

NEW CHURCH *Life*

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

MAY/JUNE 2017



The Holy City Descending The New Church Rising

The Holy City New Jerusalem has been descending from God out of heaven since the Last Judgment in 1757, but how long until the New Church is fully established as “the crown of all churches” in the world? The Rev. Willard Heinrichs offers perspective from the Writings, relating the process to our own experience when we pass from this world into successive states of being prepared for the perfection of heaven. (Page 198)

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

Where are we in the continuum from the Last Judgment to the establishment of the New Church as “the crown of all churches” in the world? In “Progress and Development of the New Church,” the Rev. Willard L. D. Heinrichs sees in the Writings a parallel with our own progression as we pass from this world into successive states of being prepared for heaven. “The age of the New Church,” he writes, “would then correspond to the state of a human being after death, a state that progresses and, with the good, is perfected to eternity.” (Page 198)

In a sermon, “What News From Earth?”, the Rev. Jeremy F. Simons says that angels asked Swedenborg what was happening in the world and he told them about what the Lord was revealing through him. That raises two questions: If an angel asked you what was happening on earth, what would you say? And if you chose to talk about revelation, what aspects would you mention – and why? It’s a different perspective for considering the implications of the *Book of Revelation* and the 19th of June. (Page 206)

In a sermon about the woman caught in adultery who was told by the Lord, “Go and sin no more,” the Rev. Grant H. Odhner offers the comforting thought that, “the Lord never sees faults as ours. He never attributes them to us, but to hell.” He never needs to change His attitude toward us. It is we who must change to accept His love. (Page 211).

Bryn Athyn College is extending its reach with the *Swedenborg and the Arts International Conference* it is hosting in June. President Brian Blair says it is a natural outgrowth of the College’s mission and a significant step toward the College serving the global community with New Church thought. Co-Chair Dr. Jane Williams-Hogan sees great potential for the College to grow from this with many new opportunities, but she also feels that the College must be proactive in making progress happen. (Page 216)

That conference will help to put Bryn Athyn College on the academic map with an impressive four-day event that includes more than 25 scholars from 10 countries. The focus will include Swedenborg’s influence on literature, art, music and architecture. See the whole schedule and website links. (Page 218)

In a talk given at the annual meeting of the Friends of the Swedenborg

Library in Bryn Athyn in February, the Rev. Dr. Jonathan S. Rose offers insight into discoveries about Swedenborg from his translation work with the Swedenborg Foundation: “Indexing his Way into Further Enlightenment – Discovering Swedenborg’s Process Through Translation.” (Page 222)

Bronwen Henry writes about an important event in Bryn Athyn in April: *Finding Hope—Talking About Addiction, Suicide, Domestic Violence and Mental Illness*. This included other churches and neighbors from surrounding communities and many people felt greatly helped by the program. Bronwen encourages other communities to host similar events and offers help in doing so. (Page 232)

During Tara Dugan’s four years at the Academy of the New Church Girls School she loved getting involved in community service through Delta Mu. Working with a grant from the Charity Works Foundation in Bryn Athyn, she took that love into El Salvador where she helped build a home with Habitat for Humanity. She describes what the experience taught her about taking the New Church mission into the world. (Page 237)

Have you ever thought about a systematic plan for reading through the *Arcana Coelestia*? Here are two charts for doing just that – how much to read each day to do it over one, two, three, four or five years. (Page 230)

Church News (page 241) includes:

- Announcement of a General Assembly to be held in 2020 in Bryn Athyn
- A series of Sunset Organ Vespers at the Bryn Athyn Cathedral this summer, which will be live streamed
- Highlights from meetings of the General Church and Academy Board and Corporation meetings
- Bryn Athyn College awards for Academic Achievement
- The 30th anniversary of the Sower’s Chapel in Sarver, Pennsylvania
- Report on a Sunday School Conference under the auspices of General Church Education
- Election of board members for the Swedenborg Foundation
- The Jacob’s Creek and Living Waters Family Summer Camps
- The ongoing and amazing reach of the New Christian Bible Study Project throughout the world

Editorials

REVELATION AS A MIRROR

To many Christians the *Book of Revelation* reads like *Alice in Wonderland* meets *Star Wars* – bizarre characters, other-worldly images and scary portent. What are we to make of a dragon with seven heads ready to devour the child of the Woman Clothed with the Sun, a blood-spattered lamb opening seven seals on a scroll, a Holy City descending out of heaven? But we are not detached spectators, left to marvel at these special effects from a safe distance. This is a story for us and about us. Plunging into the symbolism may seem like a Fun House mirror, distorting the way we see ourselves. But now that we have the revealed internal sense to guide us, *Revelation* is every bit a mirror – reflecting who we are, and illuminating where we need to be.

The literal *Book of Revelation* is abstract and inscrutable – like a complex painting that invites interpretation but defies consensus. Scholars have struggled through the ages to make sense of it all – their efforts sincere but doomed because only the Lord can reveal the spiritual meaning. We in the New Church are blessed to have that revelation – to know that it describes both a judgment on the world and on the state of the church within us. And that beyond all those dark and scary images is not the destruction of our planet but the promise of “a new heaven and a new earth” coming as “the bright and morning star” of hope and triumph.

The concept of *Revelation* as a prophecy of the Last Judgment is common in Christianity. Generally it is understood as the cataclysmic end of creation, of earth destroyed by fire. The dead rise up for judgment, with the evil cast into hell and the good taken up into heaven. We know that this judgment actually took place in the spiritual world in 1757, that spiritual freedom was restored so that we are free to choose between heaven and hell, but that the fallout from the judgment still ripples all around us.

This judgment is known as the “apocalypse,” but the root of that word is not to destroy but to uncover or reveal. That is just what we are given in *Apocalypse Explained* and *Apocalypse Revealed* – a spiritual revelation not about fire and chaos but a peaceful and inspiring image of a new heaven, a new church, a whole new world.

What is most significant about the Last Judgment and the Second Coming

is that what John saw on the Isle of Patmos, and what happened in the spiritual world 260 years ago – in times and realms far removed from our experience – relate directly to our lives. And it offers a new, personal relationship with the Lord – the church within us.

Now the Lord has revealed that that Last Judgment was on “the fallen state of the church.” That doesn’t mean a specific religious institution or denomination but the quality of personal faith within the people – the “church” that lives within us all. So the Last Judgment is something personal for each of us as well, just as everything in the Word relates directly to our lives, no matter how seemingly obscure or irrelevant. The judgment is both broad – the state of the church as a whole – and intensely personal, about our own lives right now.

What is portrayed in *Revelation* is a judgment on the false beliefs that had sprung up around religion, and the Lord making His promised Second Coming as the “Spirit of Truth” – to be seen, known and understood as never before.

After the opening declaration that everything in this book is “the revelation of Jesus Christ,” John is instructed to write to the seven churches of Asia: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea. These are not specific, established churches but represent the different ways that we see and understand the Lord. This is that church within us – our personal faith in the Lord and living according to His teachings.

Each of the messages to the churches – really to us – begins with the words, “I know your works.” These “works” may be negative, like the people of Ephesus who know the truth but don’t live by it; those of Laodicea who are “lukewarm” and don’t know what they believe; or the Philadelphians – “the faithful church” – who have kept the commandments and lived good lives.

These churches represent all people who have religion in their lives, and from whom a new church – the New Jerusalem – can be formed. But we are cautioned: “He who has an ear, let him hear what the spirit says to the churches.” We must pay attention to our inner states, regenerate, and grow spiritually.

We need to pay attention to what this means in our lives, we are told, because what courses through the strange images and visions of *Revelation* is all about judgment and deliverance. Churches are judged by how true they are to doctrine. And we are judged – really judge ourselves – by the choices we make throughout our lives.

In John’s first letter to the Church of Ephesus, the Lord says: “Remember therefore whence you have fallen. Or else I will come to you suddenly, and will remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.” And “to him who overcomes I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.” (*Revelation 2:5,7*)

All of the disturbing, threatening imagery of *Revelation* turns to hope and

promise once we confront and overcome Babylon: once we are reborn through regeneration, when falsities are exposed and rejected, and when the Lord and heaven are embraced.

Ever since the Last Judgment – and the creation of the New Church in heaven in 1770 – civilization has lived with tension, vacillating between conflict and hope. The world is transforming – but to what? And we are transforming in our lives – but to what? It is up to our free – and now thankfully spiritually informed – choices.

The New Church is being established in heaven and descending upon earth as we learn and love new truth, which is for the salvation of all humanity. We all need to look inside ourselves and ponder where we are in the midst of all this: overwhelmed by dragons at times, perhaps lured astray by the siren songs of Babylon, or fighting alongside Michael and his angels to slay the dragon.

So *Revelation* is not just an account of what John saw on the Isle of Patmos. It is a prophecy for the churches of today, and for all of us as individual “churches” – where the Lord resides within each of us.

The whole purpose of the Second Coming is to take away our blindness by shining a new light of truth so that we can see more clearly and understand more completely, and then freely decide what kind of a spiritual life we will lead. The most important phrases for the New Church in *Revelation* are “Nunc Licet” – now it is permitted to understand the mysteries of faith – and “Behold, I make all things new.” It is for us to be made new by the light of the “bright and morning star” and the “water of life” as the Spirit of Truth leads us into all truth.

The gift of the Lord’s revelation lies in both the responsibility and opportunity it confers. We are to help build the Church in the world by building it first within ourselves. This is what *Revelation* offers – a vision for the world and for our own lives, and a mirror reflecting where we are and showing us all we can be as that “New Church” grows within us.

(BMH)

THE MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB

June is traditionally a favorite month for weddings. In fact, the month of June is named for Juno, the Roman goddess of marriage and childbirth. It is a happy season of light and warmth, beauty and new life, when flowers bloom and birds pair off and build nests for their offspring.

The delights of springtime on earth represent the delights of heaven, where it is always spring. And of all heaven’s delights, the greatest are those that accompany conjugal love. (*True Christian Religion* 847) This is because that love serves the greatest of all uses, namely, the propagation of the human race, and thus the creation of new angels to add to the ever-increasing perfection of

heaven. (*Conjugal Love* 183.7)

One particular day in June, the 19th, has special significance for New Church people, for it was on that date in 1770 that the Lord sent His disciples out to preach to the whole spiritual world that “the LORD GOD JESUS CHRIST reigns.” (*True Christian Religion* 791) This marked the second coming of the Lord and the beginning of the New Church in heaven.

We might call this proclamation a “wedding invitation” because, we are told, it fulfilled the prophecy in the *Book of Revelation* that says: “Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!” (*Revelation* 19:9)

“The Lamb,” signifying innocence, is the Lord; and the “marriage” is that which exists between the Lord and His Church, which is represented by “the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” (*Revelation* 21:2, 9, 10)

It is called a “supper” because feasts are joyful occasions when members of a community get together to celebrate something. A supper is an evening meal, which is also significant because the former church’s day had come to an end. The New Church would follow as the morning of a new spiritual day.

Heaven . . . the Church . . . marriage. These are connected at the deepest level, united by their Divine source. They go together, and not one of them can exist alone, apart from God, for it is the presence of the Divine in them that makes them what they are. Holy. Living. Beautiful. Fruitful. Joyful.

This sounds very idealistic, but it is also profoundly realistic. True ideals represent the truest realities. The essence or soul of a thing is not *less* real than the outward manifestation of it, but *more* real. Life is real; “lifestyles” are more or less beneficial depending upon how genuinely they represent the order of life contained in Life itself.

Like our natural bodies, and everything earthly, marriage in this world is less perfect than the spiritual reality it comes from and is meant to serve. But in marriage, as in every aspect of our natural lives, we should strive toward the ideal, the heavenly reality, the genuine article. We must not separate the natural from the spiritual or the natural will die.

The customs and laws regarding the institution of marriage in this world should be in harmony with the spiritual order of marriage in heaven. This will encourage and support the establishment of that reality on earth; the flowering and flourishing of marriage on earth.

This is the message of the New Church; it is an invitation to “the marriage supper of the Lamb.” The more people who respond to this invitation affirmatively, the more the New Jerusalem, “prepared as a bride adorned for her husband,” will come down out of heaven and become a presence in the world.

(WEO)

RELIGIOUS FEELINGS: YEARNING AND HOPE

All human feelings, positive and negative, relate to God in one way or another, because all our affections are aspects of love, and God is Love itself.

In the first editorial in this series we looked at the feeling of **holiness and awe** that a sense of being in the presence of the Divine generates. Then in the March-April issue the subject was the feeling of **holy fear and unworthiness** that an awareness of the Lord's goodness and mercy toward us engenders. Now we'll consider the feelings of **yearning and hope** that the Lord inspires in us and that the life of religion nurtures.

The deepest desire of every human heart is for heaven and all that heaven means. This is because we were created for eternal life, and know instinctively that this world is not our final home. The highest of human hopes, then, is that we will be saved from hell and brought into heaven. What would religion be – what would *life* be – without that yearning and that hope?

Yearning for heaven has an element of nostalgia in it, or longing for a return to past states of innocence, peace and the unself-conscious happiness we experienced in our infancy and early childhood. Such states, lodged deep within our unconscious mind, are what the Writings call "remains." We yearn for heaven in the future because we've had an experience of it in the past.

There is also a prophetic element in the hope for heaven, because heaven is what the Lord, who governs all things, intends for us and is constantly leading us toward. The Lord's vision of the future good He desires for us is called "providence." Our inner vision of that good is called "hope."

Hope, therefore, is not just a feeling, but also a mental view of a good and happy condition that we desire. Some hopes may be irrational and unrealistic, but heaven is the most real of all human states, and the hope of heaven, formed by the teachings of the Lord's Word, is the most rational of all hopes.

Hope of heaven, if it is genuine, is a *self-fulfilling* prophecy because the love that inspires that hope is the same love that brings heaven into our lives. It is the presence of the Lord that makes heaven; therefore, those who love heaven love the Lord. And all who love the Lord are drawn to Him and live in His presence.

This prayer from *Psalms* will not go unanswered: "Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we hope in Thee." (*Psalms* 33:22)

And this promise from the Gospels will not go unfulfilled:

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled." (*Matthew* 5:6)

(WEO)

Letters

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.

An Abridged Edition of the Arcana Coelestia

To the Editors:

I would like to comment on several of the points raised by Barrie Ridgway in *New Church Life* November/December 2016. This was in response to the review by the Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss Sr. in *New Church Life* July/August 2016 concerning the 12 volumes of the *Abridged Arcana Coelestia* that I have prepared. Many of the points that Mr. Ridgway raises are in fact covered by Bishop Buss in his review. However, I believe there should be more clarity, particularly because Mr. Ridgway admits he has read none of the actual work itself.

The first issue I would like to address is that this work is directed at those lay people who find the original too onerous to handle and “give up” after a limited effort, which they do by their own admission. This is clearly stated in the Introduction to the work, which Mr. Ridgway has not read. This is not directed at all to those people who are comfortable in reading the original.

Subsequent to the review appearing in *New Church Life* many people have contacted me, confirming they do not read the original for this reason. I also, in the Introduction, suggest to lay people who are now reading this version that they should follow this up by going back to the original. The question is, is it better to have an abridged version, which hopefully many lay people will read and is reasonably readable – and also has been given the stamp of approval by two bishops of the Church – or to leave the status quo? I personally have no doubt now which is the better option, considering the response that I have received.

Under no circumstances do I even suggest that this work should be seen as a replacement for the original, which would be supreme arrogance on my part!

The next issue I would like to address has to do with the reason for me

starting this project in the first place, many years ago. This is also covered in the Introduction. We were regularly told by our ministers at that time that there was a *continuous* internal sense to the whole of the Word – and in fact from the beginning of *Genesis* to the end of *Revelation* – which I have always accepted, being as it is a fundamental aspect of New Church Doctrine.

I had a problem with the idea of “continuous,” however, as I did not see it until I got down one day and carefully joined together each of the explanations that show the internal sense of each clause of the literal story. And then I saw it! Not only did I see it but suddenly it became much easier to read once I had done this and as a consequence I decided to pursue this later, once I had retired. This is the reason why the full title is:

THE ARCANA

*An Abridged presentation for the Laity of the New Church
Presenting the continuous internal sense of the Word
as revealed by Emanuel Swedenborg’s Arcana Coelestia*

I am not sure how Mr. Ridgway comes to the conclusion that I am deciding on “which parts of the Word have an internal sense and which should be read and other parts which have not and may be given scant attention or left out.” I suggest his fundamental concern is that he is not happy with any “manipulation” of the Writings in any way, but as Bishop Buss says in his review, each time a minister uses a passage in the lessons for a sermon, especially if he cuts parts out, he is abridging. Each time ministers do studies and “compare one passage with another” they are taking one passage out of the original context and combining it with other passages and they are clearly encouraged to do this.

The point is that no minister’s sermon and no other doctrinal work presented by anyone can possibly be considered *in pari passu* (at the same level) as that of the works of the Writings themselves and so anything that is produced, as this *Abridged Arcana* work has been, has to be seen in this context.

The reality is that if one wants to read exactly what the Lord presented to the world through Swedenborg, one has to go back to the original Latin text because there are sometimes significant differences even between the two relatively recent translations of the *Arcana Coelestia*, which I used, namely the Potts and Elliott translations. The same applies to all translations of the Word.

Steps have now been taken to ensure that there are hard copies of sets of all 12 volumes of this abridged work at most societies of the General Church, where there is either a library or a suitable place where they can be displayed.

One of the outcomes of this is an excerpt in a recent Hurstville Society Newsletter (Australia) written by their pastor, the Rev. Todd Beiswenger:

“How many of you have read the entire 12 volumes of *Arcana Coelestia*? My guess would be ‘not many.’ I tend to think that one of the major obstacles is just the sheer enormity of it, that people get intimidated at the prospect of 12 volumes of anything. Well, if that’s you, you are certainly not alone. And now there is some help.

