

New Church LIFE

A monthly magazine devoted to the teachings
revealed through Emanuel Swedenborg

In this issue:

The Lord God Jesus Christ Reigns
A New Church Day Sermon by Daniel Heinrichs

Celebrating the Three Festivals of the Church
Christmas - Easter - June Nineteenth

Gaining Spiritual Meaning from the Three-Fold Word
Conclusion of a Study by Grant Odhner

Church News

June 2007

New Church Life

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE TEACHINGS
REVEALED THROUGH EMANUEL SWEDENBORG

The Lord God Jesus Christ Reigns

A New Church Day Sermon*Daniel W. Heinrichs* 211

The Three Great Festivals of the Church

Christmas, Easter, and June Nineteenth*Erik Sandström, Sr.* 215

Responding to The Lord’s Word—Part Two (concluded)

Approaching written revelation to be led to the Lord*Grant .H. Odhner* 226

Editorial

A Celebration of Spiritual Freedom 239

Church News

The Ukraine and Georgia.....*Göran Appelgren* 242

A New Location for the Boston Society..... 243

NEW CHURCH LIFE (USPS 378-180)
PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY
THE GENERAL CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM
The Rev. Kurt Horigan Asplundh, Editor

PRINTED BY FENCOR GRAPHICS, INC. PHILA., PA 19111
SUBSCRIPTION: \$16.00 to any address. SINGLE COPY \$1.50

Postmaster: send address changes to: New Church Life, PO Box 711, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009
E-mail: datacenter@anc-gc.org

Periodicals postage paid at Bryn Athyn, PA 19009
and at additional mailing offices

Notes on This Issue

Having now entered his 99th year, and having served as an ordained priest of the New Church for 73 years, the Rev. Erik Sandström should know something about celebrating the festivals of the church. He relates Christmas, Easter, and June Nineteenth to each other as “promise, fulfillment, and explanation.” Understanding these three festivals lifts us into an inner vision of a rational faith and shows our Lord and God reaching out to save.

In this issue, the Rev. Grant Odhner completes his presentation on “Responding to the Lord’s Word.” He discusses the relation between the “doctrine of genuine truth” and “the knowledge of correspondences,” concluding that the Writings have a specific function in relation to the Old and New Testaments, to help us see the spiritual meaning of the Word reflected in them. Though different in form and presentation, the three revelations form a one.

News of the church includes encouraging new interest in the Writings in the Ukraine and the Caucasian country of Georgia (formerly part of the Soviet Union). In Massachusetts, the Boston Society is moving this month from the Sudbury Chapel (which seats 68) to a new place of worship in Concord (which seats 300).



The Rev. Daniel Heinrichs whose New Church day sermon begins on the next page is retired from the active ministry. He was inaugurated into the priesthood fifty years ago, in 1957, and has since served in South Africa, Ohio, Washington D.C., and Miami, Florida. The Boynton Beach society in Florida was established under his leadership as pastor. Mr. Heinrichs continues to live in Boynton Beach with his wife Miriam (Smith) and assists in Florida as needed.

THE LORD GOD JESUS CHRIST REIGNS

BY THE REV. DANIEL W. HEINRICHS

“The Lord God Jesus Christ reigns, Whose kingdom shall be for ages of ages” (True Christian Religion 791)

This is the message the twelve disciples proclaimed throughout the whole spiritual world on the nineteenth day of June in the year 1770. These words signaled the fulfillment of the prophecy given in the book of Revelation: “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever... ‘We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, the One Who is and Who was and Who is to come, because you have taken Your great power and reigned’” (Rev, 11:15, 17).

The words of our text; “The Lord God Jesus Christ reigns, Whose kingdom shall be for ages of ages,” are very familiar to New Church people. This message is repeated annually at our New Church day celebrations. It is on the basis of this proclamation that our Church—The New Church—is founded.

While these words are very familiar to us, how often have we reflected on their meaning and import? We tend to think of them solely in regard to their historic importance—as the proclamation that heralded the establishment of the New Church in the spiritual world. Important as that was, there is much more meaning contained in these few words. In this sermon we would invite your reflection on them so that we may more fully appreciate their meaning.

“The Lord God Jesus Christ reigns.” These words state explicitly Who He is that reigns—the Lord Jesus Christ—Who is the one only God. This truth is not new to us, but it was new to most of those to whom this proclamation was made. Most of those to whom this message was given were brought up to believe that God, the invisible Father, reigns, and that

redemption was effected through His Son, Jesus Christ. They did not know that the fullness of divinity was in the Lord Jesus Christ, that he was God on earth in Human form, and that it was He who reigns. It appears that they had forgotten His declaration after His resurrection: “All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth” (Matt, 28:18).

Not only was this truth new to those to whom it was preached at that time, but it is new in the world today outside of the New Church. To many in the Christian world, Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is the intercessor between God the Father and man but not the ruler and creator of the universe—not the one only God of heaven and earth.

In the world of Islam, Allah is God. Jesus Christ was one of his greatest prophets. In the pagan religions of the east, various deities are acknowledged. And then, in what remains of the communist world, there is a denial of the existence of God.

Out of the vast populations of this world, only a handful of people acknowledge the truth that it is the Lord God Jesus Christ Who created the universe and reigns over its inhabitants. The importance of this truth to mankind cannot be over-estimated, or over-emphasized. It is the fundamental truth of life—the fundamental reality.

Let us first consider the meaning of our text as it applies to the Lord Himself. Prior to His incarnation and glorification, the Lord did indeed reign. But His operations in regard to leading people to heaven were exercised through the mediation of the angels of the celestial heaven. When manifesting himself to people on earth, He would infill an angelic society with His presence and present Himself as the angel of Jehovah, as He did with Abraham and many of the prophets. The Writings call it a “borrowed” human.

But, in the process of time, as the human race removed itself further and further from the true order of life, this mode of leading mankind was no longer adequate. So the Lord bowed the

heavens and came down. By birth into the world He took on the ultimate plane of life through which He could immediately approach mankind, and He glorified his Human—made it Divine. He assumed the Divine Human. Therefore, after His resurrection He could declare: “All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth” (Matt. 28:18).

Although the Lord glorified His Human while on earth, the revelation of His Divine Human, or the revealing of His Divine humanity, had to await the time when people could receive that revelation with their understanding and could rationally understand that Jesus Christ, while on earth, was God Himself in Human form.

The Lord Himself spoke of this to His disciples, saying: “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of Truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth.... He will glorify Me, for He will take what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you” (John 16:12-15).

The fulfillment of this promise to the disciples took place when the revelation of his Divine Human was completed—when the Writings were completed. Then the Lord was present with mankind in all the power of His Word, presenting Himself, or revealing Himself, to every plane of the human mind and thought—from the lowest to the highest. He could now establish a kingdom that would endure for ages of ages. He therefore called together the twelve disciples who followed Him on earth and sent them throughout the whole spiritual world to proclaim this gospel.

