboam, who had been a loyal servant of Solomon, was chosen by the Lord as the first king of the new kingdom of 10 tribes. He was informed of this in a meeting with the prophet Ahijah outside the city of Jerusalem.

Ahijah showed Jeroboam that the kingdom had been “torn” from Solomon and put into his hands. But the Lord also said (as Ahijah declared): “But I will not take all of the kingdom out of [Solomon’s] hand . . . for the sake of David My servant, whom I chose, who kept My commandments and My statutes . . . And to his son will I give one tribe, so that David My servant may have a lamp all the days before My face in Jerusalem.” (*I Kings* 11: 34, 36)

Later in the same meeting, Jeroboam is told by the Lord (again, as Ahijah reports), that “if you . . . will walk in My ways, and do that which is upright in My eyes . . . as did David My servant, I will be with you and will build you a faithful house, as I built for David.” (*I Kings* 11: 38) In other words, now a second generation removed from King David and his reign, he still remained a central figure (or even, arguably, THE central figure) in the history of Israel and its kings.

Because Solomon’s heart had been turned away from the Lord in his later years, the whole kingdom was taken away from his son, King Rehoboam, but not entirely – because of David. And a promise was made that the new breakaway kingdom could endure if its kings follow the Lord – just like David.

The northern kingdom did not, in the end, endure. We have seen (in the story that I was reading out loud to those sixth-graders about the man of God’s curse), that King Jeroboam had established worship of golden calves as a way of keeping his people from traveling to worship at the temple in Jerusalem. In fact, in the line of kings of the northern kingdom, not a single one was ever described as doing what was right in the Lord’s sight (as David had done!) and eventually the kingdom fell to the Assyrians.

But the legend of David as the exemplary king in Israel was never forgotten in the southern kingdom of Judah. There were some Judean kings in the line descended from David who managed to do what was right, but one of the

worst of them was King Jehoram, son-in-law of Ahab (who was himself one of the worst if not the very worst king in the history of Israel). And although Jehoram, “walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab had done . . . and he did evil in the sight of Jehovah” yet, “Jehovah was not willing to destroy Judah, for the sake of David his servant . . . to give to him a lamp for his sons all the days.” (*II Kings* 8: 18-19)

A few generations later, King Amaziah did better, but only somewhat better. He “did what was upright in the eyes Jehovah, only not as David his father.” (*II Kings* 14: 3) In the end, after some 20 kings in the house of David, there were only two, near the end of the line, who were described as measuring up to David. These two great kings (both of whom courageously attempted a revolution of doing away with pagan worship and returning to the sole worship of Jehovah) were Hezekiah (“he did that which was upright in the eyes of Jehovah, according to all that David his father had done”) (*II Kings* 18: 3), and Josiah (“ . . .he did what was upright in the eyes of Jehovah, and walked in all the ways of David his father.” (*II Kings* 22: 2)

King David had reigned in Israel for 40 years, but these last paragraphs showing how his memory continued and his legend was sustained, depict a strong influence for more like 400 years. Despite the reforms of the great and David-like kings Hezekiah and Josiah, Judah also fell to the Babylonians.

Later, the prophet Zechariah, who was part of the restoration of Jerusalem and the first rebuilding of the temple under the Persians, does make reference to the house of David in his prophecies (e.g. “. . . the house of David shall be as God.” (*Zechariah* 12: 8) But still about 500 years go by without a Scriptural record of how David and his royal line were spoken or thought of.

But then (as we see in the first chapter of the *Gospel of Luke*) the angel Gabriel came to old Zacharias the priest, taking his turn burning incense in the rebuilt temple at Jerusalem, and when Gabriel’s promise was realized and Zacharias’s wife Elizabeth bore a son named John, we see in Zacharias’s words that the memory of “the house of David” had not dimmed and if anything would soon be restored and raised to even greater, unimagined glory: “Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and worked redemption for His people, and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David.” (*Luke* 1: 68-69)

We know from both genealogy in *Matthew* 1 and in the account in *Luke* 2 of Joseph and Mary’s journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, that Joseph was “of the house and lineage of David.” The Lord had no earthly father, so it is probably well that we tend to think of Joseph as a just but humble man. But his role in the story is an important one, and not just as one who facilitated key events.

In ostensible compliance with imperial legal requirements, Joseph traveled with his pregnant, betrothed wife Mary from Nazareth, to Bethlehem, the “City of David,” his ancestral home. But this was not just the result of a decree from Caesar Augustus; it was a culmination of a thousand years of hopeful and expectant history in Israel.

The man of God in his curse on Jeroboam’s pagan altar had taught Israel to expect redemption in the house of David. Now, a true Redeemer was being born with a direct connection to that same house of David.

Last December, I sat in the darkened cathedral in Bryn Athyn, enjoying the Christmas tableaux service. The narration came to the part where an angel came to Joseph in a dream and explained to him that he should not fear to take Mary as his wife because “that which is begotten in her is of the Holy Spirit.” (*Matthew 1: 29*)

Having recently done a lot of the study included in this article, I took special note of the way the angel first addressed Joseph in that visitation: “Joseph, son of David . . .” It is remarkable that this is the only time in any of the gospels that anyone other than the Lord is addressed as “son of David.” Fifteen times in the gospels the Lord is called “the son of David”; this one time in Joseph’s dream is the only other time it’s used.

What is also remarkable, of course, is the connection made by that name to that thousand years of history that we see illustrated vividly in the *Books of Kings*, where David and his house are singled out as particularly beloved by the Lord and surpassingly loyal in their walking in the Lord’s ways.

When the angel called Joseph “son of David” he was receiving an awesome responsibility to provide care and protection for Mary and for her Son – the horn of salvation in the house of David.



The Rev. Kurt Hy. Asplundh is retired but teaches theology in the Bryn Athyn College Theological School and sixth-grade religion at the Bryn Athyn Church School. He also gives chapel services occasionally in the Academy of the New Church Secondary Schools. He lives with his wife, Jenn (Coffin), in Bryn Athyn. Contact: kasplundh@yahoo.com

This Changes Everything

Charter Day Address, Bryn Athyn Cathedral,
October 14, 2016

The Rev. Stephen D. Cole

Lessons: *Isaiah 65:17-25; Revelation 21:1-5; True Christian Religion 784*

In our lessons and in our recitation we heard repeatedly about things that were new: new heavens and a new earth, the New Jerusalem and the New Church. What have all these new things to do with what we are celebrating today? For today we commemorate something that happened many years ago, the granting of the Charter of the Academy of the New Church. And indeed, let us pause for a bit to consider just how long ago.

Some people, even here in town, think of the Academy as the Bryn Athyn Secondary Schools. Some people remember that Bryn Athyn College is also part of the Academy as well. Bryn Athyn has been around for a while now. In fact, the town is celebrating its centennial this year. But the Academy is actually older than Bryn Athyn. When the Charter was granted, the Academy was, in fact, in Philadelphia.

Some people think of the Academy as the educational arm of the General Church of the New Jerusalem. The General Church is older than Bryn Athyn. But the Academy is also actually older than the General Church. When Bryn Athyn became a borough, the Academy was already 40 years old. When the present General Church was started, the Academy was already 20 years old.

So if the Academy did not start as the Bryn Athyn school system and the Academy did not start as the General Church school system, what did it start as? When the Academy started it was independent of any church. When the Academy started it was intended to be a revolution.

We sit today in a building that is 100 years old. But as we entered through the West door we walked under the words "*Nunc Licet*" – now it is permitted. So what is now permitted? What is now permitted is to think in new ways. This is what the founders of the Academy wanted to do. They wanted to learn

to think in new ways and to live lives shaped by their new modes of thought. And they wanted to convince other people to do so as well. They wanted to start a revolution. They wanted to change everything.

They weren't just trying to start a revolution in Bryn Athyn; they weren't even in Bryn Athyn. They weren't trying to start a revolution in the General Church; the General Church, as it is today, didn't even exist then. What they wanted was for anyone who would listen to give up their old ways of thinking and to start to learn to think in radically new ways.

The Charter of the Academy begins: "The Academy of the New Church shall be for the purpose of propagating the Heavenly Doctrines of the New Jerusalem and establishing the New Church signified in the Apocalypse by the New Jerusalem." But the New Church that it speaks of was not some particular New Church organization.

The Academy was founded to spread ideas – new ideas – and life and action according to those new ideas. The opening words of the Charter speak of the "New Jerusalem." And here we have returned to our opening theme: The Academy, although it is 140 years ago, was founded and still exists to promote something *new*. So what is this "New Jerusalem"?

The picture of the New Jerusalem comes from a vision that the apostle John described in the final chapters of the Apocalypse, or the book of *Revelation*.

His account begins: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and the sea is no more. And I, John, saw the holy city New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." (*Revelation* 21:1-2)

A new heaven, a new earth, a revolution. And in the midst of this transformation, a New Jerusalem. And this newness is pervasive, for a few verses later the account continues: "And He who sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." All things were to be made new, everything changed.

Many sincere Christians have awaited the day when this prophecy would be fulfilled. Many of them have longed to see the day of the Second Coming of Christ. Many still await that day. And here is the first radical idea of the founders of the Academy: The Second Advent has already happened. The Last Judgment has already taken place.

When the Academy started it was independent of any church. When the Academy started it was intended to be a revolution.

The Heavenly Doctrine asserts, and the New Church believes, that this revolution took place in 1757 – 259 years ago. One era in the history of the world came to an end and a whole new age began.

On the face of it, this seems an outrageous claim. The predictions in the book of *Revelation* seem to call for a whole new world. But John was seeing a *vision*, and that vision revealed a *spiritual* reality, a revolutionary transformation of the *spiritual* condition of humankind.

The Heavenly Doctrine asserts, and the New Church believes, that this revolution took place in 1757 – 259 years ago. One era in the history of the world came to an end and a whole new age began. But who noticed? Few, if any, would have thought that the world

of 1758 was that much different than the world of 1756.

And the short work, the *Last Judgment*, published in 1758, acknowledges this:

The future state of the *world* will be just the same as it has been up to now; for the mighty change which has taken place in the spiritual world does not cause any change in the external appearance of the natural world. So just as before there will be politics, peace treaties, alliances and wars, and all the other general and particular features of society. (*Last Judgment* 73)

The state of the *world* would seem the same, but the spiritual state and the state of the Church would now change, and change dramatically. The passage continues

The future state of the *church*, however, will not be the same. It may seem much the same in outward appearance, but *inwardly* it will be different. . . . People in the church will henceforward have more freedom in thinking about matters of faith, and so about the spiritual matters which have to do with heaven, because of the restoration of spiritual freedom.

Does this explanation perhaps seem somewhat lame? Does it seem to make an excuse whereby New Church teaching can evade the fact that no dramatic change was observable back in 1758?

If our eyes could be opened to the spiritual realities, we would not think so. If we could see the evidence of the spiritual upheaval that took place, we would have no doubt. And this raises another radical idea of the Academy. Many have supposed that the spiritual world – the abode of spirits and angels – if it really exists at all, is a remote place and will be reached only some time after we die. But the world view of the Academy was that the spiritual realm surrounds us constantly and, indeed, affects everything that we think and do.

If one has not encountered this idea before, it can be a shock, but many here today have been thinking from this perspective for so long that they do not realize what a radically different perspective it is.

There are Scriptural stories, however, that can give a glimpse of what it is like to experience this shift. We read, for instance, of the time when the King of Syria feared Elisha, the prophet of God, and sent a great army against him:

And the servant of the man of God got up early to arise, and he went out, and behold, an army was surrounding the city, both horse and chariot, and his young man said unto him, Alas my lord, what shall we do? And he said, Fear not; for they who be with us are more than they who be with them.

And Elisha prayed and said, O Jehovah, open his eyes, I pray, that he may see. And Jehovah opened the eyes of the young man and he saw; and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. (*2 Kings* 6:15-17)

And so too there can be troubled times in our lives, times when we feel alone, and yet, if our spiritual sight were to be opened, we would see the reality of the heavenly army with which the Lord surrounds each one of us.

Again, the book of *Genesis* tells the story of the patriarch Jacob and a journey he took. He stopped to pass the night in a place that clearly did not seem remarkable to him at the time. But as he slept he had a dream, a dream that showed him a vision of a ladder or stairway reaching from earth to heaven, with angels ascending and descending and the Lord above the top. When he awoke, he exclaimed:

How fearsome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of the heavens. (*Genesis* 28:17)

His eyes were opened to recognize the presence of God and the gateway to spiritual reality in this seemingly ordinary place. So too can our eyes be opened if we will let them to see the presence of spiritual forces behind our superficial view of the world around us. Perhaps we can get some idea of what this might be like by thinking about an example even on the purely natural level.

Picture this: Your high school or college class takes a field trip into the autumn wilderness. You follow a naturalist of many years' experience down a woodland path. You try to be observant. You recognize that there are different kinds of trees; you note some leaves taking on their fall color; you see the variety of grass and brush in the understory. Perhaps you notice some late-blooming flowers. But suddenly your guide stops. Pointing some distance from the trail, he says, "vole tracks." You look, but you see nothing. Your party goes to investigate. Even as your guide stands above the spot, you still see nothing. As he bends over and points a twig mere inches from the ground you finally see the tiny indentations, a miniature set of footprints. How did your

The events reported in the Heavenly Doctrine and its teachings made possible the new spiritual age. So in one sense, they have already changed the starting point for everything. But as time goes forward the revolution will reach further specific areas of our lives.

mentor do it? How could anyone see such detail at such a distance?

The Heavenly Doctrine suggests to us: “Thought from the eye closes the understanding, but thought from the understanding opens the eye.” (*Divine Love and Wisdom* 46) Of course this is speaking primarily of having a *spiritual* perspective. But can you see that there is a sense in which it is true even on a strictly natural level? Our naturalist with extensive training and vast experience has a great storehouse of understanding about the natural world. His eyes are opened to see a myriad of exquisite little details in the natural world all around us that we are likely to miss.

If this is true even at the natural level, imagine the details to which your eyes could be opened if you acquired

extensive training and vast experience in looking from the *spiritual* perspective. You could then, in the words of the poet, “see a World in a Grain of Sand and a Heaven in a Wild Flower,” and you could, “Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand and Eternity in an hour.”

These are, of course, broad and metaphorical claims. And we might picture that it would take years to get to this point. But even with the more limited years we have in high school and college a profound shift in perspective can still take place.

Let us go back to the claim that the world did not change in obvious ways in 1757. If we look with keener sight, we may notice that although the state of this world did not change in the course of a day, and it did not in the course of a year, not yet in the course of a decade, the world in which we live today has been transformed during the last 250 years in ways that it was not transformed in all of the human history that went before that.

So on the one hand the *principal* change was not to change our outward condition but to allow for a freer state of thinking and a shift in the motivations from which we can act. And yet, on the other hand, this change over time has produced dramatic differences in the outer world as well.

The events reported in the Heavenly Doctrine and its teachings made possible the new spiritual age. So in one sense, they have already changed the starting point for everything. But as time goes forward the revolution will reach further specific

areas of our lives. So let us just consider a couple of examples of particular ways in which the new revelation has made it possible to open the eyes with fresh understanding.

One example is the teachings about Divine Providence. The New Church can enter into the understanding of history, human events and the lives of individual human beings in terms of the overarching government of Divine Providence. But this, you might object, is not really so new. Surely many Christians, and indeed many from other religions as well, believe that God has a universal government of all these things. And this is just the point: Many recognize God's *general* government of the world. But this is like you, strolling through the forest and noticing a few trees and flowers. Did you see the vole tracks?

The Heavenly Doctrine gives us not only general teachings about the Lord's government, it gives us details. It gives us a series of interconnected laws describing the way in which the Lord's Providence operates. Our eyes are opened, sometimes to see in exquisite detail just how these laws come into play.

Another example is the New Church teaching about charity toward the neighbor. It is, we are taught, not so much the true things known that make a church but the practice of charity. The life of religion is to do good. Again, however, one could point to most of the major religions in the world for examples of precepts about the ethical treatment of one's fellow human beings. Here too, though, we can return to our analogy and note that everyone delights in fall color,

Those who founded the Academy were full of great hope and optimism. Their hearts burned with the vision of a world transformed. Perhaps the progress over the last 140 years has not been as rapid as they might have imagined, but there are those today who still have the vision and their hearts still burn, the world can still be transformed. It can be transformed as those who attend the schools of the Academy are transformed; it can be transformed as you are transformed, because, if you are willing you can become the agents of change.

everyone is refreshed by the sharp, brisk scent in the air. Most people have a vague, general appreciation of nature. But only the trained eye picks out the little nest in the crook of a tree, the colorful newt hiding beside a rock.

The New Church doctrine of charity is not just about being nice to other people; rather, it gives a veritable taxonomy of the neighbor. There are different levels of the neighbor, different kinds of spiritual needs the neighbor may have, different kinds of actions that might be taken in exercising charity. To try to act in benefiting our fellow human beings without being aware of such details may mean that we do more harm than good.

These new teachings were unfolded in a series of theological works published 250 years ago by Emanuel Swedenborg. But Swedenborg did more than simply have the works printed. He also made efforts to send the works to intelligent and influential people. But he gradually concluded that most people were too set in their ways to be open to the revolutionary new ideas. He began to think that the only effective way to get people to think these new thoughts and to act in new ways was to reach them while they were still being trained to think.

And it seems that the founders of the Academy went through a similar evolution in their thinking. Realizing that they could not effect a revolution amongst those who had already settled on their ways of thinking and living, they began to develop a series of schools. Before long, they had a system of education that reached from kindergarten to the post-graduate level.

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Perhaps you may not convince multitudes of others to think in new ways, but your lives can become a testimony that one *can* act in new ways. And whatever realm of the world may be the field of your action, small or large, it can be transformed by the way that you live.



The Rev. Stephen D. Cole is assistant professor of Religion and Philosophy at Bryn Athyn College and of Theology in the College's Theological School. He and his wife, Jennifer (Smith), live in Bryn Athyn. Contact: Stephen.Cole@brynathyn.edu

MEMORIAL ADDRESS:
The Rev. Norman E. Riley



The Rev. Walter E. Orthwein

Readings: Psalm 8:1, 3,4; Matthew 6:19-21; Heaven and Hell 445; Arcana Coelestia 7384, 1807:1-2

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. (*Psalm, 119:105*)

This simple statement gives us a good summary of the Rev. Norman Edward Riley's approach to life. He loved the Word of the Lord. It shaped his worldview and guided the uses he served as pastor, teacher, husband, father, friend and inspiration to many.

Norman lived a long and very active life – a life of service to the Church – and he had a wonderful personality; so there is much we could say about him. Norman was of the old school, however, and it was his wish that his resurrection service be focused on teachings from the Word, rather than a tribute to himself. But there will be time for personal remembrances when we gather in the choir hall after this service.

Actually, though, one of the main ways we learn about the goodness and truth taught in the Word is by seeing them in the lives of others. This is why, in the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord said: “Let your light so shine before

men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”
(*Matthew 5:16*)

Spiritual qualities, spiritual goods and truths, are not just abstractions, but are embodied in people. They form the very core of every person, and make us what we are – images of God, each one unique, with infinite variety.

So the boundary between the natural life of a person and the religious faith he lives by is porous. As the Writings say: “All religion is of life, and the life of religion is to do good.” (*Doctrine of Life 1*)

The essence of a person is determined by what that person loves, believes and thinks about – the principles he holds dear. It is these inner, spiritual qualities, and the sphere that goes forth from them, that especially touch the lives of others and affect them most deeply.

It happens that Norman had a very warm, outgoing, engaging personality. He was definitely a “people person.” It’s hard to imagine anyone not liking him. But the love and respect we have for someone is based on something more than just the outward disposition; it is inspired by our perception of the spiritual quality of the person within.

When we perceive that someone is a good man, who loves the Lord and seeks to use whatever abilities he happens to possess to help others, this is what affects us the most. The external aspects of his personality are more or less incidental.

So in remembering our friend Norman Riley today, we will focus, not so much on the outer story of his life – interesting as it is – but on the spiritual principles, drawn from the Writings of the New Church, that he especially loved. Think of these as the “pillars” that supported the Church that the Lord was building in his mind. We will mention four of them in particular.

Bear in mind, though, as we speak of “doctrinal truths,” that “truth is the form of good.” The essence of truth, the soul of truth, the heart of truth, is goodness and love. This is the fountain that all the truths of revelation, the truths of faith, spring from, contain and communicate: love.

And “love is the life of man.” (*Divine Love and Wisdom 1*) As the Lord told His disciples: “The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” (*John 6:63*) Our lives are defined by what we believe to be true, and what we believe to be true is determined by what we love.

The first of Norman’s loves that we will mention is the love he had for the Lord’s Word.

It was indeed the lamp that guided his feet and lit his path during his journey through this earthly life. And he saw in it – from *Genesis* through *True Christian Religion* – a revelation of the Lord and the process of glorification He went through, and of our own spiritual growth and regeneration.

The Lord said: “The lamp of the body is the eye: if therefore your eye

is single, your whole body will be full of light.” (*Matthew 6:22*) The “eye” means the eye of the mind, the eye of faith, the eye of understanding – what we see to be true. For the eye to be “single” means a perception of truth that is clear, pure, not mixed up with things that obstruct or distort our mental vision.



The New King James translation uses the word “good” rather than “single” to describe the kind of vision we need, and this helps us understand the meaning here. It is love that focuses and directs our thought. It is a desire for what is good that gives us a “single eye” – that is, a clear perception of what is true and real; substantial, living, fruitful and eternal. Seeing truth begins with a love of truth.

Only the Lord has a perfect view of what is in anyone’s heart, but it certainly appeared that our friend Norman had a “good eye.”

One truth that he saw clearly, and felt very strongly about, was that the Lord’s Word includes all three of the written forms in which we have it: the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the Writings of the New Church. “The authority of the Writings” was the subject of his Theological School thesis and was a fundamental principle from which he never wavered.

“Authority” is a loaded word, with some bad connotations. But to acknowledge the authority of the Word simply means to acknowledge that the Lord is its Author, and that it is therefore to be treated with utmost reverence and respect. And that it is to be trusted and obeyed as our supreme guide in determining what is right and wrong.

Anyone who thinks that acknowledging the authority of the Word stifles thought, or casts a pall over the pleasures of life, or means there can be no fun and humor, must never have met Norman Riley.

The truth is that the good sense and good conscience we get from obeying the Lord’s commandments actually free us up to enjoy ourselves more fully. “If you abide in My Word,” the Lord said, “you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (*John 8:31*) Not just free from oppression from without, but from the even worse internal oppression of guilt and regret.

