

NEW CHURCH *Life*

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

MARCH/APRIL 2023



After being welcomed into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday with palm fronds and hosannas, Jesus wept – not for what would soon happen to Him with His crucifixion but for the people who did not accept or understand what He was teaching them. (Page 88)

**NEW CHURCH LIFE (USPS 378-180)
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New Church Life

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- 73 In This Issue
- 75 Editorials: *The Glory and the Power*
- *The Theme of Betrayal in the Easter Story*
- 80 Letters to the Editors
- 88 Palm Sunday: Jesus Wept for the People of Jerusalem
- The Rev. Eric H. Carswell*
- 93 50 Years ago in New Church Life:
- Putting Off and Putting On - An Easter Sermon
- by the Rt. Rev. Louis B. King
- 99 Stretch, Release, Breathe: How My Work Works
- on Me: Charter Day Theta Alpha Talk – *Chara C. Daum*
- 109 From the Bishop's Office: Doomscrolling
- The Rt. Rev. David H. Lindrooth*
- 112 Finding the New Jerusalem: Part Three of the Story of
- Robert Hindmarsh Compiled by *Marvin Clymer*
- 126 A Harsh God? – *Ned Uber*
- 132 Bryn Athyn Cathedral Gardens – *Terry Schnarr*
- 136 A New Index to Spiritual Experiences
- The Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith*
- 138 Church News
- 143 Life Lines
- 156 Announcements

New Church Life is available online at www.newchurchlife.org, with issues archived back to 2006. All issues of New Church Life can be searched to 1881 at www.heavenlydoctrines.org

In This Issue

Editorials (page 75) include:

- *The Glory and the Power*: The Easter story is a drama about power – the power of evil that brought the Lord onto earth to subdue it, and the Lord’s power of love that redeems us all. That drama still plays out in our lives – and the gift of Easter is the hope that it instills.
- *The Theme of Betrayal in the Easter Story* has lessons for us and the church, as well: “In a sense Judas represents the issue that religion itself faces in the modern world.” And, “We need to face the truth” that in the betrayal of Judas “these are our tendencies, that it is a challenge for us to stick to the rules and maintain our loyalties over time.” But we can do it – with the Lord’s help.

In a Palm Sunday sermon the Rev. Eric Carswell explains why Jesus wept for the people of Jerusalem, after being welcomed with palms and hosannas. He wept because they did not accept or understand what He was teaching and “because He had feelings of mercy and grief for the people of the city and the church it represented.” (Page 88)

In an Easter sermon from 50 years ago, the Rt. Rev. Louis B. King demonstrates how the whole process of the Lord putting off His human body and glorifying His Human is symbolized in what Jesus says in *John 12:24*, that “*except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.*” Bishop King explained: “As He in so many ways ‘put off and put on’ for us, so are we to put off evil and falsity as of self, so that He may put on in us and for us the fulness of regenerate life.” (Page 93)

In a much-heralded talk from the Charter Day Theta Alpha luncheon last fall, Chara Daum lifted spirits with the story of her own faith journey: *Stretch, Release, Breathe – How My Work Works on Me*. Through 40 years of teaching, translating Swedenborg’s Latin, and working with the Swedenborg

Foundation's *offTheLeftEye* videos, she humbly concludes: "Aren't we all doing this work as we bumble and stumble toward eternity, no matter the details of our work or personal life? The Lord reveals Himself to each of us in such an individual way." (Page 99)

Writing From the Bishop's Office the Rt. Rev. David Lindrooth warns about the dangers of "doomscrolling" – scrolling from one clip of bad news to the next on your smartphone. He warns that this is the way evil works on us – growing in darkness like a virus that infects a whole community. (Page 109)

Marvin Clymer offers the concluding part three of the story of Robert Hindmarsh: *Finding the New Jerusalem*. This is a fascinating history of one of the first leaders of the New Church in Great Britain – a tale of eccentric, driven characters and their commitment to the new revelation offered through Emanuel Swedenborg. (Page 112)

Ned Uber ponders the Old Testament images of a harsh God, which troubles many readers, and finds comforting explanations in the spiritual sense offered in the Writings. So many of these stories come with a harsh context in the letter of the Word but are all about how the Lord had to purify churches overwhelmed with falsity and how, "through the Lord's power, we have to root out evils in ourselves." (Page 126)

Terry Schnarr writes the beautiful story behind the Bryn Athyn Cathedral gardens, developed by Danielle Odhner and her team "as a conscious effort to bring the symbolism of the interior of the Cathedral to the outside. (Page 132. See photos on pages 134 and 135)

The Rt. Rev. Brian Keith tells of a new translation of the Index to Spiritual Experiences by the Rev. Kurt Nemitz, assisted by the Rev. Kenneth Alden – "a momentous work" that "will serve readers and New Church scholars well." (Page 136)

Church News (page 138) includes:

- The appointment of the Rev. Eric Carswell as President of Bryn Athyn College
- The replacement of a beautiful but worn floor in the Bryn Athyn Cathedral
- Pastoral staffing changes in Bryn Athyn
- Academy Summer Camps
- The Living Waters Family Camp in Ontario, Canada

Editorials

Bruce M. Henderson and the Rev. Jeremy F. Simons

THE GLORY AND THE POWER

The Lord's life on earth – from birth to crucifixion and resurrection – is a drama about power that still roils the world and makes Easter ever relevant in our lives.

The Lord came on earth because the power of hell was threatening the order of heaven and our freedom on earth. His life of spiritual temptation, the apparent defeat in His crucifixion, and the ultimate triumph of His resurrection were our victory: assuring us life and a pathway to heaven. But the conflict continues – throughout the world and in our lives. That is why Easter is more than a history lesson. It is all about our life.

The Word does not tell us much about the Lord's temptations on earth except that they were constant, as they are with us. His were infinitely more grievous because the hells attack what we love – and His love is for the whole human race. To bring that love into doubt was the ultimate temptation. Only *Matthew 4:1* gives us a glimpse of what He faced: “*Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil*” for 40 days and 40 nights.

Our temptations are just as real because they attack what we love, aimed at sowing doubt and despair. The battleground for power is the power of self-love and “I am in control,” vs. the humbling, innocent but very real power of the Lord with us.

Our culture has mixed feelings about power. Much of what plays out around us is a lust for power – for control and dominion. We remember Lord Acton's ominous warning that “power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” There are all too many examples – throughout history and today's headlines – that speak to this darker side of humanity. Abraham

Lincoln – always in tune with human nature – warned: “If you really want to test a man’s character, give him a little power.”

We live between influences for good and evil, flowing from heaven and hell – love for the Lord and the neighbor from heaven, love for self and the world from hell. We get to choose – every moment of our lives. It is not always easy, which is why Jesus wept after being welcomed to Jerusalem with palms and hosannas a week before his crucifixion – because the people did not understand or acknowledge what He was teaching. It isn’t easy to make the right choices all the time, which is why regeneration is a lifetime process – as the Lord was tempted throughout His life on earth.

Abigail Adams is fondly remembered in history with her husband John for their letters while he served in Washington and she kept farm and family together in Boston. She wrote to him in 1775, as the new nation was cautiously defining its values, with a concern that echoes today: “I am more and more convinced that man is a dangerous creature; and that power, whether vested in many or a few, is ever grasping, and like the grave, cries, ‘give, give!’”

Then there is William Shakespeare’s warning in *Troilus and Cressida*:

*Then everything includes itself in power,
Power into will, will into appetite;
And appetite, an universal wolf,
So doubly seconded with will and power,
Must make perforce an universal prey
And last eat up himself.*

This is what the Lord was fighting in His temptations – the power of hell to overwhelm His love for the human race. It is what we struggle with still – the allure of power and its threat against all that we love. The Writings warn that the love of dominion is among the most dangerous temptations we face because it flows from the love of self. But power can also be tamed – from benevolent rulers guided by service, to any of us striving to protect order as the framework of freedom.

Power does not necessarily bear within itself the seeds of corruption, but it is a temptation. Power doesn’t turn everyone into a tyrant. It is not inevitable that “power corrupts”. The Lord’s love gave Him the power to triumph over hell and give us our lives and the hope of heaven. As is said in *John 12:46*: “He has delivered us from the power of darkness.”

We pray: “Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory.” The Lord’s power, flowing from Him and His angels, is a force only for good. His resurrection symbolizes for us the opportunity to start over, to seek and experience

growth through regeneration and the Lord's redemption. It is through Him that we receive our life, the power to change, and to follow Him into heaven. That is His power. And this is the gift of Easter.

(BMH)

THE THEME OF BETRAYAL IN THE EASTER STORY

The betrayal is central to the Easter story for very good reasons. It is interesting to contrast the elements of the Christmas story with those of Easter – the beginning and end of the Lord's life on earth. They both have villains such as Herod, and the Chief Priests. They both have danger and threats to the Lord's life. They both have people who gladly receive the Lord. But at Christmas the joyful reception is on the part of uncomprehending shepherds, mysterious foreigners, Mary and Joseph, and the angels, while Jerusalem is troubled and there is no room at the inn. By contrast the joyful recipients are far more numerous as the crowds welcome Him to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday and follow Him throughout the city. Similarly, the opposition also involves far more people.

A major difference, though, is the theme of betrayal that grows throughout the Lord's ministry and culminates in a number of incidents during Easter week. There is nothing similar in the Christmas story, except perhaps in Mary and Joseph's finding no room in their own city of Bethlehem.

The theme finds expression in several parables told in the days between Palm Sunday and Easter. In the parable of the wicked vinedressers employees turn on their master and kill his son. (*Matthew 21*) In the parable of the wedding feast those who are invited refuse to come, and even attack and kill those bringing the invitation. (*Matthew 22*) The charges of hypocrisy leveled against the scribes and Pharisees are closely related to this theme. A hypocrite appears to act on the side of justice but is actually opposed to it.

Even those closest to the Lord were affected. Peter denied Him three times, and when the Lord was arrested all of the disciples forsook Him and fled. At the end we are told that the Lord even fought against heaven itself:

The truth that the Lord at length fought with actual angels, indeed with the whole angelic heaven, is an arcanum which has not been disclosed up to now. But the implications of this are as follows: Angels do indeed possess supreme wisdom and intelligence, yet all their wisdom and intelligence comes to them from the Lord's Divine. . . . Therefore it is only insofar as they are governed by truths and goods received from the Lord's Divine that they are wise

| *and intelligent. (Arcana Coelestia 4295)*

The reason that the Lord fought against the angels – that even the angels betrayed Him, in a sense – is that their wisdom and intelligence could not grasp and support what was happening. They doubted and opposed the wisdom of what the Lord was doing because they lacked the truths to comprehend it. Apparently they simply could not understand how the terrible events of Good Friday could contribute to the salvation of the human race.

It is only natural that the angels' doubts would be shared by all of us. It makes little intuitive sense that the Lord's final victory over hell was accomplished by permitting Himself to physically suffer the way that He did. Yet we are assured in the Heavenly Doctrines that this was a necessary part of the Lord's struggles against and victory over the hells. (*True Christianity 126*)

The angels' doubts, however, are scarcely related to the reasons behind Judas' doubts and betrayal. Whatever reasons Judas may have consciously held, it is clear that the real reason was the influence of hell, or the devil, as it is said in John at the Last supper:

| *And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him . . . (John 13:2)*

The reason that the theme of betrayal is so pervasive is that Judas did not really act alone. Throughout His life the Lord was assaulted by "all of the hells" (*Heavenly Doctrine 201*), and this multitude is represented in all those who opposed Him.

At the time of the end of a church many people do not love the Lord or accept His Word. Similarly, many do not love each other or behave with integrity. Judas typified that state, but he didn't act alone.

In a sense Judas represents the issue that religion itself faces in the modern world. Modern religion depends on the acceptance of teachings, affiliation with a group, and reform and regeneration over time as people apply the truth to their life. The classic issue that presents itself is that a person will seem to accept the truth but will not carry that faith into life. Or that a person will intend to begin the process of regeneration but will not follow through, or will become disillusioned with the process over time. Aspects of this are what Judas, the Pharisees and other players in the Easter story represent.

This is especially the case at the time of the end of the age, again as the Lord said:

| *Then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another... And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. (Matthew 24:11)*

In those times it is not only Judas who betrays. Betrayal becomes com-

mon, and the love of many grows cold. People easily become disenchanted with what is happening around them, whether it is their marriage, their employment, their church or their government.

We need to face the truth that these are our tendencies, that it is a challenge for us to stick to the rules and maintain our loyalties over time. But we can do it. As the Lord said:

The love of many will grow cold, but those who endure to the end shall be saved. (Matthew 24:13)

(JFS)

Letters to the Editors

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

The Perils of Selective Literalism

To the Editors:

Re: Task Force Report and Letters to the Editor Regarding LGBTQIA+ individuals and the Church:

As someone who has held the church and the teachings close to my heart for my entire life, I am concerned and fearful about the intent expressed in the Task Force Report in response to the Open Letter submitted to the church, as well as recent letters to the editor in *New Church Life* on the topic of LGBTQIA+.

The enforcement of policies aligned with the “ideals of conjugal love” on a selective basis will alienate and exclude more individuals from the church. Further, the suggestion from a recent letter (*Fundamental Principles, November/December 2022*) that the church should take a “firm and protective stance against anything . . . that might subvert . . . the basic message from *Conjugal Love*” could have serious consequences for the entire church community. Consequences that I don’t believe have been contemplated by those advocating for this position, or those who continue to insist on using language such as “unnatural” or “abhorrent” in reference to individuals with varying experiences of life and love on this earth.

My concern is for the church applying a literal interpretation of the Writings on a selective basis, and the harm this approach could perpetuate going forward. Selective literalism will not be conducive to the core values of the church, notably the values to help people hear the call to a better way of living through self-examination and repentance, and welcoming all those who wish to participate in the life of the church.

My suggestion that the position of the church and recent letters to the editors on this matter are representative of a selective literal interpretation of the Writings is based on my own experiences within the church.

When it comes to marriage, *Conjugal Love* is clear: marriage and nuptials must include a time of betrothal, selection belongs to the man, and marriage is to follow a specific series of nuptial practices. (#296)

My own marriage did not follow these nuptial practices. Further, when it comes to marriage between a man and a woman, *Conjugal Love* also makes clear that roles for the man are to be aligned with the rational wisdom of the husband, including occupations and duties aligned with the practical application of this rational wisdom (#163, 174, 175), relegating the role of the wife to domestic roles in support of perceiving and moderating the husband's affections (#166, 174, 175).

I am aware of marriages both within the church and beyond where duties between the husband and wife do not follow these definitions or demarcations within the Writings. And yet, the full participation and engagement of these married couples are enabled and permitted within the church.

Thankfully, despite our failings and shortcomings described above, my wife and I were still permitted to be married by a pastor of the General Church.

In our case, a literal interpretation of the Writings and *Conjugal Love* was not applied.

The pastor exerted his discretion in consulting with us on our intended conjunction and matrimony within the New Church, which included a review of the Writings and reflection on our commitment to the principles of the church and our marriage with each other. If, on the other hand, the church had applied a literal interpretation of *Conjugal Love*, then I fear that I would not have been permitted a marriage within the New Church.

These are only a few examples based on select passages from *Conjugal Love*. There are others. Consider the teachings concerning divorce, which is very clearly only permitted in cases of unchaste conduct (#276) or "licentiousness" (#468). I can only hope that no one within our community would allege that divorces for other reasons are "unnatural or abhorrent," to use the divisive and harmful language from recent editions of *New Church Life*.

My concern is that by taking the positions outlined in the *Task Force Report* the New Church will commit itself to a literal interpretation of *Conjugal Love* in all cases, which will increase the number of people excluded from participation in church practices, services, and ceremonies such as weddings. Going forward, will the church deny marriage to couples who do not practice a chaste period of betrothal? Or couples who do not divide duties in alignment with the precepts of *Conjugal Love*?

As a further example, and related to the Rt. Rev. Peter Buss Jr.'s comments

regarding admission to Theological School, if an individual was bodily conjoined during their time of betrothal, are they to be denied entry to the Theological School? What about ministers, or prospective applicants to Theological School, who have divorced from their partner for reasons other than “licentiousness”? Are they to be expelled or rejected from the ministry?

Alternatively, if selective statements from *Conjugal Love* are applied literally, then excluding same-sex couples from access to a New Church marriage, or from admission to Theological School, reverts to discretionary exclusion. As Bishop Buss pointed out in his article in *New Church Life*, we are all living imperfect, fallible lives and have much work to do in coming closer to the Lord. Yet, many of us are invited and encouraged to participate and engage in all the services and practices of the church. I am certain there are many individuals who do not meet all the ideals of conjugal love who have been permitted weddings within the church. When it comes to marriage in the New Church, couples consult with a pastor and are expected to review and reflect on what a commitment to the three-fold Word will look like.

If a same-sex couple can honestly read *Conjugal Love*, interpret and understand the implications for their relationship and lives, and commit to the truths of the Word in spite of shortcomings and imperfections shared and experienced by many of us, what truth or good is served by denying them access to a New Church wedding? And likewise with an individual in a same-sex relationship who would like to be admitted to the Theological School.

I would implore everyone in our community: let the Word and Writings speak for themselves. I suggest that instead of rigid permissions for ministers based on a selective interpretation of the Word, that the church focus instead on supporting pastors, laity, employees and church members to exert their own discretion as to who, how and when individuals may or may not participate in the ceremonies and rituals sanctioned by the church, including marriage.

The three-fold Word, as revealed through the New Church, offers incredible teachings for a world ripe with division, polarization, moral uncertainty and cultural intolerance. It would be incredibly disheartening if a selective interpretation of specific ideals expressed in the Writings continues to inform restrictive policies that exclude and reject individuals with varying experiences of gender and sex. With all our failings, my family and I have been welcomed into the church and permitted to be married. This has enabled us to reflect, consider and aspire to come closer to the Lord in spite of our imperfections and inability to meet the ideals expressed in *Conjugal Love* at the time of our marriage.

I respectfully ask everyone within the church community: do not selectively exclude others who are committed, and would also benefit from, sharing and participating fully in the New Church community. And at the very least I

would ask all of us to avoid using terms such as “unnatural and abhorrent” in reference to anyone who may not live up to all the ideals expressed in *Conjugal Love*.