“Willard Mansfield of South Africa undertook and completed a project to produce an *Abridged Arcana*. His goal was to make it a simpler reading work but one that reflected just the continuous internal sense, without all the other information that relates to other Biblical stories and things that were heard and seen in the afterlife. I’ve made my way through the first volume and it really is quite a nice read. I’d encourage you to stop by the church sometime and borrow a volume and enjoy the work for yourself.”

Those who would like more information are welcome to contact me at willardmansfield@inds.cybertek.co.za.

Willard R. Mansfield
Westville, South Africa

New Church Catechisms

To The Editors:

In *New Church Life*, March/April 2017, Lifelines, p. 176, the Rev. Walter Orthwein, Spiritual Editor, recommends production of a New Church Catechism with questions and answers about New Church doctrines which could be used as a learning tool and to strengthen us in temptation.

I wholeheartedly support Walter’s view about the usefulness of a New Church Catechism as I have in my possession two New Church Catechisms, both of which give excellent answers to a number of commonly asked or doctrinally significant questions and with every answer there are relevant book references from the Word in all its three revelations. These two books are:

1. *First Elements of The True Christian Religion; An Introductory Catechism For The New Church* (Adapted to the Needs of the Schools, Homes and Missions of The General Church of The New Jerusalem. The Academy Book Room, Bryn Athyn, PA 1927)

This book is a treasured possession. My copy was originally a gift from my

paternal grandfather to his wife, my grandmother, touchingly inscribed: “To my beloved wife, with love from her devoted Hubby, Alpha 14/7/29.” (Alpha was then the Orange Free State estate in South Africa of the General Church Missions.) In course of time, my grandmother gave her book to her daughter-in-law, my mother, and in course of further time, my mother gave the book to me.

The Preface by the Rev. Hugo Lj. Odhner commences: “The present little work is compiled as a guidebook to assist parents, teachers, evangelists and missionaries in the instruction of neophytes and older children or in preparing young people for the rite of Confirmation.”

The book is divided into seven topics with 70 questions and answers, all with relevant book references, plus extensive Teaching Notes, which give extra references and information for most questions.

Sample Questions and Answers:

Q. What is the New Church?

A. The New Church is the Church foretold in the Bible under the name of “the New Jerusalem.”

Q. What is the purpose of the New Church?

A. The purpose of the New Church is to worship and obey the One God, the Lord Jesus Christ, and to preach the truths concerning Him and His eternal kingdom to all nations, for the salvation of souls.

Q: How did God come into the world?

A: In the fullness of time the Lord God assumed flesh through the virgin Mary, was born into the world, and lived among men as Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God.

Q: Can we see God?

A: God is visible, approachable and adorable only as the Lord Jesus Christ, the Divine Human.

Q: What is it to have faith?

A: To have faith is to believe what is taught in the Word of God; that is, to see that it is true, and to acknowledge it in heart and life.

Q: What is the life of charity?

A: The life of charity consists in shunning as sins against God whatsoever would do harm to our neighbor, and in faithfully and sincerely performing the uses of our office or employment.

Q: What are the Sacraments?

A: The Sacraments, which are two, and are called Baptism and the Holy Supper, are holy acts of worship ordained by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Q: Is the internal sense of the Word now revealed also to men?

A: The internal sense of the Word is now revealed by the Lord through the inspired Writings of His servant Emanuel Swedenborg, for the use of the New

Church.

2. CATECHISM – For The New Christian Church meant by the New Jerusalem in the Revelation based on the teachings of the Seer Emanuel Swedenborg. By John DurbanOdhner, 1996(Copyright 1995byJohnDurbanOdhner)TheNewellPress

In his Introduction, the author states that he has written the book because of the increasing need for young people and newcomers to the Church to have answers to questions about the Church and its doctrines. This book is divided into 12 topics with more than 400 questions and answers, all with relevant book references.

In my view, both these little books are excellent, with questions and answers relevant to all ages, with answers short and to the point, and with each answer referenced. The earlier book might well be out of print now unless it was reprinted later. The second book, being a later publication, might still be available. These two books are the most succinct, yet comprehensive, reviews of the doctrines of the New Church that I know of.

Sample questions and answers:

Q: Is nature God?

A: No, it is from God, and He is in it by inflow.

Q: Why are human beings immortal?

A: Because they have the faculty of conjoining themselves with God through faith and love and so of becoming the receptacle and dwelling place of Him Who is inexhaustible and eternal.

Q: Who was Adam?

A: The first spiritual race of people, called the Most Ancient Church, who lived a heavenly life on earth. By the ancient writers their time was called the Golden or Saturnine Age, and the Age of Innocence, being represented by the head of gold in the statue seen by Nebuchadnezzar.

Q: How could God be in the world, when yet He is everywhere?

A: His Soul was the Infinite Divine Itself, which is omnipresent.

Q: What do we take with us into the other life?

A: Everything we have ever felt, thought and done, from the first to the last moment of our life.

Q: What does the Holy Supper effect?

A: Conjunction with the Lord, and introduction into Heaven.

Q: Why does man remain man and woman a woman after death?

A: Because in the man the masculine dominates in the soul as well as the mind and body, and so does the feminine in the woman.

Q: What is the New that has now been revealed?

A: All the truth contained in the Heavenly Doctrine of the New Church about

the Lord, about the Sacred Scripture or Word, about the life of Charity and Faith, about Regeneration, about Heaven and Hell, and many more things conducive to salvation and wisdom.

I have noticed that on page 35 of the later book, the work *Heaven and Its Wonders and Hell/Heaven and Hell* has been omitted from a list of the theological works published in Swedenborg's lifetime. This is obviously an unintentional error and I do not think that this omission should detract from the value of the work. If there has been a later edition, this error could have been corrected.

Heulwen M. Ridgway (Miss)
Canberra, Australia

OUR NEW CHURCH VOCABULARY

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

INTELLIGENCE

According to the Writings, intelligence is from the light of the world illuminated by the light of heaven. It consists in knowing, understanding and believing Divine truths; in perceiving inwardly whether what is presented is true or not; and in understanding the causes of things.

Intelligence, therefore, does not require great learning, and in varying degrees it is given by the Lord to all regenerating men.

Wisdom will be defined later, but we may note that it is distinguished from intelligence by two things. It is from the light of heaven; and it consists in willing, loving and doing the truths which intelligence sees and understands. (See *Arcana Coelestia* 9943; *Apocalypse Explained* 198, 408)

Progress and Development of the New Church

The Rev. Willard L. D. Heinrichs

The Lord's promise for the New Church is thrilling and it is sure. It will be the crown of all the churches that preceded it. It will never be consummated. It will endure forever and become ever more perfect. There are confirmations of this its future in *Daniel*, *Ezekiel* and the *Apocalypse*. (See *True Christian Religion* 787; *Coronis* 24; *Invitation* 39; *Coronis Summary* LII, LIII, LV)

Still there are clear indications in the Heavenly Doctrine that we should not expect an early and rapid fulfillment of the Lord's promises in this natural world

as to the dawning and development of the New Christian age. The reasons why the New Church on earth may grow slowly are given in passages such as *Apocalypse Explained* 732; *True Christian Religion* 784; *Apocalypse Revealed* 545, 546, 560 and elsewhere.

We may draw great inspiration from knowing "what" the future of the New Church is to be, and we can draw some comfort from the teachings as to "why" its promise may be somewhat slow in maturing. But we are left with the question as to "how" the Lord in His Divine Providence has been working during the 250-some years that have elapsed since the Last Judgment to bring His glorious promise to fulfillment, and what

We are left with the question as to "how" the Lord in His Divine Providence has been working during the 250-some years that have elapsed since the Last Judgment to bring His glorious promise to fulfillment, and what we might anticipate in the years to come contributing to this same end.

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Is there a process involved here that if it were known could help us to understand where the world has been in the last 250 years, where it is now, and what states it might experience in the future, as the Lord leads it more and more into the New Age, the Age of the New Church? Perhaps if we had a better idea of where we have been, where we are, and some idea of where we are still to go, we could cooperate better with the Lord in working to establish His new kingdom in this world.

I would suggest that the Lord has not left us without some general and very helpful teaching in this matter. It would appear there is indeed a process that is broadly suggested in passages such as *True Christian Religion* 762 and *Invitation* 34.

In *True Christian Religion* 762 the Lord tells us that “in the Lord’s sight the church [through the ages] is seen as a single human being, and this larger human being must pass through its stages of life like an individual – that is to say, from infancy to youth, from this to young manhood, and finally to old age; and then when he dies, he will rise again.”

When we reflect on this and its companion teaching in *Invitation* 34, the following picture emerges:

- The age of the Most Ancient Church corresponds to the infancy of this greater human being.
- The age of the Ancient Church corresponds to the childhood.
- The age of the Israelitish and Jewish Church relates to the later childhood up to maturity.
- The age of the Christian Church relates to the maturity of this greater human being until its natural death.
- The age of the New Church would then correspond to the state of a human being after death, a state that progresses and, with the good, is perfected to eternity.

Perhaps, if we had a better idea of where we have been, where we are, and some idea of where we are still to go, we could cooperate better with the Lord in working to establish His new kingdom in this world.

We have been launched into a process akin to what most individuals can expect when, with the death of their body, they enter the world of spirits and embark on a journey that leads them eventually to their eternal spiritual home.

We might then conclude that since the Last Judgment (1756-7) on the former Christianity, on Islam, and on the churches and religiosities that existed among the gentiles, people in this world have been living in a new age – the Age of the New Church. We have been launched into a process akin to what most individuals can expect when, with the death of their body, they enter the world of spirits and embark on a journey that leads them eventually to their eternal spiritual home.

Turning then to the states of people after their natural death, we find that they are led through three

successive states in the world of spirits before they come into heaven, that is, if they are good people, and two states if their final lot is in hell.

- There is the first state of exteriors.
- There is the second state of interiors.
- There is a third state, a state of instruction, for those being prepared for heaven.

Let us now, in a general, suggestive and speculative fashion, review some of the things that the Lord reveals about the successive states of a person after death in the world of spirits and how these may have some parallel in the states of this natural world that its people have passed through in the last 250 years, states that we may be in right now, and states that are yet to come.

1. The first state:

- Novitiate/new spirits, when fully awakened, find themselves in a situation that closely resembles the state in which they were when they died.
- They usually do not realize that they are no longer in the natural world. This is true even of the celestial.
- Outwardly they appear to themselves as before they died.
- They tend to take up an occupation, also the interests and hobbies that they pursued in the world.
- They live a similar external civil and moral life to that in the world.

- They resume personal friendships, religious affiliations, etc., that they had in the world.

1A. The possible equivalent in the history of this world for, perhaps, the first 150 years after the Last Judgment, maybe up to World War I:

- The first Christian dispensation and other churches and religiosities continued much as they had before the Second Advent.
- Civil affairs and moral behavior within nations and as between nations continued much the same as before the Last Judgment.
- For the most part, it was as if the New Christian Age had not come. This would appear to be the situation that is predicted by the Lord in a passage such as *Last Judgment 73*.
- I am speculating that a teaching such as this must have its “primary” application in the first state of the New Age and, perhaps, a lessening application as the New Christianity spreads from the few to the many.

2. The first state transitioning to the second state:

- Without the spirit noticing the fact, a new freedom begins to emerge and the person’s way of living begins to change. (Recall that in the spiritual world where outward things do not appear that are unrelated to the person’s state, people do not reflect unless the Lord gives them to reflect.)
- Spirits may begin traveling about, perhaps quite uncharacteristically as compared with their life in this world, and they begin to enter into all kinds of new situations and meet all kinds of new people, i.e. perhaps participate in gymnasiums, etc.
- Spirits employ spiritual speech, the speech of ideas. Potentially they can communicate with anyone now. There can be an interchange of knowledge, ideas, etc., which far surpasses anything experienced in this world. They enter also into other means of communication involving all kinds of representations, and they begin to become perceptive of human spheres as these represent a spirit’s affections, thoughts and uses/abuses.
- Spirits begin to become increasingly independent of previous personal, religious and other ties.
- About this time they may begin to be given to reflect on their experiences in the world of spirits and they finally realize they are in a new world.
- They begin to ask, “Where is heaven?” Most think that they are quite worthy and ready to enter it, but they are not. As in those *Conjugal*

Love memorable experiences, there is great ignorance to be dispelled and fundamental changes are going to be needed, before the good are going to be able to enter heaven. Internal obstructions to their spiritual progress are going to have to come out and be dealt with. There can be no shortcuts in this process.

2A. The possible equivalent of the first state transitioning to second state in this natural world:

- People begin to move about the earth in an unprecedented fashion, both within nations and between nations, employing boats, trains, automobiles, airplanes, etc.
- New nations arise and old nations begin to undergo often radical changes.
- People experience expanding freedom in scientific and other kinds of experimentation, with tremendous growth in every field of knowledge and area of human endeavor.
- There is an explosion in modern means of communication: the telegraph, the telephone, television, etc., and now the internet.

The result:

- There is a growing personal independence of age-old cultural, national and religious traditions. People just cannot be controlled (our children and grandchildren) in the way that was once possible.
- People begin to realize that, in fact, they are now in some sort of new world. They give it different names: the post-Christian era, the post-modern era, etc.
- People, perhaps, look for the emergence of some sort of heaven on earth, in the realization of all kinds of external ideas of what constitutes happiness. There is a lot of experimentation in all kinds of activities so as to secure instant happiness. Fantasy heavens are created that do not endure, and often produce disappointing and painful results.
- People think they can obtain their heaven without any fundamental changes in their moral and spiritual life – without regeneration. They think that you can have a stable civil life without a moral life, and stable moral life without a spiritual life.

3. The Second State – the state of interiors:

- Spirits in a state of new-found freedom, without conscious awareness, glide into the state of their interiors. However, they are remitted by degrees into this state with alternations between this state and their first state.

- Spirits now begin acting from their inner loves, free from fear of reproof and punishment. External bonds relating to such things as the fear of the loss of honor, reputation and gain are removed.
- With evil spirits, their inner evils begin to burst out into the open. They have no shame.
- But they are not content just to indulge themselves in evil. As indicated in the final passage of *Divine Providence* and elsewhere, the evil cannot leave others alone, especially the good. They use every clever means and strategy to appeal to the baser instincts in others in an effort to seduce them into the same or worse evils. Flattery is said to be one of the most common means employed to turn people away from the Lord and to themselves.
- All pretenses of civility and morality are gone. The only valid standard for the evil is the one that each fashions to suit his or her evil lusts and whims. And at least in the world of spirits, for the sake of the full exposure of the real character of the evil person's interiors, the Lord permits this.
- With good spirits, they are now able to enter fully and freely into a life according to their conscience. They no longer act from constraints imposed on them by others.
- Their state is compared to that of a person waking out of sleep for the first time.
- With most good spirits the entrance into the full potential of their interiors is gradual. In the extreme, with the most stubborn, perhaps over the course of 30 earth years. This is due to the fact that many people suffer under various confirmed false ideas and have formed bad habits of life of which they will need to be vastated before they can enter heaven.
- These false ideas and bad habits leave them vulnerable to the evil, who thence manipulate them and lead them astray. This brings them into states of torment and eventual despair, that is, until they see the insanity of their false ideas and the folly of their bad habits and reject them forever.

Final or third state with the good:

- After suitable vastations the good come into intensely humble states, states in which they are hungry for instruction in what is genuinely good and true. However, the truth they most long for is that truth which will enable them to enter as soon as possible into a life of use in heaven. (The evil, on the other hand, having served the good as bad examples,

and having rejected all that is good and true, and all of the Lord's efforts to bring them into heaven, judge themselves and betake themselves to their chosen hell where they will live under restraints forever.)

3A. Possible equivalent of the second state emerging in the world of our day? Do we see any parallels in the last 70 or 80 years in what appears to be happening in the world about us?

- Surely there is ample evidence of that new freedom of willing and thinking in spiritual, moral, political and social issues that came into effect with the last judgment.

On the bad side: There have been powerful and persuasive attacks on the belief in God, on the Word, on the keeping of God's commandments, especially on marriage, innocence and anything decent and holy. (See *True Christian Religion* 619)

- It would seem that open, unapologetic criminal behavior, blatant immoralities and mass atrocities, etc., may be on the rise. A lot of people young and old have been horribly exploited and abused in the process.

On the good side: In today's world a growing number of people are ready to renounce blind obedience to church and worldly authorities.

- There is an increased willingness to rethink and explore other philosophies and theological beliefs than the ones that they were reared in.
- There also seems to be growing longing and call on the part of many for peace, justice, ethical and fair dealing within and between nations.
- There has been exposure and condemnation and determined efforts to rid the world of human slavery.
- Similarly, there are efforts in almost every part of the world to improve the lives of women and children.
- There is a rising tide of voices and efforts to prod people all around the globe to become better stewards of our natural environment.

However, for the good, the well-disposed, there is not much respite as yet from adversity visited upon society by the misdirected and the evil. Not a few people are crying out, "How long, O Lord?" And the answer is still: "Time, and times, and half a time."

- The simple fact is that the well-disposed, perhaps society-wide, maybe worldwide, will need to be willing to recognize false ideas and false doctrines for what they are – irredeemably false, having experienced the

evil consequences they always produce.

- The well-disposed will need to be willing to resist and reject from their hearts, their homes, their societies and their nations, indulgence in unbridled natural lusts, appetites and their delights, however apparently harmless and appealing they may be. Why? Because of the terrible destruction of human life that they will always bring in the long run.
- If the inevitable ills that falsities and evils always bring upon society are to be exposed and ultimately rejected for what they are, people who hunger and thirst after righteousness will need to be willing to relinquish their trust in worldly authorities and eventually seek the Lord in the revelation of His Second Advent, humbly imploring Him for new rational truths to guide them into a new and more heavenly life.

When will a third state kind of state arise in this world? Of course, we do not know. But the day of the open establishment of the New Christianity will come!

