

# General Church **OUTREACH**

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The Journey reaches  
more than 1,000 people

Spiritual Growth  
Campaign Update pg. 4

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Freedom  
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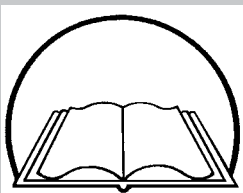
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# Editorial

BY BRONWEN HENRY

I recently heard someone reflect that our biggest problem in the church will be if we have great success in reaching out and growing. This caused me to pause. It reminded me of this quote from Marianne Williamson: *“Our greatest fear is not that we are inadequate, but that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that frightens us. ...As we are liberated from our fear, our presence automatically liberates others.”*

Consider for a moment, getting more inquiries than you have time to respond to, people requesting baptisms in countries where we have no local pastors, people requesting New Church literature in languages it has not yet been translated into, and your congregation exceeding capacity for seating in the sanctuary on Sunday morning.

When I reflect on my past couple of months, I realize that all of the above are currently true. I feel abundantly blessed as I have the opportunity to ask other people to help me in responding to inquiries off the Internet. What a joy to get

to connect pastors with people interested in being baptized (2 in the last 3 months on the Internet). As you’ll see in the article about the New Church in Ukraine (p. 9), the demand for New Church material in Russian exceeds the current capacity to translate and publish that is a problem to be thankful for. During this year’s Spiritual Growth Campaign, San Diego New Church repeatedly has faced the struggle of more people than their building seats. I pray you all have this problem. Learn more about the experiences of congregations in spiritual growth campaigns on p.4.

I am moved by the small moments in which we share our faith on a personal level. Ginny Huntzinger articulates with wisdom and grace her perspective on sharing her New Church faith (p.14). We can all benefit from remembering the principles and approaches she highlights.

May the Lord continue to bless you as you take steps as an individual or as a congregation to share your New Church faith with confidence and joy.

*General Church Outreach Magazine* exists to serve people seeking to help the growth of the New Church throughout the world. We provide readers with inspiration, practical tools, and ongoing communication about what is happening in General Church Outreach and local congregations.

The New Church Beliefs: there is one loving, personal God, and He is the Lord Jesus Christ; the Word of God (the Bible) has a deeper level of meaning revealed in Emanuel Swedenborg’s theological Writings; each of us continues life as a complete person immediately after the death of the body; God does not judge us, but we judge ourselves by what we love and how we live; and people of every faith are saved if they live sincerely according to their religion.

# Sharing the Beauty of the New Church



BY DAVID LINDROOTH

The world is full of beautiful church buildings. One can picture a cathedral with its splendid architecture and its spires reaching to the sky, reminding people of the deeper purer realities of life. There are also contemporary modern structures which draw one's attention to the beauty of nature through their impressive glass windows. A beautiful church building is a blessing. But it is the spiritual beauty communicated by a church that is essential to its health and growth. This beauty can be communicated even in the most simple of ways.

The stories of the Word are a perfect illustration of the ways that the church is about spiritual beauty. While there are many tender, touching stories in the Old and New Testaments, there are also brutal, harsh and jarring stories that don't make obvious sense to the reader. Our challenge is creating an environment where the Lord can open our eyes to the beauty within. In the Word this idea is reflected in the parable of the treasure hid-

den in the field and the man who rejoices when he discovers it (Matt 13: 44).

A friend of mine, an old World War II vet, drew my mind to this recently while we were participating in a discussion about what brought us into the church. He shared that after experiencing the horrors of combat he came home craving the

**Two fundamental considerations for a church focused on growth are how to share the Lord's beauty with the people in the surrounding community, and how to help them to see that beauty in life.**

kind of beauty that could counteract those memories. He came to the church with the understanding that only the beauty offered by the Lord would be powerful enough to help him. He eventually entered the ministry with the thought that he could use that beauty to, help build a better world.