Mark Friesen
Vancouver, BC
Canada

Response from the Rev. Jeremy Simons, Spiritual Editor of *New Church Life*:

Thank you, Mark, for bringing up this topic, since others have also probably noticed the same things you did. Consistency in approach is a hard thing for an organization to maintain. Different ministers, administrators and boards will sometimes arrive at differing conclusions and have different responses even in the clearest of situations. When situations and rules are less clear this is even more common.

Fundamentally, the General Church does not endorse selective literalism in its approach to the teachings of the *Heavenly Doctrine*. All of the teachings relating to spiritual things are taken to be true as stated. If something is said to be wrong or disorderly in the Doctrines then it is wrong or disorderly.

The thing that people often miss, however, with respect to the church, is that even if things are clearly said to be wrong, this does not necessarily mean that the church or the clergy are expected to call out or somehow punish the people who do them. The clergy are not the police and people’s private lives are not normally their business. The only times that people’s private lives become the clergy’s business is when there is a specific situation that makes it their business. Examples would be when a church employee or board member’s life becomes scandalous, or when a student in a church school risks suspension for behaviors prohibited in the student handbook, or when a minister cannot do a wedding due to causes listed in the Writings or in church policy, or when a member of a congregation creates some kind of disturbance that needs to be dealt with.

Responding to the examples in the letter, yes it is true that the *Heavenly Doctrines* teach about the orderly steps toward marriage, and say that a lack of respect for those steps will impact the quality of the love between the two partners. But they also point out that these things are “light” insofar as they look toward marriage, that the effects vary, and they do not suggest that failures in this arena disqualify couples from a church wedding – or even that it is something that a minister ought to inquire into. Different ministers may be more or less strict with this, but it is not common for people to be refused

marriage for this reason.

This is even more true when it comes to the roles of husband and wife within a marriage and the kinds of occupations that men in women in the church take on. The Writings clearly state that men and women are different, that their roles within marriage differ because of those differences, and that these same differences affect the occupations and studies that men and women typically pursue. But these things are said to illustrate the complementary natures of males and females, not to prohibit individual roles or employments, much less suggest that these should be somehow controlled or guided by the clergy. The few areas where the clergy properly have any say at all in this are primarily about the priesthood, both because it is necessarily within their purview and because the *Heavenly Doctrine* makes specific statements about it.

As to the students in the Theological School, it would be intrusive to closely examine every area of their private lives to determine their moral qualifications for the ministry. At the same time, there are plenty of behaviors, sexual and otherwise, that would preclude entry and continuation in Theological School – as is true of the high school and college, and numerous other schools worldwide.

The same is true of active ministers and other employees, and there are more than a few members of the clergy and others who have lost their positions due to these types of things. But as with many things, personnel matters tend to be confidential, and people don't necessarily know the details about why actions were or were not taken.

So, while perfect consistency is hard to achieve, it is not due to anything like selective literalism. The *Heavenly Doctrine* is authoritative in all spiritual matters. If it teaches that something is wrong and harmful, then it is wrong and harmful. But human failings are not all the same, nor are they black-and-white, nor is it the clergy's role to discover and punish them in the church population. The response to sexual and other misbehaviors is selective not because of any question about whether to take the Doctrines literally, but because the details of people's private lives, except as noted above, are not usually anyone's business but their own.

A Slippery Slope

To the Editors:

I was disappointed with both the Rt. Rev. Peter Buss Jr's letter and the Task Force Report, as neither took a strong and unequivocal stand on marriage

as taught for the New Church and hence in the General Church. There are a number of teachings in the Writings for the New Church regarding what constitutes true marriage, particularly in *Conjugal Love* and in *Arcana Coelestia*. However, in my view, the following passage best summarizes which unions are allowable conjunctions and which are not allowable:

The conjunction of good and truth is called in heaven the heavenly marriage; and this marriage is represented in the marriages on earth and likewise signified by marriages in the Word. Hence it is plain what is involved in illegitimate conjunctions, as well as in fornications and adulteries. . . . An illegitimate conjunction is one which is not made from conjugal affection, but from some other affection, as from the affection of beauty, from that of gain, or from that of personal rank; or, again, it is a conjunction which is made from lasciviousness. . . . Legitimate conjunction, which is that of minds (animorum), has place when both are in the like good and truth Hence it is plain that a legitimate conjunction has place when one of the married partners, the husband, is in truth, and the other, the wife, in the corresponding good; for thus the heavenly marriage, which is that of good and truth, is represented in the pair. Wherefore conjugal love descends from this marriage.” (Arcana Coelestia 9182)

It is perfectly obvious from this that same-sex relations fall into the category of illegitimate conjunctions.

The Writings certainly tell us that each of us should consult the Word for ourselves and draw doctrine for ourselves and confirm it in the Word. However, that does not mean that we can overturn what the Writings term “primary truths” (*Arcana Coelestia* 9222) and revise them to suit our own understanding or desires. Number 9182 above is perfectly plain in telling us what is a legitimate and what an illegitimate conjunction. This is a primary truth and cannot be revised or altered for any reason.

If we deny primary truths of the Word or the doctrine of the church from them, we are said to be blaspheming the Word and its truths. This seems to be a shocking teaching but maybe the shock will warn as strongly as possible of the danger of denying primary truths and/or the doctrine of the Church from them.

Arcana Coelestia Index: “They who in heart deny the Word blaspheme it.” (#9221) “Truths Divine must not be blasphemed, because God, in the internal sense, denotes the Divine Truth which proceeds from the Lord.” (# 9222)

“Doctrine of the truth also must not be blasphemed . . . not reviling God, means not blaspheming Truth Divine. . . . Truth Divine is the Word, and the doctrine of Truth Divine is the Word, and also doctrine from the Word. Those blaspheme who at heart deny these, although with the lips they may praise and preach them. . . . The very first thing with a member of the church is to believe the Word.”

Both the Bishop Buss letter and Task Force Report seem to me to place a bet both ways; support true marriage but be careful not to alienate those whose views and lifestyles are in opposition to what is stated in the Word for the New Church without telling them that those views and actions are “illegitimate” and “blasphemous” according to the Writings for the New Church and hence are against the principles of the General Church.

I don’t think the strength of all these *Arcana* teachings above comes over in the Bishop Buss/Task Force response. The response is apparently trying to sympathize, appease and not alienate those with a different, i.e. LGBT+, lifestyle or acceptance of such. The duty of the church is neither to condemn us nor to condone our wrongdoings and misunderstandings of truth from the Word but is to teach the truth and lead thereby to the good of life. In other words, to teach the truths given in the Word and help us to apply these truths to our lives and so help us to lead better lives.

With regard to the same-sex issue, there is only one way to handle this as far as I can see. That is, to firmly teach the truth as given in the *Arcana* passages above and then, with all the kindness, understanding and help that can be mustered, assist those in an LGBT+ situation to move toward an understanding of the only God-given truth of the one and only form of marriage that communicates with heaven and thence with the Lord.

However, play it both ways for fear of upsetting people or losing members, with all compassion, tender understanding and no strength of affirmation of the illegitimate and blasphemous nature of LGBT+ relations and the General Church is heading down the slippery slope of ceasing to represent the New Church on earth. I feel that the Bishop Buss letter and Task Force Report present an inadequate response from the Word, most especially from the Word of the Writings. I hope that a strengthened response will be forthcoming.

Heulwen Ridgway
Canberra
Australia

A Place for Humor

To The Editors:

I wonder if it would be viewed as a compliment or as a criticism of a minister if I were to say to him: “I have noticed that after your sermons usually there is a great awakening in the congregation.”

This could mean that there is a profound spiritual awakening in the souls of members of the congregation or that they have awakened from sleep.

And I would add here a memory from my college days in Bryn Athyn. I recall some of my classmates complaining to our teacher, the Rev. Cairns Henderson, that the sermons at the Cathedral were totally boring. In response, Rev. Henderson told us in no uncertain terms that we have an obligation to listen to the sermon and to not take a nap!

Humor, not corrupted by the sphere of contempt for people, ideas, institutions, etc., has a useful place in healthy minds. Indeed, it may be a sign of heaven’s gentle mirth among men and women in the natural world as they strive to live heavenly lives.

I suspect that Swedenborg had a merry twinkle in his eyes when he responded to the girl, Greta Askbom, who had asked him to show her an angel. On page 349 of the *Swedenborg Epic*, we read: “He placed her before a curtain and said, ‘Now you shall see an angel!’ He drew the curtain aside and the little girl saw herself reflected in a mirror!”

I conclude with the following: Two ministers resolved their doctrinal conflict when one of them said to the other: “Look, what are we fighting about? We both are striving to do the Lord’s work. You do it your way and I will do it His way.”

Good humor often has an unexpected conclusion which can be therapeutic to minds locked in fixed, repetitive patterns of thinking about a subject. And it seems to me that good humor can be a reliable de-stressor of taut, hurting human emotions.

Let us make the effort to enjoy the good, cheerful side of our lives in the natural world. Why not?

Richard Linquist
Huntingdon Valley
Pennsylvania

Palm Sunday: Jesus Wept for the People of Jerusalem

The Rev. Eric H. Carswell

Lessons: Luke 19:29-48, Arcana Coelestia 5480

*Now as Jesus drew near Jerusalem,
He saw the city and wept over it. (Luke 19:41)*

The shortest verse in the Word is “*Jesus wept.*” (*John 11:35*) He wept at the tomb of Lazarus and spoke of the importance of us recognizing the Lord in His Divine Humanity. Within days of this event the *Gospel of Luke* records a second example of Jesus weeping. It happened as He rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.

This is sometimes referred to as the “Triumphal Entry.” There was great celebration with multitudes shouting, “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” He rode on a colt in symbolic testimony that He was a king. And yet within this setting Jesus wept when He beheld Jerusalem. He wept because He had feelings of mercy and grief for the people of that city and the church it represented.

There certainly were reasons that Jesus might not feel merciful but rather ready to condemn evil actions and false ideas, as He had done numerous times in criticizing religious leaders and even the disciples themselves. Specifically, on Palm Sunday, the Pharisees were offended at the joyful celebration of Jesus’ entrance into Jerusalem. They were not happy to see His success.

Others responded quite differently, shouting with joy and praise. They made a pathway of garments and palms for Him. However Jesus would have been acutely aware that many who took part in that joyful celebration deeply misunderstood why He rode into Jerusalem as a king. He was not coming to set up an earthly kingdom but to bring us the happiness of heaven.

The Lord knew of the people who rejected Him. He knew the terrible events of Good Friday, culminating in His crucifixion, were a vivid symbol of how the people of the church had abused and annihilated the truth revealed in

the Old Testament. (*See True Christian Religion 130:3*) As Jesus was being crucified, He said: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." (*Luke 23:34*) He felt mercy and grief for their terrible actions.

A healthy church on earth is crucial to so many here and in the next life. When it is threatened or dies – as a whole or in the life of an individual – this is a very sad event. *Apocalypse Revealed* speaks of the Lord's response to His Church being harmed in explaining the words, "And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars" (*Revelation 10:3*):

*To cry aloud as when a lion roars symbolizes a grievous lamentation over the church, which was taken from Him. This is apparent from the explanations in the preceding chapter, where the states of life of people in the church were examined and exposed, states that were lamentable . . . Especially is it apparent from the fact that people do not acknowledge the Lord and turn to Him, even though He is God of heaven and earth. A lamentation over this is what the angel's roaring like a lion symbolizes; for a lion roars when it sees its enemies and is attacked by them, and when it sees its young or its food carried off. The same is comparatively the case with the Lord when He sees His Church carried off by devils. (*Apocalypse Revealed 471:1*)*

*He rode on a colt in symbolic testimony that He was a king. And yet within this setting Jesus wept when He beheld Jerusalem. He wept because He had feelings of **mercy** and **grief** for the people of that city and the church it represented.*

The Lord wants us to acknowledge Him. He wants us to live lives of wise kindness. He is saddened when we do not. True happiness does not exist without free choice. The Lord came to ensure our spiritual freedom. He came to ensure that each of us today has the freedom to choose between a mind and life focused on hellish or heavenly things. It is not a simple choice. It is one we make over and over again. What are we focusing on? What do we make most important? What do we long for? The Lord came into the world to fight the power of the hells because He loves us and wants more than anything that we make choices that are good for us and others.

It is hard for us to remotely envision what the Lord's battles against the hells were like. In *True Christianity* 123:4 we are told:

The Lord's battle with hell can also be compared, although inadequately, with someone fighting against all the wild animals in the world, slaughtering or taming them until not one animal would dare to go out and attack any human being who is with the Lord.

The Lord fought against the hells throughout His life. At the end, on Good Friday, He endured enormous physical pain and suffering during His crucifixion. He witnessed the people who loved and cared about Him in the world mourning His apparent defeat. He was aware of the taunts and ridicule of the Pharisees and others. He was fighting against the temptations brought by all the evil spirits of hell. But it didn't stop there. An amazing idea taught in the *Heavenly Doctrine* is that in the extreme of the Lord's temptation He even fought against all the angels:

The Lord at length fought with angels, indeed with the whole angelic heaven . . . in order that the Lord might bring the whole of heaven into proper heavenly order. He even allowed angels into Himself to tempt Him, who, insofar as they acted from themselves [proprium], did not do so from good and truth. These temptations are the inmost of all, for they go to work solely on the ends one has in view and with a subtlety such as can by no means be detected. (Arcana Coelestia 4295:2-3)

Very few of us like to face conflict. The image we are given of the Lord's final temptations is that He was battling against the entire spiritual universe.

What was behind His efforts? A love for all human beings like you and me. We read:

The Lord was filled repeatedly with an inmost confidence and faith that, because it was pure love out of which He was fighting for the salvation of the whole human race, He could not but be victorious . . . The Lord . . . in all His conflicts brought about by temptations, never fought out of self-love, that is, for Himself, but for all throughout the universe. He did not fight therefore to become the greatest in heaven, for that is contrary to Divine love. He scarcely did so to become the least. He fought solely so that all others might become something and be saved. (Ibid. 1812:1-2)

The *Gospel of John* has Jesus dying with the words: “It is finished.” Some picture these words being whispered with the last shreds of strength and consciousness left in His natural body, but nevertheless spoken with the realization that He had triumphed and that our spiritual freedom to choose heaven, its usefulness and joy, had been re-established. He had accomplished His work as Savior and Redeemer. It was a magnificent gift of love for all of us.

In the book of *Revelation* we are told of a scene of huge rejoicing in heaven where a “new song” was being sung. *Apocalypse Revealed* 662:1 states: “*To sing a new song means to joyfully confess from the heart and affection that the Lord alone is the Savior and Redeemer and the God of Heaven and earth.*”

Can you think of times when you have cheered with joy? Sometimes we share this joy with many others and sometimes we find others don’t see it the same way. An experience common to many people is watching an athletic team going down to defeat but rallying and pulling out an unexpected victory. People may cheer wildly. If we have longed to see the kind of spiritual changes that the Lord can bring in our own life or that of a loved one, when we see signs of these changes it is a tremendous source of joy. So, too, we can feel tremendous sadness if people we care about seem to be making choices that will inevitably cause harm to them and others.

The teachings of the New Church clearly state that if we care about living according to what the Lord teaches – that is if we are moved to do good things for others because this is what true charity means – then it will be easy for us not only to know how dependent we are on the Lord, but also to deeply believe it. (*Arcana Coelestia* 2343:3) When this life in us is attacked by the hells the deep concern and distress that these temptations bring will not be from a fear of losing something natural but because we fear that the qualities of faith and charity that are essential for salvation are at risk. (*Ibid.* 8164:2) We will long for the Lord to come to us.

If we have been trying to better understand and live what the Lord teaches, if we have been paying attention to the spiritual welfare of people around us, when we see the kind of spiritual changes that the Lord can bring in our own life

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or that of a loved one it is a tremendous source of joy.

Palm branches are the symbol of this Sunday. They symbolize the wisely caring things we can do for others because we know the Lord wants us to do them. (*Apocalypse Explained* 458:5) Each time we lay down one of those palms, it is like a pathway for the Lord to enter into our lives. Each time we say a prayer, it is like laying down a palm that the Lord may enter. If, over and over again, we have been seeking for the Lord to come into our life, and into the lives of others, when we see this it can be a source of great joy. But we should not forget the sadness of the Lord when He beheld Jerusalem and knew that its end as a church had come.

His Church can also come to an end in our lives if we choose evil loves and false ideas in making our life decisions, large and small. May we have a holy fear which “is a fear of sinning or acting contrary to the Commandments, thus contrary to the Lord.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 8925)

The Lord promises us the gift of deep joy as we do our part in leading wisely kind lives. Sometimes this is easy and sometimes it takes huge effort because other motivations pull us away. Still other times we are so caught up in day-to-day things that we don't long for the Lord. We don't think about it. We are focusing in other things.

If we keep trying over and over again to seek the Lord's help to be better human beings, He will come to each of us to serve us and bless us. His entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday is a symbol of His desire to come to us and bless us. The song that follows this sermon begins “Shout the glad tidings.” May it reflect our joy in seeing the Lord's role in our lives and those of our loved ones.

Amen.

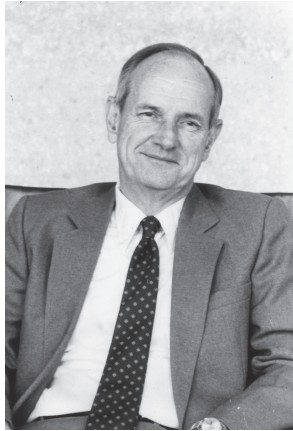


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50 YEARS AGO IN NEW CHURCH LIFE

Putting Off and Putting On

An Easter Sermon by the Rt. Rev. Louis B. King



Reprinted from the April 1973 *New Church Life*
Lessons: Psalm 116; John 12:1-24; Apocalypse Explained 899

And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.
(John 12:23,24)

The hour of the Lord's glorification was at hand. The momentous work He had descended into the world to accomplish was on the eve of its fulfillment. The Human which the Lord in His merciful and marvelous love had assumed to redeem mankind was even now about to rise from humility to glory. As a grain of wheat must fall into the soil and, as to its outer covering, begin to decompose so that the inner prolific principle may commence the germination of new growth, so the body and those elements of the mind which the Lord had taken from the mother, Mary, had to be lain down and buried, so that His Divine Human might be lifted up to become glorified and visible to

the spiritual eyes of men.