When will a third state kind of state arise in this world? Of course, we do not know. But the day of the open establishment of the New Christianity will come! The promise of the New Jerusalem is unequivocal, just as Nebuchadnezzar's dream about the five ages was said to be certain, and Daniel's interpretation of it sure!

It is for us, then, not to surrender our hope and trust in the Lord's promise. Rather, let us instead, personally, and as a church, accept the Lord's commission: "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father Who is in heaven." (*Matthew 5:16*)



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What News From Earth?

What Swedenborg said to angels about what is happening in the world

A Sermon by the Rev. Jeremy F. Simons

Lessons: Isaiah 11:8,9; John 16:12,13,25-27; True Christianity 846

“This is new,” I said: “The Lord has recently revealed secrets that are more excellent than any that have ever been revealed since the church first came into existence.”
(*True Christianity* 686)

The angels asked Swedenborg what was happening in the world. He chose to tell them about the things that were being revealed by the Lord through him. This was clearly exactly what they were interested in, and they asked him a lot of questions about it.

Swedenborg first told the angels about revelations concerning the Word and life after death. Then he talked about a number of other things, some of which might surprise you. Why would he mention, for example, degrees, and life on other planets, things that might seem to be less central to what the New Church is about than some other topics?

Two questions:

Given this subject, there are really two questions. One is: if an angel were to ask you what is happening on earth, what would you say? The other is: if you were inclined to talk about this revelation, what aspects of it would you mention? You might even wonder why angels would be asking this at all. Don't angels already know what is happening in this world? The answer to that is that although we are intimately connected with angels, and even though they do watch over us and protect us, their awareness of us is not like the awareness that we have of people in this world.

The difference between the natural and the spiritual prevents the one from being seen by the other. (*True Christianity* 607)

For people think naturally, but spirits think spiritually; and natural and spiritual

thought make one only by correspondence. It is this that prevents people and spirits from knowing anything of each other. (*Apocalypse Explained* 1182)

So although angels have an acute perception of our states, and work ceaselessly to help us, this perception is at a discretely higher level than that of our conscious thought. They do not know about or think specifically about the events taking place on the earth, despite the fact that they play a role in all of them. But given the opportunity within their own world to reflect on the subject and ask the question, they were interested to know what Swedenborg could tell them.

What would you tell them? Is there a difference between what would be of interest from an angelic perspective and what is most important? Would you describe political events? Would you talk about the internet? Would you talk about moral and spiritual issues troubling the human race?

Why this information is important:

Swedenborg talked about the things that the Lord revealed through him. He stresses how important this revelation is:

If the Lord had not come into the world no one could have been saved. The situation today is similar. Therefore if the Lord does not come into the world again in the form of divine truth, which is the Word, no one can be saved. (*True Christianity* 3)

This is about saving the human race! According to this, and many other statements in the Heavenly Doctrine, the Lord's Second Coming into the world is in the form of Divine Truth, which is the Word, consistent with the words of John: "*The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.*" (*John 1*) In John He also says that the purpose of His coming is to bear witness to the truth:

For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice. (*Ibid.* 18:37)

If this is the purpose of His coming then it follows that the information is crucial to our salvation and to the sustainability of life on this planet.

One explanation of this is given in *True Christianity* 24:

The oneness of God is written into each human mind at the deepest level, since it is central to all things that flow from God into our souls. It has not yet come down from there into our intellect, however, because we have been lacking concepts we need in order to go up toward God. Each of us needs to make a pathway for God [*Isaiah 40:3*], meaning we need to prepare ourselves to receive God, and this preparation requires certain concepts.

This is saying that in order to have a clear pathway for our God we need to be aware of certain concepts, and that these have been lacking. As a consequence humanity has been unclear in its understanding of God, and has

suffered as a result. This is why the Lord said in *John*:

I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; . . . These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but I will tell you plainly about the Father. (*John* 16:12, 25)

Swedenborg is telling the angels that this is what is happening on earth, this speaking plainly about the Father. Without these concepts the pathway for God is not clear. It is not that no one can be saved without them, but that the solutions to humanity's ills and weaknesses cannot be found without them, so humanity as a whole cannot be saved.

What are the concepts that have been lacking?

If the revelation is so important then, what are these concepts that have been lacking? It is interesting what Swedenborg mentions because they might not be the ones that most of us would talk about if given the chance. What would you mention? I expect that most of us would focus on what has been taught about the Lord, the Word, and about life after death, as we typically do when we talk to our friends about what the New Church is. This is what Swedenborg does, but he also throws in things that we might never consider talking about.

In *True Christianity* 24 there is a list:

The concepts we have been lacking are listed below. Their lack has deprived our intellect of the penetration to see that there is one God, that there can be only one underlying divine reality, and that all things in the material world come from that underlying reality.

- (a) Until now, no one has known anything about the spiritual world
- (b) The spiritual world has a sun that is pure love from Jehovah God
- (c) As a result, everything in that world is spiritual and affects us in our inner selves
- (d) By means of that sun, Jehovah God produced not only the spiritual world . . . but also the material world
- (e) Until now, no one has known the difference between "spiritual" and "earthly"
- (f) No one has known that there are three levels of love and wisdom that have been used to structure the angelic heavens
- (g) No one has known that the human mind is differentiated into the same number of levels
- (h) Lastly, none of the above would be the case for one instant were it not for the underlying divine reality – the Absolute in itself.

These are the things that have been lacking. This is not exactly the list that Swedenborg recites to the angels, which we read in our lesson, but it is similar.

In addition to what he said about the meaning of the Word and the life after death, he told them about the following things:

1. Your world has a different sun than ours.
2. There are three levels of life and three heavens.
3. Information about the Last Judgment;
4. That the Lord is the God of heaven and earth;
5. God is not only one essence but one person, in whom is the divine Trinity, the Lord is that person.
6. About the new church, and about the holiness of Sacred Scripture.
7. The *Book of Revelation* has been unveiled.
8. About the inhabitants of other planets.
9. Not to mention accounts of memorable occurrences and amazing things witnessed in the spiritual world; through these accounts much that relates to heavenly wisdom has been made known. (*True Christianity* 686)

Are these really the most important concepts?

At several points the angels say, “*Wait, didn’t they know about this already?*” such as when Swedenborg mentions levels of life or discrete degrees. The angels are amazed that people would not know about this, because it is so fundamental to the workings of the universe. To most of us, though, it is a fairly obscure idea, not one that we may think of as a leading doctrine. Yet understanding the difference between what is physical and what is spiritual, which is what these levels are about, is key to understanding the Word, the life after death and how the Lord works.

We might wonder the same thing about the emphasis on the difference between the sun of heaven and the sun that we see in this world. Why is this idea so important?

Similarly, that there is life on other planets. Although people commonly speculate that there is probably life elsewhere in the universe, and even human life, why would this belief be an important religious teaching?

People also sometime wonder about the “accounts of memorable occurrences and amazing things witnessed in the spiritual world.”

Charles Frederick Von Hopken, a friend of Swedenborg’s during his lifetime, wrote:

I asked Swedenborg once why he wrote and published these Memorable Relations, which seemed to throw so much ridicule on his doctrine, otherwise so rational, and whether it would not be best for him to keep them to himself, and not to publish them to the world? But he answered that he had orders from the Lord to publish them, and that those who might ridicule him on that account would do him injustice. (*Documents Concerning Swedenborg*, Volume 2, p. 417)

The accounts that Swedenborg wrote of his experiences in the spiritual world can seem strange and even embarrassing. Many people will dismiss them immediately as impossible – even people who might be inclined to accept many of the teachings themselves as rational and reasonable.

But imagine what the reports of explorers would be like without the element of stories and accounts of what they experienced. The stories make their discoveries and descriptions more believable, not less believable. Confidence in the source is crucial.

If we can accept the reality of heaven, then Swedenborg's accounts should make it seem all the more real and intelligible.

The point of all of this information is to provide the basis that has been lacking for a widespread understanding of and belief in the truths necessary to “*make a pathway for God*” in people's minds. The purpose is the salvation of the human race. The purpose is to promote peace on earth through knowledge of the Lord, as we read in our lesson from *Isaiah*:

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. (*Isaiah* 11:9)

The only question is whether we will believe and act on this knowledge that the Lord has given us.

Amen.



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Go and Sin No More

A Sermon by Rev. Grant H. Odhner

Lessons: Ezekiel 33:7-20; John 8.1-11; Arcana Coelestia 4997

One of the wonderful things about the story of the woman taken in adultery is that there are so many lessons we could find in it. There are lessons about human mercy and forgiveness, lessons about judging others; we learn something about the Lord's approach to people in disorder; we see how He wisely leads us to realizations in a way that causes us to judge ourselves.

The story opens up the subject of marriage and adultery. It also opens up the subject of the Word: how we are to see the Old Testament law (here about adultery) in relation to the New Testament spirit. Further, there is the subject of the Lord's enemies and their real intent in bringing the woman to Him: clearly they were not concerned with her adultery; their purpose was to undermine the Lord's authority and to make His word seem unjust, weak or arbitrary.

We could spend time reflecting on that negative spirit and how it subtly comes to us like the Scribes and Pharisees came to the Lord, and affects us, and seeks to weaken the Lord's Word in us.

But today we are going to focus mostly on the aspect of forgiveness and the Lord's mercy. The woman was guilty. There was no question there. The penalty was clearly dictated in the law. Yet the Lord said: "Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more."

Was the Lord contradicting the Old Testament law? Not really. The Old Testament law did not generally take into account the spirit or intention of the sinner. We're told in the Heavenly Doctrine that the purpose of that law was to create an external church where no internal church was possible. This external church, apart from any true *spirit* of religion, nevertheless created a symbolic *picture* of genuine religion – a picture that could attract the attention of simple good spirits and preserve a connection with heaven and with the Lord until He could make His advent.¹

¹ *Arcana Coelestia* 8588.6, 4311.2, 4208.3, 4281.5, 10500.2-3; *Heavenly Doctrine* 248

The Lord never sees faults as ours. He never attributes them to us, but to hell. He never needs to change His attitude toward us, but is ready at any time to embrace us in love.

When death was prescribed for adultery in their law, it symbolized spiritual death. It symbolized the fact that to *knowingly* and *purposefully* commit adultery brings spiritual death or damnation. When the Lord came into the world He was establishing a genuine religion that emphasized our need to be in the spirit of the law. This new religion was able to make more distinctions based on intention.

In not upholding the penalty for adultery, the Lord was implying that the woman was not yet in a state of condemnation. In other words, based on her real intentions, or on her potential for repentance, the Lord could see that she was not spiritually dead.

But note that the Lord did not say, “I forgive you.” The Lord never says this in the Gospels. (He sometimes says, “Your sins are forgiven.”) To be sure, the idea that God forgives is there, but it is only said according to the appearance. God is indeed an agent in removing evil and its effects from us. But the truth is that the Lord does not need to forgive us. “Forgive” means to “let go” or “release” from someone a fault that we attribute to him. The Lord never sees faults as ours. He never attributes them to us, but to hell. He never needs to change His attitude toward us, but is ready at any time to embrace us in love.

No, it is *we* who must change in order to accept His love. As long as we are

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hanging on to some evil desire or bad habit, we are not able to receive what He has to give. We are forgiven when we change and let go of evil. We then give the Lord permission to reorder our minds and to gradually move that evil out of our consciousness. As this removal happens we *experience* forgiveness – that is, we find freedom from that evil.

So the woman taken in adultery was not forgiven by the Lord. In fact, she does not *find* forgiveness in this story either. She is not absolved either of her crime or her responsibility for

what she had done or of the spiritual consequences that her evil would bring. The Lord simply said: “Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more.”

Just as there is an appearance that the Lord must forgive us, so there is an appearance that He condemns the guilty to hell. We are told that the Lord does not judge or condemn. He *is* the True. He *is* the Good. He is the standard. We measure ourselves against that standard. What *we choose* to love and do in relation to Him is what judges us.

This choice is ours and becomes clear with time. It definitely becomes clear when we die and find ourselves in the spiritual world, where nothing can be hidden. We then make our home with our like.

So the Lord’s statement, “Neither do I condemn you,” is a genuine truth. He never condemns anyone. He only longs for us to turn from evil and live. And this is something He cannot do for us, apart from our effort. That is why He calls us to repentance in the Word. We read in *Ezekiel* about how the prophet’s job was to be a watchman, warning people when they were in evil. The Lord knew that this message would be a burden to us. He anticipated that the Israelites would feel hopeless and say:

If our transgressions and our sins lie upon us, and we pine away in them, how can we then live? (*Ezekiel* 33:10)

We can easily feel hopeless about our evils. Did we hurt someone again with biting words? Did we fall prey to feelings of resentment toward our spouse for the thousandth time? Hadn’t we learned before that it would not solve our problems, but only lead to other negative thoughts, and to a prolonged coldness that would sap our energy and our spouse’s? Hadn’t we resolved last time we knew the glow of reconciliation and that sweet feeling of freedom from resentment, that the next time that problem came up we would seek a different path? A path of prayerful patience, or communication, or tolerance? Evil is addicting and it is easy to feel that we are powerless against it.

This is where the idea that the Lord can forgive us has appeal. If we only believe in Him in a moment of contrition, He will take away our evils or our

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Another realization that enables us to “turn and live” is that when we “go” and work to “sin no more” the Lord is actually with us. He is providing the power and even doing the work in us in the measure that we let Him.

is lawful and right, if the wicked restores the pledge, gives back what he has stolen, and walks in the statutes of life without committing iniquity, he shall surely live; he shall not die. (*Ibid.* 33:14-15)

When we resist evil and do good, our loves change; evil is not able to keep its hold on us. On the other hand, if we turn to evil, it will also make a difference.

The righteousness of the righteous man shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression . . . ; nor shall the righteous be able to live because of his righteousness in the day that he sins. (*Ibid.* 33:12)

When we choose evil, our loves move toward it. It gains a foothold in us. No fund of righteousness can undo that movement, short of a new effort on our part to move back. In response to this the Israelites said: “The way of Yehowah is not fair.” (Perhaps they would rather He do it all for them.) But the Lord countered:

It is their way which is not fair! . . . O house of Israel, I will judge every one of you according to his own ways. (*Ibid.* 33: 17, 20)

The fairness of the Lord’s way is that through it we are truly free and we matter; our “own ways” count. And in this freedom lies our ability to achieve our heart’s desires; in it lies our sense of ownership in the life we choose; in this freedom lies our sense that we matter to others and to the Lord.

The Lord said to the woman, “Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no

responsibility for them! But the Lord did not answer the Israelites in these terms when they felt hopeless. He said:

“As I live,” says the Lord Yehowah, “I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?” (*Ezekiel* 33:11)

The path of hope lies in change, not in absolution. In the rest of that chapter the Lord makes it clear that our present efforts are what count. If we make one effort to turn from evil, it will make a difference.

When I say to the wicked, “You shall surely die,” if he turns from his sin and does what

more.” It is our clear understanding of the Lord’s *mercy* that enables us to turn and live. We do not feel hopeless when we know what the Lord is like, and how He feels toward us. Knowing that is what enables us to “go” and make a new effort to “sin no more.”

Another realization that enables us to “turn and live” is that when we “go” and work to “sin no more” the Lord is actually with us. He is providing the power and even doing the work in us in the measure that we let Him.

So let us hear the Lord’s mercy when He says, “Go and sin no more.” He is not abandoning us, but inviting His nearer presence when He calls:

“Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies,” says the Lord Yehowah. “Therefore turn and live!” (*Ezekiel* 18:30-32)

Amen.



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OUR NEW CHURCH VOCABULARY

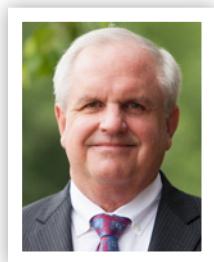
Part of a continuing series developed by the Rev. W. Cairns Henderson, 1961-1966.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL MAN

These are not terms for the mind and body, respectively. Both refer to the mind, and they are descriptive of the two minds by which man is in company with angels and with men. The internal man is the ruling love and its perceptions from which man mediates when alone, and by which he does uses in the spiritual world; the external man consists of the affections and thoughts which are displayed by a man when he is in company, and by which he performs uses in this world. An important corollary is that these two minds, distinct from each other, are also distinct from the body. (See *Arcana Coelestia* 8742; *Apocalypse Revealed* 641)

Bryn Athyn College Extends its Reach

The *Swedenborg and the Arts International Conference* taking place on the campus of Bryn Athyn College June 6-9 is a landmark event for the College, putting it on the map for academic scholarship. Below are comments from President Brian Blair and Co-Chair Dr. Jane Williams-Hogan about what this means for the College:



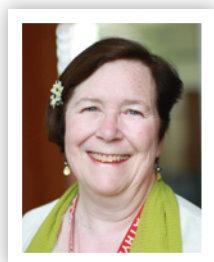
President Brian Blair

Bryn Athyn College is proud to host the *Swedenborg and the Arts International Conference*. As the only New Church college in the world, hosting this exciting event is a natural outgrowth of our mission. Furthermore, this intellectual gathering of international artists and scholars represents a significant step toward a future in which Bryn Athyn College can serve a global community in studies where New Church thought can

be conducted in conferences like this on campus.

We are delighted to share our top-notch facilities in support of this type of knowledge sharing.

Contact: Brian.Blair@brynathyn.edu



Dr. Jane Williams-Hogan, Professor Emerita

Co-Chair of Swedenborg and the Arts Conference

Brief History: It is important to know that the Swedenborg and the Arts Conference was proposed by a scholar, Massimo Introvigne, whom I have known for more than 20 years, due to my work at the American Academy of Religion. He was the guest editor for an issue of *Nova Religio* on “New Religious Movements and the Visual Arts,” and I had an article in that issue on the “Influence of Emanuel Swedenborg’s Religious Writings on Three Visual Artists.”