The beauty that the Lord offers is what every church should be looking toward being and sharing. This is a beauty beyond having attractive buildings, but rather it is the beauty found in living a spiritual life. This is addressed in a passage in *Secrets of Heaven* which

describes the appearance of angels: "In heaven those who are moved by mutual love are constantly approaching the spring-time of their youth. And the more thousands of years they live the more joyful and happy the spring-time which they are approaching. This process continues for ever, constantly bringing increases in joy and happiness in proportion to the advance and upward progress in mutual love, charity, and faith." (§553).

What are the ways a church organization can share this kind of beauty? Good preaching, welcoming people to church, reaching out to people and listening to individual stories, sharing how a life based on New Church principles can lead to beauty—these are just a few examples. As illustrated in the above passage, the key to beauty lies in living a good life that is directed by truth. Our church needs to focus on structuring to authentically live and share that good life as the connection with our Creator.

Two fundamental considerations for a church that is focused on growth are how to share the Lord's beauty with the people in the surrounding community, and how to help them to see that beauty in life. A Church does not need wealth to do these things—it needs to focus on its purpose of helping the Lord God Jesus Christ to be present with all people. In the words of the psalmist "worship the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness!" (Psalm 96:9).

# Spiritual Growth for Individuals and Hope for Congregations

BY BRONWEN HENRY

“A person is regenerated by the truths of faith and a life according to them” (*New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine* §186).

Spiritual growth campaigns are a powerful tool to help teach the ‘truths of faith’ and create a system of accountability and encouragement where people are supported to live ‘a life according to them.’

As this magazine goes to print, we are in the final weeks of wrapping up our second multi-congregation spiritual growth campaign. It is an exciting time to be part of the work at General Church Outreach because we are learning so much in this process.

Here are highlights of the joys, successes, and real challenges coming to life in the 15 congregations running a spiritual growth campaign from September through November 2007.

**Congregations are not isolated but are part of a bigger vision, as they network and support one another.**

In an effort to support congregations all implementing the spiritual growth campaign at the same time, we host a conference call every week or so, during which pastors and

campaign directors are invited to come together on the phone for one hour of inspiration, troubleshooting, and idea sharing. It has been such a joy for me to witness the networking and support taking place. For example, Ken Alden from the New Church at Boynton Beach shared his plan/schedule for which songs the congregation will sing each week with the broader group. Congregations responded affirmatively to these suggestions. Clark Echols from Glendale New Church shared how his team took holy supper together, and other congregations were inspired to plan a special worship service for their teams.

Congregations share ideas about what they will be doing for worship that week, including what skits/activities/messages they will focus on. Even people that can’t make it to the conference calls report being uplifted by reading the summaries. The Office of Education provided outstanding materials for children and families that follow along with the program. Congregations reported these materials being extremely useful and regularly utilized.

My heart is warmed by the image of pastors and lay people spread out around the country, no longer working alone, but having a broader team that both cares about them and tangibly supports them.

## Spiritual Growth Campaign Participating Congregations

### September 2007 Launch

1. The New Church of Boulder Valley
2. The New Church at Boynton Beach
3. Bryn Athyn Church
4. Glendale New Church
5. Glenview New Church
6. Ivyland New Church
7. The Philadelphia (Korean) New Church
8. Los Angeles New Church
9. Oak Arbor Church
10. Palo Alto New Church
11. New Church of Phoenix
12. Pittsburgh New Church
13. San Diego New Church
14. The Sowers Chapel
15. Washington New Church

### Fast Facts for these 15 Congregations

1194 people participating  
92 newcomers in small groups  
122 small groups

### January 2008 Launch

1. The New Church Buc-leuch
2. New Church Westville
3. Sunrise Chapel

There is a sense of camaraderie and a team mentality amongst the 15 congregations on this same journey at the same time.

**Comprehensive approach to advertising is reinforced between congregations.**

We are always improving our approach to advertising. This year the newspaper ads, banners, brochures, and mailers yielded responses that led to people attending worship for the first time and even getting plugged into small groups. One person in Australia (not connected to the General Church) saw the website promotion of the New Church at Boynton Beach and is working to lead a group in Australia with encouragement from Kenneth Alden and Ginny Huntzinger.

