

NEW CHURCH *Life*

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

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2011



Should we expect to be happy in this world?

In a study on Happiness, Rt. Rev. Brian Keith says joy and pain are inevitable in this life. What the Lord wants is for us to be optimistic, cheerful and trusting in Him, leading to the ultimate happiness in heaven. Page 397.

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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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NOTES ON THIS ISSUE

The Church and Academy were stunned and saddened by the sudden passing of the Rev. Mauro S. de Padua into the spiritual world on October 16. The Rev. Andrew J. Heilman, a good friend who first met Mauro as a young boy in Brazil, then worked with him there when both were ministers, conducted a beautiful resurrection service. (Page 389) Mauro was a friend to young and old throughout the Church, and this service was viewed by an astounding 3,000 people. See also a touching farewell poem by Kay Alden (page 396) and photographs in Church News (page 455).

- The Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith offers a slightly modified study of Happiness that was delivered to the Council of the Clergy after the General Assembly in Bryn Athyn last June. What the Word and the Writings say about happiness is largely that it should not be a goal in life but a byproduct of being useful. We should not be thinking that much about our happiness, but instead should just maintain a cheerful, optimistic outlook on life. (Page 397)
- A Christmas sermon by the Rev. Eric H. Carswell focuses on “The Annunciation: The Importance of Mary’s Role in the Lord’s Coming.” He says, “The Lord comes to each of us bringing the conception of life just as the angel Gabriel came to the virgin Mary. He comes promising a rebirth or regeneration of life that is radically different from the one we come by naturally.” (Page 415)
- In an essay reprinted from New Church Perspective, *The Ball is in Your Court*, the Rev. Peter M. Buss Jr. discusses three phrases that tie into the significant role the Lord gives us in charting our own destiny: “I choose to love you.” “Figure things out and find direction.” And, “Be a blessing.” (Page 421)
- The Rev. Mac Frazier (*Introducing Our Ministers*) was a founding partner in a cutting-edge web development company but knew all along that he really wanted to be a minister, focusing especially on spreading the Church. Now he’s leading the New Way Church, a church plant in Austin, Texas. (Page 425) We also include the sermon he preached there last June 19, “A New Christianity,” which traces the history of the Christian Church and the establishment of the New Church. He says that what we need to do to help the New Church grow is to live our faith with integrity, while being both bold and humble. (Page 428)

- George Gantz, a member of the Concord New Church outside of Boston hosted three sessions at the church last spring on “Integrating Science and Spirituality,” which he integrated into a General Assembly workshop in June. In his summary he says that “science and religion are both human modes of understanding – and we should be seeking to build bridges, not tear them down.” Why is this significant for the New Church? (See page 437)
- What happened at the Council of the Clergy meetings in Bryn Athyn last June? The Rev. Kenneth J. Alden, with help from other ministers, reports on the highlights, including a full discussion of the bishop selection process, progress in Outreach – particularly on the Internet – and a new resolution affirming positive changes concerning issues raised in a resolution a year ago. (Page 441)
- See the Annual Report of the Secretary of the General Church (page 473) and the Directory of General Church ministers (page 477). The index for 2011 for *New Church Life* will be posted at www.newchurchlife.org.
- An expanded Church News section includes items on Kenya, Charter Day in Bryn Athyn, Washington, Colchester, California, new books and the dedication of an amazing new organ in the Bryn Athyn Cathedral, plus four pages of color photographs. (Page 451)

Editorials

Faith and Opportunity

Thanksgiving as a formal observance is unique to Canada and the United States in this time of year, but harvest festivals of thanks are as old as biblical times. Indeed, the first Great Commandment is to love the Lord, from Whom all blessings flow. (*Matthew 22:37*) And, as Moses told the Children of Israel, we are commanded to give the “first fruits” of our labor to the Lord in thanks for His blessings. (*Exodus 22: 29-30, Numbers 15: 17-21*)

When the Pilgrims observed the first American Thanksgiving in 1621, they were not celebrating their bounty. Indeed, they suffered “the starving time” for two bitter winters before their settlement took root. What they were thankful for in this new land were faith and opportunity.

They and all who followed them to the new world came for religious tolerance and the freedom to pursue their dreams. They knew it was up to them what became of their labors, and that – along with God’s blessings – was challenge enough. Their faith was echoed by Abraham Lincoln – said to be a reader of Swedenborg – in his farewell address at Springfield, Illinois, before assuming the presidency amid the swirling threat of civil war: “Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended (George Washington), I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail. Trusting in Him who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well.”

It is significant that the formal celebration of Thanksgiving in the United States had its roots in Washington and Lincoln, its two greatest presidents, whose words and character have inspired people all over the world. It is sadly significant that both were much more open about their faith and about God than today’s leaders dare to be. And it is significant that both felt moved to call the nation to thanksgiving in times of great distress.

One of the enduring images of American history is George Washington on his knees in the snow at Valley Forge, praying to God in the darkest hours of the Revolution. After all that was endured in winning his nation’s freedom and independence, he proclaimed the first Thanksgiving Day November 26, 1789, exhorting his fellow citizens to acknowledge “the many favors of Almighty God.” He resolutely stated that “it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the

providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor.”

And it was Lincoln, amid the heartache of the Civil War, just a week after his momentous *Gettysburg Address*, who established Thanksgiving as the national observance it is today. In his timeless Thanksgiving Proclamation on October 3, 1863, he said:

“It is the duty of nations, as well as of men, to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God; to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations are blessed whose God is the Lord.”

Lincoln continued, in words that still speak to the consciences of all of us today: “We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace – too proud to pray to the God who made us.

“It has seemed to me fit and proper that God should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged, as with open heart and one voice, by the whole American people.”

Formal celebrations of Thanksgiving – and quiet, personal thanks to the Lord each day for His blessings – echo the Pilgrims’ heartfelt gratitude for faith, freedom and opportunity. Thanksgiving also reflects the humble acknowledgment – through all the years since that brave beginning – that the blessings born of our freedom come not from our efforts alone but from the Lord. With freedom comes opportunity and responsibility – response-ability, or the ability to respond and be useful to each other.

Our faith, and the opportunities to serve our neighbors, are epitomized in the basic teaching that “All religion has relation to life, and the life of religion is to do good.” (*Doctrine of Life 1*) Thanksgiving – whether a day of celebration or a moment of prayer – is a plateau for reflection and inspiration. It is an affirmation that as long as we keep and live our faith, we will not lack for opportunity. And we will be forever blessed.

*O, give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,
For His mercy is forever. (Psalm 107)*

(BMH)

Ponder These Things in Your Heart

Consider how the Lord's birth affected those made aware of it. Wise men from the east set out on their long journey to come and worship Him. Herod erupted in a homicidal rage. Some nearby shepherds hurried to the manger to see the wonderful thing the angels had told them about:

“And when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it marveled.... But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.” (Luke 2:18-19)

Her response was the wisest and most loving of all. To ponder means to weigh something in your mind; to consider the gravity of it, the substance of it, the value of it. Is it inconsequential, or a matter of great importance? Is it chaff to be blown away by the first breath of doubt, or is it as weighty as gold?

Truths must be carefully weighed if they are to be moved from the memory into the will and become part of our very being. (*Divine Providence* 233.7) “A person can know, think and understand a great deal, but when he is left alone to ponder, he casts away the things which are not in harmony with his love. For only what has entered his love remains.” (*New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine* 113)

“Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.” These were not matters of idle curiosity, but resonated with the deepest longings of her heart. Mary represents a spiritual love of truth, and one who possesses that love is not merely interested, but strongly affected by spiritual truth when it appears.

Is it not ironic that in this restless and noisy world, Christmas, supposedly a celebration of the Lord's advent, has become an occasion of even greater external pressures and distractions than usual?

The festive trappings and traditions of Christmas are delightful and, when kept in a proper perspective, serve a good use. But if we lose sight of the essence of what we are celebrating, then they become like beautiful wrapping on an empty box.

It is important, therefore, to find quiet moments during this busy holiday season to reflect upon the story of the Lord's advent, and consider the deep meaning of it for our lives today. Ponder these things in your heart, and rejoice!

(WEO)

The Man Who Saved the World

Along with all the benefits produced by the scientific revolution, the modern age has had to live with the dreadful possibility of a nuclear world war and the almost unimaginable destruction it would bring.

And yet, so far, this hasn't happened.

One factor in preventing it is the knowledge that both sides would suffer terrible losses – “mutual assured destruction” – the acronym MAD neatly expressing the insanity of the situation.

But does that fully account for the fact that so far the world has escaped this disaster? All it would take to override the restraint imposed by “mutual assured destruction” would be a reckless act on the part of someone in a key position.

Or even a simple mistake, like the one that took place 28 years ago, which was the subject of a recent newspaper column: “The Man Who Saved the World.”

Tensions were high: a few weeks earlier the Soviets had shot down a South Korean passenger plane that had mistakenly strayed into Russian airspace, killing all 269 people aboard.

And then, on the night of September 25, 1983, a signal was received from a Soviet early-warning satellite that the United States had launched five nuclear missiles at the Soviet Union.

A 44-year-old Soviet lieutenant colonel, Stanislav Petrov, who was in charge of the military unit monitoring such signals, was faced with a terrible decision. The protocol, which he himself had written, required him to press a red “START” button which was blinking on his console. If he had, it is likely that Premier Andropov would have ordered a counter-attack, resulting in a full U.S. retaliation, and all-out nuclear war.

Petrov was under tremendous pressure from fellow officers to “do his job,” but he hesitated because, as he said later, “I had a funny feeling in my gut.” Soviet ground radar had not picked up a missile attack, and he reasoned that “when people start a war, they don't do it with five missiles.”

Later investigations revealed that the satellite had misinterpreted sunlight reflecting off clouds as missile launches. Nevertheless, Petrov was severely reprimanded. He now lives on a paltry \$200 a month pension in a village near Moscow.

The journalist who wrote this article praises the courageous decision that “enabled all of us to live to see this day,” and “silently thanks Stanislav Petrov – the man who saved the world.”

A feeling of gratitude for that man's judgment is entirely appropriate, of

course. But it is also important to acknowledge the Divine providence that influenced his “gut feeling” and reasoning at the crucial moment. Human prudence, when directed toward a good end, is really Divine providence operating in people’s minds. “Human prudence is from God and not from man.” (*Divine Providence* 191)

Generally speaking, the battles between good and evil waged in human hearts are permitted to manifest themselves in the external conflicts that lead to wars, a recurring feature of life in this world. But, it would seem, terrible as wars are, there are limits. The God who permits them to take place has also withheld the human race from starting a war that would destroy human life on earth altogether.

In this case, a bad thing that has not happened might be considered just as miraculous as a good thing that did.

The Man who saved the world on that day 28 years ago was the same One who saved it 2,000 years ago – the same One who saves it every day.

(WEO)

Care for the Morrow

*A New Year’s editorial by the Rev. W. Cairns Henderson,
New Church Life, January, 1966*

When a new year begins, it is appropriate to examine the attitudes with which we face the future. Many will do so with grave apprehension, and will point to (troubling conditions in the world) as valid grounds for deep anxiety. Yet these things do not themselves cause anxiety; they simply release it.

Even if some ages seem to have been marked more than others by unwanted anxiety, anxiety is a quality of the natural man in every age; and if our age suffers unduly from anxiety it is because its culture is becoming increasingly man-centered. Anxiety is egocentric, and there can be no promise of relief from it as long as men trust in their own powers, prudence and good intentions to avert catastrophe.

To this condition the Lord speaks words that are familiar but are not always rightly understood. His counsel, given as “take no thought for the morrow,” has been poorly translated. A rendering closer to the original would be: “Be not distraught by many cares.”

In our rational moments, we see clearly that worry is not only useless, it is worse than useless. Untroubled forethought and intelligent day-by-day labor are commended, even urged, in the Word; but no amount of nagging anxiety about a situation ever helped the situation. On the contrary, it may stultify

judgment and paralyze action, so that the chronic worrier becomes a menace to himself and a danger to others.

How, then, can we learn to overcome anxiety, or at least control it? Recognition that worry is worse than useless, while the first step, is in itself only palliative. Nor do we get rid of anxiety merely by admonishing ourselves and others not to be anxious. That may invite the very thing we would banish by focusing our attention on it.

The only radical cure for anxiety is a spiritual trust in the Divine Providence. Those who do not believe in God, or are uncertain of His existence, have some excuse for anxiety; but to the extent that men truly believe in Him and trust in His providence the Lord removes their anxieties.

Yet the nature of that trust must be understood. The Word nowhere promises that those who trust in the Divine Providence will be spared suffering, or even death. Indeed, in asking for their trust, the Lord warned His disciples: "In the world ye shall have tribulation." Yet He added: "But be of good cheer: I have overcome the world."

The answer of the Writings to anxiety is not a fatuous: "Don't worry. God won't let it happen." It is that whatever befalls those who trust in the Divine Providence – whether good or ill, happy or unhappy – is yet conducive to their eternal welfare.

The spiritual man, while hoping for no less, will ask no more; and in this promise is the only true solvent of anxiety – the solvent given to those who seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, not ignoring but subordinating other things to it.

Letters to the Editors

“Love Wins” Doesn’t Reject Hell

To The Editors:

I was at first bewildered, then saddened at the impression (in the May-June 2011 editorial, *The New Church Gift*) of Rob Bell’s *Love Wins* as teaching that “everyone goes to heaven – no matter what – and that hell doesn’t even exist.” The writer cannot have read as far as page 71: “Do I believe in a literal hell? Of course.” Or the next page, “God gives us what we want, and if that’s hell, we can have it.” This is one of the book’s major themes.

Bell’s heaven is all about how we live, both here and hereafter. Earlier on, on page 46, we find Bell saying, “Jesus teaches us to pursue the life of heaven here and now and also then, anticipating the day when heaven and earth are one. Honest business, redemptive art, sustainable living, medicine, education, making a home, tending a garden — they’re all sacred tasks to be done in partnership with God now because they will all go on in the age to come.”

Bell’s fourth chapter is of particular interest in regard to the question of the eternity of the hells. He notes that this has been a debated issue in Christianity from the earliest times, with such eminent figures as Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Eusebius, Jerome, Basil and Augustine either espousing a belief that ultimately everyone would repent or leaving room for this belief. Bell actually leaves the question open. “Love,” he says, “demands freedom. We are free to resist, reject, and rebel against God’s ways for us. We can have all the hell we want. . . . I see this every day, and so do you. People choose to live in their hells all the time.” (pp. 113-114)

Many Christians are, indeed, “upset with this ‘New Christianity,’” but they miss the point if they accuse him of permissiveness. Saying that God does not punish us for our sins does not mean that our sins are of no account. Hard-line evangelicals object to it because it claims that non-Christians, people like Ghandi, may actually be saved. He quotes one church website as saying, “The unsaved will be separated forever from God in hell,” another as saying “Those who don’t believe in Jesus will be sent to eternal punishment in hell,” and another as saying, “The unsaved dead will be committed to an eternal conscious punishment;” and then says with obvious irony, “Welcome to our church.” (pp. 95-96)

Lastly, Bell comes as close as he can to rejecting the standard interpretation of the cross as an atonement for our sins. “Many have heard the gospel framed

in terms of rescue. God has to punish sinners because God is holy, but Jesus has paid the price for our sin, so we can have eternal life. However true or untrue that is technically or theologically, what it can do is subtly teach people that Jesus rescues us from God. Let's be very clear, then: we do not need to be rescued from God. God is the one who rescues us from death, sin and destruction. God is the rescuer." (p. 182)

But please, don't take my word for it. Read it for yourself. Find out what is happening in evangelical conversations. Try to figure out whether or not Bell has read Swedenborg. See what you think of his style, too – you might pick up some handy one-liners.

Rev. Dr. George F. Dole
Bath, Maine

The Writings and Suicide

To The Editors:

I was disturbed to read this statement in the letter from Barrie Ridgway: "The Writings clearly state that suicide is wrong." (*New Church Life*, September-October 2011, page 278) I don't believe there is any such statement to be found in the Writings. Mr. Ridgway seems to draw this conclusion from the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill." There is a lot more to this commandment than these three words.

Of course suicide is wrong, just as accidents and illnesses are. It was once pointed out to me that it is more correct to say a person died of suicide than that he or she committed suicide. This made sense to me. One person dies of cancer, another of heart failure and another of suicide.

Some people who choose this way to escape earthly pain may not be in a rational state of mind. Though in the next life they may need to deal with issues surrounding their act, they are not condemned and are welcomed into that world with love and mercy.

Donnette Alfelt
Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania



Mauro Santos de Padua

Bryn Athyn Cathedral, October 20, 2011

Rev. Andrew J. Heilman

I am a friend to all who fear Thee, and to them who keep Thy precepts.

Amigo sou eu de todos os que Te temem e dos que guardam os Teus preceitos.

PSALM 119:63

These words of *Psalm 119* are written to the Lord in a prayer, and contain a beautiful description of genuine friendship – a friendship which reaches out well beyond the normal boundaries of what most of us would feel capable of doing. And yet Mauro somehow seemed to manage. He was a friend to so many of us, a real friend, one we could laugh with, one who could weep with us. He was a friend we could confide in, and if we chose, one with whom we could dance and sing.

He could have fun, and he was fun to be with. But if you thought Mauro was all fun and games, you soon found out differently. He could bring you up short, and let you know what was really important. His friendship was not the merely social friendship we are warned about in the Heavenly Doctrine, for Mauro cared deeply for what was right and just, and he cared for those with whom he worked and had fun.

There is a teaching in the *Arcana Coelestia*, which echoes the words we began with from *Psalm 119*. After describing the wrong kind of friendship, which seeks merely external pleasure and fun, and one's own delight and

This service was seen and attended by more people than any other in New Church history – an estimated 3,000. There were more than a 1,000 in the Cathedral, including a full choir hall with a large-screen TV, and another 85 watching in the Bryn Athyn Society Building. About 70 watched in the Glenview Church – part of an estimated 2,000 people who were tuned in to the live streaming, in homes and in groups.

attention to self, it finishes with these words: “Everyone may indeed be friendly to another, but still he should be most friendly to what is good.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 4804)

When we keep this in mind, then we can reach out, as Mauro did to so many of us, whether old or young, or wise or still a bit foolish. For when the good and the joy of another is what is sought after, and not one’s own good and one’s own joy, then this is truly loving the neighbor, and the friendship is its face and garment.

With Mauro, you did not have to be perfect, nor did you need to agree with him, and because of this you could be his friend fairly easily. This is witnessed by the fact that on Facebook – that computer community that many of his other friends are too scared even to sign up for – he has more than 1,000 “friends.” For when we are friends first to what is good, we need not fear making friends with those who still need to learn what is good. And in this Mauro was fearless.

Mauro began as a young boy himself, loving life to the full with a real sense of *alegria* (a word only someone from Brazil can actually fathom, sort of a blend of joy, gladness and mirth). And during this time his mother and his grandmother were most responsible for his learning to be so friendly, for his home was a welcome spot for so many who came to visit.

Yet although the home was open, it also had rules and expectations, whether you be one of the family or not. And while his mother taught him the rules of order, his grandmother taught him short little sayings that cut to the quick – making the point almost painlessly on the outside, and yet with a prick on the conscience on the inside. Something that Mauro definitely picked up on, as most of us felt our own conscience being pricked by a short little comment he might make, when we no doubt needed it.

During this time in his childhood and early youth, he also took an interest in the truth. Although in the beginning he would tell his friends that those meetings he and his older brother Mario had with that American pastor each week were actually English classes, his interest in what the New Church taught continued and grew.

He and his friend Rogerio began to participate quite willingly to help in the church in Rio, and actually asked the pastor for a class in the Heavenly

Doctrines. This led to his coming to Bryn Athyn and the Academy New Church College, from which he graduated and continued on into the Theological School. Yet during all this, his love for fun remained unabated, and his friendships with more and more people continued as well.

And so, as a surprise to a few, and to the delight of many, out of Theological School he came, or was it danced – a young man with a fascinating blend of joy and friendliness to all, and a keen desire to know and teach faithfully what the Lord actually said. He was a strange dichotomy for some, but mostly Mauro to rest of us.

Mauro was friends with people from every corner of the world. He especially loved the British Academy Summer School and made fast friends with the young people who would come there. But there was one whom he loved the best, a young woman from Sweden, whose friendship and love would make his life whole.

It was no doubt this deep and abiding friendship with Jenny that gave rise to so many other friendships, and it was this friendship with his wife which formed his being. For from his early life in Brazil, Mauro had learned the value of family. His mother dedicated her life to her sons, making sure they knew how important family and marriage were, and how they must be protected.

And with the birth of their daughter, Lysandra, this love would grow stronger, as they both gave her the joy and fun and freedom on the one side, and good solid rules and care and protection on the other. And somehow, even in Mauro's busy life, he managed to remember to call his mother in Brazil whenever he could, and more and more often as the phone calls became easier. For he would never forget how much his mother had given him, and how much it meant for his own family here, and he would talk of it often to others.

Now we could say that he got married and settled down, and in some ways he did, with the wonderful daughter, Lysandra, in a home where love and truth found a good balance. Yet their house was a home to be shared, not just for the many friends of Lysandra, but with all the friends of Mauro and Jenny as well. For Jenny there was room in the house for the serious side which would speak truth directly and openly, and for the fun-loving side which would welcome all those many people into their new home. Most of us simply wonder how she does it.

Their friendship together is well described by what the Lord will ask of each of us when we see Him in His glory; for Mauro and Jenny truly reached out and helped even the least of the Lord's brethren. And they did this in a marvelous way, both in the literal sense and in the spiritual sense, feeding the hungry and giving drink to the thirsty.

While we would be enjoying some good food at their home, with a Brazilian coffee or a *caipirinha*, Jenny was able to help them feel what was

Mauro was known for having more than 1,200 Friends on Facebook. For Mauro these were real connections – active friendships nurtured with regular communication. Scores of touching tributes and photographs made people smile at www.facebook.com/InMemoryOfMaurodePadua.

genuinely good, and at the same time Mauro could get in a jolt of truth now and then, even stronger than the coffee he was serving up. Once, actually several times, while I sat with him, trying to figure out some solution for something going on in Brazil, Mauro would simply say: “Andy, there is only one God, and you are not Him.” Perhaps I am the only one he had to admonish like this, but somehow I don’t think so.

These short, friendly and yet pungent comments are reminiscent of similar comments made throughout the *True Christian Religion*. “My friend, go to the God of the Word, and so to the Word, and in this way enter by the door into the sheepfold, that is, the Church, and you will be enlightened.” (*True Christian Religion* 177:4) “Listen, friend, ... there is moral life which is spiritual, ... [and] that spiritual moral life is found in those who do good coming from God.” (*True Christian Religion* 460:4) “But my friend, shun evil and do good and believe in the Lord from all your heart and in all your soul, and the Lord will love you, and will give you a love of doing and faith to believe.” (*True Christian Religion* 484)

And we have the Lord’s words in the gospel of Luke, words of friendship, and yet words to take heed of. “And I say to you, My friends, Fear not them who kill the body, and afterwards have no more that they can do. But I forewarn you whom you should fear, Fear Him who has the authority.” (*Luke* 12:4)

Mauro clearly heard these words, for although he was worried for his natural health, he was far more concerned with the spiritual health for himself and his friends.

Now besides natural and spiritual food and drink, Jenny and Mauro also received the sojourner, and at times sojourned with them. Mauro and Jenny’s home is a safe port in a storm, and Marly his mother refers to her son as a *porto seguro* in her life. Many were the sick and imprisoned who also found safety and refuge, as Mauro reached out to them, and visited them, in their time of need.

We could say that they are mostly younger people, but this went on for 20 years. Those who knew him when they were young, whether in Brazil, British Academy, Pittsburgh, Glenview or at the Academy of the New Church, still want to call him to talk and confide, and get advice, sometimes asked for, sometimes not, but usually in a way they could take in.

And now as Mauro ends his sojourn in this world, he also will find the

kind of welcome that he and Jenny have offered so freely. For we are taught that after someone is resuscitated in the spiritual world, good spirits come to him and provide him with everything he needs.

It would not be surprising if his grandmother, who worked for years in hotels in Rio, and helped so much with his family as he grew up, was among those providing this reception into the joy of eternal life. And of course his younger brother, Marcus, who preceded him only three years ago into the spiritual world, will be there to welcome him as well.

We cannot but wonder why Mauro and his brother left this world so suddenly and so young. Of the four reasons given in the *Spiritual Diary* for why we die when we die, only one of those reasons relates to the use of someone for those in this world. The other three relate to our use to angels and spirits, and for our own spiritual salvation, while we are in this world, and after we depart. (*Spiritual Diary 5003*)

There is no question, from our perspective in this world, which is their use for those of us here, Mauro and his brother should still be here. But just as in the parable of the workmen being called to the vineyard, we each have our time when it is best for our eternal life, to be called from our sojourn here.

In fact it is because Mauro was so useful to so many around him, and so loved and needed, especially by his family, that we feel thunderstruck by his departure. But we know the Lord governs even the least of things through His providence, from His love and mercy, by means of His wisdom and order, and how much more so the lives of His children on earth. While the pain of losing Mauro hurts so much, we can think also of the joy Mauro has given us, and the help and truth he has shared, and how he will continue giving joy and help to eternity.

The following short Memorable Relation about an angel greeting a newcomer lets us consider where Mauro is right now, and even more where he may well be when he as an angel greets us, when we follow him when we also are called to the spiritual vineyard of our Lord.

The angel asked the newcomer "Friend, who are you? ... What is your doctrine, and your religion derived from it?" He answered, "Faith and charity." The angel said, "These are two things." He replied, "They cannot be separated." The angel asked, "What is faith?" He answered, "To believe what the Word

Mauro loved breakfast, so the day after his sudden passing mothers throughout the Bryn Athyn community prepared breakfast goodies for the students in the Secondary Schools, where Mauro was a much-loved teacher, senior class advisor, regular chapel minister and friend to all. Tears and hugs were shared with smiles in memory of their beloved Mauro.

teaches.” “And what is charity?” He replied, “To do what the Word teaches.” He asked, “Have you merely believed what the Word teaches, or have you also done it?” He answered, “I have also done it.” The angel of heaven then looked at him and said, “My friend, come with me and dwell with us.” (*True Christian Religion* 391:3)

Like this angel and the newcomer to the spiritual world, Mauro had a succinct way of putting things, and no doubt still does. For although his approach is so friendly, the love of what is good and true would come to the forefront when needed. And his critiques would go right to the mark. He was fond of saying that “the church should be a church, not a club.” Or that the church should not get so caught up in global organization that it stops being a church, “and ends up being more like Starbucks.”

Now he had nothing against a club where good healthy fun could be enjoyed. And he liked Starbucks. It was one of the few places he was willing to drink coffee that wasn’t actually Brazilian. But he felt the church should be a church, a place for people to come and be with the Lord in charity and faith, to get real help for their hearts and straightforward truth for their brains.