Let us next consider the meaning of our text as it relates to the New Church. How do these words apply to us as members of the New Church? While it is true that the Lord reigns throughout his creation, it can nevertheless be said that He reigns only in those who willingly receive Him and co-operate with Him—who

freely respond to His Divine leading. If a person rejects the Lord in heart, then it is the hell of self-love that reigns supreme in that person's life.

If the Lord is to reign in the New Church which He has established, the men and women of that Church must freely turn to Him and receive Him in heart and life. What does it mean to receive the Lord in heart and life? Very simply, it means that the Divine truth of the Word must be transferred from the printed page to the minds and hearts of the men and women of the Church. It must be inscribed upon our minds.

The Lord's Divine Love and Wisdom are fully present in the Word. When we receive these in our understanding and love and practice them in our lives, then the Lord reigns in us and in his Church.

If, then, the words of our text are to be a reality in the New Church—if the Lord God Jesus Christ is to reign in the Church—it is incumbent upon us to go to his Word, regularly and faithfully, and receive it into ourselves, inscribe it on our hearts and minds, so that our loves, our thoughts, and our lives may be an expression of the Lord's love and wisdom.

The Holy Supper, which often is celebrated at the time of the nineteenth of June, is a sacrament which corresponds to the conjunction of the Lord with his Church. The bread of the Holy Supper is a symbol of, and corresponds to, the Lord's love. The wine is a symbol of, and corresponds to, His wisdom. When we willingly, with sincerity and humility, receive these elements, we are expressing our hope and firm intention that in us, individually, the Lord God Jesus Christ will reign, and that His kingdom shall endure for ages of ages. *Amen.*

Lessons: John 16:1-15; *True Christian Religion* 791

THE THREE GREAT FESTIVALS OF THE CHURCH

BY THE REV. ERIK SANDSTRÖM, SR.

In the New Church the great festivals of the year are CHRISTMAS—EASTER—JUNE NINETEENTH. I think they relate among themselves as promise—fulfillment—explanation. Each brings to remembrance some major event on this earth, and each is a move towards the establishment of a new and eternal kingdom of the Lord in both worlds. The opening of the Word is at the heart of all three. When the Christmas and Easter events happened, together they gave us the New Testament and the First Christian Church, and June Nineteenth gave us the Writings and the New Christian Church.

Easter fulfilled what Christmas promised. For unless the Babe of Bethlehem, growing to manhood, and after completing His three years of public mission on earth, had risen from the tomb in glory and had been seen in glory, then the wondrous birth and the miracles and preachings following could not have been remembered as ending in a victorious triumph. His life's work would have appeared to end in the crucifixion. So it was His resurrection that changed the history of man. He rose as the Immanuel, God-with-us, our God visible and near. These two festivals cannot be comprehended separately. Nor for that matter can the three! For the third festival, celebrating an event in the spiritual world, builds on what happened centuries earlier here on earth, and at the same time explains what then took place and what is now taking place. So there is also a trinal unit. And together the three festivals lift us into an inner vision of a rational faith. Together they show us our Lord and God reaching out to save.

With this in mind we will therefore review the first two festivals as a unit, so that afterwards we may see the third festival in the perspective of the first two. For June Nineteenth

has a mission of its own. It invites our understanding to enter into all things that have happened before, so that by understanding we may find the way to a truly human life, one that leads to the Lord's New Church and to His New Heavenly Kingdom. And it is fitting that we try to deepen our celebration of the third festival in this month of June.

CHRISTMAS (Promise)

In all the festivals we tend to be attracted chiefly to their dramatic aspects. For *Christmas*, these include the scene at the manger with the Babe, Mary and Joseph, the adoration of the shepherds, and (much) later, the arrival of the wise men led by the star, from Jerusalem, "till it came and stood where the young Child was" (Matt. 2:1,9). For *Easter*, they include the cross, Golgotha, the empty tomb, and the resurrection stories. And for *June Nineteenth*, we see the calling together of the twelve who had followed the Lord in the world, and their being sent forth on the following day to preach throughout the spiritual world the Gospel that the Lord God Jesus Christ reigns.

These knowledges, learned from childhood and remembered with deep affection, are good and holy memories. Nor could we learn and understand deeper things without them. We should, however, from year to year try to see more of the Lord's wisdom and providence in the things we celebrate; for the more we comprehend the inner causes that made all the above things happen, the more will we exult in the wonders of the festivals and their impact on the spiritual history of the Church.

As for the First Festival, we therefore ask, *Who was the Babe born in Bethlehem?*

In general we know that His soul was Divine and truly was His Father, and that His body was born of a virgin. But what of His *mind*? And we now learn of the Lord's *two heredities*. For brevity we quote the teachings with minimal comments of our own.

The Lord's Two Heredities

1. *From His Divine through heaven.* “Before the coming of the Lord into the world, there was influx of life with men and with spirits from Jehovah, or the Lord, *through the celestial kingdom*, that is, through the angels who were in that kingdom, and hence *they then had the sovereignty*. But when the Lord came into the world, and thereby made the Human in Himself Divine, *He put on just that which was with the angels of the celestial kingdom, thus He put on this sovereignty.*” (*Arcana Coelestia* 6371. Please note: Emphasis in this passage, as in all subsequent quotations, is added.)

The above teaching is given as the spiritual sense, or inner meaning, of Jacob's words as he blessed his twelve sons, here his son Judah. He said: “The scepter shall not depart from Judah...until Shiloh comes” (Gen.49:10). *Judah* is the celestial kingdom, and *Shiloh* the Lord.

But then the teaching goes on to draw the important distinction between the *Human Divine* and the *Divine Human*, and we read: “For previously the Divine transflux through that heaven had been the *Human Divine*; it was also the Divine Man which was presented to view when Jehovah so appeared. But this *Human Divine ceased when the Lord made the very Human in Himself Divine*” (ibid.). And for clarification of this last sentence we read two pages later that “the Lord made the Human in Himself Divine, in order that from the very *Divine Human* of the Lord the Divine truth might proceed, and thus might save man” (*Arcana Coelestia* 6373). Therefore, the “very Human” in Himself was the Lord's *Divine Human*. Finally, for a distinction and definition of the two important terms “Human Divine” and “Divine Human” we go back to *Arcana Coelestia* 2814e, where we read: “We may call the truth with the Lord which could be tempted, and which underwent temptations, *Truth Divine in the Lord's Human Divine*; but the Truth which could not be tempted, or

undergo any temptations because it was glorified, *the Divine Truth in the Lord's Divine Human*" (ibid.).

These statements concerning the Divine heredity through the celestial kingdom will also give us some insight into the related teaching, that "[the Lord] alone was born *a spiritual celestial man* ... [and this so] that He might make His Human Divine, according to order from the lowest degree to the highest, and might thus dispose into order all things in the heavens and in the hells" (*Arcana Coelestia* 4594:2).