Mark Perry captures some of the excitement of church growth as he states: "One of the most wonderful things to happen here in San Diego is that people from our subdivision are attending both Church Services and Small Groups. We seat 58 people in our Sanctuary. Last Sunday we had 78 people at Church (20 of them children). This for us, this is HUGE!! I have been praying for Growth. I have asked others to pray for Growth—Central Office too. Well GROWTH is happening!" *Mark Perry, San Diego New Church*

**People around the world participate in an interactive version of this program.**

The online program has more than 500 people receiving daily or weekly uplifting messages. Some of these people are connected to congregations running the campaign, others are General Church members spread out around the world, and



others are new to the New Church. The discussion forum currently has more than 80 people signed up and people asking questions, sharing personal stories, and finding hope and inspiration. At least one person got connected from the online discussion board into a local small group meeting.

A participant from Texas sent in an email saying "I just wanted to let you know that we are listening to and enjoying church services here. I wanted everyone involved in the process of making the services available on-line to know that they are being used and appreciated."

"Thank you so much for sending this email version of The Journey

to me...I think it is outstanding."

*Mary Smuts, Perth Australia*

**Materials and program are designed for and accessible to newcomers which helps members to invite friends.**

We have heard clear feedback from people who are new to the church about the content of the program being very accessible.

Congregations report satisfaction in having a tangible program to offer newcomers when they attend worship for the first time. There are over 90 newcomers meeting in small groups. Many newcomers who signed up for the small groups are also attending worship.

"I have a neighbor who has become a very good friend and she has often asked about my church. She has been at social gatherings

with me and met some of the people that are in my spiritual growth campaign group. Since I will be hosting the group, I thought it would be a great time to invite her to attend. I reminded her that if she came to a meeting and didn't think it would work for her that I wouldn't pressure her to continue. She said, "Pencil me in!" I look forward to having her be a part of the Journey campaign. I plan to use my postcard to invite another friend to the campaign." *Member, New Church of Boulder Valley*

**People attend worship more frequently.**

Part of a spiritual growth campaign is asking participants to make commitments to work on their personal and spiritual growth.

This includes daily reading, participating in a small group, and attending worship. Congregations who are running a spiritual growth program for the first time this year have shown an increase in worship attendance of nearly 10% (as of print time). Some congregations have reported attendance during the campaign at 'festival' (Christmas, Easter, etc.) levels.

### **People develop a habit of reading daily from the Word.**

It is beautiful to see how participants are finding the stories from the Word have new life and meaning. I have heard exclamations of "I never understood the children of Israel and their journey before, until now..."

### **Small Groups build friendship, accountability, and support.**

This is where the heart of a spiritual growth campaign rests. It is not the workbook, the advertising, or even the tasks that make a spiritual growth campaign work. It is all of these coming together in the small group experience. Through small groups people are finding camaraderie, support, fellowship. They are realizing they are not alone on life's journey. More than 100 groups (that we know of) are meeting around the country weekly and both studying the Word and supporting one another in life's struggles, challenges and joys. "I have noticed a new enthusiasm toward small groups this year. It's

amazing to hear people talking about *which* group they'll be in vs. *if* they'll be in a group. A few people who chose not to participate last year have said that they didn't want to be *left out* of the fun this year. I am feeling great about the level of participation, acceptance, and yes...enthusiasm toward The Journey." *Burgandy Alden Smith, Pittsburgh New Church*



## **More than 100 groups around the country are studying the Word and supporting one another in life's challenges and joys.**

"An amazing thing happened at our group Wednesday night. One of our members spent the weekend camping with a group of women she did not know. They started

talking about what was happening in their lives and she pulled out her Journey book and told the group about the workshop. One of the women got very excited and stood up to tell her that she was also doing the Journey and she pulled out her book!" *Shirley Reischman, Glendale New Church*

### **Pastors do not work alone, but build a team of lay people empowered to serve the church.**

One pastor running the campaign, said "I don't even know what is going on. My team is doing so much." This is super. We are transitioning away from the model where the pastor does everything, and encouraging congregations to form teams that utilize the strengths and gifts of congregation members.