Let us hold fast to the simile which the Lord used; and let us note to whom He addressed His words. Certain Greeks had desired to see Him. They were of and represented the gentile nations among whom the Lord would establish His new church. Concerning this He said, in effect: "If a grain of wheat does not fall into the soil and apparently die, it cannot grow up and produce a new harvest."

Unless His material body was buried in the sepulchre there could not be resurrected a Divine body. That the Lord unlike other men rose from the tomb with His entire body is amply taught in the Word for the New Church. But that it was of the same substance before and after resurrection is also denied. A material body was sown, a Divine body was raised; and if the inquiring Greeks would see the Lord as He truly is, they and the future Christian Church which they represented should look, not to the grain of wheat or material body before it was sown, but to the infinite substantial body or Divine Human appearing as visible Divine Man after the resurrection. Indeed, a natural body was sown; a Divine body was raised.

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This similitude which the Lord used to illustrate His resurrection applies also and particularly to His glorification, which later was the making Divine of His finite human mind. This glorification process involved – in every aspect and at every stage of development – a putting off and a putting on. The human understanding and affection of truth which the Lord assumed through the medium of the finite taken from Mary were gradually and successively put off and were replaced by infinite thoughts and affections.

This same process, described in different words, is found in *Arcana Coelestia* 2657: "But the Lord utterly exterminated the first rational, so that no trace of it remained, for the merely human and the Divine cannot be together. Hence, He was no longer the Son of Man but was Jehovah as to each essence."

It was necessary that the hells attack the Lord's human mind while it retained finite limitations. In this way, through the natural human, the Lord might meet with the hells, receive their onslaught, and totally reject them without destroying them. And as the hells were successively defeated by the Lord throughout His earthly life they were subjugated; His Human was gradually made Divine; and the human race was redeemed. Redemption was the end, the goal; glorification was the means; and the passion of the cross was but the final combat with the hells whereby the Lord completed both redemption

and the glorification.

Until the Writings of the New Church were made available through the Lord's Second Coming men believed – and those who have not the Writings still believe – that the passion of the cross alone effected redemption. But we read in *True Christian Religion 134e*:

The passion of the cross was not redemption, but the uniting of the Lord's Human with the Divine of the Father; while redemption was the subjugation of the hells, and the restoration of order in the heavens; and unless this had been done by the Lord when He was in the world there would be no salvation for anyone on the earth or in heaven.

Everything of the New Church depends upon our idea of the risen Lord as God, Divine Man; and of the redemption He alone wrought for angels and men by His advent into the flesh of this natural world. We must be aware of the false doctrine that God the Father sent His Eternal Son into the world to have His innocent blood shed upon the cross, and that with this single expression of pure and unselfish love for His fellowmen the Son removed for all time the accumulated sin of the world.

This is a heresy arising from the deadly division of the Godhead into three separate but equal Divine persons. Such a doctrine would have us believe that pure love alone redeemed mankind, and that pure faith alone – faith in this redemption of love alone – can save man.

And yet neither love nor faith alone can accomplish anything. Love is life, motive and purpose. Wisdom is love's form, its right arm and its sole directive, whereby positive use is effected. So the Lord was born a man among men that from an infinite love for the salvation of all men He might effect their redemption by means of infinite truth received in and made active through the finite, human mind He would put on.

In this way the hells would be free to attack Him through the hereditary nature acquired from His mother. In no other way could the force of hell be met by His Infinite love and rejected thereby. In rejecting the hells the Lord assumed supremacy over them in their own field of reference, and thus made them subservient to His Divine will. So was their dominion over the souls of men broken and their dominant effect swept from the world of spirits.

Let us never forget that the redemption of man was accomplished, historically, in the spiritual world, for it is in that world that the minds of all men are active, though not consciously so until after death. To be sure, men's outward lives were affected in the natural world by the Lord's work of redemption. But the work itself was carried on in the spiritual world where the Lord's mind, as those of all men, was present.

The human mind functions in freedom only when in a state of equilibrium, that is, when midway between incentives to good and evil, and ideas of falsity and truth. To secure this state the Lord provides for a continual and exact balance between influx from heaven and from hell. When this influx becomes unbalanced, freedom suffers.

Prior to the Lord's advent evil had gained ascendancy in the minds of men. The world of spirits had become disordered and infilled with imaginary heavens. Influx from heaven was all but cut off and equilibrium productive of true spiritual freedom was all but extinguished. Men on earth were the cause of this. Deliberately they had turned away from the Lord, closing their minds to heaven above and opening them permanently toward hell below.

So the Lord came down to put on man's fallen nature – to put on those hereditary forms of thinking and willing which had obscured the Word, closed up heaven, and caused any true idea or worship on the Lord to vanish almost completely. Through these hereditary human forms the hells could approach and tempt the Lord. He, in turn, through the internal Human, could meet the hells head on and, without annihilating them, reject their persuasions, revealing openly and thus condemning their hidden motivations. So did He break their power over men by sweeping clear the world of spirits.

In the presence of truth which He brought into the natural world and which immediately became effective in the spiritual world, falsity and evil completely lost their power. It is only when truth is absent that falsity has power. So the Lord said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life." And the Word which He made flesh in Himself set men free from the bondage of evil and falsity.

Because the power of hell had infilled the whole world of spirits, even the angels of heaven were infected by doubts arising from activated proprial thoughts and affections. So the Lord, by revealing His truth and rejected the hells, redeemed angels, spirits and men. The form which this redemption took was the complete separation of evil from good and of truth from falsity. Good and truth, when united in spirits, separated them into a new heaven. Evil and falsity united in the remainder separated them into a corresponding hell.

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the genuine spiritual heat and light from the spiritual sun might issue forth unmolested into the minds of men on earth. And the Lord not only subjugated the hells and ordered the heavens, thereby returning freedom to mankind; He also established with men a new vision of Himself, that He might become an objective and visible God, that a church might once again exist among men – a church capable of genuine worship based upon a true understanding of the Word.

Redemption was wrought long ago in the spiritual world by the Lord. It was accomplished, not by a single act, but by a successive and continuous work within the Lord's own life, from the moment of birth to the last hour upon the cross. It was a work purely Divine which He alone could accomplish. Yet it is a continuing work in each individual who would look to the Lord, believe in Him, and do His commandments.

Every truth learned, reflected upon and applied to life, separates good and truth from evil and falsity further and more perfectly, thus continuing to eternity the individual's redemption by the Lord. This particular redemption is called the work of regeneration, the Lord's own work in man which separates and liberates him from what otherwise would be eternal bondage to evil and spiritual death.

So are all things reduced to order in man's mind, or in his own spiritual world: evils are shunned as sins that the power of hell in his life may be broken; the things of the church are established in his thought and affection, ordering and establishing a state of heaven in his internal mind. And the peace and delight of use, descending therefrom into the external mind and then outward into word and deed, become the substance and form of his new regenerate life – the New Church in him and from him. All men are capable of regeneration, of this redemption and new birth. The Lord so wills it and from mercy and omniscience provides for every conceivable contingency. But all men are not willing.

Those, however, who would receive the benefits of His redemption reflect with profound gratitude this Easter morning that He was born and died, that He rose from the grave a Divine Human being, and that He has come again to explain the eternal need of "putting off and putting on," as He Himself put off the Mary human and put on a Divine Human.

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er of the hells and put on for mankind the freedom of redemption, as He, in putting off the material body in the tomb, put on and raised up a Divine body visible and to be seen forever in His Word; as He today puts off the obscurities of the letter and puts on the power and glory of the spiritual sense in His second advent.

Yea, as He in so many ways has “put off and put on” for us, so are we to put off evil and falsity as of self, so that He may put on in us and for us the fullness of regenerate life. And how true His words:

Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto Me.

Amen.

Stretch, Release, Breathe: How My Work Works on Me

Chara C. Daum

Theta Alpha Luncheon Talk
Charter Day 2022
October 7 – Bryn Athyn

Editors' note: A copy of this talk also appears in the Spring edition of the *Theta Alpha Journal*.

Introduction: When Theta Alpha leaders invited me to speak today, they said: “You’ve worked for the church for a long time. What have you learned?”

In reflecting on the question, I was stunned to realize I’ve had two 20-year chapters of working for “The Church.” The first 20 years were for the General Church and the Academy, the second for the Swedenborg Foundation. I have worked with original Swedenborg manuscripts, teamed up with six different translators of Swedenborg, proofread new Latin editions of various works, and appeared on the internet as a Swedenborgian personality. That work is where the meat of this talk comes from, but I have to mention other arenas that have provided huge learning curves for both heart and mind: as a Latin teacher at the Academy, a leader at Laurel Camp, a helper for Jonathan Rose’s “Spirit and Life Bible Study,” and of course the personal work of human relationships.

This was a career I had not planned and did not see coming as a young woman, but I see now that the Lord provided a beautiful path for me, dropping the breadcrumbs of my lifelong love for words, The Word, and the human beings I walk the planet with.

Thank you for this chance to reflect on how my work for “the church” has moved my heart. It’s lovely to be here today with Theta Alpha, to talk about my own personal “New Church education” in my adult life. But first – fair warning – I have learned that whenever I speak publicly, I weep. Somebody once told me that crying is what happens when your spirit gets too big to fit in your body, so it spills out in tears. So, I’m OK with crying, and I’ll try to just carry on!

“What have I learned” from my work over 40-some years? Of course, it’s more than I can ever recount. But I’d like to take you on a little travelogue through my work history, as the context for a few key moments that have impacted my own faith journey.

I am a Bryn Athyn girl. It’s been the context for my whole life, even when I didn’t live in town. I happily attended the schools here, and when I graduated with a degree in religion and sacred languages from Bryn Athyn College, I felt I had a (stomp, stomp) solid footing in what the New Church is all about, what it should look like, and how we should all be living by it. I joined right in with what I thought to be a homogenized, rich and creamy take on the whole thing.

One of my first jobs at the beginning of my unforeseen career was working with Dr. Durban Odhner to decipher Swedenborg’s handwriting for the books now called *Spiritual Experiences* (formerly known as *Spiritual Diary*). Those scrawled pages – not intended for publication – were full of ink blots and cross-outs and re-writes, and even a grocery list in Swedish on the back of one page.

Scrutinizing those pages was a first step in changing the way I conceived of Swedenborg’s Writings and the human agency involved in this Divine Revelation, that is, how it was delivered through the work of a mere mortal. It shifted my center of gravity a bit, and I found myself with a slightly wider footing.

My next job offer came from the Rev. Bruce Rogers, my professor and mentor throughout college, to whom I’m deeply grateful for setting me on this path. He asked me to be the “Latin reader” or “Latin consultant” for some of his translations, eventually including *Conjugal Love* and *Divine Providence*.

What’s a Latin consultant? Think of it as an assistant translator. Surrounded by a sea of dictionaries and lexicons and reference works, I would compare Swedenborg’s Latin on one hand, to Bruce’s translation on the other, making sure that every Latin word made it into English in one way or another, catching errors, and offering feedback.

That was my first experience of diving into entire books of Swedenborg’s Latin, coming face to face with every very long sentence, and grappling with what Swedenborg was trying to convey to our finite minds. I began to see why translation is known as “the art of failure” – because something is inevitably lost when a message moves from one language to another, due to the inherent

I began to see why translation is known as ‘the art of failure’ –because something is inevitably lost when a message moves from one language to another, due to the inherent differences between languages.

differences between languages. You’ve heard the term “lost in translation.” It’s a real phenomenon!

I began to contemplate language usage in a new way, to feel the import of the fact that language is constantly changing. I wrestled with the concept of idiolect, though I didn’t have the word for it at that time. Your *idiolect* is your completely unique way of using and understanding language. Completely unique!

What are the ramifications of that simple and universal fact for the whole idea of translation? For the translation of a message from God? What was in Swedenborg’s own mind, more than 250 years ago,

when he used big-concept words like: *amor* (love), *bonum* (goodness), *ecclesia* (church)? How do we discover that intended meaning, and how do we convey it into the moving target that is the English language?

It all seemed intimidating, and the responsibility sometimes felt overwhelming. I was yanked out of my comfort zone, which was the perfectionistic and yes, *non-existent* world where everything is knowable, and clear, and there is One Right Way. (*Stretch!*)

The next step in broadening my horizons was getting involved in the Swedenborg Foundation’s translation project, the *New Century Edition of the Theological Works of Emanuel Swedenborg* (referred to as the NCE). This intriguing project was aimed primarily at people who have never heard of Swedenborg.

The NCE Committee established a list of principles to guide its translators. I’ll name just two: leaving no Latin word untranslated (which does away with the words *proprium* and *arcana coelestia*, for example); and aiming at the heart of the English language, by using Anglo-Saxon rather than Latinate vocabulary where possible. Why does that last one matter? Well, here’s a brief musical interlude [to the tune of *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star*] to illuminate the difference:

*Scintillate, scintillate asteroid minific
Urgently I ponder your nature specific
Exaltedly poised in the ether capacious
Convincingly resembling a gem carbonaceous*

*Scintillate, scintillate asteroid minific
Urgently I ponder your nature specific.*

Now that's all English, but it uses almost all words of Latin origin, whereas the version you're familiar with, "Twinkle, Twinkle," uses almost all words of Anglo-Saxon origin. It has a different impact, doesn't it? I just had to give you one concrete example!

All of these translation objectives were fascinating and fun stuff for a word nerd like me. So I was thrilled – and terrified – when the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Rose asked me to be the Latin consultant for his translation of *Vera Christiana Religio* – *True Christian Religion*, or *True Christianity*.

Joining the NCE team as they wrestled with the challenges spurred by these guidelines was such a joy and an honor and an education. I loved spending time with those brilliant minds and kind, passionate hearts coming from different Swedenborgian perspectives than I had grown up with. That experience stretched me a lot, and I'm very grateful that bridge was built in my own heart.

As I worked on Jonathan's translation, I experienced for the first time what people meant by translation "style." I had only ever worked with Bruce's translations before, and Jonathan's work felt so different. And through the years, I discovered that Lisa Hyatt Cooper's work was another very different style, and so was George Dole's, and Erik Odhner's. Each new translator stretched me a little further and loosened my grip on rigid literalism, nudging me toward idiomatic expression. It's been a fascinating adventure in idiolect, and in translating the message rather than the words themselves – but not without an existential crisis about *our* human agency in this Divine Revelation.

To wit:

I vividly remember a pivotal moment, sitting at my "translation station," pondering the Latin word *caritas*, traditionally translated "charity." Possible options being considered for the NCE were goodwill, thoughtfulness, caring, kindness, neighborly love, or simply love in some contexts. What? Are we allowed to change the rendition of this Latin word?

I had to consider what the word "charity" usually means in the world today – which is, giving something to people less fortunate than ourselves, right? But that's not what Swedenborg means by charity (usually). It's about having love in our hearts for all people, looking for and loving the goodness in them, and even just doing our jobs to the best of our ability as an avenue for truly loving others. So, I was agonizing about how that word should be translated, and a revelation came to me, in the words of Isaiah:

| *Behold, the Lord's arm is not shortened, that it cannot save. (Isaiah 59:1)*

(Repeat that to yourself.)

I realized that nobody is *not* going to make it to heaven just because we use “goodwill” instead of “charity.” The Lord is so much bigger than that! And in the face of the Lord’s magnitude and omnipotence, I realized that we were just one small team of fallible people, doing our best to convey these spiritual ideas. In the Lord’s Divine Providence, we were the ones led to this work, and we were employing all our education and love and wisdom to produce an accurate and meaningful translation – just one offering in a never-ending string of attempts to accommodate changing language.

That crisis gave me an opportunity to practice a favorite line from the *Psalms*:

| *Fret not. It only causes harm. (Psalm 37:8)*

And it brought me face to face with my supposed belief in another favorite quote, from *Arcana Coelestia/Secrets of Heaven 8455*:

| *Peace has in it confidence in the Lord, that he directs all things, guides all things, and leads to a good end.*

Did I really believe that? I mean, I wasn’t feeling the peace part, but did I believe (borrowing from some other translations) that the Lord directs and is in charge of and guides and provides and takes care of all things? Everything? Leading to a good outcome? It was confronting.

Could I release my clutch on a form I was used to, and see how the ideas could come through in a different way? Could I lean into trusting that the Lord could bring something good out of our efforts, for whomever these new translations might reach? Well, I did, eventually, and when I came through that crisis and began trusting the Lord’s leading in this little part of my little job in my little life, that trust somehow extrapolated out to the whole world.

(The Lord is in charge. Fret not. Breathe.)

And something good has come out of the NCE efforts. But it doesn’t float everyone’s boat. The new translations have been hard for some people. They were a challenge for me at first, especially when I came across a beloved quote, and the words were all switched up.

The thing is that the words of our sacred texts can be the building blocks

for our own personal Holy Temple, our own inner Tabernacle, the place where we meet with God in our own heart and mind. When those words are changed, it can feel like our holy temple is crumbling or our tabernacle is being torn down. It's distressing and painful. So, I have complete sympathy and love for those who prefer the older translations upon which they have built their familiar sacred space. I do not want to trample on that holy ground.

My next arena for growth was the incredible odyssey of working on *Arcana Coelestia*, "Secrets of Heaven," with Lisa Hyatt Cooper. What a privilege – to have a job that made me keep forging ahead in the *Arcana*, and to travel with a dear friend, word by word, through the whole thing.

Hidden among the profuse repetition in those books, I discovered so many shining gems of the Lord's love for us. I covered my workspace in sticky-note quotes, trying to hold on to those spiritual twinklers. And, of course, they occur in all the books of the Writings. One of the treasures that kind of took my breath away when I encountered it in the Latin was a piece of angelic advice: "*Read the Word and believe in the Lord . . . and you will see the truths that are to be part of your faith and your life.*" (*True Christianity* 621:3)

Wow! "You" – second person! It sounds like such an individual thing! Like, "the truths that will be a part of your faith and your life" are potentially different for every single person! That really hit me. So much for "homogenized . . ."