While the issue was in progress, in the spring of 2015, Massimo wrote to me and suggested that Bryn Athyn College sponsor a conference on Religion

and the Arts. I immediately discussed that suggestion with Brian Henderson, Director of Glencairn. In September, I got another email from Massimo in which he suggested the conference focus on Swedenborg and the Arts.

I brought that suggestion to President Brian Blair, which he wholeheartedly endorsed, and the conference was born. The key elements here are: networks, consistent involvement with scholarly organizations and a focus of scholarship on Swedenborg.

Going forward: The Swedenborg and the Arts Conference has an outstanding group of presenters. Many of them were invited to participate and the others responded to our “call for papers.” Those invited were in the networks of the two Co-Directors of the Conference, myself and Dr. Devin Zuber (a Bryn Athyn College graduate), Massimo Introvigne, and Stephen McNeilly, Executive Director of the Swedenborg Society, London.

The conference is a cooperative effort of many New Church organizations: Bryn Athyn College; The Center for Swedenborg Studies at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California; the Swedenborg Foundation; the Swedenborg Society; and the Swedenborg Scientific Association. Maintaining these connections and continued cooperation with them is vital to the College for efforts like the conference going forward.

Emphasizing to the College faculty the importance of doing New Church and Swedenborg-focused scholarship, and then presenting it to outside scholarly organizations, is also an essential ingredient. It is also important to encourage Bryn Athyn College faculty to develop and maintain relationships with outside scholars, that is to develop and maintain networks.

The College should see holding scholarly conferences as a vital part of its mission and develop funding for this. The College should also initiate visiting professor positions at the College and find the funding to support these positions. In addition, it would be wonderful if some of the activities I have engaged in during my career at the College could, in fact, be institutionalized.

It should be clear from my perspective that what the conference means to the College going forward is whatever we want it to mean. For such an event to be meaningful, we must capitalize on it. We, the College, are the ones who can do it. While invitations may come to us as a result of the conference, going forward is basically up to us.

We can engage in scholarship, present at conferences, build networks, get invitations to present and publish, and we can invite scholars to our events, publish their papers and books and become the go-to place for Swedenborg scholarship as more and more academics become aware of the influence of his Writings on the world.

The conference promises to be a great event. I hope to see you there.

Contact: *Jane.Williams-Hogan@brynathyn.edu*

Swedenborg and the Arts International Conference

Bryn Athyn College is hosting the *Swedenborg and the Arts International Conference* June 6-9 in the Brickman Center. This first-ever such conference is dedicated to examining the influence of Emanuel Swedenborg's writings on the arts. More than 25 scholars from 10 countries will be present to explore and discuss Swedenborg's substantial influence on literature, painting, architecture, music and other forms of art.

Co-sponsors with Bryn Athyn College are: the Swedenborg Foundation, The Swedenborg Society (London, England), Glencairn Museum, the Center for Swedenborgian Studies of the Graduate Theological Union (GTU) in Berkeley, California, and the Swedenborg Scientific Association. Co-Chairs are Dr. Jane Williams-Hogan of Bryn Athyn College and Dr. Devin Zuber, GTU.

The conference offers a singular opportunity to hear how Swedenborg's theology and science catalyzed a number of artists and writers, ranging from Romantic poet William Blake to Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoyevsky.

Attendees will learn how artists capture in paint or stone the reality of an inner spiritual world, and how artists George Inness and William Keith attempted to answer this question on their canvases and transformed American landscape painting in the process.

Why did Swedenborg's view of heaven and the cosmos shape urban design and architecture, from Daniel Burnham's plans for Chicago to the Arts and Crafts Movements of the late 19th century? And how did Swedenborg – “the Buddha of the North” in D. T. Suzuki's words – end up becoming a critical resource for East-West cultural translation for early Modernists in Japan?

Artists, writers and musicians inspired by the ideas contained in Swedenborg's works are still painting, still writing, and still designing today. Some of them will be at the conference to discuss what they are working on and their plans for the future.

For further information:

- www.brynathyn.edu/swedenborgconference
- <https://swedenborgartsconference.wordpress.com>
- www.facebook.com/SwedenborgArtsConference

If you are unable to register online or need help doing so please call Kaylene Glenn at 267-502-2579. Below is the latest program available for the conference for this issue of *New Church Life*. There may be changes. We hope to have a report in the next issue and perhaps some of the papers given in future issues.

Tuesday, June 6: Swedenborgian Imaginaries

9 a.m. Welcome and opening remarks: Co-Chairs Dr. Jane Williams-Hogan and Dr. Devin Zuber, and Bryn Athyn College President Brian Blair

9:30 **Keynote: Dr. Wouter Hanegraaff**, University of Amsterdam:
Imagining Swedenborg's Heaven

10:45 **Session 1: Spiritualistic Poetics**

Chair: Dr. Kristin King, Bryn Athyn College

- Dr. Marco Pasi, University of Amsterdam: *Painting the Spiritual World*
- Dr. Everett Messamore, University of Heidelberg: *Poets Are No Dreamers: Andrew J. Davis*
- Dr. Robert Rix, University of Copenhagen: *James John Garth Wilkinson*

1:45pm **Session 2: Swedenborg in World Literatures**

Chair: Rita Sherma, Graduate Theological Union (GTU)

- Dr. Ilya Kutik, Northwestern University: *Swedenborg and Russian Symbolist Poetry*
- Austin Salzwedel, GTU: *Sino-Japanese Hieroglyphics in America: Swedenborgian Influences in Okakura Kakuzo*
- Dr. Ilya Vininsky, Princeton University: *Fyodor Dostoyevsky and Emanuel Swedenborg*
- Dr. William Rowlandson, University of Kent: *The Heavens and Hells of Jorge Luis Borges*

4:00-

6:00 Optional: SwedenborgLibrary and Archives open for tours; walking tours of Bryn Athyn, Pennypack Ecological Trust Watershed, Lord's New Church (weather permitting)

Wednesday, June 7: Seeing, Hearing and Building New Worlds

9 a.m. Welcome and opening remarks: Introduction of Dr. Linda Dalrymple Henderson

9:15 **Keynote: Dr. Linda Dalrymple Henderson**, University of Texas, Austin: *Swedenborg and the Arts in Later 19th-Early 20th*

Century Contexts

10:45 **Session 3: American Landscape Painting**

Chair: Dr. William Coleman, Winterthur/Library Comp. of Philadelphia

- Dr. James Lawrence, GTU: *Painter, Pastor: Spiritual Arc in William Keith*
- Dr. Adrienne Baxter Bell, Marymount Manhattan College: *The Fact of the Indefinable: George Inness in the 1860s*
- Dr. Diane Apostolos-Cappadona, Georgetown University: *A Tale of Two Christs: William Page's Journey from Unitarianism to the New Church*

1:45pm **Session 4: Visionary Architecture and Sound**

Chair: Holly Mitchum, GTU

- Dr. Kristen Schaffer, North Carolina State: *Plan of Chicago and the Universal Human*
- Dr. Paul Ivey, University of Arizona: *From New Church Architecture to City Beautiful*
- The Rev. Stephen Cole, Bryn Athyn College: *Swedenborgians and the Arts and Crafts Movement*
- Dr. Graham Bier, Bryn Athyn College: *Toward an Internal Sense: C.J. Whittington*

4:15 Tour of Bryn Athyn Cathedral: Dr. Martha Gyllenhaal

5:00 Self-guided tours of Glencairn Museum

6:30 Wine reception in Glencairn Cloister (weather permitting)

Banquet in Glencairn's Great Hall

Thursday, June 8: Swedenborgian Imaginaries

9 a.m. Welcome and opening remarks: Introduction of Dr. Massimo Introvigne

9:15 **Keynote: Dr. Massimo Introvigne**, Center for Studies on New Religions (CESNUR): *Concentric Circles*

10:45 **Sessions 5: William Blake and His Critics**

Chair: Dr. Rebecca Esterson, Center for Swedenborgian Studies at the Graduate Theological Union (GTU)

- Dr. Martha Gyllenhaal, Bryn Athyn College: *William Blake's Watercolors of the Last Judgment*
- Dr. Matthew Leporati, College of Mount Saint Vincent: *Swedenborg's Conjugal Love and Blake's Erotic Poetics*

- Dr. Eric Galvin: *Influence of Swedenborg on Joseph Clark*

1:45pm **Session 6: European Romantic Painting and its After-Effects**

Chair: Dr. Jonathan Kline, Tyler School of Art, Temple University

- Dr. Cordula Grewe, University of Pennsylvania: *Landscape Between Revelation and Ritual*
- Saori Osuga, Waseda University: *Swedenborg and the French Romantics*
- Daniel Guéguen: *Swedenborg and Belgian Art*
- Colette Walker, GTU: *Hidden Correspondences: Kandinsky*

3:45 **Session 7: Jamesian Modernisms**

Chair: Dr. Peter Schneck, University of Osnabrück

- Dr. Devin Zuber, GTU: *Swedenborg and James*
- Meredith Massar Munson, GTU: *Mystical, Pragmatic Modernism*
- Dr. Paul Croce, Stetson University: *The Aesthetics of Experience: William James*

8:00 Swedenborg at the Cinema (Film Screenings)

Mitchell Center for the Performing Arts

Moderated by Dr. Devin Zuber, Stephen McNeilly and Dr. Aram Yardumian

Friday, June 9: Inspired Futures

9:00am Welcome and opening remarks

9:15 **Keynote: Homero Aridjis**

9:15 **Sessions 8: Swedenborg and the Contemporary**

Chair: Dr. Aram Yardumian, Bryn Athyn College

- Karen Weiser, CUNY: *Swedenborg and the Poetics*
- Stephen McNeilly, Swedenborg Society, London: *Modalities of Practice*
- Bridget Smith, independent artist: *Swedenborg: Photography in Place*

11:00 **Closing Plenary Session**

Dr. Zuber, Dr. Williams-Hogan and select panel chairs

Indexing His Way into Further Enlightenment: Discovering Swedenborg's Process Through Translation

The Rev. Dr. Jonathan S. Rose

(This is a written version of a talk with slides given to the Friends of the Swedenborg Library Annual Meeting, February 12, 2017)

By “translation” in this title I mean both the rendering of Latin words in English and also the editing and reference-checking that go along with it.

My thesis, briefly put, is that what I might call Swedenborg’s “indexlike” and “cross-reference” material – where there’s a statement followed by a string of numbers – has more value than we give it credit for.

In Swedenborg’s published theological works this indexlike material is presented, broadly speaking, in one of three ways:

1. As a momentary cross-reference inserted into the flow of the main text;
2. As an author’s footnote to the main text;
3. As a solid block, equivalent to his main text.

And why would I link these together? They are all based on Swedenborg’s indexes. In fact, the same content sometimes appears in one place as one type of text and in another place as another.

Swedenborg, of course, also had other kinds of indexes. At the end of two of his later theological works, *Marriage Love* and *True Christianity*, he published an index of memorable occurrences. Plus, many indexes survive that he left in manuscript form, and we know there were still more that have not survived.

This kind of material has often been treated by later editors and translators as inferior to the main text.

Admittedly, the first kind of indexlike material, the embedded cross-

reference, has been preserved in later editions. But people producing audio versions may understandably omit it, and of course readers presumably generally skip it.

The second kind of indexlike material, the author's footnotes, have often actually been omitted from later editions and translations, or in other cases moved to the back of the book.

But I'm especially interested in the third kind of indexlike material, which perhaps reaches its peak in Swedenborg's 1758 work *New Jerusalem (The New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine)*. This published theological work has 23 chapters, most of which are followed by a block of indexlike text. In fact, the indexlike material constitutes some 69 percent of the text.

The New Century Edition (NCE) has recently issued the Rev. Dr. George Dole's fresh and wonderfully readable English translation of *New Jerusalem*, including all the indexlike material. (It is a cornerstone of our approach that we include everything in Swedenborg's first edition.)

I was shocked to find recently that this NCE version is the first time that indexlike material has been translated into English in 106 years! Since it fills the page and is separate from the main text, this material was presumably considered easier to remove than embedded cross-references. So it seems as though the larger such text is, the more inclined we are to get rid of it.

For more evidence that this material has been seen as secondary, consider how Potts' *Concordance* handles it. Although the *Concordance* takes great pains to represent Swedenborg's doctrinal main text, when it comes to indexlike material, Potts merely summarizes it as "Refs. to Passages." (i.e. N. 25. That all good and truth are from the Lord. Refs. To passages. 308.)

Now all of this is understandable, *if* we consider this material to be a normal index. Because an index is by nature a mere humble servant, is it not? It's a signpost, a pointer, a hyperlink, directing one to where the real action is. But is that all this was?

Important to Swedenborg

While this material may not be very important to us, I would argue that it was very important to Swedenborg. Both the activity of producing this material and the resulting product seem to have been of great significance to him.

To lay this out I need to broaden the scope from his indexlike material to all his indexes.

Before his spiritual eyes were opened, Swedenborg included indexes in some of his published works. These were brief and normal. In *Dynamics of the Soul's Domain* vol. 1, for example, there is a seven-page index, or a rate of one page of index for every 55 pages of text, and the wording of the index simply reflects the wording of the main text.

But something changed after Swedenborg's spiritual eyes were opened: Indexing became more important to him. Consider the fact that the first major thing he wrote then was a series of six indexes to the Bible that total 2,515 manuscript pages. By the third of these six, he began including the spiritual meaning of the text – a departure from mere signposting!

Consider also the fact that at that same time Swedenborg began writing down his spiritual experiences, and then went over these and indexed them at a rate of one page of index for every *two* pages of text. Anyone who has worked on that material can tell you that his index entries are differently worded, clearer, and sometimes longer than the thing they are supposedly just indexing! Yet to the best of my knowledge this material has never before been translated into any language.

The first ever translation is being done as we speak by the Rev. Kurt Nemitz for the General Church Translation Committee. It has not been all that important to us, but it was apparently very important to Swedenborg.

Consider also the humble fact that Swedenborg's published theological works (and a few major unpublished works) have sequential section numbers that run from beginning to end and even across volume boundaries. Swedenborg adopted this practice no doubt so that he could index and cross-reference his works before pages were typeset. Proof of this is found in his *Revelation Explained (Apocalypse Explained)*, which stops abruptly long before it was completed, but already has abundant cross-references in it. Swedenborg must have created an index for this work, too, but it has not survived.

In fact, let's consider how Swedenborg's published theological writings begin. After the title page of *Secrets of Heaven (Arcana Coelestia)*, but before you even reach No.1, what do you find? A string of forward cross-references, and an index of spiritual experiences.

After he finished *Secrets of Heaven* in 1758 Swedenborg published five works in one year. Stuart Shotwell, managing editor for the New Century Edition, recently made this fascinating observation: when you arrange them in the order in which they were originally written, the amount of indexlike material increases.

In *Other Planets (Earths in the Universe)*, such material constitutes six percent of the work, all of it in the form of author's footnotes. In *Heaven and Hell*, that amount rises to 19 percent and is present in both footnotes and as block text at the end of chapters. In *Last Judgment*, that amount rises to 22 percent, again in both footnotes and as block text. In *New Jerusalem*, that amount rises to 69 percent, and none of it is in footnote form; it is all block text at the end of chapters. And in *White Horse*, that amount rises yet again, to 80 percent, and again, none of it is in footnotes; it forms one large appendix after a brief chapter of biblical exegesis. Can we maintain that this material was

unimportant to Swedenborg?

And while we're at it, let's consider how Swedenborg's published theological writings end. With an index! Just as they began, they end with an index of spiritual experiences. At the end of *True Christianity* there is a 47-page index of these experiences, which includes many details not covered in the main text, and ends with a whole additional memorable occurrence, all of which has often been cut. (For details, see my translator's preface to *True Christianity* vol. 2 in the deluxe, purple edition.)

So, indexing was not superfluous to what Swedenborg was doing; it was an integral part from start to finish. And the nature of these indexes went beyond what is normal.

Threefold Indexing

More evidence of how important this material was to Swedenborg is how much work he put into it. Let's consider how he produced the indexlike material that constitutes 69 percent of *New Jerusalem*.

The Rev. John Elliott made a significant contribution to our understanding in his wonderful Latin edition of Swedenborg's Indexes to *Arcana Coelestia*. He points out that there are two types of material in these indexes. This led Stuart Shotwell and me to realize that what is present in *New Jerusalem* is yet a third type; that is, this material took a *threefold* process to create.

First, Swedenborg would go through *Secrets of Heaven* paragraph by paragraph and write an entry in his index under some appropriate keyword. For example, in his index entry for *cor*, the Latin word for "heart," all the numbers are in sequential order, starting with 170 and ending with 10335 (see Elliott 2004, 82). The result is a numerically ordered, but topically random, list of statements with usually just a single reference each. This is what we call first-order indexlike material.

Then Swedenborg would reread this and copy it over but re-sort the information into a new synthesis. (See Elliott 2004, 83) The format of the text changes. In the case of the entry on the heart, Swedenborg has taken all the mentions of *the will* in the first-order entry on the heart, and combined them into one statement with a string of numbers at the end. Then he took all the mentions of *love* and combined those. The result is a series of individual, disconnected statements but they now have more topical density and each has a string of numbers at the end. This is second-order indexlike material.

Finally, Swedenborg would take that second-order material and rework it yet again, rearranging the points and crafting them into paragraphs of prose, which is third-order indexlike material; at times he even provides it with internal headings.

I don't have an example about the heart, so let's look at one from the NCE

New Jerusalem about the inner and outer self instead. Note the presence now of a flow from one statement to the next, with connective tissue and logical markers that I have italicized here – in fact you can ignore the references and read this as regular prose.

The outer things in us are relatively remote from the Divine, so they are more obscure and general: 6451. They are *also* relatively disorganized: 996, 3855. Inner things are more perfect because they are closer to the Divine: 5146, 5147. There are thousands upon thousands of things in our inner self that appear as one general thing in the outer self: 5707. *So* the more inward our thinking and perception are, the clearer they are: 5920. *It follows then* that we should concentrate on what lies in the deeper levels: 1175, 4464. (*New Jerusalem* 47:2)

So, given that Swedenborg wrote a rough copy and then a fair copy of the works he published, was it not enough that he wrote out the 4,563 pages of *Secrets of Heaven* by hand, with a quill pen, *twice*? No, he also went back and indexed it *three times*.