"The Glendale New Church Leadership Team had its first meeting! We are committed to doing several key tasks more completely and joyfully this year, including calling people in follow up to mailings, inviting people to worship because it is part of the whole program, and including more people from the congregation on the team! We are excited by the prospect that people in last year's small groups can be asked to lead groups this year! The Journey begins!" *Clark Echols, Glendale New Church*

**Congregational Health**  
Congregational health is the

primary goal of a spiritual growth campaign. Healthy congregations are growing congregations. Similar to our physical health which cannot be remedied with one pill but must be gained through exercise and diet over time, spiritual growth campaigns are not a quick fix. In fact, numerous congregations have become more aware of barriers to growth through the process of striving to implement a spiritual growth campaign. When you are working on a program of this size and impact, issues do not stay hidden. Numerous congregations have faced very real and difficult situations regarding teams, internal fighting, communication, physical barriers of signage, resistance to change, etc. At the Philadelphia (Korean) New Church, John Jin reported that his congregation had a new commitment to praying for the healing of internal struggles. This is a perfect example of the most beautiful results coming out of this effort, not just an increased awareness of the issues, but a renewed spirit to face and overcome challenges with the Lord's support.

“In this concept of ‘spiritual growth campaign/Journey campaign’ I think that we have bumped into something that has untold potential for the future of the New Church on earth.” *Mark Pendleton, Glenview New Church*

### **Challenges and Realities**

When people ask me about spiritual growth campaigns, there are generally two (completely opposing) ways

that I respond. On one hand I emphasize that this is a totally new/different/cutting edge exciting opportunity to transform your church. On the other hand, I share that there is nothing new happening in a spiritual growth campaign, it is just a systematic approach to well-known church growth principles. One thing that I know for sure is that there are no quick fixes to church growth—spiritual growth campaigns included. Church growth, and successful spiritual growth campaigns, are the result of the Lord's blessing on countless hours of prayer and hard work by a dedicated team of people. A few patterns are emerging regarding implementing campaigns. This should not be overly surprising or discouraging, but more an opportunity to assess how to best respond to these challenges in the future.

Congregations running a spiritual growth campaign for the second time may observe a decrease in member participation. This may be partially attributed to the ‘newness’ wearing off and also

members increased understanding (and possibly trepidation) of the time commitment involved. On the positive side, we have observed that second time congregations continue to have an increased participation of newcomers.

Building a healthy team is core to a successful campaign. When a team lacks clear direction, delegation, and communication, the problems of the team may filter down to the congregation, with decreased enrollment. Team challenges may show up when people are overcommitted without sufficient time to dedicate to their team role.

Congregations are making an extraordinary effort to implement spiritual growth campaigns with the intention of revitalizing and growing their churches. There are real barriers to growth which we must continue to strive to overcome: internal fighting, spreading ourselves too thin on different projects, lack of communication to build excitement, burning out the same volunteers over and over, etc.

Increasing our awareness of these issues is the first step to begin to remedy them and create a space for the Lord to do the awesome work of building His church.

“Be of good cheer. Do not think of today's failures, but of the success that may come tomorrow. You have set yourselves a difficult task, but you will succeed if you persevere; and you will find a joy in overcoming obstacles. Remember, no effort that we



make to attain something beautiful is ever lost.” *Helen Keller*

### **January 2008 Launch of Journey Campaign**

New Church Westville, Sunrise Chapel, and New Church Buccleuch are launching The Journey spiritual growth campaign in January 2008. We are optimistic about these congregations launching these programs from the strength and momentum of the 15 congregations who implemented the program starting in September 2007. Stay tuned for stories and results from these congregations.

### **Next Campaign Preview**

The application process for the next campaign is already underway, and we are beginning the process of supporting congregations to launch this new campaign in September 2008 or January 2009. ■

## Stretching the Geographic Reach of The Journey

As preparations for The Journey Spiritual Growth Campaign began to reach a fevered pitch in 15 General Church congregations, individuals and groups not connected to those congregations started buzzing with excitement as well.

With a special donation supporting the effort, General Church Outreach pushed the geographic boundaries of the Campaign by starting a new program designed to give The Journey greater impact and spread the news across the United States, and internationally. To that end, General Church Outreach hired Burgandy Alden Smith working out of Pittsburgh, PA to implement this new effort to connect people to the Journey.