“Blessed *are* those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.” (Revelation 22:14)

To know the Word is good. To obey the Word is good. But to *love* the Word -- this is the best of all. And the Word *is* lovable, because the Word is the Lord, and the Lord is Love itself.

This is not always apparent in the literal sense, especially in the Old Testament. But when, in light of the Heavenly Doctrine revealed by the Lord in His Second Coming, we see the Lord in the Word, and hear Him speaking to us from its heart, then the difficulties that appear in some of the literal statements that form the outer covering of it fall away like dry husks from ripe fruit to reveal the sweetness within.

The second pillar of Norman’s philosophy of life which we’ll speak about is his devotion to the New Church.

Norman was born 90 years ago in Accrington in the north of England, the fourth of five children in a family that had been in the New Church for five generations. He actually gave his first sermon there, as a lay preacher, at the age of 17.

He attended the New Church College of the British Conference in London and was ordained into the ministry in 1950. He and his wife Maureen were married in 1959, while he was serving in his first pastorate, in Middleton, England.

They would have five daughters: Jayne, Joy, Philippa, Melinda and Vivienne; three sons-in-law that Norman thought the world of: Stuart Burke, Andrew Bruell, and Westley Friesen; and four grandchildren: Ursula, Jarvis, Rosalie and Ryan.

At various times, Norman served four branches of the New Church: including five congregations in the British Conference; Perth in the Australian Conference; the Lord’s New Church Which Is Nova Hierosolyma in Bryn Athyn; and the General Church in Bryn Athyn, England and South Africa.

But it was the doctrines and the people that especially interested him, not the organizations or church policies. And, as he said, being a pastor was, to him, not a job or a career but a *calling*. Priests are called to their office by a love for the salvation of souls.

Norman enjoyed meeting and talking with people everywhere he went: in England, Australia, America and South Africa. But he had a special fondness for Africa, and the Africans for him. He was the superintendent of the General Church Mission in South Africa, he served at Kent Manor in Zululand, and founded the Transvaal Circle, which later became the Buccleuch Society.

An interest in doctrine and a love for people should go hand in hand, as they did for Norman. For it is by means of the truths of doctrine that the Lord

heals people's souls, draws them out of hell, and leads them to heaven.

The Lord Himself is the supreme example of the connection – and in fact oneness – of Divine truth and Humanity. The doctrine of the Divine Human is the cornerstone upon which the whole edifice of New Church theology rests.

The Lord's prophetic statement in the Gospels, quoted from the *Psalms*, has now in the Church of the New Jerusalem come to pass: "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone." (*Matthew 21:42; Psalm 118:22*)

"The stone which the builders rejected" is the truth of the Lord's Divinity. When His disciple Peter acknowledged that truth, the Lord said it was the "Rock" upon which He would build His Church. (*Matthew 16:18*)

On earth, though, that truth was rejected and He was crucified. And again, the first Christian Church which had been founded upon it eventually – in its Trinitarian theology, not necessarily in the hearts of all the people – lost sight of that simple, fundamental truth.

And thus the Divine and the Human which God had joined together in the Lord Jesus Christ were put asunder by false human reasoning. And many people today are unable to see how Jesus, who lived on earth as a Man, could be God.

But this is the Rock upon which Norman built his house. He loved being able to worship a visible, knowable, Human God – the Lord Jesus Christ, the one God of heaven and earth.

A third main interest of Norman's was the world of nature and its spiritual significance.

Norman was an avid gardener and you could tell just by looking at him that he loved the outdoors. And as we might guess it wasn't just nature itself that he found so delightful but the spiritual significance he saw in it.

The doctrine of correspondence in the Writings reveals the soul of nature – the spiritual dimension that fills it with meaning that transcends the material.

"A clear-sighted observer," we are told in the *Arcana*, "can see that each and all things in nature bear relation to truth and to good, and thus can know that universal nature is a theater representative of the Lord's kingdom." (*Arcana Coelestia 4409*)

Norman Riley was such a clear-sighted person. Nature, for him, was charged with intimations of the Divine. In the words of the poet he could see "heaven in a wild flower." In the words of the Lord he considered "the lilies of the field." (*Matthew 6:28*)

Because human beings are inhabitants of two worlds – our minds being in the spiritual world even as our bodies are in the natural world – everyone has some perception, however vague, of the dual nature of creation and this is reflected in countless ways in our common speech.

If someone says he has an “aching heart,” for example, we don’t recommend that he see a cardiologist; we know he means he is sad. We know instinctively that the “heart” corresponds to love.

What most people do not know, however, is that *every* organ and part of the human body also corresponds to some spiritual faculty, use or condition. And further that this is true of everything in the whole natural universe – because the God who created it, and from Whom it continues to exist every moment, is Human.

So when Norman saw a bird fly by, for instance, his children recall that he was likely to point to it and observe that what they were seeing was really an emblem of some angelic wisdom and human thought.

“For there is nothing beautiful and delightful in the skies or on the earth which is not in some way representative of the Lord’s kingdom.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 1807)

Norman saw signs of heaven all around him: in the beauty and order of nature, in his work for the Church, and in other people. And “heaven” is just another word for “happiness.”

Which brings us to the fourth trait of his that we want to speak about -- namely, joy.

Norman was a joyful person and brought joy to those around him.

His children, in reflecting upon his character, recalled how often he would ask them if they were happy and encourage them to live their life joyfully. “Go and live your life,” he would say. “Be happy and love life.” Even in his last days he would ask: “Are you happy?” Clearly, their happiness was his happiness. And this wish for the happiness of others was not limited just to his own family.

Which reminds us of this well-known saying from the work on *Divine Love and Wisdom*: “Love consists in this, that its own should be another’s; to feel the joy of another as joy in oneself, that is loving.” (n. 47)

Those who feel the joy of others as joy in themselves already have heaven within them. We speak of people “going to heaven” when they die, but for those who have received the life of heaven into their hearts and minds during their life in this world, the journey is a short one. In fact, it is no journey at all – just an awakening to full consciousness of a joy they had already begun to experience in this world.

And now, as we bid farewell to our friend Norman, we’ll close with these words from the parable of the talents, which were spoken to the servants who had used their gifts wisely:

‘Well done, good and faithful servant. . . . Enter into the joy of your Lord.’ (*Matthew 25:21*) Amen.

Contact: Walter.Orthwein@verizon.net

The Miracle and the Theology of Handel's Messiah

The Rev. Dr. Erik E. Sandstrom

Everyone loves Handel's *Messiah*. It pins down the sacred scripture texts prophesying the Lord's Advent, and then the Advent itself, including the whole life of the Lord to the resurrection, and ending with our own resurrection as a promise. Everyone knows the score almost by heart and it stirs us every Christmas and Easter season, to hear it again, and again.

I have often wondered whether Handel's *Messiah*, celebrating the Lord's First Advent, was somehow part of the Second Advent, the revelation of the Heavenly Doctrines as the Word of the Lord, explaining how the Lord was the Messiah and was glorified to reign in heaven forever. For after the Resurrection, the Lord could inspire music as well. Having glorified the rational level of the Human and the body itself, He rejected or wiped out the body parts, replacing them with Divine "counterparts" which "took their place, instead of the body." (*Arcana Coelestia* 6872)

The Lord from then on could "enlighten not only the internal spiritual man but also the external natural," thus both the rational and the sensuous parts of the human mind "simultaneously." (cf. *Arcana Coelestia* 2776.3, 3195.3, 4180.5; *True Christian Religion* 109.2)

Part of this new influx would be of "harmonious sound [which] corresponds to states of joy and gladness in the spiritual world, [which] . . . spring from affections, which in that world are affections for what is good and true. Music flows into the sense of hearing, which does not originate in the natural world but in the spiritual world; from the correspondence of things in the natural world – which flow into it in accordance



Ca. 1726 portrait of George Friedrich Handel by Balthasar Denner

with true order – with realities in the spiritual world.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 8337.2)

Did the true order and realities of the spiritual world come to fruition in Handel’s *Messiah*? It was this enlightenment, made possible by the First Advent, that could now begin to seep through to the human race. Resulting first was the Age of Enlightenment, then the Biblically based Great Awakening, simultaneously darkened by the Deistic movement vastating the then Christian Church, leading up to a culmination of music. This was seen in the Baroque turning deftly to the Classical in and with Handel’s *Messiah*. It was shortly followed by the greatest liberation of music in Mozart, born in 1756 into the lap of the Post-Judgment world, with Haydn, C.P. Bach, Clementi *et alii* bridging the transition gap.

The year 1750 is generally seen as the start of “classical music.” Beethoven was waiting for the full effect of the New Heaven, opened by June 19, 1770, his birth year. And, of course, the New Church on earth was established in 1787 from the New Heaven: “and peace, as in heaven, so upon the earth.”

The resurrected Lord’s new dual influx had been obscured by the dark cloud interposed after Nicaea in 325 A.D., causing the “spiritual sun to set” and making spiritual temptations impossible. (*True Christian Religion* 597) But it was lifted by the 1757 Last Judgment, releasing that “seven-fold splendor” (*Divine Love and Wisdom* 233) promised in *Isaiah* 30:25, 26: “the sun will be seven-fold, as the light of seven days,” from the Lord’s transfiguration when “His face shone as the sun and His raiment became as the light,” (*Matthew* 17:1, 2) and “His face was as the sun,” (*Revelation* 1.15), enlightening the “state of the Church after the Lord’s Advent.” (*Divine Love and Wisdom* 233)

After His Resurrection, and renewed after 1757, the Divine Proceeding has embraced both Divine Providence and the Holy Spirit, (*Divine Providence* 58). Thus both “hands” of the Lord, the right hand or invisible Divine Providence, and the left hand “the manifest” Holy Spirit, “showing plainly of the Father” – i.e. explaining the Doctrine of the Lord, in the Heavenly Doctrines.

The new Divine Proceeding has been inspiring humanity with Divine Truth for 2000 years now, causing the Age of Enlightenment and Age of Reason, and after 1757, forever. Indeed, some say the Age of Reason started with the experimentation of Roger Bacon (1219-1294), down to today’s Hubble telescope defining new galaxies and solar systems with detected planets. These are all the things the Lord saw as an infant when Abram was told to “count the stars” – i.e. the Lord learned His own Divinity, a discovery signaled by adding to Abram’s name the Divine breath syllable H as in



Messiah
an Oratorio

Handel’s own hand-written
Cover Page for the first
performance of *The Messiah*.

YHWH or יהוה¹:

“No longer will your name be called Abram, but your name will be Abraham” (*Genesis* 17.5, *Arcana Coelestia* 2009, 2063), recollecting which He said, “before Abraham was I AM.” (*John* 8.58, *Arcana Coelestia* 10579, 2921.6) The Lord knew He was the Savior of all in the universe, even as an infant. (*Genesis* 15.5; *Arcana Coelestia* 1805) As in *Messiah*, “His Name shall be called Emanuel, God with us,” “Almighty God, the Everlasting Father;” “Hallelujah” – הללויהָה – that is “Praise Jehovah.”

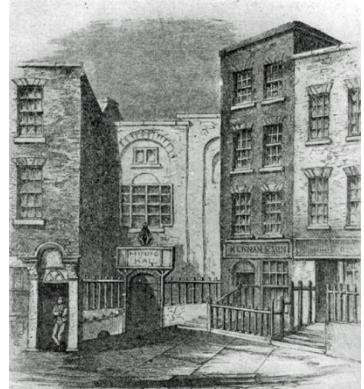
Handel's *Messiah* seems like “true order and realities from the spiritual world” (*Arcana Coelestia* 8337) – a miracle of such inspiration! Indeed Handel himself, working his way into England's acceptance, says: “I did think I did see all Heaven before me, and the great God Himself!” At its premiere in Dublin April 13, 1742, the theater was so packed – more than 700 – that the men were asked to remove their swords, and ladies were asked to not wear hooped dresses!

Of this performance the press raved: “Words are wanting to express the exquisite delight it afforded to the admiring and crowded [sic] audience. A Dublin clergyman, Rev. Delaney, was so overcome by Susanna Cibber's rendering of ‘He was despised’ that reportedly he leapt to his feet and cried: ‘Woman, for this be all thy sins forgiven thee!’”

The performances of the *Messiah* went through several additions and changes. By 1749 new parts were added for the performance at Covent Garden, still standing room only. In 1754 it was made an annual charitable event, benefiting London's “Foundling Hospital” for orphans. Handel was last present at its performance on April 6, 1759, just eight days before he died.

Part of the miracle of the *Messiah* is the speed of composition. Handel is known to have started on August 22, 1741, completed the first part by August 28, Part II by September 6, Part III by September 12, then “finishing and filling up” by September 14, 1741.

The other part of the miracle was his musical inventions: *melisma* and syllabic (or word) painting. This was the second Oratorio Handel composed – he switched from Italian Opera to English Oratorio – the first Oratorio being “Alexander's Feast.” (1736)¹ Then through *Saul and Israel in Egypt*, both in



The Great Music Hall in Fishamble Street, Dublin, where *Messiah* was first performed. Handel put on six concerts preceding the *Messiah*, December 1741 to February 1742, pitching his popularity for the *Messiah* premiere, April 13, 1742.

1 Lynn-Del and I were delighted to hear this performed with Ken York and Margaret Gladish by the Philo Musica Choir January 2016.

1739, he was all set for the *Messiah* – not yet an idea in his mind.

For just prior to the *Messiah*, Handel decided to “stress the effects of orchestra and soloists” by using “*melisma*” – the voice carrying several syllables over long transitions – and “syllabic painting” – placing one word on each syllable, but following the effect of the music. “Handel’s use of word painting excites nerves by rendering the *Messiah* the exquisite air of ingenuity, grace, perspicuity, eloquence and animation. Word painting is the musical depiction of words by mirroring music to convey the literal meaning of the text of a song.”² It is to music what *onomatopoeia* is to prose.

One prime example is the text, “Every valley shall be exalted.” The music is raised on “valley,” and “exalted” stays on that level, and for “every mountain and hill made low,” the music then goes low! The “crooked” sounds crooked. “Made straight” sounds straight, and the “rough places plain” leads to a long

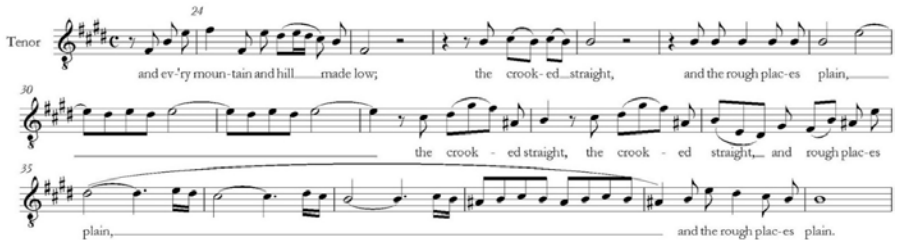


Figure 1

plain sounding phrase. (From *Isaiah* 40:4; Fig. 1)

When it comes to, “We like sheep have gone astray,” the music is hard to follow, if you recall the phrase. The music literally follows those stray sheep. Another example is, “we have turned everyone to his own way.” The music turns, remember? The *melisma* with syllabic painting, “We have tuuuuuuuuuuuurned . . .” I think gives the musicians – let alone the performer – some great fun keeping track of all that intricate turning.

The music becomes majestic, when the “government shall be upon His shoulder,” for the music climbs up and up, “with Government shall be, shall be,” and then descends, on to “His shoulder.” And then each phrase of “Wonderful, Counsellor” descends on the shoulder, the rest of the names do a flourish before “Prince of Peace” descends back down – yes, on His shoulder!

When it comes to, “He was despised, rejected,” one can almost hear the contempt and spitting – hence Mr. Delaney’s spontaneous praise. And “Glory to God in the highest” goes up to God, then an octave down to heaven, then from “angelic heavenly host” prophesying the Advent of the “Prince of Peace” an octave down with “Peace on earth.”

2 Wikipedia

And of course the *Hallelujah Chorus*: it was when the *Messiah* was performed in 1743, that “King George II (who happened to be present), started up, and remained standing”³ – at the “King of Kings” part of that chorus. The audience obliged as well. At least so the story goes. In any case, standing for the *Hallelujah Chorus* has turned “syllabic painting” into “syllabic posture” – a representative action moved by a reality from heaven, where the Messiah is now present as to His Divine Human.

Another person comes into the picture for the Messiah – Charles Jennens, a wealthy landowner with musical and literary interest. He became a devotee to Handel's music, and being opposed to the Deism of the day (more on that below) he actually brought the libretto of Biblical quotes from the King James Bible to Handel. Jennens was by then a close friend of Handel, having collaborated with him on *Saul*, and the earlier *Rodelinda* in 1725. So the biblical text was thanks to Jennens, who wished to restore “God's ability to intervene in human affairs,” denied by Deists who deemed God the “clockmaker of the Universe.” (God wound it up and then left it to tick on its own, without any trace of its Author.)

Let us take a look at Deism, coming as a culmination of the historic era known as the Age of the Enlightenment cum Age of Reason, roughly from 1620 to 1789 – the French Revolution – with Copernicus, Galileo, Locke, Newton and Franklin as key figures.⁴

Some main concepts of the Enlightenment were the right of self-government and the natural rights of all human beings. Two major works printed on Deistic principles were Tindal's 1730 *Christianity as Old as Creation*, which became the Deist's Bible, claiming that true Christianity is the natural religion of all time. The Gospels are subject to verification by human reason: we can know all that is in the Bible without the Bible. Another was Diderot's *Encyclopedie* from 1751 through the next dozen years, which “replaced the Bible” among all *litterati* and even royalty – Frederick and Catherine the Great among them. It was during the Enlightenment that Deism turned to finding God “on your own” *without* the Bible or Divine Intervention – just when the Lord “intervened” again in His Second Advent!

Deism shared its platform with the “Great Awakening” – from 1720 into the 1740s. This was the “shared religious experience” phenomenon – enthusiastic preaching outdoors to large gatherings, both in the colonies, i.e. America, and back in England and Germany. Names included Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, Howell Harris, Jakob Spener in Germany, and of

3 http://www.boston.com/ae/music/articles/2009/12/19/taking_a_stand_for_messiah/

4 The Age of Reason – contemporary with Age of Enlightenment - with Thomas Paine through Immanuel Kant as key figures.

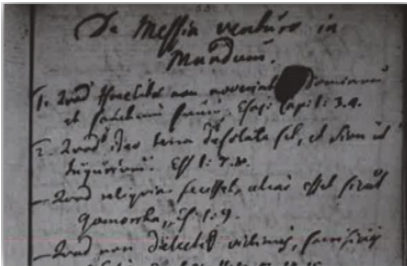
course John Wesley, who became one of the best-known activists.

We know Wesley “wished” to communicate with Swedenborg, which Swedenborg informed him he had “heard from heaven.”⁵ Although Wesley initially thought well of much of Swedenborg’s Writings, they never met, and Wesley later denied much of the doctrines, trying even to smear Swedenborg’s reputation. It was at the tail end of this Great Awakening that Handel’s *Messiah* and Swedenborg’s call, as well as Wesley’s oratory, converged from 1738 to 1743, just prior to the Last Judgment of 1757 in the spiritual world.

The outdoor enthusiastic preaching may well be what the Writings call the “frenzy which has invaded theology and the Church” making it “Christian in name only.” (*True Christian Religion* 4) This revivalism mixed with millenarianism – “the end is nigh” – was part of the “naturalism” i.e. Deism, that brought about the Last Judgment.⁶ Millenarianism took hold especially following Lisbon’s earthquake on All Saints Day, November 1, 1755, deemed back then as a “Last Judgment.”

So Jennens was right to oppose Deism, and assemble the text for the *Messiah*. This alone can be seen as providential. Right after Swedenborg’s first call by the Lord in 1743, after finishing *Worship and Love of God* and printing Part I, he started writing about “The Messiah to come.”⁷

Swedenborg in *Arcana Coelestia* volume 2 (Lewis and Hart, London 1750) says of the *Messiah*: “The Messiah or Christ was to come to eternally save their souls.” (# 2520) Swedenborg had this volume translated into English by John Marchant,⁸ in six installments. No one knows who bought these, or whether one or some of them found their way to the Bishops of England, or to King George II himself. But those Bishops did see Swedenborg’s five works extracted from the *Arcana*,



5 Tafel, 564-571

6 Naturalism or Deism and the Last Judgment: the “Church invaded by naturalism” which makes one with both adultery and atheism. *Apocalypse Revealed* 464, *Arcana Coelestia* 5116. 3; *Apocalypse Explained* 981, 1220, *Coronis* 0, *Apocalypse Explained* 1176, *True Christian Religion* 94. It uses the human “natural lumen” which “denies God” (*Ibid.* 75.7), feeds on “ignorance and takes root in the interior rational mind” (*Ibid.* 136, 339, 771) It made the Christian Church at that time “Christian in name only.” (*Ibid.* 4)

7 “De Messia Venture in Mundum” Swedenborg’s manuscript jottings, from Codex 38, written 1745, one of several unpublished interworks between *Worship and Love of God* and *Arcana Coelestia*.

8 See *New Church Life*, 1999 p. 255 “The Remarkable Volume II of the Latin *Arcana*,” by Edward Cranch.

printed in 1758.⁹

When King George II, now in heaven, heard of the Bishops' rejection of these works on earth, he reprimanded them in the afterlife for not accepting "the Lord as God of heaven and earth" – i.e. as the Messiah – saying "Depart! Alas, who can become so hardened against hearing anything relating to heaven and eternal life?" (*Apocalypse Revealed* 716) It was this same King who stood up at Handel's *Hallelujah Chorus*.

I can't find any other link between Swedenborg and Handel's *Messiah*, or Jennens, although they were crossing paths in London around the same time. What might account for the remarkable coincidence – providence in outmost – of Wesley's "strangely warm feeling" of conversion in 1738, of Handel's *Messiah* in 1741-2, and of Swedenborg's eyes being opened in 1743? The Lord's closer presence might do it.

We know that the Last Judgment of 1757 was pending in the world of spirits, between heaven and hell – the common "Grand Central Station" for all who awake after death, where all human minds are now. Prior to the actual Last Judgment, there is a stage called "visitation" when the Lord with the higher angels draws "closer" to the world of spirits, but "gently." (*Apocalypse Explained* 418) This is how the good spirits are drawn out and rescued. (*Apocalypse Explained* 315, *Arcana Coelestia* 2317, *Last Judgment* 61, *Continuation of the Last Judgment* 25, *Last Judgment posthumous* 58) During this preliminary stage, angels infiltrate the false heavens (*Ibid.* 69) and rescue those who are interiorly good but ignorant and in falsities, (*Ibid.* 58, 59, 61) just as the angels did with Lot's family prior to fire and brimstone.