Well, I can't resist listing some of my favorite gems – some of those "truths that are to be part of my faith." Impressionistically stated, and in my own idiolect, here are a few of them (and please imagine twinkling stars or a bit of fireworks going off with each statement):

God is LOVE and MERCY ITSELF!

You were predestined for heaven!

The Lord is pulling for you all the way!

One of the treasures that kind of took my breath away when I encountered it in the Latin was a piece of angelic advice: "Read the Word and believe in the Lord . . . and you will see the truths that are to be part of your faith and your life."

The Lord is guiding you every moment toward your highest possible happiness – no matter what the circumstances look like!

The Lord can bring goodness out of every painful happenstance!

The Lord has MERCY for the ENTIRE human race, ‘consigned as we are to misery’!

God can’t even look at us with a frown!

It LOOKS like truth comes first, but it’s really LOVE that is the goal!

It’s easier to get to heaven than you think!

In the other life, your own heart will lead you to your eternal dwelling place!

You will be where you can breathe!

(Deep breath)

Well, maybe we can’t always feel these amazing things, but it’s beautiful and hopeful stuff! So, when you’re working hard on the essential task of self-examination and repentance and trying to be a better person – don’t forget that you have all of this going for you! *Release the fear that we’re not good enough, or that God is judging us harshly. Breathe in the Lord’s mercy and love!*

This brings us to the most recent chapter of my work for the Swedenborg Foundation, on the YouTube channel called “*offTheLeftEye*” (OTLE) It’s a bizarre name, I know, but it’s taken from Swedenborg’s experience of going through the dying process: after being with the highest angels, he felt the sensation of something being rolled off his left eye, which meant he was ready for spiritual instruction. So, our channel offers videos for people looking for new spiritual ideas. Hugely challenging to my comfort level (*biggest stretch*) I was invited to appear on-screen, online, first reading through *Heaven and Hell* with our viewers, then taking part in skits, or being interviewed about some bit of Latin or linguistic concept. But most challenging was taking questions from our live online audience and attempting to answer life’s big questions, off-the-cuff and in-the-moment. Whoosh. So confronting.

But, as Jonathan has calculated, I *had* read 5,551 first edition pages in the

original Latin (about 76% of the published theological works, he says), and I *had* wrestled up-close-and-personal with what they are trying to say, so I had to accept that I probably *did* have more exposure to Swedenborg than most people in the world, and that I was perhaps qualified *enough* to try to talk to people about it.

I call myself an “impressionistic Swedenborgian” because I am not good at remembering exact quotes or where they come from, and I lack an encyclopedic mind. But from my years of study, I have my own God-given sense about the message in the Writings, and I have learned to be (relatively) comfortable speaking from that standpoint.

I practiced believing that all our thoughts and feelings come to us from the spiritual world, as Swedenborg learned, so when a question was posed in real time, I grew the courage to speak the thoughts that came into my head – another chance to lean into believing that Divine Providence is working through us, overseeing every moment and bringing good from whatever happens. (*Release the fear. Breathe into the possibilities.*)

These days, I spend most of my work time responding to viewers’ comments on our OTLE videos. It’s an honor and it’s humbling. Every day I interact with people from all over the world, from every walk of life, every faith tradition, every economic level and every state of mental health, struggling with heartfelt questions:

- Where is my recently departed loved one? Will I ever see them again?
- Thank you for letting me know that these dark thoughts in my head aren’t me, they’re evil spirits!
- What is the point of life?
- Why is there so much suffering?
- Does God really love me?

There’s so much pain in human hearts, so much confusion – and though some people have already intuited some of the answers, we get so much feedback that these new ideas have been life-changing. It has greatly deepened my appreciation for the blessings of our teachings. I love having a chance to give these people compassionate listening, offer a helpful Swedenborgian concept or two to ponder, suggest another video – and then leave them in the Lord’s hands.

If they don’t like what we offer, I don’t

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need to change their minds about anything. I don't have to solve their problems. Because the Lord is in charge of everybody's spiritual path. Whether they are devotees of Swedenborg, Jesus, Buddha, Allah, Oprah, Deepak Chopra, Brené Brown, Charlie Brown or Winnie-the-Pooh, God can meet them – with that non-shortened arm – in every moment of every moment with what is best for their individual spiritual progress.

It's not up to me to dictate their path. I can just offer a helping hand and a sip of water. And when I practice that attitude with complete strangers on the internet every day, it helps me extend that grace toward the people in my own life, my church, my town, my household.

(Let go of control. Trust in the Lord's care for everyone.)

Well, they happened to ask me to give this talk today. But aren't we all doing this work as we bumble and stumble toward eternity, no matter the details of our work or personal life? The Lord reveals Himself to each of us in such an individual way. He speaks to us through our hearts and how we are moved when we read the Word or encounter truth in the world.

We are each "our own love and our own understanding." (*True Christianity* 778) We are each growing an individual church inside us as we try to figure out what is true, and then try to live accordingly. That is "the church" – the joining of truth and goodness, of faith and life in our hearts. No matter what work you do or how you spend your time, you are each on that journey of "working for the church." And I wonder: might it be a constant adventure for everyone in learning how to "*Stretch, Release and Breathe*"?

So – that's the story of me bridging the centuries, zooming in on Swedenborg's scribbled Latin, and zooming out to the whole world on YouTube. By diving deep and narrow into Swedenborg, I've sprung up with a broadened

and expanded mind and heart, stretching to embrace the whole journey and all of God's children along the way.

I have been *stretched* out of my first stable-but-stiff-stance of young adulthood. I have *released* my tightly-clenched notions of what "the church" is or should be for anyone other than myself. I practice breathing in the fact that God IS, that God is in each of us, and that God is guiding each of us, in every present moment, on the path toward our own eventual brightest light and greatest joy.

My path is only my path. My path is what happens when I "read the Word

My path is only my path. My path is what happens when I "read the Word and believe in the Lord and see the truths that are to be part of my faith and my life." And the same goes for you.

and believe in the Lord and see the truths that are to be part of my faith and my life.” And the same goes for you. I can let go of how others are following their God, and I can live my faith the way the Lord leads me to live it. And I can fret not, because it only causes harm.

And so, in the words I often use to sign off from my YouTube comments: “I wish each of you every blessing on your own spiritual path.”

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FROM THE BISHOP'S OFFICE

Doomscrolling

The Rt. Rev. David Lindrooth

Last December, the Oxford English Dictionary announced that the word “Doomscrolling” as one of its “words for the year.” I wasn’t sure what the word even meant but it caught my attention because it seemed to characterize something about the last several years of our culture. And I wasn’t disappointed when I looked it up.

Wikipedia defines “Doomscrolling” as *“the act of spending an excessive amount of time reading large quantities of negative news online.”* The word evokes imagery of a person staring into his smartphone and scrolling from one clip of bad news to the next while ignoring life happening around him. It’s an addictive behavior keying into the brain’s alert system that normally helps a person identify a threat or dangerous situation.

Before social media and the omnipresent smartphone, threats and dangers were occasional, not incessant. There was time to process bad news with defined news sources that had limits to what they could produce. While there was plenty to worry about in the 1920s, the difference was the lower volume and limited scope of the news that the normal person had access to. All that ended with the invention of the smartphone which gave people instant access to unlimited bad news that is unfiltered and largely unchecked as to its veracity. Now with a simple click to a social media app on one’s phone, a person can get carried away by a perpetual, non-stop flood of negative content.

One of the underlying reasons for this is that a whole industry has been built to get your attention and it knows that pushing bad news your way is

one way to capture it. This industry has developed programs designed to take advantage of what attracts your attention. Social media platforms have algorithms (computer programs) that function to key in on your desire for bad news – often without the user being aware of it. So not only do they pump bad news into your phones, but the programs are able to monitor your preferences so that they provide the kind of news that most provokes you.

The emotional disturbance, anger and depression that doomscrolling brings to the life of the user is bad enough. What is perhaps worse is that it motivates the user to share that negativity with others. It is not hard to see this affecting the mood of communities of people, leading to anger and depression. This is certainly true of communities such as the church.

The concept behind “doomscrolling” reminds me of the viral nature of evil. Evil has the impulse to self-replicate and grow and can become all-encompassing, much like a virus spreading from one person to another until a whole community is infected.

Consider this passage from *Divine Providence* 328:

When evil thus grows worse in many people, [hell] then spreads the evil issuing from itself to many more. For every evil has in it a lust to lead astray, a lust ablaze in some with a wrath against goodness. This is the reason for the contagion of evil. When this infects the leaders, governors and prominent people in a church, the religion becomes corrupted, and the means of healing, namely truths, become perverted by falsifications.

Evil grows best in darkness and secret situations where we are unconscious of its growth. (See *Arcana Coelestia* 1880, 9125 and others) This is also a characteristic associated with doomscrolling, which allows a growing presence of negative emotions that spill over onto other parts of life as a person simply does not have the mental ability to process all of the negative information supplied through social media.

A reasonable positive reaction to this problem is to limit consumption

*The concept behind “doomscrolling” reminds me of the viral nature of evil. Evil has the impulse to **self-replicate** and **grow** and can become **all-encompassing**, much like a virus spreading from one person to another until a whole community is infected.*

of random content through one's phone. The time and mental energy consumed by one's interaction with social media can be replaced by time and attention spent serving others.

Taking care to moderate one's consumption of online content is well endorsed by passages in the Word. One prominent passage in *Arcana Coelestia* speaks of this in reference to manna. It says that one should avoid unnecessary worrying about the future – a clear attribute of doomscrolling. As an alternative, one should work on trusting the Divine – even when there are future decisions and actions that need puzzling out.

We read that those who trust in the Divine

notwithstanding they have care for the morrow, still have it not, because they do not think of the morrow with solicitude, still less with anxiety. 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. They know that 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)

It is well worth taking the time to read this entire passage. I see it urging caution and moderation in reference to consuming modern news content, particularly in reference to future predictions of bad news. We are urged to use our intellect to provide for uses in the future, but we are also urged to do that thinking in an environment of trust that the Lord is “constantly providing and leading all of us toward an end that is good.”

That sounds like the environment of the New Church.

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*Evil grows best in **darkness** and **secret** situations where we are **unconscious** of its growth. This is also a characteristic associated with doomscrolling, which allows a growing presence of **negative emotions** that spill over onto other parts of life.*



Finding the New Jerusalem: Robert Hindmarsh (Part 3)

Compiled by Marvin Clymer

This article concludes the story of Robert Hindmarsh which began in the January/February 2022 issue of *New Church Life* and continued in the November/December 2022 issue.

NEW ACTIVITIES

Emerging from the state of apparent indifference and spiritual vastation which followed upon the struggles described in the last chapter, Robert Hindmarsh re-appears in the history of the New Church in the year 1810, when it is known that he prepared a new preface to his translation of the work on *The Last Judgment*, which was the first work published by “The Society for Printing and Publishing the Writings of the Hon. Emanuel Swedenborg, instituted in London in the year 1810.”

In January 1811, Robert Hindmarsh, who was then without a settled occupation, removed to Manchester to take charge of a printing office which the Rev. William Cowherd professed to have established in that city for the special purpose of publishing translations of Swedenborg’s Scientific and Theological Works. Mr. Cowherd had formerly been a curate under the Rev. John Clowes, and was later, for some years, the Pastor of the New Church Society in Man-

chester, which had separated itself from the Old Church, and had opened a chapel in Peter Street; but he was never ordained into the Priesthood of the New Church.

An eloquent and popular preacher, he was at the same time a person of unbalanced if not unsettled judgment, combined with an incredible arrogance and imperiousness. While proclaiming himself as the most extraordinary man living – which he may have been, in one sense, and as the only person in the world who really understood the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, he perverted the Doctrines of the Church to suit his fantastic notions, and finally founded an independent sect, styled “The Bible Christians,” the most distinguishing feature of which was total abstinence from fermented liquors and animal food.

Though he and several others who had formerly belonged to the New Church finally fell victims to a diet for which they were not prepared, the sect still survives in England, and also in America, where a congregation yet exists in Philadelphia. *

It seems that Hindmarsh, when connecting himself with Cowherd, was not aware of the latter’s personal and theological peculiarities. Arriving at Manchester, he found that the “Printing Office” was a fiction, and that Cowherd only wished to use the name of Robert Hindmarsh to seduce the New Church. After enduring, for three months, incredible indignities from this fanatic, Hindmarsh broke his engagement with him, and determined to return to London.

By this time, however, the members of the New Church in the neighborhood of Manchester had, as if by accident, discovered the wonderful power of Hindmarsh as a public speaker and expounder of the Word. A number of them urged him to accept the office of minister to a new Society then being formed in Manchester, and, after much hesitation on account of his age, as he was then in his 52nd year, Hindmarsh finally consented to enter actively into the work of the priesthood. A room in Clarence Street, Manchester, was furnished for a chapel, and here Hindmarsh entered into the full performance of the sacred office, to which he earnestly considered himself as called and ordained by the LORD.

* This article was selectively taken from Robert Hindmarsh, A Biography, by Carl Th. Odhner (Chapters 8 - 10), first printed serially in New Church Life from April – December of 1894 and published as a book in 1895.

Note that this was written in 1894. The portrait of Robert Hindmarsh is courtesy of the National Gallery in London. Original by Samuel William Reynolds, and by Samuel Cousins, published by Agnew & Zanetti, after Joseph Allen mezzotint, published 20 April, 1824. NPG D3699.

The Rev. D. G. Goyder, in his *Concise History of the New Jerusalem Church* (London, 1827), thus describes Hindmarsh as a preacher:

“Mr. Hindmarsh is so far from having studied preaching as an art that he has been heard to say it was what he abominated. His utterance is at once rapid and natural, flowing inconceivably easy, and productive of great effect upon such elevated minds as are capable of understanding him. He is so exceedingly well read in all the Writings of our author that his discourses appear as combining all the luminous views of Emanuel Swedenborg, whilst they are couched in language of the most elegant and dignified description. He is not very apt in Scriptural quotation, but his comparisons and illustrations are striking and beautiful in the extreme.

“For a congregation of old recipients of the New Church, I look upon him as being the Minister most likely to be useful, for it is no disparagement to other ministers to state that his knowledge of the Doctrines was superior to most, equal to all, and inferior to none. But where there is a society of new recipients, or where they are young men, I do not consider him as likely to be so eminently useful; still, in making this assertion, I wish it to be understood that the fault would be more in the hearer than in the speaker; his discourses being mostly of that interior and spiritual kind, only fitted to those who have been long receivers and readers of the Writings.”

No faithful preacher of the Internal Sense of the Word can wish for higher praise than this, but Mr. Goyder is evidently mistaken in his estimate of Hindmarsh’s power of accommodating his presentation of the Doctrines to the apprehension of the simple or the uninstructed. Few, if any, of the ministers of the Church have enjoyed more signal success than did Hindmarsh in the work of external evangelization, whenever he applied himself to it. His favored field, however, was the literary work in the Church, to which he now could devote himself more freely.

The first fruit of this work, after he had resigned his secular occupations, was a translation of *The Coronis, or Appendix to the True Christian Religion*, which was published at Manchester in 1811. This was the first English translation of the *Coronis*, and was furnished with a very valuable “Glossary,” explaining certain foreign or unusual terms and names used by the author. In the same year Hindmarsh published an excellent sermon on *The Birth of Immanuel*, treating of the Incarnation of the LORD.

In the following year he published a work, *Reflections on the Unitarian and Trinitarian Doctrines* (Manchester), which was occasioned by the public attacks on the Divinity of the LORD by the Rev. John Grundy, a Unitarian minister.

His next work was published under the title, *The New School of Theology* (Manchester), and contained a description of the aims and methods of an In-

stitution which he had opened in Manchester in 1813. This School was to be “similar to the ancient Schools of Philosophy and Divinity.” It was to be open on Thursday evenings and was intended to afford all inquirers an opportunity to investigate and discuss the Doctrines of the New Church.

The undertaking was, at first, attended with great success, and a number of persons were by these means led to accept the Heavenly Doctrines. But after a time the meetings began to be disturbed by disorderly persons, the public interest died out, and the school was finally discontinued. The room in Clarence Street was obscurely situated, and notwithstanding the splendid talent of the preacher, the Society did not increase in numbers.

“Twice Mr. Hindmarsh had his goods packed up, and was on the point of departure for London, and twice was this room closed, and again opened to the public; his friends were exceedingly reluctant to part with him, and on the evening preceding his intended departure, when he had not so much as a candlestick unpacked, it was contended that the erection of a New Temple would be the only means of raising a Society, and of permanently establishing Mr. Hindmarsh among them. The idea was no sooner presented than grasped, and Mr. Hindmarsh had once more to unpack.” (Goyder’s History, p. 111).

Accordingly, a commodious and handsome Church was built in Salford, near Manchester, which was dedicated by Hindmarsh in September 1813. From this time forth the Society increased and prospered greatly under the faithful ministrations of the talented Pastor, who continued in that office during the period of 11 years.

Robert Hindmarsh’s most extensive work was published in 1814, under the striking title: *A Seal upon the Lips of Unitarians, Trinitarians, and all others who refuse to acknowledge the Sole, Supreme, and Exclusive Divinity of our LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST*. In this work of 600 pages Hindmarsh has brought together and explained 144 passages from the New Testament, in proof that JESUS CHRIST is the Supreme and only God of Heaven and Earth.

The illustrations and remarks of the author are singularly clear and striking, and the whole work is an invaluable addition to the evangelistic literature in the Church. It has gained a well-merited popularity in the New Church and has been republished twice in England and once in America.

As a sequel to the *Seal upon the Lips*, and to be distributed gratis with it, Hindmarsh published at the same time a little work of 35 pages with the curious title, *The Interview Extraordinary*. This was a report of an imaginary conversation between Athanasius, Arius, Socinus, Dr. Priestley, and Mr. Hindmarsh. The errors of Tri-theism and Atheism are here, again, exposed in a clever and entertaining manner.

In July 1815, Hindmarsh finished an interesting little work on *Precious Stones*, which was published at London in 1851, 16 years after his death. He

treats here of the spiritual signification of the stones in the breastplate of Aaron, and other precious stones mentioned in the Word, and gives proof of thorough scholarship as well as of a systematic study of the Writings.

In the same year he was chosen President of the Eighth General Conference, which met in Manchester, August 14-18, 1815. This Conference was of especial interest, in consequence of the unanimous resolution which it passed, establishing a Trine in the Priesthood. Though elected President, Hindmarsh was not recognized as an ordained Minister by this meeting.