He had a strong sense for preserving the sacredness and solemnity of the Word, worship and especially marriage, and he also had an uncanny way of knowing when it was time to truly enjoy the life and happiness in a free and easy way. This is best illustrated at the many weddings that Mauro and Jenny attended, and that he very often officiated.

This July in Rio, his home town, he was the minister for a wonderful wedding full of joy, and yet with his direction the solemnity and holiness of the ceremony was maintained and all could hear him speaking the Lord’s words of promise and hope for the young couple’s marriage to eternity.

And yet, less than an hour later, at the Clube Aeronáutico, where the reception was held, this same joy of marriage burst forth into song and dance, and there was Mauro, a true friend, out on the dance floor dancing with the same energy he had at his own wedding 15 years earlier.

When we see such joy and friendship at these weddings, which was how many saw Mauro for last time, just a few days ago, we can reflect on the words of John the Baptist in the Gospel of John: “He who has the bride is the bridegroom, and the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices with joy because of the bridegroom’s voice; this my joy therefore is fulfilled.” *“Aquele que tem a noiva é o noivo; mas o amigo do noivo, que lhe assiste e o ouve, alegra-se muito com a voz do noivo. Assim, pois, já este meu gozo está cumprido.”* (John 3:29)

This joy and friendship that Mauro and Jenny had together in their marriage was something they shared with others, especially their daughter, something that led so many young people to seek him out to be at their weddings. And yet

we know from the Heavenly Doctrine that this friendship between the two of them as husband and wife is actually an inmost friendship and full trust, that is more interior than any other friendship that we can have.

As we read in the work *Conjugal Love*: “Since love truly conjugal conjoins the souls and hearts of two, therefore it is united with friendship and thereby with confidence, and makes both conjugal. Such friendship and confidence are so eminent above every other friendship and confidence that, just as that love is the love of loves, so that friendship is the friendship of friendships, and likewise that confidence.” (*Conjugal Love* 334)

And we are also taught elsewhere in that book “that those who have lived together in love truly conjugal ... are united as to souls, and thence as to minds, and this union being spiritual is an actual joining of the soul and mind of the one to the soul and mind of the other, which can by no means be dissolved.” (*Conjugal Love* 321)

These wonderful teachings are contained in the admonition of the Lord given to us in Malachi, words which Mauro loved and taught, words which explain the origin of all true friendship in the world: “*Ela é a tua amiga, e a esposa da tua aliança. E não vos fez um só?*” “She is thy friend, and the wife of thy covenant. And did He not make you one?” (*Malachi* 2:14-15)

Amen.

Readings: John 15:9-17; Arcana Coelestia 548; Matthew 25:31-40; Conjugal Love 214, 334

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Throughout his Resurrection Address, the Rev. Andy Heilman sprinkled some quotes from the Word in Portuguese – Mauro de Padua’s native language, and the language of family members at the service.

Mauro

While we were sleeping you slipped into the night
No chance to say thank-you
Or good-by

You could fill a room with your presence
We expected you to stay much longer
To leave by the front door
With your loud familiar flourish
Instead you left
Quietly out the back
The screen door slamming behind you
Echoing into the darkness

Surely you must have paused on the thresh-hold
To look back on the light-filled room
Of the life you left behind
It was everything you ever wanted
There must have been a moment
Of incredulous wonderment at the timing of it all

Answers will unfold for you more easily where you have gone
We are left here with hearts still struggling to beat
Aching to comprehend the void you leave behind

Once again God called your name
You answered "Here am I"
"Good night"

Kay R. Alden
Bryn Athyn

Some Aspects of Happiness

Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith

This is slightly modified from a presentation to the Council of the Clergy, June 2011

There is a well-known document that reads: “We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

For those not well versed in United States history, this is the second sentence of the Declaration of Independence, dated July 4, 1776, that announced the separation from England and the founding of an independent country. Of the asserted “unalienable rights,” life and liberty seem to be self-evident. But “the pursuit of happiness”? Setting aside the fascinating idea of whether seeking happiness should be a goal for a country or not, should we expect to be happy? Should we have happiness as one of our aspirations?¹

In one sense, this appears to be an absurd question. We are clearly taught that the Lord “wills to make everyone happy to eternity.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 904:2, 1735, 4735:2, 10578:3; *True Christian Religion* 43) And isn't heaven fundamentally a place of happiness and joy, a land flowing with milk and honey? In fact, it is said that “He Himself is heaven and the happiness of eternal life.” (*Apocalypse Revealed* 949)

The amount of happiness the Lord wants to give us is beyond number and description. “[N]o aspect of it can be described or in any way captured in human concepts.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 32) It is “inexpressible” (*Arcana Coelestia* 155), transcends “all perception” (*Arcana Coelestia* 4721:3), and “cannot be described in words.” (*Divine Providence* 39) And “a spiritual person feels and experiences spiritual delight, which is superior to natural delight, because it exceeds it a thousand times.” (*Conjugal Love* 29e) If the Lord wills us to be happy, and intends us to experience it forever, then shouldn't we want to be happy and strive to experience it?

But if that is so, why does happiness seem to be so little mentioned in the Old and New Testaments? In fact, the word “happy” appears only once in the New Testament: “If you know these things, happy are you if you do them.” (*John* 13:17) (And the Greek word that is translated “happy” in this

¹ To be fair to the early founders of the United States, the emphasis was probably more upon the “pursuit” than achieving “happiness” itself.

passage, *makarios*, is everywhere else translated “blessed.” “Joy” appears less than 90 times in the Old Testament, and about 25 times in the New. Variations of “gladness” show up more frequently, and “blessed” appears the most often. So while being happy is encouraged in a number of Scriptural passages, it does not tend to be a dominant theme.²

Setting aside the frequency of the usage of these words, the Old Testament can perhaps be characterized as emphasizing following the law, or obedience, as the central theme. And the New Testament, while affirming that, adds a moral or explanatory level – encouraging good behavior and addressing the motivation behind that. In both of these cases, the primary focus is not on people becoming happy, but on them believing what is true and doing what is good.

This is not surprising given what produces happiness.

Sources of Happiness

The Writings identify numerous things that lead to happiness. These include:

- **Acknowledging the Lord:** “That ‘I will bless those who bless you’ means pure happiness to those who from their hearts acknowledge the Lord.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 1422; *Apocalypse Explained* 1006)
- **Being conjoined with the Lord:** “The more closely a person is conjoined with the Lord, the happier he becomes.” (*Divine Providence* 37, 41)
- **Having good and truth:** “The more good there is in his truth, the more blessed and happy he is.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 2434)
- **Being useful:** “As a person was created to perform uses, and this is to love the neighbor, so all who come into heaven, however many there are, must do uses. All the delight and blessedness of these is according to uses and to the love of uses. Heavenly joy is from no other source.” (*Apocalypse Explained* 1194)
- **Surviving temptations:** “Those who endure spiritual temptations shall have consolations and be happy.” (*Apocalypse Explained* 898)
- **Removal of evil:** “A withdrawal [from self love and love of the world] is the starting-point to life itself, bringing blessedness and happiness within.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 2363)

² However it is clearly promoted in the Sacred Scriptures:

“Let all those who seek You rejoice and be glad in You...” Psalm 40:16, 70:4

“Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad...” Psalm 96:11

“Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.” Matthew 25:23

“Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready...Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!” Revelation 19:7, 9

There are many more, which can be found in the Appendix.

Two significant aspects of this stand out. The first is that happiness does not come from any tangible “thing” including worldly success, possessions, money, external achievements, etc.³ It only comes from spiritual qualities or practices that affect one’s eternal life. The second is that happiness is not an end in itself, but is a by-product from seeking something else. That is, happiness does not seem to be a goal in itself, but something which occurs when other, more significant, goals are pursued and achieved.

Rewards

An illustration of this is found in the teachings about rewards. We are meant to be useful, and to focus on what is being done for others rather than on ourselves. That in “doing goods without any reward there is happiness so great as to be heavenly happiness itself.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 6391:2, 6392; *Heavenly Doctrine* 158; *Apocalypse Explained* 102:7) And to the extent we do think of what we might get out of our work or charitable acts, it takes away from them. It is said of those who are regenerating that “they are then so averse to self-merit that when they merely think of it they grow sad, and perceive their blessedness and happiness to be proportionately diminished.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 2371:5) In fact, we are told that,

“happiness vanishes as soon as they think of reward, for being in the reward itself, thought about reward renders that love impure, and perverts it; the reason of which is that they are then thinking about themselves, and not about the neighbor, that is, about making themselves happy, and not others, except insofar as it affects themselves.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 6388)

However, in the early stages of regeneration, the thought of reward is often what the Lord uses to the spur us on to action. Mediate goods describe this phenomenon (see *Arcana Coelestia* 4063 and the entire series on Jacob with Laban). This is not a problem as long we grow out of it, but to retain a focus on rewards allows selfishness to remain and corrupt whatever good we might do.

This does not mean that we should artificially try to push all thought of happiness from our minds. There does not seem to be a problem with us occasionally thinking about happiness, provided we meet a fundamental condition. It is described this way:

“If a person is living according to the Lord’s commandments, it is permissible for

³ A curious exception to this may be the happiness that angels derive from just having more angels around. As *Arcana Coelestia* 547 notes, “the more there are who constitute the Lord’s kingdom, the greater is the happiness, for it increases in proportion to the numbers.” Greater numbers provides for greater harmony and opportunity to share the love they have. See the Appendix for more statements about this.

him to think of eternal life, salvation, and heavenly joy; but it is not permissible for him to keep his mind intent upon reward, for if he does so he has reward as an end, and easily falls into the thought that by his life he deserves heaven and salvation, and this thought causes him to have regard to self in every particular, and such regard to self removes him from heaven; for so far as a person looks to self in what he does, he does not look to heaven." (*Apocalypse Explained* 445; see also *Arcana Coelestia* 177 describing how angels keep the thoughts of those who are dying on eternity and not on salvation or happiness.)

There is a reward for those who are doing good from the Lord and not self, but it "is not a reward of merit but a reward of grace." (*Apocalypse Explained* 695:2)

Thus it would seem that pursuing happiness might not lead to it, but might actually lead away from it! (*Cf. Psalm 34:14*: "Seek peace, and pursue it.")

Communicating Happiness to Others

While seeking happiness for ourselves is not likely to bring the rewards sought, communicating what good we have with others appears to be inherent in the nature of good itself. This is perhaps best seen in heaven where "each person communicates his joy to all, and all to each." (*Arcana Coelestia* 549, 10723) In fact "it is a blessedness and happiness to him that he is able to communicate it." (*Arcana Coelestia* 2872)

"When an angel does good to somebody else he also communicates to that person the goodness, blessedness, and bliss he himself has received; and he does this in a spirit of wishing to give the other everything and hold nothing back." (*Arcana Coelestia* 6478)

Self-love, on the other hand, "does not communicate anything to others, but stifles and smothers all their delight and happiness." (*Arcana Coelestia* 2057:3) Presumably this is because it is self-centered and absorbs to oneself rather than going outward to others.

The image that most powerfully represents this aspect of communication is that of each angel being a center. In heaven,

"the happinesses of all are communicated to each one, and those of each one to all. Consequently the heavenly form is such that everyone is as it were a kind of center, thus a center of communications, and consequently of happinesses..." (*Arcana Coelestia* 2057:2; see also 549, 2872, 10723)

Because an angel does not think of himself, but shares his joy with all those around him, and all other angels in turn do the same, each one receives much more than he gives. This type of magnification by giving away relationship among the angels increases their happiness beyond measure.

Should We Expect to be Happy in This World?

While the Lord's purpose is to make us happy in heaven forever, what about in this world? How important is it to the Lord that we experience happiness here?

The ascetic movement, which distains the pleasures of this world, thinking them impure and their rejection as a means of aspiring to a higher reality, do not tend to receive a favorable treatment in the Writings. (*Arcana Coelestia* 945, 3951:2, 4730:2) Often their attempts to deny themselves pleasures inadvertently places more focus on themselves, and can lead to a sense of superiority. What's more, if they deprive themselves of natural wealth or the ability to earn money, they then become dependent upon others and cannot be useful.

Is there anything wrong with the delights of this world? The Writings provide an impressive list of what we can appropriately enjoy:

“No one is forbidden to enjoy the pleasures of the body and its senses, that is, the pleasures of possession of lands and wealth; the pleasures of honor and office in the state; the pleasures of conjugal love and of love for infants and children; the pleasures of friendship and of interaction with companions; the pleasures of hearing, or of the sweetness of singing and music; the pleasures of sight, or of beauties, which are manifold, as those of becoming dress, of elegant dwellings with their furniture, beautiful gardens, and the like, which are delightful from harmony of form and color; the pleasures of smell, or of fragrant odors; the pleasures of taste, or of the flavors and benefits of food and drink; the pleasures of touch.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 955:2; *Heaven and Hell* 358)

This indicates that there is very little in this world that we are not meant to enjoy!

However, the happiness we experience in this life is but a dim foreshadowing of what is to come. Put negatively, in comparison to heavenly happiness, “bodily and worldly joys are relatively non-existent and foul.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 540) Put more positively, in the other world a person “can receive thousands of thousands more things of intelligence and wisdom and happiness than when he lived in the world.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 5707:2, 1937)

Unfortunately, unhappiness is also inevitable in this world. “[S]ince there is nothing but evil in a person, he cannot but undergo alternations.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 935:2) Temptations are a prime example of this – states of struggle when we are horribly torn and feel nothing but hell around us. They rise up from our evils, attempting to destroy the good and truth that we are attempting to embrace.

Another fascinating aspect of this is that our ability to sense what happiness we do have is extremely limited while in this world. No one “who is moved by the affection for good and truth is able when he is living in the world to perceive that happiness, but only a certain delight instead” (*Arcana Coelestia* 3938:6), and spiritual happiness “seldom shows itself with anyone in the very body, thus

This does not mean that the Lord does not care about our happiness here. It is just that His focus is on something greater and more long lasting.

seldom to the sense.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 6408, 10722, 994:3; *Divine Providence* 41; *Heavenly Doctrine* 236) This could explain why people who are leading good lives – shunning evils as sins, being useful, etc. – may not feel like they are experiencing the happiness that should come from the presence of the Lord.

There are many reasons that prevent us from accurately determining if we are truly happy in this life or not. Yes, we can feel delights and pleasures which can be obscure indicators of heavenly joy, but good and truth are spiritual realities and while in the natural world “a person is then in a natural state, and the natural realm communicates with the spiritual one not by a continuous connection, but by correspondences.” (*Divine Providence* 41)

The natural realm “is subject to worldly cares and as a consequence to anxieties.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 3938:6, 6408; see also 8455:2) These so distract our minds, and obscure our perceptions, that even if regeneration is taking place, even if we have accepted a basic orientation to heaven, we could easily not be conscious of it. This means that when we may not be feeling so great, but someone asks, “How are you doing?” and we give the polite answer of “Fine,” we may be speaking more of the truth than we realize!

Another component of this is that the Lord’s goal is not our happiness in this life. “Divine Providence has as its end in view a person’s eternal salvation, *thus not his great happiness in the world*, not – that is to say – wealth and eminence which people during their lifetime think real happiness consists in.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 6481, emphasis added). What’s more, “Divine Blessing is to be happy to eternity, and that the Lord regards such things as are of brief duration, as relatively, are the things of this world, no otherwise than as means to eternal things.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 8717:3)

And taking this even further, sometimes the Lord actively works against what we perceive to be our happiness. The “Lord provides for the good, who receive His mercy in time, such things as contribute to the happiness of their eternal life; riches and honors for those to whom they are not hurtful; and no riches and honors for those to whom they would be hurtful.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 8717:3, 6481, 7007:3) And “the Divine providence....is constantly moving in ways different from and *contrary to* a person’s will.” (*Divine Providence* 219:4, 234; emphasis added)

This does not mean that the Lord does not care about our happiness here. It is just that His focus is on something greater and more long lasting. Hence the relative unimportance of whether, or how much, we experience states of

happiness in our natural lifetimes, or not.

It is also important to remember that the Lord uses even the apparent unhappiness of this life for good, “for those who trust in the Divine all things advance toward a happy state to eternity, and that *whatever befalls them in time is still conducive thereto*.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 8478:3, 8560, 8455:2; *Apocalypse Explained* 1166:2; *Spiritual Experiences* 2784; emphasis added) And “when the Lord is with anyone, He leads him, and provides that *all things which happen, whether sad or joyful, befall him for good: this is the Divine providence*.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 6303; emphasis added)

This does not mean that the Lord wills unhappy things to occur. But He does not permit anything to happen unless He can use it to enhance our happiness eternally. So even in the worst things that the Lord permits, He is present and one can look to the good that will come in spite of and even by means of those unhappy states.

Should we be Optimistic – Looking Ahead with Joy?

Several times in the New Testament the Lord encouraged His followers to be happy, or cheerful. To a paralytic lying on a bed He said, “Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you.” (*Matthew* 9:2) When He was walking on the water and the disciples were afraid He said, “Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid.” (*Matthew* 14:27; *Mark* 6:50) And as He was preparing them for His departure from the natural world, He said, “be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” (*John* 16:33) In all of these cases the people were seeing the negatives, but the Lord was telling them to see the positives.

Intriguingly, the Greek word translated here for “cheer,” *tharseo*, has the sense of “having courage.” It also can have the flavor of being assured or having confidence. In effect, the Lord was encouraging them not to focus upon their difficulties or the uncertainty of the future, but upon the good that He is leading them to. Given that the Lord’s providence is always leading to good, and uses whatever occurs to promote that, it would suggest that optimism should be our dominant outlook!⁴

This fits with the teaching of the Writings that people “need not go about like a devotee with a sad and sorrowful countenance and drooping head, but may be joyful and cheerful.” (*Heaven and Hell* 358; *Spiritual Experiences* 5794) The Writings also observe, “to him who is glad at heart, all things that he hears and sees appear smiling and joyful; but to him who is sad at heart, all

⁴ It should be noted that we cannot change our feelings or affections, only the Lord can do that. But we can change our frame of mind and try to look more positively upon the people and world around us – seeing the good and not the evil, as was noted of Shem of Japheth regarding Noah’s nakedness, the evils of others (see *Arcana Coelestia* 1079, et al.)

A primary reason for us to strive for a cheerful countenance is that it exhibits trust in the Lord.

things that he sees and hears appear sad and sorrowful.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 920:2; *Divine Wisdom* 10)

On one occasion when Swedenborg was experiencing a chastising spirit, “the angelic spirits kept my face constantly cheerful and smiling, and the region about the lips prominent, and my mouth open.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 7807) The apparently celestial spirits from Jupiter “inflowed most especially into the face, and that they disposed it to be smiling and cheerful, and continually so while they were present.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 8113)

Our attitude of mind even affects the quality of our meals: “when anyone is enjoying material food for the nourishment of the body, his food is more nourishing if he is at the same time in cheerful spirits and conversing on agreeable topics, which is a sign that there is a correspondence between spiritual food for the soul and material food for the body.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 5576:3)

Apparently having a smiling face is more than just a matter of trying to be upbeat, for “joys and gladness expand the face and adapt it to the influx of the cheerfulness of the soul.” (*Intercourse of the Soul and Body* 13:2). This suggests that a happy countenance actually enables the joy of the soul within to shine forth, and, we might infer from this, a downcast disposition hampers the happiness within from appearing.

The Writings offer two other fascinating examples. One is about those in business who shun unlawful gains: “They are also content with their own, feel cheerfulness of mind, and gladness of heart, as often as they bethink themselves that they have not been guilty of fraud.” (*Apocalypse Explained* 977:3) Either this is setting the bar extremely low for someone to feel happiness – not stealing – or it indicates how little it should take to enable us to feel joy! The second example is those who love their country “pay their taxes willingly and cheerfully.” (*True Christian Religion* 430) This is often brought out with a certain amount of irony when taxes are due, recognizing how little most people enjoy paying them. But maybe there is a real message here – even something as unpleasant as paying taxes, even if we think they are unfair or we have other objections, should be approached with a positive, cheerful, attitude.

A primary reason for us to strive for a cheerful countenance is that it exhibits trust in the Lord. The spirits from Jupiter smile because “they have no solicitude about future things, nor have they worldly cares, for these are things which bring sadness and anxiety into the lower mind, and from this into the face.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 8247) Or,

“It was said that they so dispose the faces of the inhabitants of their earth, for they wish to inspire them with tranquility and delight of heart.... The desires and anxieties about the future, which induce intranquility and unpleasantness, and

excite and agitate the mind into various disturbances, were then removed.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 8113)

This trust in providence is seen in the angels’ attention to the present and absence of any thought of the past or future.

“I have spoken with the angels concerning the memory of things past, and the consequent anxiety regarding things to come; and I have been instructed that the more interior and perfect the angels are, the less do they care for past things, and the less do they think of things to come; and also that from this comes their happiness. They say that the Lord gives them every moment what to think, and this with blessedness and happiness; and that they are thus free from cares and anxieties.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 2493; see also *Spiritual Experiences* 1312, 2188, 2190, 2271) This is why spirits have their natural memories lulled to sleep in the next life, for “those who draw upon their memory of things past, are not only concerned about future ones, but also worried that things in the present are not like those of the past, and sad about whatever state they are in.” (*Spiritual Experiences* 3962)

This recalling or unhealthily longing for the past can become a powerful impediment to any change since it creates an unhappiness with any deviation from the current status.

An additional support for not looking back is found in a teaching about those who were in the lower earth. These spirits, while protected there from the hells, are usually thought of as having a less than happy existence. But, “they live cheerfully with one another, and worship the Lord, nor do they know anything about hell.” (*Apocalypse Revealed* 845:2) This suggests that their happiness stems, at least in part, from their not thinking about hell. Their ignorance was bliss. (Cf. *Conjugal Love* 444:8, where angels asked Swedenborg not to tell other angels from their society about what is opposite to conjugal love since that would hurt their innocence.)

This is not to say we should never look back. There can be a joy in seeing the course of providence in one’s life. But the hells can use this to turn our minds away from the future that the Lord is leading us to.

And looking into the future is not inherently wrong. One of the best known passages on this is *Divine Providence* 178:

“Reason’s essential delight is to envision from love the effect in thought – not at the time of the effect, but prior to it, or not at the present time, but in a time to come. It is this that gives a person what we call hope, which grows or dwindles in his reason as it envisions or anticipates the outcome. This delight is fulfilled in the outcome, but afterward erased, along with thought about it.”

And the Lord uses hope and trust in our temptations. In fact, during temptations the “Lord keeps him in hope and trust, which are the forces of combat from within whereby he resists.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 6079) (Although the person undergoing a temptation may not be able to perceive this at the time. See *Arcana Coelestia* 5044, 8924, 10685.)

Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart,
All you who hope in the Lord." (*Psalm 31:24*)

So the challenge is to look ahead with hope, and not with anxiety.

Is Seeing What is Wrong, Wrong?

Does this mean sadness, or a negative view of things, is somehow evil? As noted above, unhappiness or sadness is inevitable in this world. And states of grief are appropriate for the loss of loved ones. What's more, angels themselves are not strangers to sadness. "[A]ngels have temporary sad states." (*Spiritual Experiences* 299) An example given in this passage is angels who welcome newcomers to their communities, but experience sadness if they leave to go elsewhere.

Whenever angels are in their propriums, they are sad. Swedenborg noted, "I have talked with them when they were in that state and have seen their sadness; but they said that they hoped to return soon to their former state, and thus into heaven again, as it were; for to them it is heaven to be withheld from what is their own." (*Heaven and Hell* 160) Also, "angels are overwhelmed with sorrow and grief if permitted to think and to will from themselves." (*Arcana Coelestia* 5428e)

There are other examples of what might be called valid sadness. Anxiety and grief are experienced when there is the loss, or threat of loss, of spiritual good and truth. (*Arcana Coelestia* 2689, 3471, 8352) There is sadness "when that which is wished for does not come to pass." (*Arcana Coelestia* 3118) Good people "are sad when it is believed that they work for the sake of recompense." (*True Christian Religion* 440; see also *Arcana Coelestia* 2371:5)

Whenever there is opposition to one's loves there are less than happy states. (*Apocalypse Explained* 660) In temptations, especially in the extreme of despair, there is the agony of hell. Repentance requires us to see what is evil so that we might shun it. And zeal, which we tend to think of as boisterous and harsh, interiorly is "a kind of sorrow coupled with a wish that something should not be, and more inwardly still a kind of vague displeasure that interrupts heavenly delight because what is good and true does not exist in another." (*Arcana Coelestia* 3909)

All of these states, and others that might be added, are appropriate, but seem to be temporary. For example, if we are to do serious self-examination once or twice a year, it means we are not doing it the rest of the time. (see *True Christian Religion* 567:5, 621:6; *Conjugal Love* 529) Some of these states might be more pronounced, or appear to last a long time while in this world.

But one would not expect extended sad states to exist in heaven.

In looking at the prophets of the Old Testament, it seems that they did not have the most joyous of lives. There are wonderfully uplifting passages in the

prophets, including many of the beautiful Messianic prophecies. But overall, they did not seem to live very happy lives – constantly speaking out about the evils of the people and those of the civil and religious leaders.

What's more, they frequently acted out physically painful representations of the degradation of the church. Granted, they were working in a milieu where the church was coming to an end so there was not much positive to comment on. And for them in the spiritual world, presuming they still hold the role of spokesmen for the Lord, one hopes that they were released from the more negative aspects their roles. So perhaps the focus on the negative might not be eternal for them.

But another more challenging case is that of the kidneys' spirits. The kidneys perform an essential and ongoing function in the human body. They are part of the Grand Man, and thus permanently inhabited by angels. Their positive function is to screen and remove falsities. (*Arcana Coelestia* 5381, 5382; *Heaven and Hell* 96; *Spiritual Experiences* 367, 1010; *Apocalypse Explained* 167) This leads them to explore others, often bringing about punishment. (*Arcana Coelestia* 5378; *Spiritual Experiences* 959)

While this is an important role, when they are acting, they “for the most part take away pleasant and cheerful feelings and introduce unpleasant and sad ones.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 5384) Presumably this happens because they see what is wrong, identify it, and an awareness of the presence of evil or falsity brings sadness. And presumably they are not taking delight seeing the evils of others. (*Arcana Coelestia* 1079, *et al.*)

So focusing on what is wrong is their appropriate role and part of a positive process. But they seem to remain in this state forever. Does this suggest that, at least for some, always looking for what is evil and false is a legitimately permanent state? Or are kidney spirits active in finding fault only a portion of each day, and the rest they can live a less critical existence?⁵

A Paradox?

So, where does all this leave us? On the one hand we should not be thinking too much about our happiness, recognize that our ability to experience happiness on this earth is very limited, and accept the fact that we are likely to experience a great deal of pain or unhappiness in this world. On the other hand, and in the face of these realities, we should have a cheerful, optimistic, outlook on life.