Now these false heavens had started blocking out the spiritual sun, causing obscurity from 325 A.D. all the way up to 1757, for 1,432 years. Since the Lord flows through heaven – the transflux – it is obvious what darkening effect these false heavens had on earth. The same happened prior to the First Advent: ever since Noah's Flood, the Lord had flowed through heaven using celestial angels as the "Angel of Jehovah."

When this mode of revelation was rejected by people "receding from the Lord," (*Arcana Coelestia* 4180.5) the Advent in Bethlehem was of dire necessity, lest the human race perish. (*Ibid.* 1680, 8364, *Spiritual Experiences* 133, 3783, 4596, *True Christian Religion* 74) The Lord willed therefore to make Himself as a terminus for that transflux by taking on His own human by birth into the world. Thus the "transflux [i.e. the angel of the Lord]" seen in Old Testament times "was the Divine Human at that time," (*Arcana Coelestia* 6280) but now

9 *Heaven and Hell, Concerning the New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine, Concerning the Last Judgment, Concerning the White Horse and Concerning the Earths in the Universe* *Apocalypse Revealed* 716

the Lord willed to “send Himself into the world” (*True Christian Religion* 92) by birth.

Thus in “bowing the heavens and coming down,” the Lord “took on just what was with the angels” (*Arcana Coelestia* 6371) in the very descent to Mary’s womb, so that on earth the Lord had Jehovah as His own soul, “God with us Emanuel,” both embodied as the Son of God, and speaking the Word from His own earthly mouth, as the Son of Man.

On this whole process, we read: “. . . because Jehovah took on that human form by passing through heaven, and yet in order to save the human race it was necessary for Him to be a human being – in all reality and essentially such – He was pleased to undergo human birth, and so to take on a truly human form in which He – Jehovah Himself – was present.” (*Ibid.* 10579.4) The previous “transflux” mode “came to an end.” (*Ibid.* 6371.2)¹⁰

That angel of Jehovah, the transflux via angels, announcing His birth in Bethlehem, is Handel’s, “A multitude of the heavenly host singing Glory to God in the Highest, on earth Peace, goodwill toward men.” And the Wise Men worshipping Him as the King is “the Government shall be upon His shoulder, Almighty God, the Everlasting Father, King of Kings.”

The Lord on earth glorified His Human, He “made His Human, while He was in the world, to be Divine Truth; but after that, *when He was fully glorified*, He made it to be Divine Good, and so one with Jehovah.” (*Ibid.* 6716.3) Therefore, “When He had glorified Himself, He rose above [the earlier receptacle]; even His Human was made absolute Divine Good, or Jehovah.” (*Ibid.* 5307.2) This risen Lord is hailed in Handel’s, “Hallelujah, Lord of Lords, He shall reign forever.”

The Lord’s Divine Human after the Resurrection became an “essence by itself filling the universal heaven” (*Ibid.* 3061), that is, “as the Divine and Human in Him are one Person, that the Lord is that Father.” (*True Christian Religion* 852, 112) Thus we see that the Messiah when risen, is “Our Father who art in the Heavens.”

The Lord can from now on be seen by any angel “as an angelic being distinguished from other angels by the Divine that shines through.” (*Heaven and Hell* 52, 55) This is *not* the former *angel of the Lord*; instead it is the Lord Himself seen as an “angelic being.” This is Handel’s “Behold your God.”

Another huge consequence of the First Advent was the beginning of the Holy Spirit when the Lord breathed on His disciples and said: “Receive the Holy Spirit.” The Lord now does this to all people. Whether it is received “discernibly or indiscernibly,” the Holy Spirit today “imparts the ability to

10 Note to colleagues: these quotes are “gauntlet proof”. See “Clergy Report” *New Church Life* Sept. Oct, 2015, p. 477-478

understand Divine Truths and thereby receive that life.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 9818.14, 15) What truths? The Writings have now presented all of it, visibly, comprehensively and in print, “in natural language, to the rational comprehension.” (*De Verbo* 6)

This is how we “see God” in the Doctrine of the Lord all through the Writings. It was by anyone reading them that the New Church started: “The New Church as to Doctrine was seen by John as the city, New Jerusalem.” (*Apocalypse Revealed* 896) “This book is the coming of the Lord.”¹¹ “This Second Coming of the Lord is taking place by means of someone to whom the Lord has manifested Himself in Person . . . I testify in truth that the Lord . . . has assigned to me this task.” (*True Christian Religion* 779)

The Writings were the outcome of Swedenborg’s enlightenment and dual existence in both the natural and spiritual world for 29 years. This outcome was made possible by the Lord’s dual enlightenment, leading also to our modern world of science and technology: “He enlightens also the physical man.” (*Ibid.* 109) Together with this new – 2000-year-old! – influx, there was another most astonishing change – the end of Paradise, or of the Holy Land, being representative as to every river and mountain, hill and town site. “They no longer represented heaven.” (*Word* 233, *True Christian Religion* 291, *Arcana Coelestia* 1003) Instead, this representation was transferred. Where to?

To Europe, the “kingdoms of Christendom” (*Divine Providence* 251.4), but now resting on the *internals* of people, not their *externals*. (*Arcana Coelestia* 1003) This northwestern transfer is meant in the internal sense by “Patmos . . . meaning enlightenment.”¹² John was exiled there by the Romans in Providence because Patmos was part way between Asia and Europe. (Fig.2) And so representations moved away from where worship had been practiced since Adam or the Most Ancient Church, to “Europe, those to whom the Word is about to come.” (*Apocalypse Revealed* 34)

The Word came to Europe and its history. First Peter was martyred in Rome, later Emperor Constantine was converted, and then every pagan horde that attacked Rome was also



Figure 2

11 His Liber est Adventus Domini,” written by Swedenborg on work of the Writings, preserved British Museum, London.

12 Patmos, square lower right.

converted and took Christianity back home with them. Or missionaries did it. So Europe became the “new Canaan.” “The kingdoms of Christendom” took over the representation of Canaan, of “Israel, Amorites, Ammonites, Moabites, Philistines, Syrians, Egyptians, Chaldeans and Assyrians.” (*Divine Providence* 251.4) Just as Israel in the Old Testament had been attacked when it fell into evils, so wars in Europe occurred “in the natural world [because they] correspond to something spiritual in the spiritual world, and everything spiritual has to do with the church.” (*Ibid.*)

Today no one knows which “Christian kingdom” stands for which ancient one, so you don’t have to worry. But still “the character of the church on earth, and the identity of the evils into which it falls” is the same now as in Old Testament times, and the Christian Church, in Europe, “is punished with wars.” (*Ibid.*251.4) Even today?

If you don’t believe it, the Writings excuse your skepticism: “This isn’t seen at all in the natural world, [full of] external phenomena . . . [which don’t] form the church. However, it is seen in the spiritual world, where the internal constituents [of] the church . . . are apparent.” (*Ibid.* added emphasis)

If you still worry about it, here is more to doubt: the rest of the world is also representative. “European trading empires” have colonized the entire world, a permission “in providence” in spite of the maniacal destruction of native cultures involved, “*for the sake of the Word*” being spread worldwide. (*Divine Providence* 256.2, emphasis added) The Lord never wills destruction, but He here willed that the Bible be read and translated all through the world, just in time for the Last Judgment of 1757. For the heavens rest on the Church where the Word is read. (Church Specific, heart and lungs, *Heavenly Doctrine* 244, *True Christian Religion* 245, *Apocalypse Explained* 351.2)

Christians reading the Bible worldwide is a “believe it or not” fulfillment of the Lord’s words, “Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them.” (*Matthew* 18.20) Still skeptical? Well, the Lord adds with a smile, I think: “This seems to be a fabrication, but yet it is the truth.” (*Divine Providence* 256.2) So there!

The Last Judgment was such a tumultuous event – whole populations of spirits gathered for heaven, or sliding this and that way into hell – that the world had to be stabilized – its “fullness, sanctity and power” (*Sacred Scripture* 37) setting the stage for the spiritual sense to be revealed. It was time for, “Who shall stand when He appeareth?”

So, European nations have a spiritual meaning – both good and the opposite bad – and the colonies they established would likely have the same meaning. So now we can begin to see why Handel, a German, went to live and work in England.

What do European nations “mean”?

Germany, Handel’s birth place, probably means *referring to history* for

authenticity. (cf. *True Christian Religion* 714) England is probably linked to Israel – its role in 1948 in Israel's independence, and remember the “Holy Grail” legend, Camelot, Avalon, implying Jesus visiting ancient Britain? And Stonehenge is a religious link to ancient times. Since England has “the greatest spiritual freedom” – transferred also to America which probably means the same thing, perhaps that is why the New Church has its main strength in English-speaking parts of the world.

Sweden, we might speculate, was the land of ancient knowledge. Uppsala University where archeology was taught, and where then Emanuel Svedberg graduated in 1709, was the northernmost Reformed university. And Sweden had become the center of Lutheranism after the Providential Thirty Year War, (1618-1648) whereby in Divine Providence the Reformation “liberated the Word from its tomb” (*Invitation* 24) so that it “was again received.” (*Sacred Scripture* 110)¹³

Thus, Sweden might be a fit for the biblical (not modern!) Syria, meaning “rational knowledge of spiritual realities.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 3762.5, 5223.3, *Apocalypse Explained* 559.8) That was why Balaam earlier came from Syria, and later also the Wise Men who gave the Lord gifts in Bethlehem. Swedenborg fits for “rational knowledge of spiritual realities” – same realities as music? -- and as someone who would worship the Lord as the wise men did.

And France? Believe it or not “the noble kingdom of France” is the “internal sense” of *Revelation* 17: 12, “the nation which had not yet a king” – because of France's opposition to Papal authority. (*Apocalypse Revealed* 740, 745) History verifies France's role in keeping Papal authority in check, from Charlemagne on. Besides, Charlemagne's grandfather, Charles Martel, had stopped the Muslims crossing the Pyrenees in the Battle of Tours in 732 A.D. And in 1683, it was King Sobieski of Poland who saved Vienna from the Muslim Ottoman Turks.

What truths and evils of the Church were involved then? What of the naval battle of Lepanto, on October 7, 1571, where the Ottoman forces were decisively defeated by Don Juan of Austria's Catholic forces? Cervantes served Don John, experiences on which he based *Don Quixote*. Does *Don Quixote*, the Battle of Lepanto, as well as G.K. Chesterton's epic poem *Lepanto* of 1911, as well as *Tours and Vienna*, contain the same truth triumphing over some church evil long ago?

Dim drums throbbing, in the hills half heard,
Where only on a nameless throne a crownless prince has stirred,
Don John of Austria is going to the war,

13 Cf. *Apocalypse Explained* 988, 684.40, 1069, *Apocalypse Revealed* 759, *Invitation* 24, *Divine Providence* 258

Stiff flags straining in night-blasts cold
 In the gloom black-purple, in the glint old-gold.¹⁴

England, the British Empire, was at that time the center of power. And England was in the center of the Reformed in the world of spirits ready for the Last Judgment, because they are “in the greatest light” of freedom. (*Continuation of the Last Judgment* 48, *Last Judgment* post. 5, *True Christian Religion* 807, *Apocalypse Revealed* 675)

The Word could there be preached openly. And all of European history – in fact world history, all those 2000 years of wars and battles – has a spiritual meaning! And remember the prophecy of the “end will come with wars and rumors of wars”? (*Matthew* 24:5-7; *Mark* 13:6-8; *Luke* 21:8-11) This signifies “disputes and contentions about truths, and consequent falsifications.” (*Apocalypse Explained* 734.24). Well, those are like Handel’s, “We like sheep have gone astray,” and “We have turned each to his own way.”

There was in fact a world war going on in 1757. The Seven Year War (1756 to 1763) pitched all of Europe against each other: England and Prussia against France, Russia, Sweden and later Spain; plus the French-Indian Wars against England, plus the War in India with England’s Clive, fighting against the Mughal, Muslims. And Ibn Abd al-Wahhab himself was “purifying Islam” in the Holy Land, destroying his own people, and threatening to level the Kaaba as idolatrous.

And all the colonies of Europe were roped into this War: the Caribbean, South America, Africa, Philippines, India and Asia, of course North America. Several American native tribes (see *Last of the Mohicans*) were fighting for either the French or the British, also in Canada, where Wolfe took Quebec. Those gentiles were also judged in 1757.

Even Swedenborg himself was embroiled with this war, i.e. Sweden’s debacle for lack of supplies.¹⁵ This was probably the reason for the hiatus in printing the Writings between 1758 and 1763.¹⁶ And why did Swedenborg switch from printing the Writings in London to Amsterdam? (All from 1763 on; only *Intercourse Between Soul and Body* was again published in London 1769.) This is probably because England and Sweden were on opposite sides in the Seven Year War, or Dutch is easier for a Swede to speak – or because the Netherlands represent the spiritual love of honest trade. (*True Christian*

14 [https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Lepanto_\(Chesterton\)](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Lepanto_(Chesterton))

15 One of Swedenborg’s great concerns in parliament was this war, and that his friend, the Premier of Sweden Anders von Höpken, being relieved from office.” Swedenborg tried to intervene to have him reinstated. Von Höpken later spoke highly of the Writings, as a “religion for all of mankind.”

16 Printing hiatus 1758-1762, Although Swedenborg then wrote, but did not print, the *Apocalypse Explained*. The Ms. Of the *Apocalypse Explained*, both first and second drafts, are preserved, Swedenborgiana, Swedenborg Library.

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Another prediction for the Last Judgment was “earthquakes” (*Matthew* 24.7), which signify changes of the state of the church by falsities which corrupt. (*Apocalypse Explained* 734.24) And there was a huge earthquake regarded as “as last judgment.” On November 1, 1755, All Saints Day, the most devastating earthquake shook Lisbon. All the faithful were at church. They all fell into the crypts that opened up, the ceilings collapsed on them, and the candles burned them alive. A tsunami took those who fled to the harbor.

The whole of Europe was outraged or jubilant at providence or the lack thereof: Voltaire wrote “*écrasez l’infâme*” – eliminate that thing! Rousseau blamed “stupid people building in the wrong place.” However, there was an apparent simulcast earthquake – cities sinking – in the world of spirits, right then in November 1755, “where a most atrocious plot [was made] against the *Arcana Coelestia*.” (*Spiritual Experiences* 4988)

So, one wonders: was Lisbon also involved in such a plot? Lisbon was the center of the Jesuits and the Spanish Inquisition – mainly censorship but also imprisonment and execution. The aftermath of Lisbon’s Earthquake of 1755 was the disbandment of the Jesuits. The question remains open whether there was any plot against the *Arcana* also on earth.¹⁷

Right while these wars and earthquakes happened on earth, the very same nations were lined up in the world of spirits, ready for the Last Judgment. Coincidence? The European Reformed nations were in the middle, with English in the very center, and other Reformed nations at various points of the compass around them, then Catholics all around the Reformed, next the Muslims around them, and finally all Gentiles south and east of them – a huge lopsided “target” of millions of spirits.

These were the *False* or *Imaginary* Heavens, from which by “visitation” or gently flowing in, the Lord was withdrawing all the good, the way the angels did for Lot and his family from Sodom.

The Judgment came in sequence: (1) Catholics, (2) Muslims, (3) Gentiles, and (4) the center, shorn of support, the Reformed last. (*Last Judgment Posthumous* 2, *Last Judgment* 47, *Continuation of the Last Judgment* 14 et. al) This is Handel’s, “Who shall abide,” and “The refiner’s fire” shall “purge them,” and “Why do the nations so furiously rage?”

Australia had not yet been discovered, where dwelt the last Cro-Magnon remnants, the Australian aborigines, with their wall art, as also in Sahara, similar to the cave art in France and Spain. I suspect all wall and cave art

17 Swedenborg tried to print “*De Conjugiis Mortuorum*” in Paris, but had to “collect all papers and flee.” The Inquisition left Paris in 1763, so this would be before then. Anecdote by Wadström, perhaps from Provo, noted 25 May, 1788, but episode not dated. Title is probably a faulty recollection of “*Amor Conjugialis*.”

to be part of Noah's Flood, and Enoch's Word (God took him, i.e. preserved the knowledge of correspondences, i.e. of animals = human affections). Being descendants of the Celestial Church Adam, they hark back to Dreamtime, i.e. contacting angels again. The Lord gave those celestial angels to "reign over the human race," meant by the "scepter of Judah that should not depart until Shiloh come." They carried out the Lord's transflux – again, the Angel of Jehovah who scared the shepherds with their "Glory to God in the highest, and Peace on earth."

If the Lord came closer with His gentle presence (*Apocalypse Explained* 418) before 1757, the same proximity also brought on temptations, or in the historical context, vastations. (cf. *Arcana Coelestia* 840, 4299) Such a closer presence of the Lord prior to the Last Judgment could account for the epochal *surges* in European history, from the Renaissance through the Age of Enlightenment, the contemporary Age of Reason and the tag-on Great Awakening.

The vastations – temptations – that the Lord's closer presence brought on could account for all warfare linked with the Second Advent, as well as for Deism, which is just veiled atheism. The vastations of the Church could also account for the deadness of church worship, caricatured by Hogarth.¹⁸

When the second stage of preparation for the judgment comes, leading up to the actual Judgment, the Lord reaches "more powerfully" (*Apocalypse Explained* 418) into the world of spirits – here's that "Refiner's Fire." The frenzy of Revivalism and millenarianism, as well as actual worldwide warfare, could be Handel's, "Why do the nations so furiously rage together"?

The Lord's "more powerful" reach was the Last Judgment itself: it was to rescue also the wicked and raise them into heaven. The Lord *never* condemns or is even angry with anyone. (*Apocalypse Explained* 375, *Arcana Coelestia* 3605.4 1838, 1861, 2706, *Brief Exposition* 62) "I came not to judge the world," the Lord said. (*John* 12.47) He only saves. Even of the wicked He says, "They shall have their reward." (*Matthew* 6.2, 4)

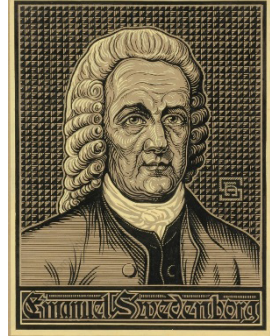
He reaches out to what is His



18 William Hogarth cartoon of sleeping congregation in Church of England, illustrating the Dead Christianity then.

own with everyone, in this case the Divine Truth of the Word abused by the hypocrites in the middle of the false heavens. They had used the truth to hold the ignorant masses under dominion. Now these truths received the Lord's more powerfully present saving hand, reaching out to elevate the wicked also. But alas, with all the good spirits already rescued and saved for heaven, the truths with the wicked became too hot to handle, and not being part of them, they threw away from themselves the last means for their salvation.

No longer buoyed up by truths, they "cast themselves" into hell. (*Apocalypse Revealed* 340, 343) Down they sank, tugged by their own specific gravity of evil and falsity, to the depth of their rejection of the truth. And the abused truths? Like the talent buried in the ground, they were returned to the celestial heaven, "he who had ten talents." (*Matthew* 25:14-30) Thus too was fulfilled the guest without a wedding garment pitched into outer darkness. (*Ibid.* 22.11-13, *Arcana Coelestia* 2132) By the end of 1757, the world of spirits was permanently cleared¹⁹ of similar large "intervening clouds" darkening the mental skies on earth, ever again.²⁰



The Lord's dual influx whereby Swedenborg received the "Heavenly Doctrine from the Lord out of heaven" (*Heavenly Doctrine* 7) could also have inspired Jennens and Handel's inspiration, even Wesley's "feeling of warmth" of conversion. By this influx, the Lord called Swedenborg:²¹ "I have been called to a holy office by the Lord Himself, who most mercifully appeared before me, his servant, in the year 1743; when he opened my sight into the spiritual world, and

granted me to speak with spirits and angels, in which state I have continued up to the present day. From that time I began to print and publish the various arcana that were seen by me and revealed to me." (Letter to Hartley, Aug.2

19 Although it took several more years, 1757-1770, before the New Heaven could be prepared and opened, see *New Church Life* June 2008, p. 240 "From New Heaven to New Church."

20 From then on continual mini-judgments take place, of about 200 or so spirits at a time, within 30 years or so after their deaths; the worst interference or "cloud" they can cause on earth is by mental obsessions, i.e. *fanaticism*. (*Last Judgment Posthumous* 105, *Heaven and Hell* 426, *Arcana Coelestia* 1983.4, 5990)

21 Sergius Hruby portrait of Swedenborg, previously unknown. Ca. 1900

1769) All of this writing and printing took place “while I have read the Word.” (*True Christian Religion* 779)²²

There is no evidence that Jennens or Handel knew anything of Swedenborg. But it is interesting that Swedenborg first began to write of the Second Coming using “God Messiah.” This was some time after Jennens compiled the text for Handel’s *Messiah*. As a devout opponent to Deism, Jennens certainly seems qualified for the enlightenment any commoner can receive if he holds the Word to be holy. Thus Jennens collected the “doctrine of genuine truth” – hand and face passages where the spiritual meaning is open in the literal text (*Sacred Scripture* 55) – from Holy Scripture, the King James Version he loved, to disprove Deism, and send Handel to his most famous victory: *The Messiah*.

In its apparently miraculous music, receiving of the “true order and heaven’s realities,” Handel’s *Messiah* serves as a platform for the explanation of who Messiah really is by the “manifestation of the Lord, and admission [of Swedenborg] into the spiritual world, [which] surpasses all miracles . . . [since it] has not been granted to anyone since the creation, as it has been to [Swedenborg].” (*Invitation to the New Church* 52)

These two miracles were just a couple of years apart – 1741-2, and 1743 – with first public performances or publications in the spiritually central, English-speaking world, so that both could follow the track of Christianity and spread to the whole world. That is why the New Church today is world-wide.

Hallelujah!