The next work produced by Robert Hindmarsh was *A Compendium of the Chief Doctrines of the True Christian Religion* (London, 1816), which in a very brief compass presents a bird's-eye view, as it were, of the pearly gates and golden streets of the Holy City, the New Jerusalem.

This compendium was the first of its kind ever published and became very popular in the Church. It was published in new editions both in England and in America and has been published twice in the French language. In 1816, Hindmarsh published his *Remarks on the Holy League* (Manchester). This League, it will be remembered, was an Alliance entered into after the fall of Napoleon between the rulers of Austria, Prussia and Russia, whereby these monarchs bound themselves to remain united in "true and indissoluble fraternity" under the Supreme Sovereignty of "God the Divine Saviour."

History shows the hollowness of this pretended "Holy Alliance," but Hindmarsh, and many with him, hailed it at the time as the harbinger of a new dispensation of love, justice and peace among the nations on earth. He sent copies of his Remarks to the three rulers concerned, and received, in reply, a brief but gracious acknowledgment signed by Frederick William, the King of Prussia.

[A notable incident in 1816 was described in *The Rise and Progress of the New Jerusalem Church*]

As the rise of a Society of the New Church in the neighborhood of Colchester had attracted some notice in that large and respectable town, and had even called forth there a professed opponent of the doctrines, in the person of a Methodist Preacher, who had endeavored to vilify the character of Swedenborg, and make his sentiments appear ridiculous, in a small pamphlet, which had been extensively circulated; it was thought, that it might be useful in checking this opposition, and in improving the attention thereby excited into a serious and profitable inquiry into the real merits of the case, if convenience could be obtained for Mr. Hindmarsh to deliver a Lecture or two in that town.

Two friends, therefore, went over from Brightlingsea to make inquiries, who, not being able to find any other suitable place, applied to the Mayor for the use of the Town Hall, stating the object to be the delivery of a Theological Lecture; and the Mayor, without hesitation, immediately granted the request. Posting and hand-bills were accordingly circulated through the town,

apprizing the inhabitants, "that on Friday, the 26th of July, by permission of the worshipful the Mayor, a Lecture would be delivered in the Town Hall, by Mr. Hindmarsh, from Manchester, on some of the most important doctrines of the New Church, called the New Jerusalem, particularly the doctrine of the Divine Trinity, the doctrine of life, or the way to heaven, and the state of man after the death of the body."

Hereupon, as was afterwards learnt, the Corporation and the Clergy of the town took the alarm, and insisted upon the Mayor's revoking his consent; which was notified to the inhabitants by counter-proclamations, and the assiduous vociferations of the Town Crier.

In the mean time Mr. Hindmarsh, with some friends from London and Manchester, had arrived, but remained without any knowledge of the change till about three o'clock, on the day appointed. On the spur of this emergency a large room was engaged at the Angel inn, a few paces from the Town Hall, and proper measures were taken to announce the change in the place of delivering the Lecture. Notwithstanding the shortness of the notice, the room was crowded by seven o'clock, (the time of commencement,) almost to suffocation, and many went away unable to obtain admission. The number in the room was supposed to be not less than from four to five hundred.

Previous to the commencement of the Lecture, and after the people were assembled, the landlord informed Mr. Hindmarsh, that he had been threatened with a fine of £40, if he permitted the Lecture to be delivered in his house; and he desired to know if anything of a political nature was intended to be introduced.

Mr. Hindmarsh assured him that his subjects would be purely theological, that he was in no danger of any unpleasant results from the meeting, and that he should stand completely indemnified for anything he might suffer on account of it. The landlord being satisfied with this assurance, told him he might begin as soon as he pleased.

The Lecture is stated by some who were present, to have been of the most clear and convincing description; and it appeared to give much satisfaction to the greater part of the audience. Some few, indeed, near the door, among whom were noticed two or three Methodist Preachers, were heard at times to mutter disapprobation, saying of the Lecturer, "Why, he denies the doctrine of a Trinity of Divine Persons! he sets aside the atonement, the merits of Christ, justification by faith alone, and the resurrection of the material body!"

Finding, however, that the company in general was too much engaged in listening to the doctrines of the New Church on these subjects, to suffer their attention to be withdrawn for a moment from them, they at length discontinued their opposition, and remained silent.

When the Lecture was concluded, which lasted an hour and a quarter,

one of the Methodist Preachers present asked leave to propose some questions; which being granted, he abused the permission by haranguing those who chose to listen to him, without giving Mr. Hindmarsh sufficient opportunity to reply; who, therefore, seeing a disorderly spirit beginning to manifest itself, and judging that no real good could be done by controversy, prudently put an end to the meeting; earnestly recommending to the company to reflect seriously and without prejudice on the important subjects, which had been laid before them that evening.

Though the meeting was ended abruptly, owing to the disorderly and even threatening attitude of a mob of Methodists, yet a profound impression had been made upon the minds of some. A Society of the New Church was soon afterward formed in this town, where an earnest and progressive Church is still in existence.

The following year Hindmarsh made another missionary journey, which was attended with great success and permanent results. He visited and lectured in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Paisley, New Castle, Hull, York and Leeds, and wherever he appeared great multitudes were attracted by his well-known name and were instructed by his luminous exposition of the Doctrines. In Edinburgh, Paisley and Glasgow his visits led to the establishment of permanent New Church Societies.

At the Eleventh General Conference, held in Derby, August 11-14th, 1818, Robert Hindmarsh was again elected President. In the Report of this Conference we find the following minute:

“37. Mr. Robert Hindmarsh having been requested to leave the room, and the Rev. J. Proud called to the chair, the subject respecting the ordination of Mr. Robert Hindmarsh was then introduced, and underwent a very deliberate and able discussion: when it was

“Resolved, unanimously, that in consequence of Mr. Robert Hindmarsh having been called by lot to ordain the first minister in the New Church, this Conference consider it as the most orderly method which could then be adopted, and that Mr. Robert Hindmarsh was virtually ordained by the divine auspices of heaven; in consequence of which this Conference consider Mr. Robert Hindmarsh as one of the regular ordaining ministers.”

This resolution is of the utmost importance in the history of the Church, being a distinct acknowledgment of the Divine origin of the Priesthood. Unfortunately, the Conference did not long remain in this acknowledgment, although the ordinations through Robert Hindmarsh have never been formally repudiated.

The Intellectual Repository for the same year contains a “Proposal for founding a Seminary for the education of youth in general, and particularly for the qualification of young men as Ministers of the New Jerusalem,” which was

communicated by Robert Hindmarsh. This proposition, which may be said to have initiated the long-continued propaganda for a distinctively New Church education, is characteristic of Hindmarsh's penetrating view of the most effective means to the establishment of the New Church. We quote the following from the introductory paragraph of the "Proposal":

It having been found, by more than 30 years' experience, that the course of Religious Education adopted in the Universities and other public Seminaries is in itself a serious obstacle to the reception of the Heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem, inasmuch as it disqualifies rather than prepares a student for the important office of minister in the New Church; and it being now generally admitted that a respectable, able, and useful ministry (however desirable) cannot be established, unless measures be taken to unite with liberal education a system of Religious Instruction in all respects congenial with the true sense of Divine Revelation, as laid down in the Theological Writings of the late Honorable Emanuel Swedenborg;-the following Proposals are, therefore, submitted to the consideration of the members of the New Church in general.

Though this proposition does not appear to have been immediately adopted by the Church at large, the idea had found an expression, the seed had been sown. The first attempt to establish a New Church College, such as the one proposed by Hindmarsh, was made 10 years later in London, when the "Woodford School" was instituted by Mr. W. Malins, and though this School, after a few years, lost its distinctive character, yet the desire for New Church education, amid many disappointments and much bitter opposition, revived and increased in force, until, in 1876, it found an organic ultimatum in the establishment of the Academy of the New Church, which body has adopted, as its chief *raison d'être*, the performance of this all-important Heavenly use

In 1820 Robert Hindmarsh published another excellent work, *A Key to the Spiritual Signification of Numbers, and of Weights and Measures in the Holy Word*. (Manchester) The author has here compiled and carefully digested the teachings of the Writings on these subjects. The little volume is one of the most useful works in the collateral literature of the Church and might be republished to the great benefit of every student of the Science of Correspondences.

THE LEADER OF THE CHURCH

Robert Hindmarsh, at this period of his life, was looked up to as the foremost minister and acknowledged leader of the Church, whether in peace or in war. Such was the general confidence which the Church reposed in him that he was

unanimously elected the President of the General Conference at five consecutive sessions of that body (1818-1822), and when attacks were made upon the Heavenly Doctrines by the forces of the Dragon, as often happened in those days, he it was whom his brethren called upon to ride forth as unconquerable champion of the Truth.

Thus, in 1820, when the Rev. J. G. Pike, a Baptist Minister of Derby, poured out upon the Church a vial of malignant misrepresentations and calumnies, in a volume entitled *Swedenborgianism Depicted in its True Colors*, Hindmarsh was requested by the Conference of that year to draw up a suitable reply.

At first, he expressed his disinclination again to enter the field of controversy, but at length acceded to the wishes of his brethren, and, in the following year, issued his well-known *Vindication of the Character and Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, against the slanders and misrepresentations of the Rev. J. G. Pike.* (Manchester)

The volume contains, further, a refutation of the false reports propagated by John Wesley respecting Swedenborg's alleged madness and is one of the most important and powerful works that have been written in defense of the Heavenly Doctrines and of Swedenborg himself. A second edition was published in the following year.

His next work, which was one of a similar character, was published in 1824, under the title, *Christianity against Deism, Materialism, and Atheism.* This volume was occasioned by a blasphemous letter openly addressed to the author by Richard Carlile, the notorious English infidel and radical, who used to travel about England, lecturing against the existence of a God.

It is not known what effect Hindmarsh's answer to this letter had upon him, though it was sharp enough in tone and arguments, but he soon found a formidable adversary in another New Churchman, a simple Lancashire weaver, named Thomas Wilson, who literally pursued the atheist. Wherever Carlile lectured in Lancashire, Thomas Wilson was sure to be there, sometimes in disguise, to trouble him with New Church arguments and unanswerable questions, until Carlile finally fled in terror at the first sight of his relentless antagonist, never again to appear in that county.

In 1824 Robert Hindmarsh resigned his pastoral charge in Salford, owing, it is said, "to some unfortunate differences of opinion" (Goyder's History, p. 111), or, according to another authority, to failing physical strength. On leaving Salford, an elegant and valuable silver cup was presented to him by his Society, with an appropriate inscription expressing the gratitude and affection of his flock for his many years of faithful ministry. To the Pastor's heart this token was made especially dear from the fact that the children of the Sunday School under his charge had voluntarily asked and received permission to contribute toward it each one penny.

Hindmarsh and his wife now took up their residence in the home of a married daughter in Canterbury, but though he withdrew from the regular work of the Ministry, his activity on behalf of the Church by no means ceased. He still devoted his best energies to the defense and exposition of the Doctrines, and the pages of the Intellectual Repository during this period were enriched by many valuable articles from his pen.

About this time he became involved in a friendly controversy with the Rev. Samuel Noble, the editor of that journal, on the subject of the Integrity of the Word. Mr. Noble held that the Word, in the sense of the Letter, is, indeed, preserved entire, but is not to be found so preserved in any one particular manuscript or text.

Hindmarsh, on the other hand, firmly upheld the teachings of the Doctrines of the New Church on this subject, and proved that the Word is preserved entire, without fault or omission, in the *Textus Receptus*, which was the one used by Swedenborg himself. Hindmarsh's position was that of simple faith in the authority of the Writings of the New Church, as the only reliable source of our information respecting the canonicity and integrity of the Word in the Letter.

Mr. Noble, on the other hand, based his position more on the "facts" brought to light by biblical criticism, and denied, in toto, the authority of the Writings in dealing with matters of natural science!

The external progress and affairs of the Church were still followed with great interest by Hindmarsh in his retirement, and he occasionally officiated in the ordinations of ministers and the consecration of Churches. At the General Conferences of 1827 and 1831 he was again elected President of this most general body of the New Church in Great Britain.

After a few years of quiet study and preparation, Hindmarsh, in 1833, brought out two new and important works. The first of these was *An Essay on the Resurrection of the LORD*, in which the author attempts to answer the much-discussed question: "With what Body did the LORD rise from the Dead?"

After reviewing exhaustively the different opinions on this profound subject, he states, as his own conclusion from the Doctrines, "that the material body was dissipated in the sepulchre, at or before the time of the LORD'S resurrection in and with a Divinely-substantial body, perfectly distinct from the former."

We cannot here enter upon a critical examination of the book as a whole, but may safely state that, though not free from errors, it forms one of the most solid works on interior theology ever produced in the New Church.

The other work, referred to above, was entitled *The Lamb Slain from the Foundation of the World*, being a forcible exposure of the false doctrines held

by Christians in general concerning the Person of the LORD, the work of Redemption, and the means of Salvation. This was the last of his works to be published during his life in this world. It was not, however, the last production of his ever busy pen, for in the following year he completed two manuscripts of equal, if not even greater, excellence and importance.

Of these the first appeared in London, in 1846, under the title *The Church of England Weighed in the Balance of the Sanctuary and Found Wanting, being an examination of the "Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion," the three Creeds, and the Book of Common Prayer*. The other was published in 1861, under the editorship of the Rev. Edward Madeley, and was entitled *Rise and Progress of the New Jerusalem Church in England, America, and other parts*. For the compilation of this, the first History of the New Church ever written, posterity can never be thankful enough. It is too well known to require any particular description in the present sketch.

THE LAST YEARS

In 1833, the beloved wife of Robert Hindmarsh, after more than 50 years of most happy and lovely companionship, preceded him into the spiritual world. He contributed an account of her last moments to the pages of the Intellectual Repository, from which we quote these touching lines:

"Having lived for so many years in the bonds of married love with her partner, she was [while on her death-bed] almost constantly inquiring for him, if on any occasion he happened to be absent from her (which, however, was seldom the case), and when present she with equal earnestness begged him to be as near to her bedside as possible, and to continue with her.

"Indeed, in her very last moments, when through weakness she was unable to articulate her words, she was still heard, in feeble and dying accents, to call upon him to keep close to her; and when she was assured by those around her, and by the well-known, voice of her husband, that he was present, she then seemed satisfied for a while; but presently she again called for him, and was again answered as before; and this continued as long as she was capable of uttering an audible sound.

"In a few minutes afterward, her pain having previously left her, she expired apparently in great peace and tranquility of mind: a rare example of the affectionate attachment of a wife to her husband through life, and in the very article of death itself."

The issue of the long-married life of Robert and Sarah Hindmarsh were five children: Henry, Elizabeth, Charles, George and Jane. From their infancy these children were instructed in the Heavenly Doctrines by their father, but they do not appear to have taken any active interest in the uses of the Church, with the exception of the eldest, Mr. Henry Hindmarsh, who was a solicitor

in London, and, in 1820, prepared the "Conference Deed," or legal document of Trust, whereby the Conference was authorized to receive, hold and apply legacies, etc., for the sole use and benefit of the Church at large.

Robert Hindmarsh bore his grievous bereavement with the resignation and fortitude of a true New Churchman. He was now 74 years of age, yet his health seemed as robust and his mind as active and vigorous as ever. He attended the 26th General Conference, held in August, 1833, when, for the ninth time in his life, he was chosen to preside over the deliberations of this body. He afterward visited Manchester, and then returned to London, where he saw his last two works through the press. He again went to Manchester, whence he returned to London in February, 1834.

On this, his last journey, he contracted a severe cold from which he never recovered. Being fully persuaded that the fullness of his time had come, he devoted the remainder of his days to revising his manuscript works, collecting and arranging his papers, and generally "setting his house in order." To a friend who visited him a short time before his death he remarked: "It is a great mercy to have warning before we go, that we may be able to do what is necessary to leave things right behind us; but now I have done everything, and am quite ready."

To the very end he delighted in conversing with his friends upon the spiritual things of the Church and dwelt with rapture upon the pleasure which he anticipated in soon being able to understand the Word so much better than it was possible to do in this world, and especially upon the blessed privilege, which he hoped would be given him, of beholding the LORD in His Divinely Human Person.

In his very last days, when panting for the breath which was fast leaving him, he comforted his sympathizing friends with the words that he did not suffer as severely as they might think, saying, among other things: "You might think it odd to be told that there are two parties concerned about one dying man; but there are two friends near me, who do all the hard work for me." He also said that the delight of the state to which he was going at times so burst upon him that he was obliged to pray to the LORD that he might not be overpowered by it; that such myriads of transporting thoughts rushed in a moment upon his mind, that he perceived that the increased activity of perception, which he should have when altogether in the spirit, would be such as to surpass all description, and be attended with delights now inconceivable.

The day but one before his death he somewhat revived, and, sitting up in bed, requested that his manuscript history of the New Church be brought to him that he might examine a certain part, which he thought needed correction. Finding alterations unnecessary, he pronounced the work ready for publication, and, with a mind perfectly at ease, patiently awaited his release from

the body, which took place on Friday, January 2, 1835. He was then in the 76th year of his age, and in the 53rd year after his reception of the Heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem. Such was the work and such the life of this faithful servant of the LORD. It remains now but to add a few words concerning his personal qualities as described by his contemporaries in the New Church.