⁵ The Rev. Willard L. D. Heinrichs, a profound student of the teachings on the spiritual world, has suggested that descriptions of their sadness inducing practices are more from the World of Spirits than heaven. These descriptions are given because it is closer to what we experience on earth, and hence more intelligible to us. But he suggests that in heaven, as a part of the Grand Man, and in each level of heaven, which in itself is one complete man or human, their functioning is much more subtle and gentle. Thus they are not constantly in negative states nor do their actions result in sadness among the angels.

One of the prophecies about the New Church found in Isaiah is:

“For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing. And her people a joy. I will rejoice in Jerusalem, And joy in My people; The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, Nor the voice of crying.” (65:17-19)

Spiritually “‘Jerusalem’ is the church, ‘rejoicing’ its delight from good, and ‘gladness’ its delight from truth.” (*Apocalypse Explained* 294:14) This would seem to be the Lord’s intent – both to lead us eternally to happiness, but also to make His church one that can rejoice in what is good and true.

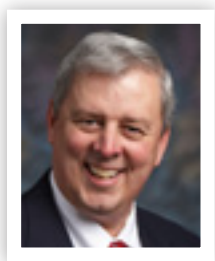
This does not eliminate unhappiness. The natural conditions of this world obscure a delight in good, and in states of repentance or temptation there is no joy. In our zeal and hope for good, we will be disappointed and experience sadness.

Yet these are temporary states. The pain and despair of temptation, for those who endure, gives way to a “cheerful and serene state” (*Arcana Coelestia* 5246:4, 2338, 6829) and a person is then “far from indignation, anger, unrest, cupidities, and the like.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 5725)

A well-known image of the angelic ideal is found in *Arcana Coelestia* 8478:3:

“Unruffled is their spirit whether they obtain the objects of their desire, or not; and they do not grieve over the loss of them, being content with their lot. If they become rich, they do not set their hearts on riches; if they are raised to honors, they do not regard themselves as more worthy than others; if they become poor, they are not made sad; if their circumstances are mean, they are not dejected.”

While this frame of mind may be difficult to achieve in this life, or to constantly maintain, it would seem that as we strive to be in the stream of providence, an overall optimism should win out over temporary pessimism or sadness. A trust in the Lord and His providence should enable us to face the harshness and limitations of this world, and not let them diminish our fundamental hope and expectation for happiness that stems from the Lord.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith was ordained in 1976, into the second degree in 1978 and into the third degree in 2004, and serves as Assistant Bishop of the General Church. He has served previously in Glenview, as Dean of the Academy Theological School, Principal of the Bryn Athyn Church School, Interim President of the Academy of the New Church, and Regional Pastor of the Southeastern and Midwestern United States. He is also chair of the General Church Translation Committee. He and his wife, Gretchen (Umberger), live in Bryn Athyn.

APPENDIX

SOURCES OF HAPPINESS

From the Lord alone

“...all joy and happiness in heaven come from the Lord alone...” *Arcana Coelestia* 552

“...He causes each and every one in the heavens to enjoy their happiness...” *Apocalypse Explained* 726:2

Acknowledging the Lord

“...all happiness to those who acknowledge the Lord from the heart...” *Arcana Coelestia* 1422; *Apocalypse Explained* 1006

“...when a person by acknowledgment and by faith from love, as if from himself, ascribes to the Lord all things of his life, the Lord in turn ascribes to a person the good of His life, which carries with it every happiness and every blessedness...” *Apocalypse Explained* 1138:6

Trust in the Lord

“...for he then trusts solely in the Lord and has no care for other things, and is certain that all things are tending to his good, his blessedness, and his happiness to eternity.” *Arcana Coelestia* 2892

“Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.” *Psalms* 2:12

Conjoined with the Lord

“The more closely a person is conjoined with the Lord, the happier he becomes.” *Divine Providence* 37, 41

Good and truth

“...the happiness of eternal life to those who are in truths of doctrine from the Word, and in a life according to them.” *Apocalypse Revealed* 526

“...the more good there is in his truth, the more blessed and happy he is.” *Arcana Coelestia* 2434

“...all the happiness that angels of heaven have is from good through truths; and each one there has so much and such wisdom and happiness, as he has of the good from which are truths...” *Apocalypse Explained* 797:3, 1189

“...a person does not rejoice from himself, but from the goods and truths that he has; these things rejoice because they make the rejoicing of a person.” *Apocalypse Explained* 405:11

From love

“...such as the love is, such is the delight, the blessedness, and the happiness.”
Arcana Coelestia 2718:4; *Heavenly Doctrine* 62

“...everything delightful and everything pleasant is from love, consequently all joy and all happiness...” *Arcana Coelestia* 3539:4

Mutual love

“...heaven is mutual love, and heavenly joy the joy resulting from this.” *Arcana Coelestia* 537, 916:2

Life of good

“...the life that belongs to love. This is the source of all happiness in heaven...”
Arcana Coelestia 32

Active life

“Some think that heaven consists in a life of ease, in which they are served by others; but they are told that there is no possible happiness in being at rest as a means of happiness...” *Arcana Coelestia* 454

Being useful

“...angels find all their happiness in use, from use, and in accordance with use.”
Heaven and Hell 403; *Arcana Coelestia* 454, 7038

“Every pleasure therefore which is from charity, has its delight from use. The more noble the use, the greater the delight. Consequently the angels have happiness from the Lord according to the essence and quality of their use.”
Arcana Coelestia 997:2

“As a person was created to perform uses, and this is to love the neighbor, so all who come into heaven, however many there are, must do uses. All the delight and blessedness of these is according to uses and to the love of uses. Heavenly joy is from no other source.” *Apocalypse Explained* 1194

Temptations and after

“...those who endure spiritual temptations shall have consolations and be happy.” *Apocalypse Explained* 898, 897:2, 695:19

“...they who suffer temptations on account of faith in the Lord and life according to His precepts, will have eternal life and happiness.” *Apocalypse Revealed* 639; *Arcana Coelestia* 6829

“...after temptations he is filled with joy, and good bears fruit, and truth is multiplied with him...” *Apocalypse Explained* 439:3

Experience with unhappiness

“...what is blessed and happy, no one can perceive with an exquisite sense unless he has been in a state of what is not good, not blessed, and not happy. From this he acquires a sphere of perception, and this in the degree in which he has been in the opposite state.” *Arcana Coelestia* 2694:2, 6144

Protection from evil

“Divine truth, from which is all intelligence and wisdom, with which the Lord flows in, is meant by ‘Jehovah makes His faces to shine upon thee;’ and protection thereby from falsities is meant by ‘be gracious unto thee;’ and the Divine good, from which is all love and charity, with which the Lord flows in, is meant by ‘Jehovah lift up His faces upon thee;’ and protection thereby from evils, and thence heaven and eternal happiness, are meant by ‘give thee peace;’ for when evils and falsities are removed and no longer infest, the Lord flows in with peace, in which and from which is heaven and the delight that fills with bliss the interiors of the mind, thus heavenly joy.” *Apocalypse Explained* 365:12

Acting not from self, but the Lord

A celestial person “acts not according to his own desire, but according to the good pleasure of the Lord.... Thus he enjoys internal peace and happiness...” *Arcana Coelestia* 85:3

Believing all good is from the Lord and evil from hell

“All good flows in from the Lord, and all evil from hell (n. 904, 4151). [This is not believed today.] But if he would believe as the thing is, he would not appropriate evil to himself, but cast it back from himself into hell, neither would he make good his own, and thus would not claim any merit from it How happy the state of a person would then be, as he would view both good and evil from within, from the Lord” *Heavenly Doctrine* 277

Thinking one is the least

“...anyone who wishes to be the least has the greatest happiness. And because the person who is least does have the greatest happiness, he is for that very reason the greatest.” *Arcana Coelestia* 452, 1936:4

“...the happiest [are] they who desire others to be the most happy, and themselves the least so...” *Arcana Coelestia* 2654:5

From interiors, not exteriors

“...the nature of all delight is to become more vile in proportion as it progresses toward the externals, and more happy in proportion as it advances toward the internals.” *Arcana Coelestia* 996

Internal things “make people blessed and happy in the kingdom which they are going to enter and in which they are going to live for ever.” *Arcana Coelestia* 4464:5

“When sensuous things are in the last place, a happy and blessed feeling flows from the interior person into the delights of these things, and increases them a thousandfold.” *Arcana Coelestia* 5125e

Natural conforms to rational

“...there is nothing else that can make a person blessed and happy but that his natural be conformed to his rational, and both be conjoined together. This is effected solely by means of charity, and charity is solely from the Lord.” *Arcana Coelestia* 2183:4

Withdrawal from evil

“...a withdrawal is the starting point to life itself, bringing blessedness and happiness within...” *Arcana Coelestia* 2363

“...heaven and the joy of heaven first begin in a person when his regard to self in the uses which he performs, dies out.” *Arcana Coelestia* 5511:2

“...these happinesses enter as a person puts away the lusts of love of evil and falsity...” *Divine Providence* 39:2

From genuine worship

“The more a person acknowledges these things [all good from Lord, none from self], not with the mouth, but with the heart, the more he is in humiliation; and consequently the more he is in adoration, that is, in true worship, and the more he is in love and charity, and the more in happiness.” *Arcana Coelestia* 1153:2, 7093:2; *Apocalypse Explained* 502:4

Numbers!

“...the more there are who constitute the Lord’s kingdom, the greater is the happiness, for it increases in proportion to the numbers, and this is why heavenly happiness is unutterable.” *Arcana Coelestia* 549

“...heaven can never to eternity be filled, still less is the door shut; but the more there come thither, the more blessed and happy are those who are in heaven; because the harmoniousness is so much the stronger.” *Arcana Coelestia* 2130:2

“Blessedness consists in unanimity and harmony, whereby many, even very many, consider themselves to be a one. For from many agreeing together, or a harmony of many, comes a oneness, which results in blessedness and happiness and, from a shared feeling of happiness, a doubled and tripled happiness.” *Spiritual Experiences* 289

“...the greater the number of those who constitute the Kingdom of God Messiah, the greater is the happiness of the harmonies of the several orders;

and it is increased according to degrees. From this it can therefore be concluded how ineffable the happiness must be, and how it must be increasing.” *Spiritual Experiences* 359

“And because those who are in that love perceive the highest happiness in being able to communicate to others that which flows into them, and this from the heart, the communication becomes perpetual and eternal; and on this account, as the Lord’s kingdom increases, so the happiness of each angel increases.” *Arcana Coelestia* 2057:2

Angels have some additional sources of happiness

Thinking of the Lord

“They are in their delightful, nay, in their blessed and happy states, when they are thinking about the Lord, His Divine and His Human, and how the Human was made Divine; for they are encompassed with a celestial and spiritual sphere which is full of the Lord; so that it may be said that they are in the Lord. Hence nothing is more blessed and happy to them than to think in accordance with the things that belong to that sphere and its derivative affection.” *Arcana Coelestia* 2551

“...in a perception of inmost joy when thinking of the Lord and of the salvation of the human race by the Lord’s making Divine the Human in Him; and in order that the angels might be kept in this most heavenly joy, and at the same time in wisdom, that Divine process is fully described in the internal sense of the Word...” *Arcana Coelestia* 5249:2, 8261:3

“The actual happiness of the angels resides in the fact that every detail has to do with the Lord; for they abide in Him.” *Arcana Coelestia* 5688:3

Not thinking and willing from themselves

“...the sweetness which the Angels perceive from the fact that they do not think and will from themselves, but from the Lord; hence they have tranquility, peace, and happiness.” *Arcana Coelestia* 6469, 6471

Teaching

“...nothing gives angels greater delight and happiness than to be teaching those who pass from the world into the next life.” *Arcana Coelestia* 2284e, 454

“... [angels] perceive nothing more blessed and happy than to teach novitiate brethren, and imbue them with the truths and goods which are of heavenly order, and thus lead to the Lord.” *Arcana Coelestia* 2704

Providing other services for people

“...angels know no greater happiness than ... in being of service to people, controlling the evil spirits about them lest they pass the proper bounds, and inspiring them with good; and in raising up the dead to the life of eternity,

and then, if the souls are such as to render it possible, introducing them into heaven.” *Arcana Coelestia* 454

Removal of restraints

“It is different in heaven, where love to the Lord and mutual love deriving from that love join its members together at an internal level. When external restraints are removed there, angels become even more closely joined to one another. And being thereby drawn nearer to the Divine Being (*Esse*) coming to them from the Lord, they are filled deeper still with affection, and from this with a sense of freedom, and as a consequence with feelings of blessedness, happiness, and joy.” *Arcana Coelestia* 5002:2

Perception of good in another

“...no one in heaven perceives his own good in himself to be good unless it is also in another; and this is the source of the happiness of heaven.” *Heaven and Hell* 268, cf. *Divine Love and Wisdom* 47

Differences among angels

“... there is not the least of difference that is not disposed in most perfect order, so as to conspire most harmoniously to a common unity, and the common unity to unanimity of individuals, and thereby to the happiness of all from each, and of each from all.” *Arcana Coelestia* 684

When the Word is read on earth

“...when the Word is being read by a person the angels may thereby be in their happiness of wisdom, and also be at the same time in the delight of serving as means.” *Arcana Coelestia* 5398:3

“While children are reading [the histories of the Word] and are affected by them from innocence, the angels who are with them are in a happy celestial state, being affected from the Lord with the internal sense, consequently with those things which the historical facts represent and signify; and it is the celestial happiness of the angels that flows in and causes the delight with the children.” *Arcana Coelestia* 3690:2

Not by admission – no one there!

Some “...believed that they might come into a higher heavenly happiness simply by access to a heaven where higher angels are. They were even permitted to enter among such angels, but when they were there, they saw no one however much they searched, although there was a great multitude present.” *Heaven and Hell* 35

Higher heavens happier

“...the inmost heaven excels in wisdom and intelligence, and therefore in happiness, the heavens which are below.” *Arcana Coelestia* 9666:2

The Annunciation

The Importance of Mary's Role in the Lord's Coming

A sermon by the Rev. Eric H. Carswell

*The Holy Spirit will come upon you,
and the power of the Highest will overshadow you;
therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be
born will be called the Son of God.*

— LUKE 1:35

What amazing words these must have been to the young woman, Mary, when she first heard them. Just minutes before she had probably been engaged in some mundane task of daily life in her mother's home, perhaps grinding flour or baking bread, maybe weaving or spinning wool into yarn.

If she was like most young women who are shortly to be married, her mind would have been turned to her future life with Joseph, what their home would be like, the children they would have and the life that they would lead together. Happy images of the future would have filled her thoughts. She would have had her hopes, dreams and expectations – images of how her life would be as the future wife of Joseph.

Suddenly with the appearance of the angel Gabriel, her visions of the future contained a new and dramatically different element. The angel told her that she was highly favored and blessed among women, that the Lord was with her and that she would soon conceive and bring forth a son whose name would be Jesus. This child would be given the throne of Mary's ancient relative, King David, and reign forever.

Mary voiced the question of how this would take place. She knew the order of natural conception and knew that the angel's message did not fit into this order. In explanation the angel Gabriel told her of the greatest miracle of all time saying, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God."

We are called to believe that miracles do occur. Some people are troubled by the idea of miracles based on their picture of cause and effect in this world.

They have accepted that the only causes are natural ones – the laws of physics and so on. For such a person the idea of Jesus being born without a natural father is fantastic beyond belief.

But we are called to believe that miracles have and do occur. There are forces that attack this belief. We have grown up in a culture that has a strong sense of natural order. Science today is capable of explaining so many events that previously were mysteries. It is capable of explaining them by means of fundamental laws of nature.

For some this sense of natural law can become so strong that the Lord's active presence within creation vanishes. For some there is no Divine intervention within this system. All is fixed and moves along with changes taking place by mere random accident. But it could be noted that according to natural law most changes result in more chaos, not less chaos. Changes tend toward the breakdown of a higher order into a lower one.

Think of the example of a person quickly typing out a document on a computer. You would expect that errors would be introduced into the typing. What is the likelihood that the errors would improve the original document? It's possible, but rather unexpected. But the argument for pure natural evolution is that given enough time and the forces of natural selection life as we now know it has developed.

Asserting that human life came about purely by random accidents starting with the genetic code of the most primitive life millions of years ago seems akin to saying that given enough time and enough typed copies a simple child's nursery rhyme could evolve into a Shakespearean play without any plan or higher thought being involved.

We are called to believe that miracles do occur. However, the Writings for the New Church have taught us that we are not to expect to see the miracles of the Old and New Testaments performed today in the same way they were performed in the time those books were written. We read:

The reason miracles are not done at this day, as before, is that miracles compel, and take away free will in spiritual things; and from being spiritual, they make a person natural. All in the Christian world . . . can become spiritual; and they become spiritual solely from the Lord through the Word; and the faculty for this would perish if they were brought to believe through miracles. (True Christian Religion 501)

Partially based on statements such as this, a person can come to a pattern of thinking that does not believe in the Lord's ability to affect things for good in a miraculous way even today. A person could believe in God, but still tend to view the progression of his or her life as following laws of a machine-like system. Anything that does not fit into this fixed system is believed to be a miracle that would take away spiritual freedom – the very freedom that the

Lord was born into the world to re-establish.

Perhaps, though, it is too easy for us to become too limited in our view – so limited that we block out of sight of the miracles that can occur within our own lives without taking away our spiritual freedom. Perhaps it is too easy for this limited point of view to block out a sense of the Lord's presence – of the Holy Spirit's presence. How does the Lord reach out to touch our lives?

What of Mary's life? The events surrounding the first Christmas were a major intervention within her life. The same is true of her husband to be, Joseph. Both of them could have denied the possibility of a miraculous conception and this state of denial would have been far more damaging than that of Zacharias.

Could the Lord's birth ever have taken place if Mary was not willing to accept the angel's words? Her firstborn was to have a continuing effect throughout her whole life. His presence was not without many events that brought a sense of awe and wonder to both Mary and Joseph. We know of at least one event that showed that raising Jesus was not always easy. At age 12, they spent three anxious days searching for Him, only to find Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of teachers, listening and asking questions.

In addition to the way in which Jesus' birth and life intervened in Joseph's and Mary's life, think of the way His presence affected the disciples. Many of them were happily going about their daily jobs when they were called to leave all behind and follow Him. While this intervention sometimes involved something of the miraculous, it also involved an element of free will.

Just as Joseph and Mary could have resisted the words of the angel announcing that the Lord would be born, so also the disciples could have heard the Lord call them to follow and shook their heads and returned to their work. There were many, many others who were influenced in this same way. Many others who heard the Lord's words calling to them and had their lives profoundly influenced by what He said.

The Lord comes to each of us in our lives many times each day. While we may not have anything occur in our lives that an objective observer would call miraculous, it is not true that our lives will follow some pre-established route, set by our inborn nature and directed by compelling experience of the natural world.

The Lord's first birth represents the way in which He comes in any age to anyone who will receive Him. Just as the words of the angel Gabriel would have been a dramatic intervention within the happy normalcy of the future that Mary would have envisioned, so also the Lord can come to us announcing the conception of a future for us that is far different from the one our natural mind would envision.

The Lord comes to us offering and promising a far different set of reactions

The Lord comes to each of us bringing the promise of a new conception of life just as the angel Gabriel came to the virgin Mary.

to daily events from the ones we presently have – a different perspective, a far greater patience in some areas and a stronger resolve and commitment in others. He comes to us bringing light to areas of thoughts that we had resigned ourselves to being in deep darkness and bringing warmth to much that we might otherwise have done from need or duty.

The angel Gabriel was sent to a virgin, whose name was Mary. Ancient prophecies had promised that the Messiah would be born as the child of a young woman. Several hundred years after this prophecy was given, a Greek version of the Old Testament called the Septuagint, introduced a new element of the miraculous by using a word in this prophecy

that was not the general one for a young woman, but rather the distinctive Greek term for “virgin.”

When the angel appeared to Joseph in a dream, the gospel of Matthew records that he quoted this prophecy according to the way it is presented in the Septuagint. The Writings for the New Church make it quite clear that this seemingly added idea is correct and even essential in our understanding of the Lord’s advent.

There are two distinct reasons for the importance of a belief in the virgin birth. One reason has to do with the essential need for Jesus to be born with a natural mother but without a natural father if He was going to become our Savior and Redeemer. It was crucial for the work of Jesus that He not derive from His birth any of the internal evils that are passed on through the soul provided by the natural father in any natural conception.

His soul and life came directly from the infinite God. His developing mind and life were the ever more perfect manifestation in human form of the Father and creator, our Lord and God. But it was important that He take on a natural mind at first empty of any experience and knowledge as you and I were born with. It was important that He take on the hereditary inclinations to evil that birth to a natural mother brought to His life.

The second reason for believing in the virgin birth exists because of the representation of the term virgin and what this says about how the Lord comes to us in our lives. We are told that a virgin represents someone who is willing to have his or her life affected by truth. In this story, Mary represents a state of mind in each of our lives that is not controlled by self-interest nor committed to a determined course of action. It is a state of mind that is open to new possibilities.

The Lord comes to each of us bringing the promise of a new conception of life just as the angel Gabriel came to the virgin Mary. He comes promising a rebirth or regeneration of life that is radically different from the one we come

by naturally. It is not to the hustle and bustle of established life that He appears, but rather to those states of mind that, like the virgin Mary, look forward to something new and different and most importantly are willing to receive the conception of this new life.

The life that comes to us naturally, apart from any presence of the Lord, is like a child conceived of a human father and mother. Without the Lord's presence, this life cannot have any other basis than self-interest and worldly concern. Experience may teach us to broaden this self-interest and to temper these concerns, but apart from the Lord's advent within our lives they will never rise above this level.

The Lord is born within each of our lives within the states of mind that are willing to be affected by what the Word teaches – by the states of mind that are willing to rise above the prompting of our natural inclinations to be self-serving and natural in our interests, thoughts and actions.

He is born within the states of mind that are willing to turn outward to recognize and serve the needs of those around us. He is born within the states of mind that are willing to recognize that natural things exist to serve the needs of mankind and creation as a whole and have their proper uses as well as their abuses.

Our preparation for the celebration of Christmas, more than any other event of the season, tends to turn people outward to others. It is a time that can help us to recognize the community of caring people that we live in. And it is a time that can remind us that many are in need – there are many people who can use our help.

This help may be a matter of providing food, clothing and shelter for those have not been able to or have not yet come to be provident enough to provide them for themselves. It can be a matter of giving a hand to someone who could use some help with a job, sharing some burden with that person.

Christmas is a time when we give gifts that symbolize love and friendship for others. The most lasting gifts are those that we give when we recognize the spiritual needs of others – when we recognize that, by our words and actions, we can help the Lord bring loving warmth to another person's life.

We, by our words and actions, can bring the light of greater understanding to another person's life. We have the capability of helping others receive far greater blessings in life than they might otherwise. Our preparation for and celebration of Christmas can remind us of how a truly Christian life is one of wisely giving and of serving. The state of mind that receives this reminder is

Christmas is a time when we give gifts that symbolize love and friendship for others. The most lasting gifts are those that we give when we recognize the spiritual needs of others . . . when we can help the Lord bring loving warmth to another person's life.

The words of the angel Gabriel to Mary are also words to us with the promise of a new life that will profoundly affect what we care about, think and do each day throughout the year.

the one imaged by the virgin, Mary.

The Lord comes to each of us in our lives, just as the angel Gabriel came to Mary. He comes telling of events that can take place, if we are willing, which far exceed anything we might picture ourselves. He promises us a new life, born within our own, but not taking its source from us. He promises the presence of the Holy Spirit within this new life. He

comes with a miraculous intervention in the natural course of events.

The words of the angel Gabriel to Mary are also words to us with the promise of a new life that will profoundly affect what we care about, think and do each day throughout the year. These words are the promise of a new life for each of us.

When we take the sacrament of the Holy Supper, this act of worship represents our desire to receive the Lord's gifts of love and wisdom within our lives, represented by our eating of the bread and drinking of the wine. There is a powerful reminder of the words of the angel Gabriel in the Writings description of this sacrament:

. . . the Holy Supper for those who approach it worthily is a kind of guarantee and seal put on their adoption as sons of God . . . the Lord is then present and introduces into heaven those who are born of Him, that is, who are regenerated. (True Christian Religion 728)

As the angel Gabriel said to Mary, so the Lord would say to us:

The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.

Lessons: *Isaiah* 7:1-15, *Luke* 1:26-38, *Arcana Coelestia* 1573: 3-4,7-8.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The Rev. Eric H. Carswell was ordained in 1979 and into the second degree in 1981. Among other assignments he has been pastor of the Glenview and Pittsburgh Societies and head of their schools, Dean of the Academy Theological School and Regional Pastor for the Northeastern United States. He is Vice Chancellor for the Academy and Bishop's Representative for Education for the Academy and General Church Schools. He and his wife Donna (Zeitz) live in Huntingdon Valley.



The Ball is in Your Court

Rev. Peter M. Buss Jr.

One of the things that has always struck me about the teachings of the New Church is the significant role the Lord gives us in charting our own destiny. Not only is this true in the big picture of our lives, namely whether we choose to live in heaven or in hell, it is also true of so many facets of the life we live along the way.

We are called to obey the Lord's teachings, to repent of certain things, to be life-long students of the Lord's Word, to believe in the Lord and trust in His providence, to seek enlightenment, to pray, to engage in worship, to be useful, to care for one another, and to figure things out for ourselves. It's true that the Lord's part will always be larger than our own, and that we are called to acknowledge that we don't do anything good without His help, but there is no doubt that He has set up the system in such a way that requires our engagement.

There are three phrases I've discovered that serve as a consistent reminder of this theme of "doing my part." One came in the context of marriage, one arose out of a mental exercise I was asked to engage in, and the third came out of my pastoral work.

"I choose to love you."

Taking marriage first, I don't pretend to have all the answers about how to make a marriage work, or how best to prepare for marriage, but I do know some of the things the Lord teaches on the subject. One such teaching that I've come to believe is central to a long and lasting marriage is: "Consent is the essential element in marriage." (*Conjugal Love 21*)

Not surprisingly, the context for this teaching is a marriage ceremony before a priest. The heart of a wedding ceremony is the couple's consent to be married. The priest says, "Will you, in the presence of the Lord, pledge your love and promise faithfulness...?" "Will you now be united together in marriage as husband and wife according to the laws of Divine order?" "Will you have this woman for your wife...?" "Will you have this man for your husband...?" The answer in each case: "I will." I want to do this. I choose this path. It's all "consent."

Editor's note: This article originally appeared on New Church Perspective: www.newchurchperspective.com. Peter Buss welcomes responses at peterb@glenviewnewchurch.org.

The beauty is that consent doesn't end with the wedding ceremony. While the teaching is given in the context of a wedding, the message is about marriage in general. One of the best pieces of advice I ever received relating to marriage is that it is a daily choice; every day I can wake up and say, "I choose to love you."

Every day I have the opportunity, and responsibility, to act in loving ways toward my wife. Every day I also have the ability to choose the Lord's path with regard to marriage. I can choose to be useful. I can choose to learn more about what He has to say about marriage. I can choose to turn to His Word for counsel on issues that arise. I can choose to work on changing a behavior that is compromising the quality of my marriage. I can choose to listen, to respect, to apologize when necessary.