Further, these same teachings will lead us to see some of the great secrets enfolded in the angel Gabriel's words of Annunciation: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the SON OF GOD" (Luke 1:35). Are we not here called to ponder the very essence of Christmas? Who was He, the Babe of Bethlehem?

But we must also know of the Lord's other heredity.

2. *From the Jewish race through the mother.* "One may be surprised that it is said there was hereditary evil from the mother with the Lord; but as it is here (Gen 13:7) so manifestly declared, and the internal sense is concerning the Lord, it cannot be doubted that it was so.... But there is a difference between hereditary evil which is derived from the father, and that which is derived from the mother. Hereditary evil from the father is more interior, and remains to eternity, for it can never be eradicated. *The Lord had no such evil, since He was born of Jehovah as His Father, and thus as to internals was Divine, or Jehovah.* But hereditary evil from the mother pertains to the external man: *This was with the Lord.* Thus the Lord was born as another man, *and had infirmities as another man....* The Lord, however, *had no actual evil, or evil that was His own,* as He Himself declares in John: '*Which of you convicts Me of sin?*' (John 8:46)" (*Arcana Coelestia* 1573).

EASTER (Fulfillment)

The three festivals, singly and jointly, like the Sabbath, are to be remembered. They are powerful in our spiritual life. And we needed first to see that Christmas tells us *Who He was who came, and What in the Lord rose to complete union with His infinite Divine, the Father*. And on both of these points the Writings give us detailed answers.

Now, as for Easter, our focus must be on *the Lord's Resurrection Body*. For unless we know that the Lord in rising rejected all things whatever that he had from the mother, we will retain a confused concept of the Lord's Divine Human. We will think that perhaps the Lord added something finite to His Divine. For we read that the Lord "rose again with the whole body, differently from any man" (*Divine Love and Wisdom* 221:2).

Yet the idea that there is something finite, thus limited, in the Lord our God is unthinkable. Indeed, the very teaching just quoted is preceded by clarifying words that show how that teaching is to be understood. We read: "The Lord came into the world, and took upon Him a Human, that He might put Himself in power to subjugate the hells and to reduce all things to order both in the heavens and on the earth. This [Divine] Human He superinduced over His former Human [Divine]...*both His Humans being however Divine, and therefore infinitely transcending the finite humans of angels and men. And because He fully glorified the natural Human even to its ultimates, therefore He rose again with the whole body, therein differing from any man*" (*Divine Love and Wisdom* 221:2). Thus He rose in a Body that was Divine and infinitely transcended the finite humans of angels and men.

The fundamental teaching, not to be overlooked in contemplating the Lord's Resurrection Body, we find in the explanation of Abraham's calling his son's name Isaac at his circumcision

(Gen. 21:3-4). Three arcana are here drawn forth, one of them (referring to "born unto Abraham") being as follows: "The Lord's Divine Human *was not only conceived, but also born, of Jehovah*, and hence the Lord as to His Divine Human is called *the Son of God and the Only-begotten*" (*Arcana Coelestia* 2628). Thus the body in which the Lord appeared to His followers after His resurrection was not born of Mary but of His own Divine. The son of Mary died on the cross; the Son of God rose from the tomb.

This whole secret can also be seen contained in the Lord's words from the cross when He transferred His son-relationship from Himself to His disciple John. "When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother: 'Woman, behold your son!' Then He said to the disciple, 'Behold your mother!'" (John 19:25-27).

Moreover, with regard to the body the Lord had from the mother before His death and resurrection, we read that "the Lord, in the sepulcher, and thus by death, rejected all the human from the mother and *dissipated it...* and so He assumed the Human from the Father. Thus the Lord, *thoroughly and clearly glorified, rose with the Human*" (*Athanasian Creed* 162; see also a similar teaching in *Arcana Coelestia* 6873).

We therefore see within the beloved Gospel stories that the Lord throughout His life in the world struggled with a two-fold heredity, that He fought against the one and glorified the other. He was in continuous temptation battles. We say, He fought against the maternal heredity, but this really means He fought against all the hells, because through this heredity these had an entry into Him before He was glorified, and through it they fiercely attacked Him. We see, also, that His Human, in which He rose into union with His infinite Divine, was totally a Divine Human, without a shadow of the maternal human, and was our God visible—truly God-with-us. The Word in the letter also

confirms this. For the Lord Himself never called Mary His “mother,” though others so referred to her (see *Lord* 35:5 et al.). And since His glorification was successive (*Canons. Redemption* vii:6), the Lord addressed Mary as “woman” even early in His ministry: “Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come” (*John* 2:3,4; *True Christian Religion* 102; *Lord* 35:4). No, in His resurrection, in His glorified Human, there was not one iota from the mother. And now we turn to June Nineteenth, similarly looking for the essential wonder within the events that we best remember. The Writings will equally lead us here.

JUNE NINETEENTH (Explanation)

June Nineteenth, or New Church Day, is of course unique to the New Church. The rest of the world does not yet know about it. To us, however, it is of equal standing with the other two, but is at the same time the culmination of these. Christmas and Easter both come into their full right because of the Writings, thus because of what we celebrate in June. Now we can see the interior meaning of the Gospel as well as those basic stories themselves. We see all of our three glorious festivals as three Sabbath Days. Remember them, to keep them holy!

And so we now ask: What is the essence of this our third festival? We know that it was on the nineteenth day of June in the year 1770 that the Lord called together His twelve disciples, and that on the following day He sent them out into all quarters of the spiritual world to preach a new triumphant gospel. But why just then? It was because it was then that *The True Christian Religion* was completed!

Let us here recall the familiar charter of this New Church festival: “*After this work was finished*, the Lord called together His twelve disciples who followed Him in the world; and the next day He sent them forth into the whole spiritual world to

preach the Gospel that *the Lord God Jesus Christ reigns, whose kingdom shall be for ever and ever*, according to the prediction of Daniel (vii:13,14), and in the Revelation (xi:15); and also that *They are blessed who come to the marriage supper of the Lamb* (Rev. xix:9). This took place on the nineteenth day of June, in the year 1770. This is meant by these words of the Lord, ‘He shall send His angels...and they shall gather together His elect ... from one end of the heavens to the other’ (Matt 24:31)” (*True Christian Religion* 791).

Here, we note first that this statement, in the original Latin, is set aside on a page of its own and is given a heading of its own: **MEMORANDUM**. “Memorandum” means *worthy of being remembered, or memorable*.

Second, we note that this event in the spiritual world, a world that knows no time, stands alone in the body of the Writings in being given a specific date on earth. The completion of the *True Christian Religion*, thus *the completion of the published works*, did of course take place here on earth, and this on the nineteenth day of June, 1770. But the resulting dramatic event just described was neither seen nor known by the people on earth who lived at that time. It is as though a date is given so that we might have a day for celebration.