We are welcome, of course, to omit the resulting material, but let's at least hold in our hearts that a lot of work went into it. It is like a couple, and one says to the other: "Did you by any chance throw out the stuff in the brown pot from the fridge in the basement?" "Yeah, it was just old cabbage." "Well, that old cabbage was actually sauerkraut I was making! I pounded that for hours and it has been brewing for three weeks!" "Oops! Sorry about that."

Likewise with Swedenborg's indexlike material. It may look at first like old cabbage to us, but we should at least realize that he worked hard on that and felt it was important.

New Content

But even more significant than the sheer amount of work it took is that the resulting material contains things Swedenborg didn't say anywhere else. This is not generally recognized. But anyone who has worked at checking cross-references in Swedenborg's works can attest that doing so is a nightmare! Why?

Let me give you an example from a parenthetical cross-reference in *Secrets of Heaven* 9410. Note the wording here in the redesigned standard edition:

(That regeneration goes on up to the end of man's life in the world, and afterward to eternity, see n. 8548-8553, 8635-8640, 8742-8747, 8853-8858, 8958-8969.)

So here is a statement followed by not one, not two, but 36 references in five groups. Imagine you are the reference checker. "Okay, here we go!" you say to yourself. "To verify these references all I need is to find that statement in those passages and put in a checkmark." So, you read No. 8548. Well, it is about the need for rebirth in order to go to heaven. But the passage says nothing about regeneration going on throughout our life and after death to eternity. Nos. 8549, 8550, and so on are also about regeneration, but say nothing of the

kind. Hmmm.

You keep checking. Along the way you learn that regeneration is needed because our life is upside-down to begin with; that we can't be regenerated unless we know some truths; that both our inner and our outer selves have to be regenerated. You learn that our ruling love is a key element and *cannot* be changed after death. (Hmmm.) But none of it fits the bill, with the exception of the word "regeneration"!

In the last batch of 12 passages, though, Nos. 8958-8969, after learning that temptations are needed for regeneration, in the third-to-last passage you read that our spiritual self eventually gets the upper hand over our lower self and we gain "intelligence and wisdom, which afterward increase day by day." Now you get a little excited! Perhaps in the last two passages, you'll see the thing that you have been looking for! But no.

So, wait a minute! What was that opening sentence again? ("That regeneration goes on up to the end of man's life in the world, and afterward to eternity, see Nos. 8548-8553, 8635-8640, 8742-8747, 8853-8858, 8958-8969.") Did we really just read 36 passages to find nothing more than the word *regeneration* and the statement that *intelligence and wisdom afterward increase day by day*, which doesn't even directly say that *regeneration* continues, and says nothing about whether it goes on after death? *Afterward* there is arguably vague in comparison with *throughout your life and to eternity*.

So, do you as reference checker say, "S'all good! Two thumbs way up"? Are those, in fact, the references Swedenborg intended? I believe they are, because they point so precisely to 36 passages on regeneration. But then what is going on?

My working theory is that Swedenborg reads those 36 passages and has a *new insight*, and puts it in the statement with the list of numbers. In fact, it is literally added sideways in the margin of his manuscript. All the passages referred to give supportive information, and presumably even led to Swedenborg's insight, but the resulting cross-reference does not function like a normal index entry would. This may drive the reference-checkers crazy, but for the same reason, its value is higher than we thought. It says something new.

And this is just one of many examples. Back in the day, there were no electronic search tools, but now we can search all the Latin in a heartbeat. And yet in checking references in *New Jerusalem*, we found a great many instances in which a phrase used in the indexlike material was the first time Swedenborg ever wrote those words.

Let me give you one more example; this is from that index at the end of *True Christianity*, which I discuss in the translator's preface to the NCE volume 2. As I approached translating that index, I thought I could just cut and paste the language from what I had already translated. Silly me! That turned out to

be completely impossible.

For example, in *True Christianity* No.110 we read about a person who had fallen out of heaven because of the way he viewed the Trinity (the shading here indicates words in the main text that are not copied into the index – a perfectly normal situation):

I asked him why he had fallen out of heaven like that. He answered that Michael's angels had thrown him down. "*It was because I voiced some of the beliefs I had convinced myself of in the world,*" he said. "*Among them was this one: God the Father and God the Son are not one; they are two. As it turns out, though, all who are in the heavens today believe that God the Father and God the Son are one like a soul and a body.*"

But here is Swedenborg's index entry for that passage. (The bold here marks *additional* details that appear only in the index entry – which is *not* at all normal for an index.)

I . . . asked why he had fallen out of heaven like that. He answered that Michael's angels had thrown him down, because he had said that God the Father and his Son are two, not one. He said that the entire angelic heaven believes that God the Father and his Son are one as a soul and a body are one – **a point the angels support with many passages from the Word. They also use rational argumentation as support: they say the Son's soul came from nowhere else but the Father; therefore that soul was an image of the Father, and the body that came from it contained that image. He added that when he was in heaven he of course spoke of one God, just as he used to do on earth; but because his verbal statements to this effect did not match what he was thinking, the angels said he did not believe in any God, because the two views cancel each other out. He said this was why he was thrown out of heaven.**

No Switch

But in a way, doesn't this make sense considering Swedenborg's state? I mean, it's not as though there was an *enlightenment switch* that Swedenborg turned on for writing his main text and then carefully turned off when he was cross-referencing and indexing.

And why would he want to shut off his enlightenment while indexing? What would be the point?

Put yourself in Swedenborg's shoes for a moment – the Lord has appeared to you and heaven is opened to you. But it is confusing, and your whole world is being turned upside down. So much of what you have been taught is wrong and you have to relearn and retool your mind.

Consider that the first appearance of an inner meaning to the Bible surfaces in passages in Swedenborg's Bible indexes.

And perhaps you have seen how seemingly random the entries in the main text of *Spiritual Experiences* are. But then look at the *index* of *Spiritual Experiences* – that material has been brought into much greater order. And

aren't those reworded, clearer, sometimes longer entries, evidence that Swedenborg was coming to greater understanding as he reflected on what he had written? He can't shut off his enlightenment, and wouldn't want to! *And what is he going to do*, once he has an insight? Rewrite the whole *Spiritual Experiences*? No, put it in the index. Do it now!

And that example from *Secrets of Heaven* 9410: Perhaps Swedenborg read those passages and had a new realization about the eternity of regeneration. Well, what do we expect him to do? Reissue *Secrets of Heaven*, starting over again? No, there's no time for that. Just put it in the statement, show the passages that shed that light for him, and move on.

How perfect is it that the end of his entire published corpus is an index that includes not only some striking additions but also a fresh new experience never published elsewhere? So, he had a vision after finishing the main work. What is he going to do, stop the presses and redo *True Christianity* to fit it in? No, put it in the index and finish the volume.

Conclusion

To summarize and conclude, what I might call Swedenborg's "indexlike" and "cross-reference" material, where there's a statement followed by a string of numbers, has been treated as having secondary importance, perhaps because it appears to merely repeat things already said in his main text. But careful study of that material, of the kind that occurs when translating, editing and checking it, reveals that it contains new insights and wording that is not present elsewhere in his works, and therefore it is primary, highly evolved material and deserves more love and respect.

After all, Swedenborg still had enlightenment while cross-referencing and indexing. In fact, there is evidence that rereading helped shape and deepen his understanding. Indexing was, of course, not the *source* of his inspiration, but in the act of considering again what he had written, I believe he would gain new light, and that indexing and cross-referencing therefore played a key role in shaping his theological works from beginning to end.



The Rev. Dr. Jonathan S. Rose serves as translator for the Swedenborg Foundation, where he has served as president. He is also involved with Curtis Childs in producing *offTheLeftEye* video productions for the Foundation and conducts a popular Bible study class in Bryn Athyn which is live streamed. He and his wife, Kristin (King), live in Bryn Athyn. Contact: jsrose@swedenborg.com

ARCANA COELESTIA -- DAILY READING SCHEDULE

How many pages or paragraphs do you have to read to finish the Arcana Coelestia in a given number of years?

Any

Swedenborg Foundation

Standard Edition, Green
Standard Edition, PDF

Swedenborg Society

Blue Binding
Elliot Translation

Length	Unit
10837	Paragraphs
7094	Pages
7597	Pages
5810	Pages
6064	Pages

1 Year	2 Years
30	15
19	10
21	10
16	8
17	8

If you read a given number of pages or paragraphs a day, how long will it take you to read the Arcana Coelestia?

Any

Swedenborg Foundation

Standard Edition, Green
Standard Edition, PDF

Swedenborg Society

Blue Binding
Elliot Translation

Length	Unit
10837	Paragraphs
7094	Pages
7597	Pages
5810	Pages
6064	Pages

Pages/Paragraphs read

50		40	
Mos	Days	Mos	Days
7	4	8	28
4	21	5	26
5	0	6	8
3	25	4	24
4	0	5	0

A DAILY READING SCHEDULE FOR THE ARCANA COELESTIA

3 Years	4 Years	5 Years
10	7	6
6	5	4
7	5	4
5	4	3
6	4	3

per day

M = month = 30.4 days

30		20			15			10			5		
Mos	Days	Yrs	Mos	Days	Yrs	Mos	Days	Yrs	Mos	Days	Yrs	Mos	Days
11	27	1	5	25	1	11	23	2	11	20	5	11	8
7	24		11	21	1	3	17	1	11	10	3	10	20
8	10		12	16	1	4	20	2	1	0	4	1	29
6	12		9	17	1	0	23	1	7	4	3	2	7
6	20		10	0	1	1	9	1	7	29	3	3	27



Finding Hope: Talking About Addiction, Suicide, Domestic Violence and Mental Illness

By Bronwen Mayer Henry

In April, 2016, and April, 2017, the Bryn Athyn Church coordinated a powerful annual event, Finding Hope, addressing important topics we don't usually talk about (addiction, suicide, domestic violence and mental illness). Here, Bronwen Mayer Henry, event coordinator, describes some of the inspiration behind this annual event, how it has been received and grown, plans for the future, and how other churches can get involved.

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)

*F*inding Hope is an event born out of crisis. In the beginning of 2015 in the Bryn Athyn community there were a series of deaths from overdose, suicide and domestic violence. These events and these losses broke the hearts of many people connected to Bryn Athyn Church, and in many ways the community was shaken.

In this vulnerable moment, a neighboring church and a behavioral health center reached out and offered to help our grieving church. ("Love is itself turned to mercy and becomes mercy when anyone who is in need of help is regarded from love or charity; hence mercy is the effect of love toward the needy and miserable." *Secrets of Heaven* 3063)

From this offer of support, individuals from both groups and from the Bryn Athyn Church came together and began meeting as a team to find ways to offer care and support to the community, and to start candid conversations about these important topics that are culturally often hidden in shadow. With time and prayer, a jointly coordinated event came about: *Finding Hope*.

What is Finding Hope all about?

This event is all about creating a space where people can learn from others around these topics, speak from their own experiences, and most importantly, be met with love. It makes a lot of sense to avoid talking about these topics; they are painful and complicated. And yet not talking about them adds to the suffering of the people impacted by them. The shame and isolation compound the suffering tremendously.

Finding Hope also offers a moment of respite to those suffering either directly with these topics, or in supporting a loved one who is suffering. It's a time to show that people do not have to face these devastating losses and challenges alone. That there is kindness and gentleness in holding each other through these difficult experiences, as Jesus commanded: "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." (*John 15:12*)

New Church teachings have a lot of tangible insight to offer in these conversations. One of the most common questions that comes up in these situations is: "How can God let this happen to me?" The Writings offer a beautiful explanation of a loving God, and how God does not bring hardship upon us and yet permits it, and then constantly moves whatever unfolds toward good that may come from it. "When we say, therefore, that God permits, we do not mean that He wills, but that for the sake of the goal, which is salvation, He cannot prevent." (*Divine Providence 234*)

This view that God does not punish us but rather permits evil to exist in a world can be liberating. Although God doesn't prevent pain from happening, love will walk with us through the pain. "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (*John 14:27*) It is exceptionally powerful that these conversations come from a centered place of a loving God who is holding it all.

This event is all about creating a space where people can learn from others around these topics, speak from their own experiences, and most importantly, be met with love.

How did the event go in Bryn Athyn?

The most recent *Finding Hope* event 2017 was a powerful gathering April 1 at the Mitchell Performing Arts Center. The planning team included 10 people from five different local churches, including Bryn Athyn Church and NewChurch LIVE. The event was formatted to create space for these conversations and yet not put any one individual on the spot to share his or her story or experience,

“This is so needed, and it makes me feel proud of my church for really being there for people who need it most. For not shunning those who are in addiction, or suffering from mental health issues, but instead saying, ‘We care about you. We all battle this. Let’s work together.’”

although participants were invited to afternoon small groups if they wanted to share more from their experiences.

The morning began with a keynote address by Dr. Dan Gottlieb, a psychologist and therapist well-known locally as former host of “Voices of the Family” radio show. Dr. Gottlieb personally knows of tragedy, loss and suffering, and has been impacted by these topics.

We then had a panel of local people speaking on their own life experiences of domestic violence, suicide and addiction. For each of these sessions, there was time for questions from the audience. It was absolutely amazing to witness people speaking authentically about the struggles in their lives. And although not all attendees were at the microphone sharing their stories,

those who did spoke for many in the room.

People were able to ask: “My son died from overdose, did I enable him because I didn’t kick him out?” And, “How do I talk about my experience of domestic violence without harming my children?” And, “How do I let go of the shame I feel from my failures?” And heartbreakingly more.

We very intentionally opened and closed the event with creative pieces of music and poetry to set and hold the space for care and kindness. For the last activity, attendees were invited to write on a large leaf a prayer or the names of people they were holding in their hearts around these topics.

The following Sunday morning a tree was planted with all of these leaves in the soil in a ceremony at one of the local churches that helped coordinate the event. This tree planting ceremony with prayerful leaves was also done at Bryn Athyn Cathedral directly after the previous year’s *Finding Hope*, marked with a beautiful stone displaying the quote: “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” (*Matthew 11:28*)

The event was attended by more than 200 people. More than 100 of them had no former connection with Bryn Athyn Church. We spread the word primarily through word of mouth, Facebook advertising, and posters. We also submitted a press release and got local coverage following the event in two papers.

We received stunning feedback by moved participants, including: “This is so needed, and it makes me feel proud of my church for really being there for people who need it most. For not shunning those who are in addiction, or suffering from mental health issues, but instead saying, ‘We care about you. We all battle this. Let’s work together.’” (Bryn Athyn Church Member)

How can other communities get involved?

These topics impact all of our communities. How are we as a church responding? How are we saying: “We see you and your suffering, and we care.”

I think it would be possible to start *Finding Hope* events near other congregations. People could begin by seeing who in their congregation wants to be part of the conversation. Then reach out to other local church and faith groups to see if they want to work with them. Finding the local non-profits in the area that are already working and responding to these crises can be a great first step for finding featured speakers or resource tables at the event. I’ve been so moved and inspired as I get to know the local non-profits serving in these areas, and we can help them serve more people.

Those interested can also get small groups started or established ones involved in the conversation. General Church Outreach developed a workbook to support the conversation



For the last activity, attendees were invited to write on a large leaf a prayer or the names of people they were holding in their hearts around these topics. The following Sunday morning a tree was planted with all of these leaves in the soil in a ceremony at one of the local churches that helped coordinate the event.

called *Finding Hope Workbook and Resources* and is available at www.newchristianresources.org. This five-week series focuses on finding compassion for oneself and others through these challenges, and offers national resources and helpful articles.

Another very important way to get involved is to spend time in prayer. Life can be so unbelievably hard. We want to shower love and compassion on all the people we interact with. Showing up the best we can be is a worthwhile effort.

Though in many ways we are all left speechless and feeling helpless in the face of addiction, suicide, domestic violence and/or mental illness, it is powerful and important to step up and respond even at the risk of our responses being inadequate. Because when anyone suffers from addiction, domestic violence, suicide and mental illness, we are all impacted.

Sometimes we get to offer the care and compassion; other times we receive it. And, at the core of it all, the Lord is calling each of us to love our neighbor, show compassion and do our very best to offer comfort and healing.

“True worship of the Lord consists in performing useful services; and such services during a person’s life in the world lie in a proper fulfillment of his function by each person, whatever his or her own position, that is, in serving his country, its communities, and his or her neighbor with all his or her heart.”
(*Secrets of Heaven* 7038)



Bronwen Henry is Small Group Coordinator for Bryn Athyn Church and Program Manager for Journey Programs in the General Church. She has led the 2016 and 2017 *Finding Hope* events in Bryn Athyn. She is passionate about the church stepping up to respond to these important topics, together with our surrounding communities. If you are looking to start a *Finding Hope* effort in your area and want to check in with her, please contact: bronwen.henry@newchurch.org or 215-

530-2036. Bronwen lives with her husband, Jeremy, and children in Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania.

Charity Works: Carrying the New Church Mission Into Service in El Salvador

Established in 2013 in an ongoing attempt to engage young adults with the Church, the Charity Works grant program provides necessary funding for those looking to kick start service-related projects related to the New Church concept of charity and use.

Charity Works has helped eight young adults to date move their ideas from concept to reality, and has helped projects occur locally, and as far away as Ghana and Australia.

Tara Dugan (Academy of the New Church Girls School '16) planned to join Habitat for Humanity for nine days in El Salvador last summer. She raised some of the program fee on her own, and a bump in support from the Charity Works program helped her finalize her plans and make the trip possible. Tara spent her time helping to lead a team building houses for the poor. She also gained new perspective on why she wanted to go to another country and offer her efforts to a community where she had no connection.