Not only that, but consent implies that I want these things: I want this relationship to succeed. I want this person in my life. I want to make her day better, and to see if I can help some of her dreams come true. Again, it's all about consent, leading me to see that it really is the essential element of marriage. I have a major part to play in its success.

"Figure things out and find direction."

The second phrase that captures the concept of "doing my part" came from an unexpected source. In a recent graduate school program, I was challenged by a professor to define a "position statement" for myself, in a marketing sense. This was an opportunity to take another look at the big life-question, "What am I here for?" The phrase I eventually settled on is, "I'm here to help people figure things out and find direction." It doesn't just relate to my chosen profession, although I think it's one way of describing the value of the New Church. It is something I can strive to do for the people in my family, for my friends, in my volunteer work, and so on.

Moving away from a personal mission statement, several teachings lead to the conclusion that we are to figure things out for ourselves. There's a famous teaching in *Divine Providence* about "prudence," saying that if we "did not manage all the concerns of our function and life as though by our own prudence" we would be "like someone standing with hands hanging limp, mouth open, and eyes closed, holding his breath and awaiting influx." (*Divine Providence* 210)

There's another teaching in the same book that we're not allowed to know the future: "If we did, we would no longer think about what we should do or how we should live in order to reach some particular goal" and would strip ourselves of the very freedom and rationality that make us human. (*Divine Providence* 179) The Lord calls us to use our minds to engage with our experience of life. I love how succinctly it's stated in the book of *Isaiah*: "'Come now and let us reason together,' says the Lord." (*Isaiah* 1:18)

“Be a blessing.”

The third way in which the concept of charting our own destiny has hit home for me is in the discovery of a three-word directive from the Lord. So often, you can read the same text in the Word and miss something that jumps out at you the next time you read it. That happened to me when I read in *Genesis* about the call of Abraham. God said to him, “I will bless you and make your name great, and you shall be a blessing.” (*Genesis 12:2*)

The phrase that “popped” for me is “...*be a blessing.*” What started to meld in my brain around that phrase were all the teachings about being useful – that we are created to use our gifts and talents to make the lives of other people better (*True Christian Religion 406*); about the ways the Lord has created us – with hearts that can love, brains that can figure things out, and bodies that can do many useful things; about the call to love our neighbors as ourselves (the second Great Commandment, *Matthew 22:39*), or to love one another as the Lord loves us (the “new commandment,” *John 13:34*); about the energy of angels to share all their blessings with others (*Heaven and Hell 399*); and about the essence of love, “loving others who are outside oneself, wanting to be one with them, and blessing them from oneself.” (*True Christian Religion 43*)

“*Be a blessing!*” It’s such a powerful directive. Again, it’s something I can hear as a calling in the big picture of life, and it’s also something I can choose to do every single day. I can wake up and ask myself: In what ways am I called to be a blessing today? I can engage in any situation I find myself and strive to make a positive difference. I can consider the most important people in my life and ask myself how I can brighten their day. I can regard the organizations that I associate with in the same way. There truly is no end to the ramifications of this simple, very memorable teaching.

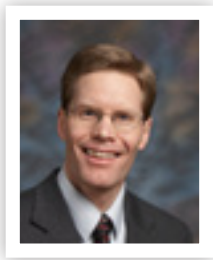
They say things come in threes, and that’s one final reflection I would offer. “I choose to love you” is largely a “heart” issue. “Figuring things out and finding direction” is largely a brain or intellect issue. “Being a blessing” are words to live by, with the emphasis on doing. Hearts, minds and actions really define who we are as human beings. Or we could call it love, wisdom, and use. Either way, these three things demonstrate that the Lord has created us to be extremely capable people. He also gives us the responsibility to use these incredible gifts for their intended purposes, namely to cooperate with Him as He leads us to serve others.

Having said all this, I recognize some obvious questions arise out of such a topic. In addition to an interest in your reaction to all this, I wonder how you would respond to the following questions:

- Where does the Lord’s help and guidance come in? Sometimes we feel more alone in life than we believe is ideal, and wish the Lord would give us a little

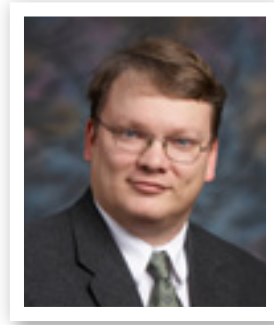
more help or guidance than we're getting. How do we square the incredible autonomy we have with the need for support from our God?

- What would you say in answer to the big life question, "Why are you here?"
- Have you had the experience of being asked if you were "saved," leading to conversation about the belief that we can do nothing of substance about our salvation except professing our belief in Jesus Christ as our Savior? If so, how do the concepts of autonomy, capability and responsibility as taught in the New Church work in such conversations? How would you express the fact that the Lord is the only one who can bring us into heaven, without going to the extreme that we have no part to play in the process?
- Is there a phrase that is meaningful to you, or a teaching, that captures the role you are asked to play in your own life?



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The Rev. Peter M. Buss Jr. was ordained in 1993 and into the second degree in 1995. He is Pastor of the Immanuel Church Society in Glenview. He and his wife, Teresa (Farrington) have been married for 20 years and are raising four children, aged 11 to 18. He enjoys running, golf and scuba diving.



Rev. Mac Frazier

A Passion for Spreading the Church

Our second-career ministers have fascinating tales of how they came – and were led – into the ministry. Often there was a spark there all along. That’s certainly true of Mac Frazier.

Mac was a founding partner with several other young New Church men of Refinery, Inc., a cutting-edge web development company, where he ran the strategic consulting division for eight years. But he says his wife and his partners knew all along that the ministry was his long-term plan, no matter how things panned out with Refinery.

He was born Glenn McKinley Frazier to Bob and Bonnie Frazier in Bryn Athyn, but has always been known simply as Mac. He spent his first year in Kenya, where his Dad was a textile consultant, then grew up in Bryn Athyn.

He remembers that “as a little kid I used to pretend in my mind that I was the one preaching, sometimes.” In sixth grade, the Rev. Fred Schnarr gave the students a big assignment, then suffered a heart attack, which he survived, but was out of school for the year. Mac’s unfinished project was on the Ancient Word, “and I was a bit lost.”

The Rev. Prescott Rogers subbed during the year and gave him encouragement, plus some notes, and sixth-grade teacher Gloria Wetzel showed him how to use the Concordance. “But it wasn’t really until the summer after high school graduation (1989) that I really had the first conscious intentional thoughts about going into ministry.”

One day he found himself sitting in the empty cathedral, just thinking, “when I felt a powerful desire to help bring people into the Lord’s kingdom.”

Editor’s note: This is part of a continuing series introducing ministers of the General Church.

Next: The Rev. Chuck Blair, Pastor of NewChurch LIVE.

But there were other things he was interested in, so he put off the call for many years.

“Finally, with my wife’s encouragement, I left my business when it had gotten to a slower-growing, more stable point and felt confident that my absence wouldn’t cause major problems, and entered Theological School. (The business was sold a year later.) He graduated and was ordained in 2006.

All of these events influenced his decision. When he decided to enter Theological School, “I was passionate about correspondences, the Ancient Word, and doctrinal study. I came out the other side still dedicated to doctrine, but more energized by the human side of the use, with a passion for evangelism in particular.”

Mac says he was deciding progressively on the ministry over the course of his life. It had become a firm decision by the time he proposed to Gillian (Leeper) – when Refinery was just starting up. The final nudge to apply to Theological School was a small invitation in the *Bryn Athyn Post* by then-Dean Eric Carswell. Well, that and the fact that his brother Scott also was applying. “I couldn’t let him beat me to ordination!” (Younger brother Pearse has also entered the ministry.)

Among experiences in Theological School affecting how he approaches the ministry were attending a Making Disciples conference in Boulder, Colorado, and the Rev. Grant Schnarr and Bronwen Henry of General Church Outreach giving him a copy of *The Purpose Driven Life*.

After ordination, his first assignment was in Pittsburgh, where he was Assistant to the Pastor, Amos Glenn, taught in the school, was a traveling minister from North Ohio to North Carolina, and worked with the Rev. Ethan McCardell, then pastor in nearby Sarver.

He was ordained into the second degree during his second year in Pittsburgh, then moved to Bryn Athyn as an interim Assistant to the Pastor so that then-Assistant Pastor Grant Schnarr could serve NewChurch LIVE. He taught in the elementary school, helped support the NewChurch LIVE preaching team, served the New Church Young Adults group (“Pulse”), and helped to develop New Church Journey programs in the Office of Outreach.

Two years later he and his family (with children Glenn, Tommy, Siobhan and James) moved to Austin, Texas, to launch New Way Church. He led the first monthly worship gathering in August 2010, then began weekly worship in February of this year. (www.NewWayAustin.org)

“My current position as founding pastor in a brand new church here in Austin,” he says, “is the culmination of hopes, dreams and plans I have had for many years. At the same time, it is insanely challenging work. Being a church planter tests my faith, my resolve, my ego and my sanity, to be quite honest. But the New Church – to say nothing of the General Church – needs

to be available to billions more people than it currently is, and it is my firm conviction that there is no more effective means of doing this than by starting new local church communities.”

Mac says he is most happy when preaching, “and the more people I can connect with, the better. Some of my favorite moments so far have included preaching on Charter Day in the Field House in Bryn Athyn, speaking at the most recent General Assembly, and several other times preaching in various places around the country. Also among the highlights are several weddings and baptisms.”

He’s run out of time for hobbies lately but enjoys reading (almost anything, but especially science fiction and fantasy literature), gaming, chess, bonsai training, martial arts, playing guitar and piano, and watching movies. “My one form of escapism right now is playing an online science-fiction MMOG (massively multiplayer online game) that a friend and congregant here in Austin got me interested in recently.”

One thing you might not know about Mac: He was once a guest on an Iranian, anti-government, pro-democracy student-run underground Internet radio program.

His favorite passage from the Writings is: “It is not so difficult to live the life of heaven as some believe.” (*Heaven and Hell* 528) Actually, the whole section beginning with 528 and going forward on this topic.

A New Christianity

A Sermon by the Rev. Mac Frazier

Today is June 19th. June-teenth, as it's called around here. Yesterday we had a barbecue to celebrate something that happened on this date many years ago.

June 19th is the date on which word of the emancipation of slaves in America reached a town here in Texas. But June 19th is also the date that marks the beginning of a new kind of Christianity.

New Way Church is just a baby church, not even a year old, but we are part of a movement that began more than 200 years ago. That movement, a New Christianity, which began on June 19th, is what is illustrated in the final two chapters of the Book of Revelation. That city, New Jerusalem, descending to earth, is a symbolic picture of what the Lord's kingdom is meant to be.

But why a "new" Christianity? Why a New Church? Because shortly after it began, the Christianity begun by Jesus lost its way. It went off the rails. Within a few hundred years, the message of Jesus was overshadowed by confusion, by false ideas, and by powerful political interests. And if you had to pick a date for when things went wrong, you could easily choose – yes, June 19th. It was on that date that what is now considered the normal, orthodox, "catholic" understanding of who Jesus Christ is, was established at the Council of Nicea.

For the first century or so, Christians debated and discussed deep questions such as the nature of Jesus as God, how the Father Jesus spoke of related to him as Son, and what God wanted people to do as a consequence. And no one was in charge. It was an intellectual free-for-all.

Things got complicated as Christianity spread beyond its Jewish roots. Greek philosophy got into the mix, and with that all sorts of hang-ups about the supposed unchangeableness of the Divine. And this started to cause all sorts of debates. Which is fine. Early Christianity had plenty of room for multiple interpretations and points of view. But then the Roman Empire got involved.

Christianity went from being an oppressed cult to the official state religion of the most powerful government on earth. And the Romans didn't like ambiguity. Eventually, the Emperor called together all of the leaders in the

Editor's note: This is a transcription from an oral sermon, delivered June 19, 2011, at the New Way Church in Austin, Texas.

Christian movement to settle “once and for all” some essential questions.

It was a highly political process, with backroom deals, hidden agendas, and lots of verbal debate. And in the end, a particular point of view “won.” The result of the Council of Nicea was the Nicene Creed, which stated that Father, Son and Holy Spirit were each somehow a separate “person,” and yet that it was not allowed to call them separate gods – somehow three people are/is one god. It didn’t make sense, but it helped resolve some other issues, and it helped put down the opinions of a group that argued against Jesus being divine at all. It was a compromise position.

But it was also, now, the law. In typical Roman fashion, it became illegal to hold any other opinion on the nature of Jesus as God, and people who disagreed would be punished – killed, even. End of discussion.

The Christianity that resulted spread and grew more powerful, and alternative opinions were increasingly suppressed. There were other things that went wrong along the way, but the Council of Nicea in 325 was the beginning of the confusion about who God is. And with that came confusion about how we are supposed to respond to God.

So that New Jerusalem, that city coming down out of heaven, is a vision for a new birth within Christianity, a new coming of the church. And if the church went off the rails at the Council of Nicea in 325 – if that was the very first – what does it look like to have the New Jerusalem, the New Church come down to earth?

It has to start with going back to the basics: Jesus is God.

And if you start with that idea and say, “You know what? Whatever we read, whether it’s in the Old Testament or the New Testament, or in other books of theology, or works of philosophy – whatever we read – let’s read that in the context of the words of Jesus himself.” Give what Jesus said top billing in how you understand everything else. Start with that.

And what was Jesus’ message, over and over and over again? He preached love.

People asked, “What do I need to do to inherit the Kingdom of God?” He said, “Well, you know the commandments? Don’t lie, don’t steal, don’t murder, don’t covet, don’t commit adultery – all these ‘don’ts’? Obey that, and love one another. Cease to do evil, learn to do good.” Over and over and over again, this was his message. This is what He preached.

For the New Jerusalem coming down into this world, more people under the banner of Christianity have to get back to the idea: Jesus is God and because of that we are going to live as He taught – living a life of love and service to one another, shunning evil and doing good.

And so the New Jerusalem coming down – for that to happen in this world, more and more people under the banner of Christianity, as followers of Christ, have to get back to this idea: “Jesus is God and because of that we are going to live as He taught. And that is living a life of love and service to one another. We’re going to shun evil and do good.”

So we talked about 325 AD. That was the Council of Nicea – that’s when they had this giant political debate, created a law that for centuries afterward, if you went against it, you got in serious trouble. Fast forward to the mid-18th century, and Christianity was on fire. There were all sorts of people who had been questioning and reconsidering a lot of the traditional ideas of Christianity.

This had been going on for a while. The Protestant Revolution was the beginning of that. Martin Luther was one of the first people within the Catholic power structure to say, “You know what? I think we went off the rails somewhere.” He wasn’t the very first to say it, but he was one of the first to say it and not get killed for it and then draw a large following.

There were others who started to come along as well and point out problems with traditional Christianity. And a lot of the things they pointed at were specific abuses of power that the Catholic Church was committing.

Within that context, there was a man named Emanuel Swedenborg. He was Swedish, and his father was a bishop in the Lutheran Church in Sweden. And he was also a scientist. He was in the House of Nobles. He did a lot of scientific experimentation. He also wrote some philosophy.

And he had an epiphany. He had a spiritual experience, and was called to be a part of this New Jerusalem, to helping a new birth, a rebirth of Christianity, to come about.

And so he went back and he started reading the Bible. He studied it and he prayed about it. And we believe today – this is one of the founding ideas behind the New Church movement that New Way Church is part of – that he was inspired.

He wrote a lot of books and said, “So here’s where Christianity was and here’s where it’s gotten to, and maybe here’s where it ought to go.” And he talked about a new way of understanding how to read the Bible, and a new way of understanding the relationship between the spiritual world and the natural world.

His capstone was this book called *True Christian Religion*. There’s a more modern translation called *True Christianity*. And it was written in the context of a trial.

The Protestant Reformation was well under way. This was a group of religious people who said, “You know what? Maybe traditional Christianity hasn’t gotten it right.” They started to write new rules. Part of their problem was they hadn’t let go of this ancient Roman concept of “there’s got to be one

right person and everyone else goes to jail.”

There were some who began to persecute anyone who disagreed with them. Calvin was particularly bad about this. He was fairly well known for having people arrested, burned in effigy, and even burned to death in some cases. There were others as well. And so, as Swedenborg was starting to write these books, saying, “Well, maybe it’s like this,” and “Maybe this is how we should read the Bible,” he caused a stir. Within his own country – Sweden – people who read his books started to get in trouble.

At one point there was a trial to see whether or not it would become against the law for Swedenborg’s books to be sold in Sweden. So this trial was going on, and he had been writing all of these books for different audiences, and this was really the book that he wrote seemingly in response to what was looking like the beginning of a persecution of this new kind of Christian.

He wrote a book that summarized all of the key points of all these things he had been writing about for years. He had started publishing books of theology in 1749. It was 1769 when he wrote this final book. In fact, he finished it on the anniversary of the Council of Nicea, on June 19th, 1770. He published *True Christian Religion* in 1771 and died in 1772.

At the very beginning of *True Christian Religion*, he laid out an essential definition, explaining, “This is really what real Christianity is all about.” There are several different parts to it, but I’m just going to read a section of it here, from the very beginning.

It says, “The particular details of faith on man’s part are, 1) God is one, in whom is the Divine Trinity, and He is the Lord God the Savior Jesus Christ.”

Now he wrote whole books that explain what that means, and this particular book had three long chapters on what it means to say, “Well, this trinity – these three parts – are in Jesus Christ.” But the central idea is, “Jesus Christ is God, and God is one.”

It also says, “2), Faith leading to salvation is believing in Him.”

A lot of people were saying this then. But then the next part goes on to define what believing in Him actually means.

“3) Evil actions must not be done because they are the work of the devil and come from him. 4) Good actions must be done because they are the work of God and come from Him.”

Got that? Part of what was going on at the time is that the Catholic Church said, “If you want to go to heaven, you just have to be part of the Catholic Church. And we can kick you out. But if you give us money or you do certain things, well, then we’ll let you into heaven.”

But other people said, “Well, that’s not what Christ said. Christ said you have to have faith, so anything that’s not just having faith is out. Unnecessary and unwanted.”

God didn't say, 'Behold I make all new things.'

He said, 'I make all things new.' He wants to change us and the religious landscape by gently helping us turn toward the idea of who God really is, what He is asking of us and trying to do with us.

Some wondered, "But what about how we live our life? Doesn't that matter?"

"No, no, no. It's good to be good, but to be saved, you have to believe."

And so here Swedenborg is writing, "Well, no, you have to believe. And you have to not do bad things and you have to do good things." It's not either/or. It's not the Roman "one way or the other." It's both/and.

It goes on to say, "A person must perform these actions as if they were his own, but must believe they come from the Lord working in him and through him."

People were starting to say, "Well, you're saved only by faith, because otherwise it's like you're trying to buy your way into heaven. It's like you're bribing God. You're taking away God's power." And you know,

there's a truth in there, because if you do good, it's really God working through you. Right? None of us really does anything good of ourselves.

So *True Christian Religion* says to us, "Yes, you're supposed to acknowledge that, but you have to behave as if you're the one who's doing the good." You can't just say, "Oh, I believe, and I'll trust that God will make me do good stuff" because we often don't do good stuff. You have to make an effort. You have to cooperate with what He's trying to do with your life.

So these five points – these were the starting point of a religious revolution.

Now here's the thing: Swedenborg himself never made a big attempt to start a movement. He didn't start the "Cult of Swedenborg." He didn't gather followers to himself.

In fact, initially, when he was first writing, he published anonymously. It was only after people started to ask questions and to figure out who was writing these books that he actually started putting his name on them.

He wasn't interested in gathering people together, and in fact, from reading his letters it seems what he mostly wanted was for the existing Christian Church to read his books and open their minds up a little bit.

What actually happened was that most of them read his books and got very, very angry and said, "Anyone who reads his books is out of the church." Protestant, Catholic – didn't matter. "We all hate you."

So, in the beginning, the people who called themselves "New Christians," called themselves "Swedenborgians," or identified with the "New Jerusalem," were a small and kind of quiet group. And they mostly thrived in places that had a little bit more freedom.

England especially became a place where a lot of these new kinds of

Christians started to meet quietly together, because England was a much more open society compared to a lot of the rest of Europe.

But still it was kind of a quiet movement. And there was a debate within this movement about how to relate to traditional Christian organizations. Some thought along these lines: “Well, OK, so Swedenborg wanted to reform the existing church. That didn’t really seem to go that well. Books got confiscated and that didn’t work out, so maybe what we need to do is step aside and create this totally separate thing – a New Jerusalem.”

Jesus said, “Behold, I make all things new.” So they said, “Well, maybe the church needs to be a new thing.” And so for a while the movement was kind of this quiet separatist thing, but that debate continued to exist within it. “Are we supposed to be separate from Christianity or are we supposed to be part of the Reformation of Christianity?”

I think the answer lies in the fact that John did not say, “I saw a totally new city – I don’t know what it’s called – coming out of heaven.” No, he said, “It’s Jerusalem! It’s the city that we’ve always looked at as the symbol for the church, but it’s totally different. It’s new. It’s been remade.”

God didn’t say, “Behold, I make *all new things*.” He said, “I make *all things new*.” Just like God isn’t out to replace all of you folks, but to change you. He wants to change the religious landscape of earth, not by getting rid of Christianity. Not even by getting rid of any of the other world religions, but rather by gently helping us all turn toward this idea of who God really is, and therefore what God is really asking of us, what He’s trying to do with us.

And the Lord is a gentle God. So He does this as slowly as He needs to for us to be able to keep up. Unfortunately, that’s been very, very slow.

But part of change does involve removing old things and replacing them with the new, and so new organizations that are not part of any of the old denominations and organizations of traditional Christianity are an important part of the picture.

And so a New Christianity begins with these basic ideas: that God is one; that if you really want to know who God is, look to Jesus as you see Him in His Word; and that you’re meant to live, learning to stop doing bad things, and learning to do good things, in a life of service and love to one another.

That core formulation of what religion is all about – what a life of spirituality is meant to look like – is the bedrock of the New Church, of a New Christianity. And New Way Church, right here, is aspiring to be a tiny little piece of that great city. That’s our mission: to – in our tiny little way – help recreate Christianity and the religious landscape of the entire human race.

So, are you ready for that? Think you can pull that off?

Here’s the thing: many, many people have tried to reform religious thought in the world. And there are generally three ways you can do it.

What is the best way to religiously change the world? To be bold and humble at the same time.

First, you can go to war. This is a very, very popular method. Find the people who disagree, and kill them, until their friends realize they'd rather agree with you than be dead.

But you know what the problem with that is? You can threaten people into agreeing with you, but in their hearts, they haven't really changed. You haven't won anything. You've gotten people who disagree to be quiet about it, but you haven't gotten them to agree. You can't punch somebody into agreement. Doesn't work. And in the meantime, you're not being very Christlike, so you've already failed.

The second way you can do things is by saying, "You know what? We are going to go create our own small utopia. We're going to have our own culture and our own ways, and we're going to build walls."

And you know what? There have been a lot of religious movements that have done this, too. Some of them have been very good at serving the spiritual needs of the members of their communities, but they don't really do much for those outside of the community.

I have a lot of respect for Amish culture, for instance. I don't know how many of you are aware of this, but it was pretty big news while I was in Pennsylvania. There was a tragic shooting in a town there where a man shot up an Amish school, killing several children. But the big story was the way the Amish people responded with love to the family of the shooter, the person who caused them all this pain. It was a beautiful thing, and I'll be forever impressed with aspects of that culture and that religious community.

And yet, there we have a group of people who have essentially decided, "We're going to put walls around our lives, and we're going to limit and carefully control what crosses in and out of those walls." Which means they have decided to limit and control their influence on the world, as a way of stopping the world's influence on them.

A lot of groups have done that. There have been times when those within the New Church movement have taken that approach. And I think that can be helpful for serving the members of a church community. Not so useful for those outside, though.

So, what's the third way of attempting to religiously change the world? The third way is to be bold and humble at the same time.

If you are willing to be clear about what you stand for, to say what you believe, to speak your truth with integrity, and to live your life according to your beliefs. To live the truth that you know – without hiding it. Make it open, and a part of your life. Don't keep truth to yourself, but don't use it as a weapon against others either.

This doesn't sound big and dramatic. It's not like a crusade. It's not like a gearing up for a siege, either. It's neither of the extremes of "Let's go get the world" or "Let's get away from the world." It means connecting with people who disagree with you while maintaining your own beliefs.

And merely by courageously living your life in integrity, you actually change the world. And it is so undramatic and so unspectacular that most people don't believe this works. But this is really how you change the people around you. They are changed by how you live your own life.

But you have to do it in a way that is in integrity and that is courageous. It's courageous because it means saying, "You know what? I disagree. And I love you. Can I share my opinion?"

That's what has to happen within the community as well as in its interaction with its neighbors. It's so much easier to decide, "I'm just going to avoid all conflict. I'm going to avoid all argument. I'm going to ignore what other people have to say, so that I don't have to figure out a way of connecting that with what I believe. I'm just going to wall everything off and maybe I'll be in the world, but I'll pretend not to be."

And it's also so much easier to say, "You know what? If I don't agree, I'm going to speak up and I'm going to make sure that they get it and I'm going fight until I win."

Those extremes do not change people. Rather, being humble and courageous at the same time does. Respect other people's opinions and respect your own as well.

The words that I'm saying are undramatic. And what I'm describing sounds sort of subtle – maybe a little bit boring. But I promise you – this is a world-changing way of living your life. But because it's not dramatic, no single one of us is able to make a big, big difference doing it this way.

But if as a community this is how we live our lives, and as families, this is how we live our lives, well, as families and as a community, we will grow. People are attracted to that.

Think of some of the greatest religious figures of our time – some of the most respected people. They are people who have courageously and humbly lived out their spirituality for all to see.

The Dalai Lama, for instance, is not a Christian, and yet a lot of Christians look up to him. He stands for something good, but he does it in the humble way. He's courageous and humble.

So, that's the task this week. I want you to practice being humbly courageous. And I wish I had a tip on how to pull it off. There really isn't a "tip" for this, though.

To those of you who are parents – one of the most effective ways of living humbly and courageously is by raising your kids to know that their opinions

matter, and that they need to respect other people's opinions. To respect their own opinion, to respect other people's opinions. Do this and you create a home where people are free to speak up but they are not free to knock down. You will create people who will be humble leaders of the world.

I pray regularly that the New Jerusalem will come down from heaven, that we get to a place where really, spiritually, there are no more tears, and no more pain, and no more suffering. That the way we as a species have turned religion into a way to hurt each other stops. And that change begins with communities like this.

You really can change the world. So, on this anniversary of the publishing of *True Christian Religion*, this anniversary of the Council of Nicea, June 19th, that's my message for you all. Amen.