But what is the connection between a book being completed and the announcement of the good news that the Lord God Jesus Christ reigns? The connection is that He could not reign before this completion, thus not before the whole series of the books that constituted His new Advent had been brought into a summary in “The Universal Theology of the New Church” (the sub-title of *True Christian Religion*). The Lord, even more than any good earthly king, rules only by means of law. But the Word had been perverted in the Church: “They had made the commandment of God of no effect by their tradition” (Matt.15:6). The Lord had no law by which to govern. So the

Church made Him but a “nobleman,” and rejected Him. He was for many centuries in “a far country to receive for Himself a kingdom and to return” (Luke 19:12). But now the time had come for His return. The law had been restored; *The True Christian Religion* had been written. His new reign could be proclaimed. This is what happened on June Nineteenth and the day after, and this is what gives the New Church a crowning festival to celebrate.

We say that giving an earthly date to a spiritual event is unique. Two other events, however, come close, and we can find their general timing, yet neither is given a specific date. The first was the Last Judgment. We learn that this great revolution swept through the world of spirits in the year 1757. It happened a few months after the completion of the *Arcana Coelestia* in 1756. The second was when “the angelic heaven from the east to the west, and from the south to the north, appeared of a deep scarlet color with the most beautiful flowers.” (*Ecclesiastical History* 7) Swedenborg was a witness to this in the company of “the kings of Denmark and others” (ibid.). And what was the occasion? The publication of *A Brief Exposition of the Doctrine of the New Church*.

A word must be said of this power-packed, strongly worded little work. It preceded *The True Christian Religion* by about two years, and it may be regarded as a forerunner and herald of that major work. Is it a second John the Baptist? The major work itself can be seen as the crowning work in a series of books that shine with Divine light. The Lord comes in all of them. Nevertheless, through *A Brief Exposition* He calls special attention to the crowning work, and makes us aware that this was the book that proclaimed the reign of the conquering, returning King.

Further, we must note that the little posthumous work, *Ecclesiastical History*, first says that “the books are to be

enumerated which were written, from the beginning to the present day, by the Lord through me,” and then adds: “In the spiritual world there was inscribed on all these books, ‘*The Lord's Advent*’” (*Ecclesiastical History*. 3 & 8). We also quote: “The same I also wrote by command on two copies in Holland” (*ibid.*). And we can add: One of these copies has been found! It is preserved in London, England, in the Library of the British Museum, and is there available for inspection (though not for handling). On the inside of the first cover we find in Swedenborg’s handwriting these words: “*Hic Liber est Adventus Domini, Scriptum ex Mandato*” (“This Book is the Advent of the Lord, Inscribed by Command”). (See an editorial postscript at the end of the little work.)

And now we observe at least two things that the above three events have in common. (1) They all happened in the spiritual world. (2) They are all based on a momentous event in this world, namely, the publication of one or other works of the Writings. The Last Judgment, beginning in 1757, was set in motion by the eight-volume Latin *Arcana Coelestia* finished in 1756; the brilliant display of colors and flowers on the heavenly sky was lit up by publication of the *Brief Exposition*; and finally, the sending forth of the twelve disciples with the everlasting Gospel that **the Lord God Jesus Christ reigns** followed completion of that Magnum Opus, *The True Christian Religion*. I think it is allowable to think of the *Arcana* as the Alpha in the successive production of those Writings, and of *The True Christian Religion* as the Omega. This, however, is not to belittle in the least those works which were written by the same “Servant of the Lord Jesus Christ” and posthumously published by others, but likewise Divinely commissioned. I think of these as “the cup running over.”

All these Writings give cause for humble thanksgiving and joyous celebration. The world, unknowingly, is waiting for

them, for on them and on influx from the New Heaven depend the resurrection of the remnant from previous churches and, at the same time, salvation from ignorance, false concepts, and evil destructive ways of living. As we read: "It is clear that unless the Lord [in His First Advent] had come into the world no one could have been saved. It is similar today; and therefore *unless the Lord comes again into the world in the Divine Truth, which is the Word, no one can be saved*" (*True Christian Religion* 3; see also 182 & *Apocalypse Revealed* 9).

One day, we may think, June Nineteenth will be a holiday all over the world. For the New Church *will* be known—perhaps hastened by electronic means now available everywhere, and will be accepted by many. We have the Lord's own assurance in the *Apocalypse Revealed*. It reads: "*It is certain that a new church, which is the New Jerusalem, will exist, because it is foretold in the Apocalypse (chap. xxi, xxii); and it is also certain that the falsities of the former church are first to be removed, because they are treated of in the Apocalypse as far as chapter XX*" (*Apocalypse Revealed* 547:e).

Yes, the Nobleman will return victorious to claim His kingdom. And He will reign for ever and ever, "according to the prediction of Daniel...and in the Revelation."

**SKETCH OF AN ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY
OF THE NEW CHURCH**

1. A new Ecclesiastical History must be written, because now is the Lord's Advent predicted in Matthew xxiv.
3. The books are to be enumerated which were written, from the beginning to the present day, by the Lord through me.
8. In the spiritual world there was inscribed on all these books: "The Lord's Advent." The same I also wrote by command on two copies in Holland.

Postumous Theological Works, Volume I

RESPONDING TO THE LORD'S WORD
Approaching written revelation to be led to the Lord

BY THE REV. GRANT H. ODHNER

Part Two (Concluded)

How We are to Gain Spiritual Meaning From the Three-Fold
Word

In the previous article we mentioned the following principles for approaching written revelation to gain its genuine meaning, its spirit, which is the Lord's spirit:

- The first thing is to approach *the Lord* there
- Approach *with holy regard*
- Approach *affirmatively*
- Approach *from the Lord* and not from self
- Be in the effort to *love truths and practice them*
- Be in the effort to *shun evils as sins against the Lord*
- Approach the Lord and find enlightenment and doctrine *in the Word's literal meaning*

The next principle is:

We must *acquire a doctrine of genuine truth to serve as a lamp for viewing the rest of the Word*

The Writings are firm that the Word cannot be understood apart from doctrine that serves as a guiding light. Individual statements can be taken out of context and used to prove any number of heresies. But those who approach the Lord and have light from Him because they love truths and apply them to life, can go to the Word and see the ideas that can guide their thinking. These ideas are represented clearly in some passages. The genuine truth shines out plainly there, without obscuring appearances, like the bare face and hands of an otherwise-clothed person.

When these naked truths are gathered together, they form a unified picture that is genuinely true, because it reflects the understanding of the Word that the angels have.¹ It is in harmony with the internal sense.