A campaign model was developed focusing primarily on small group formation and participation in the online version of the program, with particular emphasis placed on personal invitation. The production of professional advertising, workbooks, leaders’ guides, and printable and audio sermons organized according to the weeks of the campaign was undertaken. Personal support was offered via email, conference calls, and an online discussion

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# Loving Arms Adopts Kenyan Orphanage

BY REV. DAVID LINDROOTH

I am thrilled to announce that the Kenyan Orphanage run by Khalid Obiri is going to be administered as a branch of the Loving Arms Mission. The Kenyan orphanage, located in Ogembo Kissii now cares for 20 children varying in age who are able to attend both the church and the school as a vital part of their upbringing. Loving Arms Mission is a not-for-profit that specializes in Children’s homes that are based on the principles of the New Church. They currently have two in Katmandu with the Kenyan orphanage constituting their first branch in Africa.

I am extremely grateful that Loving Arms is willing to take this vital function on. They are well equipped to attend to the needs of this wonderful group of children. In the past, General Church Outreach has hosted a grass roots fundraising movement for this important need. The transition will ensure that there is an organization in North America that is looking after the orphanage in a more systematic way and which can better provide for the children’s needs.

During the transition period, General Church Outreach will forward your contributions to the Kenyan Orphanage to Loving Arms to ensure that the orphanage continues to be adequately supported. Your continued support of the orphanage is needed during this transition and in the future. You can send your tax deductible contribution to “Loving Arms Mission” Box 213, Bryn Athyn PA, 19009.

# The New Church in Ukraine



Left: Katya Graf'ska, David Lindrooth, and Svetlana Manaenkova

BY ABIGAIL ECHOLS

The New Church is growing around the world. This sentiment may seem abstract or even cliché to you, but in Ukraine the reality of this statement is new and exciting for the people who are reading the Writings for the New Church for the first time. For the 100 people who started reading the Writings in 1993, church growth in Ukraine is a reality.

In this early stage of spreading the Writings for the New Church, regular worship services are not yet developed. Despite this fact, the groups in Ukraine are thriving and working on growing as a church. The unique and emerging situation in Ukraine is a testament to the power within the Writings for the New Church.

## Where are groups located?

There are two main groups in southern Ukraine. The Dnepropetrovsk Swedenborg Society is located in Dnepropetrovsk. The Crimean Swedenborg Society is located in Yalta on the Crimean Peninsula (see map for locations). The groups are over two hundred miles apart, yet they maintain communication and support. There is convenient transportation supporting travel back and forth between the groups which provides regular face to face communication.

While neither group has a church building, the Dnepropetrovsk group does have the Swedenborg Centre, which they use for many purposes including holding doctrinal classes and discussions and distributing literature.

## History of the New Church in Ukraine

Nova Hierosolyma, or The Lord's New Church, has existed in Lvov for many years, and has also spread the works of Emanuel Swedenborg.

Nova Hierosolyma existed in Ukraine before the members of the Dnepropetrovsk and Yalta groups found the Writings, and there has been communication between the groups, although they remain separate organizations.

## How did these groups get started?

These groups formed in the last 14 years when several of the key Church members were on staff together at Artek, a children's camp in Yalta. Several of the camp staff members discovered a book of the Writings, read it, and wanted to read more. They wrote to the address in the back of the book, and waited to find out if they could find more books of the Writings. Being from all over the former U.S.S.R. these camp counselors separated after camp, and the interested parties scattered. They continued their conversation, however, and as the people in Dnepropetrovsk received copies of the Writings in English, they began translating these books into Russian, and have since grown into two organized groups. Motivated and ready to work on projects and development, there are currently about 30 participants in the Dnepropetrovsk Swedenborg Society, and 70 participants in the Crimean Swedenborg Society.