Lessons: *Revelation 21:1-5 True Christian Religion 2:2*

Integrating Science and Spirituality

George Gantz

The Swedenborg Center of Concord, with support from the New Church of Concord, Massachusetts, earlier this year opened a conversation on the Internet and in a local discussion series: *Integrating Science and Spirituality*. (See www.swedenborgcenterconcord.org). This conversation is important, and very much needed, in the face of the acrimonious public debate between the polarized minority camps of atheists and biblical literalists. In truth, science and religion are both human modes of understanding – we should be seeking to build bridges, not tear them down.

Why is this significant for the New Church? In my mind, the rise of science over the recent centuries is part of the “New Church descending,” as it represents the human intellect and capacity for understanding the natural world coming fully into its own. And of course, that also means the risks to the human soul of choosing materialism and the related loves of dominion and self-gratification, are greater than ever.

These risks are all around us – as we enjoy the fruits of the human technological enterprise, we can easily become separated from our own hearts and the “still small voice within.” The broader symptoms in society of alienation and detachment abound in the world at large, but are manifest in each of us as well.

The roots of this issue are deep. In 1757, Swedenborg wrote: “I spoke about the foundations of truth, that they are two, one from the Word, the other from nature or from the truths of nature; But, still, they agree the one with the other; Since sciences have shut up the understanding, therefore, sciences may also open it; and it is opened so far as men are in good.” (*Spiritual Experiences* 5709)

More than 150 years earlier, Francis Bacon, sometimes referred to as the father of modern science, said something remarkably similar: “Let no man.....

In my mind, the rise of science over the recent centuries is part of the ‘New Church descending,’ as it represents the human intellect and capacity for understanding the natural world coming fully into its own.

think or maintain that a man can search too far, or be too well studied in the book of God's word, or the book of God's works, divinity or philosophy; but rather let men endeavor an endless progress or proficiency in both; only let men beware that they apply both to charity, and not to swelling; to use, and not to ostentation." (from *The Advancement of Learning: Colours of Good and Evil*, originally published in 1597)

Indeed, the charity and humility called for by Bacon and Swedenborg seems to be lacking these days in both camps.

There is another important dynamic at work in science that makes the effort to engage in the ISAS dialogue particularly relevant. Over the past century, at the very foundations of the scientific enterprise, limits in the ability of science to explain the true nature of physical reality have emerged. The natural world is more complex and more elusive than anyone could have imagined. A century that began with confidence that the scientific enterprise would soon answer all the great questions ended in a confusion of quarks and strings, dark matter and quantum entanglements.

Mid-century, Einstein opined that God does not play dice with the universe – by the end it almost seems that God has played a practical joke on the human aspiration to a complete understanding of the natural world. Even Stephen Hawking recently admitted that scientists may never be able to grasp the Theory of Everything.

The puzzlements of science are fascinating topics in themselves – but they are also an open door for conversations about the usefulness of the other human mode of knowing, the one that reaches beyond the merely physical into the spiritual. Creativity, inspiration, revelation, insight, subjective experience, contemplation, prophecy – these are tools of the spirit which can help transcend the limitations of science and bring human understanding to a higher and more complete order.

Moreover, while Divine Providence assures that God's truth can flow through all of these tools, I am convinced (and the New Church teaches) that the sharpest of these tools is the revelation of the Bible/(the Word of God) and particularly the inner spiritual meanings explained in the teachings of Emanuel Swedenborg.

In our three ISAS discussion forums in the spring of 2011, we addressed three areas where the limitations of science have become or are becoming apparent: logic/mathematics; the human brain; and biology. In a nutshell, science is provably unable to explain or reconcile fundamental features in these disciplines. Logic (in formal systems) cannot prove both completeness and consistency. Brain models cannot explain consciousness. Biology cannot explain the impetus for life.

For each, there are spiritual insights that can lead to a higher order

understanding. For example, gaining understanding beyond the limits of logical systems requires appeal to “higher orders”, e.g. going outside the system. The implication is that the truths of the natural world are incomplete without spiritual truths.

Similarly, in biology, each seed contains within it the potentiality of emerging through a developmental interaction with the environment, and the origins of life itself contains the potentiality of emerging into human form.

Why this is the case can only be understood in the context of a divine ordering principle, a “theistic rationale” as described by Dr. Reuben Bell. The same can be said about consciousness, free will and moral choice – clearly these are embodied in material brain states, but they are an emergent ordering on a higher, spiritual level.

The post-modern scientific conundrums open the door to spiritual inquiry with religion as a partner, not an antagonist, with science.

The possibilities in this statement would seem to be borne out by the fact that the literature seeking to understand and explore the interface of science and spirituality has exploded in the past few years, and some of it is even beginning to appear in the public media.

Two interesting new additions to the conversation include books published by Oxford University Press in 2010. One, by Elaine Howard Ecklund, is *Science vs. Religion: What Scientists Really Think*. The second is *America’s Four Gods* by Paul Froese and Christopher Bader. Both books highlight the misrepresentations that abound.

Froese and Bader’s research indicates that in America’s secular, materialist culture, a surprising 96 percent of people believe in God. Relative to scientists, Ecklund’s research leads her to conclude: “Much of what we believe about the faith lives of elite scientists is wrong. The ‘insurmountable hostility’ between science and religion is a caricature ... hardly representative of reality.” Both sets of findings are encouraging.

So how do we engage in a conversation about integrating scientific and spiritual understanding of the world and our life in the world? Bacon and Swedenborg emphasized the importance of both natural and spiritual truth, and both point out that the inquiry must be approached “in good”, i.e. from “charity” and “use”, rather than from selfish motives.

This is a useful starting point for what we are trying to accomplish in the ISAS forum. If we approach these questions – and our dialogue – with humility, and with the objective of gaining from both science and religion, then

If we approach the questions with humility, and with the objective of gaining from both science and religion, then hopefully we can appreciate the truth available from both modes of thought.

hopefully we can appreciate the truth available from both modes of thought. By approaching the conversations with an open mind, and an open heart, we can find the higher truths that will help us be more “useful”, “charitable” and “good.”

Readers are welcome to join in this conversation. The website at www.swedenborgcenterconcord.com is open. We have 10 articles posted so far, as well as links to other resources. We also recorded the three discussion sessions last spring, and they can be reached through links on the website. More articles are in the works, but in the meantime, anyone can add his or her own comments or ideas.

Editor’s note: George Gantz also hosted a workshop on this topic at the General Assembly in June.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



George Gantz is a member of the New Church of Concord. He is a lifelong student of science, philosophy and (more recently) the teachings of Swedenborg, and lives in Wayland, Massachusetts, with his wife, Wenda.

Council of the Clergy Meetings

This is a condensed version of a Report on the Council of the Clergy meetings held June 27-29, 2011 after the General Assembly in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania.

The report was prepared by the Rev. Kenneth J. Alden, with assistance from Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith and the Revs. Eric H. Carswell and Derrick A.M. Lumsden.

Monday, June 27

SESSION 1

In his opening worship the Rt. Rev. Thomas L. Kline read from *John 5*, drawing attention to the pastoral care the Lord gave to the paralyzed man lying on his bed by the pool of Bethesda. Rather than simply healing him, the Lord challenged him. Divine truth challenges people to get on with their life, lifted to a higher principle. So pastors who let the Lord's truth lead provide for healing to take place. The Lord also urges the Church to lift our minds to a higher view – His view which shows possibilities far greater than we can see – and to walk in it.

Upon recommendation of the Membership Committee, the following recently ordained men were accepted as full members of the Council of the Clergy: The Revs. Honore A. Aka, Edward Akotey, Ablam Amouzouvi, Guillaume J. K. Anato, Todd J. Beiswenger, Evariste Daligou Dakouri, Moise G. Doukourou, Pearse M. Frazier, Henry-Joel K. Kouhoui, Cyprien K. Mangoua, Nicks Marisa, Stephen K. Muire, Calvin A. Odhner, Ryan M. Sandstrom, Ron D. Schnarr, Brian Smith, Malcolm C. Smith and Howard A. Thompson. The Revs. R. Amos Glenn and Sung Won Paek were made associate members since they are no longer primarily focused on being General Church ministers. The Rev. Michael K. Cowley resigned and is therefore no longer a member of the Council.

Associate members – those no longer serving primarily in the ministry of the General Church – are welcomed to participate in all but the governance issues of the Council.

New Candidates for the priesthood, Solomon J. Keal and J. Kamenan Atta, were welcomed as guests. The Rev. Malcolm G. Smith, unable to attend due to his recent move to South Africa, participated via a Skype Internet connection.

The Rev. Dr. Erik E. Sandstrom gave a summary of three short papers:

* *How the Human was Made Divine (what happened to the body?)* outlined truths by which we can enter with the understanding into this matter of

faith. The Lord arranged angelic societies around Himself; induced states on Himself, preparing the natural then the rational and then adjoining the merit of righteousness to Himself. The final “how” is that the Divine substance replaced the maternal, physical forms.

* *Why the Writings are the Word: Because They Say So* showed that the term “Word” applies to both the literal and internal sense. The doctrine in heaven is the same as what we have been given in the Writings. All six degrees of truth (*Arcana Coelestia* 8443) have been put plainly in the Writings, which are entirely in accord with the spiritual sense.

* *Who Can Be Priests?* directed our attention to *True Christian Religion* 155, which speaks of the Holy Spirit being promised with inauguration into the priesthood. Nothing Divine belongs to the priest, and yet that which is Divine and on a discretely higher degree of life is adjoined to the priest. He said that discrete degrees are essential for a correct understanding and practice of the priesthood. He observed that the male form of mind receives influx in the intellect differently from the female mind, and with this comes an ability to raise the understanding into light as this number calls for in the priest’s disposition – a way detached from the priest’s will. It also calls for the male disposition separating the truth seen from his own native loves.

With thanks for his scholarship, several speakers challenged his conclusion about *how* the Writings are the Word. They suggested that the internal sense in heaven is of a discretely higher nature than that contained in the Writings. The Word is described in many different ways in the Writings, which fit some of those descriptions but not all. Dr. Sandstrom maintained that the Writings have no “literal sense,” but rational terminology which has a direct relationship to its content. So there is no difference between its meaning and its terminology.

SESSION 2

This session focused on the business of episcopal selection. The Selection Process Committee – the Revs. Ekow E. Eshun, Matthew L. Genzlinger, Jong-Ui Lee and Grant H. Odhner, Chairman – brought five matters before the Council for decisions:

Whether to continue the tradition of not setting criteria such as age, years of service or types of experience to limit potential nominees. To leave the Council in as much freedom as possible, the committee proposed that criteria not be specified. This was quickly accepted.

Whether to allow nominations from the floor. Because nominations are open for several months, and this practice can be changed if the need arises, it was recommended and accepted not to allow nominations from the floor.

What is the orderly way to address concerns priests may have about candidates? Our previous policy was to speak only of positive qualities from

the floor. Many perceive this to be deficient. The committee recommended a means to consider concerns without allowing negativity to rule. A lengthy discussion focused on the uses and dangers of addressing concerns about a candidate's shortcomings, the distinction between the man and the use he may serve, the weakening and strengthening effects that raising concerns can have, etc. The discussion continued on Tuesday.

Whether candidates should be asked to respond in writing to a set of prepared questions so that those who do not know them well can better understand who they are and their vision for the Church. Discussion brought to light the dangers of having a man-made vision for the Church; the use of hearing a candidate's ideas about serving the Lord's vision; the possibility these statements could become "campaign promises"; and a man's commitment to the uses of the priesthood being sufficient, with no further need of a vision statement. It was decided to have the candidates respond to some questions in writing.

Voting methods. The previous system involved discussing candidates, voting, eliminating the one with the fewest votes, and continuing until one is selected. When there are more than two candidates, this tends to eliminate consensus candidates in favor of those with a strong following but who may not be as acceptable to the entire group. The Rev. Stephen D. Cole, who has studied this, addressed the Council on other vote aggregation methods. After reviewing numerous methods, he noted that no one method is seen to be "fair" according to a set of fairness criteria, with each having its strengths and weaknesses. This was continued to Tuesday.

SESSION 3

The Rev. Mark D. Pendleton summarized his 78-page paper, *Repentance as a Spiritual Discipline*, which grew out of an experience as a teenager facing an issue that was solved using the steps of repentance. In further studies and practice he found that following these steps got him to the heart of any issue more quickly, directly, deeply and completely than any other, gave him a greater connectedness with the Lord, and gave him hope 100% of the time.

The basic steps are self-examination, acknowledging one's sins, praying to the Lord, and abstaining from one's evils. By following these steps of repentance we experience real choice. A new will grows up against an old will – not a regenerate will but the first step, as a kind of gateway to reformation.

Mr. Pendleton quoted newcomers who have been using this program: "Self-examination is solid gold." "It's the best thing I've ever done." "I believe this process is the salvation of marriage." "There's something about this process different from anything available anywhere in the world." "What you're telling me confirms everything I've ever learned from psychology." This approach is

very newcomer friendly.

Mr. Pendleton was thanked for his useful, practical paper. One younger minister said this method had changed his life and that young people are looking for such a practical application of doctrine of life.

While this paper is too long for publication in *New Church Life*, Mr. Pendleton is seeking to have it published and widely available.

SESSION 4

The Rt. Rev. Thomas L. Kline offered his report as the Executive Bishop.

He spoke of his response to the clergy resolution. The major item of improvement was increased confidence in the direction and future of Bryn Athyn College. He has also made greater use of Consistory, where consultation has changed how he makes decisions and has affected directions in the General Church. He feels we are on a good course.

Bishop Kline then spoke to the financial crisis in the Church. Few congregations are solvent. Health care and benefits are escalating rapidly. The economic downturn has hurt contributions and a large percentage of our endowments are down. We have laid off more than 50 full- and part-time employees in the Academy and General Church. We don't want to spend down the endowments nor do we want to operate the Church on endowments only.

A Funding Principals Committee has been established to look at priorities of expenses to aid the administration in making decisions. It has representation from ministers, Board members, laypeople and administration. He said we would see a smaller central office in the future and maybe smaller grants to societies.

The accreditation of the Theological School is an important issue. Since this accreditation is under the umbrella of Bryn Athyn College, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education Standards for Governance mandate that the Theological School be under the College President. This mandate has been accepted because accreditation is important for a number of reasons, including: non-USA students must get visas to study at the school and sometimes it is necessary for graduates seeking visas to serve in other countries. We are also looking at the possibility of seeking separate accreditation for the Theological School in the future.

Bishop Kline noted that General Church marketing is now under the direction of the Rev. David H. Lindrooth in the Office of Outreach. An emphasis will be the General Church Internet project, with the Rev. John L. Odhner as content editor, Robert T. Andrews doing structural work, and Tracy L. McCardell as a computer expert. With some 30,000 real contacts each month, this appears to be a good avenue to reach newcomers.

In response to questions, one issue he discussed was experiments in the

Church. In the past, when a society could not afford a full salary, the minister traveled to other circles and groups. We experimented with giving grants so the pastor could develop the local church and not be absent with travel. But with congregations numbering in the teens, 20s or 30s, unless they can become self-supporting, or have resources of their own, we cannot continue this experiment.

One of the most successful experiments in the Church's history is NewChurch LIVE. It is not just that it attracted 130 new members, but that when it did not meet financial expectations, it cut expenses. In the past, some new uses that didn't meet expectations became a black hole for money. By cutting expenses when an experiment doesn't work out we can confidently do other bold projects. We have to be in the real world financially. Formal New Church education in our established schools is one exception to a pay-as-you-go use. Schools need endowment to support them. But our current model would be challenged if we tried to start another school.

Clergy and Wives Dinner

Among social events two that included clergy wives stand out. The first was the open house in the Glencairn cloisters on Sunday evening. The second was a social hour in Cairnwood followed by dinner under a tent. We had a taste of heavenly food when the Rev. Khalid O. Rangi and his wife, Josephine, offered a charming song from Kenya. Affections were clearly stirred, as little groups or couples spontaneously stepped up to sing a song or two representing Ghana, Côte d' Ivoire, Togo, Australia, South Africa, the United States and possibly others. What a delight to have love for the Lord, marriage and life expressed in song in so many different languages!

Tuesday, June 28

SESSION 5

Worship led by the Rev. Eric H. Carswell was based on *Jeremiah 29*, and his topic was "a future and a hope." He said the future and hope of the Church lies in doing the things the Lord sets before us even though we often find ourselves in less-than-ideal circumstances.

The Rev. Yong "John" J. Jin introduced candidates for the ministry from Korea. Shiro Matsumoto, Japan, and Soon Cheol Lee, Korea, were unable to attend, but Suk Man Kang, Seoung Gil Kim, Mahn Hoe Choe and Young Ho Jung were welcomed with applause.

The Rev. Louis D. Synnestvedt reviewed his paper, “*One the Head of the Church.*” He began with the story of Joseph in *Genesis* 37, 38 and 42. He spoke of our youthful dreams for ourselves in the Church and how these often meet with disillusionment. This comes of pursuing doctrine rather than life. Like the brothers rejecting Joseph’s dreams, do we reject the dreams the Lord has for this Church?

If asked, “Who is the head of our church, the General Church?” we might respond, “the Bishop.” The best answer, however, is that the Lord Jesus Christ is the head of the Church. Our challenge is to do as John the Baptist said, “The Lord must increase but we must decrease.” We live in an age and a time when the Church needs no intermediaries: the Lord Himself is our intermediary and His Word is the means of conjoining the earth and the heavens, within us.

Mr. Synnestvedt presented some practical considerations aimed at generating discussion and stretching our concept of what the General Church is and can be. Could we avoid using the expression, “head of the Church,” for any other than the Lord? Rather than speaking of decentralizing the Church, we could think of re-centering the Church on the Lord. One model could be the Lord standing in the midst of the seven lampstands, providing the light for each lamp. With the selection of the next bishop, might we consider a transition to a House of Bishops? Could our overseas churches regard the Executive Bishop as an “Acting Bishop”? He concluded that if we acknowledge that the Lord is the head of the Church, a new truth – pictured by Benjamin, who brought the brothers and Joseph together – may come to this Council, bringing the Church together.

In discussion, the Lord’s Prayer was suggested as illustrating the innocence and humility needed to have us acknowledge the Lord as the head of His Church. It was questioned whether the difficulties and stresses in the Church are due to having a Bishop as our organization’s leader. All organizations should have the Lord as their head, and all human organizations need leaders. One minister suggested that just as no one beneath the Lord coordinates the angels in heaven, the Lord can organize His Church if we all look to Him. Bishop Kline said he sees his role not as micromanaging what goes on in the Church but as bringing doctrine to the fore so that it may lead. We in the General Church are not “*the* New Church” but one of many churches. More bishops within the General Church will come in time.

SESSION 6

The Selection Process Committee concluded its report, with the Rev. Stephen Cole continuing his presentation on methods of voting. After extensive discussion it was decided to adopt a ranked, or consensus, balloting system. The committee will recommend a specific form of this at the beginning of the

next set of meetings.

The discussion turned to how to address potential concerns about candidates, with numerous proposals discussed. The method adopted is:

- a. Invite clergy to submit concerns privately, in writing, to the Nominating Committee
- b. The committee summarizes concerns, communicates a summary to candidates, along with affirming things said from the floor
- c. The candidates are given time to reflect and formulate a response
- d. The committee articulates the concerns to the Council of the Clergy
- e. The candidates are invited to address the concerns
- f. The clergy encourage one another to exercise charity/self-control in speaking of concerns on the floor and with each other off the floor.

SESSION 7

Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith summarized his paper, "*Some Aspects of Happiness*," which is reprinted in this issue, beginning on page 397.

A sampling of responses: We have no excuse not to be happy; it goes together with salvation. Those who overemphasize future happiness can leave the impression that this earth is only a depressing place. *Arcana Coelestia* 4063 says each state has its delights. Sadness differs from grief-for-others. We have a moral obligation to behave cheerfully toward others. We should realize what good news we in the New Church have to share. We can tell people to be happy in times of temptation: "you are being led to your happiness." Competition and winning are seen in our culture to be keys to happiness, but there is greater happiness in things like peace and conjunction. A college teacher reflected on some of the fallacies he has observed in students: that hard work and happiness are opposites, and that you can choose what makes you happy.

SESSION 8

The Rev. James P. Cooper, Secretary of the Council, led this business session. With an increasingly diverse clergy, who do not have relatives in Bryn Athyn, it is difficult to find housing for ministers in February. Using Academy dormitories might be the best option, but this would require June meetings. He proposed that our meetings in 2012 take place June 25-29. After much discussion, the Council passed an amended motion, with some dissent, to hold the meetings a day later, from June 26-30.

Outreach Director, the Rev. David H. Lindrooth, described the incredible value of Internet advertising. We get about 23,000 contacts a month who seem affirmative to what we teach. The plan is gradually to turn up the flow of contacts by increasing the amount of Google advertising. Our goal is to respond to inquiries within 48 hours. We will have something in place to

handle the flow as it increases. We are hiring a portion of the Rev. John L. Odhner's time to handle some of this flow, and also have many well-trained lay volunteers. When possible, we refer contacts to local congregations but the vast majority live nowhere near a society. One problem is how to serve people who are convinced of the truth of the doctrines and want to be members but who live in distant or even dangerous locations. Some other churches conduct baptisms by proxy. We need to study this question to see how best to serve these people.

Several ministers expressed strong reservations about conducting baptisms remotely. Could we find willing ministers and funding to send them to remote locations? One minister recalled traveling into war zones and his children's fears that he would not return. He suggested that baptizing remotely be reserved for dangerous situations. Several ministers suggested doctrines that might guide our thinking in considering such a practice. Another suggested that rather than altering a sacrament we consider a different classification of membership.

Several ministers asked for help with local advertising campaigns based on the experience of the General Church in its Internet advertising. There was interest in ads that attract people who want to know more, as opposed to those who are looking for a doctrinal fight.

Wednesday, June 29

SESSION 9

The Revs. Yong "John" J. Jin and Derrick A. M. Lumsden were elected to the Membership Committee, replacing the Revs. Göran R. Appelgren and Lawson M. Smith, whose three-year terms had expired.

A moment of silence was observed for members of the Council of the Clergy who had departed this life during the past year: the Revs.. Ragnar Boyesen, Robert A. Cooper, Vinicius R. Guerra and the Rt. Rev. Louis B. King.

The last item of business was a consideration of a resolution prepared by several ministers to bring closure to the previous year's resolution. Discussion turned to three topics:

1. What were the positive changes that had occurred since the previous resolution?
2. Whether the amendment would open a new area of ongoing resolutions, requiring closure the following year.
- 3) The impression of some that the Resolution of 2010 was a problem for the Church.

In regard to the first, two ministers who taught in the College affirmed that things were much better than they were the year before, due to structural changes at the College. Bishop Kline referred to his report on changes that had been made, as published in *New Church Life*.

In regard to the second point, several affirmed the desire of clergy and laity to see that doctrine, and thus the Lord, is guiding the Church. There is no intention for further resolutions.

On the third point, several said that from their perspective, last year's resolution was a *response* to existing problems, and was designed to show the clergy's awareness of them. The following resolution was voted on by written ballot:

"The clergy would like to acknowledge and appreciate the efforts taken by the Episcopal Office to address many of the concerns regarding the direction of the General Church and Bryn Athyn College. Challenges still remain, but we have seen progress, and support the Bishop in his continuing work of improvement, and we encourage our Bishop to let the Heavenly Doctrine more and more visibly lead the Church."

It passed by a vote of 78 yes, 5 no, and 2 abstentions.

SESSION 10

The final session considered a presentation by the Revs. Stephen D. Cole and Andy J. Heilman on "*The New Church Revision of the Sacred Scripture or the Word of the Lord*." This is a literal translation of the Old and New Testaments based on principles from the Writings and the work of previous New Church scholars. Mr. Cole noted how appropriate it was to end our sessions with the doctrine of the Word. This "Kempton Revision," as it is also called, challenges us as the Divine truth challenges us, hopefully because it is a reflection of the Divine truth. It is a flawed translation, and it will always be regarded as a work in progress, and never as *the* standard edition for the New Church. The online version has already been revised.

Mr. Cole reviewed the history of translation in the New Church, going back to 1788 when James Glenn called for a new translation that agrees better with the kind of literal translations used in the Writings. Mr. Cole highlighted principles of New Church translation that are guided by the Heavenly Doctrine. For example, *Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture* 3 says that the purpose of the Word is to conjoin man with heaven. Since correspondences bring this about, we need our translations to contain specific words and imagery as a correspondential foundation.

Mr. Heilman noted that more than 100 people have worked on this translation, in addition to those in the past. A priority in this translation is to maintain the purity and integrity (Urim and Thummim) of the Word. He

said the Word is alive, and touched on the frequent reference to parts of the human form that need to be explicit in the literal sense for the sake of the internal sense. Also, because the singular speaks to the heart and the plural to the understanding, this translation uses “thee” and “thou” to show singular as distinct from plural.

One minister asked how congregation members can be inspired to enjoy the riches of this translation. Another said that while he cannot imagine writing a sermon without consulting this translation, he would probably never read from it in public, but would share a few details that would delight people. The letter of the Word is a body but it is the spirit that communicates. Another minister urged us to give this translation some positive thought and try it, saying that we can enjoy healthy things even if they are not our first choice. One minister wondered how thrilled they must be in the spiritual world that we have this new translation.

With an explanatory booklet, it is available through Kempton.

The Rev. Grant H. Odhner noted that nominations were open for Executive Bishop. In the next few months ministers can submit nominations by sending to the committee a name and a recommendation of why that minister would make a good Executive Bishop. About halfway to the close of nominations the committee will make known to the clergy the list of who has been nominated so that it can be supplemented as needed.

The meetings closed with worship led by the Rev. James P. Cooper on the profound doubt Elijah faced, even though the Lord had given him a tremendous victory over the 400 prophets of Baal. He compared Elijah’s challenges to those that can make a priest feel overwhelmed. He detailed how the Lord gradually led Elijah back into a life of use. In his lowest states the Lord stood by Elijah and sent him forth to stand on the mountain of the Lord, to return him to an active life of use in the service of the Lord’s eternal kingdom.

Church News

MISSING MAURO

The sudden passing in mid-October of the **Rev. Mauro de Padua**, chaplain, senior class advisor and religion teacher in the Academy Secondary Schools, brought an outpouring of tender memories and photographs from all around the world. This was particularly true on Facebook, where Mauro maintained close relationships with 1,200 “friends.”

Typical of the loving responses was the letter below from the **Rev. Daniel Goodenough**, former Dean of the Theological School and President of the Academy, which was sent to the Council of the Clergy upon learning of Mauro’s death. Dan has retired to Wyoming with his wife, **Ruth**, but still is active as a visiting minister in the western United States. The letter was published in the California Digest (of the New Church) and is reprinted with Dan’s permission:

“Friends:

Like so many of you, I am deeply saddened by this shocking news. Mauro’s ability to carry on meaningful unpretentious spiritual give-and-take with young people was legendary, and will be extremely hard to replace in this life. My guess is that the needs in the world of spirits and beyond must be extraordinary for him to be taken at this time.