This relationship between “genuine” truth/doctrine in the Word’s literal sense and the internal sense is described variously:

- Genuine doctrine is “what the internal sense teaches; thus it *is* the internal sense itself” (*Arcana Coelestia* 10400:3-40.) [Note: My emphasis in this and following passages is indicated by italics.]
- “The truth of the internal sense...*is the same as* the genuine truth of the doctrine of faith of the church” (*Arcana Coelestia* 9034:2).
- The doctrine of genuine truth is “*in accord with*” the spiritual sense (*Sacred Scripture* 25; *de Verbo* 7:7-8).
- Genuine truths are “*of* the internal sense in the literal sense” (*Arcana Coelestia* 3440).
- Genuine truths are “*similar to* the internal sense” (*Arcana Coelestia* 2225).
- “[N]aked, *as they are* in the spiritual sense” (*Apocalypse Explained* 778:6).

This teaching about genuine truth’s being from the meaning of the letter of the Word (which at face value clearly refers to the Old and New Testaments) raises the issue of what role the Writings play. We have been told that the Writings reveal genuine truth and with it the internal sense.² We can understand this to mean that the Writings simply *uncover and point to* the genuine truth in the Old and New Testaments. They certainly do this. But in articulating that genuine truth in written form, and

¹ “Genuine” is very often used to describe truths in heaven – *Apocalypse Explained* 1088.4, 778.4, 819.2-3, 950.1-2 – or truths in heavenly light – *de Verbo* 7.7-8; *Apocalypse Explained* 527, 654.16, 695.20, 846.2, etc.

² *Sacred Scripture* 25; *de Verbo* 7.8; *Apocalypse Revealed* 1; *Apocalypse Explained* 641.3,

clearly claiming to be the Lord's works, the Writings necessarily become a *source* of genuine truth and thus of doctrine. This has been virtually universally recognized in the General Church in the past.

I would go further and say that in articulating genuine truth in a whole new form (in natural rational language) and in doing this in a multitude of new contexts, and by doing so in relation to many ideas that are utterly foreign to anything revealed in the former revelations, the Lord has created a new Word! This Word, that reveals "still more interior truths," is "to serve as the doctrine of life and faith for the New Church" (*Apocalypse Explained* 670:4). He has not done this to replace the former revelations, but to fulfill them, and at the same time to give guidance to a whole new era in the church on earth.

But to return again to our principles about acquiring doctrine from the Word's letter. What is the nature of this genuine truth that we can find in the Word's letter? It is noteworthy that the Writings describe it in very basic terms. Some passages:

The doctrine of genuine truth can also be drawn in full from the sense of the letter of the Word, because in this sense the Word is like a man clothed whose face and hands are bare. *All things that concern a person's life, and consequently his salvation, are bare; but the rest are clothed. (Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture 55)*

Many things are intermingled [in the letter of the Word] from which doctrine can be gathered and formed, especially the *doctrine of life, which is the doctrine of charity and of faith from it. (Apocalypse Explained 356:1)*

The [Word's] literal meaning clearly presents...everything that teaches the way to salvation, thus *everything that teaches how one is to live and believe. (de Verbo 5:4)*

At this point (Gen 18:17) the sense of the letter is similar to the internal sense, as is the case in various other places, especially where the *essentials of faith* are dealt with. Because these are *vital for salvation* they are spoken of in the letter as [plainly as] in the internal sense, as in the following in Moses: “Jehovah our God is one Jehovah; and you shall love Jehovah your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength....” (*Arcana Coelestia* 2225)

The things which are contained in the internal sense of the Word are no other than those which the genuine doctrine of the church teaches. The genuine doctrine of the church teaches *the Lord, faith in Him, love to Him, and love of the good which is from Him*. This love is *charity toward the neighbor*. Those who live this life are enlightened by the Lord, and see the holy things of the Word; as by no means do others. (*Arcana Coelestia* 9086e)

These face-and-hands truths are not arcane or complicated! If they were, they could not serve their function, which is to guide and regulate our thinking, to give us a set of principles according to which “all other things can be explained” (*Apocalypse Explained* 816:2). I believe this teaching is an injunction to look for the “big ideas” that govern smaller ones. *Arcana Coelestia* 2225 (just above) uses the phrase “essentials of faith,” and cites the two great commandments.³

The Writings give a cluster of meanings to the word “prince” in the Old and New Testament. These meanings suggest the basic nature of genuine truths and their guiding function.

Here (Ezek. 46:13)...by the “prince” [is signified] those who are in *genuine truths* and thence in good. (*Arcana Coelestia* 7839)

³The leading ideas for interpreting the Word especially relate to the two “great commandments”: *Arcana Coelestia* 3440, 4966, 7233.3, 9086e; cf. *Apocalypse Revealed*

Things *primary for interpretation* (signified by “prince of the guards”) are those which primarily conduce to the interpretation of the Word, and thus to the understanding of the doctrinal things of love to God and charity toward the neighbor, which are from the Word. (*Arcana Coelestia* 4966)

Of the house of the prince of the guards. That this signifies by those things which are primary for interpretation... namely those which are of the Word as to the internal sense. (*Arcana Coelestia* 5084)

Faith is given by means of truth, and indeed by means of *primary truths*. For enlightenment is effected by virtue of these, so that the truths flowing from them, which are called “secondary,” may be clearly perceived. (*Arcana Coelestia* 8585)

(See also: *Apocalypse Explained* 279:9; *Arcana Coelestia* 3424:3, 6766)

These “primary truths” serve as “generals” in the light of which “particulars” become clear.

What is *primary* is also *general* because it rules in the rest; for particulars bear relation to primaries as [they do] to generals, in order that they may make a one and that no contradiction should appear. (*Arcana Coelestia* 5082)⁴

Those who are in good not yet formed by means of truths... are first formed by the Lord by means of *primary truths*, that is, by means of *general truths*, in which and from which are the rest. Primary truths are: that there is one God; that the Lord was born a man that He might save the human race;

⁴ cf. *Arcana Coelestia* 8314; *Apocalypse Explained* 279.6

that there is a heaven and that there is a hell; that those come into heaven who have lived well and those into hell who have lived ill; also that love to God and love toward the neighbor are the commandments on which the rest hang; and that this love is impossible except through faith. These and the like are primary truths, and these are first insinuated by the Lord in the good with the person who is being regenerated. When these truths have been insinuated, and have become truths of good, then the rest are insinuated. And *in these general or primary truths, and under them, they are set in order* according to the heavenly form, and thus by degrees cause the life of heaven to be in that person, and cause him to be as it were a heaven in a small image. That is, they cause all things which are of his understanding and of his will to be in consociation with the goods and truths of the angels, thus to be with the angels. (*Arcana Coelestia* 8773)

We gain from the Word ideas that are united into a doctrine that is genuinely true and has the power to guide our thinking by studying the Word and seeing ideas in relation to each other. This is referred to in a number of places in the Writings as “gathering/collecting” (*colligo*⁵) and “collating” (*collatis*⁶).