## Recent Events

These lay led groups have a remarkable number of projects being developed. In many ways these societies are babies in the world of Churches. Without any formal training or experiences in other New Church organizations, members are starting from scratch—pro-

gressing carefully and successfully. Svetlana Manaenkova is one of the leaders of the Swedenborg Centre. In her article "Dnepropetrovsk & Crimean Swedenborg Societies", published in the Fall 2006 issue of Swedenborg Publishers International (SPI) Newsletter Svetlana

small groups in their town. It was a great experience for us to get to know about the life of lay people in the General Church. The discussions about the very important subject of faith continued until deep into the night and were very useful and interesting for everyone."



Above: Svetlana and David inside the Swedenborg Centre. Below: members of the Dnepropetrovsk group with Göran and Josephine Appelgren

said that "at the beginning of this summer Mr. Mike Cole with his wife Mrs. Ulla Cole (from USA) were guests in our Centre. We were very happy to be acquainted with them. They told us much about the activity in their Church and in

These groups are eager to learn, and willingly host guests so they can build connections and learn from each other. During a visit earlier this year, Rev. Lindrooth and Rev. Appelgren facilitated a weekend conference hosted by the Crimean Swedenborg Society. Twenty-four people attended the workshops, church service, and sessions. Exploring many questions, the people were able to learn more about the New Church and the Writings in a stimulating and instructive weekend.

Svetlana also reported that "the members of Crimean Society actively communicate with new followers of Swedenborg in their area by email and phone. It is very important to notice that this summer was very fruitful for our two societies (Dnepropetrovsk and Crimean) and the numbers of followers of the Doctrine are growing; God leads them to the Centre and we help them to know about the Doctrine."

## About Swedenborg Centre

One of the huge success stories for these groups was the opening of the Swedenborg Centre in 2005. Located in the corner apartment on the first floor of a building in Dnepropetrovsk, this centre provides the space for regular meetings to discuss doctrine, a location for newcomers to visit if they have questions, and a space for the work of translating and distributing the translated books.

Svetlana described some of the benefits of having such a place in her article when she reflected that “the opening of the Swedenborg Centre...allowed starting the meetings with people who are interested in Doctrine not only by phone or by post, but personally. Because the Centre is open every day from 10.00 A.M. until 7.00 P.M., each person who wants to communicate can come from different places in Ukraine at any time. Many people who walk along the street or even pass by car on the road also come into the Centre with the question: ‘Who is Swedenborg?’ and these can receive information about his life and the Doctrine.”

This project could not have been completed without the help and support of Duncan Smith. He held fundraisers, communicated, and advocated to get funding to help the Dnepropetrovsk Swedenborg Society make the Swedenborg Centre a reality. Cost for maintaining and developing the uses of the Centre is low, and the people are committed to this work. They believe in the teachings they have found, have experienced life-changes through the Writings for the New Church,

and they want to help other people to have the same experience.

## Hopes for Translation

Publishing and distributing books is very inexpensive in Ukraine, and the people involved in these projects are working to find the most effective and cost-efficient way of distributing these books. They feel sure that the best way to spread the doctrines of the New Church is by publishing Swedenborg’s books in Russian.

**The best way to spread the doctrines of the New Church is by publishing Swedenborg’s books in Russian.**

Svetlana enthusiastically shared that “during the summer, Crimean Swedenborg Society member and translator Helen Vozovyk continued the translation of *Arcana Coelestia*. At the present time she is finishing the work on the first part of Exodus. Now we are actively searching for a publishing house that has a great distribution net and can publish new books.”

## What Next?

The atmosphere around religious issues has been tense in Europe for many years. While this is true in Ukraine, there is also more acceptance of religion. As a result of this tension these two groups are trying to stick together and keep a strong

## Quick Facts about Ukraine

Size: Slightly smaller than Texas (USA), it is the second-largest country in Europe.

Population: 46,299,862

Languages: Ukrainian and Russian are the primary languages.

History: Previously part of the U.S.S.R, Ukraine’s Independence Day was August 24, 1991.

Religions: Ukrainian Orthodox- Kyiv Patriarchate 19%, Orthodox 16%, Ukrainian Greek Catholic 6%, Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox 1.7%, Protestant, Jewish, none 38% (2004 est.)