Mauro was a student of mine, a backpacking bud (1987 in Wyoming), a colleague at the Academy and at the British Academy Summer School, a friend both of me and my children.

I especially valued his ability to listen and respond to young people other than the usual Academy young person. He instinctively sensed where people from different, non-typical places were coming from. In my experience, he married a strong and clear doctrinal stance with sensible applications to life and sympathetic understanding of real-life human situations.

He stood for truth, good and right, both firmly and humbly – not easy for us to do. Some tough times in his earlier past seem to have made him highly sensitive to others who went through hard personal experiences. And his own convictions that New Church teachings work, growing out of his own living, seemed to be the basis for his effective teaching and pastoring.

Mauro was also widely appreciated by many older people, again including those who were less familiar with traditional General Church habits and culture. Strong pastoral and teaching years seemed to lie ahead of him. And at the moment it’s hard to think beyond the many, many large gaps he leaves.

He reminds me of several other relatively young people I’ve known, taken to the next life apparently prematurely, who seemed to have resolved some of their basic spiritual issues more fully and decisively than the rest of us – appearing to have it

together spiritually in himself. However that might be, I'm among the many of you who will really miss Mauro, and with you I send love and prayers to his wife Jenny and daughter Lysandra, and to all who mourn our loss. – Dan”

NEW CHURCH PIONEERS IN KENYA

Rev. Grant Odhner

In August my wife, **Sarah**, and I had the privilege of travelling to Kenya. It was thrilling to see a new part of the world. But the real privilege was to meet people who are excited about the New Church and who are pioneers in a land where the New Church is unknown.

My purpose in going to Kenya was to teach a group of men who are training for the ministry. The Bishop has placed the training of these men under the Dean of the Bryn Athyn College of the New Church Theological School. As an instructor in this school I volunteered to teach a two-week intensive program. There is no budgeted funding to train ministers in their home countries, so we are grateful to a generous donor who made our trip possible.

Sarah works in the General Church Office of Education as a member of the Sunday School team (among other things). She came to offer training for Sunday School teachers. She shared teaching resources, taught basic computer skills (since many resources are available on the Internet or in electronic format), and modeled a variety of methods for teaching the Word. Much of what she did had broader application, since many of the Sunday School teachers also teach in the congregations' day schools (which Sarah visited while in session).

The General Church has three congregations in southwest Kenya, south of the city of Kisii: Etor, Riunde and Nyakeyo. Each congregation has a grade school with many children who attend from the surrounding area. The region is rural but densely populated. Few have any means of transportation other than walking. So having a school is an important community service for a church.

A growing number of the teachers in these schools are New Church and are incorporating the General Church religion curriculum in their instruction. We visited all three congregations. Sarah spent more time in the schools, as I was busy teaching in Etor. A number of my students studying for the ministry are teachers at the schools.

I taught courses on the doctrine of the Lord and the doctrine of the Word. (Our texts were the two books of the Writings on those subjects published in *The Four Doctrines*.) I found the students eager and happy to be studying the Heavenly Doctrine. We began and ended our day by singing a hymn and by prayer. The singing was in Swahili, but I enjoyed singing along (we had hymn books with words only; everyone seemed to agree on the tune). The men sang with spirit.

The lectures were punctuated by “breakfast” at 10:00 a.m. and ended with lunch at 12:30. The men had a lot of reading to do to prepare for the next day, and in some cases they had a long commute. (As practically no one has a personal vehicle, transportation meant a ride on a motorcycle taxi, a “piki-piki,” and/or a long walk.)

In addition to teaching I preached in Etora to the congregation of the **Rev. Samson Abuga**, and in Riounde to the congregation of the **Rev. Khalid Obiri**. (I was able to visit but not preach at our third General Church Kenyan congregation, Nyakeyo, of the **Rev. Nicks Marisa**.)

I did many baptisms at one service, celebrated communion, gave a memorial address for the father of Rev. Khalid and Rev. Nicks, and also spoke at an evangelization “crusade” in a village near Etora put on by Samson’s congregation (complete with music, dancing and singing to entertain and attract a crowd, and loudspeakers for the preaching).

It was a busy time, but we returned feeling excited about the potential of the New Church in Kenya. We found that the people there know the Bible well, have a thirst for God, and have a keen interest in our beliefs in life after death and Jesus Christ as the Personal face of the one God. The New Church will surely grow in East Africa. We are fortunate to be able to help the Lord in that fruitful field. (See a photo of the group in Kenya on page 457.)

ACADEMY CHARTER DAY

The Charter Day weekend in Bryn Athyn, October 7-9 – celebrating the 134th anniversary of the granting of the Academy of the New Church Charter – was blessed with perfect weather, happy memories and shared enthusiasm for the Academy Schools.

The Cathedral address was presented by the **Rev. Scott I. Frazier**: *What Really Matters: Bring Your Fire Pans to the Lord*. Scott is an instructor in Latin, Hebrew and Religion in Bryn Athyn College. The procession to the Cathedral, under cloudless skies, was bright with the red sweaters of Secondary Schools students.

The banquet address was given by the **Rev. Dr. Thane P. Glenn**: *New Church Education on the Edge*. Thane is Chaplain and Assistant Professor of Religion and English in Bryn Athyn College. His address on how his teaching of Religion 101 has changed him and the course for the better in adapting to new students in the College will be published in the January-February issue of *New Church Life*. Both addresses can be heard at: www.newchurchaudio.org.

NEWS FROM WASHINGTON

Kathy Johns has announced that she will step down as Principal of the Washington New Church School at the end of the current school year, so that

she can return to her first love – teaching.

Kathy says, “I will remain fully engaged in my responsibilities this year as we serve the needs of 54 wonderful students, and work of a strategic plan for WNCS. Next year I hope to assume a role that best serves the school’s needs as we move forward with administrative changes.” (Sixteen percent of those 54 students are new to the school this year.)

The School Board and the Board of Trustees have convened a committee to explore next steps, with a lot of opportunities for input from the congregation. They hoped to make a recommendation to the joint boards in early November, which will be shared with the society.

Thirteen young people from Washington got together in late September with a dozen youths from Kempton for a camping weekend at Cowans Gap State Park in Pennsylvania. The weekend was a great success, led by chaperones **John Croft** and **Ryan Sandstrom** from Washington and **Dan Brown** and **Tiffany Synnestvedt** from Kempton.

OUTREACH IN COLCHESTER

In the October newsletter for the General Church in Great Britain, the **Rev. Olaf Hauptmann** reports on a booth the Colchester New Church recently hosted at a *Health & Healing Festival* to hand out literature and talk to spiritual seekers.

A lot of work went into creating an attractive booth, with a provocative banner, designed by **David Glover**: “*What happens to little children when they die? They become ANGELS . . . just like us.*” (See photo on page 457.)

The Office of Education in Bryn Athyn supplied 100 copies of *New Church Connection*. The Swedenborg Foundation provided 90 leaflets with extracts from *Heaven and Hell*, plus other pamphlets. The Swedenborg Society in London lent more than 100 copies of the Writings and collateral books. Colchester produced some pamphlets as well. All were labeled with appropriate contact information.

“With everything looking so nice,” Olaf reports, “we felt confident and it seemed easy to talk to people and hand them our attractive leaflets. At the end of the two-day festival we had handed out pretty much all of our free leaflets and also sold some books.”

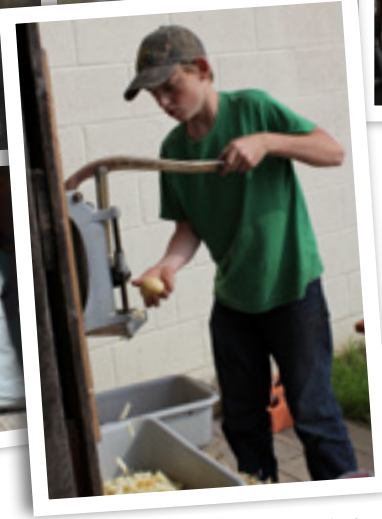
Olaf watched people reading the banner. “Many faces lit up with a smile. Some were puzzled. There were also those who were put off. . . . So you might think that I recommend that next time we have a booth for the New Church we should choose a less divisive text. But no. The thing is that all spiritual truths have a very pleasant aspect as well as a side that is darker or less pleasant. We see the good in contrast to evil. Heaven is understood in contrast to hell.

“So it is that even if we talk about a beautiful doctrine such as marriage

Mauro Santos de Padua

November 10, 1965 — October 16, 2011





Autumn Weekends are a popular draw after church on Sundays in Kempton, Pennsylvania, for members and guests of the congregation, as well as passers-by on their way to Hawk Mountain. Among the treats: pulled pork sandwiches, french fries fresh from a boiling cauldron, “hand” apple pies and baked goods.

Photos by Neva Gladish Asplundh

A scene from the Christmas Tableaux last year at the Olivet New Church in Toronto, directed by Fran Raymond.



Glendale Church

The Rev. Olaf Hauptmann at a booth for the Colchester New Church at a Health & Healing Festival in Colchester. The banner – which drew a lot of attention – reads: *What happens to children when they die? They become ANGELS... just like us!*



Left to right in Kenya: Nehemiah Manyara Gwonda, Victor Moseti Torori, George Omsu Magero, Fred Onsiro Ang'asa, Emanuel Wanjala Juma, Sarah and Grant Odhner, and Samson Mogusu Abugu. Missing from this photo were Benson Moi Ombiro and Robert Ontarige Oboko.



Charter Day 2011

in heaven we will find that some people still feel left out; maybe they are not married, maybe they are divorced, maybe their marriage is nothing like the ideal.

“When it comes to genuine truth it will always prove to be divisive for some. Much like the scroll that John ate in the Book of Revelation – it was sweet in the mouth but bitter in the stomach. (*Revelation 10: 8-10*)

“What we did find was that the great majority did like the message and many took great comfort from it. Several had lost children themselves; many more knew someone who had lost a child. One man worked in a hospice, sitting with the dying. He seemed to understand the best of all and took great delight in hearing everything we had to say.”

Olaf says they know they had an impact, but how deep or lasting, or if it leads people to the church, is hard to tell. “But we have tried – and so far it seems we did well.”

150TH ANNIVERSARY IN GLENDALE

The Rev. J. Clark Echols reports that the Glendale (Ohio) New Church is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year.

It was formed originally by members of the Marston Allen family, one of the founding families of Glendale, Ohio, and is now on the national registry of Historic Places.

In March of 1861 Charles H. Allen (1820-1889) donated land for the congregation and “a sum of money sufficient to build the proposed Temple.”

The Glendale Village Council Proclamation notes that “The Parish Council met with a well-regarded, and later famous, architect, Alfred Mullet, (who) approved his plan. The charming board-and-batten Gothic Revival church is Mullet’s first known private work. A large crowd in a service full of ritual dedicated the building for New Church worship, on October 6, 1861. At a total cost of \$4,361.72, of which C.H. Allen donated \$3134.72, the church was completed in just over 160 days.”

The Declaration of Dedication stated: “In the name of the Parish of the New Jerusalem Church at Glendale, we their representatives, being before the Altar of this Temple, declare that the ground on which this temple is built, the Temple itself, and the sacred things belonging to it, are hereby dedicated to the Lord, and to the Church, which is his kingdom on earth.”

The congregation has met continuously for 150 years, “keeping alive the vision of its founders of a society of people dedicated to the establishment and spread of its Christian philosophy.”

The public was invited to a celebration of the 150th anniversary on Sunday, November 6, which included displays of artifacts tracing the history of the church in Cincinnati and the Glendale New Church.

The first two pastors of the church were the **Rev. J. P. Stuart** (of Stuart Hall fame) and the **Rev. Frank Sewell**, a prolific writer. Later pastors included the **Rev. Willis Gladish** (ancestor of them all), the **Rev. David Holm** (pastor when the 100th anniversary was celebrated), and the **Rev. Stephen Cole** (when the building was sold to the General Church Congregation). The current pastor is the Rev. Clark Echols. (See a photo of the church on page 457.)

GROWTH IN ORANGE COUNTY

The Rev. David Lindrooth, Director of General Church Outreach, reports that the **Rev. Yong J. Jin** has been visiting a Korean group in Orange County, California. In an early September visit Jon baptized 15 people into the faith of the New Church. David says, "It is very exciting to see this kind of new commitment developing. It seems to align with the high level of interest we have had at www.newchurch.org from this region."

HELP WITH SUNDAY SCHOOL

The General Church Office of Education offers a lot of resources to help congregations, groups and families with Sunday School services.

Go to www.newchurch.org and click on "Resources and Sermons," then "Educational Materials" and "Sunday Schools." There you will find links to the Sunday School Newsletter, materials for preschool (ages 3-5), elementary (ages 6-12) and teens, teacher support and Spiritual Growth Campaign materials.

Under Educational Materials you can also find links for: Resources for Teachers, Materials for Homeschooling, Resources to Support Religious Education at Home, and Journey Campaign.

Teachers and others are encouraged to go to www.facebook.com and search for and "friend" New Church Sunday Schools. There you can sign up for e-mail distribution of the Sunday School Newsletter, which in October featured "Mentoring Future Sunday School Teachers." For more information e-mail sundayschool@newchurch.org.

CALIFORNIA'S JOHNNY APPLESEED

You've heard of Johnny Appleseed (John Chapman) and how he spread the teachings of Swedenborg along with apple seeds throughout Ohio in the early 1800s. How about Eliza Lovell Tibbets?

Eliza was not the itinerant disciple that Johnny was, but she is hailed as the mother of the citrus industry in California, was a devout Swedenborgian and an independent spirit whose causes sprung from her faith.

A new book from the Swedenborg Foundation, *Creating an Orange Utopia: Eliza Lovell Tibbets and the Birth of California's Citrus Industry*, tells the story of this legendary woman.

Eliza Tibbets is famous for growing the first seedless navel oranges and fostering the beginning of the now-flourishing citrus industry in California. She was also a celebrated abolitionist and suffragette.

The Foundation says: “Born in 1823 to a Swedenborgian family in Cincinnati, Ohio, Eliza Lovell Tibbets was a pioneer, an outspoken force for women’s rights, a Spiritualist, and a Utopian community builder committed to creating a better world. But it was Tibbet’s introduction of the navel orange to the young Utopian community of Riverside, California in 1873 that was to cement her place in history – saving the Riverside colony and creating a booming industry that lifted California upon its shoulders – eventually financially outpacing the Gold Rush that had preceded it some 50 years earlier.”

In her preface to the book, Patricia Ortlieb writes: “As I conducted research for this book, I discovered that there is much more to the story of Eliza Lovell Tibbets than her role as mother of the southern California orange industry. Involved in many of the social reform movements of her time – from abolishing slavery to giving women the right to vote to reforming religion – Eliza was a woman far ahead of her time. She spoke for herself and had strong values of right and wrong. For this I credit her Swedenborgian church upbringing, which allowed and even encouraged her to think for herself, made decisions, and work to improve society.”

The book is available from the Swedenborg Foundation, www.swedenborg.com.

NEW BOOKS FROM THE U.K.

Three new books have been published by The Swedenborg Society in London.

One is a new translation of *Heaven and Hell* by **K C Ryder**, with an introduction by Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges, who has been influenced by Swedenborg. **Nora Foster**, publicist for The Swedenborg Society, says this new edition “shines a modern light on this classic text, bringing to life its fascinating mixture of mystical travelogue and philosophical reflection.”

She adds, “We hope that this historic edition, aimed at a general audience, will restore Swedenborg to the canon of the history of ideas.”

In his Translator’s Preface, Mr. Ryder notes: “This has been a task (a pleasurable one) which has taken me four years to complete. . . . I am happy with the end result, and feel that it fairly represents what Swedenborg is saying to us. For that should be the main aim of the translator – to climb into the mind of the writer, and to walk around, to try to understand what makes him or her tick.”

Also just published are *A Descriptive Bibliography of the Works of Emanuel Swedenborg, Vol. 1*, edited and compiled by **Norman Ryder**, and *Memoirs of Swedenborg* by Carl Robsahm, a close friend and neighbor of Swedenborg, with

revised translations, introduction and annotations by **Anders Hallengren**.

The latter is part of a series, beginning with Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Swedenborg: Introducing the Mystic*. The series editor is **Stephen McNeilly**. The books are available from The Swedenborg Society, www.swedenborg.org.uk.

ORGAN DEDICATION

A dedication service was held in the Bryn Athyn Cathedral October 16 for its new Renaissance Allen Organ, a generous gift of **Tom and Charlene Cooper**. The program noted that “their love for fine music and ongoing support of local organists is at the heart of this magnificent gift.”

The service began with an hour of preludes presented by:

- **Terry Schnarr**, Head Organist at the Bryn Athyn Cathedral since 2000 and Cathedral Choir Accompanist since 1996
- **Betsy Walsh**, Assistant Organist at the cathedral
- **Kenneth Coy**, organist at The Lord’s New Church and frequent guest organist in the cathedral
- **Leah Martin**, 16-year-old former student of Terry Schnarr, now studying at the Settlement School
- **Rudolph A. Lucente**, Director of Music and Liturgy at St. Rose Catholic Church, an assistant organist at the Grand Court Organ (formerly Wanamaker’s) in Philadelphia, a holiday organist at Longwood Gardens and Dean of the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

The dedication service was conducted by **Rt. Rev. Thomas Kline**, which included several offerings by the Cathedral Choir, with **Chris Simons** conducting.

The audio system for the new organ includes 24 speakers mounted at the rear of the nave on either side of the West Window. These speakers have since been encased in beautiful gothic style oak cabinets, designed and built by **Steve Hendricks** of Historic Doors in Kempton, Pennsylvania.

Another 24 speakers have been installed in the front organ loft, which can be played at the same time as the rear speakers or independently. The pipes remain in the front organ loft from the Schlicker pipe organ installed in 1973, which is still maintained.

You can hear the organ during live streaming of services from the cathedral at www.ustram.tv/channel/brynathynservice or linked through the Bryn Athyn Church and Cathedral websites, www.brynathynchurch.org and www.brynathyncathedral.org.

REMEMBRANCE

A Remembrance Gathering was held in the Choir Hall of the Bryn Athyn Cathedral on Monday evening, October 1, led by the **Rev. Kurt Hyland Asplundh**. A similar service was inaugurated last year, led by the **Rev. Jay Barry**.

The idea is to provide a spiritual setting for people to come together to honor and remember loved ones now in the spiritual world. This is also an initiative other congregations might want to try periodically.

Kurt did some readings, followed by a short talk, and invited those present and willing to share a thought about their loved one. A bulletin board also was provided for posting pictures.

Refreshments were provided and the nave was open with quiet music for prayer and reflection.

Note: In the September-October issue we said we hoped to publish in this issue the sermon delivered in Ivyland by the **Rev. Tom Rose** on September 11, the 10th anniversary of the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington. Unfortunately, that service was extemporaneous and failed to record so there is no record of it.

Giving

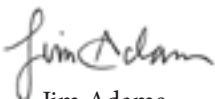
Giving to the General Church and the Academy of the New Church (Secondary Schools/Bryn Athyn College)

Recent articles in the September-October *New Church Life* focused on the critical need for financial support for the General Church and the Academy of the New Church. A number of people have asked where to send checks to support our organizations. There are several options:

1. Respond to the annual appeal that went out in November. If you did not receive or have misplaced this letter, please contact us, or simply send your contribution to the Development Office, Box 711, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009, designating how you would like your contribution divided between the General Church and the Academy (Secondary Schools and College).
2. Contribute online:
 - General Church: Go to www.newchurch.org and click on *Donate*.
 - ANC Secondary Schools: Go to www.ancss.org, click on *Alumni and Supporters*, then *Make a Gift*.
 - Bryn Athyn College: Go to www.brynathyn.edu, click on *Alumni*, then *Make a Gift*.
3. Donate toward the matching fund. (Only donors who have not given to the Academy in the past five years are eligible.) We received a \$350,000 matching gift from the Asplundh Foundation to help us increase donor participation for the Academy. Gifts from eligible donors to the Student Scholarship Fund will be matched, dollar-for-dollar.

Please also remember to support your local congregation. Contact your pastor or society treasurer to make a gift.

We appreciate your support of the uses provided by our Church and Schools.



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Life Lines

STEVE JOBS AND THE NEW CHURCH

The late Steve Jobs was rightly hailed as a man who helped to revolutionize communication and connectedness around the world – from personal computers to iPhone and iPad. Someday he may be recognized as well for providing a framework like no other for the spread of the New Church.

An ad for New Church Audio on page 378 shows the results for the past 12 months just for www.newchurcaudio.org, with people from 105 countries visiting the site almost 8,000 times, averaging 28 minutes per visit. These are real searchers.

In a presentation, *New Jerusalem Come Down to Earth*, for a conference in Bryn Athyn in 2007 celebrating the 250th anniversary of The Last Judgment, the Rev. Dr. Reuben Bell talked about how “we can see the New Jerusalem at work in a changing world.” Among the signs “if we wish to see them,” he said, is this:

“There is no more clearly visible manifestation of the New Jerusalem than the Internet, the astonishing development of which denotes its correspondence to something very powerful in the spiritual world. The Internet, an ethereal and almost spiritual thing, is the essence of freedom in organic form. Leaderless, multi-nodal, and driven by individuals in unanimous action, this form is the next phase of the New Church coming into the world.

“It is modeled on the spiritual principles of freedom and variety that make heaven a paradise; and yet, true to form, it permits evil to express itself as well. The responsibility to use this powerful instrument wisely falls on individuals, not the government or the church, as an exercise in our regeneration. As the printing press was the instrument that brought the New Church into being, so will the Internet propel the New Jerusalem into all the world.”

This presentation is included in an 800-page collection of papers from the conference: *The World Transformed: Swedenborg and the Last Judgment*, available from the General Church Bookstore, <http://store.newchurch.org>.

(BMH)

STEVE JOBS: NEVER AGAIN, BUT...

The outpouring of emotion greeting the news of Steve Jobs’ death was remarkable. One tribute to this wizard of innovative technology, design and marketing bore the heading: “Will there ever be another Steve Jobs?” The answer is no, and this is true of everyone. We are all made in the image of God,

and since God is infinite, the variety of finite humans forms created in God's image is endless. Each human being is unique.

Our human character – the unique combination of affections and intelligence that give us our humanity – are derived from the Lord's Divine Humanity, which is infinite and eternal. There will never be another Steve Jobs, but the Divine wellspring from which all human genius and accomplishments are derived will never run dry. There will always be new uses, and new human beings to be inspired with a vision of them to carry them out.

(WEO)

IS THERE AN APP FOR THAT?

One of the endearing teachings of the Church is that there are 12 gates to the Holy City – more than one way to get into heaven. One thing we can be sure of: there is no VIP entrance.

This comes to mind when many who have lived a life of privilege and adulation pass into the spiritual world.

Consider Steve Jobs, who made a fortune with Apple and was rightly hailed for his technological genius and gifts to the world. But like many such gifted people he was a complicated and apparently troubled soul, who could be both incredibly generous and disappointingly cruel and unkind to others – even his own family.

We surely cannot judge Steve Jobs, any more than anyone else, and just hope he is finding the peace that seemed so elusive amid all his astounding success. We just wish more people outside the gates – in all walks of life – would come to realize that they are choosing their eternal life in this life, and that they would actively choose the Lord's kingdom by making it a part of their lives on earth, every day.

It's interesting that Jobs made a lot of us exclaim "Wow!" with each new i-marvel, and that his last words as he passed from this world to the next were: "Wow! Wow! Wow!" Just imagine what he was seeing.

(BMH)

A CAUTIONARY NOTE

Resist Beginnings is the title of an old New Church book by John Bigelow. The gist of the message is that it is a lot easier to get rid of an evil in its beginning stages before it grows and becomes too strong. This is represented in *Psalms 137* by a declaration which in the literal sense is horrible: "O daughter of Babylon ... Happy shall he be who takes and dashes your little ones against the rock." In the spiritual sense, by "Babylon" is meant evil, especially the desire to rule over others and make them subject to your will.

This love of dominion is the "fountain" from which all manner of other evil

delights gush forth. (*Divine Providence* 215.9) To recognize the first stirrings of such evil in yourself and work to remove it by applying the truth of the Word is a wise move. And so it is with all evils: nip them in the bud.

(WEO)

AND A HOPEFUL ONE

Notice the word “begins” in this sentence: “When a person *begins* to shun and turn away from evils because they are sins, all things that he does are good, and may be called good works.” (*Apocalypse Explained* 974). You don’t have to be a saint, you don’t have to be in an advanced state of regeneration, in order to do good.

Later in the same number it says: “As soon as a person shuns and turns away from evils as sins his works are good not only outwardly but inwardly also....(and) the works that he does are living works, while those that he did before were dead works.”

(WEO)

A WELL-ROUNDED LIFE

A simple definition of religion is: believing in God and living well. (*see Divine Providence* 322). And since religion, properly understood, is not just one compartment or aspect of life, but encompasses all of life, we could just as well say that believing in God and living well are the two essentials of a well-rounded, fully human life.

(WEO)

THE CHRISTMAS PRESENT

Much of the Word is written in the past tense. Noah built the ark. David slew Goliath. Jesus fed the multitude. But the essential elements of the Christmas story are told in the present tense – because what happened then still is happening every day in our own lives.

“For unto us a Child *is* born, unto us a Son *is* given, and the government shall be upon His Shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.” (*Isaiah* 9:6)

“And the angel came in unto her (Mary), and said, Hail, thou that *art* highly favored, the Lord *is* with thee: blessed *art* thou among women.” (*Luke* 1:28)

“And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I *bring* you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

“For unto you *is* born this day in the city of David a Savior, which *is* Christ the Lord.” (*Luke* 2:10,11)

The Christmas present is “glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.” (*Luke 2:14*) It comes to each of us – every day as a present – and begins with each of us, in how we use the gift.

(BMH)

THERE WAS NO “IMMACULATE CONCEPTION”

The term “immaculate conception” is often used by people who mean to refer to the Lord’s Virgin birth. The two terms are not at all interchangeable. “Immaculate conception” is a Roman Catholic teaching that Mary herself was born of a virgin. Such an idea is utterly foreign to the teaching of the New Church, of course.

The Writings teach that the Lord was born on earth in order to take the corrupt human heredity that predisposes us to evil upon Himself so He could be tempted by the hells, fight against them from the Divine Soul within Him, and subjugate them. If Mary had not received that natural human heredity and transmitted it to Jesus the whole purpose of the Lord’s incarnation would have been thwarted.

(WEO)

EDMUND H. SEARS

There have been quite a few enthusiastic readers of Swedenborg (some quite prominent) who, for one reason or another, never actually joined the organized church. Edmund H. Sears (1810-1876) is an example. You may not recognize the name, but you’re no doubt familiar with two Christmas carols he wrote which are in our Liturgy: *Calm on the Listening Ear of Night* and *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*. He wrote the first in 1834 during his first year in Theological School. (Take note, theologs!)