Many things are intermingled [in the letter of the Word] from which doctrine can be *gathered (colligi)* and formed, especially the doctrine of life.... (*Apocalypse Explained* 356:1)

The internal sense is not only that sense which lies concealed in the external sense...but is also that which results from *a number of passages of the sense of the letter rightly collated*

⁵ (Chad) *colligo* - To fasten, tie: ...To bring together, collect, gather....

⁶ *collatus* - past participle of *con-ferre* = bring together

(*collatis*), and which is discerned by those who are enlightened by the Lord in respect to their intellectual.

(*Arcana Coelestia* 7233:3)

(See also *Arcana Coelestia* 10028.2 on this point.)

In saying that we must acquire a doctrine of genuine truth from the Word's letter, I believe, again, that the Writings are teaching us about how we must approach, not just the Old and New Testaments, but the Writings themselves. There is a broader application here that must be heeded for the health of the church. With the Writings, too, we must be guided by the essentials of faith, the ideas vital for salvation, the truths "primary for interpretation," the generals in the light of which we rightly see particulars. We must be careful to work from actual passages in that written revelation, yet we must also collect and compare passages and reflect on them in relation to each other.

It is true that the big ideas taught in the Writings are quite clear. They are not for the most part veiled in gross natural or sensory appearances. Yet I'm often struck at seeing students (and even colleagues) taking appearances for realities—e.g. placing truth before good, failing to see how one truth clearly stated qualifies another. It is rare that an important idea is not acknowledged *intellectually*: it is rather a question of being guided by the Lord's love to place the most important ideas in a governing position over the rest. I am not setting myself up here as one who is wise! I am often ashamed to find that for all the truth I know, I did not have the insight from love to see and articulate what another did. This is what I am referring to. The genuine truth in the letter is naked and plain to see, as *Sacred Scripture* 55 tells us; yet the very next point made is that none see it but those who are enlightened (*Sacred Scripture* 57). I think "see it" here means giving it priority in our thinking. We must heed this with the Writings.

Many other teachings in the Writings are not so essential, so

“vital to salvation.” There are many apparent contradictions. Fortunately every affirmative seeker can readily understand the clear truths articulated in the Writings. However, I have come to appreciate that it truly takes a person with a lot of knowledge and expertise to set particular ideas in a larger framework, and alongside each other, to reconcile diverse and seemingly contrary statements. There are appearances in the Writings. No matter how clear the new revelation is, the Lord can speak only by means of the ideas that appear to finite natural minds—Ezekiel’s, Matthew’s, Swedenborg’s, ours. This is another reason to acknowledge the principle that one must collect ideas and form doctrine from them.

We must *acquire a knowledge of correspondences* and use it to elucidate the Word’s letter

The Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture gives the knowledge of correspondences a distinctly secondary role in gaining the Word’s spiritual meaning. This is curious, since the Writings sometimes indicate that knowing correspondences is necessary for seeing the spiritual sense, with no mention of the primary role that genuine truth must play.⁷ Sometimes a closer look will show that such passages do in fact indicate that some other doctrinal knowledge is necessary as well as that of correspondence of the symbols.⁸ However the impression given by the expositions in *Arcana Coelestia*, *Apocalypse Explained*, and *Apocalypse Revealed*, is that the spiritual sense is given by unfolding the meaning of words by a knowledge of correspondences, and that this is the main key. A careful look, however, confirms the priority given to the doctrine of genuine truth as taught in *The Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture*. At the outset of

⁷ E.g. *Arcana Coelestia* 4280.3, 9393.2, 10240.2; *Heaven and Hell* 114; *Apocalypse Explained* 375.5, 619.18; *de Verbo* 7; *Divine Wisdom* 2; *Sacred Scripture* 9-10; *True Christian Religion* 207; cp. *Married Love* 532.

⁸ cf. *Arcana Coelestia* 2333.2, 6361, 9632

the *Arcana* we read:

That [the first chapters of Genesis contain a spiritual sense] no one can possibly know except from the Lord. It may therefore be stated in advance that of the Lord's Divine mercy it has been granted me now for some years to be constantly and uninterruptedly in company with spirits and angels, hearing them speak and in turn speaking with them. In this way it has been given me to hear and see wonderful things in the other life which have never before come to the knowledge of any man, nor into his idea. I have been instructed in regard to the different kinds of spirits; the state of souls after death; hell, or the lamentable state of the unfaithful; heaven, or the blessed state of the faithful; and *especially in regard to the doctrine of faith which is acknowledged in the universal heaven*; on which subjects, of the Lord's Divine mercy, more will be said in the following pages. (*Arcana Coelestia* 5)

It is really the doctrine of heaven—which consists of genuine truths—that opens the internal sense which, in turn, “unfolds the correspondences” (*Arcana Coelestia* 10057:1-2). As we have seen, this doctrine provides the guiding generals/essentials.⁹

A knowledge of correspondences, on the other hand, provides a key to entering into “particulars” of the spiritual meaning. This is suggested in the following passage:

One who is unacquainted with the internal sense cannot but

⁹ I would note that it has always been thus. The Most Ancient and Ancient Churches entered into the spiritual meaning of their revelations only through being introduced to genuine truths, to serve as the guide to their perception of particular truths that they got from corresponding symbols. The people of the Most Ancient Church had to be introduced by angels (*Arcana Coelestia* 597.2) and presumably by their parents (*Apocalypse Explained* 799; *Divine Providence* 215:2; *Married Love* 205) to “a general knowledge of what was good and true” to serve as “general leading principles”; these were then confirmed by innumerable particulars by perception (*Arcana Coelestia* 597.2; cf. 895). The Ancient Church got its general doctrine from the Most Ancient Church (*Arcana Coelestia* 1241).

think that these words (Matt. 25:31-46) were spoken by the Lord of some last day, when all in the whole world will be gathered before Him, and will then be judged; and also that the procedure of the Judgment will be just as is described in the letter, namely, that He will set those who are to be judged on the right hand and on the left, and will speak to them as in the parable. But one who is acquainted with the internal sense, and who *has learned from other passages in the Word* that the Lord judges no one to eternal fire, but that everyone judges himself, that is, casts himself into it; and who has also learned that the Last Judgment of everyone is when he dies, *may know in some measure what these words involve in general*. And one who from the internal sense and *from correspondence* knows the interior meaning of the words, *may know what they mean in specific*, namely, that in the other life everyone receives a reward in accordance with his life in the world. (*Arcana Coelestia* 4663)¹⁰

The general knowledge about judgment gathered from “other passages” sounds like the doctrine of genuine truth. The knowledge of correspondence leads to a more specific consideration of a number of elements of that general meaning. It draws on specific genuine truths and brings them together in a particular context (e.g. to some issue regarding regeneration, or the life of charity, or the Lord’s glorification, etc.). The effect of this is to bring doctrines into a particular focus. This is where the power of seeing the spiritual meaning at work within the ultimate appearances becomes greatest.