*According to the CIA World Factbook*

## The Writings Translated into Russian

*True Christian Religion*

*Divine Providence*

*Divine Love and Wisdom*

*Heaven and Hell*

*The Four Doctrines*

*Earths in the Universe*

*Arcana Coelestia* volumes 1, 2, & 4.

partnership going so that they can grow and make an impact over time. This is a significant part of why they are so focused on producing Russian translations of the Writings. They want to spread the teachings of the New Church to as many people as they can, and the most useful way for them to do this is to generate material in a language that is widely used within and beyond the European borders.

In order to facilitate additional translations and continue to provide service to newcomers and members

alike, the Dnepropetrovsk group is hoping to maintain and grow their Swedenborg Centre, and increase the number and types of events held there. Svetlana is



The Dnepropetrovsk group with David, Göran, and Josephine.

also working to establish a travel agency that would work out of the Swedenborg Centre, and would generate income for the Centre and could offset the cost of translation and publishing.

### Developments in Eastern Europe:

During Rev. Lindrooth's visit to Ukraine, Rev. Göran Appelgren and his wife Josephine were also there. (They are currently living in Sweden). After stopping in Ukraine they traveled on for a first time visit with a group of people in Georgia (Asia) who are interested in the New Church. ■

## Ukrainian Student Attends Bryn Athyn College of the New Church

**Kateryna Graf'ska (Katya)** (17) was introduced to the Writings as a little girl in Ukraine. Her parents, Svetlana and Valeriy Manayenkov, found the Writings through a family friend who had found a book of the Writings in Russian, and loved it. After Katya's parents read the book, they wanted more. They wrote to the addresses in the back of the book asking for more books in Russian or English. Eventually they received responses with books in English. Svetlana began translating these books into Russian.

Katya grew up appreciating the teachings of the New Church. In the summer of 2006 Katya attended the British Academy Summer School, and got a glimpse of the life of New Church young people. She enjoyed the opportunity to be around people with similar beliefs and thoughts, and in part because of this trip, and her second trip to BASS in 2007, Katya decided to travel around the world and attend Bryn Athyn College.

In many ways, Katya said, Bryn Athyn College is better than she anticipated. She came without having many details about what life would be like, and has been pleasantly surprised by the people, the support, and the education. With a mix of classes and free time, Katya is taking advantage of her opportunities to connect with other New Church people in a way she has never been able to before. An unexpected blessing of Bryn Athyn College for Katya is having friends to go out and have fun with and also have serious, meaningful conversations.

In Ukraine Katya was used to small group discussions with specific topics and questions. It has been a big difference to switch to the Bryn Athyn Church and experience the full worship services of the Cathedral. Katya believes that both of these different formats are useful, and she wants to remember the value in different forms of communicating about the church and religion.

While Katya doesn't know what her career plans are, she has already benefited from her experience of the last few months and is looking forward to the rest of the year at Bryn Athyn College.

# Tatsuya Nagashima

BY DAVID LINDROOTH AND  
DON ROSE

It has been said that a person can't truly make an impact on the world without the process involving sacrifice. This is certainly true in evangelization. In January 2007 we acknowledged the passing of a person who gave so much to bring a knowledge of the New Church into his country. Tatsuya Nagashima himself was a convert to the New Church. He lived in Japan where Shinto Buddhists outnumber Christians one hundred to one. Tatsuya discovered the church after a lifetime of actively searching and trying many religious traditions. He realized that as one of the few members of the New Church in Japan, he wanted to make a difference.

Tatsuya describes with touching humility his coming into the New Church as a series of dramatic events all orchestrated by Divine Providence. In an autobiographical printed in *New Church Life* (2001, p. 251) we read "Without my father's sudden death, I wouldn't have been awakened into life after death. Without believing I would become a swan, I wouldn't have been baptized into Christianity. Without having made a vow [as a Jesuit monk], I wouldn't have fought for religious freedom. Without having recanted my faith in Catholicism, I wouldn't have studied the Holy Scriptures on a deeper level. And without having left the old Christianity, I wouldn't have been infilled with an abundance of religious truths from the Writings."