The Rev. David Howarth, who was his successor as Pastor of the Society at Salford, thus describes him as a man among men:

“In the manners of Mr. Hindmarsh there was nothing of pharisaical austerity; his piety was equally free from the fanatic’s gloom and the dissembler’s affectation; and his equability of temper and cheerfulness of mind plainly evidenced that, in his estimation, religion was not intended to diminish, but rather to purify and exalt every human joy and pleasure, whether internal or external. In private conversation our friend was communicative, animated, and engaging; and here, as in his discourses from the pulpit, he was zealous alike to maintain the truth, and to expose the fallaciousness of error; his intelligent remarks, therefore, would sometimes appear sharp and indiscriminate, yet they were evidently made without any consciousness of improper feeling, and designed to promote the spiritual welfare of all with whom he conversed.” (*Memorial Discourse*, p. 17)

The Rev. Edward Madeley, of Birmingham, thus summarizes his personal virtues:

“His time, his learning, his talents, his influence, and whatever he could secure from but scanty means of support, were all, for the protracted period of upwards of half a century, cheerfully devoted to the LORD’S service. He maintained in all the relations of life, as a husband, a father, a minister, and a friend, that uncompromising integrity, that devoted attention to duty, that ardent attachment, which, combined with true Christian piety and even child-like humility, commanded the universal affection and respect of all who had the high privilege of his association.” (*Intellectual Repository*, 1835)

And the Rev. Samuel Noble thus indicates the historical significance of the career of Robert Hindmarsh to the future generations of the New Church:

“So long as the New Church exists, which will be as long as the earth endures, the great promoter of the establishment of the New Church distinct from the Old will be spoken of with honor; and the name of a Peter and a Paul will not be remembered longer than that of ROBERT HINDMARSH.” (*Intellectual Repository*)

The lesson of his life is before us. May it serve to illustrate the Divine Truth, which he so clearly perceived, so lovingly obeyed, and for which he so faithfully labored. May the thought of his personality recede before the recognition of the LORD in His Divine Human, who is the One and only Priest, Ordainer, Organizer, and Sustainer of His Church, the New Jerusalem.

For more stories about early champions of the New Church, explore the New Church Digital Collections at www.swedenborglibrary.org/digital and select: New Church History> Early History> New Church People> In America or In England.



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A Harsh God?

Ned Uber

At a Christian conference I attended in Austria a number of years ago, one of the speakers was David M. Rohl, from London. He has done some exciting work revising the chronology of ancient Egypt and thus is able to show, for example, where Joseph's efforts are evident in Egyptian history and where archive tablets of the time discuss David, Saul and Jesse, as well as finding archeological evidence for many other facts of the Old Testament. He has authored a TV series and a book, *Pharaohs and Kings, A Biblical Quest*, which I recommend.

David Rohl strongly stated that he had no trouble with the God of the New Testament but was bothered by God as described in the Old Testament, especially His telling the children of Israel to destroy so many cities, including women and children. His prime example was Jericho. Most of the conference attendees believed that this was simply God's judgment on the people of Jericho. God always knows what He is doing. He judges justly and inflicts punishment appropriately. David wondered why God would condemn those who didn't know Him.

While I accept the historical basis for the events of the Old Testament, from the birth of Abraham onward, and I believe that every word of the Bible is inspired by God and is there for a reason, I had a pretty clear sense that the story of the conquest of the land of Canaan occurred as it did so that it could represent or contain the internal sense, to function as a parable for all people in all times and that the Lord never commands evil. (*Arcana Coelestia* 6914.5)

It represents how the Lord had to purify the church that had become false. (*Arcana Coelestia* 8317) It also represents how, through the Lord's power, we

have to root out evils in ourselves. It shows that regeneration is a progressive, orderly process, and problems arise when some evils are left. (*Ibid.* 9333, *Apocalypse Explained* 650f) But I couldn't use quotes from the Writings to answer David's concern that God commanded killing, which is evil.

One of my starting points is that God is love itself, and that He desires nothing that is evil. Evil actions in the Bible that are attributed to God's command are really from man's (mis)interpretation or (mis)hearing of God's desires. In his talk earlier in the conference, David explained that this was a brutal time in humanity's history and development. One people conquering and enslaving or wiping out another was commonplace. In Abraham's time, child sacrifice was common.

Thus, Bible stories would have been different if they had been written about a different people in a different time. So, then I went to look for evidence of this misinterpretation in the Old Testament and found it right in the story of Jericho. It is the only place I have found in the Bible where we are told what God (through the angel) said, then we hear how Joshua understood it and what he passed on, and finally we see what the people did. (If you find another instance, please let me know!)

This note is to share that discovery with you. The command of the angel to Joshua ends with the wall falling down and every man going forward. Joshua's retelling of the angel's commands adds the statement about killing everyone, putting the treasure into the temple, and cursing the land. I believe that God permitted Joshua's actions for the purpose of establishing the kingdom of Israel and for conveying the parable about our regeneration, but He didn't command it. Below is a table illustrating this by separating the story into three columns: what the Lord says through His angel, what Joshua says, and what happens. (Joshua 5-13 to 6-27)

After showing David Rohl this detail of the story of Jericho, he asked why none of the other people who were part of our discussion questioned that the Lord had commanded the destruction of the people of Jericho. This helped me to recognize the blessing of knowing the Lord through the internal sense of His Word. I hope others find this useful when talking with people troubled by the appearance that God commands or causes evil.

A decade later I came across this second Old Testament example of God's goodness and love in Exodus and Numbers.

In Exodus 23, God indicates that He will drive the current inhabitants out of the Promised Land. It does not mention the children of Israel having to kill anyone. The Lord was going to do it for them, without much fighting and with no bloodshed.

| *I will send My fear before you, I will cause confusion among all the*

people to whom you come, and will make all your enemies turn their backs to you. And I will send hornets before you, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before you. I will not drive them out from before you in one year, lest the land become desolate and the beast of the field become too numerous for you. Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you have increased, and you inherit the land. (Exodus 23:27-30)

Then in Numbers 13:27-33, the children of Israel send in scouts and got their report:

Then they told him, and said: "We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. Nevertheless the people who dwell in the land are strong; the cities are fortified and very large; moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the South; the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and along the banks of the Jordan."

Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it." But the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we." And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight."

In Numbers 14, the people were fearful and discouraged. But after being rebuked, they decided to try to take the land on their own and failed. This started their wandering in the wilderness for 40 years, followed by their bloody conquest of the Promised Land.

BUT, it sure seems to me that there would not have been ANY bloodshed if the children of Israel had done it the Lord's way. He would have driven the inhabitants out slowly, over time. So too, the Lord gives us a variety of ways to learn what we need to learn, to grow, and to improve our lives and our ability to serve the neighbor. There are easier ways and there are harder ways to learn. He makes it as easy on us as we will allow Him to make it.

The Rev. Dr. Ray Silverman has a great article on this idea that if we say "yes" to the Lord's plan, even if it looks hard, it will be much easier in the

long run than having to wander in the wilderness. And He gives us many opportunities each day to say “yes.” Search for “Silverman” on the site https://newchristianbiblestudy.org/bundles/ncbsw/on-deck/english/new-church-life/1987_HTML.htm or go here: <http://www.heavenlydoctrines.org>

In 2013, while celebrating Easter, I was reminded how Jesus refrained from harming anyone, in fact healing the high priest’s servant’s ear which was cut off in the garden of Gethsemane in Luke 22. Although it is interesting that every gospel mentions the servant’s ear being cut off, only Luke mentions Jesus healing him. I don’t know what to make of that.

When those around Him saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, “Lord, shall we strike with the sword?” And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. But Jesus answered and said, “Permit even this.” And He touched his ear and healed him. (Luke 22:49-51)

Also during an Easter Bible study at work I came across a discussion in John 21 of how people misunderstand God’s direct statements, even when He was right there in front of them:

Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, “Lord, who is the one who betrays You?” Peter, seeing him, said to Jesus, “But Lord, what about this man?” Jesus said to him, “If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me.”

Then this saying went out among the brethren that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, “If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you?” This is the disciple who testifies of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true. 25And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

This very last item in Jesus’ gospels makes a clear case that even His direct statements got misinterpreted by us finite and fallible human beings.

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THE LORD'S DIRECTIONS	JOSHUA'S DIRECTIONS	ACTIONS
<p>5-13. And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?</p> <p>5-14. And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant?</p>		
<p>5-15. And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.</p>	<p>6. And Joshua the son of Nun called the priests, and said unto them, Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD.</p>	<p>8. And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns passed on before the LORD, and blew with the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them.</p>
<p>6-1. Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in.</p>		
<p>2. And the LORD said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valor.</p>		
<p>3. And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days.</p>	<p>7. And he said unto the people, Pass on, and compass the city, and let him that is armed pass on before the ark of the LORD.</p>	<p>9. And the armed men went before the priests that blew with the trumpets, and the rearward came after the ark, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets.</p>
<p>4. And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets.</p>	<p>10. And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout.</p>	<p>11. So the ark of the LORD compassed the city, going about it once: and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp.</p>
		<p>12. And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the LORD.</p> <p>13. And seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD went on continually, and blew with the trumpets: and the armed men went before them; but the rearward came after the ark of the LORD, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets.</p> <p>14. And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp: so they did six days.</p> <p>15. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times.</p>

A HARSH GOD?

<p>5. And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him.</p>	<p>16. And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the LORD hath given you the city.</p>	<p>20. So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.</p>
	<p>17. And the city shall be accursed, even it, and all that are therein, to the LORD: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent.</p>	<p>21. And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword.</p>
<p>22. But Joshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, as ye sware unto her.</p>		
	<p>18. And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it.</p>	<p>23. And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel.</p>
	<p>19. But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are consecrated unto the LORD: they shall come into the treasury of the LORD.</p>	<p>24. And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein: only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of</p>
<p>25. And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho. 26. And Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before the LORD, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it. 27. So the LORD was with Joshua; and his fame was noised throughout all the country. 7-1 But the children of Israel committed a trespass regarding the accursed things, for Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed things; so the anger of the LORD burned against the children of Israel.</p>		

Bryn Athyn Cathedral Gardens

Facebook Page and Smartphone Garden Tour

Terry Schnarr

Assistant Chairperson of the Bryn Athyn Church Outreach Committee

Danielle Odhner and her company, Glenhurst Ltd., are contracted to manage the beautiful gardens at Bryn Athyn Cathedral. She has designed and developed them since 1998, making a conscious effort to bring the symbolism of the interior of the Cathedral to the outside. In October of 2021 Danielle met with the Bryn Athyn Church Outreach Committee to explore ways to use the gardens as an outreach tool.

She outlined five major uses of Bryn Athyn Cathedral:

- worship
- the home of an active congregation
- an evangelical tool for New Church doctrine
- the symbolic center for the General Church
- a historic building.

She proceeded to show how the gardens support each use. Their primary purpose is to nurture the affections of worshippers through creating an overall atmosphere of reverence and peace, providing spaces for reflection and for the mind to rest in preparation for worship. As an evangelical tool, the gardens serve to illustrate the doctrines and support worship activity, drawing visitors closer to the church.

It has long been Danielle's dream to share her horticultural knowledge and the spiritual correspondences of the gardens with an online audience. She told the committee that people had a thirst for gardening tips during the Covid pandemic, and the time seemed right to pursue this endeavor beyond her personal Facebook page. The Rev. Eric Carswell, then assistant pastor of Bryn Athyn Church who co-chaired the Outreach Committee with me at the time, was supportive of exploring this further as a means to create interest in the church.

David Childs has been key to the development of this online project and partnered with Danielle since its inception. David has prior professional experience with setting up QR codes to direct people to websites, presentations

and how-to videos. (QR codes are images made up of an array of black and white squares that are used for storing URL's or other information for reading by a camera or smartphone.) He likes to play with technology, has a passion for gardening and a deep appreciation for Danielle's work. They make a great team!

David began by using a drone image to create a map of the Cathedral gardens and labelled and numbered them in sequence. He took short videos of Danielle talking about each of the gardens and ordered QR code markers which were planted, one in each garden. He also created the Bryn Athyn Cathedral Gardens Facebook Page where these videos could be shared along with images of the gardens from local photographers.

Content in the videos and on the Facebook Page may touch on the beliefs and correspondences underlying the garden designs, quotes from the Word or Writings, identification of particular plants, or specific horticultural tips. Uses of the garden for worship are sometimes featured, such as images of June 19th Pageants and Easter garden scenes.

The smartphone garden tour was officially launched in May of 2022 in conjunction with the first Sunset Organ Vespers of that season. Now at any time, congregants and visitors can view videos about the gardens by simply pointing their smartphones at one of the QR code markers on the grounds. The plan going forward is to regularly update these videos with current information and occasionally feature ministers and other staff members.

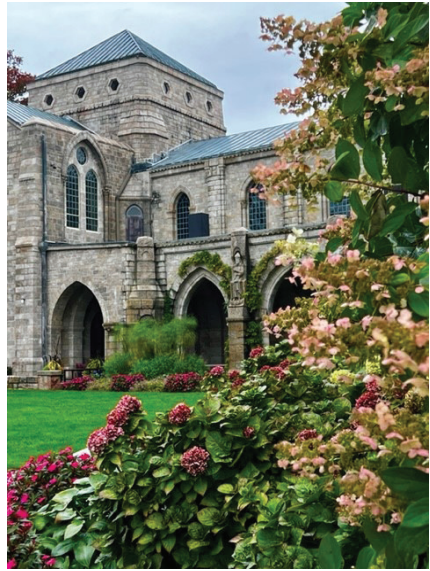
We are grateful to Danielle and David for sharing their passion and love for the church and gardens in this creative undertaking. The infrastructure is



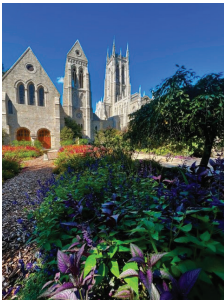
now in place, and we look forward to further developments in the coming seasons. Visit the Cathedral grounds to take a smartphone tour yourself or explore the Bryn Athyn Cathedral Gardens Facebook Page online for inspiring updates. <https://www.facebook.com/BrynAthyn-CathedralGardens>

(See photos on pages 134 and 135)

Terry Schnarr is Principal Organist at Bryn Athyn Cathedral and has co-chaired the Bryn Athyn Church Outreach Committee with the Assistant Pastor since 2012. She has combined her two passions of church music and outreach in developing the Sunset Organ Vespers Series which will begin its seventh season this May. Terry is planning to retire at the end of June when she and her husband, the Rev. Philip Schnarr (and son James) will move to Whidbey Island, Washington, where they will be in close proximity to their children and grandchildren. Contact: terryschnarr@gmail.com



**BRYN ATHYN
CATHEDRAL GARDENS**
Photos by David Childs



**CATHEDRAL GARDENS
SMARTPHONE TOUR**
Photos by David Childs



A New Index to Spiritual Experiences

Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith

For the first time in the English language, more than 200 years since it was written, we now have a translation of Swedenborg's Indices to his *Spiritual Experiences*. The Rev. Kurt P. Nemitz has completed this translation with the assistance of the Rev. Kenneth J. Alden. (Mr. Nemitz also sets the record for being the first translator of the *Spiritual Experiences* **not** to depart for the other world before his work was finished!)

Dr. Durban J. Odhner, in conjunction with his work on providing a critical Latin edition of *Spiritual Experiences*, also included the two Latin indices. Mr. Nemitz, who worked closely with him and then completed the translation of SE, used this as a basis for his translation. The longer – Index I covers more than half of SE – and Index II overlaps some of those numbers and takes it to the end, but in a briefer style.

Swedenborg compiled and utilized indices in his writing process. Soon after he received his call to be a revelator, he began an extensive index of the Bible. This he used regularly throughout, providing frequent and extensive quotes to demonstrate correspondences or to confirm statements of truth. The two indices to *Spiritual Experiences* enabled him to refer back to the wonders he saw and heard in the spiritual world as he wrote *Arcana Coelestia* and future works. (He also compiled indices to *Arcana Coelestia*, *Apocalypse Revealed* and a treatise on *Angelic Wisdom Concerning Marriage*, which is not extant.)

There are two main uses for the SE indices. First, it provides a quick reference for some of the wondrous teachings and experiences found in *Spiritual Experiences*. Often a number/paragraph is summarized in a single sentence,

so it is much quicker to get the gist of what is reported. Simply scanning an entry can give an idea of the subject, and perhaps inspire further exploration in *Spiritual Experiences* itself.

Second, because the statements in the indices are not usually quotes, one can find subtle differences so as to be able to look at passages in a slightly different way. For example, *Spiritual Experiences* 3146 describes a person in the other world who returned to an earlier state in his life, where he spoke and might have driven his parents to indignation. The Index adds the detail that “he said something hard.” Or number 3423 which describes “metric speech” of the spirits which leads to unity. In the Index it is described as “the rhythmic speech of angels in gyres, that all agree unanimously.” Or number 3384 describes the punishment of those who reject marriage once the initial sexual lust abates as “mangling.” The Index describes it as “dismemberment.” Subtle differences, but certainly of interest to scholars.

These indices are available in electronic form for download as a PDF (Portable Document Format) file by clicking this link (if you are reading this online) or typing it into your browser: newchurch.org/SEIndex. They are searchable with a PDF reader.

The Revs. Nemitz and Alden are to be congratulated on this momentous work. It will serve general readers and New Church scholars well.



Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith

Church News

Compiled by Bruce Henderson

REV. ERIC CARSWELL NAMED PRESIDENT OF BRYN ATHYN COLLEGE

*The Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss Jr.
Chancellor, Academy of the New Church*

It is my distinct honor to announce that the **Rev. Eric Carswell** has been affirmed unanimously by the Board of Trustees for the position of President of Bryn Athyn College of the New Church for an interim period. This appointment comes after unanimous support from the President Search Committee for my nomination of Eric to this position.

Eric has served in several leadership roles over the course of his career. This includes serving as pastor of three General Church congregations: Pittsburgh, Glenview and Bryn Athyn. He has also served in several leadership capacities within the Academy, including Vice Chancellor, Academy President and Dean of the Theological School. He has an undergraduate degree in Psychology from Penn State University and a Master's in School Administration from Lehigh University. He has served in Regional Pastor roles within the General Church, involving supervision of fellow priests and counsel on many personnel matters. He has also served on the Advisory Council for Bishop **Peter Buss Sr.**, **Bishop Tom Kline**, **Bishop Brian Keith** and **Bishop Peter Buss Jr.**

Beyond the positions he has held, there are many who value his approach to leadership. He has a deep appreciation for the first law of Divine Providence, that people be led in freedom according to their reason. That translates into an incorporation of and respect for people's ideas, and an ability to bring those together into a shared path forward.

Many people would describe Eric as an incredibly hard worker who understands systems and manages teams effectively. He engages in projects small and large, makes connections and gets things done. I have had the privilege of working closely with Eric. I see him as a trusted colleague to whom I can turn for insightful counsel and willing teamwork. As is evident in this case, he

rarely says no to an important use that he can serve.