It is amazing what happens when we go to a story in the Old or New Testament. The various details there suggest to us some area of our religious life or of doctrine. As we reflect on this, various basic doctrines, vital to life and salvation, come to mind. These provide a framework that is genuinely true. Then, by

¹⁰ cp. *Arcana Coelestia* 2135b.3-5

looking at the images and symbols of the story from a knowledge of correspondences, we are led to consider a whole order and progression of ideas that is unique. We do not find new truth per se. But we find truth that is newly felt, newly seen, newly edifying to us in our present state. This “lights up” the core doctrinal ideas that we know and love! And it “corroborates” them, confirms and strengthens them.

A knowledge of correspondences is not to be our guide

We read:

It might be believed that the doctrine of genuine truth could be procured by means of the spiritual sense of the Word which is furnished through a knowledge of correspondences. But *doctrine is not procured by means of that [knowledge], but is only lighted up and corroborated*. For as said before (n. 26), no one comes into the spiritual sense of the Word by means of correspondences unless he is first in genuine truths from doctrine. If a man is not first in genuine truths he may falsify the Word by means of some correspondences with which he is acquainted, by connecting them together and interpreting them so as to confirm that which cleaves to his mind from some principle previously received. Moreover the spiritual sense of the Word is not given anyone except by the Lord alone, and it is guarded by Him as heaven is guarded, for heaven is in it. It is better therefore for man to study the Word in the sense of the letter; from this alone is doctrine furnished. (*Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture* 56)¹¹

These last two principles that should guide our approach to written revelation are certainly said of the Old and New Testaments, and are most germane to them. However, I think

¹¹ cf. *True Christian Religion* 230; *de Verbo* 21.

they apply to the Writings as well, but are not called for to any great extent.

The Writings were given to function as a rational revelation in relation to the more sensual and natural revelations of the Old and New Testaments. They are written largely in rational appearances, in abstract language more remote from the fixity of time and space. It seems clear that the Writings want us to go to the Old and New Testaments, where the natural letter provides a nearly continuous plane of imagery in which higher ideas can be seen in series, and enjoyed in greater fullness, holiness, and power.

On the other hand, I do think it is important to be mindful that there are many natural illustrations, examples, applications, in the Writings that are clothing for a revelation that is *universal* and in itself *spiritual*. The concept of correspondence should still guide our thinking, enabling us to focus on the genuine truths. In any case, just as with the Old and New Testaments, any application of correspondences to the Writings would yield no new truth; it would only light up and corroborate genuine truth.

In summary

The Lord's deepest wish is to establish a relationship of mutual love (conjunction) between Himself and us. He creates us to begin life in the natural world so that we can be free to come to an acknowledgement of Him, and respond with love in return. But this cannot take place unless He reveals Himself to us in our natural state. The threefold Word has been given for this purpose. The Old Testament provides an initial basis of response through its sensory pictures and stories. The New Testament reveals the Lord in a historical setting, pointing to universal truths but still speaking in parable. The Writings complete this natural Word by revealing the consistency and interior wisdom of the Lord's loving purpose.

The Writings are indeed part of the Word. They are the Lord's books, written revelation accommodated by Him to the natural mind. Their greatest use is one with that of the Word throughout the spiritual and natural worlds: to join us with the Lord. In a broad sense they form part of the foundation for the Word in heaven. The Writings were given as the third and final revelation to the natural mind, and they have initiated a new era in the church, serving as the "doctrine of life and faith" of that New Church. The Writings have a specific function in relation to the Old and New Testaments, to help us see the spiritual meaning of the Word reflected in those previous testaments in its fullness, holiness, and power. The Writings continually point to the Old and New Testaments as the starting and ending point of our conjunction with the Lord. Together the three revelations form a one.



ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE BISHOP NEW CHURCH LIFE EDITOR

The Rev. Kurt Horigan Asplundh has served as editor of *New Church Life* for the past two years and will be retiring from this use this summer. During Mr. Asplundh's editorship, in addition to the print edition, *New Church Life* has been introduced on the New Church website where current and recent issues can be viewed online at www.newchurchlife.org. I wish to thank Mr. Asplundh for serving this use.

I am pleased to announce that the Rev. Dr. Erik E. Sandström has accepted appointment as editor to replace Mr. Asplundh. The transition will take place July 1st, this year.

Thomas L. Kline
Bishop

Editorial

A CELEBRATION OF SPIRITUAL FREEDOM

This year marks the 250th anniversary of the Last Judgment of 1757. What did this great judgment accomplish? As history shows, the world continues much as it has before.

The great change is an internal one. The Last Judgment has released people's thought from the grip of false doctrine. It has brought about a new state of spiritual freedom.

This is far-reaching!

Spiritual freedom involves being free from false ideas, seductive theories, and perverted thinking. It involves the ability to identify evil affections, destructive loves, and selfish motives. To discern and identify these allows us the freedom to decide whether or not we will be swept up by them and carried away to certain unhappiness and slavery.

In the world today, there is little recognition of the importance of spiritual truth. Few realize that wisdom in life is from a spiritual origin, not a natural one. Few realize how vulnerable to worldly opinions and emotional impulses rational thought can be. Reflect on the current issues and controversies about civil, moral, and natural matters that fill the pages of our papers and find a ready audience in front of our TV screens. What kind of reasoning do we find? Are justice and morality prevalent? And what ideas do we use to guide our own lives? Where do we turn to find direction and to make right decisions that affect our marriages, our jobs, our children?

Someone once said that the Writings of the church do not teach us about education. We may smile at that. Do they speak of any of our natural concerns? Do they tell us how to conduct a business? Do they provide legal guidance? Do they instruct us about mental depression? Yes, the Writings speak to all of these areas of life—though not directly. What they provide is a

spiritual perspective on every aspect of natural life. With this perspective, the New Church person is able to reflect on natural life with rational wisdom to identify what is false and worthless and to see what is good and useful. Without such a perspective, a person is awash in a sea of natural emotion and opinion, adrift from the basic principles that grant true freedom.

We live so much of our life indiscriminately, without reflection or rational thought. Or else, we respond to it with customary reactions based on previous training or prejudice. In either case, we are not free. We are either spontaneously moved by a natural affection of questionable origin or bound by a rigid traditional response. We have not made a choice, much less a truly rational choice. What could be more important to our life in this world than being able to think freely from the knowledge of spiritual principles of faith? These are not simply theological abstractions. They are the insights that give us true rationality and true freedom.

The New Church has been established by the Lord that we might be free! What greater use could we perform in the world and for ourselves than to guard and use our opportunities for spiritual freedom? This is a clear and urgent need. It can be fulfilled only by the wisdom that the Lord has given for the New Church at His second coming.