Following are excerpts of Tara's *before* and *after* thoughts on why she went, what she accomplished, and how Charity Works was able to lend a helping hand in making her dream of service materialize.

By Tara Dugan

Before coming to the Academy Girls School, I attended Center School, a small private institution in Abington, Pennsylvania. During my time there, I was president of the Rotary Club affiliate for two years. The club focused on service, which I love – and I loved leading it. I enjoyed my time at Center School because of the many fund-raising and volunteer events, such as preparing meals for my church and even babysitting.

At ANC, I was a part of Delta Mu, the community service club. I helped fix camps for underprivileged kids, buy and package presents for children with an incarcerated parent, clean highways, and much more. Delta Mu made my

transition into ANC easier than I thought – most likely due to all the extra activities I was involved in.

Although these service opportunities allowed me to help others, my time at ANC forced me to think deeply about what service truly means. I learned that giving to others is a wonderful way not only to take care of God's people, but also is an ideal way to show love to the Lord. I learned that charity in service activities is respectable, but being charitable in all aspects of my life is most desirable. Through the teachings of the New Church, I realized that serving others is what I am called to do.

I planted my roots in charity, but at ANC I branched out. I took a class called Senior Project where the premise was to produce a project that is challenging, purposeful and interesting. For my project, I made menstrual packages for young girls living in Ghana. It was a wonderful experience for me. It made me feel connected to people across the world. Still, I had a craving to expand my service from here. Helping others where I lived did not suffice; I palpably needed to be there and help others struggling in different countries.

Researching an organization for a Charity Works project, I found Habitat for Humanity. Its vision is “a world where everyone has a decent place to live.” The organization seeks to “put God's love into action” and “bring people together to build homes, communities and hope.”

Habitat was leading a building trip to El Salvador last July and I hoped to join them. In the process of searching for a service trip that would best suit me, Habitat's vision struck me. It is nothing elaborate, but it was an important undertaking.

A big theme with Habitat for Humanity is community. As you build, you work hand in hand with the family who will be living in the home you are creating. The goal of the El Salvador trip was to make a home for a family while creating lifelong connections with the people in the community. That is what I particularly love about Habitat; it allows you to create a relationship with the people you hope to help.

Habitat embodies a teaching from the New Church I especially like: “The essence of love is loving others more than oneself, wishing to be one with them and devoting oneself to their happiness.”

During my time at ANC, I had a teacher, the Rev. Barry Halterman, who regularly spoke about this passage from *True Christian Religion*. While reading the Writings, you are likely to be confused about most things until you truly understand them on an innate level.

This passage, however, made perfect sense to me. If you love others more than yourself and make connections with them, it is likely that happiness will occur between the two parties involved. To me, that is exactly what Habitat for Humanity is trying to accomplish. Another teaching I learned at ANC from

Emanuel Swedenborg is: “You are what you love, and you love whatever you give your attention to.” I wanted to give my attention to one of many struggling families in El Salvador because I trust in the good that charity can do.

By the end of my senior year, I felt like I had not done as much as I wanted to. I was a part of Delta Mu and other various service projects, but I felt that I had not yet fully understood the developing countries I wanted to help. I not only wanted to help, but to learn about other cultures and customs.

The trip lasted nine days.

On day one, I arrived at San Salvador airport where the Habitat staff welcomed me. I travelled to the housing accommodations and joined my team. On day two, the staff oriented me to their work in El Salvador, and introduced me to the community where I would work. Days three to seven were building days, with meal breaks and evening activities. Day eight was spent immersed in the wonderful Salvadoran culture, and then a final team dinner. On the final day, I departed for home.

Success is never easily measured; however, I planned to measure my success on how I thought I had impacted the family receiving the home. Many families give testimonies to Habitat for the work they did for them. After reading many of these, I hoped to impact the family there as profoundly as others have.

My experience is something I will never forget.

It sounds silly, but I worried about having no building experience prior to this. I did not think I would be of value. I quickly learned that this was not the case! I learned how to mix cement, use tools, and handle other laborer-type devices. It was tiring and required a lot of hard work, but I could not help but feel satisfied knowing I was helping.

Along with the building crew and masons, it was nice to spend time with the family we were building for. Each day we started work at nine, ate lunch, and then continued to work until dinner. Lunch was always my favorite part of the day. Not just because I rested, but because the mother of the family brought out homemade meals for all of us.

Although no one there spoke English and I did not speak Spanish, I became good friends with them. We communicated through physical gestures such as secret handshakes or goofy faces. A principle of Habitat is to “demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ.” I am only one girl, so I can only do so much. However, even without the power of verbalizing my words I can emulate the Lord’s love through genuine human connection.

I worked with a diverse group of people, which was a huge treat. Thanks to Charity Works, I helped build a house for a family I would not have known otherwise. The staff at Habitat worked collectively with the family to teach them how much money they can spend each month on their home, and how

to pay bills efficiently. Habitat is not a giveaway; hard work from the recipient is still needed for a successful experience. Another principle I learned from Habitat is “sustainability.” Without continued efforts, on both parts, nothing can persist.

It is a blessing spending time with the family who will be living in the home you helped build. Helping this family have a safe and livable home is something that I am extremely grateful for. Without the help of Habitat for Humanity and Charity Works I would not have been able to accomplish this.

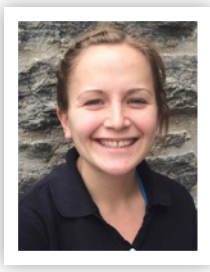
During the trip, I learned a great deal about another culture and even about myself.

I also admire how obtainable the Habitat for Humanity projects are. Having a clear and precise end goal has always helped me achieve the most success in my work.

Attending the Academy of the New Church for four years helped me shape an appreciation for giving. While at ANC, I learned the value of helping others – particularly by observing the faculty. They not only volunteered for causes that mattered to them but had an overall charitable nature. Their dedication to helping others truly inspired me.

To find out more about the Charity Works program, or to request an application or more information, you can visit the website: www.charityworksgrants.org. You can also reach out to Clayton C. Walsh, Charity Works Director, at claytoncwalsh@gmail.com with any questions.

“Genuine truth, the affection of which is charity, regards nothing else than life with the neighbor.” (Doctrine of Charity 150)



Tara Dugan is studying nutrition at LaSalle University in Philadelphia. Contact: tara.m.dugan@gmail.com

Church News

Compiled by Bruce Henderson

GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2020

The Bryn Athyn Society has agreed to host a General Assembly in 2020. This will be the 250th anniversary of the birth of the New Church in heaven. Watch for further announcements.

EUROPEAN ASSEMBLY 2017

The European Assembly is scheduled August 4-7 at the High Leigh Conference Centre in Hoddesdon, north of London. The theme is: *From Where We Are...* No matter where you are on your spiritual journey, the Lord leads you from that place. For further information see the website: <http://europeanassembly.eu>

The program is taking shape. Here are some of the speakers and their topics:

- **Rev. Howard Thompson:** “Your Place in the Kingdom” – the importance of our role, or use, in our daily lives
- **Rev. Göran Applegren:** “The Lord’s Glorification Series – A Case for Real Spiritual Growth” – how do we deal with doubt and resistance when moving from a lower to a higher state of mind?
- **Per Bingen** – Shining the light of the Heavenly Doctrines on Darwinism
- **Rev. Chuck Blair**, Pastor of NewChurch LIVE – connecting with people where they are
- **Fritz Bot, Marian van Genne** – An update on the Dutch Group
- **Rev. Michael and Gwenda Cowley** – “Reflections on recovery compared to regeneration” – when “our life is a train wreck” how do we apply the universal teaching that the Lord always takes care of us?
- **Rev. Ray and Star Silverman** – Teaching the Ten Commandments to college students
- **Rt. Rev. Peter Buss Sr** – The Lord’s leading and the paths through which He leads us

We look forward to welcoming friends old and new from many countries of the world, and discovering the different ways that the church impacts our different lives – *where we are*.

Booking has closed. Notes about how to travel to the High Leigh Conference Centre will soon be put on the website and sent to those who have signed up.

SUNSET ORGAN VESPERS

This summer Bryn Athyn Church is launching a new series of four Sunset Organ Vespers on Sunday evenings, featuring the Chara Aurora Cooper Haas Pipe Organ. These programs will be live-streamed at www.brynathyncathedral.org so that friends throughout the Church can share in the music and the sphere. (See photos on page 256.)

The Cathedral hill has long been a destination for members and friends to come and enjoy the setting sun. Once a month a special vespers will be timed to finish just before the sun goes down, so that those attending may end their inspirational experience by viewing the sunset.

The vespers will consist of mostly organ music, with a minister on the chancel offering an opening welcome and prayer, and brief readings from the Word and the Writings interspersed throughout the music. This will be a newcomer-friendly event -- an opportunity for affections to be uplifted by beautiful music and thoughts turned to the Lord at the close of the day.

The grounds will remain open until 9:30 p.m. so that those attending may enjoy the grounds and gardens with special lighting. (Freewill donations accepted.)

June 18 - 7:30 p.m.

Terry Schnarr

Principal Organist, Bryn Athyn Cathedral

July 16 - 7:30 p.m.

Leah Martin

Organ Student, Jacobs School of Music, Indiana

August 13 - 7 p.m.

Kenneth Coy

Assistant Organist, Bryn Athyn Cathedral

September 17 - 7 p.m.

Rudolph A. Lucente

Adjunct Faculty, St. Charles Borromeo Seminary

Assistant Organist, Wanamaker Grand Court and Longwood Gardens

Member, Philadelphia Organ Quartet

Inquiries may be addressed to Pastor Eric Carswell (eric.carswell@)

brynathynchurch.org) or principal organist Terry Schnarr (*terry.schnarr@brynathyncathedral.org*).

GENERAL CHURCH BOARD AND CORPORATION

The General Church Board of Directors met March 17-18. Highlights include:

New Bishop: General Church and Academy of the New Church Boards will meet with General Church clergy on June 23 to counsel on the needs of the Church in looking for a new executive bishop, following the announced retirement of the **Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith** in 2019. Affirmation was expressed by the General Church Board to increase the episcopal allocation from 1½ to 2 full-time positions if the next executive bishop deems this necessary.

Budget: The operating budget projects a surplus of about \$3,000, with revenue and expenses both down approximately \$36,000.

Advancement: **Mark Wyncoll** has been hired as the manager of giving operations. All Board members are contributing to the General Church Annual Fund. Board members and administration are reaching out to all donors with phone calls.

Cairncrest: An extensive report on the feasibility and desirability of converting Cairncrest into an elegant inn was received. This will require more study, including examination of where current General Church offices might move and the associated costs.

Assistant to the Bishop: General Church Education had an impactful leadership team retreat, reported in Church News of the March/April issue of *New Church Life*. The department expects to go live this summer with a web project designed to make material more easily available.

Strategic Plan: Strategies are generally moving forward. Progress includes a dedicated part-time ministerial resource to work with young adults, in cooperation with Bryn Athyn College and the Academy Secondary Schools, and the Women's Task Force meeting regularly and developing recommendations for consideration.

Corporation: The General Church Corporation is meeting June 24 at 11 a.m. in the Mitchell Performing Arts Center on the Academy campus. Incumbents on the General Church Board who are eligible and willing to be re-elected include: **Kay R. Alden**, **Jake C. Brown**, **Ian B. Carswell**, **Gustav Fornander**, **Mary Jane Jungé** and **Patrick Mayer**. New nominees for three-year terms are:

- **Stephen. D. Ball**, Mitchellville, Maryland
- **David D. Deibert**, Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania
- **Alex Coulibaly**, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa
- **Charles H. Ebert**, Lafayette, Colorado

ACADEMY BOARD

A priority for the Academy Board of Trustees is finding a successor to Charlie Cole as Board Vice Chair. He has served two full terms and cannot be re-elected. A process is underway to identify a new candidate. The Board hoped to have this done before the May meeting.

That May meeting of the Board, plus the annual meeting of the Academy Corporation, will be held at Glencairn Museum.

BRYN ATHYN COLLEGE AWARDS

Bryn Athyn College presented Academic Achievement Awards to 97 students on March 30th, including 78 students (27 percent of the student body) achieving the Dean's List in one or more of the last three terms. **Dan Uber** was singled out as making the Dean's List in all eight terms he has been in the College.

Here is a list of the awards presented:

Institutional Assistance Grants (IAG):

- **Anthony Astorino**
- **Jacob Dillon**
- **Chantal Farmer**

Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania (AICUP)-UPS Scholarship:

- **Teri Roberts**

Cole Foundation Human Society Scholarships and Grants:

Scholarships:

- **Marie Daum**
- **Daniel Uber**

Grants:

- **Rosemary Fuller**
- **Brittany Gunther**
- **Alex Hyatt**
- **Sarah Jackson**
- **Brennen McCurdy**

Colonial Williamsburg Teacher Institute Scholarships:

- **Eric Gardner**
- **Marin Roth**
- **Kathleen Vandergrift**
- **Brianna Zabielski**

Nobre Computer Science Scholarship:

- **Freya Kistner**

Theta Alpha International Scholarships:

- **Rachel Elphick**
- **Leanna Smith**

Bryn Athyn College Alumni Association Scholarship – Innovation and Leadership Award:

- **Laura Clymer**

Awards for participation in Academic Institutes, Conferences and Competitions:

Colonial Williamsburg, Teacher Institute, Summer 2016:

- **Lauren O'Connor**

Cumberland Valley Math Modeling Contest, Shippensburg University:

- **Shannah Conroy**
- **Phoenix Fritch**
- **Freya Kistner**

Bryn Athyn College Career Olympics:

Cash prizes awarded to three teams of students

SOWER'S CHAPEL 30TH ANNIVERSARY

Trish Lindsay

Both The Sower's Chapel in Sarver, Pennsylvania, and The Sunrise Chapel in Tucson, Arizona, celebrated the 30th anniversary of the building of their chapel this year. They have much in common.

Both societies had a long history in the communities in which they took root. They were called "isolated" societies, but were immersed in their surrounding communities. Early members of the New Church had established these outposts in the 1920s and 1930s, which were served by ministers in nearby societies. The Pittsburgh New Church served the Freeport Society and the Tucson Society was served by ministers from California before the first young minister was assigned as a resident pastor – the **Rev. Douglas M. Taylor**, in 1959.

During my lifetime, I belonged to both of these New Church societies, so I take great pleasure in reporting on the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the completion of building The Sower's Chapel in the Freeport/Sarver area of my adopted home in Pennsylvania.

The Sower's Chapel was built after a history of patchwork worship services that provided for the "country church" members north of Pittsburgh. The Heilman family had lived in Armstrong County, Pennsylvania, since the

Revolutionary War. When the **U.O. Heilman** family discovered the New Church, they travelled to the city to worship with the Pittsburgh New Church members. **Dr. Rene Heilman** married **Alexander P. Lindsay**, and the two families purchased land in the Buffalo Valley to hunt, fish, farm and establish their homes. The Brown family followed, and then the Horigan family, the Aldens and other adventurous friends and family.

The early members of the New Church in the Freeport area met for worship services in their homes. In the 1970s-1990s we sent our children by bus to the Pittsburgh New Church School and provided Vacation Bible School for the growing number of children in our New Church families and among our community friends. In the 1980s we rented the Episcopal Church in Freeport for afternoon worship services, and later we were welcomed to the Fair Winds Manor meeting room for Sunday worship to accommodate our growing numbers.

The Rev. Donald L. Rose came up from Pittsburgh to baptize our children, hold family services wherever we were meeting, have classes for the adults, and teach at the summer Bible School. Our church members have many fond memories and stories of Don Rose and the earlier ministers – the **Revs. Kurt H. Asplundh, Louis B. King** and **Willard D. Pendleton**.

Finally, in 1986-87, the Freeport/Sarver area embraced a sufficient number of members to take on building a permanent place of worship, The Sower's Chapel, located at the "other end" of Iron Bridge Road, in Sarver. The **Rev. Ragnar Boyesen** was called to serve as our first resident pastor and fortunately he was gifted in skills to facilitate the building of the church and to attract people in the community to join us in worship.

We named the church "The Sower's Chapel" to reflect the farming community in which we lived, as "The Sunrise Chapel" reflects the Sunshine State. We also wanted the name to reference the Parable of the Sower, one of the few parables in which Jesus revealed the spiritual meaning of the parable He was teaching to His disciples.

At the 30th Anniversary Dinner on April 22 at The J-Barn, a local restaurant, we reminisced with slides and stories about all the people who contributed to the building of our chapel. After a short history of the establishment of the New Church in the Freeport area, our emcee, **Dr. Dan Heilman**, invited people to offer memories of the building of our church and other incidents and events of the last 30 years. We noted that our dedication dinner 30 years before had been celebrated at the same restaurant, Jardines, whose ownership had changed, but which was still in business just over the hill from the chapel.

As we reminisced, we were reminded of the resident pastors and their families who joined us in our country chapel: **Clark and Margie Echols**, the first residents of "the manse," **Les and Bev Sheppard, Ethan and Jessica**

McCardell, Fred and Aven Chapin and now **Derrick and Eden Lumsden**.

We also shared fond memories of the ministers who served us in our “wilderness years” and when we just needed a minister to fill the pulpit: the **Revs. Kenneth Stroh, Brian Keith, Willard Heinrichs, George McCurdy, Bob Cole, Martie Johnson, Ray Silverman, Prescott Rogers, Chuck Blair, Calvin Odhner, Alan Cowley, Jean Atta, Amos Glenn, Chris Bown** and **Pearse Frazier**, to name a few.

It was noted that our church society’s greatest strength is in its commitment to provide a spiritual home for adults and children alike, with the Word at its center. We are also intricately involved in the community around us. Our members have businesses in the community, serve professionally and share memberships in many clubs and organizations, such as the Masons, Eastern Star, Kiwanis, Shriners, the College Club, the Tarentum Book Club, 4-H, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and the Volunteer Fire Department. They even run for public office.