I asked Eric if he wished to say a word of welcome as he enters into this use. He offered the following:

When I was asked earlier in January whether I was willing to consider the position of interim president for Bryn Athyn College, I agreed to be interviewed because I value highly what Bryn Athyn College can do. I am humbled that the Selection Committee responded affirmatively and the Academy Board has affirmed my nomination. I look forward to working with the faculty and staff, representatives from the student body, the Board, and other stakeholders to best serve the near- and long-term future of Bryn Athyn College.

Looking back, it is a blessing that five people were willing to consider the President role and participate in our Search Committee process. Two others took a deep look at the position, offering insightful input before declining to move forward. We thank those men and women for their love of the College and their ways of serving. I mention this to underscore the fact that we had options – good options – and ended up determining that Eric has the best all-round qualities for the position.

It is useful to note that Eric will be serving an interim position, likely extending to the end of the 2024-2025 school year. The major projects before Eric and the College team are to manage a leadership transition, to finalize responses to MSCHE on remaining accreditation matters, to work with the Board and others on fiscally responsible budgeting for the College, and to provide for a shared mission direction that the majority of College constituents can get behind. These goals will be achievable to the extent that all those who love the College rally behind Eric's leadership and do their part to serve.

BRYN ATHYN CATHEDRAL PROJECT

Since Bryn Athyn Cathedral was dedicated in October 1919, its construction has held up well. Routine maintenance and restoration ongoing.

One aspect that has needed complete replacement is the beautiful old oak floor in the social hall, which most people pass through on their way into services. The floors had been sanded many times, wearing the tongue and groove down to the point where they could not be sanded again. So the decision was made to replace it – matching the wood, the design and the craftsmanship as exactly as possible. The area was shut down through January and February to allow for demolition of the old floor and installation of the new, including sanding, finishing and curing before reopening in early March.

During that process an intricate and beautifully designed subflooring was uncovered – which no one had ever seen once the final flooring was installed. Such was the artistry which the general contractor, **Glenn Gurney**, and his crew took great pains to duplicate.

Glenn describes the process of obtaining the new flooring from a lumber mill in upstate New York:

“This material was sawn from slow growing northern timbers, to ensure the tightness and density of the grain matches the inherent qualities of the Cathedral’s original flooring. It was also created from wider stock that started in the rough between 8-14” inches wide, just as the original material was. This ensures the flooring all comes from the best and oldest part of the log toward the very bottom of the tree, which is where the tightest grain and highest amount of heartwood are found.

“In addition to the grain and widths, the mill also provided lengths that are extremely rare in this day and age. Again, this was all done with the intent to achieve the flowing look of the original planks. The flooring has exceptional lengths showcasing planks up to 15’ feet long, with 70 boards alone between 12-15’ in length. They can’t stress enough how rare this is in today’s lumber market and how scarce and special are the timbers to create something like this.”

Early in the project Cathedral Director **Meg Rohtla** noted: “Since the furniture has been removed from the room, you can better see Raymond (Pitcairn)’s use of ‘refinements in the form of curves and other departures from the straight and parallel delineation.’ (Description from the Cathedral Book) The floorboards abutting the walls extend from 3 inches to more than 9 inches in width.”

Stewart Asplundh, Bryn Athyn Society Treasurer, adds this interesting



footnote: “Wood from original purchases during Cathedral construction was inventoried and it was determined that a portion of rosewood would not be needed for any future uses at the Cathedral and could be sold. We researched potential markets for rosewood and contacted various companies to gauge interest in purchasing. We eventually received proposals from several guitar companies interested in the wood, with a final sale to Santa Cruz Guitars in New Mexico.”

PASTORAL CHANGES

The **Rev. Derek Elphick**, Pastor of Bryn Athyn Society, announced the appointment from the Bishop’s Office of the **Rev. Jeffrey Smith** to the Bryn Athyn pastoral team, starting July 1. This will be a full-time position to replace two part-time ministers: the **Rev. Phil Schnarr**, who retired last June 30, and the **Rev. Jeremy Simons**, who is retiring at the end of this June.

SUMMER PROGRAMS

The Academy of the New Church Secondary Schools again will be offering several camps this summer:

- Performing Arts Camp, June 20-30
- Tools4Life, June 25-July 1
- ANC Summer Camp, July 9-14

The **Performing Arts Camp**, for current 6th, 7th and 8th graders, will culminate with two performances of *The Lion King Jr.* on June 30. Students will learn the elements of blocking, vocal production, choreography and character development.

For more information, email sarah.waelchli@ancss.org
or call 267-502-2678.

Tools4Life – for incoming juniors and seniors – is a career and life skills camp designed to help teenagers gain the tools and confidence for their next steps after high school.

Typical activities include visits to area colleges, an off-campus career day, community service, a dinner/date night and a recreational outing.

For further information contact ali.durand@ancss.org.

Summer Camp – The popular ANC Summer Camp welcomes 8th and 9th graders, with Jena Frey and Sarah Waelchli as directors. To learn more please visit ANC Summer Camp (/fs/pages/543)

9th ANNUAL LIVING WATERS FAMILY CAMP

The Rev. Justin Schorran

The Living Waters Family Camp will take place in Paisley, Ontario, Canada, July 13-16. This year's theme is: *What Does it Mean to be New Church?*

Now is a great time to start a family tradition where grandparents, parents and children can all go to a summer camp and worship, learn, pray and play together. These family camps provide a fantastic opportunity for the Lord to store up some cross-generational New Church “remains.” Every good church camp has the Lord at the center of it, and the opportunity to learn about Him from His Word and to worship Him with thankful praise!

Is it even possible to define what it means to be New Church? At its broadest, we are told that there are two essentials to being New Church. Are there any qualifiers? Is the New Church a state of mind in the individual or can it apply broadly to an external organization as well? Perhaps it is both! Please join us for camp and let's discuss this together.

The camp is located near Paisley, Ontario, on the Saugeen River and is called Hidden Valley Christian Camp. You can explore it on the web at hvc-camp.ca. It is 194 kilometers from the Olivet New Church and just 154 kilometers from the Carmel New Church. It is also 189 miles from Oak Arbor, Michigan, so we warmly welcome any of our neighbors from the United States. Canoeing and fishing are available and the camp is just 20 kilometers from the beach on Lake Huron.

The General Church in Canada has been very supportive of this venture and there are scholarships available to ensure that the camp is affordable enough for most everyone to attend. For more information about Living Waters Family Camp, or if you would like to attend, please visit the website to register: <https://livingwatersfamilycamp.wordpress.com>

Rev. Justin Schorran – Assistant to the Pastor at Carmel New Church
livingwatersfamilycamp@gmail.com
226-899-4746

“Living waters” are often mentioned in the Word, and by them are meant truths that come from the Lord and are received. These are living, because the Lord is Life itself, as He Himself teaches, and

Life Lines

Bruce M. Henderson and the Rev. Jeremy F. Simons

THE NEW CHURCH ARTIST: A WINDOW TO THE SOUL

Religious themes – whether subtle and overt – have been expressed in art for centuries. The New Church brings its own perspective from the repositories of the Bryn Athyn Cathedral and Glencairn Museum to all levels of New Church education and the work of many a New Church artist. All of this adds a special dimension to the history and impact of art and religion.

A recent *Wall Street Journal* article – *You Can See God in Van Gogh's Paintings* – noted that he was not a religious painter, in the same school as Michelangelo, Raphael or Caravaggio, but that religion was in his soul – and thus in his art.

He once wrote to his brother, Theo: “It does me good to do what’s difficult. That doesn’t stop me having a tremendous need for, shall I say the word – for religion – so I go outside at night to paint the stars.” People search for hidden meaning in such masterpieces as *Starry Night*, finding glimpses of the Divine.

Van Gogh left this insight: “Try to understand the last word of what the great artists, the serious masters, say in their masterpieces: there will be God in it.”

New Church education has been blessed with wonderful teachers who get the connection, from Beth Johns to Martha Gyllenhaal. Following their lead, Jonathan Kline, current art teacher at Bryn Athyn College, brings his own passion for New Church art. He sees an exciting opportunity for the College “to signal its own distinctive religious identity.” (See an article about Jonathan and his passion – *Artfully Academic* – in the January/February issue of *New Church*

Life.) But the giant of New Church artists – to my layman’s eyes – was Nishan Yardumian.

Glencairn Museum hosted a wonderful exhibit in 2018: *A Window to the Soul – Nishan Yardumian’s Biblical Art*. Nishan was a gifted and much-loved artist and teacher who profoundly influenced scores of students at Bryn Athyn College and elsewhere – and who died much too young at 39. He was a fountain of information and insights, with a delightful sense of humor and an infectious laugh. He had a special interest in religious art and this exhibit focused on his exploration of the Divine within biblical scenes and how that illuminates our experience as spiritual beings.

In introducing that exhibit Glencairn Director Brian Henderson said: “We hope this exhibit invites you – as Nishan intended through his art, so clearly influenced by the teachings for the New Church – to ask what it is in us to which each painting makes its appeal. To reflect on the meaning that each of these stories from the Lord’s Word has in our lives. To allow something spiritual in us to be called forth.”

One of Nishan’s favorite sayings was: “Paintings don’t re-direct the mind; they realign the heart.” He liked to feel that a painting adds something spiritual to a room – something genuinely human. So, it is not just a panting on a wall but “a window to the soul.”

Among the memorable quotes accompanying his paintings were:

- Painting aims at the universal with the hope that each individual can find his identification within it. Teaching aims at the individual with the hope of developing the universal.
- To me, the very strength of a painting is that it is static. It doesn’t change; we do.
- While analyzing the appeal a picture has for us, we must ask: to what in us is the picture making its appeal? The answer to this will determine the type of friendship we are to have with it.
- The discipline the artist must develop with constancy is that of discerning the angelic from the worldly in the environment.

I remember a wonderful talk Nishan gave at a Charter Day banquet many years ago – typically understated and simply profound. He showed two paintings to illustrate “how looking at a painting is getting a piece of someone’s mind.” Then he took us on “an express train through Art History to demonstrate that since the Middle Ages art has progressively focused on the mind, and that this is the baton that we in the church can pick up and run with.”

He took us on a fascinating romp through art history, with his own gifted insight into how artists use light to enhance their subject – and their message.

Finally, he reflected: “Art in the 20th century has entered the ‘cave’ of the mind. Brain matter is now subject matter. Artists have made their mark on an area where previously, to steal a line from James Joyce: ‘the hand of man never set foot.’

“Light from the outside cannot illuminate this area. To bring light to the mind is the church’s goal. As it does it will be reflected in its art.”

The artist, he said, “isolates and focuses on things of the spirit. In the end art is the way we encourage ourselves as a community. A community without it would be like children with no encouragement from their parents, or athletes with no encouragement from their teammates. With it we connect generations and the internal and external worlds. Art is our mark on inexorable nature.”

I like to think of Nishan roaming the spiritual world and connecting with all the artists he considered friends in the mission they shared. He is no doubt delighting in the ineffable beauty of heaven and the challenge of capturing all that its light reveals about the angels’ own nature. And he would be laughing and marveling with his fellow artists – perhaps under a *Starry Night* – at the ultimate revelation of the art of heaven, and understanding so clearly what every artist tries to capture: “God is in it.”

(BMH)

JURY NULLIFICATION

Juries in many countries have an interesting power called “jury nullification”:

Jury nullification (US/UK), jury equity (UK), or a perverse verdict (UK) occurs when the jury in a criminal trial gives a not guilty verdict despite a defendant having clearly broken the law. The jury’s reasons may include the belief that the law itself is unjust, that the prosecutor has misapplied the law in the defendant’s case, that the punishment for breaking the law is too harsh, or general frustrations with the criminal justice system. Some juries have also refused to convict due to their own prejudices in favor of the defendant. Such verdicts are possible because a jury has an absolute right to return any verdict it chooses. (Wikipedia)

This means that although juries are instructed to do no more than determine if the defendant has broken the law as it exists in the applicable penal code, the truth is that the jury can decide the defendant’s guilt or innocence on any basis that it wants.

In practice this often means that unpopular laws cannot be enforced. Over a period of time it also often means that these laws are changed. This is one

reason, for example, why laws are changing in the United States with respect to the use of illegal substances and laws relating to sexuality. Unpopular laws sometimes cannot be enforced partly because juries won't convict those who break them.

In its own way the same can be true in the church.

In the General Church the question, with respect to moral and spiritual issues, is not whether something is right or wrong, but *whether the Heavenly Doctrine* says it is right or wrong. That is because the Writings are the final authority when it comes to these questions. This has been the key distinguishing position of the General Church from the beginning.

But we who are members of the church do not necessarily see it that way. For us the question usually seems to be whether something is right or wrong – period. It may take some convincing to help us to see that what the Heavenly Doctrine says is the truth of the matter.

In practice this means that some teachings are too unpopular to be easily communicated or acted on, even though the Writings are clear about them. It often means that the clergy struggles to know how to respond to these doctrines and teach them appropriately. This is even more difficult for lay boards and church school faculties to grapple with. These kinds of things become sources of tension between the clergy and the church membership. In some ways this is similar to the tensions that typically exist between the civil government, together with its legal apparatus, and the citizens of most places.

Jury nullification means that unpopular laws sometimes can't be enforced. In churches a similar phenomenon sometimes means that unpopular doctrines can't be taught.

This points to the importance of culture. A culture of respect for the government and the civil law, and an educated electorate that understands and accepts the civil law, decreases the likelihood of jury nullification. Similarly, in the General Church, much depends on the ability to build a culture that understands and accepts the Heavenly Doctrine as the last word – which each of us can then interpret for ourselves. This is central and may be more important to emphasize than the rights or wrongs of any particular issue.

A respect for both freedom and order are vital components of both our legal system and the church. Both rely on an educated and intelligent populace. Both also rely on fair and wise leadership. These are the hard-to-reach goals of most organizations and governments, but the closer they get, the smaller the chances of phenomena like jury nullification.

(JFS)

WILL YOU GO TO HEAVEN?

A provocative TV ad (also on Facebook and YouTube) asks the ominous question: “When you die are you going to heaven – or not?” Then the tantalizing promise: “You can know for sure.” Just go to this website: *heavenor-not.net*.

It’s an effective ad because most people wonder what will happen when they die. No doubt there’s been a lot of traffic to this website. It would be better, of course, if the curious came to New Church websites for what God Himself has revealed about life after death. Hopefully some will be stimulated to search further. But at a time when so many seem unmoored to conscience, it is useful just to get people thinking that their choices have eternal consequences.

The “heaven or not” website restates Biblical teachings that God created the heavens and the earth – and created us. So, we get to heaven through Him. Yes, we are sinners, but we can be forgiven, so there is hope. *John 1:25* is quoted: “*I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die.*” That does imply that it takes more than believing; that you must also live what you believe. But then it falls back on the conviction that just having faith is enough: “*For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.*” (*Ephesians 2:8-9*)

We have so much more to offer anyone anxious to know if he or she will go to heaven:

One of the teachings we love to share is this: “*Heaven is such that all who have lived well – of whatever religion – have a place there.*” (*Divine Providence 330*) And: “*Those who do what is good for the sake of the neighbor or the Lord are in heaven.*” (*Arcana Coelestia 9210:3*)

We are all created for heaven – of whatever faith – and we all can get there if we live the life of heaven by shunning evil and following the Lord. “All who become angels carry their own heaven deep within themselves, because their love is the love that constitutes that heaven.” (*True Christian Religion 739*)

We need to live our lives with an awareness that we are choosing heaven – or hell – with the choices we make each day that come to define our ruling love.

So, to answer the TV ad, can we really know that we are going to heaven? We may be confident, perhaps a little unsure and uneasy, maybe just hopeful. But if we are honest with ourselves about the choices we are making in the way we live our lives, we will find our home in heaven or hell – and should not be surprised when we get there.

(BMH)

‘I’LL NEVER WORK AGAIN’

It’s a refrain we hear all too often these days. Sometimes it’s a sigh of resignation. Sometimes it is the hope of being liberated from the drudgery of going to work every day. Either way, it’s not a healthy attitude. And it illustrates that too many people have no concept of the purpose of life – on earth and in heaven.

A pervasive teaching in the Word is that we are to love the Lord and love our neighbor. That means being useful, kind, compassionate, serving. And that is what really makes us happy. But too many people live with the illusion that work is drudgery – and that happiness is simply freedom from work. A common obsession is to “hit the lottery” – to win so much money that “I’ll never have to work again.” But many a study has shown that people made suddenly wealthy through luck become miserable with lives of indulgence and leisure. Some even say: “It was the worst thing that ever happened to me.”

Another sad phenomenon is that many people have just stopped working. They either can’t find work or have stopped looking and are content to live off their government. The covid pandemic provided subsidies for those put out of work that actually became reverse incentives because people “earned” more by not working.

One commentator said, “the most chilling metric of all” is that seven million Americans of prime working age “are done looking for jobs.” Bernie Marcus, founder of Home Depot – the largest home improvement retailer in the United States – says he could not start such a business today. Too many people have the attitude: “I don’t want to work – just send me money.”

This brings to mind the introductory section of *Conjugal Love*, where people allowed to experience their imaginary heavens quickly learn what heavenly life is – and what it is not.

One group of newcomers imagines the joy of heaven and eternal happiness to be “feasting with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and after the feasts sports and public shows, then feasts again, and so on to eternity.” It took only a few days of such indulgence to have them begging to be allowed to flee and to discover the true joy of heaven:

Since the angels who are in heaven are in goodness from the Lord, they desire nothing more than to perform useful services. These bring delight to their life, and it is according to useful services that they enjoy bliss and happiness. (Arcana Coelestia 6073.2)

Indeed, hitting life’s lottery is to find that bliss and happiness by living lives of service, love and kindness – every day – to eternity.

(BMH)

DEAN BOYCE: CONSUMMATE NEW CHURCHMAN

Dean Boyce came into the church as though it was always in his soul.

Dean had New Church friends at Lehigh University and the seeds were planted. Meanwhile, the young woman who would become his wife was introduced to the church by my wife, Carol, at Hood College in Maryland. Divine Providence took over. The church was planted and was a guiding light through his life.

When he and his family of three moved to Columbia, Maryland, it was a 45-minute drive to the church in Mitchellville but they did it every Sunday. Dean quickly became a (very tall) presence and pillar of the church: on the board, on committees, doing whatever he could to help.