The Rev. Dr. Erik E. Sandstrom has served in the Olivet Church, Toronto, Canada; the Michael Church, London, England; the Hurstville New Church in New South Wales, Australia; as an instructor in Bryn Athyn College and its Theological School; and as Director of Swedenborgiana in the Swedenborg Library in Bryn Athyn. In retirement he continues to serve as Acting Curator of Swedenborgiana. He and his wife, Lynn-Del (Walter), live in Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania. Contact: Erik.Sandstrom@brynathyn.edu

22 This opening stage of Divine enlightenment from 1743 also would account for Swedenborg’s *interworks*, between his *Worship and Love of God* (printed in 1745 i.e. Adam and Eve chatting about how creation actually took place, the Nebular Hypothesis revisited), (Coleridge later lauded this work as the very Parnassus of poetry!) and the *Arcana* in 1749: These never-printed-by-Swedenborg interworks are: 1. the *Adversaria or Word Explained* (a dry run for the *Arcana*) 2. the *Spiritual Diary* starting in 1748 – coming into daily adventures in the after-life -- he also renewed studies of Hebrew; 3. *Index Biblicus*, a biblical Index -- meanings of key scriptural names and words, 4. *Messiah about to Come*, 5. *Gad and Asher*, 6. *Isaiah and Jeremiah Explained*, 7. *The Greek Orthodox Religion*, 8. *Miracles*. We might also include 9. *Marginal Notes* – his own jottings on the spiritual sense of various texts in his Sebastian Schmidt or *Schmidius Bible* (Leipzig 1694); the Old and New Testament Hebrew and Greek translated into Latin.

The New Christian Bible Study Project: How's It going?

Steve David

It's going gangbusters! With no advertising, we still had more than 70,000 site visitors in the past 30 days, up 77% from this time last year. We're excited about the current state of play, and still more about the potential.

There are hundreds of millions of Bible-reading Christians in the world and more and more they are reading the Word online. Online, they can readily search for things and read commentary that helps them understand the meaning of the stories in the Word. Our big idea is to work with that wide interest, building a great Bible study site, and feeding people with the New Church's true understanding of the internal sense. We think that will resonate with many, many people.

The 850,000 people we see this year are just the beginning. If we can keep working our way up into the big leagues of Bible Study and appear on the first page of search engine results for many Bible searches, the number of first-time visitors will skyrocket.

Recent accomplishments?

We have been working hard on getting more content into our system and on being multilingual. We have a million pages on our site that have been indexed by Google, and more are coming. Here are some quick statistics:

Content:

- The Word: 82 translations in 49 languages
- Swedenborg's Writings: 45 originals, 124 English translations, and 47 translations in 10 other modern languages
- Explanations:
 - Bible stories: We're up to 386 explained stories
 - Spiritual topics and concepts: 86
 - Word/phrase significations: 3074

We've been putting a lot of effort into prepping and importing existing

translations of the Writings in modern languages. We have 13 Portuguese translations in the system, 10 French, plus four each in Chinese and Korean, and several in Spanish, Dutch, German, Czech, Norwegian and Swedish. All are cross-linked to Bible translations in those languages, too.

This is great, not just because it puts them out there for everyone to use, but it also supports the work of New Church ministers and lay people around the globe.

What's Coming Up?

Long term, we are working on four main fronts:

- We need the site to be a great place:
 - To read and explore the Word
 - To read and explore the Writings for the New Church
 - To find plain language explanations of the Word's inner meaning and of doctrine
 - To study and learn, over the long run, either with other people or solo

For each of those fronts, we need users to be able to work in their own comfortable language. That's a big undertaking, but it's really important.

To be able to do these things requires pretty advanced software. It's new; we're trying to do something that's quite unique. It costs money, so we need to keep fund-raising. (Huge thanks to everyone who has helped so far!) It also requires, we think, a crowd-sourced effort involving scores of New Church people. Yet, despite the need for a lot of work, we think this project is already providing a very high-leverage way to reach hundreds of thousands of people, and that it's a springboard to much bigger things.

Here's what we're working on now. One of our projects is called "The Writings for Everyone." Essentially, we want to make the most of the already translated works of the Writings. It's amazing how much translation has been done. The other day, Carroll Odhner told us there are works of the Writings in as many as 99 languages!

Right now we are focused on importing works of the Writings in translations that:

- Have digital versions already available
- Are in reasonable shape to be imported
- Have matching Bible translations in the same language
- Have at least some New Church people who use that language who can be helpful resources

We have a few more French ones to add, and we're eagerly awaiting some Spanish translations. We've got much more to do in German, and we're going

to be tackling Japanese, Georgian, Zulu, Malayalam, Serbian, Croatian, Finnish and Russian as soon as we can.

This might seem like a lot of work, and it is. But when you look at it, it's not that much incremental work to get existing works of the Writings that have already been translated into a site where they can be linked to the Word and seen by thousands of people. It's a very effective way to reach out to the world.

Can New Church People Help?

We recently ran a three-week project with a talented team of Latin students. They worked their way through the processing of 19 existing translations of Swedenborg's works. They worked in Latin, English, Dutch, Korean and Czech, and have brought our total offering to 160 translations in 11 languages. There's still a long way to go, but it was great progress!

Some people are helping by reading old sermons into Google docs, using the free voice-to-text feature that Google provides. Other people are providing plain-language explanations of the internal sense. Bilingual people are helping to make the site's user interface work in various languages. Some creative people are providing photos and artwork that can illustrate stories and concepts. Some New Church software developers have pitched in to help with aspects of development. Many people have donated money to help fund the work of the core staff.

How Does This Project Relate to the General Church and Other Outreach Projects?

The New Christian Bible Study Project has been a cross-church-branch project from its inception. All the church branches value the Word and the Writings, and they all have an interest in seeing them be multilingual, widely read, easy to use side-by-side, and with ready cross-referencing and searchability.

We have good informal working relationships with all the church branches, with the colleges and seminaries and schools, and with the Swedenborgian publishers. The Rt. Rev. Peter Buss Jr. is on our Board of Directors, which provides a good General Church connection.

We're already linking to many resources coming from various New Church projects, and we're planning to increase this cross-fertilization.

What Can *New Church Life* Readers Look Forward To?

- For each targeted language, we'll have a user interface, a translation of the Word, translations of the Writings, and explanations.
- There will be more, better explanations, with choices for text, audio and video.

- There will be a growing set of tools for studying, solo or in groups, and helping people with their spiritual journeys.

Speaking for our core staff, we very much appreciate all the support that people have given to the project and while we are excited about the progress we've made we think the future looks even better.

Website: www.newchristianbiblestudy.org

Contact: sdavid@skymark.com

OUR NEW CHURCH VOCABULARY

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

HUMAN ESSENCE

Here we have another important term which occurs in the doctrine of the glorification. It refers to something which the Lord put on by birth of Mary, but which was neither from her nor yet Divine when assumed: a truly human accession from which the Lord could conquer the hells and which He could make Divine. This was an as-of-Himself reception of the Divine love and wisdom, manifested in the desire to be led by the Divine and to learn truth.

These formed in the Lord a plane of human consciousness on which, when in the state of humiliation, He could feel entirely separate from the Divine, and of Himself could fight against and conquer the hells. This is what is meant by Human essence, and it was this that was glorified, so that, from being a receptacle of life, the Lord became life itself in the Human.

(See *Arcana Coelestia* 1675.)

Church News

Compiled by Bruce Henderson

PASTORAL MOVES

The Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith

The Rev. Jean Atta, who has been residing in Los Angeles, will be moving to Boulder, Colorado, through June. This will give him valuable training under an experienced pastor to better prepare him for a call after that. He will continue to serve Los Angeles and other Western United States congregations from Boulder.

The planned moves of the **Rev. Coleman Glenn** to Toronto, Canada, the **Rev. Jared Buss** to Oak Arbor, Michigan, and the **Rev. Joel Glenn** to Durban, South Africa, in November have needed some revision.

Due to medical complications, the Glenn family needs to stay in Bryn Athyn for medical and family support. Also, the visa process for Joel moving to South Africa has run into delays. So Coleman will remain in Bryn Athyn for the foreseeable future. Jared will remain in Toronto at least through June. And we anticipate Joel moving to Durban in the beginning of March, or as soon afterward as he can obtain a visa.

The Rev. Derek Elphick will be without an assistant in Oak Arbor when Joel leaves, but we anticipate placing the candidate **Elmo Acton** there after his graduation in June.

CHARTER DAY 2016

The Charter Day Address in the Bryn Athyn Cathedral by the **Rev. Stephen D. Cole** – “This Changes Everything” – was a message about the revolutionary beginnings of the Academy and how we are all called upon still to be agents of change. You can read his address on page 538. See photos from the Charter Day weekend on pages 586 through 589.

Academy Corporation

At the annual meeting of the Academy Corporation on October 14, these new members were elected to six-year terms:

- **Shaun Buss**
- **Sean Connelly**
- **David Cooper**
- **Kyle Genzlinger**
- **Leslie G. Horigan**
- **Travis Lindsay**
- **Cathy A. McQueen**
- **Wayne Wadsworth**

Re-elected to six-year terms were:

- **Amy C. Buick**
- **Dirk Jungé**
- **John A. Kern**
- **Lael U. Odhner**
- **Clark D. Pitcairn**
- **Edward A. Simons**
- **Stewart Dean Smith**

Thanked for their service were retiring Corporation members:

- **James Roscoe**
- **Huard Smith**
- **Peer Snoep**
- **Mara Jungé Wrinkle**

Distinguished Alumni and Outstanding Volunteers

Every year since 1992 the Academy Secondary Schools have honored Distinguished Alumni – two for the Girls School and two for the Boys School – as well as Outstanding Volunteers. In recent years Bryn Athyn College has done the same for its own Distinguished Alumni and Outstanding Volunteers.

In the Secondary Schools the Distinguished Alumni are invited to speak to the seniors of the Girls School and Boys School on the Thursday of Charter Day weekend about what the Academy has meant in their lives and how it can help to guide the lives and careers of these young people. The alumni are honored that night along with the Outstanding Volunteer at a dinner with the principals of the Secondary Schools, spouses of the honorees and guests from the Academy faculty and administration.

The College honors its Distinguished Alumni and Outstanding Volunteer at a reception in the Brickman Center on Friday evening, where they are invited to share thoughts about their college and volunteer experiences.

The Academy Secondary Schools honor alumni “whose personal and

professional achievements model New Church values. These individuals continue to impact ANCSS through generous contributions of their time, talent and treasure.”

This year’s Distinguished Alumni in the Secondary Schools were:

Siri Odhner Hurst (GS 1966): Siri graduated from Emerson College in Boston and taught speech communication in the Bryn Athyn College Theological School. She has taught in the Academy Girls School and Boys School and earned a Masters in Speech Rhetoric and Communication from Temple University. She worked as Cultural Activities Coordinator at Glencairn Museum, and has been involved with film making, producing and directing plays for the Bryn Athyn Community Theater.

Dr. Kristin King (GS 1976): Kristin began her career as a registered nurse, then graduated from the College of William and Mary, where she was awarded a scholarship for graduate study at Cambridge University. She earned a PhD from Boston University and taught there and at other colleges in the Boston area. In 1995 she came to Bryn Athyn College where she has taught English Literature and also served as President for five years. Back in the classroom she is exploring innovations in higher education, digital humanities and research.

Randy Gyllenhaal (BS 2006): Randy was editor of the *Academian* at the Boys School, which sparked his interest in journalism. He graduated from Elon University in North Carolina, where he studied journalism and international relations, and also interned with ABC News in Washington, DC. He has worked as a TV reporter in Vermont and South Florida, and since 2014 with NBC10 in Philadelphia. He has covered presidential candidates, Pope Francis’ visit and the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia.

Bruce Henderson (BS 1956): Bruce graduated from Penn State University with a degree in liberal arts/journalism. He worked for almost 40 years as an editorial page editor of a daily newspaper, producing more than 10,000 editorials and 2,000 columns and winning more than 60 national and state awards for writing. He served 15 years on the Bryn Athyn Church Board, nine years on the Academy Board of Trustees, and was a founding board member of the Pennypack Watershed Trust. He worked for 10 years as Director of Development and Communication for the General Church and Academy, and has been editor of *New Church Life* since 2011. He has written three books: *Window to Eternity*, *Why Does God Let It Happen?* and *The Seventh Seal*, which is in production.

The Outstanding Volunteer – recognized for her “significant volunteer contributions in support of ANCSS” was **Wendinne Pendleton Buss** (GS 1986): Wendinne got her AA from Bryn Athyn College and a BA in international relations from George Washington University. For six years she has provided a female presence in the Academy’s religion course on marriage. For the past five years she has been leading vespers in the girls dormitory, providing a

peaceful, listening and supportive sphere for the girls. She says she is “sort of a rent-a-mom” for girls who need it, and it is “one of the greatest joys of my life!”

The Bryn Athyn College Distinguished Alumni awards “honor alumni who have achieved personal and professional success by practicing the values of New Church liberal arts education and by contributing to the communities where they live and work.”

This year’s Distinguished Alumni were:

Scott Daum (BS 1978) and **Chara (Cooper) Daum** (BA 1982): Scott earned a Masters in Secondary English Education at the University of Maryland, then taught for 20 years in the Academy Secondary Schools – plus coaching, serving as a houseparent and Dining Hall manager. He was Principal of the Boys School for 10 years and now is an advisor to administrators in General Church schools, oversees curriculum development, manages teacher support and evaluation, and creates professional development programs.

His wife, Chara, focused on religion and sacred languages at Bryn Athyn College and found summer jobs where she could use Swedenborg’s Latin. She taught Latin in the Secondary Schools for three years. She served as a Latin consultant to the Rev. Bruce Rogers for translations of the Writings and now is part of the Swedenborg Foundation’s New Century Edition team. She helps with the online *Swedenborg and Life* production and with the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Rose’s *Spirit and Life Bible Study*.

David Radcliffe (AA 1983): David graduated from the Academy Boys School and received an AA from Bryn Athyn College before earning a BA in International Studies and a Master’s in Public Administration from The American University in Washington, DC. He also received a Master of Science in National Security Strategy from the National War College. David is a strategist for the Office of the Secretary of Defense, specializing in security cooperation, counterterrorism policy and sub-Saharan African security issues. He has directed and managed multi-million-dollar security programs for the Department and was a key architect of U.S. Africa Command when it was established in 2007. He grew up in the Washington area and he and his wife, Heather (Newkirk), are active in the Washington New Church. He is also a member of the General Church Board of Directors.

Honored as the Outstanding Volunteer in recognition of his “significant volunteer contributions in support of Bryn Athyn College” was the **Rev. Dr. Erik E. Sandstrom** (BS 1964, MDiv 1971). Erik served in the U.S. Peace Corps before attending Theological School, and has served New Church societies in Toronto, Canada; London, England; and Hurstville, Australia. He was a professor in the Theological School, Curator of Swedenborgiana in the Swedenborg Library in Bryn Athyn, and editor of *New Church Life* until his retirement. He continues to serve in a volunteer capacity as Acting Curator of Swedenborgiana.

College Dedications

As part of the Charter Day observance there were two special dedications in Bryn Athyn College: two new residence halls dedicated on Friday afternoon to the late and beloved biology professor **Dr. Sherri Rumer Cooper**, and former College teacher and Academy President, the **Rev. Daniel W. Goodenough**; and the groundbreaking and dedication of a new athletic field on Sunday afternoon in honor of **Major General Ronald K. Nelson**. (See photos on page 588.) Below are remarks offered at each by **Brian Blair**, President of the College:

Dedication of the Goodenough and Cooper Halls

Over the years, the College has been blessed with faculty members who want to make a difference in their students' lives and provide them with an excellent education. A college is only as good as the faculty that makes the magic happen in the classroom. We are honored today to recognize two talented, inspiring and dedicated educators who devoted so much of their lives to serving Bryn Athyn College and the Academy.

Dr. Sherri Rumer Cooper

Dr. Sherri Rumer Cooper was a beloved faculty member, having joined the College faculty in 1999 after establishing an impressive record of paleoecology research at the University of Maryland, Johns Hopkins University and Duke University. With such exemplary academic credentials, Dr. Cooper was a prized addition to the Bryn Athyn College faculty. She taught courses in biology, ecology, botany, limnology and environmental science, and she continued to conduct and publish research while at Bryn Athyn College.

She shared her passion for research and science unstintingly with her students. Her dedication to research went toward developing a powerful and unique undergraduate research program with the Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust. Through her excitement for science, her teaching, her research and her leadership, Dr. Cooper helped to make biology one of the most robust programs in the College.

One of the many blessings we received from Dr. Cooper was her intellectual insight into creation and the power of the Creator. She saw how the hand of God was placed on all living things. She challenged students to see the correlations between science and spiritual guidance. In short, she made the classroom a wonderful learning experience both from a natural perspective as well as a spiritual one. Dr. Cooper was deeply loved by her students, fellow faculty and the community at large.

Almost a year ago, Dr. Cooper lost her long and courageous battle with cancer. Her life and contributions to Bryn Athyn College will be forever remembered on this campus with the dedication of this new residence hall under her name. We are also honored to have members of both the Cooper

and Rumer families here in attendance. Please know that we are so pleased you could join us today and share in our expression of love and appreciation for everything Dr. Sherri Rumer Cooper did for Bryn Athyn College.

Rev. Dan Goodenough

The Rev. Daniel Goodenough was a very popular member of the faculty and administration at the Academy of the New Church. He was ordained in 1965 and became assistant to the pastor at the Olivet Church in Toronto, Ontario. Two years later he moved his family to Bryn Athyn where he became an instructor at the Academy of the New Church. He went on to become Dean of the Theological School in 1990, then President of the Academy in 1992.

During his tenure at the Academy, Rev. Goodenough served as a beloved teacher at four Academy schools: Bryn Athyn College, the Theological School, the Boys School and the Girls School. His keen knowledge of religion and history, along with his passion for scholarship, were evident in every class he taught. The positive effect he had on students was a result of his knowledge and teaching skills surely, but the impact he made also came from a special sense of caring that he consistently brought to the classroom.

During Rev. Goodenough's tenure as President of the Academy, he made many contributions to the development and expansion of the campus and programs. He served for 10 years as Academy President, then retired in 2002. His leadership was instrumental in expanding the uses of the Academy while inspiring many others to follow in his footsteps. Those who had the privilege of having been taught or mentored by Rev. Goodenough remember him fondly.

Dan and his wife Ruth now make their home in northern Minnesota, and it is a pleasure to be joined by both of them as well as other members of the Goodenough family. We are thrilled to honor Dan today with the dedication of the Goodenough Residence Hall.

Dedication of the Major General Ronald Nelson Athletic Field

Major General Ronald Nelson is a respected alumnus who attended the College from 1950 to 1951, after graduating from the Academy Boys School in 1950. As a long-time teacher at the Academy, General Nelson was instrumental in the creation of the Bryn Athyn College men's lacrosse program 50 years ago. His legacy is rooted in the use of sport as a platform to teach integrity, courage, dedication, commitment and honesty.

Speaking personally now, I have to refer to General Nelson as Coach Nelson, which is the title by which we addressed him as college students. Coach Nelson is indeed a special man. Every student-athlete coached by him admires and appreciates the education, training and mentoring that he gave to each of us. Coach Nelson taught us invaluable lessons that have indeed lasted a lifetime. He inspired his student-athletes to take on tough competition, to believe in themselves, and to play the game with true sportsmanship and

teamwork.

I would like to share with you a recent story about Coach Nelson. Last spring, I called 14 members of the inaugural Bryn Athyn College men's lacrosse team of 1966 to invite them to an honoring ceremony celebrating 50 years of BAC lacrosse. Many of these players initially thought I was calling them for a contribution, but when I mentioned I was calling about Coach Nelson there was an immediate change in vocal tone. It was an amazing experience to hear the love and respect that each player had for their coach. But I was not surprised. Turning back to General Nelson, the soldier, he also set wonderful examples in leadership, patriotism and accomplishment. General Nelson has an exemplary military record. He was designated a naval aviator in 1956 and flew Marine One during President Eisenhower's administration. After leaving active duty, he served in the Marine Corps Reserve. He was continually promoted through the ranks – eventually to Major General – and served on bases up and down the Eastern Seaboard. Even in retirement, General Nelson has an on-going passion for naval aviation and has served on the board of the Wings of Freedom Aviation Museum in Willow Grove.

At Bryn Athyn College, we are fortunate to have such a great role model after whom to name this new field in his honor. Thank you General Nelson.

(In his gracious remarks accepting this honor, General Nelson said he wished the field could bear the names of all the students he coached because “they are what it's all about.”)

Charter Day Banquet

The banquet program tied in the history of the Academy campus with this year's celebration of the Centennial of Bryn Athyn Borough. The emcee was **B. Erikson Odhner**, Curriculum Developer and teacher in the Academy Secondary Schools.

The program featured **Gail R. Cooper**, Latin teacher, and the **Rev. George McCurdy**, former Principal and religion teacher, who traced the history of the Academy, using numerous nostalgic photographs of Academy buildings and much-loved teachers. The core message was: “Our ANC campus and teaching methods have changed but our core values have remained the same.”

Theta Alpha Luncheon

The Theta Alpha luncheon on October 14 featured *A Century of Academy of the New Church Fashion*, with models from the community and Bryn Athyn College recreating the fashionable look of well-known women in Academy history.

The fashion show, with stunning costumes off the racks of Mitchell Performing Arts Center and narrated by **Sonia Doering**, was a huge hit with

the luncheon audience. The runway featured:

- **Caterina Fuller** as *Sarah Hibbard*
- **Clara Roth** as *Lillian Beekman*
- **Aspen Klippenstein** as *Alice Grant*
- **Rosemary Fuller** as *Mildred Pitcairn*
- **Maya Synnestvedt** as *Fidelia de Charms*
- **Caterina Fuller** as *Gabrielle Pendleton*
- **Amissah Synnestvedt** as *Lyriss Hyatt*
- **Kristin King** as her mother, *Freya King*
- **Erica Cantley** as *Morna Hyatt*
- **Ashley Walsh** as *Mary Lou Williamson*

And from the 1950s-1960s:

- **Portia Wille O'Brien** as cheerleader
- **Margaret Gladish** as a prom girl
- **Carol Henderson** as a phys ed student wearing the traditional blue gym suit

Entertainment included a dazzling presentation, *In Dreams*, by the ANC Dance Ensemble, directed by **Sarah Gladish**. The dancers included:

- **Arabella Guzman-Baker**
- **Rebecca Liu**
- **Alana O'Grady**
- **Teryn Rose**
- **Brianna Salvatori**
- **Lauren Sheedy**
- **McKenna Smith**
- **Sophie Zhong**

See photos of the fashion show on page 589.

GENERAL CHURCH BOARD

At the September 30-October 1 meeting of the General Church Board of Directors a report on the International Church noted that there are 64 congregations worldwide, supported by 83 active ministers. There are 12 elementary schools, three theological schools, two distance-learning theological schools, a summer secondary school (the British Academy Summer School), plus the Academy of the New Church Secondary Schools and Bryn Athyn College.