Our pastor has to be careful when scheduling meetings and events not to conflict with some of these community commitments that our members hold dear. Actually, our pastor is also active in a local Boy Scout troop, and serves on the Ecumenical Ministerium, a group of ministers from the various local churches, in two neighboring communities, Freeport and Saxonburg. All our pastors have enjoyed the fellowship of the ministers in our local churches, dating back to Ragnar Boyesen.

One of the stated goals of The Sower’s Chapel is to serve our community in such a way that, if we were gone, we would be missed. Our Community Memorial Day Service on Sunday morning of Memorial Day Weekend is celebrating its 10th year. Each year we select a veteran from the community to honor for his or her service in the U.S. military forces. This year we will honor an Army nurse, 1st Lt. Louise Elliott, who served courageously at the Battle of the Bulge in Bastone, France, during World War II. An Honor Guard from a local ROTC Unit will perform the flag ceremony, with twin bugles playing the slow salute, as the flag is presented to Louise Elliott’s surviving husband, Jim Elliott.

Over Labor Day weekend, we sponsor a Golf Scramble at Birdsfoot Golf Club to raise money for local charities, the Freeport Meals on Wheels and the Cabot Food Bank, and we also share one-third of the proceeds with the New Church in Côte d’Ivoire, West Africa. We have a Vacation Bible School in the summer and in the fall we sponsor a Johnny Appleseed Fun Run for school-age children at the church.

The Rt. Rev. Brian Keith and his wife, **Gretchen**, attended our 30th anniversary celebration, adding official significance to the occasion. They joined our friends from the Pittsburgh New Church, visitors from away and

our current members, many of whom are now parents with families, but were children when the church was built.

Everyone enjoyed seeing the slides of these young men and women when they were children, as well as the members who were vital in the building of the church, but who have passed into the spiritual world, such as **Charles and Helena Brown, Alex and Betty Lindsay, Lee and Flora Horigan, Ragnar and Dorrit Boyesen, Larkin Smith, Terry Bier and Claudia Lindsay.**

We welcome the good wishes of our fellow New Church men and women, and all God's children, as we set forth on future ventures in living and spreading the good news of our Lord's First and Second Advent.

(See photos on page 253)



GCED SUNDAY SCHOOL CONFERENCE

Sarah Odhner

General Church Education held a conference for Sunday school teachers in North America and Europe on a beautiful spring weekend in Bryn Athyn. The conference took place at Cairncrest, the General Church's headquarters, from April 28-30. Twenty-two Sunday school teachers and pastors, representing 13 societies, joined us either in person or online.

Conference plenaries and workshops focused on the challenges and opportunities for Sunday schools in the 21st century. The opening plenary, 936 Sundays, by the **Rt. Rev. Peter Buss Jr.** and **Sarah Odhner**, highlighted the importance of the 936 Sunday opportunities in a child's life from birth to age 18 for instruction in the Word, community and service. You may see the talk at bit.ly/936Sundays.

Additional plenaries provided space for identifying common Sunday school challenges, and framing the challenges as opportunities for growth. The final plenary resulted in attendees identifying practical steps that could be taken to bring positive change in their local Sunday schools.

A variety of hands-on workshops were offered to bolster teaching confidence, introduce new teaching resources and help leaders manage their programs. Workshops included: *The Big Picture of the Word* with the **Rev. Grant Odhner**; *Core New Church Concepts* with the **Rev. Kurt Hy. Asplundh**; *Teacher Recruitment and Care* with **Nina Dewees** and **Sarah Odhner**; *Teens and Tweens* with **Don Blair**, the **Rev. Michael Cowley** and **Sarah Odhner**; and *Take Your Pick: GCED Resources* with **Rachel Glenn**. One of the resources introduced was *FaithBuilder*, a four-year series of video-based lessons for teens. Attendees also got a sneak preview of GCED's new resource website,

which will be available later in September 2017.

GCED honored attendees for their years of volunteer service to General Church Sunday schools, with special recognition going to **Lyn Perry** from San Diego for her 41 years of teaching Sunday school.

In wrapping up one participant said, “I now have much more confidence in initiating and giving energy to a teen Sunday school program.” Another shared, “This helped give me ideas, focus and a sense of mission for our Sunday school program.” Finally, “I am returning home with renewed vision and encouragement.”

GCED welcomes questions and comments at gced@newchurch.org.

FAMILY SUMMER CAMPS

Jacob’s Creek

The Jacob’s Creek Family Camp is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, July 23-26 at the Laurelville Mennonite Church Center in Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania, about 50 miles east of Pittsburgh. The theme of the camp is “Behold, I make all things new.”

The program will include:

- Adult lectures and discussions
- A fully planned children’s program
- Morning and evening family worship
- Lots of recreation, including swimming, sports, hiking, campfire singing and a talent show

Last year the camp hosted 180 people, with ages ranging from two weeks to 89 years -- plus 50 between the ages of 14 and 24. One camper said, “This camp is a little slice of heaven.” A college student said, “I’m definitely coming back next year – and I’m bringing my mother!”

The Rev. Matthew Genzlinger, pastor of the Concord New Church in Massachusetts, will be the Family Camp Pastor. Joining him on the pastoral staff will be the **Rev. Brett Buick**, Kempton, Pennsylvania; the **Rev. Brad Heinrichs**, pastor of the Caryndale New Church in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada; and the **Rev. Derrick Lumsden**, pastor of the Sower’s Chapel in Sarver, Pennsylvania.

Returning as camp directors are **Blake and Paul Messman**, and **Jamie and Julie Uber**.

To learn more and for registration please visit the Jacob’s Creek Family Website: www.jacobscreekcamp.alotspace.com or “friend” the camp at www.facebook.com/JacobsCreekFamilyCamp. Inquiries may also be directed to Julie Uber: julie.uber@gmail.com or 412-782-2710.

Living Waters

The fifth annual Living Waters Family Camp will be held July 6-9 near Paisley, Ontario. This year's theme is: "As for me and my house we will serve the Lord." (*Joshua 24:15*)

The Rev. Brad Heinrichs says: "This year's theme is focusing on how we can pass on a love for the truth of the Lord's Word and for His Church to the next generation. There are a number of questions many parents ponder about how they can increase the chances that their children will freely choose to embrace the things of religion that they hold precious. The Heavenly Doctrines have lots to say about this process and we will explore these teachings and hopefully come away with a powerful sense that the Lord can guide us in this important work."

The camp, on the Saugeen River, is called the Hidden Valley Christian Camp, which can be explored at www.hvccamp.ca.

Scholarship aid is available from the General Church in Canada. For more information please contact Brad Heinrichs at pastor@carmelnewchurch.org or 519-748-5802.

GATHERING LEAVES

Gathering Leaves 2017, an annual retreat "promoting harmony among women associated with various Swedenborgian organizations around the world," will meet September 21-24 at the Crieff Hills Retreat and Conference Centre, Puslinch, Ontario, Canada. (www.crieffhills.com)

Interested women are invited to join the Facebook group – Gathering Leaves Swedenborgian – to keep abreast of announcements. Registration and further information is available on the website: <http://gatheringleaves.weebly.com/>

The theme for the retreat is "Crystal Clear Expressions of Faith Through the Creative and Healing Arts," with presentations and workshops organized around the theme.

Organizers state: "We acknowledge our common beliefs, explore our differences, develop respect for one another's contributions, create a healing atmosphere and celebrate our spiritual sisterhood. We promote charity and goodwill, so we might say, 'No matter what form her doctrine and external form of worship take, this is my sister; I observe that she worships the Lord and is a good woman.'

"Please join us at the Crieff Hills Retreat and Conference Centre. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet up with friends old and new and to learn new things."

SWEDENBORG FOUNDATION

At the annual meeting of the Swedenborg Foundation April 28 at Bryn Athyn College the following were elected to four-year terms:

- **Karen Laakko Feil** manages programs, marketing and community outreach for the Swedenborg Library in Chicago. She has previously served on the Foundation Board and the Board of the Swedenborg School of Religion. She is retired after 30 years of direct marketing and strategic planning positions in the education, publishing and art fields.
- **W. Bergen Jungé** has been teaching business at Bryn Athyn College since 2015, after 30 years as an information technology professional. He was most recently vice president of information technology at Parker Hannifin Corp. He has been active in several New Church societies, serving as President of the Board at the California New Church and Chairman of the Swedenborg Chapel in Ohio.
- **Rev. Jeremy Simons** (re-elected) who retired as Pastor of the Bryn Athyn Society and now serves as Chaplain at the Bryn Athyn Cathedral. He has also served as a Pastor of Glenview, Illinois, and Kempton, Pennsylvania.
- **Kathy Tafel** leads mobile engineering at Meetup.com and makes software for everyday use at Corpus Collusion. Before founding her own company she served in various marketing roles at Apple Inc. She lives in Brooklyn, New York.

The program featured **Dr. Jane Williams-Hogan**, Co-Chair of the *Swedenborg and the Arts International Conference* taking place June 6-9 at Bryn Athyn College, where she is Professor Emerita of Sociology. She spoke about the conference, Swedenborg's influence on the arts, and why art is such an important medium for expressing his theology.

CONVENTION'S CONVENTION

The Swedenborgian (Convention) Church is celebrating the 200th anniversary of its first convention in West Chester, Pennsylvania, July 8-12, in the area where that first convention was held. It will begin, on Saturday, July 8, with a tour of Bryn Athyn.

After a guided tour of the Bryn Athyn Cathedral, attendees will have lunch at the home of **Bishop Tom and Nina Kline**, whose daughter, **Dr. Rebecca Esterson**, is a professor at the Center for Swedenborgian Studies in Berkeley, California. After lunch the group will tour the Glencairn Museum and the Lord's New Church.

ACADEMY JOURNAL

The 2015 – 2016 *Academy Journal* has been posted on both the Bryn Athyn College and the Academy of the New Church Secondary Schools websites. To view the *Journal*, please go to either of these links:

<https://brynathyn.edu/academyjournal>

<http://www.ancss.org/one-school/>

STAY CONNECTED

Alumni, General Church Members and Friends: If you would like to receive updates on what is happening at the Academy Secondary Schools, Bryn Athyn College or the General Church, please provide us with your address, if it has changed recently, and/or your e-mail address and/or phone number. As we try to go paperless, many of our communications are electronic.

In addition, if you would like to make a special request you can reach us at: advancement@anc-gc.org or 267.502.4895

Looking forward to hearing from you!

EASTER MILESTONE

Steve David reports that the New Christian Bible Study Project passed 100,000 visits per month on Easter Sunday.

“It’s a good milestone for the project,” he said. “There’s a whole lot more to do, but we seem to be on a good path. This worldwide effort seems to be working. We’re going to keep doing our best to help the General Church spread the Word.”

The website is on a pace for more than 1.2 million visits this year – from all over the world. It interfaces in English, Chinese, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Korean and Swedish. It also offers the Word in 42 languages and at least portions of the Writings in 15 languages so far. There are 579 story explanations by New Church people. The site puts the Word and the explanations from the Writings at the fingertips of seekers throughout the world.

Anyone interested in helping the effort in any way is encouraged to contact Steve David at sdavid@skymark.com.

Check the ever-growing website: www.newchristianbiblestudy.org



The chapel from the parking lot



Sower's Chapel Chancel



30th anniversary celebration dinner,
with Dan Heilman as emcee



Inside Sower's Chapel



The view from the road



Mary Poppins and Bert (Declan Durand) lead the Chimney Sweeps in a rousing "Step in Time"



George, Mary Poppins and Jane: "Let's go fly a kite"



Mary Poppins and Bert with a statue suddenly come to life



George, Mary Poppins and Jane: Practically Perfect



Chimney Sweeps up above London



Bert solos a soulful "Chim Chim Cheree"



Michael, Jane and "The Perfect Nanny"



Mrs. Banks (Rayna Synnestevedt, Michael Banks (Hayden Hoffman), Mary Poppins (Brianna Salvatori), and Jane Banks (Serena Boyesen)



Brianna Salvatori makes her dramatic entrance as Mary Poppins



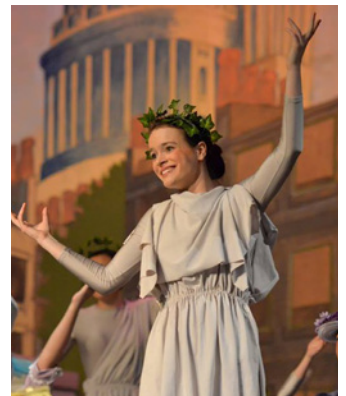
Chimney Sweeps up above London



Mary Poppins and Bert: "Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious!"



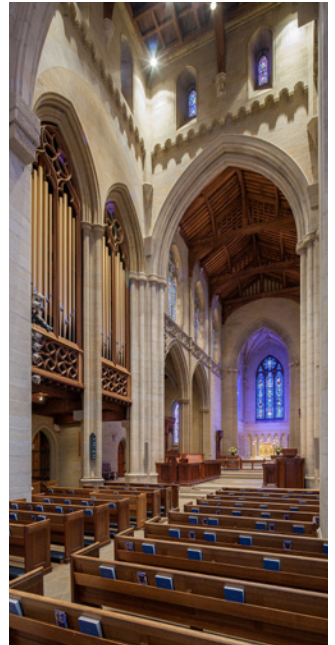
Mary Poppins and Bert in the park



A statue in the park who comes to life (Brielle Williams)



A series of four organ vespers will be offered once a month and live-streamed from the Bryn Athyn Cathedral at sunset. (See information on page 242.) These photos include the organ and interiors of the Cathedral, plus a drone photo of the Cathedral taken at sunset by Brent Schnarr. This photo has been used on postcards advertising the event.



Life Lines

A COUP FOR THE COLLEGE

In 1968 the Academy College, as it was then known, took a giant step from the second floor of Benade Hall to new and modern Pendleton Hall across the road. This was the beginning of a dream for the College.

Eight years later the Academy celebrated its centennial with a memorable album, *Toward a New Church University*, put together by Sanfrid Odhner. It focused on the 100-year foundation of the dream.

Its concluding “Challenge” states: “Since Benade a century ago proclaimed its birth – ‘The Academy lives!’ – the rhythms of growth have brought to the Academy each 20 years a new and crucial challenge. Upon what threshold does the Academy now stand for which in 1976 we light a hundred candles? There is a new mood in the school. From two decades of self-improvement and expansion has come a sense of stature, competence and mission – a restless stirring to reach out and touch and influence society. . . .

“Chancellor [Willard D.] Pendleton, responding to that mood of mission, sees the Academy as the ‘hope of the future in a nihilistic world,’ and calls upon her for ‘a band of warriors.’ And President [Louis B.] King says of the Academy’s role, ‘As the effects of the Last Judgment continue to manifest themselves in our materialistic environment there is a desperate need for the descent of the New Church.’ Both stress the critical necessity for vigilant fidelity to doctrine, a distinctiveness shaped from within.”

In this 21st century Bryn Athyn College has blossomed into an impressive campus, on track to becoming that New Church University. And that does not speak just to a growing enrollment and multiplying programs but to the College’s expanding reputation and place in the academic world.

One significant sign is the *Swedenborg and the Arts International Conference* taking place on the campus this June. With its impressive guest list of 25 eminent scholars from 10 nations – and the serious scholarship they represent – the conference is helping to put Bryn Athyn College on the academic map.

President Brian Blair says proudly, “As the only New Church College in the world, hosting this exciting event is a natural outgrowth of our mission.” And he sees “this intellectual gathering of international artists and scholars”

representing “a significant step toward a future in which Bryn Athyn College can serve a global community in studies where New Church thought can be conducted in conferences like this on this campus.”

But beyond that flush of pride there is work to be done. As Co-Chair Dr. Jane Williams-Hogan notes on page 216, the College is challenged to see such events as vital to the College’s mission and to build on it – with all the necessary networking, funding and commitment.

“For such an event to be meaningful,” she says, “we must capitalize on it. We, the College, are the ones who can do it. While invitations may come to us as a result of this conference, going forward is basically up to us.”

Let us hope the College rises to the challenge of making this another significant building block “Toward a New Church University.”

(BMH)

A GOAL WE SHOULD STRIVE FOR

We must do everything we can to free Bryn Athyn College and all our schools from any dependency upon government funds and the regulations that accompany such financial aid.

Many universities, intimidated by political correctness and threats of government financial penalties, now provide, not just coed dorms, but coed bedrooms. Not a suite, a *bedroom*. And they make it difficult to opt out of such an arrangement. (See the article by a mother – a graduate of Yale College and Harvard Law School – whose daughter at Stanford University was assigned to a coed bedroom without being informed of this: (<http://www.nationalreview.com/article/227424/caveat-parens-karin-venable-morin>).

Our College is not the only institution facing the loss of freedom to operate according to its own moral principles. Financial independence is vital in this war of independence.

A prominent example of what we should aim for is Hillsdale College in Michigan, a top-ranked private liberal arts college founded in 1844 that has approximately 1,400 students.

According to its website:

Hillsdale College, which does not accept or permit its students to bring federal financial aid to campus, is fully committed to providing its students with competitive financial aid packages, all of which are privately funded.

From its founding, Hillsdale has been nationally recognized for independence from federal and state subsidy. Our commitment safeguards our ability to serve the mission of the College and preserves the integrity of our liberal arts curriculum.

Across the nation, generous people who believe in Hillsdale’s mission support our independence through their gifts, and allow us to provide generous scholarships and privately funded, need-based aid to our students.

Hillsdale is not a religious college, but in its Articles of Association it states: “We are grateful to God for the inestimable blessings resulting from the prevalence of civil and religious liberty and intelligent piety in our nation. We are dedicated to the diffusion of sound learning that is essential to the perpetuity of these blessings.”