I had a vague idea that Sears was a member of the New Church, but in fact he was a Unitarian minister. He was a friend of a New Church minister, B. F. Barrett, who introduced him to the Writings. After several years of careful reading and consideration, Sears told Barrett he wanted to join the New Church. “The doctrine of the Lord is glowing in my mind like a noon-day sun,” he wrote to Barrett, “and I cannot doubt any longer that Swedenborg was the appointed medium of a new dispensation.”

But Barrett advised Sears not to leave his pulpit because he was very well known, respected and influential where he was, and his congregation was quite accepting of the New Church doctrine he was already preaching.

I didn’t realize that *Calm on the Listening Ear* is known outside the New Church (along with two additional verses not in our Liturgy), but on the Internet there are some choirs singing it. The music is different, though. It is by

John Dykes, whereas in our Liturgy it is by George A. Blackman. Considering my nonexistent musical ability, I don't know if Blackman would take this as a compliment or not, but our version is much more glorious.

(WEO)

WILLIAM KEITH

An article in the *American Art Review* magazine for October about New Church artist William Keith (1838-1911) calls him “the dean of late 19th-century San Francisco artists.” The article immediately preceding this is about George Inness, another prominent New Church artist mentioned in our last Life Lines.

Keith, a landscape painter in the Hudson River style, emigrated to America from Scotland at age 11. He and Inness, who also came from Scotland, were part of a circle of close friends of the Rev. Joseph Worcester, pastor of the New Church in San Francisco. Others in the group included the renowned New Church architect Daniel Burnham and the great naturalist John Muir.

Worcester was a very accomplished architect by avocation, and was a leading figure in the Arts and Crafts movement and development of the Mission Style in California. He influenced Keith toward a more subjective style in his painting. And Inness, who visited San Francisco in 1891, enthusiastically praised Keith's work and also encouraged him in this direction. The San Francisco Swedenborgian Church (as it's called now), an architectural gem designed by Worcester, has four large Keith landscapes in its sanctuary, painted by the artist for the church.

The sublime landscapes of the type Keith painted went out of style in the late 19th century (less so in San Francisco, with its proximity to Yosemite, Lake Tahoe and other spectacular scenery), but are now receiving new appreciation, along with William Keith.

(WEO)

POLITICS AND RELIGION

The presidential campaign season in the United States already has some people – including a few non-New Church clergy – challenging and questioning the faith of various candidates.

Syndicated columnist Cal Thomas observed: “America has a rich history of preachers from the left and right speaking from their church and public pulpits about a wide variety of social and moral issues. It is when preachers start endorsing or opposing candidates based on their perception of who is God's choice that serious problems arise. It suggests, especially to the non-

believers in the world, that the Kingdom of God is part of an earthly kingdom. The result is a loss of power for that unseen Kingdom, which is the only one that can transform a life and, thus, a culture.”

(BMH)

ROB BELL

The controversy in the wake of a new book by a Christian pastor in Grand Rapids, Michigan, is of interest to New Church people because his view of hell (which caused all the stir) is *somewhat* similar to ours. Rev. Rob Bell's book, *Love Wins*, is popular among young evangelicals of various denominations, even though his ideas about heaven and hell go against what most evangelical leaders believe – namely, that only Christians can be saved. Bell's "heresy" is that he says even people of other faiths, such as Hindus or Muslims, are not condemned to hell just because they don't believe in the divinity of Jesus. His critics say that this takes away the rationale for Christian missionary efforts.

Bell's view of salvation is certainly closer to the New Church doctrine than the orthodox "faith alone" teaching. It strikes me as a significant step in the right direction, and I am happy to think that the revision of teachings which we know to be false is being inspired by spiritual light from the new heaven. The pope's declaration in 2007 that unbaptized babies have a "prayerful hope" of going to heaven, rather than eternity in "limbo," is another example.

But rejecting falsity is not the same as having a clear and comprehensive system of new truths to replace it. The doctrine of the New Church is not a patchwork of separate partial truths, but a seamless fabric. It is not just a few rays of light here and there on an otherwise dark landscape, but the sun of heaven itself rising over a new day. It is good, though, to see the cloud cover beginning to break up and the new day beginning to break through.

(WEO)

AN UNCOMMON MAN

You wouldn't expect a professional football coach to be an advocate first for God in the lives of the young men he mentors. But Tony Dungy, retired Super Bowl winning coach of the Indianapolis Colts and now an analyst with NBC TV, is that uncommon man.

His latest book, *Uncommon: Finding Your Path to Significance*, is a guidebook for young men to give meaning to their lives as "uncommon men." He sees that calling in a God-centered life of use and charity, with a faith that echoes what we might call New Church themes.

As a coach, character always rose above talent in the players he drafted. Dungy says he always believed his primary job as a coach was to build men worthy of being role models for all the boys who look up to them. He wanted

them to develop and promote character, integrity and courage – which he saw as flowing from faith and living their beliefs. We become “uncommon men,” he says, by cultivating uncommon character – which starts “with spending time with God every day.”

With a perception of how divine providence is in every aspect of our lives, he asks young men to think about why they are here, and offers his own answer: “I believe that God knew you would be in the spot you are in right now, with the passions and gifts that you have and the platform that only you enjoy. I believe that the imprint you are meant to leave on this world is not accidental or coincidental. Your life has been intentionally designed by God to have a uniquely significant and eternal impact on the world around you.”

He sees our individual roles in life as stewardship – serving God. “As stewards of all we have in our control,” he writes, “we must ask: Do I invest in eternity? Do I do things that will outlive men? Do I invest in the lives of others? Do I invest in the expansion of God’s agenda?”

Tony Dungy has lived humbly in the spotlight and worked quietly out of the spotlight with young men in prison. He has a Super Bowl ring, but cares much more about the lives of those he has been able to influence in positive ways – especially those most in need of values and direction in their lives.

Some see Dungy’s legacy in rings and trophies. He sees it in those he has mentored to become “uncommon men.”

(BMH)

WE MISS THEM!

There have been so many in the last year or two! New Church friends who left us and entered the spiritual world. Some whom we’ve known and loved for many years were at a ripe old age; others went “before their time,” as we say. But this is from the standpoint of this world of time and space, in which we who must carry on without them live.

In the Lord’s providence, which regards our eternal well-being above all else, nothing happens at a time which is inopportune *spiritually*. Still, in this world, it feels as if the fabric of our church community has a number of holes in it.

(WEO)

THE BLESSINGS OF DEATH

Death is portrayed as the Grim Reaper, but when we think of it in terms of the Lord gathering people to Himself in heaven, or when we think of it from the point of view of the angels welcoming new members into their midst, it is seen in a friendlier light. “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.” (*Revelation 14:13*) And as for those of us who mourn their loss, the promise has been

given: “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.” (*Matthew 5:4*)

Among the benefits that come to us in this world from our recurring experience of people leaving for the spiritual world are these:

1. It reminds us that life in this world is only temporary, and causes us to reflect on the reality of the spiritual world, and how our own preparation for heaven is progressing.

2. It is an occasion for sympathy and the exercise of charity toward those who have suffered the loss of a loved one.

3. The good things said at memorial services for people who lived “sincerely, faithfully and well” increases our resolve to be “good and faithful servants” ourselves.

(WEO)

WHOOPS!

We are grateful to Richard Lines, Secretary of the Swedenborg Society in London, United Kingdom, who obviously knows his British poets better than we do, for this correction:

“It was not Emily Dickinson (‘That Happy Day,’ *New Church Life*, September-October 2011) who wrote the line, ‘I shall but love thee better after death,’ but Elizabeth Barrett Browning (in *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, no. 43). Elizabeth Barrett Browning was certainly a keen reader of Swedenborg, and I think her husband Robert was too, as is clear from similar sentiments he expresses in his own poems. But was Emily Dickinson a reader of Swedenborg? I think that it is quite likely. She was influenced by Emerson and the Transcendentalists and also by Emily Bronte. There seems to be Swedenborgian imagery in *Wuthering Heights*, although I have never heard her mentioned as a reader of Swedenborg.”

(BMH)

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE
GENERAL CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM

Between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011, 84 members were received into the General Church. During the year the Secretary's office received notice of the deaths of 59 members.

Membership July 1, 2010	5296
New Members	84
Deceased Members	59
Resignations	7
Membership June 30, 2010	5314

New Members

General Church Of The New Jerusalem

CANADA

Bruce, Bryan John
Bruce, Nancy Ann Scharlach
Harris, Drew Philip
Maciaczyk, Bradley Peter
Schnarr, Patricia Louise
 Uniac
Smith, Janine Gladish
Watson, Paul Gregory
 Durrant

GHANA

Adjei, Catherine
Amoah, Atta
Ansah, Joyce Ansomah
Ansah, Bernice Safoah
Ansong, Felicia Kesewaa
 Ntim
Debrah, Agnes
Sarpong, Enerst Osei
Somuah, Aaron Kwabena

IVORY COAST

Dakouri, Evariste Daligou
Doukourou, Moise Gogable
Kouhoui, Henry Joel Kouassi
Mangoua, Adelaide Affoue
Mangoua, Cyprien Kouame

JAPAN

Hirayama, Mugihito
Yuichiro, Tomiyama

NORWAY

Floyd, Thomas Xavier
Koch, Dagfinn

SOUTH AFRICA

Allais, Karen Mortlock
Chaane, Diana Busisiwe
de Chazal, Isabel Edith
 Mowbray
de Chazal, Arthur Louis
Heathfield-Elliott, Keith
Heathfield-Elliott, Gloria

Harrison

Joseph, Kevin Jerome
Joseph, Shakila Bhugwanth
Langridge, Amanda Joy
 Daniels
Langridge, Mark
Latta, Denise Patricia Latta
Maphari, Julia Murembiwa
Mukangwa, Leon Kyassi
Sitole, Mandla Charlton
Sitole, Mandisa Sitole

SOUTH KOREA

Choi, Soon Whan
Choi, Okhee
Hyun, Je Woong
Joh, Keehyun
Jung, Young Hwa
Kim, Taek Gyung
Kim, Moo Kil
Kim, In Duk
Ko, Yang Choon
Kwon, Jai Hyun
Kwon, Da Kyung
Lee, Jong Me
Lee, Da Won
Park, Su-mi
Park, Sam Soon
Shim, Woo Ja

UNITED KINGDOM

Buckle, Marc
Buckle, Louisa Katrina Marie
 Hawkins
Warwick, Charity Jean

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

California

Chung, Jae Hyon Choe

Colorado

Dickson, Rachel Leah
Hunt, Douglas Clayton

Morey, Caleb Charles

Florida

Acton, Alfred Stuart

Illinois

Curcio, Donna Emily Day
Palmer, Barbara
Palmer, Dwight Bannister

New Jersey

Ahern, Michael Edward

New York

Ahern, Jacqueline Renee
Phillips

Ohio

Ferguson, Nancy Anne

Pennsylvania

Adams, Emily Kendra
Ayers, Kendall
Clauser, Ruth
Deeken, Deborah Emery
Mazza, Mark David
Muller, Thomas Morus
Posey, Matthew Morel
Posey, Emily Merle Friesen
Rohtla, Eric Alexander
Schadegg, Brenna Ashley
Synnestvedt, Judah Edward
Synnestvedt, Lydia Smith
Webster, George Allen

Washington

O'Connor, Janice Frannea
Witscher, Ronald Elmer

Deaths

General Church Of The New Jerusalem

- Abele, John Alan*; 66; January 1, 2011; Willow Grove, Pennsylvania
- Alden, Beatrice Jean Alden*; 87; April 27, 2011; Cleveland, Ohio
- Alden, William Byrd*; 89; March 08, 2011; Glenview, Illinois
- Asplundh, Barr Elder*; 82; August 14, 2010; Fort Washington, Pennsylvania
- Aymer, John Richard*; 77; July 7, 2010; Marshalltown, Iowa
- Bostock, Edward Crary III*; 94; January 19, 2011; Willow Grove, Pennsylvania
- Bostock, Mark*; 80; November 29, 2010; Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania
- Bown, Elaine Carswell*; 87; December 16, 2010; Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania
- Boyesen, Dorrit Birgitte H. Pedersen*; 64; March 18, 2011; Abington, Pennsylvania
- Boyesen, Eyvind Hoidal*; 68; November 17, 2010; Kempton, Pennsylvania
- Boyesen, Ragnar*; 69; September 09, 2010; Abington, Pennsylvania
- Buss, Frederick Leonard*; 96; May 15, 2011; Hilton, KZN, South Africa
- Coffin, Ronald Hugh*; 70; July 30, 2010; Waukegan, Illinois
- Cole, Hilda Katherine Zanzig*; 90; May 07, 2011; Doylestown, Pennsylvania
- Cooper, Robert Andrew*; 51; July 7, 2010; Hurstville, NSW, Australia
- Cross, Mary Macy Carpenter*; 89; April 05, 2011; Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania
- De Maagd, Richard John*; 79; August 1, 2010; Robertsedale, Alabama
- Fairburn, Elden Lloyd*; 86; March 04, 2011; Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada
- Fornander, Waijny Margaretha Carlsson*; 98; December 31, 2010; Jönköping, Sweden
- Francis, Lambertine Pauline*; 96; January 18, 2011; Voorburg, Netherlands
- Frazier, Jane Smith*; 82; January 23, 2011; Abington, Pennsylvania
- Friesen, Edward*; 88; August 16, 2010; Dawson Creek, British Columbia, Canada
- Friesen, Emily Elizabeth Yakubowski*; 81; January 18, 2011; Dawson Creek, British Columbia, Canada
- Gibson, Moira Douglas Ridgway*; 94; October 16, 2010; Westville, KZN, South Africa
- Gillespie, Barry Gavin*; 66; March 23, 2011; Johannesburg, GAU, South Africa
- Gillespie, Dennis Pierre*; 69; June 17, 2011; Durban, KZN, South Africa
- Guerra, Vinicius Reis*; 73; October 13, 2010; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Hallowell, Mary Elizabeth MacFadden*; 87; December 12, 2010; Huntingdon valley, Pennsylvania
- Henderson, Ian Keith*; 72; April 13, 2011; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Herder, Robert Rex*; 92; January 02, 2011; Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania
- Higgins, Nancy Alden*; 84; October 24, 2010; Hesperia, California
- Iungerich, Conrad Eldred*; 74; July 08, 2010; Lake Lure, North Carolina
- Jorgenson, Gordon Thomas*; 73; October 28, 2010; Toronto, Ontario, Canada
- Keal, John Knowlson*; 62; January 20, 2011; Southampton, Pennsylvania

Keegan, Anna Marie Rosenquist; 88; November 01, 2010; Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

McQueen, Kenneth Theodore; 85; October 09, 2010; Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Mitchell, Franklin Osgood; 87; February 23, 2011; Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania

Norbeck, Margaret Karen Charles; 88; February 24, 2011; Abington, Pennsylvania

Odhner, Patricia Ann Sable; 82; November 19, 2010; Stony Run, Pennsylvania

Odhner, Aubrey Cole; 86; May 11, 2011; Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Orthwein, Angelina Gene Gill; 90; April 28, 2011; Creve Coeur, Missouri

Parker, Sandra June Magro; 46; June 29, 2011; Glenview, Illinois

Pollock, Virginia Rae Studebaker; 91; October 22, 2010; San Diego, California

Robbins, Karen Elizabeth Ryan; 68; February 16, 2011; Phoenix, Arizona

Rose, Kenneth; 81; August 30, 2010; Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Roth, Howard Frederick; 81; September 15, 2010; Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Schnarr, Jason Dandridge; 27; July 29, 2010; Abington,

Pennsylvania

Sellner, Jerome Vinet; 79; November 26, 2010; Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Smith, Dorothy Day Cole; 86; May 22, 2011; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Strobaek, Birgit Eleanora; 59; April 12, 2011; Roskilde, Denmark

Tyler, Virginia Smith; 99; June 29, 2011; Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Walters, Lillian Gladys Ditmars; 90; April 01, 2011; East Wenatchie, Washington

Wilkinson, Joan Hope Adams; 95; December 01, 2010; Westville, KZN, South Africa

Williamson, Walter Lydick; 81; November 05, 2010; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Williamson, Phyllis Schoenberger; 85; March 09, 2011; Natrona Heights, Pennsylvania

Wyncoll, Rosemary Susan; 79; November 08, 2010; Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania

Pitcairn, John Pendleton; 88; May 18, 2010; Corpus Christi, Texas

RESIGNATIONS

Cahaley, Gabriella; Tucson, Arizona, April 20, 2011

Cahaley, John; Tucson, Arizona, April 20, 2011

Cormier, Rachel; Perkasie, Pennsylvania, February 22, 2011

Hollingsworth, Bayard; Ooltewah, Tennessee, July 19, 2010

Nelson, Alvin; Sterling, Illinois, May 26, 2011

Nelson, Betty; Sterling, Illinois, May 26, 2011

Odhner, Megan; Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania, April 27, 2011

DEATHS

Delayed Reports

Borketey, Michael Angenu; 39; July 10, 2009; Accra, Ghana

Moore, John Paul; 90; December 24, 2001; Centennial, Colorado

Directory

General Church Of The New Jerusalem

2011-2012

OFFICIALS

Bishop

Rt. Rev. Thomas L. Kline

Assistant Bishop

Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith

Secretary

Mrs. Alaine F. York

GENERAL CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM

(A Corporation of Pennsylvania)

Officers of the Corporation

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Vice President

Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith

Secretary

Nancy L. Heilman, Esq.

Executive Director

Mr. David O. Frazier

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Timothy V. O'Connor

Linda S. Odhner

Jason V. Reuter

Matthew A. Smith

Arthur E. Uber, III

Thayer L. York

Ex-officio embers

Rt. Rev. Thomas L. Kline

Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith

Mr. David O. Frazier

BISHOPS

Keith, Brian Walter

PO Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained June 6, 1976; 2nd degree, June 4, 1978; 3rd degree, October 17, 2004. Serves as Assistant Bishop of the General Church, Vice President of the General Church International, Incorporated, and Chairman of the General Church Translation Committee.

Kline, Thomas Leroy

PO Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained June 10, 1973; 2nd degree, June 15, 1975; 3rd degree, November 30, 2003. Serves as Executive Bishop of the General Church, General Pastor of the General Church, Chancellor of the Academy of the New Church, President of the General Church in Canada, President of the General Church in South Africa, and President of the General Church International, Incorporated.

PASTORS

Abuga, Samson Mogusu

The New Church Etor, PO Box 13, Kisii, 502, Kenya, East Africa

Ordained May 25, 2003; 2nd degree, September 20, 2009. Serves as Pastor of the New Church Etor, Director of the Keugata (Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania) Theological School, and Principal of the Good News Preparatory School in Etor, Kisii, Kenya.

Aggro, Hennock

PO Box 306, Ofankor-Accra, Ghana

Ordained July 13, 2008; 2nd degree, July 4, 2010. Serves as Pastor of the Wusuta Group in Wusuta, Ghana

Agnes, Sylvain Apoh

01 BP 12161 Abidjan 01, Republique Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa

Ordained May 23, 2004; 2nd degree, June 25, 2006. Serves as Pastor of Bobby New Church Congregation in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, President of the New Jerusalem Theological Institute in Abidjan, and head pastor for the General Church in Ivory Coast.

Alden, Kenneth James

7354 Shell Ridge Terrace, Lake Worth, FL 33467-7703

Ordained June 7, 1980; 2nd degree, May 16, 1982. Serves as Pastor of the Boynton Beach Society in Boynton Beach, Florida and Visiting Pastor of Bonita Springs, Florida.

Allais, Mark Barry

PO Box 816, Kelvin 2054, South Africa

Ordained May 24, 2009; 2nd degree November 21, 2010. Serves Pastor of The New Church Buccleuch in Buccleuch, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Amoako, Kwadwo Adu

c/o the New Church, PO Box NT 262, Accra, Ghana, West Africa

Ordained July 13, 2008; 2nd degree July 4, 2010. Assists with the Teshie Nungua group and visits the Kumasi Group monthly.

Ampem-Darko, Israel Gyan

*The New Church, PO Box KK 113,
Kukurantumi-Akim, E/R, Ghana, West
Africa*

Ordained July 13, 2008; 2nd degree
July 4, 2010. Serves as assisting
Pastor for the Ofankor Group.

Anochi, Nicholas Wiredu

*c/o The New Church, No. 2 Rocky Road,
Dome, PO Box TA687, Taifa, Ghana, West
Africa*

Ordained June 4, 1995; 2nd degree,
November 2, 1997. Serves as Pastor
of the New Church Dome, Ghana,
West Africa.

Appelgren, Göran Reinhold

*Aladdinsvägen 27, S-167 61 Bromma,
Sweden*

Ordained June 7, 1992; 2nd degree,
July 3, 1994. Serves as Pastor of the
Stockholm Society and as Visiting
Pastor of Oslo, Norway; Regional
Pastor for Europe and India.

Ayi, Segno-Kodjo

*La Nouvelle Eglise du Togo, B.P. 61202,
Lomé, Togo, West Africa*

Ordained May 27, 2001; 2nd degree
July 20, 2008. Serves as pastor of the
Lomé group in Togo, also offering
support to Vogan group; head pastor
for the church in Togo.

Barry, James Headsten

210 Cliveden Ave., Glenside, PA 19038

Ordained May 24, 2009; 2nd degree
June 6, 2010. Serves as Assistant
to the Pastor of the Bryn Athyn
Church, Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania.

Blair, Charles Edmund

PO Box 716, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained May 28, 2006; 2nd degree,
April 27, 2007. Serves as Pastor of
New Church Live and Chaplain at
Cairnwood Estate in Bryn Athyn,
Pennsylvania.

Borketey-Kwaku Jacob Borteye

*PO Box TNE 1278, Teshie-Nungua Estates,
Accra, Ghana, West Africa.*

Ordained, May 18, 2003; 2nd degree
July 13, 2008. Serves as Pastor of the
Teshie Circle, Ghana and head pastor
for the church in Ghana.

Bown, Christopher Duncan

299 Le Roi Rd., Pittsburgh, PA 15208

Ordained June 18, 1978; 2nd degree,
December 23, 1979. Serves as Pastor
of The Pittsburgh New Church and
Principal of Pittsburgh New Church
School in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Buss, Erik James

*755 Fetters Mill Rd., Huntingdon Valley, PA
19006*

Ordained June 10, 1990; 2nd
degree, September 13, 1992. Serves
as Assistant Pastor of the Bryn
Athyn Church in Bryn Athyn,
Pennsylvania.

Buss, Peter Martin, Jr

73 Park Drive, Glenview, IL 60025

Ordained June 6, 1993; 2nd degree,
June 18, 1995. Serves as Pastor of the
Glenview New Church in Glenview,
Illinois, President of the Midwestern
Academy, School Pastor of the
Glenview New Church Schools and
Regional Pastor for the Midwestern
U.S.

Carswell, Eric Hugh

PO Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained June 10, 1979; 2nd degree, February 22, 1981. Serves as Bishop's Representative for Education and Vice Chancellor of the Academy of the New Church.

Chapin, Frederick Merle

980 Sarver Rd., Sarver, PA 16055

Ordained June 15, 1986; 2nd degree, October 23, 1988. Serves as Pastor of the Freeport Society in Sarver, Pennsylvania.

Cole, Nathan Field

3 Chapel Hill Drive, Kitchener, ON, Canada N2R 1N1

Ordained January 11, 2009; 2nd degree August 22, 2010. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor of the Carmel New Church in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada.

Cole, Stephen Dandridge

PO Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained June 19, 1977; 2nd degree, October 15, 1978. Serves as Assistant Professor of religion and philosophy in Bryn Athyn College of the New Church and of theology in Bryn Athyn College Theological School.

Cooper, James Pendleton

2 Lorraine Gardens, Etobicoke, ON, Canada M9B 4Z4

Ordained June 13, 1982; 2nd degree, March 4, 1984. Serves as Pastor of the Olivet Church in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, Principal of Olivet New Church School, Regional Pastor for Canada, and Secretary of the Council of the Clergy.

Darkwah, Simpson Kwabeng

New Church School, DTD Community 5, Tema, Ghana, West Africa

Ordained June 7, 1992; 2nd degree, August 28, 1994. Serves as Pastor of the Tema, Circle in Ghana, West Africa, Visiting Pastor of the Madina Circle in Ghana, West Africa, and Principal of the Tema New Church School.

Dibb, Andrew Malcolm Thomas

PO Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained June 6, 1984; 2nd degree, May 18, 1986. Serves as Dean of the Bryn Athyn College Theological School.

Dube, Jerome Bhekuyise

Private Box 1164, New Germany 3620, South Africa

Ordained June 5, 2005; 2nd degree November 11, 2007. Serves as Pastor of the Clermont Society in South Africa.

Dziekpor, George Genya

PO Box CS 9277, C7, Tema, Ghana

Ordained July 13, 2008; 2nd degree July 4, 2010. Serves as Pastor of the Abelenkpe group in Accra, Ghana.

Elphick, Derek Peter

395 Olivewood Court, Rochester, MI 48306

Ordained June 6, 1993; 2nd degree, May 22, 1994. Serves as Pastor of the Oak Arbor Society in Rochester, Michigan.

Eshun, Ekow Essiedu

PO Box CS 9299, Community 7, Tema, Ghana

Ordained May 27, 2007; 2nd degree July 13, 2008. Serves as Assistant to

the Pastor in the Tema Circle in the church and school and is working to establish a group in Ghana's western coastal region.

Ferrell, Michael Eugene

320 New Oak Lane, Bowie, MD 20716

Ordained June 5, 2005; 2nd degree, June 3, 2007. Serves as Assistant Pastor of the Washington New Church Society in Mitchellville, Maryland and Visiting Pastor of the Baltimore Society in Baltimore, MD.

Frazier, Glenn McKinley

5822 Trailridge Dr., Austin, TX 78731

Ordained May 28, 2006; 2nd degree June 22, 2008 Serves as Pastor of the New Way New Church in Austin, Texas.

Frazier, Scott Innes

PO Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained May 28, 2006; 2nd degree, May 11, 2008. Teaches and is head of the Religion Area in Bryn Athyn College.

Genzlinger, Matthew Laird

62 Church Street, Concord, MA 01742

Ordained May 27, 2001; 2nd degree, August 10, 2003. Serves as Pastor of the New Church of Concord in Concord, Massachusetts.

Gladish, Michael David

11910 Chantilly Lane, Mitchellville, MD 20721

Ordained June 10, 1973; 2nd degree, June 30, 1974. Serves as Pastor of the Washington New Church Society and School in Mitchellville, Maryland, and Regional Pastor for the Southeastern U.S.

Gladish, Nathan Donald

809 S Smokey Mountains Rd., Tucson, AZ 85748

Ordained June 13, 1982; 2nd degree, November 6, 1983. Serves as Pastor of the Sunrise Chapel in Tucson, Arizona.

Glenn, Coleman Starkey

1717 102nd Ave., Unit 5, Dawson Creek BC V1G 5A9 Canada

Ordained May 24, 2009; 2nd degree October 3, 2010. Serves as Pastor of the Dawson Creek New Church in Dawson Creek, British Columbia, Canada.