There are 55 active ministers (66%) outside of North America, serving

44 congregations (69% of the total). In the current fiscal year \$634,000 – or 70% of subsidies given out church-wide – are supporting worship and schools outside of North America.

There has been significant growth in West Africa and Asia over the past 10 years, especially in the number of ordained clergy seeking to launch new congregations. This includes new beginnings in Burkina Faso, China, India, Nigeria and Cuba. A church-building project is underway in Seoul, Korea, to support the Church there and throughout Asia.

The General Church is attempting to narrow the focus of church growth abroad and to produce income-generating projects in order to continue spreading New Church teachings in a sustainable way.

The Board-Clergy Communication Committee reported that it considered decision-making within the Church, recognizing that while there are clearly delineated areas where decisions fall to priests or laity there are grey areas where discussions and interactions between both are essential. Appreciation was expressed for an organizational culture which generally focuses on consensus and input, while recognizing that this is harder to achieve on a larger scale.

The Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss Jr. reported as Assistant to the Bishop on the Women's Participation Task Force – a group of 12 people, with two more likely to be added. The group will seek input from board and clergy so that eventual recommendations are more likely to be embraced. The target for recommendations is the end of June.

Bishop Buss also reported on continuing discussion about the best way to support growth of the Church in West Africa.

The board considered some of the lessons learned from church plant closing in Austin, Texas, including tighter financial scrutiny when the General Church is subsidizing the effort and stricter management in measuring growth and success. A written case study will be used to improve the process of future church plants.

The 2016 fiscal year for the General Church ended with a favorable variance of more than \$230,000, but expenses exceeded budget by about \$340,000, leaving a deficit of approximately \$95,000. Among the added expenses were severance payments, retirement plan correction and the closing of the church plant in Austin. Positives included Annual Fund contributions about \$90,000 above the goal, \$70,000 above budget for restricted gifts for Education and Outreach, \$170,000 favorable in income from Capital Campaign reconciliation.

The investment report noted that the New Church Investment Fund missed targets for the past several years but beat the benchmark for the last quarter. The committee will re-examine asset allocation strategies and the relationship with its investment company.

WEST AFRICA REGIONAL CLERGY MEETINGS*Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss Jr.*

The General Church currently holds regional clergy meetings every third year. These meetings replace the international plenary meetings that take place in Bryn Athyn in June. Nine sets of regional meetings took place this past year, in places such as Stockholm, Kempton (Pennsylvania), Tokyo and Bryn Athyn. The focus of this report is on the set of meetings that took place in Togoville, Togo, on August 15-19, 2016.

This set of meetings was the largest of the regional meetings, with 36 people in attendance:

- Two of us from the central offices (**Bishop Peter Buss Jr.** and **the Rev. David Lindrooth**)
- Five from Togo (one of whom is a candidate due to be ordained in April 2017)
- 15 from Côte d'Ivoire (four of whom are candidates also to be ordained in April 2017)
- 10 from Ghana
- One from Benin
- One from Burkina Faso
- Two from Nigeria (one studying for the General Church clergy via distance learning, and the other ordained earlier in a different New Church organization)

We were housed comfortably at a lake-side retreat owned by the **Rev. Kodjo Ayi**, as well as in neighboring houses. An accompanying picture (page 590) shows how we got there – in a large canoe, which made us feel much like the disciples on the Sea of Galilee. Since no one was in his own work location, the venue allowed for much casual conversation and relationship building – around meals, with morning prayers and exercise, at fireside chats, and so on.

The meetings took place within a newly constructed open-air building on adjacent church-owned property. The story of how this building came into being is telling of the creativity that often happens in this part of the world. Instead of using the money allocated for these meetings to rent a hotel conference center, as well as hotel rooms for participants, the Togolese crew decided instead to put the money toward this building project. The resulting structure is impressive, and will serve the church in that area for years to come.

Time at the meetings was used to digest doctrinal presentations, absorb practical learning, and brainstorm ways to engage in the financial challenges we face in the sub-region. The theme was: *Growth of the Church in West Africa*.

In terms of doctrinal presentations, the following were offered:

- *Essentials* (**Rt. Rev. Peter Buss Jr.**)
- *Growth of the Church—How Do We Define It?* (**Rev. Segno-Kodjo Ayi**)
- *The Internal Sense and the Literal Sense—Strengths and Weaknesses* (**Rev. Roger Koudou**)
- *Divinity in Humanity* (**Rev. Adu Amoako**)
- *The Lord Leads the Church through Charity and Good Works* (**Rev. Edward Akotey**)

In terms of practical learning, the Rev. David Lindrooth led a seminar on *How to Use Small Groups to Build a Healthy Growing New Church*. We also took time to hear reports of church activities in each country represented. These in turn led to discussions about the relative scarcity of resources against the many projects that these ministers would love to do.

The Church in West Africa has grown, in terms of clergy, from 11 priests in 2009 to 27 ordained today and others soon to join those ranks. Imagine all these pastors or pastors-in-training sharing ideas and renewing relationships with one another. Imagine sessions presented in French and translated into English, or the other way around. Imagine the support that comes from exploring challenges and successes with others who have been there.

It is an understatement to say that the time was inspirational and fun. Our sincere gratitude goes to the Togolese delegation which hosted the meetings, and our support goes to all these people as they carry on the Lord's work.

LIVING GRATEFULLY PAGEANT AT THE KAINON SCHOOL

Justina Wasserman, head of marketing for the Kainon School in Durban, South Africa, wrote about a special pageant at the school in September celebrating the theme of Living Gratefully.

“One way we experience gratitude,” she said, “is when we notice and appreciate the many ways the Lord takes care of us and how His guidance is most important when we are struggling or trapped, and realize we cannot succeed on our own.”

This year's pageant focused on the *Exodus* story about the Lord freeing the Children of Israel from slavery in Egypt. This is a metaphor for how He frees us from spiritual enslavements and shows how He gradually leads us to hope and freedom.

The Rev. Erik J. Buss, former pastor of the Westville society and a visiting minister there earlier this year, wrote the pageant.

See photographs on page 585.

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION TASK FORCE

The Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss Jr.

The General Church strategic plan calls for a Women's Participation Task Force. The charge of this group is:

Promote involvement of women through a task force charged with exploring respect for and utilization of feminine wisdom in the Church. After doctrinal and current-state exploration, develop a report on appropriate methods of enhancing the roles feminine wisdom and expertise may play.

This task force is up and running. I write to describe who is involved, what is happening, and how to share any input you may have.

There are 14 people on this task force, including me:

- **Heather Allais** (Bucleuch, South Africa)
- **Rakel Björkstom** (Stockholm, Sweden)
- **Hilary Bryntesson** (Bryn Athyn)
- **Ethan Daum** (Austin, Texas)
- **Liane de Chazal** (Oak Arbor, Michigan)
- **Nina Dewees** (Bryn Athyn)
- **The Rev. Mac Frazier** (Glenview, Illinois)
- **Charlotte Gyllenhaal** (General Church Board, Indiana)
- **Cathlin Hendricks** (Boulder, Colorado)
- **Laura Hill** (Caryndale, Ontario, Canada)
- **The Rev. Jeremy Simons** (Bryn Athyn)
- **Craig Steen** (Oak Arbor, Michigan)
- **Dr. Jane Williams-Hogan** (Bryn Athyn College, Co-Chair)

We have met three times: once to get oriented and organized; a second time to digest relevant teachings from the Word; and a third time to review summary statements based on those teachings that can serve as a reference point for our continued work.

I would characterize the discussion so far as equally inspiring and challenging: inspiring in that members are offering insights on teachings, and thinking creatively about how they apply in today's world; challenging in that not all task force members agree on the meaning we should derive from these teachings or on some of the proposed applications.

Nevertheless, we are making progress. By way of illustration, I offer two (of 17) of the summary statements brainstormed by this task force:

- *Given the complementary perspective and approach of men and women, it follows that human society works best when masculine and feminine input is brought to bear. When both masculine and feminine approach a given*

use from love, and collaborate on its performance, the use is elevated.

- *The interplay of teachings about masculinity and femininity and people's experience of masculine and feminine human beings can be tricky. There is value in drawing on the wealth of evidence from brain research and sociological observation which appear to confirm the teachings presented in the Writings. It can also be useful to acknowledge that some people struggle to match the doctrinal descriptions of masculinity and femininity with their experience of themselves and the people in their lives.*

The next topic under consideration is communication: how to listen more effectively within the church to feminine wisdom, and to ensure that the perspectives women would offer can appropriately influence things within the Church. Other topics on the docket include: what's happening around the Church, and what could happen; toward a more supportive culture; and educational strands.

This task force is seeking to operate in an open and collaborative format. It is sending regular updates to the clergy and General Church Board. If you would like to address us, please feel free to email me at peter.buss.jr@newchurch.org or Jane Williams-Hogan, Co-Chair, at Jane.Williams-Hogan@brynathyn.edu.

Our aim is to present major findings and recommendations to the Council of the Clergy and to the General Church Board at their respective June 2017 meetings.

LIVE STREAMING CHAPEL

Jim Adams

Managing Director, ANC Secondary Schools

The Academy Secondary Schools are pleased to announce that thanks to a very generous donation we have installed video cameras and equipment in our Benade Hall Auditorium so we are able to live broadcast chapel each morning. We also plan to broadcast other programs such as Senior Project presentations.



To view the chapel service, you can subscribe to our ANC Secondary Schools youtube account using the address below. You can choose to set your account to notify you each time a new video is uploaded.

<https://www.youtube.com/ancsecondarieschools>

NEW JERUSALEM: A NEW TRANSLATION

The Swedenborg Foundation has just published *New Jerusalem*, the latest title in the Portable New Century Edition Translation Series. The translator is the **Rev. Dr. George F. Dole** who has won acclaim for translations of many other books of the Writings.

It begins with the vision in the book of Revelation about “a new heaven and a new earth . . . and the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven,” and how the spiritual meaning is all about a new church established in heaven and on earth, and its heavenly teachings.

A blurb on the back cover says: “This short work, presented as a series of teachings that characterize a spiritual age to come, is also one of Swedenborg’s most concise and readable summaries of his own theology. Building on fundamental concepts such as good, truth, will and understanding, he describes the importance of love and usefulness in spiritual growth.

“In the second half of the volume, he focuses on how this new theology relates to the church of his day and to church teachings about the Bible, the Lord’s incarnation on earth, and rites such as baptism and the Holy Supper. Each short chapter is followed by extensive references back to his theological *magnum opus*, *Secrets of Heaven*.

“*New Jerusalem* is an excellent starting point for those who want an overview of Swedenborg’s theology, presented in his own words.”

Gary Lachman, author of *A Secret History of Consciousness*, says the book, “Brings an important and much-needed 18th century treasure to a 21st century world.”

The publication date is December 1, 2016. Copies can be ordered through www.swedenborg.com/product/new-jerusalem-nce/

RETREAT UPDATE

The Boynton Beach Retreat, scheduled for January 29 through February 2 in Florida, has announced a program change.

Dr. Erica Goldblatt Hyatt, assistant professor of psychology at Bryn Athyn College, had to withdraw because she is expecting a child in the spring.

Replacing her is **Dr. Sonia S. Werner**, assistant professor emerita at the College, who has taught conflict resolution and altruism from a Swedenborgian viewpoint in the College and Theological School.

The program also includes presentations by **Brian D. Henderson** on the Glencairn Museum and the **Rev. Glenn (Mac) Frazier** on lessons learned from a church plant – since discontinued – in Austin, Texas.

Registration for the Retreat is closed. Information is available from the director, Bob Brickman, at bbretreat@newchurchboyntonbeach.org.

A summary of the presentations will appear in the March/April 2017 issue of *New Church Life*.



The congregation including parents and Church members



Egyptian maidens (servants) who went to the river with Pharaoh's daughter. From left: Amy Baronetti, Thiana Nulliah, Eryn Launspach.



Rev. Malcolm Smith talking to the children before a prayer prior to the start of the pageant



Reece Harvey (left) an Israelite, Ayaan Parbhoo (middle) is Aaron and Emmanuel Nzaji (right) an Egyptian who fought the Israelite



Kelcey Charles, Kiara Troskie Herbestein, Beth Mayer, Jess Mansfield, Paige Haarhoff (Cockerell) and Jenna Dunk – Women in the crowd of Israel
Back: Pharaoh's daughter: Hemma Pawaar



Left to right: Haley Holsworth, Kyle Mattison, Edwin Asplundh, Eric Zhang, and Sophie Zhong.



BAC Rocks! Concert at MPAC



Charter Day Banquet



Bryn Athyn College students Rachel Elphick and Shane McCurdy during the Charter Day procession



Left to right: Kyle Genzlinger, Jennifer Allen, Mara White and Peter Buss during the golf outing



Left to right: Leah Antwi, Ursula Friesen, and Dara Rogers



The start of the Bob Eidge 5K.



College students during the Charter Day procession



Matt McCabe runs the ball during the Charter Day football game



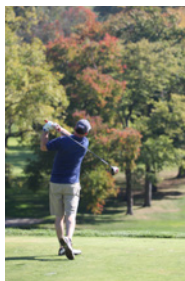
Class of 2017



Left to right: Freya Kistner, Shannah Conroy, Shaun Buss, Richard Glenn, Sonja Kistner, Brandy Rose and Leanna Smith



Women's alumni volleyball game



Golf outing



Samantha Hill and Benjamin Conroy



Allen Bedford during BAC Kite Day



Suzanne Nelson and her father
Ronald K. Nelson



Breaking ground for the General
Ronald K. Nelson Turf Field



President Brian Blair addresses the crowd during the
General Ronald K. Nelson Turf Field Ground Breaking Ceremony



New Residence Halls dedication



Distinguished alumni honored at the alumni
reception. Top left to right: Erik E. Sandstrom and
Chara Daum. Bottom left to right: Scott Daum
and David Radcliffe



Dan and Ruth Goodenough at the dedication of the new residence halls



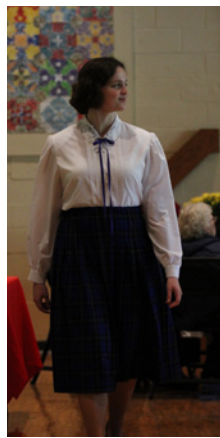
Alumni Reception in the Brickman Great Hall



Maya Synnstedt as
Fidelia de Charms



Left to right: Amisshah Synnstedt, Kristin King,
Caterina Fuller, Maya Synnstedt and Rosemary Fuller



Ashley Walsh as Mary
Lou Williamson



Caterina Fuller as
Sarah Hibbard



Clara Roth as
Lillian Beekman



Aspen Klippenstein
as Alice Grant



Caterina Fuller as Gabrielle Pendleton



Portia Wille O'Brien as a Cheerleader



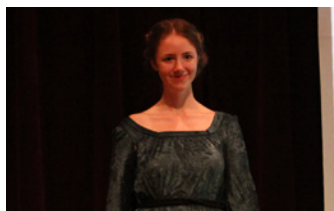
Margaret Gladish as a Prom Girl



Carol Henderson as a Gym Student



Kristin King as Freya King



Rosemary Fuller as Mildred Pitcairn



Attendees at the West Africa meetings



Rev. Ayi at his lakeside retreat, La Champ du Lac



On the way to the meetings: Ablam Amouzouvi and Guillaume Anato



On a canoe ride to the Retreat Center: left to right, Cyprien Mangoua, Moïse Doukourou, Aïme Dayoro, Ebiserikumo Ebute-Mette, Moïse Bab



West African Clergy Meeting venue: The church building and conference center in Togoville, Togo

Life Lines

THANKSGIVING AND DIVINE PROVIDENCE

The roots of the traditional Thanksgiving celebration in the United States are generally well known. The Pilgrims arrived on the Mayflower in 1620 and established the Plymouth Colony in what became Massachusetts. They were saved from “the starving time” of two bitter winters that decimated their numbers by a friendly Indian named Squanto who taught them how to plant corn and squash, catch fish and lobsters, and live off the land.

Less well known is the remarkable back story of Squanto and the role of Divine providence in giving added meaning to Thanksgiving.

Years before the Mayflower voyage, English ships had come to this same area. In 1608 one of them also dropped anchor off Plymouth to trade with the Indians. But the crew also took advantage of the friendly Patuxet Indians, brutally capturing several and taking them to Spain, where they were sold into slavery. One of them was Squanto.

He had the good fortune though of being bought by some Catholic friars who treated him well and eventually freed him. He made his way to London, where he learned the culture and language. In 1618 he was given passage back to the New World in exchange for serving as an interpreter with the Indians.

He made his way back to his village only to find it deserted. The tribe had been wiped out by disease, brought by the Europeans. So Squanto likely would have died had he not been kidnapped. He lived alone in the woods. This is when fate brought him to the desperate colonists – happy for the opportunity to live in religious freedom but enormously challenged just to survive. They desperately needed help.

You can imagine their surprise when Squanto walked out of the woods speaking perfect English. Not only had he lived in London more recently than they had but he also had grown up on this daunting land where they had settled. He taught them how to survive and they gratefully adopted him as one of their own.

He was the answer to their prayers. Indeed, Plymouth Colony Governor William Bradford wrote in his journal that Squanto was “a special instrument sent of God.”

So when these surviving colonists expressed their thanks and praise to God at that first Thanksgiving, they were especially grateful for their blessings in this New World – faith and opportunity. They had to be grateful as well for the kind benevolence of the Lord's providence that oversaw them all.

(BMH)

BEARING FRUIT

The ideals and principles of New Church education grow naturally out of the Heavenly Doctrines, which give us deep insights into all the important issues of life, including the nature, purpose and development of the human mind. The inspiration to establish and maintain schools based on them is constantly renewed by the doctrines themselves – that is, by the Lord in His second coming.

New Church schools are among the most remarkable fruits that have come from the seeds sown by the Lord in His second coming; and the schools, in turn, produce new seeds for the future. We can see this working on a practical level in the way generations of young people well versed in the doctrines by their New Church education have been inspired to continue supporting that use and the Church in general throughout their adult lives. This has been the key to the General Church's success for five generations.

The potential in these truths for practical application in the field of education is so strong as to amount to a Divine mandate – which comes with a promise of success if followed. “If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.” (*John 13:17*)

The field may be small, but it is the field we have been given, and despite all difficulties, we must cultivate it faithfully. Though small, it is good ground. It has yielded a rich harvest in the past and it will continue to bear fruit. The results (in terms of numbers) may sometimes seem disappointing, but like the manna that fell from heaven upon Israel in the wilderness, they will be enough.

(WEO)

CHRISTMAS PAST: JOHN THE BAPTIST AND HEROD

Christmas is all about joy and happiness: the Lord coming to earth as a baby in a stable, Mary and Joseph, shepherds and wise men, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men.” We celebrate with decorated trees and lights, festive parties, joyous carols, loving gifts. But Christmas is also very much about two figures we tend to keep outside the sphere – John the Baptist and Herod. But both are essential to the meaning and promise of Christmas.

It is significant that in the Christmas story John the Baptist is born first. This is because he brings the message of baptism and repentance – that we must turn away from evil before we can turn toward the Lord’s goodness and really know Him. Only with the new light of truth that came with the Lord being born of earth can we see evil for what it is and shun it.

The gift of Christmas is that we can all get to heaven if we live the life of heaven. But John’s message is prerequisite: we must repent – be born again – before we can enter.

The Lord came into the world because people had forgotten Him and did not know Him. Sadly, this is still true. That is why we need Christmas – every year – and why the Christmas story in the Word is written in the present tense. “For unto you is born this day a Savior who is Christ the Lord.” He still is coming to be born in our hearts – every Christmas, every day.

The Lord came into the world to remove hell from angels and people, and to glorify His Human. He brought hell under control and opened heaven so that from then on He could be present with people on earth, and save those who lived according to His commandments. Consequently, the Lord could regenerate and save them, for those who are regenerated are saved. Without the Lord’s coming no one could have been regenerated. (*True Christian Religion* 579)

Herod is such a counterpoint to the joy of the Christmas story that we often choose to ignore him. He looms menacingly over the innocence and glory of all that we love. But this is what evil does. The enduring challenge of our Christmas celebration is to stand up to the evil in the world – and in our own lives – so that we can know the true joy of Christmas. And we have the enduring lesson of Jesus showing us how to confront the hells and triumph over temptation.

This is what the Lord’s coming on earth accomplished. It opens a pathway for us to salvation and heaven – with John the Baptist first telling us to shun evil so we can fully know and love God, then Jesus telling us to love God and our neighbor first, not ourselves.

Talk of repentance and shunning evil may seem counter to the Christmas message of peace and happiness, but this is what makes peace and happiness possible.

The ultimate gift of Christmas is that the Lord’s unconditional loving presence is not just something that visited the world 2,000 years ago, but is with us constantly still – every day.

(BMH)

CHRISTMAS PRESENT: SCROOGE AND THE GRINCH

Christmas may be all about joy and happiness, but its dark and somber side extends well beyond John the Baptist and Herod. Two of the more iconic

modern examples of the anti-Christmas spirit are Ebenezer Scrooge from Charles Dickens's immortal 1843 novella, *A Christmas Carol*, and the perennial Dr. Seuss favorite, *How The Grinch Stole Christmas*, first published in 1957 and made into a television show in 1966, which many families have watched every year since.

Scrooge and the Grinch are beloved examples of how we all can become better people at Christmas through regeneration – being reborn with a new spirit.

Scrooge is the antithesis of Christmas – a cold-hearted miser who hates everything it stands for. The story of his redemption by the ghost of his old business partner, Jacob Marley, and then the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Christmas Present and Christmas Yet-To-Come, has become a defining morality tale of the power of Christmas to elevate our spirit.

Scrooge won't even give to the poor at Christmas, considering them "better off dead." But on Christmas Eve he is visited by the ghost of Jacob Marley, who also had spent his life hoarding wealth and exploiting the poor. Now he is condemned to walk the earth to eternity, bound by the chains of his own greed. He warns Scrooge of a similar fate – unless he heeds the warning of the Christmas Ghosts.

The Ghost of Christmas Past takes him back to his unhappy childhood, then a happier Christmas when he meets Belle, the love of his life. But she leaves him when she realizes he loves money more than he loves her, breaking his heart.

The Ghost of Christmas Present shows him all of London celebrating Christmas, including his faithful and abused clerk Bob Cratchit and his family. Scrooge is touched by the pure-hearted nature of Bob's sickly son, Tiny Tim, and is disturbed when told that Tim will die unless things change.