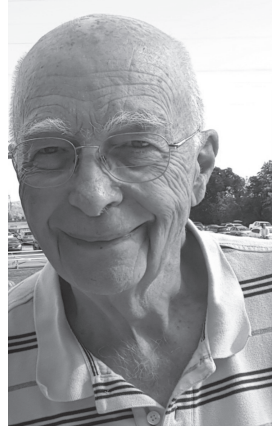
Years later, remarried, he did the same at the Boynton Beach New Church in Florida. The commute was cut to 30 minutes. The commitment was the same. Everyone knew you could count on Dean, whatever needed doing – from serving on the board to parking cars at the Boynton Beach Retreat and calling numbers at society Bingo nights. Always smiling. Always gracious. Always there.

Dean, who passed away in January, is remembered by all who loved and respected him as a big man with a big heart – for his endearing qualities of kindness, gentleness, caring, patience, diligence, and readiness to help. He believed that faith is not something you have; it is something you do. Dean lived the faith of that “quiet New Churchman” the church relies upon.

His children remember him warmly as a loving father. Daughter Jaime Lacey said in a Facebook post: “He loved me dearly, provided for me, and guided me gently through life. He was always there when I needed him, which I will miss terribly. In the last year, our roles shifted, as I started providing more care for him. We spent many hours together talking, sharing, eating ice cream, just being. It troubled him greatly that he could no longer ‘do’ for himself and others. What he didn’t realize was that he still was impacting others through his kindness and graciousness. I witnessed it countless numbers of times but realized its impact in the tears shed after he was gone. Thank you for teaching me one more valuable lesson.”

And there is a lesson here for all of us. When people age and their bodies start failing, they often feel useless. But Dean still was being useful to his family and friends just with his presence and meaning in their lives.

This was captured by my father in a 1966 editorial in *New Church Life* –



Spiritual Problems of Aging – that still resonates.

Addressing these feelings of uselessness in old age he passed on comfort and reassurance from the Writings: “Considered interiorly, a man’s spiritual use is the influence he has on others, the impact of his character upon them; and in this view use does not cease with retirement, or even with the weakness of more advanced years. A character formed by the choices of a long lifetime of experience and expressing something of the real wisdom of life may have a far greater influence upon others than its possessor realizes. Wherever its sphere is received it has much of value to give – much, indeed, that only wise old age can give.”

Dean’s character – and his legacy – were formed in large part by his choice to become a New Churchman and to live that faith. That’s where his influence was – his use. To him belongs the ultimate epitaph: a good man, a life well lived – the epitome of the “good and faithful servant” entering into the joy of his Lord.

(BMH)

RECONCILING THAT ‘HARSH GOD’

In an article on page 126, Ned Uber ponders the image of a “harsh God” in the Old Testament and how to reconcile that portrayal with the all-loving God we know.

This is why many Christians are more comfortable with the loving, forgiving, healing Jesus of the New Testament than the seemingly angry and vengeful God of the Old Testament.

At the 400th anniversary of the King James Version of the Bible in 2011, a reporter praised it as “a mighty collection of wisdom, holiness and comfort.” This prompted a scornful letter questioning if this reporter had been “so caught up in the language and translation that he missed all the violence: the jealous God full of wrath and vengeance; the genocide; the denigration of women; the approbation of slavery; and the approval of incest and infanticide? Extremism to the max! Most of us are taught to revere the Bible, not read it. When I actually did read it, I became an atheist.”

That’s a harsh reaction but illustrates the challenge – met by most Christians – of having only the letter of the Word to guide them. They still find great comfort and meaning in the Bible but are left to ponder what may seem incongruous.

This is one reason I wrote my book, *A New Key to the Bible* – to introduce people to the revealed internal sense of the Word and all the rich spiritual meaning it adds to Scripture. Among the many promises the faithful are fa-

miliar with is this: *“I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. But when He, the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all truth.” (John 16:12-13)*

We are blessed to know that Spirit of Truth, ready to guide those willing into all truth – to have the letter of the Word they love and revere enriched with spiritual meaning.

An example I cite in the book – similar to those referenced by Ned Uber – is the harsh story in *Joshua 8* of the Lord’s command to Joshua to completely destroy the city of Ai. He was told: “Stretch out the sword that is in your hand toward Ai, for I will give it into your hand.” And Joshua did just that “until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai.” He and his army ambushed and killed 12,000 men, women and children; set fire to the city; and made it “forever a heap of ruins, as it is to this day.”

How could our loving God command something so contrary to His nature – the slaughter of men, women and children, and the annihilation of their city? That is what the reader of the literal sense is left to ponder.

The spiritual sense paints a very different picture. Just the name Ai represents a heap of worldly rubble. Its inhabitants symbolize all the evil emotions and selfish passions within us. It is the classic confrontation, seen over and over in the Word, of evil confronted and overcome by the power of truth. So, God was not actually ordering the brutal killing of innocents but teaching us to confront and rid ourselves of selfishness and worldliness.

The literal meaning of this story – and so many others in the Word – may seem alien on the surface to our concept of God. Through revelation we are given to see and understand the true nature of God and the Word, and to find meaning and purpose for our lives.

This book was written as an introduction to the revelation in the Writings – a deeper understanding of the Bible that doesn’t take anything away from the love and comfort people draw from its literal sense but which can help to enlighten and magnify their faith.

(BMH)

SPURIOUS CONSCIENCE

In Mark Twain’s *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Huck experiences a crisis of conscience after he fails to betray his runaway slave friend, Jim, and give him up to some slavecatchers:

They went off and I got aboard the raft, feeling bad and low, because I knowed very well I had done wrong, Then I thought a

minute, and says to myself, hold on; s'pose you'd a done right and give Jim up, would you felt better than what you do now? No, says I, I'd feel bad -- I'd feel just the same way I do now. (Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain chapter 16)

Discussing Huck's belief that failing to turn Jim in was a terrible sin, Mark Twain commented:

In those old slave-holding days the whole community was agreed as to one thing – the awful sacredness of slave property. To help steal a horse or a cow was a low crime, but to help a hunted slave, or feed him or shelter him, or hide him, or comfort him, in his troubles, his terrors, his despair, or hesitate to promptly to betray him to the slave-catcher when opportunity offered was a much baser crime, and carried with it a stain, a moral smirch which nothing could wipe away.

That this sentiment should exist among slave-owners is comprehensible – there were good commercial reasons for it – but that it should exist and did exist among the paupers, the loafers the tag-rag and bobtail of the community, and in a passionate and uncompromising form, is not in our remote day realizable.

It seemed natural enough to me then; natural enough that Huck and his father the worthless loafer should feel it and approve it, though it seems now absurd. It shows that that strange thing, the conscience – the unerring monitor – can be trained to approve any wild thing you want it to approve if you begin its education early and stick to it. (Notebook #35 reprinted in Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Univ. of California Press, 2003)

Twain's point here is that as much as our conscience feels like a kind of inbuilt, unerring monitor of right and wrong, the truth is that it is something trained, and it "can be trained to approve any wild thing you want it to approve if you begin its education early and stick to it." The book is clearly mocking Huck's erroneous belief, but Twain is well aware, writing from the vantage point of the 1880s, that a mere 20 years earlier those views were widely held throughout the United States, and that people in the South were willing to fight and die for them.

The Heavenly Doctrine calls this kind of conscience a "spurious" conscience. That is, the person may genuinely hold the belief, but the belief is wrong:

| *Conscience in general is either true, spurious, or false. True*

conscience is a conscience formed by the Lord from truths of faith. . . . Spurious conscience is a conscience formed with those outside the church from the religious worship in which they have been born and brought up. . . . False conscience is a conscience formed not from internal things but from external, that is, not from charity but from self-love and love of the world. (Arcana Coelestia 1033)

Spurious conscience is spoken of here in reference to people outside the church, or gentiles, whose religious beliefs are sometimes sincere but erroneous, while other aspects of their beliefs are true and compatible with a genuine conscience. A spurious conscience is something that all of us have to the extent that we are misled by false ideas that we see as true – as Huckleberry Finn was.

False conscience, on the other hand, is not a misguided conscience but one that is based on worldly and self-centered concerns and anxieties. Most people have a conscience, for example, about driving above the speed limit, but it is just as likely to be based on the fear of being caught speeding as on any real concern about the harm we might cause. A person with a false conscience really has no conscience at all, and when the external restraints that enforce that conscience are removed it soon disappears.

A true conscience is something that we learn, being initially based on external fears and constraints, and only over time becoming something genuine. As Mark Twain notes, however, *“that strange thing, the conscience – the unerring monitor – can be trained to approve any wild thing you want it to approve if you begin its education early and stick to it.”*

This is why the source of our feelings of conscience is so important. Without direct and effective teaching to the contrary, our conscience will be based on the cultural inputs that we are exposed to in the course of our daily lives. Huck Finn knew it was wrong to help Jim because that was the strongly held belief of his time, place and social group. In a different time and place, and with different people, that belief would be seen as ludicrously wrong. But every population in every time and place has its own set of peculiar beliefs, based on its own situation and influences.

A conscience that is based on popular views, however, is not necessarily merely spurious, it is also often a false conscience, because it will change with popular opinion. It may be based on no deep belief at all, but on the social demands of the culture, and as such it can turn on a dime.

The Heavenly Doctrine speaks of spirits with us who burden our consciences with spurious issues. They give several examples:

For example, if someone travels to foreign countries and spends his money on very expensive articles, then they would burden his conscience with this single objection, that by doing this he deprives

his country of his wealth, which ought, however, to remain within it. . . . Likewise, if the conscientious doubt is raised about someone spending money for the most useful purposes, yet in doing so depriving the heirs of it, to [whose interests], seen from a legal standpoint, the person must be dedicated. And there are countless similar cases. (Spiritual Experiences 1240)

In both of these cases there is a legitimate issue that might be taken into consideration, but not as a matter of conscience that outweighs other factors.

And once such a scruple has been raised as a premise, supporting arguments to weigh down upon this false conscience are never lacking. And because they only take into consideration the factors that support their objections, they regard causes of the greatest usefulness, which ought to outweigh them, as nothing. (Ibid)

There are many matters of conscience like this that influence our lives today. A possible example is the principle of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI). The U.S. Chamber of Commerce asks companies to develop DEI statements:

A diversity and inclusion statement demonstrates a company's commitment to building an inclusive, varied workplace welcoming to people of all backgrounds. Much like a mission and values statement, the diversity and inclusion statement is, ideally, more than just a marketing exercise. It should guide your hiring, employee benefits, customer service and workplace culture. (U.S. Chamber of Commerce)

As with the examples from *Spiritual Experiences 1240* above, the point of this is very legitimate. Every company ought to have “*an inclusive varied workplace welcoming to people of all backgrounds.*” Set against a cultural background in which prejudice and exclusion are longstanding corrosive issues these are vital considerations. As principles that “*guide your hiring, employee benefits, customer service and workplace culture,*” however, these are not the only factors to take into account. They may conflict, for example, with the classical liberal values of merit, fairness and equality, or other laudable standards.

A true conscience needs to be based on truths from the Word, which are solid and unchanging, and which do not vary according to the whims of the popular imagination. A conscience based on the truths of the Word is based on the laws of love to the Lord and the neighbor, on the holiness of marriage, on honesty and a devotion to uses. Our strongly-held cultural feelings on issues affecting our lives always need to be examined in the light of these teachings – even when this places us in the minority and subjects us to possible

exclusion and marginalization.

Huck Finn's crisis of conscience over his friendship with Jim is sadly amusing when looked at from Mark Twain's vantage point of the 1880s. There are many similar cultural mores that have changed dramatically over time, from the acceptability of certain types of clothing and speech to expectations with respect to hospitality, working environments, food and hygiene. Our ideas and feelings will necessarily change with the times, but a true conscience will always be based on what is true and unchanging.

(JFS)

Announcements

BAPTISMS

Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord. (Psalm 127:3)

Brock, Ivan Nathaniel

At Rochester, Michigan,
December 26, 2022 (born August 2,
2022), son of Gaird and Mikalah
Klippenstein Brock, Rev. Alan M.
Cowley officiating.

Chatfield, Edward Townsend

At San Diego, California,
December 24, 2022, Rev. C. Mark
Perry officiating.

Cole, Reagan Allison

At Bowie, Maryland, December 27,
2022 (born September 22, 2022),
daughter of Austin Cole and Brenna
Sweeney, Rev. Michael E. Ferrell
officiating.

Croft-Greer, Gideon Flynn

At Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania,
January 22, 2023 (born February
1, 2022), son of Brian Greer and
Bernadette Croft-Greer, Rev. Scott I.
Frazier officiating.

Elder, Amy Beth

At Rochester, Michigan,
December 23, 2022, Rev. Alan M.
Cowley officiating.

Friday, Amy Lyn

At Kempton, Pennsylvania, January
15, 2023, Rev. Brett D. Buick
officiating.

Friday, Ella Rose

At Kempton, Pennsylvania,
January 15, 2023 (born August 13,
2013), daughter of Michael and
Amy Seidel Friday, Rev. Brett D.
Buick officiating.

Friday, Josephine Mae

At Kempton, Pennsylvania,
January 15, 2023 (born April 25,
2016), daughter of Michael and
Amy Seidel Friday, Rev. Brett D.
Buick officiating.

Friday, Michael Edward

At Kempton, Pennsylvania,
January 15, 2023, Rev. Brett D.
Buick officiating.

Friday, Wyatt William

At Kempton, Pennsylvania,
January 15, 2023 (born April 25,
2016), son of Michael and Amy
Seidel Friday, Rev. Brett D.
Buick officiating.

Gbah, Laure Marie

At Yakro, Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, December 11, 2022, Rev. Moise O. Bab officiating.

Henry, Justin Kouami Kan Saint

At Yakro, Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, December 11, 2022, Rev. Moise O. Bab officiating.

King, Logan Blair

At Kempton, Pennsylvania, December 30, 2022 (born August 18, 2022), son of Adam and Aven Schorran King, Rev. Lawson M. Smith officiating.

Kling, Bennett James

At Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, January 14, 2023 (born August 13, 2022), son of Joshua and Brenna Schadegg Kling, Rev. Thomas H. Rose officiating.

Kling, Emilia Grace

At Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, January 14, 2023 (born August 13, 2022), daughter of Joshua and Brenna Schadegg Kling, Rev. Thomas H. Rose officiating.

Kouakou, Marceline Ahou

At Yakro, Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, December 11, 2022, Rev. Moise O. Bab officiating.

Kouame, Daniel Tchaga

At Boumdiali, Côte d'Ivoire, January 29, 2023 (born January 9, 2023), son of Henry Joel Kouassi Kouame and Ruth Waraba Pan Kanate, Rev. Henry Joel Kouassi Kouamel officiating.

Koutou, Kariol Ledru Ahi

At Yakro, Yamoussoukro Côte d'Ivoire, December 11, 2022, Rev. Moise O. Bab officiating.

Ouattara, Ramatou Nargassoukou

At Yakro, Yamoussoukro Côte d'Ivoire, December 11, 2022, Rev. Moise O. Bab officiating.

Ouattara, Tionkoli

At Yakro, Yamoussoukro Côte d'Ivoire, December 11, 2022, Rev. Moise O. Bab officiating.

Ross, Edgar VI

At West Chester, Pennsylvania, December 9, 2022 (born February 21, 2022), son of Edgar V. and Josie Ross, Rev. Charles E. Blair officiating.

Scanlon, Jennifer

At Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, December 24, 2022, Rev. Charles E. Blair officiating.

Valenzujela, Bernadino Martinez

At Phoenix, Arizona, May 22, 2022, Rev. Jean A. Atta officiating.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BAPTISMS CONT.

Walbert, Alexander Peter

At Kempton, Pennsylvania,
January 28, 2023, Rev. Lawson M.
Smith officiating.

CONFIRMATIONS

How can a young (person) cleanse the way? By taking heed according to Your Word. With my whole heart I have sought You; O, let me not wander from Your commandments, (Psalm 119:9,10)

Coffelt, Karen Elaine

At Phoenix, Arizona, May 22, 2022,
Rev. Jean A. Atta officiating.

Genzlinger, Laban Gustav

At Kempton, Pennsylvania, January
1, 2023, Rev. Brett D. Buick
officiating.

BETROTHAL

*I will betroth you to Me forever; yes,
I will betroth you to Me in justice
and judgment, in loving kindness and
mercy; I will betroth you to Me in
faithfulness, and you shall know the
Lord. (Hosea 2:19,20)*

MARRIAGE

*Truly conjugal love is not possible
except between two; neither is it
possible between two except from the
Lord alone. Engraved on this love is
heaven with all its blessings.
(Conjugal Love 332)*

**Walbert-Smith, Alexander Peter
Walbert and Janina Smith**

At Kempton, Pennsylvania, January
28, 2023, Rev. Lawson M. Smith
officiating.

**Lee-Kim, Jong Ui Lee and
Eun-Kyoung Elaine Kim**

At Etobicoke, Ontario, Canada,
December 30, 2022, Rev. James P.
Cooper officiating.

IN MEMORIAM

In order that a person may live to eternity, it is necessary that what is mortal, or the material body, should be taken away from him by death. When this is done, that which is immortal is uncovered, and the person becomes a spirit, still in human form. (Divine Providence 324)

Andrews, James Stuart

December 29, 2022, of Corbett, Oregon. 77.

Hauptmann, Poliana Nobre

December 27, 2022, of Copenhagen, Denmark. 45.

Baltazar, Hocson Dizon

January 12, 2023, of San Jose, California. 85.

Lepofsky, Margaret Schiffer

November 10, 2022, of Toms River, New Jersey. 75.

Bostock, Jacqueline Mary

Synnestvedt – January 30, 2023, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania. 97.

Oliver, Thomas Albert

October 27, 2022, of Spring Valley, California. 79.

Boyce, Dean Rutherford

January 5, 2023, of Boynton Beach, Florida. 85.

Schnarr, Gary Robert

January 13, 2023, of Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania. 77.

Farrell, Cheryl Anne Packer

January 3, 2023, of North Wales, Pennsylvania. 76.

Waters, Gerald Gilbert

January 6, 2023, of Westville, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. 85.

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Thank you!

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