I believe Hillsdale to be a fine college, and am glad such institutions exist, but it is no substitute for our New Church College. Please contribute to the effort to build up the endowment for Bryn Athyn College and all our schools. Large donations are obviously needed, but every dollar helps, and the more widespread the support our schools receive, the more inspired others will be to contribute.

(WEO)

CURSE OF CURSING

During the Boynton Beach Retreat in February the Rev. Dan Heinrichs reminded me of a favorite editorial of his – *Neither by Heaven* – written by my father, the Rev. Cairns Henderson, for the April 1954 *New Church Life*. (It is also included in the collection put together by Bishop Willard Pendleton in 1978, *Selected Editorials*.)

It lamented the way that profanity – especially taking the Lord’s name in vain – had become so pervasive in the prevailing culture. And as with so many of the editorials in this book it is as timeless and relevant as when it was written 63 years ago – even more so because the curse has only become more acute. Here is the editorial:

• • •

Because they are laws for angels and men the Ten Commandments reach from the highest heaven to the ultimates of life on earth. Thus the precept, “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain,” does forbid profanity, swearing in general, and all use of obscene language. And there is, perhaps, no other ultimate prohibition in the Decalogue that is so generally disregarded. From fo’c’sle to fraternity house, from factory to farmyard, the Lord’s sacred names are taken in vain daily; and men who would not know how to utter them in worship use them freely to scoff and jeer, and to vent their impatience and angry passions.

Swearing is an insidious habit which, the Writing tell us, may have an embarrassing carry-over into the spiritual world after death. Young people seem to acquire the habit imitatively, from a mistaken notion that it is a sign of full-blooded masculinity. Actually, it is a sign of intellectual and emotional immaturity; and foul language, regrettable in the mouth of a man, is lamentable on the lips of a woman.

In cold fact, if such feelings must be expressed, swearing does nothing for a man that a good vocabulary effectively used would not do better. At best it is a crutch for the inarticulate. Frequently it is nothing more than a sulfurous smokescreen behind which to retreat in disorder when worsted in rational argument.

But the habit becomes especially serious when it involves misuse of the Lord's Divine names. Daily we pray: "Hallowed be Thy name." Yet the fact remains that, as far as we are concerned, the Lord's name will be hallowed only as we keep it holy. Ignorance may be an extenuation in some instances, but it cannot excuse us; and while we are free to swear if we wish, we can do so only with our eyes open to our inconsistency. For the fact is that we cannot love the Lord and at the same time use His sacred names to express anger, irritation, incredulity or contempt.

We cannot love the neighbor and at the same time consign him to the infernal regions, or ask God to condemn him the moment he crosses us. We can plead, of course, that it is just a habit, that we do not really mean what we are saying. But it may then be asked whether it is the mark of a rational man to say habitually what he does not mean.

The proprium even rebels against the restraints religion would have it accept. But religion and practice cannot be kept in separate and unrelated compartments; and there is safety only in a practical hallowing of the Lord's name, bearing in mind that it includes all that is from Him.

• • •

Coincidentally, it was while we were in Florida for the Retreat that my older brother, Hugo, passed on to the spiritual world. Recalling memories about his life I thought back to a short story he had written for Richard Gladish in the Academy College – which relates to that potentially "embarrassing carry-over into the spiritual world after death." The story was about a young man who had died – and had been trying to rid himself of the habit of swearing. As he was being shown the many marvels of heaven, he suddenly exclaimed, "Well, I'll be ..." "Damned?" interrupted his guiding angel. "I hope not."

(BMH)

SCIENCE AND RELIGION

The doctrine of correspondences shows us how the spiritual world and the natural world are related – the spiritual being the realm of causes, and the natural consisting of effects produced by influx from the spiritual. In light of this revelation, we see how the facts discovered by science, and the natural truths based on them, can serve to confirm and illustrate the spiritual truths revealed by the Lord in His Word.

There is nothing strained or artificial about this. Natural facts do not have to be invented or manipulated to accord with religious truth; they accord naturally because the worlds they pertain to correspond.

Religious truth, abstract and universal, seeks concrete and particular confirmations and applications on the natural plane. Conversely, scientific knowledge needs the light of spiritual truth in order for its human meaning and proper use to be perceived.

Science must be able to pursue its own truth in its own way, free from religious dogma. I say “dogma” rather than “truth” because it would be foolish to speak of science being free from *any* truth, religious or otherwise. There is no freedom apart from truth and reason which is based on truth.

Genuine religion has no quarrel with science, and genuine science has no quarrel with religion. But nothing is completely pure with man, and all human thought, including religious and scientific, is subject to bias and errors. These may arise from a literalistic interpretation of Scripture and false dogmas, or from a biased selection of facts and misinterpreted appearances of natural reality – not to mention the distortions resulting from the loves of self and the world.

(WEO)

SWEDENBORG THE NATURAL PHILOSOPHER

The modern use of the words “science” and “scientist” to mean the scientific method (based on empirical evidence) and those who practice it arose in the 19th century. We say Swedenborg was a “scientist” before he was called to be a revelator, but in his day the study of nature was called “natural philosophy.”

I think this is a distinction worth noting because there is such a large philosophical component in much of the science of our own time, especially in the theoretical branch of physics, which involves astronomy, cosmology, relativity and quantum theory. The philosophical implications and questions raised by the “Big Bang,” for instance, are very significant.

Science seeks knowledge, but knowledge carries with it the question of *meaning*. Subjects such as genetic engineering, artificial intelligence, or the possibility (or rather, probability) of life on other planets, raise ethical, philosophical, and ultimately, theological questions. And to deal with these questions intelligently requires spiritual knowledge and enlightenment.

The tools that modern science has placed in our hands can be used for tremendous good or tremendous evil – which it will be depends upon whether we are spiritually mature and wise, or spiritually infantile and stupid.

How fortunate it is, therefore, that at the very dawn of the modern age of science a new revelation of spiritual truth should have been given to guide us

in its wise use. Surely this was providential.

The coming together of science, philosophy and theology in our time was foreseen by the Lord, and prepared for by bringing them together in the mind of Swedenborg two-and-a-half centuries ago.

(WEO)

“A HIGHWAY OUT OF EGYPT”

The confluence of science, philosophy and theology was actually anticipated long before Swedenborg – in these verses from Isaiah:

In that day there will be a highway out of Egypt into Assyria, and the Assyrian will come into Egypt and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians will serve with the Assyrians. In that day Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria – a blessing in the midst of the land, whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, “Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance.” (*Isaiah 19:23-25*)

Egypt stands for facts, or the scientific principle; Assyria for reasoning based on facts, or the rational principle; and Israel for spiritual truth. “In the spiritual sense this means that at the time of the Lord’s coming the scientific, the rational and the spiritual will make one, and that the scientific will then serve the rational, and both the spiritual.” (*Arcana Coelestia 1186; True Christian Religion 200.2*)

Swedenborg in his own thought made the journey from “Egypt” through “Assyria” and into “Israel” – from scientific fact, to philosophical reasoning, to spiritual truth. Western culture is embarking on a similar journey. Science and natural reasoning are the dominant influence, but the discoveries of science itself are straining the bonds of naturalism and pointing toward the spiritual reality that underlies the natural universe.

(WEO)

“THE ALL IN ALL THINGS”

If I had to pick one word to describe the essence of all reality – including God, the created universe, and life on earth – that word would be “Human.”

We know from the Word (and especially the doctrine of the Divine Human in the Writings) that **God is Human**, because He is Love Itself and Wisdom Itself, the two essential qualities of humanity.

We know **the universe is essentially human** in nature because God, who is Human, is “the All in all things of the universe.” (*Divine Love and Wisdom 198*) Moreover, we know that the universe was created for the sake of mankind, that there might be a heaven from the human race.

The fact that **we are human** is obvious, and we should know that this is

because we are made in the image and likeness of God, and thus are able to be affected by the goodness and truth that go forth from the Divine love and wisdom of God.

The truth that all life, and in fact everything in all three of nature's kingdoms – animal, vegetable and mineral – are essentially aspects of humanity embodied in material forms, is not so obvious; it takes revelation to open our eyes to it. It is because they are all derived from the Love and Wisdom of the Creator, and are thus **forms of use** – use being what love seeks to bring into existence by means of wisdom. The supreme example of this is the human form, which is the aggregate of all forms of use. The doctrine of the “Grand Man” (*Maximus Homo*) explains this.

In a previous issue of *New Church Life* I quoted a statement by the 19th-century English botanist and New Churchman Leopold H. Grindon, which I think beautifully sums up the whole scheme of creation: “Nature is man diffused, and man is nature concentrated.” In this view, the evolution of man is seen as the gradual concentrating of the humanity that pervades the natural universe.

Everything in creation relates to and reflects the human, each in its own particular way. This is because God is Human and is “the All in all things.”

(WEO)

THE ANTHROPIC PRINCIPLE

And now in science, in the cosmological theories of physics and astronomy, we have the “anthropic principle.” There are several variations of it, but the basic idea is that the universe is so “finely tuned” to make life possible that it strains credibility to attribute this to pure chance. In its “strong” form, the anthropic principle suggests that there was a Creator who designed the universe specifically for the sake of life (and thus human life).

More about this another time, but for the moment I just want to observe that this scientific theory dovetails nicely with the New Church belief that the world was created for the sake of a heaven from the human race – and is thus a good example of the “highway out of Egypt” prophesied in *Isaiah* 19.

(WEO)

PITFALLS IN READING THE WORD

In mid-March Dr. Allen Bedford, Academic Dean at Bryn Athyn College, spoke at the College Colloquium on: *Forming a Partnership – Reading True Christianity as a Guide Toward Faith*.

Allen noted that his PhD is in chemistry, not theology, but his study of *True Christianity* is impressive, and he laid out the systematic study that

underlies his faith. There is a “divine design” (see *True Christianity* 105) for forming a partnership with the Lord. This is shown as a series of steps, laid out in the sequence of the chapters, that provide a guidebook for why we should and how we can cooperate with our Creator.

Allen admitted to being challenged at times by scientific statements in *True Christianity* – and elsewhere in the Writings – that just are not true, and by generalities about nationalities and religions that may seem overstated for Swedenborg’s time and certainly don’t hold up today.

Some in the audience expressed similar concerns about the context of the Word and the Writings, which sometimes seems at odds not only with science but with what we expect to find about a loving, omnipotent God. How do we reconcile those doubts with the sincere conviction that we are conjoined with the Lord through reading the Word?

Allen cautioned against getting bogged down in the literal sense. We are taught that the Word is always directed at us personally. And no matter the context, it is always teaching us to love the Lord and love the neighbor. So when we come to stumbling blocks where what we read just doesn’t sound true this is what we should be looking for: What is the Lord trying to say to me here? How does this apply to my life?

(BMH)

WHEN WE FORGET THE LORD

At least when we are reading the Word we are looking to the Lord for guidance in our lives. What happens when we are just too busy or distracted to read the Word and those “green books on the shelf”? What happens when we forget the Lord?

In the *Books of Kings* there is a series of chapters about kings who either “did what was right in the sight of the Lord” or what was wicked. Then comes Josiah, who “did what was right . . . and walked in the ways of his father David.” He began purging Judah of its graven images and ordered that the temple in Jerusalem be restored. The high priest, Hilkiah, found in the neglected temple the Book of the Law of the Lord, given by Moses, which had been abandoned and forgotten there.

When he learned this Josiah was distraught about the spiritual lapse of his people, saying: “For great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that is written concerning us.” (*II Kings* 22:13)

But Josiah and his people were spared “the wrath of God” because he made a covenant “to walk after the Lord, and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all their heart and with all their soul, to

perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people stood to the covenant.” (Ibid. 23:3)

So the Lord is forgiving to those who “forget the law,” as long as they repent and obey. But how much are we challenged today – not only in our own lives but throughout our increasingly secular culture – when we forget the Lord?

The Word is filled with warnings – and hope. How many times did the Children of Israel forget and stray – after being warned to “remember the law”? They even begged Aaron to make them a golden calf while Moses was gone for 40 days and nights receiving the Ten Commandments. Still they were allowed to enter the Promised Land. But the danger of forgetting God always hangs over us.

Consider the perspective of Russian literary giant Alexander Solzhenitsyn when he was awarded the Templeton Prize in Philadelphia in 1983:

“Over half a century ago, while I was still a child, I recall hearing a number of older people offer the following explanation for the great disasters that had befallen Russia: ‘Men have forgotten God; that’s why all this has happened.’

“Since then I have spent well-nigh 50 years working on the history of our revolution; in the process I have read hundreds of books, collected hundreds of personal testimonies, and have already contributed eight volumes of my own toward the effort of clearing away the rubble left by the upheaval.

“But if I were asked today to formulate as concisely as possible the main cause of the ruinous revolution that swallowed up some 60 million of our people, I could not put it more accurately than to repeat: ‘Men have forgotten God; that is why all this has happened.’”

(BMH)

BEWARE DRAGONS ON GENTLE SLOPES

Among the many haunting images in 19th of June pageants from the *Book of Revelation* is the evil dragon threatening to devour the child of the Woman Clothed with the Sun. She is given the wings of an eagle to escape into the wilderness, where she is nourished and protected “for a time, and times, and half a time.”

We are told in the Writings that this is all about the beginning of the New Church, in heaven and on earth. But like this sacred woman, we are never completely safe from the dragons in this world.

When the woman was carried off to safety, the dragon “went to make war with the remnant of her seed” – meaning all those who keep the commandments of the Lord.

There are beasts and dragons all around us – false gods trying to destroy innocent people. Their relentless efforts to make people doubt and go against

their beliefs is brilliantly captured by C. S. Lewis in his classic satire, *The Screwtape Letters*.

This is a collection of scurrilous letters written by Screwtape – a highly placed assistant to “Our Father Below” – to his nephew and novice demon, Wormwood. Screwtape is mentoring Wormwood on how to corrupt the soul of an unsuspecting and well-inclined young man and to assure his damnation. The implication is that this process can be that subtle and insidious for any of us – unaware of the dragons (or Wormwoods) praying on us.

It is no coincidence that the apprentice devil is named Wormwood. The name comes from *Revelation* 8:11, as the angels are sounding their trumpets: “And the name of the star is called Wormwood; and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.”

Apocalypse Revealed 410 says that a star here represents our own pride of self-intelligence and that “wormwood” signifies the way that our intelligence can be corrupted by falsifying the truths of the Word.

In one of his letters the devious Screwtape advises Wormwood: “Do remember, the only thing that matters is the extent to which you separate the man from the Enemy [meaning God and heaven]. It does not matter how small the sins are provided that their cumulative effect is to edge the man away from the Light and into the Nothing. Murder is no better than cards if cards can do the trick. Indeed, the safest road to Hell is the gradual one – the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts.”

Screwtape, Wormwood, dragons – and not just fiery, scary dragons but crafty species with insidious lures – are always after us, desperate to turn us from light to darkness. The hope given to us in *Revelation* is that God is always with us – and that Michael is always ready to help us slay the dragons.

(BMH)

DON'T BLAME THE ORGANIST

Tom Cooper loves organ music so much that he and his wife, Charlene, gifted the Bryn Athyn Cathedral – and the congregation – with a wonderful organ several years ago. He enjoys nothing more than listening to Terry Schnarr or Kenneth Coy fill the cathedral with reverent music as they practice. But he is concerned with a growing dissonance in the organ world.

He shared an article from the *Boston Globe*, “Is Organ Music Killing Our Churches?” along with a number of thoughtful comments from the Episcopal Café website where it was reprinted.

The author relates organ music to the soundtrack of horror movies and

says dismissively of the pipe organ: “It endures not because anyone particularly likes organ music (there’s none on iTunes top singles this week, and, I’m betting, none on your iPod), but simply because it’s there. Usually ensconced in the balcony of a church, an organ is too heavy to move and too expensive to burn, so we might as well play the thing, no matter how many young people we are scaring away.”

Among the responses to this critique:

- There are many reasons why attendance is down across the country. You can no more say it’s the music than the taste of the communion wine.
- We just did a liturgy survey of our parishioners and the biggest response we got was that the people wanted more contemporary music (less organ).
- There are a lot of reasons for the decline in church membership. It’s silly to say the organ is the reason. I think it’s more due to churches being hypocritical, too judgmental, and irrelevant to the lives of people.
- In our culture, which is saturated with music, iPods and playlists, we need worship services that are a mix of the old (our roots) and the new (where we are as a people today).
- Whatever music style is chosen it needs to be done well and with reverence.
- Imagery and vocabulary from the baroque era do not easily touch the soul of most millennials who never knew a world without the internet.
- There is no magic bullet to fix things, but I rarely hear someone talk about liturgical choices as reasons why people leave church. It is almost always because of the failings of the institution, not its worship.
- The whole generational divide thing is really the Church of the Perpetual Adolescence making another appearance.

The Bryn Athyn society is large enough that people have several choices each Sunday, from traditional organ to contemporary guitars, mellow horns and harmonic voices, and most of our churches and societies are experimenting with variety. There’s nothing wrong with accommodating to different forms of music and worship as long as it is all reverent and brings people to the Lord.

But whatever accompaniment we choose, let’s all be appreciative of the musicians and music directors who are generally underpaid and often are volunteers. And let us not use organs, guitars, “praise bands” or “soft rock” as an excuse for not going to church. Good music that helps put us in the right sphere surely helps, but we should be there first to worship the Lord. Then thank the organist.

(BMH)

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INTERNAL SENSE

The internal sense of the Word lies concealed within the letter and should not be confused with the genuine sense of the letter. It is characterized by the entire absence of the elements of person, place and time, and it contains two elements, namely, affection and thought. This sense is threefold. The inmost, supreme or celestial sense, which treats of the Lord, is for the third heaven; the spiritual sense, or internal sense proper, in which the subject is the Lord's kingdom, is for the second heaven; and the internal-historical, spiritual-moral, or proximate internal sense, which describes the state as to morals and doctrine of the nation mentioned in the letter, is for the first heaven. (See *Arcana Coelestia* 1405, 7233, 4279)



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