Glenn, Thane Powell

PO Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained May 24, 2009; 2nd degree June 6, 2010. Serves as Assistant Professor of Religion and English in Bryn Athyn College.

Gyamfi, Martin Kofi

The New Church, PO Box 10, Asakraka-Kwahu, E/R, Ghana, West Africa

Ordained June 9, 1991; 2nd degree, August 28, 1994. Serves as Pastor for the New Church in Asakraka-Kwahu, Visiting Pastor for Nteso and Oframase Groups in Ghana, West Africa and Regional Pastor for West Africa.

Halterman, Barry Childs

PO Box 707, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained June 5, 1994; 2nd degree, September 8, 1996. Teaches and serves as Head of the Religion Department in the Academy Secondary Schools. Assists at New Church Live.

Hauptmann, Olaf

8 Stoneleigh Park, Lexden, Colchester, Essex, England CO3 9FA

Ordained May 23, 2004; 2nd degree July 30, 2006. Serves as Pastor of the Colchester New Church, Colchester, Essex, England.

Heilman, Andrew James

1050 Mountain Road, Kempton, PA 19529

Ordained June 18, 1978; 2nd degree, March 8, 1981. Serves as Assistant Pastor of the Kempton Society in Kempton, Pennsylvania, Regional Pastor for Brazil, and Visiting Pastor of the Campo Grande and Fatima Societies in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and to Curitiba, Parana in Brazil.

Heinrichs, Bradley Daniel

58 Chapel Hill Drive, Kitchener, ON, Canada N2R 1N2

Ordained May 23, 1999; 2nd degree, November 19, 2000. Serves as Pastor of the Carmel New Church in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, Principal of the Carmel New Church School, Executive Vice President of the General Church in Canada, and Chairman of Information Swedenborg, Incorporated.

Jin, Yong Jin

537 Anne Street, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006

Ordained June 5, 1994; 2nd degree, June 16, 1996. Serves as Pastor of the Philadelphia Korean New Church, and responsible for outreach to the Korean-speaking community in the United States; Regional Pastor for Asia; Dean of the Korean New Church Theological School.

Johnson, Martie

7708 171st Street SW, Edmonds, WA 98026-5013

Ordained May 27, 2001; 2nd degree, June 16, 2002. Currently serving as a Chaplain in the United States Navy.

Koudou, Roger

Nouvelle Eglise Chrétienne de Cote d'Ivoire, 01 BP 4853 Abidjan 01, Republique Côte d'Ivoire

Ordained July 13, 2008; 2nd degree July 11, 2010. Serves as Pastor of the Nouvelle Eglise Chretienne de Côte d'Ivoire, and leader of the Swedenborg Association in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

Lee, Jong-Ui

Gwangju, Seo-gu, Chipyung-dong 1171-4, Kumho Ssangyong APT 204-605, 502-754, South Korea

Ordained May 31, 1998; 2nd degree, June 17, 2001. Serves as Pastor of the New Church at the City of Light in Gwangju, Korea.

Lewin, Alan

21A Hayne Road, Beckenham, Kent, England, BR3 4JA

Recognized as Priest in the General Church in November 19, 2006. Ordained 2nd degree December 2, 2007. Serves as Pastor of the Michael Church, London, England, and Visiting Pastor of the Surrey Circle, England.

Lindrooth, David Hutchinson

PO Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained June 10, 1990; 2nd degree, April 19, 1992. Serves as Bishop's Representative for Outreach.

Lumsden, Derrick Alan Mark

7 Sydney Road, Westville 3629, South Africa

Ordained May 25, 2008; 2nd degree May 16, 2010. Serves as Pastor of New Church Westville in Durban, South Africa,

Maseko, Jacob Mokaka

PO Box 261, Pimville, 1808, South Africa

Ordained November 29, 1992; 2nd degree, September 18, 1994. Serves as Pastor of the Diepkloof Society, South Africa.

Mbatha, Bhekuyise Alfred

PO Box 1013, Eshowe, KZN 3815, South Africa

Ordained June 27, 1971; 2nd degree, June 23, 1974. Serves as Pastor of the Impaphala Society in South Africa.

McCardell, Ethan Derek

17534 Wallingford Ave. N, Shoreline, WA 98133

Ordained May 25, 2003; 2nd degree March 21, 2004. Serves as Pastor of the Light for Life New Church in Seattle, Washington.

Mkhize, Sibusiso Protus

Box 16932, Eshowe, KwaZulu-Natal, 3815, South Africa

Ordained May 25, 2003. 2nd degree November 11, 2007. Serves as Pastor of the Kwa Mashu Society in South Africa.

Nicolier, Alain

10 Rue de Haras, Bourguignon-21200, Meursanges, France

Ordained May 31, 1979; 2nd degree, September 16, 1984. Serves as Pastor of group in Bourguignon, France, and Evangelist for French-speaking West Africa.

Odhner, Grant Hugo

PO Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained June 7, 1981; 2nd degree, May 9, 1982. Serves as Assistant Professor of religion in Bryn Athyn College and of theology in the Bryn Athyn College Theological School. Visiting Pastor of the New York City Circle. Chairs the General Church Publication Committee.

Odhner, John Llewellyn

PO Box 277, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained June 7, 1980; 2nd degree, November 22, 1981. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor of the Bryn Athyn Church in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, and works on the Office of Outreach Internet Project.

Pendleton, Mark Dandridge

1028 Gladish Lane, Glenview, IL 60025

Ordained June 9, 1991; 2nd degree, May 29, 1994. Serves as Assistant Pastor of the Immanuel Church in Glenview, Illinois.

Perry, Charles Mark

7911 Canary Way, San Diego, CA 92123

Ordained June 9, 1991; 2nd degree, June 19, 1993. Serves as Pastor of the San Diego Society in San Diego, California; visits Palo Alto, California.

Rangi, Khalid Obiri

The General Church of the New Jerusalem, The New Church Riounde School and Orphanage Home, PO Box 3959, Kisii 40200, Kenya, East Africa

Ordained May 25, 2003; 2nd degree September 27, 2009. Serves as Pastor of the Riounde New Church Society

in Riounde, Kisii, Kenya, Director of the New Church Kisii Orphanage Home, and Director of the New Church Riounde School.

Rose, Jonathan Searle

PO Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained May 31, 1987; 2nd degree, February 23, 1997. Serves as translator for the Swedenborg Foundation.

Rose, Patrick Alan

502 Knollwood Place, Woodstock, GA 30188-4588

Ordained June 19, 1975; 2nd degree, September 25, 1977. Serves as Pastor of the Atlanta Society in Atlanta, Georgia, and Visiting Pastor throughout Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama and Louisiana. Does internet work for the clergy.

Rose, Thomas Hartley

851 W. Bristol Road, Ivyland, PA 18974

Ordained June 12, 1988; 2nd degree, May 21, 1989. Serves as Pastor of the Ivyland New Church in Ivyland, Pennsylvania.

Roth, David Christopher

3421 Blue Stem Avenue, Longmont, CO 80503

Ordained June 9, 1991; 2nd degree, October 17, 1993. Serves as Pastor of the New Church of Boulder Valley in Boulder, Colorado and Regional Pastor for the Western United States.

Schnarr, Philip Bradley

PO Box 277, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained June 5, 1996; 2nd degree, May 31, 1998. Serves as School Pastor of the Bryn Athyn Church School.

Segbenu, John Kwaku

PO Box 325, Madina-Accra, Ghana

Ordained July 13, 2008; 2nd degree July 4, 2010. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor in Tema, and teaches in the Tema school.

Silverman, Ray

PO Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained June 6, 1984; 2nd degree, June 19, 1985. Serves as Chaplain and Assistant Professor of religion in Bryn Athyn College.

Simons, Jeremy Frederick

PO Box 277, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained June 13, 1982; 2nd degree, July 31, 1983. Serves as Pastor of the Bryn Athyn Society in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania.

Smith, Lawson Merrell

171 Kunkles Dahl Road, Kempton, PA 19529

Ordained June 10, 1979; 2nd degree, February 1, 1981. Serves as Pastor of the Kempton Society in Kempton, Pennsylvania, and Principal of the Kempton New Church School. Regional Pastor for the Northeastern United States.

Souka, Eric Messan

Nouvelle Eglise du Togo, BP 61202, Lomé, Togo

Ordained July 20, 2008; 2nd degree July 11, 2010. Serves as Pastor of the New Church Group in Vogan, Togo.

Walsh, Garry Brian

4036 E. Coolbrook Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85032

Ordained May 27, 2001; 2nd degree, September 8, 2002. Serves as Pastor of the Phoenix New Church Society in Phoenix, Arizona.

Xaba, Langalibalele Abraham

2375 Sono Road Zone 2, Diepkloof 1862, South Africa

Ordained August 27, 2006; 2nd degree August 9, 2009. Serves as Pastor for the Alexandra Society in South Africa.

Yang, Gyu Dae

Kyomoon Apt. 104-1403, Kyomoon-dong, Kuri-si, Republic of Korea 471-020

Ordained into 2nd degree October 21, 2007. Serves as Pastor of the Seoul New Church in South Korea.

Zathey-Agboga, Godwin

PO Box HP 396, Ho, Volta-Region, Ghana, West Africa

Ordained May 27, 2007; 2nd degree July 13, 2008. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor of the Asakraka-Kwahu New Church, visiting minister to Kumasi group, and will work to initiate a startup group in the Volta Region.

MINISTERS

Aka, Honoré Amahin

01 BP 12161, Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire

Ordained July 11, 2010. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor of Bobby New Church Congregation in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

Akotey, Edward

PO Box 10, Asakraka-Kwahu, E/R, Ghana

Ordained July 4, 2010. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor of the New Church in Asakraka-Kwahu, Ghana.

Amouzouvi, Ablam Komlan

c/o Rev. Segno-Kodjo Ayi, La Nouvelle Eglise du Togo, BP 61202, Togo

Ordained July 11, 2010. Serves as Assistant to the pastors in Lomé and Vogan, Togo.

Anato, Guillaume Joseph Kuassivi

03 BP 3850, Cotonou, Benin.

Ordained May 30, 2010. Serves as Minister in Cotonou, Benin.

Beiswenger, Todd Jeffrey

26 Dudley Street, Penshurst, NSW, 2222 Australia

Ordained May 22, 2011. Served as Assistant to the Pastor of Ivyland New Church, July – December, 2011. Serves as Acting Pastor of the Hurstville New Church in Hurstville, Australia

Dakouri, Evariste Daligou

21 BP 4352, Abidjan 21, Côte d'Ivoire

Ordained July 11, 2010. Serves as Minister to the Gesco New Church group in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

Devassy, Peter Naduvilaveetil

Pulinthara House, OPP PHED Pump House, West Karuvilipady, Cochin, Kerala 682005, India.

Ordained October 23, 2011. Serves as Minister of the New Church in India.

Doukourou, Moise Gogable

01 BP 12161, Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire

Ordained July 11, 2010. Serves as full-time instructor in Theology in the New Jerusalem Theological Institute/Abidjan.

Frazier, Pearse McCollum

3585 Rte. 737, Kempton, PA 19529

Ordained May 22, 2011. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor of the

Kempton New Church in Kempton, PA.

Kouhoui, Henry Joel Kouassi

23 BP 1843, Abidjan 23, Côte d'Ivoire

Ordained July 11, 2010. Serves as Director of the New Jerusalem Theological Institute/Abidjan.

Mangoua, Cyprien Kouamé

01 BP 12161, Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire

Ordained July 11, 2010. Serves as Minister to the Cite Verte New Church group in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

Marisa, Nicks

PO Box 3959, Kisii 40200, Kenya

Ordained July 18, 2010. Serves as Minister of the group in Nyakeyo, as Assistant to the Pastor in Riounde, Kisii, Kenya and principal in charge of developing a high school there.

Muires, Stephen Karel

Tegnerlunden 7, 6 tr SE-111 61 Stockholm, Sweden

Ordained May 22, 2011. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor in Stockholm, Sweden, and serves as Visiting Pastor of the Jönköping Circle in Sweden, the Copenhagen Circle in Denmark and The Hague group in the Netherlands.

Nobre, Vicente Henrique Rabelo

Rua Salvador Caruso Orlando, 1729 B-12, Medeiros – Jundiá – SP – Brazil, CEP 13.212-246

Ordained May 28, 2006. Serves as Minister to New Church in Jundiá, Sao Paulo, Brazil and as visiting minister to Curitiba, Parana, Brazil.

Odhner, Calvin Acton

134 Smithwood Dr., Etobicoke, ON M9B 4S4, Canada

Ordained May 22, 2011. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor of Olivet New Church in Etobicoke, Ontario, Canada.

Sandström, Ryan Matthew

15809 Piller Lane, Bowie, MD 20716

Ordained May 22, 2011. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor of the Washington New Church in Mitchellville, MD.

Schnarr, Ronald Doering

1820 Park Lake Dr., Boulder, CO 80301

Ordained May 30, 2010. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor of the New Church of Boulder Valley in Boulder, Colorado.

Smith, Brian Donald

134 Smithwood Dr., Etobicoke, ON M9B 4S4, Canada

Ordained May 30, 2010. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor of the Olivet New Church in Toronto, Canada.

Smith, Malcolm Glenn

30 Perth Road, Westville 3629, South Africa

Ordained May 30, 2010. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor of New Church Westville in Westville, South Africa.

Thompson, Howard Arthur

PO Box 277, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained May 22, 2011. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor of the Bryn Athyn New Church in Bryn Athyn, PA.

**Villanueva, Johnny Antônio
Zavalaga**

Estrada de Santa Maria, 1175, Vila Nova, Campo Grande, Rio de Janeiro, RJ 23.071.060 Brazil

Ordained October 28th, 2008. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor in Rio de Janeiro.

AUTHORIZED CANDIDATES

Atta, Kamenan Jean Francois Aime

PO Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Keal, Solomon John

PO Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Beirith, Eduardo

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Choe, Mahn Hoe

Woorim Apt 105-806 Jinsa-Ri, Kongdo-Eup, Kyeong-ki, Ahnseong-Si 456-713, South Korea

Jung, Young Ho

Do-Bong, Chang, Dong., 380 Jukong Apt, Seoul 403-810, South Korea

Kang, Suk Man

Hindolmaeul Apt 403-502 ho, 1343 Baekseok-Dong Ilsandong-ku, Koyang-Si, 411-724, South Korea

Kim, Seoung Gil

391-15 Suyu 5-dong, Kangbuk-ku, Seoul, South Korea 142-884

Lee, Soon Cheol

101-301 Samik Ceramic Apt. 374-1, Mochung-dong, Hungduk-ku Chungju-si, Chungchungbuk-Do, Republic of Korea 361-140

Matsumoto, Shiro

1-206, Inagedai-House, 7-8, Inagedai-cho, Inage-ward, Chiba-shi, 263-0032 Japan

NON-GENERAL CHURCH
MINISTERS SERVING
GENERAL CHURCH GROUPS

Dole, George Frederick

876 High St., Bath, Maine 04530-2423

Serves as Pastor of the Church of the New Jerusalem in Bath, Maine.

Keyworth, Richard John

15 Dunkirk Road, Panmure, Auckland 1072, New Zealand

Serves as Pastor of the Auckland Circle, New Zealand.

RETIRED

Acton, Alfred, II

116 Walnut Way, Pineville, SC 29468

Ordained June 19, 1964; 2nd degree, October 30, 1966; 3rd degree, May 16, 1999. Serves as co-Pastor of the Charleston Group in Charleston, South Carolina.

Buss, Peter Martin

950 Pendleton Ave., Longmont, CO 80501

Ordained June 19, 1964; 2nd degree, May 16, 1965; 3rd degree, June 1, 1986. Bishop Emeritus of the General Church. Serves as Supervising Pastor in South Africa.

Alden, Glenn Graham

c/o Sunrise Chapel, 8421 E. Wrightstown Road, Tucson, AZ 85715

Ordained June 19, 1974; 2nd degree, June 6, 1976.

Asplundh, Kurt Horigan

PO Box 26, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained June 19, 1960; 2nd degree, June 19, 1962.

Ankra-Badu, William Ofei

PO Box 11305, Accra-North, Ghana, West Africa

Ordained June 15, 1986; 2nd degree, March 1, 1992.

Asplundh, Kurt Hyland

PO Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained June 6, 1993; 2nd degree, April 30, 1995. Teaches theology part time at Bryn Athyn College and at the Bryn Athyn College Theological School.

Bau-Madsen, Arne

PO Box 333, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained June 6, 1976; 2nd degree, June 11, 1978. Serves as Associate Pastor of Kempton Society in Kempton, Pennsylvania.

Burke, William Hanson

2465 Spring Harbor Dr., Cumming, GA 30041

Ordained June 7, 1981; 2nd degree, August 13, 1983.

Cole, Robert Hudson Pendleton

PO Box 356, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained June 16, 1963; 2nd degree, October 30, 1966. Serves as Visiting Pastor of Chicago New Church in Chicago, Illinois and does other travel work for the General Church.

Echols, John Clark, Jr

9331 Westchester Park Ct., West Chester, OH 45069

Ordained August 26, 1978; 2nd degree, March 30, 1980. Serves as Pastor of the Cincinnati Society in Cincinnati, Ohio and Visiting Pastor in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Elphick, Frederick Charles

21B Hayne Road, Beckenham, Kent, England, BR3 4JA

Ordained June 6, 1984; 2nd degree, September 23, 1984.

Goodenough, Daniel Webster

PO Box 748, Big Horn, WY 82833

Ordained June 19, 1965; 2nd degree, December 10, 1967. Serves as Visiting Pastor in the Northern Rocky Mountains, USA.

Heinrichs, Daniel Winthrop

9115 Chrysanthemum Drive, Boynton Beach, FL 33437-1236

Ordained June 19, 1957; 2nd degree, April 6, 1958.

Heinrichs, Willard Lewis Davenport

7358 Mt. Sherman Rd., Longmont, CO 80503

Ordained June 19, 1965; 2nd degree, January 26, 1969. Serves as Visiting Pastor in the central United States.

Howard, Geoffrey Horace

128 Boyle Way, Summerville, SC 29485

Ordained June 19, 1961; 2nd degree, June 2, 1963. Serves as co-Pastor of the Charleston Group in Charleston, South Carolina.

Jungé, Robert Schill

9212 Quaker City Road, Kempton, PA 19529

Ordained June 19, 1955; 2nd degree, August 11, 1957. Serves as Visiting Pastor of the Central Pennsylvania Circle.

Kwak, Dzin Pyung

Prayer House of the New Church, 131 Kyohang-ri, Socho-myon, Wonjoo-si,

Kangwon-do, R. O. Korea 220-831

Ordained June 12, 1988; 2nd degree, November 11, 1990.

Larsen, Ottar Trosvik

2145 Country Club Drive, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006

Ordained June 19, 1974; 2nd degree, February 16, 1977.

McCurdy, George Daniel

PO Box 707, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained June 25, 1967; Recognized as a priest of the New Church in the second degree July 5, 1979; received into the priesthood of the General Church June 9, 1980. Serves as Visiting Pastor of the Harleysville Circle in Harleysville, Pennsylvania, to Williamsburg, Virginia, and to Lake Helen and Jacksonville, Florida. Acts as the General Church's Ecclesiastical Endorsing Agent for Military Chaplains and Chairman of the Military Service Committee.

Nemitz, Kurt Paul

7127 Willard St., Pittsburgh, PA 15208

Ordained June 16, 1963; 2nd degree, March 27, 1966. Serves as a translator for the General Church.

Nicholson, Allison La Marr

1 Somerset Place, Topsham, ME 04086

Ordained September 9, 1979; 2nd degree, February 15, 1981.

Nobre, Cristóvão Rabelo

Rua Fernando Cunha, 114, Barra, 45990-000 Alcobaca, Brazil

Ordained June 6, 1984; 2nd degree August 25, 1985. Serves as a translator for the General Church.

Nzimande, Bongani Edward

PO Box 848, Pinetown, 3600, South Africa

Ordained November 14, 1999; 2nd degree May 25, 2003. Serves as Visiting Pastor of the Enkumba Society in South Africa.

Orthwein, Walter Edward III

2934 Orchard Lane, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006

Ordained July 22, 1973; Recognized as a priest of the General Church in November, 1976 and ordained into the 2nd degree, June 12, 1977. Serves as Co-editor of *New Church Life*.

Pendleton, Dandridge

PO Box 550, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained June 19, 1952; 2nd degree, June 19, 1954.

Riley, Norman Edward

2360 Byberry Rd., Hatboro, PA 19040

Ordained June 14, 1950; 2nd degree, June 20, 1951. Recognized as a priest of the General Church January, 1978.

Rogers, Norbert Bruce

449 Woodward Drive, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006

Ordained January 12, 1969. Serves as a translator for the General Church.

Rogers, Prescott Andrew

6211 Lowergate Drive, Waxhaw, North Carolina, 28173

Ordained January 26, 1986; 2nd degree, April 24, 1988. Serves as Pastor of the Charlotte Circle in North Carolina.

Rose, Frank Shirley

9233 E. Helen Street, Tucson, AZ 85715

Ordained June 19, 1952; 2nd degree, August 2, 1953.

Sandström, Erik Emanuel

PO Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained May 23, 1971; 2nd degree, May 21, 1972. Serves as Acting Curator of Swedenborgiana.

Sheppard, Leslie Lawrence

*1417-45 Duncan St., West End, Brisbane
4101 Queensland, Australia*

Ordained into 1st and 2nd degrees, June 7, 1992.

Smith, Christopher Ronald Jack

741 Old Philly Pike, Kempton, PA 19529

Ordained June 19, 1969; 2nd degree, May 9, 1971. Serves as a visiting Pastor to Central Pennsylvania.

Synnestvedt, Louis Daniel

3657A Rte. 737, Kempton, PA 19529

Ordained June 7, 1980; 2nd degree, November 8, 1981,

Taylor, Douglas McLeod

*942 Meadowbrook Drive, Huntingdon
Valley PA 19006*

Ordained June 19, 1960; 2nd degree, June 19, 1962.

Tshabalala, Njanyana Reuben

PO Box 851, Kwa Xuma, 1867, South Africa

Ordained November 29, 1992; 2nd degree, September 18, 1994. Serves as Pastor of the Balfour Society in Mpumalanga, South Africa.

Waters, Gerald Gilbert

*9 Chiltern Gardens, 39 Pitlochry Road,
Westville, 3630, South Africa*

Ordained March 17, 2002; 2nd degree October 17, 2004. Serves

as Pastor of Providence Home, Westville, and as Visiting Pastor of the Zululand Group in Kwa-Zulu, Natal; Executive Vice President of the Corporation of the General Church in South Africa.

Weiss, Jan Hugo

1020 Marina Drive, Placentia, CA 92870

Ordained June 19, 1955; 2nd degree, May 12, 1957. President of New Church Outreach.

In addition to the specific assignments listed for some of the retired clergy above, several retired priests travel regularly to serve as visiting pastors/preachers where needed.

UNASSIGNED MINISTERS

Alden, Mark Edward

PO Box 204, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained June 10, 1979; 2nd degree, May 17, 1981.

Barnett, Wendel Ryan

19 Milton Drive, Yardley, PA 19067

Ordained June 7, 1981; 2nd degree, June 20, 1982.

Bell, Reuben Paul

121 North Street, Saco, ME 04072

Ordained May 25, 1997; 2nd degree April 11, 1999.

Carlson, Mark Robert

30 New Road, Southampton, PA 18966

Ordained June 10, 1973; 2nd degree, March 6, 1977.

Childs, Robin Waelchli

PO Box 707, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained June 6, 1984; 2nd degree, June 8, 1986.

Clifford, William Harrison

1544 Giddings Ave. SE, Grand Rapids, MI

49507-2223

Ordained June 6, 1976; 2nd degree,
October 8, 1978.

Glenn, Robert Amos

700 Lenox Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15221

Ordained May 28, 2000; 2nd degree,
June 2, 2002.

Schnarr, Grant Ronald

PO Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Ordained June 12, 1983; 2nd degree,
October 7, 1984. Serves as an
instructor of theology in Bryn Athyn
College.

Fitzpatrick, Daniel

2 Raquel Ct., Marietta, GA 30064

Ordained June 6, 1984.

Paek, Sung-Won

Administration, MossRehab/
Einstein, 60 E. Township Line Rd.,
Elkins Park, PA 19027

Ordained May 27, 2001.

Schorran, Paul Edward

631 Old Philly Pike, Kempton, PA 19529

Ordained June 12, 1983.

SOCIETIES AND CIRCLES

<i>Society</i>	<i>Pastor or Minister</i>
Alexandra, Johannesburg South Africa	Rev. Langalibalele A. Xaba, Pastor
Atlanta, Georgia	Rev. Patrick A. Rose, Pastor
Baltimore, Maryland	Rev. Michael E. Ferrell, Visiting Pastor
Bath, Maine	Rev. George F. Dole, Pastor
Boulder, Colorado (New Church of Boulder Valley)	Rev. David C. Roth, Pastor Rev. Ronald D. Schnarr, Assistant to the Pastor
Boston, Massachusetts	Rev. Matthew L. Genzlinger, Pastor
Boynton Beach, Florida	Rev. Kenneth J. Alden, Pastor
Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania	Rev. Jeremy F. Simons, Pastor Rev. Erik J. Buss, Assistant Pastor Rev. Philip B. Schnarr, School Pastor Rev. James H. Barry, Assistant to the Pastor Rev. John L. Odhner, Assistant to the Pastor Rev. Howard A. Thompson, Assistant to the Pastor
Bucleuch, Johannesburg South Africa	Rev. Mark .B. Allais, Pastor
Central Pennsylvania	Rev. Robert S. Jungé, Visiting Pastor
Chicago, Illinois	Rev. Robert H. P. Cole, Visiting Pastor
Cincinnati, Ohio	Rev. J. Clark Echols, Pastor
Clermont, Durban South Africa	Rev. Jerome Bhekiyuse Dube, Pastor

Colchester, England	Rev. Olaf Hauptmann, Pastor
Dawson Creek, B. C., Canada	Rev. Coleman S. Glenn, Pastor
Detroit, Michigan (Oak Arbor Church)	Rev. Derek P. Elphick, Pastor
Diepkloof, Soweto South Africa	Rev. Jacob M. Maseko, Pastor
Enkumba, KwaZulu Natal South Africa	Rev. B. Edward Nzimande
Freeport, Pennsylvania (Sower's Chapel)	Rev. Frederick M. Chapin, Pastor
Glenview, Illinois	Rev. Peter M. Buss, Jr., Pastor Rev. Mark D. Pendleton, Assistant Pastor
Hurstville, Australia	Rev. Todd J. Beiswenger, Minister
Impaphala, South Africa	Rev. B. Alfred Mbatha, Pastor
Ivyland, Pennsylvania	Rev. Thomas H. Rose, Pastor
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