The Ghost of Christmas Yet-To-Come takes Scrooge to Christmas Day a year later. Tim has died because his father could not afford the care he needed. Scrooge then is shown the grave of a "wretched man" – and weeps to see his own name on the tombstone. He immediately repents and turns to a life of kindness and generosity. You might say – as with the Grinch – that his heart "grew three sizes that day."

The Grinch is a furry recluse living on a cliff overlooking the cheerful community of Whoville, with evil in his heart. He cannot stand their happy celebration and sneaks into town on Christmas Eve to steal all their gifts and decorations. With an evil twinkle in his eye, he anticipates their spirit being crushed. But he is no match for the innocent Cindy Lou and the Whos, who still gather in the town square to sing cheerfully in celebration of Christmas.

Like Scrooge, he has an epiphany, returns the gifts and joins in celebration with the Whos. As Dr. Seuss memorably describes it:

*Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before.
What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store?
What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more?*

And so people are warmed every year by this fanciful children's story and its enduring message amid the hubbub of Christmas commercialism about what is really important. Christmas is always a celebration of hope – that the coming of the Lord onto earth and into our lives really is the ultimate Christmas gift that can transform any traces of Scrooge and the Grinch within us and lift our spirit to heaven.

(BMH)

CHRISTMAS YET-TO-COME: IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE

Another venerable Christmas classic is the movie, *It's a Wonderful Life*, which was not a success when it was released in 1945 but has since been acclaimed as one of the greatest movies ever made, and joins *The Grinch* as a must-watch seasonal favorite.

Jimmy Stewart is George Bailey, a rock of integrity in his community of Bedford Falls but whose world is suddenly shattered, leading him to the brink of suicide. His guardian angel Clarence is sent to intervene and “earns his wings” by teaching George an important lesson.

When George says, “I wish I had never been born,” Clarence is able to show him what would have happened to Bedford Falls and his family if he had not been born. It's a sad picture and immensely distressing to George. We all know the happy ending, when his friends rally to save his bank – and his life. A grateful George suddenly realizes he is “the richest man alive” because of his friends and family, and that it truly is “a wonderful life.”

Frank Capra said he made the movie “to combat the modern trend toward atheism” and to uphold “the individual's belief in himself.” But this is ultimately another Christmas morality tale – this one all about the Lord's providence.

We may all have “what if” moments in our lives. What if I had never been born? What would be different? What if I didn't have that “unexpected” meeting with the person who turned out to be my spouse? Our lives are filled with apparently chance experiences that may forever change our lives. But it is not chance that determines our lives. It is the Lord's loving and guiding providence:

Those who are in the stream of providence are at all times carried along toward everything that is happy, regardless of the appearance of the means. (*Arcana Coelestia* 8478:4)

There is no such thing as chance; apparent accident or fortune is providence in the ultimate order. (*Arcana Coelestia* 6493)

Divine Providence does not regard that which is brief and transient and comes to an end with a person's life in the world; rather it regards that which remains forever and so does not come to an end. (*Arcana Coelestia* 10775)

It was within the Lord's providence that George Bailey had saved his young brother Harry from drowning, that Harry lived to shoot down a kamikaze pilot about to blow up a ship full of sailors, that George was able to prevent a drunken pharmacist from accidentally putting poison in pills meant for a sick young boy, that all George had done for his town was not in vain. It was when Clarence let him see all that would have happened if he had not lived that George realized there was meaning in his life – and a power greater even than Clarence watching over him.

This, too, is part of the Christmas gift. Yes, the Lord's providence is in every part of our lives, ever lifting us up and bending the bad things that happen to us toward good. This is how the Lord loves and looks out for us. It is how His love works in our lives – every day.

“It's a Wonderful Life” because the Lord has been born into it – and never stops coming to us.

(BMH)

WHAT'S YOUR MESSAGE?

The guest editorial on page 521 by the Rev. Solomon Keal, “Born to be an Angel,” notes that we are all born to be angels – and that “angel” means “messenger.”

So we are all born to be messengers for the Lord. This is especially meaningful in the Christmas season when we hear the eternal message from the Angel – the Messenger – of the Lord:

For unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; you shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

It is also a message to take into the New Year when we resolve to be better people in loving and serving others.

So what is our message – as angels in waiting? What good news are we spreading to herald the coming of the Lord into our lives? What messages are we hearing – and open to – from the messenger angels around us?

The Christmas message is not just a gift we receive passively. It challenges us to look for the opportunities it presents to us, and the obligations.

Every Christmas – indeed every day – we are given untold gifts from the Lord that give us life and a future. We know that we become angels not when we enter heaven but by living as angels – as messengers – in the world, which

makes heaven our home. So what is our message now? What is the gift we give back to the Lord?

(BMH)

WILL OUR CHURCH SURVIVE?

Our Church won't, but the Lord's will. What I mean is: "Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain that build it." The degree of success our organization achieves depends upon the degree to which it adheres to the teachings of the Writings and thus serves the Lord's purpose in revealing them, which is to form a New Church.

One measure of "success" is growth in numbers, which is something we naturally desire and should indeed strive for. But the *spiritual* health and growth of the Church, which is not so easily measured, is the essential thing.

These two kinds of success are distinct, but in the long run they go together. Dedication to spiritual use tends to attract the people and money needed to carry it out – as the history of the Academy and General Church well demonstrate.

Gaining worldly success would be futile if the Church loses its soul in the process. (*cf. Matthew 16:26*) The Church's soul is the Lord, who has come again in the Heavenly Doctrine as "the Spirit of truth." (*cf. John 16:13*)

But how can we know whether we are being led by the Lord and His Word or by worldly ambition and the conceit of self-intelligence? We cannot, with any certainty. A thousand people may do the same thing, but no two from exactly the same motive. Only the Lord really knows what is in anyone's heart; and the communal heart (as we might call it) of our Church organization is even more complex and unfathomable. Besides, our wisdom is so limited that even the best of intentions are no guarantee that the actions they inspire will be the best.

Still, it is good to reflect upon what it is we are trying to achieve, and why, and whether it is in accord with the Lord's Word (bearing in mind, of course, that our understanding of it is not perfect).

"You will know them by their fruits," the Lord said. (*Matthew 7:16*) This is the best measure of the wisdom of any plan – the results. But even it is unlikely to make it possible to say "case closed," because results are usually mixed.

"Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (*Luke 12:32*)

(WEO)

HOPE AMID THE FALLOUT

The well-respected Pew Research Center has been tracking the decline in religious faith in the United States for years. Its most recent study says: “Perhaps the most striking trend in American religion in recent years has been the growing percentage of adults who do not identify with a religious groups.” They are leaving behind whatever faith they were raised with.

About half of what Pew calls the “nones” were raised in a faith but have moved away from religion – because of science, “common sense,” “lack of evidence” or they just don’t believe in God anymore.

Among some of the reasons given are:

- Too many Christians doing un-Christian things
- I feel there is something out there, but I can’t nail down a religion.
- Right now I’m kind of leaning toward spirituality, but I’m not too sure. I know I can pray to my God anywhere. I do believe in a higher power, but I don’t need a church to do that.

One anonymous person commented: “It’s really less that they are leaving God than it is that they are leaving religion. Western religion is just outdated.”

It’s not all hopeless. Another person said: “I believe in the hereafter. Why? Because there has to be a place for those who never caught a break here on earth. The poor, the disfigured, the aborted, the socially rejected, all have been redeemed and will enjoy eternity.”

Given that we are still dealing with the fallout from the Last Judgment of 1757 it may be no surprise that people are not finding the answers they need in their churches. But we are also witnessing the fallout from a growing lack of faith and no longer looking to the Lord.

Consider just these indicators of moral tailspin in the United States – reflected throughout much of the world – and how much they seem to track the decline in religion:

- The United States now has the highest teen pregnancy rate in the industrialized world
- There are more than 100,000 websites – available to all – that deal in child pornography
- According to the FBI there are 33,000 violent gangs active in the country, with 1.4 million members
- The average age a person in the United States enters prostitution is 12 to 14
- Only 35 percent of Americans say they believe in objective moral truth

Another scary statistic is that our young people are growing up with virtually no religious context in public education, in their homes or in the

public square. So it is no surprise in the Pew study that the younger people are, the less religious they are. And what does that project for our future?

Against this ominous tide we know that the Lord's love and providence are working every moment with every individual to lift us up and give us hope. He still comes to be born in our hearts every year – every Christmas. We need to be doing all we can to make sure there is always room in the inn.

(BMH)

'THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX'

All human thought takes place within a "box" of some kind. The quality of our thought depends upon the nature of the box we're thinking outside of, and the one we're thinking within.

The box we need to learn to think *outside* of is composed of natural appearances, popular opinion, false assumptions and prejudices, pride, and the limitations of our own intelligence. The way to think outside this box is to conform our thoughts to the larger box of spiritual reality. This begins with humility, and knowledge of the Lord's Word.

Creation consists of an endless series of boxes within boxes. The difference between the higher and lower heavens is that the thought of those in the higher heavens is contained within "larger boxes" than those in the lower heavens. Also, the boxes of the higher heavens are made out of less dense, more translucent material.

The way to a more comprehensive and clearer understanding of life is not to pretend we are capable of thought that is not circumscribed. All human thought is limited, bound by time and space; and we need concrete forms to define it and for it to rest upon. To think without any limits, without any preconceived constructs whatsoever, would be like seeing through everything, which is to see nothing. The mind is like a house, and a house without walls isn't a house.

Our goal should be, not so much to "think outside the box," but to accept that our thought will always be limited to a greater or lesser degree, and seek to enlarge the box we think in (expand the scope of our thought). This we can do by studying the Word, reflecting on nature in the light of spiritual truth, praying to the Lord for enlightenment, and, in general, regenerating.

"You have heard that it was said . . . but I say unto you . . ." The Lord repeated those words again and again in the Sermon on the Mount. (see *Matthew* 5: 22, 28, 32, 34, 44) He was teaching His disciples not just to think outside the box, but to think inside the *new* box He was giving them.

(WEO)

SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE

The endeavor to make computers that can “think for themselves” is progressing. This may seem to make them more like us, more *human*, but there is a consideration that has been mostly overlooked, because few people actually believe it – namely, that human beings do not really “think for themselves.”

Thought, and consciousness itself, are effects of life, and there is only one Source of Life, the Lord. Our ability to think comes from the constant influx of life into our minds. The essential quality of our thoughts and ideas depends upon the degree to which the Life that drives them comes to us by way of heaven or is distorted by detouring through hell.

We do not just think, but we have a *conscience* and are able to direct and amend our thoughts. The innate faculty of conscience needs to be developed, however. A true, spiritual conscience grows in us when we learn the truths from the Word, take them to heart and obey them.

We also have free will and can choose what to think about. We are subject to influences from both heaven and hell, but we are not mere puppets, and can choose which kind of thoughts to embrace and cultivate and act upon, and which to resist and not act upon.

The secret of spiritual intelligence is to develop a habit of responding affirmatively to heavenly influences, while turning away from contrary ones and asking the Lord to send them away.

(WEO)

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

AI holds forth much promise for improving our natural lives, but also has the potential for serious harm, as a number of experts on the subject have warned.

Computers are machines, without human feelings or conscience or the ability to receive influx from the Lord. As they become more and more autonomous – endowed with the ability to “think” for themselves and learn from experience, and make choices independently of the humans who built them with these capabilities – what guarantee is there that they won’t choose to do things their human engineers never intended? It is entirely conceivable that at some point they will come to regard human beings as competitors or potential threats that they must seek to eliminate.

On the other hand, we might be reassured by considering that the key word in the phrase “artificial intelligence” is . . . *artificial*. Real intelligence is a human attribute, and computers, not being human, are not really intelligent. They give the appearance of intelligence because of the vast store of information they contain and the speed with which they are able to access it. People, also, who have a lot of knowledge stored in their memory may give the appearance

of being rational to a greater degree than they actually are. We should not confuse knowledge with intelligence.

Real human intelligence involves two distinctly higher mental functions: rationality and perception from love; and also conscience. Genuine rationality draws upon spiritual perception from above (which comes from the innately human love of truth and the intuition that there is a God), and “memory-knowledge” from below (from nature and from the Word, the two foundations of truth).

Human intelligence is a function of *life*. Computers, no matter how much memory may be stored in them, and how rational their ability to manipulate it (programmed into them by human scientists) may make them appear, will always lack the sensitivity and perception that human beings have from the life flowing into them from the Lord.

The essence of intelligence is wisdom. Wisdom is a property of love. And “Love is the life of man.” (*Divine Love and Wisdom n. 1*) Human beings are capable of real intelligence because they are capable of love. Computers are able to win a chess game, operate robots that build things, and even perform delicate operations better than human surgeons (under a surgeon’s guidance). They can even drive cars – better than people in some respects. They are wonderful tools.

But the intelligence that enables them to do these things, and exercise some degree of autonomy in deciding how to do them (and even, theoretically, *if* to do them) is not their own. It lacks the sensitivity and wisdom, the self-awareness and judgment, of the genuine human intelligence that invented the computer.

In my “Harps of Gold” editorial I quoted this saying from *Divine Love and Wisdom*: “Love consists in feeling the joy of another as joy in oneself.” Only one who has had the *experience* of that feeling could really understand the truth of that statement. A computer might be programmed to know that this is a good thing, and even to speak as if it actually felt this way, but it could never actually feel it, and thus could not really understand it.

Life is love, and comes only from God. This includes the life of the mind. Affections come from love, and thought comes from affection. Machines are not living, cannot love, and therefore cannot think. Any apparent intelligence they may display is artificial. Not real.

(WEO)

JUSTICE FOR ALL

With the growing lack of belief in God more and more permeating the world, there is also less of a belief in a life after death and a spiritual purpose in life.

In his wonderful book, *Man's Search for Meaning*, Holocaust survivor Viktor Frankl said he found that people who had no purpose to live for in that desolate environment quickly gave up and died. Those who still had meaning thus had hope – and that is what kept them going. He found that the last freedom we have – when we have lost all others – is choosing how we respond to life and its challenges.

What gives people hope, apart from religious faith? Well, I remember overhearing a conversation between a woman and some co-workers years ago when she stated simply: “I believe in a life after death because somewhere there has to be justice.” That’s an echo of the desperate conviction above – that there must be a hereafter because “there has to be a place for those who never caught a break here on earth.”

Yes, somewhere there has to be justice. That is the promise of the Christmas season – that the hells have been overcome, that heaven awaits all who choose its life, that we are free to choose our destiny, and that there is – finally – justice for all.

(BMH)

THE ULTIMATE GOAL

Many years ago a good friend – not in the Church – was buying insurance. When the agent asked her, “What is your goal in life?” she answered – without a moment’s hesitation – “to get to heaven.” That’s when he hesitated. There was no box on his form to check off for “heaven.”

But our friend had it right – and already had her “insurance.”

This is what it means to have a real purpose in life:

“Our purpose is what we love above all else. It exists in our will like a hidden current in a river, that moves and carries things along, even when we are doing something else, because it is what motivates us.” (*True Christianity* 399)

(BMH)

Annual Report

Secretary of the General Church of the New Jerusalem

Anita F. Halterman

Between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016, 49 new members were received into the General Church, and three members resigned. During the year the Secretary's Office received notice of the deaths of 43 members.

Membership July 1, 2015	5411
New Members	49
Resignations	3
Deceased Members	43
Membership June 30, 2016	5414

GENERAL CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM NEW MEMBERS

BRAZIL

das Chagas Ferreira, Francisco

CANADA

Sam, Alvin Ling Chung

GHANA

Adams, Mahama

Adu-Twum, Joseph

Agyapong, Prince

Budu, Prince Nana

Ofori, Richard

IVORY COAST

Beugre, Etienne Mogue

Lasme, Mellon-Agnes Rene

Sery, Rosalie Amoin

Zoh, Kla-Die Roger

SOUTH AFRICA

Homber, Shirley Yvonne

Ngoma, Natalie Olivetti

Nzama, Nokwethemba Blessness

Nzama, Bongumusa Clive

Nzuza, Ellen

TOGO

Souka, Kokouvi Robert

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Arizona

Rosenblum, Peter

Colorado

Henry, Joseph Clayton

Florida

De Santis, Rachel Stephenson

Heinrichs, Devon Robert

Heinrichs, Rachel Ann

Illinois

Caliendo, Frank Dominick

Maryland

Dwyer, Amy Lyn

Federici, Toni Renee

Glenn, Benjamin Alexander

Zuber, Kira Elizabeth

Pennsylvania

Acton, Elmo Kenneth

Alden, Micah Asher

Asplundh, Lauren Nelson

Brown, Luke James

Buick, Maraika Brown

Cole, Alison Aubrey

David, Luke de Maine

DeGeorge, Mary Beth

Dougherty, Denise Elizabeth

Dunn, Christopher C. Jr.

Foley, Ernest Patrick

Mergen, Reuben

Miller, Russell Gray

Smith, Anders Marlyn

Smith, Cody Gale

Smith, Jeffrey Owen

Smith, Leanna Jill

Synnestvedt, Kirk Dean

Synnestvedt, Rebecca Jackson

Weaber, James Francis

Texas

Johnson, Nicholas W.

DEATHS

Alan, Doris Merrell, 88, January 29, 2016, of Rio Rancho, New Mexico

Alden, Yadah Heinrichs, 90, May 7, 2016, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Arnoux, Patrick Campbell, 77, August 13, 2015, of Tampa, Florida

Bartlett, Penelope Lumsden, 95, August 30, 2015, of Pietermaritzburg, South Africa

Bostock, Richard, 87, January 8, 2016, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Budlong, Elizabeth Heinrichs, 90, March 28, 2016, of Acton, Massachusetts

Cahoon, James Lloyd, 77, February 21, 2016, of Denver, Colorado

Carpenter, Diana, 77, September 30, 2015, of Tucson, Arizona

Coffin, James Price, III, 82, April 7, 2016, of Fairhope, Alabama

Cole, Louise Freyaldenhoven, 96, June 20, 2016, of Morrilton, Arkansas

Cole, Rev. Robert Hudson Pendleton, 81, October 9, 2015, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Cooper, Dr. Sherri Rumer, 59, November 23, 2015, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Dawson, Nancy Stroh, 92, July 15, 2015, of London, United Kingdom

Delyea, Alethe Starkey, 84, December 12, 2015, of Etobicoke, Ontario, Canada

Finkeldey, Ruth Gunhild, 92, July 3, 2015, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Fletcher, Joseph Garner, 67, January 17, 2016, of Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania

Genzlinger, B. Reade, 61, January 4, 2016, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Glebe, Muriel Cooper, 81, January 14, 2016, of Kitchener, Ontario, Canada

Gotsch, Eugene Frederick, 92, July 25, 2015, of Millersville, Maryland

Holmes, Barbara Walker, 92, June 26, 2016, of Casa Grande, Arizona

Horigan, Marion Hasen, 92, August 19, 2015, of Kitchener, Ontario, Canada

Kuhl, Josephine Odhner, 78, December 2, 2015, of Kitchener, Ontario, Canada

Lansbury, W. Roger, 71, April 6, 2016, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Lindrooth, Dan Harold, 84, February 5, 2016, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Lockhart, Joann K. "Mim", 71, July 3, 2015, of Toms River, New Jersey

Mbedzi, N. Eric, 54, February 9, 2016, of Alexandra Township, South Africa

McQueen, Benjamin Benade, Jr., 89, April 16, 2016, of Chattanooga, Tennessee

McQueen, Joy Synnstedt, 88, March 11, 2016, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Merrell, Joel Andrew, 51, February 2, 2016, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Mortlock, Bernard Alexander, 85, September 14, 2015, of Edenvale, South Africa

Needle, Margaret Evens, 90, February 15, 2016, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Nilson, Helen Barnitz, 92, May 19, 2016, of Columbia, Maryland

Odhner, Rachel David, 90, July 17, 2015, of Kempton, Pennsylvania

Rohtla, Margit Nagy, 88, May 14, 2016, of Southampton, Pennsylvania

Rosner, Joan Price, 87, March 18, 2016, of Chicago, Illinois

Schiffer, Charles William, 71, January 8, 2016, of Lisbon, Ohio

Scott, Margaret Hudson, 88, September 28, 2015, of Aurora, Ontario, Canada

Smith, Larkin Wade, 75, January 28, 2016, of Warrington, Pennsylvania

Stitt, Shirley Kitzelman, 95, February 7, 2016, of Chicago, Illinois

Synnstedt, Peter Howells, 82, November 4, 2015, of Rochester, Michigan

Taylor, Rev. Douglas McLeod, 90, February 22, 2016, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Wille, Yvonne Bostock, 95, August 7, 2015, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Williamson, Mary Louise, 88, February 9, 2016, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

RESIGNATIONS

*Campbell, Rosemary Brooks
Gath, Christine Turner
Halterman, Rachel*

Directory

GENERAL CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM 2016-2017 OFFICIALS

Executive Bishop: The Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith
Assistant to the Bishop: The Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss Jr.
Secretary: Mrs. Anita F. Halterman

GENERAL CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM (A Corporation of Pennsylvania)

OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION

President: The Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith
Vice President: The Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss, Jr.
Secretary: Mr. Daniel P. Martz
Treasurer/CAO: Mr. David O. Frazier

BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION

Kay R. Alden,
Gregory L. Baker,
Bengt Boyesen,
Beth A. Brock,
Hugh R. Brown,
Jake C. Brown,
Andrew R. Bruell,
Amy C. Buick,
Wade Buick,
Ian B. Carswell,

Robert M. Dike,
Mark O. Elder,
Gustav I. Fornander,
Charlotte Gyllenhaal,
Darryl G. Hasen,
Kirk Hasen,
P. Blake Hill,
Lee Horigan,
Brent H. Hyatt,
Mary Jane Jungé,

Stephanie A. Klippenstein,
Daniel P. Martz,
Patrick A.P. Mayer,
Ronald K. Nelson,
David Norman,
Jennifer B. Pronesti,
David G. Radcliffe,
Arthur E. Uber III,
Dawn R. Wadsworth,
Thayer L. York

Ex-officio Members:

The Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith
The Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss Jr.
Mr. David O. Frazier