WWW.NEWCHURCHVINEYARD.ORG

An on-line family magazine from the G.C. Office of Education
featuring materials for all ages focused on a new theme every month



Signs in Heaven in June 2007
The Lord Our God in July 2007

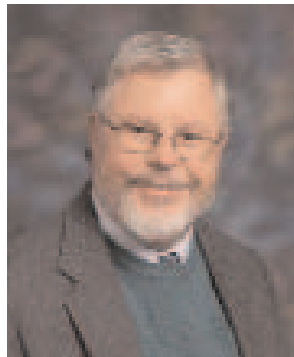
**NEW DEAN OF THE THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL
THE REV. DR. ANDREW DIBB**

I am pleased to announce that the Rev. Dr. Andrew M.T. Dibb has been appointed Dean of the Theological School, effective July 1. He will succeed the Rev. Eric Carswell, who becomes President of the Academy on that date.

Dr. Dibb was born in South Africa. He is married to Cara Glenn Dibb and they have three children. He graduated from Bryn Athyn College, majoring in Religion, and was ordained in 1984 after graduating from the Theological School. He also earned Bachelor and Master's degrees—with distinction—plus a Doctorate, all in Church History, from the University of South Africa.

He has served in Caryndale, Canada and in Buccleuch, South Africa, where he was Dean of the South African Theological School. He has been an assistant professor in the Academy Theological School since 2002.

Rt. Rev. Thomas L. Kline
Chancellor of the Academy



The Rev. Dr. Andrew M.T. Dibb

Church News

VISIT TO THE UKRAINE AND GEORGIA

Dear friends,

I am just back from a week's trip to the Ukraine and Georgia. This time the meeting in the Ukraine was held in Yalta and not in Dnepropetrovsk which is where the Swedenborg center is located. Twenty-four people attended from different parts of the Ukraine. There would have been more, but some eight people had to cancel at the last moment, and another ten or so had wanted to come but could not. In addition, the Rev. David Lindrooth, Director of General Church Outreach, was there for the first time with me and my wife Josephine, she also for the first time. We met for two days, Saturday and Sunday. David's presence at the meetings was very valuable.

It is hard to convey in a few words the spirit of the meeting, but it was simply amazing. I'll just mention one bit of it. After the worship service on Sunday, we had a Bible study on the Easter story. Very soon the discussion was all about the Lord's resurrection body. Twenty-four people were intensely involved in trying to understand one of the most arcane subjects of our Doctrines. This having been said, it should be noted that this is a group where application to life is at the core of everything they do. Truly amazing.

On the next part of the trip I went, alone, to Georgia. This is one of the three Caucasian countries that formerly belonged to the Soviet Union, the others being Armenia and Azerbaijan. Last year, I got an e-mail from a man in Tbilisi. He said they had a group that had been reading the Writings for three years and that they wanted to set up a center for the New Church in the Caucasus. This April, I finally managed to get a trip organized. To make a long story short, I found out that there are eighteen

people who meet almost every Sunday. They will now register their group under the name, “The New Church in Georgia,” and they want to be instrumental in spreading the church in Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. They wanted to know everything about our church—how to worship, how to organize youth groups, outreach work, and a women’s guild. They want to get brochures and introductory materials that they can translate into Georgian. I sent them some books a few months ago, gave them some more at the meeting, and promised to send more by mail. The thirst and enthusiasm was overwhelming. And lastly, three of them want to study for the ministry! One is 48 years old, one 28, and the third one 16.

One thing that is quite obvious in both groups is their strong wish to get in touch with other New Church groups in the world, especially in Europe.

I truly feel it is a privilege to be able to reach out to new lands. May the Lord shine into the hearts and minds of these people.

The Rev. Göran Appelgren
Stockholm, Sweden
April 27, 2007

A NEW LOCATION FOR THE BOSTON SOCIETY

After eighteen years in Sudbury, Massachusetts, the Boston congregation of the General Church is moving to a new location in Concord, Massachusetts.

Years of planning and preparation have taken place to make this move possible. The congregation is moving into what was formerly a Catholic church in a prominent location in the historic town of Concord. The building has been renovated for

use by the New Church. It seats about 300 compared to 68 for the Swedenborg Chapel at the church in Sudbury. The congregation has voted unanimously to name its new place of worship *The New Church of Concord*.

The transition to the new location is taking place this June with special “Moving of the Word” services. A final service will be held Saturday, June 16th, at the Swedenborg Chapel in Sudbury. The next day, Sunday, June 17th, the first service will be held at the New Church in Concord. The focus of this weekend will be on the teaching that the Church is where the Word is.

Although the congregation is moving to a new church building, the spiritual center and rock on which the church is founded remains the same. That center and foundation is the Lord and His Word. With this in mind, the Rev. Geoffrey Howard, pastor of the Boston Society from 1990-1999, (now retired) has made a handsome replica of the Ark of the Covenant. At the end of the final service in Sudbury, the altar copy of the Word will be placed in this ark. Then, to open the first service in Concord, the Word will be removed from the ark and placed on the altar in the new building.

These services have been arranged for the current congregation in making the transition to its new place of worship. A publicly advertised service of welcome for the Concord community is planned for September, and a dedication service is to be held in the spring of 2008.

From *The Sower*
The Boston Society Newsletter



THE NEW CHURCH OF CONCORD



*“Blessed is he who keeps the words of
the prophecy of this book.” (Revelation 22:7)*

New Church Day - June 19th

A sampling of recordings for preparation and
celebration, others available upon request.

Worship Services: Sermons

The New Jerusalem - Rev. Jeremy Simons, #107448
The Two Witnesses - Rev. Lawson Smith, #106839
You Are the Light of the World - Rt. Rev. Peter Buss, #106574

Worship Services: Family

The Tree of Life - Rev. Geoffrey Childs, #103936
The Temple in Heaven - Rev. Donald Rose, #102877
The White Horse - Rev. Kurt Ho. Asplundh, #100293
The Woman Clothed with the Sun - Rev. Grant Schnarr, #107435

Worship Services: Contemporary

The New Jerusalem - Rev. Jeremy Simons, #107445
The Woman Clothed as the Sun - Rev. Thomas Rose, #105807
The Lamp Stand Church - Rt. Rev. Thomas Kline, #104482

Doctrinal Classes

The Book of Revelation Explained - Rev. Jeremy Simons, #105706
The Second Coming - Rt. Rev. Alfred Acton, #102855
Preparation for the 19th of June (3 Parts) - Rt. Rev. Louis King, #102461-3

Please order using the catalog numbers listed.

Cassette - \$2.00, CD - \$4.00, Catalog - \$5.00

*Please do not submit payment at this time, as shipping charges
will be added to the invoice included with your order. Thank you!*

NEW CHURCH
AUDIO 

Box 752 - 1120 Cathedral Road
Bryn Athyn, PA 19009-0752
newchurchaudio@newchurch.org
267-502-4980