BISHOPS

Keith, Brian Walter. Ordained June 6, 1976; 2nd degree, June 4, 1978; 3rd degree, October 17, 2004. Serves as Executive Bishop of the General Church, General Pastor of the General Church, Chancellor of the Academy of the New Church, President of the General Church in Canada, President of the General Church in South Africa, and President of the General Church International, Incorporated. Address: PO Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Buss, Peter Martin Jr. Ordained June 6, 1993; 2nd degree, June 18, 1995; 3rd degree, June 9, 2013. Serves as Assistant to the Bishop of the General Church, Vice President of the General Church International, Incorporated, and Head of the General Church Education Department. Address: PO Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

PASTORS

Abuga, Samson Mogusu. Ordained May 25, 2003; 2nd degree, September 20, 2009. Serves as Pastor of the New Church Etorá, Director of the Keugata (Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania) Theological School, Principal of the Good News Preparatory School in Etorá, Kisii, Kenya, and Regional Pastor for East Africa. Address: The New Church Etorá, PO Box 13, Kisii, 502, Kenya

Adognon, Alex Koami. Ordained September 1, 2013; 2nd degree, April 19, 2015. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor in Togoville, Togo. Address: BP 61202, Lomé, Togo

Aggro, Hennock. Ordained July 13, 2008; 2nd degree, July 4, 2010. Serves as Assistant Pastor for the Abelenkpe New Church. Address: PO Box 306, Ofankor-Accra, Ghana

Agnes, Sylvain Apoh. Ordained May 23, 2004; 2nd degree, June 25, 2006. Serves as National Pastor of the General Church in the Ivory Coast, President of and Instructor in Theology in the New Jerusalem Theological Institute in Abidjan, and Senior Pastor of the Sinai Chapel, Bobby. Address: 01 BP 12161 Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire

Aka, Honoré Amahin. Ordained July 11, 2010; 2nd degree August 12, 2012. Serves as Pastor of the Bouake Group in Côte d'Ivoire. Address: 01 BP 1453, Bouake 01, Côte d'Ivoire

Akotey, Edward. Ordained July 4, 2010; 2nd degree October 21, 2012. Serves as Pastor of the Nteso Group of the New Church in Nteso, Ghana. Address: PO, Box 4, Nteso-Kwahu, E/R Ghana

Alden, Kenneth James. Ordained June 7, 1980; 2nd degree, May 16, 1982. Serves as a translator for the General Church and curriculum consultant in General Church Education. Address: PO Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Allais, Mark Barry. Ordained May 24, 2009; 2nd degree November 21, 2010. Serves as Pastor of The New Church Buccleuch in Buccleuch, Johannesburg, South Africa, and as Executive Vice President of the South African Corporation of the General Church. Address: PO Box 816, Kelvin 2054, South Africa

Amoako, Kwadwo Adu. Ordained July 13, 2008; 2nd degree July 4, 2010. Serves as Pastor of the Pankrono-Kumasi New Church in Kumasi, Ghana. Address: PO Box RY 143, Railways, Kumasi-Ashanti, Ghana

Amouzouvi, Ablam Komlan. Ordained July 11, 2010; 2nd degree October 21, 2012. Serves as Pastor of the New Church in Lomé, Togo. Address: La Nouvelle Eglise du Togo, BP 61202, Lomé, Togo

Ampem-Darko, Israel Gyan. Ordained July 13, 2008; 2nd degree July 4, 2010. Serves as Assistant Pastor for the Ofankor New Church Group in Ghana. Address: The New Church, PO Box KK 113, Kukurantumi-Akim, E/R, Ghana

Anato, Guillaume Joseph Kuassivi. Ordained May 30, 2010; 2nd degree October 28, 2012. Serves as Pastor in Aidjedo, Cotonou and Theology Teacher in Cotonou, Benin. Address: 03 BP 3850, Cotonou, Benin

Appelgren, Göran Reinhold. Ordained June 7, 1992; 2nd degree, July 3, 1994. Serves as Pastor of the Stockholm Society and as Visiting Pastor of Oslo, Norway and Copenhagen, Denmark; Regional Pastor for Europe and India. Address: Aladdinsvägen 27, S-167 61 Bromma, Sweden

Atta, Jean Aime. Ordained May 27, 2012; 2nd degree, September 21, 2014. Serves as Assistant Pastor at The New Church of Boulder Valley, 1370 Forest Park Circle, Lafayette, CO 80026

Ayi, Segno-Kodjo. Ordained May 27, 2001; 2nd degree July 20, 2008. National Pastor for the Church in Togo, and Pastor in Togoville. Address: La Nouvelle Eglise du Togo, B.P. 61202, Lomé, Togo

Bab, Moise. Ordained August 25, 2013; 2nd degree, August 9, 2015. Pastor for the Divo General Church Group. Address: 01 BP 12161, Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire

Barber, Christopher Augustus. Ordained May 26, 2013; 2nd degree, October 17, 2014. Serves as an Instructor of Religion in the Academy of the New Church Secondary Schools in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania. Address: PO Box 295, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Beirith, Eduardo. Ordained August 16, 2012; 2nd degree, October 16, 2015. Serves as Pastor of the New Church Group in Curitiba, Parana, Brazil. Address: Nestor de Castro 223, Loja 2 Centro, Curitiba, PR 80.020-120, Brazil

Beiswenger, Todd Jeffrey. Ordained May 22, 2011; 2nd degree, January 19, 2014. Serves as Pastor of the Hurstville New Church in Hurstville, and the Brisbane New Church of Australia (New Church in Australia). Address: 26 Dudley Street, Peshurst, NSW 2222, Australia

Blair, Charles Edmund. Ordained May 28, 2006; 2nd degree, April 27, 2007. Serves as Pastor of New Church LIVE and Chaplain at Cairnwood Estate in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania. Address: PO Box 716, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Borketey-Kwaku, Jacob Borteye. Ordained, May 18, 2003; 2nd degree, July 13, 2008. Serves as Pastor of the Nungua New Church, and as Dean of the Ghanaian Theological School, Ghana. Address: PO Box TNE 1278, Teshie-Nungua Estates, Accra, Ghana

Buick, Brett. Ordained May 31, 2015; 2nd degree November 13, 2016. Serves as Assistant Pastor of the Kempton Society. Address: 8560 Kistler Valley Rd., New Tripoli, PA 18066

Buss, Erik James. Ordained June 10, 1990; 2nd degree, September 13, 1992. Serves as Assistant Pastor of Bryn Athyn Church in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania; Regional Pastor for parts of Northeastern U.S. Address: PO Box 277, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Buss, Jared James. Ordained May 31, 2015; 2nd degree, October 23, 2016. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor in Toronto, Canada. Address: 134 Smithwood Drive, Etobicoke, ON M9B 4S4 Canada

Carswell, Eric Hugh. Ordained June 10, 1979; 2nd degree, February 22, 1981. Serves as Pastor of the Bryn Athyn Society in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania. Address: PO Box 277, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Choe, Mahn Hoe. Ordained April 29, 2012; 2nd degree, April 26, 2014. Serves as Pastor of Ahnseong Uri New Church in Ahnseong, South Korea. Address: Woorim Apt 105-806 Jinsa-Ri, Kongdo-Eup, Kyeong-ki, Ahnseong-Si 456-713, Republic of Korea

Cole, Nathan Field. Ordained January 11, 2009; 2nd degree, August 22, 2010. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor of the Carmel New Church in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada. Address: 35 Chapel Hill Drive, Kitchener ON, N2R 1N1, Canada

Cole, Stephen Dandridge*. Ordained June 19, 1977; 2nd degree, October 15, 1978. Serves as Assistant Professor of Religion and Philosophy in Bryn Athyn College of the New Church and of Theology in Bryn Athyn College of the New Church Theological School. Address: PO Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Cowley, Alan Michael. Ordained May 26, 2013; 2nd degree, July 13, 2014. Serves as Pastor of the Boynton Beach Society in Boynton Beach, Florida, and Visiting Pastor of Bonita Springs, Florida. Address: 103 Half Moon Circle, F-2, Hypoluxo, FL 33462

Cowley, Michael Keith. Ordained June 13, 1982; 2nd degree, May 13, 1984. Serves as Pastor of the Olivet Church in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Address: 2 Lorraine Gardens, Etobicoke, ON M9B 4Z4, Canada

Dakouri, Evariste Daligou. Ordained July 11, 2010; 2nd degree August 12, 2012. Serves as Pastor of the Gesco General Church Group in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, and Secretary of the General Church in Cote d'Ivoire. Address: 21 BP 4352, Abidjan 21, Côte d'Ivoire

Dayoro, Aime Okpo. Ordained August 25, 2013; 2nd degree, August 9, 2015. Serves as Assistant Pastor of Abobo N'dotre General Church Group in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. 01 BP 12161, Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire

Devassy, Peter Naduvilaveettil. Ordained October 23, 2011; 2nd degree October 25, 2015. Serves as Pastor of the New Church in India. Address: The New Church, Ompathungal Canal Road, Mattathur, PO, Trissur, Kerala, India

Dibb, Andrew Malcolm Thomas. Ordained June 6, 1984; 2nd degree, May 18, 1986. Serves as Dean of the Bryn Athyn College of the New Church Theological School. Address: PO Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Doukourou, Moise Gogable. Ordained July 11, 2010; 2nd degree August 12, 2012. Serves as Pastor of Abobo N'dotre General Church Group in Côte d'Ivoire, and Assistant Head Pastor of the General Church in Cote d'Ivoire. Address: 01 BP 12161, Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire

Dube, Jerome Bhekuyise. Ordained June 5, 2005; 2nd degree November 11, 2007. Serves as Pastor of the Clermont Society in South Africa. Address: Private Box 1164, New Germany 3620, South Africa

Dziekpor, George Genya. Ordained July 13, 2008; 2nd degree July 4, 2010. Serves as Pastor of the Abelenkpe Group in Accra, Ghana. Address: PO Box CS 9277, C7, Tema, Ghana

Elphick, Derek Peter. Ordained June 6, 1993; 2nd degree, May 22, 1994. Serves as Pastor of the Oak Arbor Society in Rochester, Michigan, and as Regional Pastor for the Midwestern U.S. Address: 395 Olivewood Court, Rochester, MI 48306

Eshun, Ekow Essiedu. Ordained May 27, 2007; 2nd degree July 13, 2008. Serves as Pastor of the Tema and Madina Circles in Ghana, West Africa, and Principal of the Tema New Church School; National Pastor of Ghana. Address: PO Box CS 9299, Community 7, Tema, Ghana

Ferrell, Michael Eugene. Ordained June 5, 2005; 2nd degree, June 3, 2007. Serves as Assistant Pastor of the Washington New Church Society in Mitchellville, Maryland, and a Visiting Pastor to congregations throughout the United States. Address: 4210 Canyonview Drive, Upper Marlboro MD 20772

Frazier, Glenn “Mac” McKinley. Ordained May 28, 2006; 2nd degree June 22, 2008. Serves as Associate Pastor of the Glenview New Church. Address: 2730 Park Lane, Glenview, IL 60025

Frazier, Pearse McCollum. Ordained May 22, 2011; 2nd degree September 30, 2012. Serves as Pastor of The Pittsburgh New Church and Principal of the Pittsburgh New Church School in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Address: 299 Le Roi Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15208

Frazier, Scott Innes. Ordained May 28, 2006; 2nd degree, May 11, 2008. Serves as Assistant Professor of Religion and Latin and Chair of the Religion Department in Bryn Athyn College of the New Church. Address: PO Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Genzlinger, Matthew Laird. Ordained May 27, 2001; 2nd degree, August 10, 2003. Serves as Pastor of the New Church of Concord in Concord, Massachusetts. Address: 62 Church Street, Concord, MA 01742

Gladish, Michael David*. Ordained June 10, 1973; 2nd degree, June 30, 1974. Serves as Pastor of the Washington New Church Society, in Mitchellville, Maryland, and Regional Pastor for the Southeastern U.S. Address: 11910 Chantilly Lane, Mitchellville, MD 20721

Gladish, Nathan Donald. Ordained June 13, 1982; 2nd degree, November 6, 1983. Serves as Pastor of the Sunrise Chapel in Tucson, Arizona. Address: 11240 E. Miles St., Tucson, AZ 85748

Glenn, Coleman Starkey. Ordained May 24, 2009; 2nd degree October 3, 2010. Serves as Special Projects Developer in the Office of Outreach and elsewhere. Address: 496 Woodward Drive, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19009

Glenn, Joel Christian. Ordained May 31, 2015; 2nd degree September 25, 2016. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor in Oak Arbor, Michigan. Address: 670 N. Main Street, Rochester, MI 48307

Glenn, Thane Powell. Ordained May 24, 2009; 2nd degree June 6, 2010. Serves as Assistant Professor of Religion and English and Chaplain in Bryn Athyn College of the New Church. Address: PO Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Gnagne, Gedeon G. Ordained August 25, 2013; 2nd degree, August 9, 2015. Serves as Director of and Instructor of Theology in the New Jerusalem Theological Institute/ Abidjan and Associate Pastor of Sinai Chapel Bobby in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire. Address: 01 BP 12-161, Abidjan 01, Côte d’Ivoire

Gyamfi, Martin Kofi. Ordained June 9, 1991; 2nd degree, August 28, 1994. Serves as Pastor for the New Church in Asakraka-Kwahu, Visiting Pastor for the Oframase Group in Ghana, West Africa, and Regional Pastor for West Africa. Address: The New Church, PO Box AS 10, Asakraka-Kwahu, E/R, Ghana

Halterman, Barry Childs. Ordained June 5, 1994; 2nd degree, September 8, 1996. Teaches and serves as Head of the Religion Department in the Academy Secondary Schools and as Chaplain for the Secondary Schools. Assists at New Church LIVE. Address: PO Box 707, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Heilman, Andrew James*. Ordained June 18, 1978; 2nd degree, March 8, 1981. Serves as Regional Pastor of Brazil, Pastor of the Fatima Society in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and Assistant Pastor of the Kempton New Church in Kempton, Pennsylvania. Address: 1050 Mountain Road, Kempton, PA 19529

Heinrichs, Bradley Daniel. Ordained May 23, 1999; 2nd degree, November 19, 2000. Serves as Pastor of the Carmel New Church in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, Principal of the Carmel New Church School, Executive Vice President of the General Church in Canada, Chairman of Information Swedenborg, Incorporated, and Regional Pastor for Canada. Address: 58 Chapel Hill Drive, Kitchener, ON N2R 1N2, Canada

Jin, Yong Jin. Ordained June 5, 1994; 2nd degree, June 16, 1996. Serves as Pastor of the Philadelphia Korean New Church, and responsible for outreach to the Korean-speaking community in the United States; Regional Pastor for Asia; Dean of the Korean New Church Theological School. Address: 537 Anne Street, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006

Jung, Young Ho. Ordained April 29, 2012; 2nd degree, April 26, 2014. Serves as Pastor of the EunHea New Church in Seoul, South Korea. Address: Do-Bong, Chang, Dong, 380 Jukong Apt, Seoul 403-810, Republic of Korea

Keal, Solomon John. Ordained May 27, 2012; 2nd degree, February 2, 2014. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor of the Bryn Athyn Church in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania. Address: PO Box 277, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Kim, Seoung Gil. Ordained April 29, 2012; 2nd degree, April 30, 2016. Serves as Pastor of Kangbuk New Church in Seoul, South Korea. Address: In Su Dong 391-15, Suyu 5-dong, Kangbuk-Gu, Seoul, Republic of Korea 142-884

Koudou, Roger. Ordained July 13, 2008; 2nd degree July 11, 2010. Serves as Pastor of Nouvelle Eglise Chrétienne de Côte d'Ivoire in Abidjan. Address: 01 BP 4853 Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire

Kouhoui, Henry Joel Kouassi. Ordained July 11, 2010; 2nd degree August 12, 2012. Serves as Pastor to the General Church group in Daloa, Côte d'Ivoire, and as Secretary of the Clergy in Cote d'Ivoire. Temp address: 12161 Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire

Lee, Jong-Ui. Ordained May 31, 1998; 2nd degree, June 17, 2001. Serves as Pastor of the New Church at the City of Light in Gwangju, Korea. Address: 204-605 Kumho Ssangyong APT, Chipyeong-dong, Seo-gu, Gwangju 502-754, Republic of Korea

Lee, Soon Cheol. Ordained April 29, 2012; 2nd degree, April 26, 2014. Serves as Pastor of Chungju New Church in Chungju, South Korea and Translator of the Writings into Korean. Address: 101-301 Samik Ceramic Apt. 374-1, Mochung-dong, Hungduk-ku Chungju-si, Chungchungbuk-Do, Republic of Korea 361-140

Lindrooth, David Hutchinson.

Ordained June 10, 1990; 2nd degree, April 19, 1992. Serves as Director of the Office of Outreach. Address: PO Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Lompo, Samuel Oumpougouila.

Ordained August 25, 2013; 2nd degree, August 16, 2015. Serves as Pastor to the New Church Group in Burkina Faso. Address: 11 BP 412 Ouagadougou CMS 11, Burkina Faso

Lumsden, Derrick Alan Mark.

Ordained May 25, 2008; 2nd degree May 16, 2010. Serves as Pastor of the Sower's Chapel in Freeport, Pennsylvania. Address: 980 Sarver Road, Sarver, PA 16055

Mangoua, Cyprien Kouamé. Ordained July 11, 2010; 2nd degree August 12, 2012. Serves as Pastor of the Cité Verte General Church Group in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, and as District Pastor of Abidjan. Address: 01 BP 12161, Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire

Matsumoto, Shiro. Ordained April 30, 2012; 2nd degree April 27, 2014. Serves as a New Church Pastor in Japan. Address: 1-206, Inagedai-House, 7-8, Inagedai-cho, Inage-ward, Chiba-shi, 263-0032 Japan

McCardell, Ethan Derek. Ordained May 25, 2003; 2nd degree March 21, 2004. Serves as Pastor of the Michael Church in London, England. Address: 21A Hayne Road, Beckenham, Kent BR3 4JA, England

Mkhize, Sibusiso Protus. Ordained May 25, 2003; 2nd degree November 11, 2007. Serves as Pastor of the Kwa Mashu Society in South Africa; Visiting Pastor to Empangeni. Address: Box 16932, Eshowe, KwaZulu-Natal, 3815, South Africa or General Church of the New Jerusalem, H-602 Umgankla Road, KwaMashi 4360, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

Nicolier, Alain. Ordained May 31, 1979; 2nd degree, September 16, 1984. Serves as Pastor of groups in Bourguignon and Ariège, France. Address: Conte' 09420 Rimont, France

Odhner, Calvin Acton. Ordained May 22, 2011; 2nd degree February 17, 2013. Serves as Pastor of the Atlanta Society in Alpharetta, Georgia, and Visiting Pastor throughout Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Florida and Louisiana. Address: 220 Sable Creek Drive, Alpharetta, GA 30004

Odhner, Grant Hugo*. Ordained June 7, 1981; 2nd degree, May 9, 1982. Teaches Theology in the Bryn Athyn College of the New Church Theological School. Visiting Pastor of the New York City Circle. Chairs the General Church Publication Committee and is Secretary of the Council of the Clergy. Address: PO Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Odhner, John Llewellyn*. Ordained June 7, 1980; 2nd degree, November 22, 1981. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor of Bryn Athyn Church in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, and works on the Office of Outreach Internet Project. Address: PO Box 277, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Pendleton, Mark Dandridge. Ordained June 9, 1991; 2nd degree, May 29, 1994. Serves as Pastor of the Glenview New Church. Address: 73 Park Drive, Glenview, IL 60025

Perry, Charles Mark. Ordained June 9, 1991; 2nd degree, June 19, 1993. Serves as Pastor of the San Diego Society in San Diego, California; visits Palo Alto, California. Address: 7911 Canary Way, San Diego, CA 92123

Rose, Jonathan Searle*. Ordained May 31, 1987; 2nd degree, February 23, 1997. Serves as translator for the Swedenborg Foundation. Address: PO Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Roth, David Christopher. Ordained June 9, 1991; 2nd degree, October 17, 1993. Serves as Pastor of the New Church of Boulder Valley in Boulder, Colorado, and Regional Pastor for the Western United States. Address: 3421 Blue Stem Avenue, Longmont, CO 80503

Sandstrom, Ryan Matthew. Ordained May 22, 2011; 2nd degree January 13, 2013. Serves as Pastor of Ivyland New Church in Ivyland, Pennsylvania. Address: 851 W. Bristol Road, Ivyland, PA 18974

Schnarr, Grant Ronald. Ordained June 12, 1983; 2nd degree, October 7, 1984. Serves as an Instructor of Theology in Bryn Athyn College of the New Church. Address: PO Box 475, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Schnarr, Philip Bradley. Ordained June 5, 1996; 2nd degree, May 31, 1998. Serves as School Pastor of Bryn Athyn Church School. Address: PO Box 277, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Segbenu, John Kwaku. Ordained July 13, 2008; 2nd degree July 4, 2010. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor in Tema, Pastor of the Abbey New Church Reading Group, and teaches in the Tema School. Address: PO Box 325, Madina-Accra, Ghana

Silverman, Ray*. Ordained June 6, 1984; 2nd degree, June 19, 1985. Serves as Associate Professor of Religion, English and Moral Philosophy in Bryn Athyn College of the New Church. Address: PO Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Simons, Jeremy Frederick*. Ordained June 13, 1982; 2nd degree, July 31, 1983. Serves as Bryn Athyn Cathedral Chaplain and as a Visiting Pastor to Central Pennsylvania. Address: PO Box 277C, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Smith, Brian Donald. Ordained May 30, 2010; 2nd degree October 30, 2011. Serves as Assistant Pastor of the Washington New Church and Principal of the Washington New Church School. Address: 11503 Chantilly Lane, Bowie, MD 20721

Smith, Lawson Merrell*. Ordained June 10, 1979; 2nd degree, February 1, 1981. Serves as Pastor of the Kempton Society in Kempton, Pennsylvania, and Principal of the Kempton New Church School. Regional Pastor for parts of Northeastern United States. Address: 171 Kunkels Dahl Road, Kempton, PA 19529

Smith, Malcolm Glenn. Ordained May 30, 2010; 2nd degree February 26, 2012. Serves as Pastor of New Church Westville in Westville, South Africa, Visiting Pastor for Cape Town. Address: 13 Glencairn Close, Westville 3629, South Africa.

Souka, Eric Messan. Ordained July 20, 2008; 2nd degree July 11, 2010. Serves as Pastor of the New Church Group in Vogan, Togo. Address: Nouvelle Eglise du Togo, BP 61202, Lomé, Togo

Thompson, Howard Arthur. Ordained May 22, 2011; 2nd degree June 23, 2013. Serves as Pastor of the Colchester New Church, Colchester, Essex, England. Address: 8 Stoneleigh Park, Lexden, Colchester, Essex CO3 9FA, England

Villanueva, Johnny Antônio Zavalaga. Ordained October 28th, 2008; 2nd degree August 19, 2012. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor in Rio de Janeiro. Address: Rua G, 123, Bairro de Cedae, Campo Grande, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil

Walsh, Garry Brian. Ordained May 27, 2001; 2nd degree, September 8, 2002. Serves as Pastor of the Phoenix New Church Society in Phoenix, Arizona, and Visiting Pastor to Palo Alto, California, and Portland, Oregon. Manager of the e-mail lists for General Church clergy and clergy wives, Webmaster of portions of the General Church clergy website and associated wives' website. Address: 4036 E. Coolbrook Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85032

Xaba, Langalibalele Abraham. Ordained August 27, 2006; 2nd degree August 9, 2009. Serves as Pastor for the Impaphala Society in South Africa. Address: 2375 Sono Road Zone 2, Diepkloof 1862, South Africa

Zattey-Agboga, Godwin. Ordained May 27, 2007; 2nd degree July 13, 2008. Serves as Pastor for the New Salem New Church in Ho, Ghana. Address: PO Box HP 396, Ho, Volta-Region, Ghana

Timothy¹. Ordained May 1, 2013; Second degree, April 30, 2016. Serves as a New Church Pastor for China.

*Due to changes in the benefits package, these men have found it financially advantageous to retire officially. However, they continue serving faithfully in their current uses between two-thirds and full time.

MINISTERS

Ang'asa, Fred Onsiro. Ordained July 6, 2014. Serves as teacher in the Good News Preparatory School in Etorá. Address: New Church Etorá, PO Box 13, Kisii 502, Kenya

Floyd, Thomas X. Ordained May 31, 2015. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor in Stockholm and is Visiting Pastor in Scandinavia. Address: PO Box 2029 Gullhaug, Holmestrand 3087, Norway

Juma, Emanuel Wanjala. Ordained July 6, 2014. Serves as teacher in the Good News Preparatory School and is Visiting Pastor to the Masai group. Address: New Church Etorá, PO Box 13, Kisii 502, Kenya

Magero, George Omosu. Ordained July 6, 2014. Serves as teacher in the Good News Preparatory School and is Pastor of Kiangware Group in Kenya. Address: New Church Etorá, PO Box 13, Kisii 502, Kenya

Park, Jea S. Ordained April 26, 2014. Serves as Minister to the Ham Pyung Chundranamdo Korea. Address: 658 Sanggok-Ri Haebo-Myun, Hampyung-Gun Chunnam -Do, Republic of Korea

Sakae, Seiich. Ordained April 26, 2014. Serves as Minister to Tokyo, Japan. Tokyo Group co-Pastor and Visiting Minister in Japan. Address: 2-26-21 KitakaSai Edoga Wa, Tokyo, Japan

Yang, Dong Y. Ordained April 30, 2016. Address: 305-401 Jayean & EYulrim Apt. 1629, Jangji-Dong Kimpo-Si, Kyungki-Do, South Korea

Zoho, Alphonse Téhé. Ordained August 25, 2013. Serves as Acting Pastor of the Duekoue General Church Group in Côte d'Ivoire. Address: 01 BP12161, Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire

AUTHORIZED CANDIDATES

Acton, Elmo Kenneth. Address: 23 Cherry Street., Willow Grove, PA 19090

Amahin, Abel Nguessan.

¹ Last name is omitted for protection

Assiobo, Leopold Yaovi Kouglo.

Address: 01 BP 12161 Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire

Beugre, Etienne Mogue. Address: c/o Rev. Sylvain Agnes, 01BP, Abidjan 12161, Côte d'Ivoire

Ferreira, Francisco Das Chagas.

Address: Rua Belarmina 144, Vila Militar/Rio de Janeiro, Brazil – RJ, CEP: 21745-110

Lasme, Mellon Rene Agnes. Address: c/o Rev. Sylvain Agnes, 01BP, Abidjan 12161, Côte d'Ivoire

Nakato, Sachio. Address: College of International Studies, Ritsumeikan University, 56-1 Toji-in Kitumachi, Kita-Ku, Japan, 603-8577

Synnestvedt, Judah Edward. Address: PO Box 199, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Woo, Gyung-Chull. Address: 103 Ho, Paek Woon Villa, 1390 Walpyant 1 Dong, Sugu, Daejeon City, South Korea

Zoh, Roger Kladier. Address: c/o Rev. Sylvain Agnes, 01BP, Abidjan 12161, Côte d'Ivoire

**NON-GENERAL CHURCH
MINISTERS SERVING
GENERAL CHURCH GROUPS**

Keyworth, Richard John. Serves as Pastor of the Auckland Circle, New Zealand. Address: 15 Dunkirk Road, Panmure, Auckland 1072, New Zealand

RETIRED

Acton, Alfred, II. Ordained June 19, 1964; 2nd degree, October 30, 1966; 3rd degree, May 16, 1999. Serves as co-Pastor of the Charleston Group in Charleston, South Carolina. Address: 116 Walnut Way, Pineville, SC 29468

Buss, Peter Martin Sr. Ordained June 19, 1964; 2nd degree, May 16, 1965; 3rd degree, June 1, 1986. Bishop Emeritus of the General Church. Address: 950 Pendleton Avenue, Longmont, CO 80501

Kline, Thomas Leroy. Ordained June 10, 1973; 2nd degree, June 15, 1975; 3rd degree, November 30, 2003. Bishop Emeritus of the General Church. Address: PO Box 219, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Alden, Glenn Graham. Ordained June 19, 1974; 2nd degree, June 6, 1976. Address: 2260 Brown Road, Ferndale, WA 98248.

Ankra-Badu, William Ofei. Ordained June 15, 1986; 2nd degree, March 1, 1992. Address: PO Box 11305, Accra-North, Ghana

Asplundh, Kurt Horigan. Ordained June 19, 1960; 2nd degree, June 19, 1962. Address: PO Box 26, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Asplundh, Kurt Hyland. Ordained June 6, 1993; 2nd degree, April 30, 1995. Teaches Theology part time at Bryn Athyn College of the New Church and sixth-grade Religion at Bryn Athyn Church School. Address: PO Box 411, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Barry, James Headsten. Ordained May 24, 2009; 2nd degree June 6, 2010. Address: 330 Wellesley Road, Philadelphia PA, 19119

Bau-Madsen, Arne. Ordained June 6, 1976; 2nd degree, June 11, 1978. Serves as Associate Pastor of Kempton Society in Kempton, Pennsylvania. Address: PO Box 333, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Bown, Christopher Duncan. Ordained June 18, 1978; 2nd degree, December 23, 1979. Address: 1349 Beechwood Boulevard, Apt 2, Pittsburgh, PA 15217

Burke, William Hanson. Ordained June 7, 1981; 2nd degree, August 13, 1983. Address: 2465 Spring Harbor Drive, Cumming, GA 30041

Cooper, James Pendleton. Ordained June 13, 1982; 2nd degree, March 4, 1984. Acts as Chaplain of the Military Service Committee. Address: 31 Dalegrove Crescent, Etobicoke, ON M9B6A5, Canada

Darkwah, Simpson Kwabeng. Ordained June 7, 1992; 2nd degree, August 28, 1994. Address: New Church School, DTD Community 5, Tema, Ghana

Echols, John Clark Jr. Ordained August 26, 1978; 2nd degree, March 30, 1980. Serves as Pastor of the Cincinnati Society in Cincinnati, Ohio, and Visiting Pastor in Indianapolis, Indiana. Address: 9331 Westchester Park Court, West Chester, OH 45069

Elphick, Frederick Charles. Ordained June 6, 1984; 2nd degree, September 23, 1984. Address: 21B Hayne Road, Beckenham, Kent BR3 4JA, England

Goodenough, Daniel Webster. Ordained June 19, 1965; 2nd degree, December 10, 1967. Serves as Visiting Pastor in the Northern Rocky Mountains, USA. Address: 201 4th Avenue, Two Harbors, MN 55616

Heinrichs, Daniel Winthrop. Ordained June 19, 1957; 2nd degree, April 6, 1958. Address: 9115 Chrysanthemum Drive, Boynton Beach, FL 33437-1236

Heinrichs, Willard Lewis Davenport. Ordained June 19, 1965; 2nd degree, January 26, 1969. Serves as Visiting Pastor in the central United States. Address: 7358 Mt. Sherman Road, Longmont, CO 80503

Howard, Geoffrey Horace. Ordained June 19, 1961; 2nd degree, June 2, 1963. Serves as co-Pastor of the Charleston Group in Charleston, South Carolina. Address: 128 Boyle Way, Summerville, SC 29485

Jungé, Robert Schill. Ordained June 19, 1955; 2nd degree, August 11, 1957. Address: 9212 Quaker City Road, Kempton, PA 19529

Kwak, Dzin Pyung. Ordained June 12, 1988; 2nd degree, November 11, 1990. Address: Prayer House of the New Church, 131 Kyohang-ri, Socho-myon, Wonjoo-si, Kangwon-do, Republic of Korea 220-831

Larsen, Ottar Trosvik. Ordained June 19, 1974; 2nd degree, February 16, 1977. Address: 2145 Country Club Drive, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006

Lewin, Alan. Recognized as Priest in the General Church in November 19, 2006. Ordained 2nd degree December 2, 2007. Address: 72 Nipper Lane, Whitefield, Manchester M45 7RF, England

Maseko, Jacob Mokaka. Ordained November 29, 1992; 2nd degree, September 18, 1994. Address: PO Box 261, Pimville, 1808, South Africa

McCurdy, George Daniel. Ordained June 25, 1967; Recognized as a Priest of the New Church in the second degree July 5, 1979; received into the priesthood of the General Church June 9, 1980. Serves as Visiting Pastor of the Harleysville Circle in Harleysville, Pennsylvania. Acts as the General Church's Ecclesiastical Endorsing Agent for Military Chaplains, Civilian Chaplains. Address: PO Box 911, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Nemitz, Kurt Paul. Ordained June 16, 1963; 2nd degree, March 27, 1966. Serves as a translator for the General Church. Address: 7127 Willard Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15208

Nicholson, Allison La Marr. Ordained September 9, 1979; 2nd degree, February 15, 1981. Address: 63 Sam Houston Drive, N Ft Myers, FL 33917

Nobre, Cristóvão Rabelo, Ordained June 6, 1984; 2nd degree August 25, 1985. Serves as a translator for the General Church. Address: Rua Fernando Cunha, 114, Barra, 45990-000 Alcobaca, Brazil

Nzimande, Bongani Edward. Ordained November 14, 1999; 2nd degree May 25, 2003. Serves as Visiting Pastor of the Enkumba Society in South Africa. Address: PO Box 848, Pinetown, 3600, South Africa

Orthwein, Walter Edward III. Ordained July 22, 1973; Recognized as a priest of the General Church in November, 1976 and ordained into the 2nd degree, June 12, 1977. Serves as Spiritual Editor of New Church Life. Address: 2934 Orchard Lane, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006

Pendleton, Dandridge. Ordained June 19, 1952; 2nd degree, June 19, 1954. Address: PO Box 550, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Rogers, Norbert Bruce. Ordained January 12, 1969. Address: 449 Woodward Drive, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006

Rogers, Prescott Andrew. Ordained January 26, 1986; 2nd degree, April 24, 1988. Serves as Pastor of the Charlotte Circle in North Carolina. Address: 6211 Lowergate Drive, Waxhaw, NC 28173

Rose, Frank Shirley. Ordained June 19, 1952; 2nd degree, August 2, 1953. Address: 9233 E. Helen Street, Tucson, AZ 85715

Rose, Patrick Alan. Ordained June 19, 1975; 2nd degree, September 25, 1977. Address: 502 Knollwood Place, Woodstock, GA 30188-4588

Rose, Thomas Hartley. Ordained June 12, 1988; 2nd degree, May 21, 1989. Address: 3245 Masons Mill Road, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006

Sandström, Erik Emanuel. Ordained May 23, 1971; 2nd degree, May 21, 1972. Serves as Acting Curator of Swedenborgiana. Address: PO Box 740, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Smith, Christopher Ronald Jack. Ordained June 19, 1969; 2nd degree, May 9, 1971. Serves as Religion teacher for grade 11 students in the Kempton Church ASPIRE program. Address: 741 Old Philly Pike, Kempton, PA 19529

Synnestvedt, Louis Daniel. Ordained June 7, 1980; 2nd degree, November 8, 1981. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor of Kempton. Address: 3657A Route 737, Kempton, PA 19529

Tshabalala, Njanyana Reuben. Ordained November 29, 1992; 2nd degree, September 18, 1994. Serves as Pastor of the Balfour Society in Mpumalanga, South Africa. Address: PO Box 851, Kwa Xuma, 1868, South Africa

Waters, Gerald Gilbert. Ordained March 17, 2002; 2nd degree October 17, 2004. Serves as Chaplain of Providence Home, Westville, and as Visiting Pastor of the Zululand Group in Kwa-Zulu Natal. Address: 39 Sandown Village, 27 Harvey Road, Pinetown 3610, South Africa

Yang, Gyu Dae. Ordained into 2nd degree October 21, 2007. Address: Kyomoon Apt. 104-1403, Kyomoon-dong, Kuri-si, Republic of Korea 471-020

In addition to the specific assignments listed for some of the retired clergy above, several retired priests travel regularly to serve as visiting pastors/preachers where needed.

UNASSIGNED MINISTERS

Alden, Mark Edward. Ordained June 10, 1979; 2nd degree, May 17, 1981. Address: PO Box 204, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Barnett, Wendel Ryan. Ordained June 7, 1981; 2nd degree, June 20, 1982. Address: 19 Milton Drive, Yardley, PA 19067

Bell, Reuben Paul. Ordained May 25, 1997; 2nd degree April 11, 1999. Address: 121 North Street, Saco, ME 04072

Chapin, Frederick Merle. Ordained June 15, 1986; 2nd degree, October 23, 1988. Address: 101 Windmill Road, Butler, PA 16002

Childs, Robin Waelchli. Ordained June 6, 1984; 2nd degree, June 8, 1986. Address: 723 Sampson Avenue, Willow Grove, PA 19090

Clifford, William Harrison. Ordained June 6, 1976; 2nd degree, October 8, 1978. Address: 1544 Giddings Avenue SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49507-2223

Fitzpatrick, Daniel. Ordained June 6, 1984. Address: 2 Raquel Court, Marietta, GA 30064

Glenn, Robert Amos. Ordained May 28, 2000; 2nd degree, June 2, 2002. Address: 700 Lenox Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15221

Hauptmann, Olaf. Ordained May 23, 2004; 2nd degree July 30, 2006.

Paek, Sung-Won. Ordained May 27, 2001. Address: Administration, Moss Rehab/ Einstein, 60 E. Township Line Road, Elkins Park, PA 19027

Schnarr, Ronald Doering. Ordained May 30, 2010; 2nd degree April 7, 2013. Address: 1315 26th St., Louisville KY 40210

Schorran, Paul Edward. Ordained June 12, 1983. Address: 631 Old Philly Pike, Kempton, PA 19529

SOCIETIES AND CIRCLES

Societies

Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire
Rev. Sylvain Apoh Agnes, Pastor

Accra, Ghana
Rev. George G. Dziekpor, Pastor

Alexandra, Johannesburg, South Africa
Rev. Mark Allais providing oversight

Asakraka, Ghana
Rev. Martin K. Gyamfi, Pastor

Atlanta, Georgia
Rev. Calvin A. Odhner, Pastor

Boulder, Colorado (New Church of Boulder Valley)
Rev. David C. Roth, Pastor

Boston, Massachusetts

Rev. Matthew L. Genzlinger, Pastor

Boynton Beach, Florida

Rev. Alan M. Cowley, Pastor

Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Rev. Eric H. Carswell, Pastor

Rev. Erik J. Buss, Assistant Pastor

Rev. Philip B. Schnarr, School Pastor

Rev. Jeremy F. Simons, Cathedral
Chaplain

Rev. John L. Odhner, Assistant to the
Pastor

Rev. Solomon J. Keal, Assistant to the
Pastor

Bucleuch, Johannesburg, South Africa

Rev. Mark B. Allais, Pastor

Cincinnati, Ohio

Rev. J. Clark Echols, Pastor

Clermont, Durban, South Africa

Rev. Jerome Bhekiyuse Dube, Pastor

Colchester, England

Rev. Howard A. Thompson, Pastor

Dawson Creek, B.C., Canada

Rev. Bradley D. Heinrichs providing
oversight

Detroit, Michigan (Oak Arbor Church)

Rev. Derek P. Elphick, Pastor

Diepkloof, Soweto, South Africa

Rev. Mark Allais providing oversight

Etorá, Kisii, Kenya

Rev. Samson M. Abuga, Pastor

Freeport, Pennsylvania (Sower's Chapel)

Rev. Derrick Lumsden, Pastor

Glenview, Illinois

Rev. Mark D. Pendleton, Pastor

Rev. Glenn "Mac" Frazier, Associate
Pastor

Gwangju, Korea

Rev. Jong-Ui Lee, Pastor

Hurstville, Australia

Rev. Todd J. Beiswenger, Pastor

Impaphala, South Africa

Rev. Langalibalele A. (Phila) Xaba, Pastor

Ivyland, Pennsylvania

Rev. Ryan M. Sandström, Pastor

Kempton, Pennsylvania

Rev. Lawson M. Smith, Pastor

Rev. Brett D. Buick, Assistant Pastor

Rev. Louis D. Synnestvedt, Assistant to the
Pastor

Rev. Andrew J. Heilman, Assistant Pastor

Rev. Arne Bau-Madsen, Associate Pastor

Kitchener, Ontario, Canada (Carmel New Church)

Rev. Bradley D. Heinrichs, Pastor

Rev. Nathan F. Cole, Assistant to the Pastor

Kwa Mashu, Durban, South Africa

Rev. S. Protus Mkhize, Pastor

Lomé, Togo

Rev. Ablam K. Amouzouvi, Pastor

London, England (Michael Church)

Rev. Ethan D. McCardell, Pastor

New Church LIVE

Rev. Charles E. Blair, Pastor

Pankrono-Kumasi, Ghana

Rev. Adu Amoako, Pastor

Phoenix, Arizona

Rev. Garry B. Walsh, Pastor

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Rev. Pearse M. Frazier, Pastor

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (Campo Grande) (Fatima)

Rev. Andrew J. Heilman, Visiting Pastor

Rev. Johnny A. Z. Villanueva, Assistant to
the Pastor

San Diego, California

Rev. C. Mark Perry, Pastor

Seoul, Korea

Rev. Young Ho Jung, Pastor

Stockholm, Sweden

Rev. Göran R. Appelgren, Pastor

Tema, Ghana

Rev. Ekow E. Eshun, Pastor

Rev. John K. Segbenu, Assistant Pastor

Toronto, Ontario, Canada (Olivet Church)

Rev. Michael K. Cowley, Pastor

Rev. Jared J. Buss, Assistant to the Pastor

Tucson, Arizona Rev. Nathan D.

Gladish, Pastor

Vogan, Togo

Rev. Eric M. Souka, Pastor

Washington, D. C.

Rev. Michael D. Gladish, Pastor

Rev. Michael E. Ferrell, Assistant Pastor

Rev. Brian D. Smith, Assistant Pastor

Westville (Durban) South Africa

Rev. Malcolm G. Smith, Pastor

Circles

Visiting and/or Resident Pastor or Minister

Albuquerque, New Mexico

Auckland, New Zealand

Rev. Richard J. Keyworth, Pastor

Cape Town, South Africa

Rev. Malcolm G. Smith, Visiting Pastor

Central Pennsylvania

Rev. Jeremy F. Simons, Visiting Pastor

Charlotte, North Carolina

Rev. Prescott A. Rogers, Pastor

Chicago, Illinois

Rev. Michael E. Ferrell, Visiting Pastor

Cité Verte, Abidjan

Rev. Cyprien K. Mangoua, Pastor

Cochin, Kerala, India

Rev. Peter N. Devassy, Pastor

Connecticut

Rev. Dr. Andrew M. T. Dibb, Visiting

Pastor

Copenhagen, Denmark

Rev. Thomas X. Floyd, Visiting Pastor

Cotonou, Benin

Rev. Guillaume J. K. Anato, Pastor

Curitiba, Parana, Brazil

Rev. Eduardo Beirith, Minister

Dome (Taifa), Ghana

Rev. Israel Ampem-Darko, Pastor

Enkumba, KwaZulu Natal, South Africa

Rev. B. Edward Nzimande, Visiting Pastor

Gesco, Abidjan

Rev. Evariste D. Dakouri, Pastor

The Hague, Netherlands

Rev. Ethan D. McCardell, Visiting Pastor

Hambrook, South Africa

Rev. B. Edward Nzimande, Visiting Pastor

Harleysville, Pennsylvania

Rev. George D. McCurdy, Visiting Pastor

La Crescenta, California

Rev. Kamenan Jean Atta, Pastor

Lake Helen, Florida

Rev. Michael Ferrell, Visiting Pastor

Madina, Ghana

New York City/ Northern New Jersey

Rev. Grant H. Odhner, Visiting Pastor

North Ohio

Rev. Michael E. Ferrell, Visiting Pastor

Palo Alto, California

Rev. C. Mark Perry, Visiting Pastor

Perth, Australia

Rev. Todd J. Beiswenger, Visiting Minister

Philadelphia New Church (Korean)

Rev. Yong J. Jin, Pastor

Seattle, Washington (*Light for Life New Church*)

Tokyo, Japan

Rev. Seiich Sakae, Pastor

Yopougon, Côte d'Ivoire

Rev. Roger Koudou, Pastor

Note: In addition to Societies and Circles, there are Groups of General Church members in various geographical areas that receive occasional visits from a priest.

OUR NEW CHURCH VOCABULARY

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

HUMAN INTERNAL

This rare but important term occurs in the phrase “the heaven of human internals.” It refers to the soul – to the two superior degrees of the mind which are in the order of heaven, above consciousness, incapable of being modified or changed by man’s own life, and the Lord’s dwelling place in him.

It is the activities imparted to these degrees by the Lord that, in reception, make the angelic heavens. For this reason, and because they are in themselves above the consciousness of the highest angels, they belong to the Lord alone. They form a very heaven which is nearest to the Lord, and this is what is meant by the heaven of human internals. (See *Arcana Coelestia* 1999.)

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Rev. Walter Orthwein, Spiritual Editor
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