After finding the New Church, Tatsuya dedicated the remainder of his life to translating the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg into Japanese. His translations are not the difficult, highly stylized Japanese that much of this type of religious, philosophical literature is often translated into. Rather, he chose to translate into the beautiful, flowing and easily readable Japanese that is used in everyday modern speech. His wife Sumi was able to edit his work supporting his efforts to create publications that will serve for many years as an accurate, readable presentation of these new truths.

**Books of the Writings translated by Tatsuya:**  
*True Christian Religion, Heaven and Hell, De Verbo, Earths in the Universe, New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine, The White Horse, The Four Doctrines, Divine Love and Wisdom, Divine Providence, and the first six volumes of Arcana Coelestia.*

Of his translating work, Tatsuya wrote: "Thanks to my Jesuit training in the 1950s, I am now translating the most valuable treasure in human history, *Arcana Coelestia*, into my language. The Lord is giving me a last chance of my earthly life for a challenging long-term project. Swimming alone in the rough waves was worth it, and still is. Every day a new passage or number of the *Arcana* bewilders, frightens, challenges, inspires, reveals, awakens or puzzles me. Before me a still indefinitely vast but immensely rich ocean is ex-

panding" (*New Church Life* 2001, p. 254).

Tatsuya described his life as "swimming alone in rough waves." He reflected partly that the work of evangelization is a continuous struggle. Tatsuya writes that there will be loneliness, "despair and frustration through trial, error and pain. Hearing voices shouting 'Stop. It is of no avail.' We often cry out with the Psalmist David, 'Lord, how they are increased who trouble me! Many are they who rise up against me. Many are they who say of me, 'There is no help for him in God' (Psalm 3)." But then he mentions the quiet voice of the Lord, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" (*New Church Life* 2002, p. 66).

Of his work bringing the Writings to his nation, Tatsuya wrote that "translation hours may be sacrosanct, yet the hellish influx sneaks in whispering that my work is of no avail.... 'How can a reader understand the contents if the translator doesn't understand? How can my work bring anyone to regeneration if I am not regenerate?' My reply is, 'Go away, Satan! Let me continue my work. It's not your business, nor mine. It is the Lord's'" (*New Church Life* 2004, p. 147).

This man was one of the founding fathers of an emerging New Church in Asia. He is an inspiration to us as we work to serve the Lord's Church on earth. ■

# What Would You Say?

BY GINNY HUNTZINGER

Getting acquainted is an act of sharing. For some, it is more than just a “happening” and leads to wonderful friendships; for others it is a trial that tests their social and communication skills. Can we conclude that what we say sets the stage for further communications or closes the door to sharing? As New Church people we have the privilege and responsibility to communicate not only about our personal lives, but about our values, our beliefs. What can we say?

Indeed, this is an important question, with the possibility of many answers. First, I feel strongly that too much information, too fast, produces a smothering effect from which most potential friends will flee. Secondly, I believe that it is wise to assess the degree of sincerity of the person with whom you are talking. Do they really want to know what church you go to, especially if it is one they have never heard of? Or are they just making

polite conversation? Are they trying to convert you to their church? Or are they sincerely interested in religions other than their own?



**Once you establish a warm relationship, you can begin exploring each other's values, philosophies, and beliefs.**

Getting to know someone as a friend is probably the best way to begin relating to each other. What do you have in common? Children? How many? What ages? Where do they go to school? Activities? What do you do outside the home? A person needs to feel that you care about them. They need to feel safe. They need to trust you. After they come to value you as a person, your opinions will have credibility, even if your new found friend does not agree with all of them.

Once you have established a warm relationship, you can begin exploring each other's values, philosophies, and beliefs. What church do you go to? This may be the question of a sincere believer and/or a sincere searcher. It may be one you can answer very simply by saying casually, “Oh, I go to the New Church?” Is it a Christian church? “Oh yes.” Then you believe in Jesus? “Oh yes.” From the simplicity of both the questions and the answers one can move on to other topics.

## What is Your Approach?

Talking about your faith is an art, not a science. Although some fundamental elements will remain the same, there are many different approaches.

*General Church Outreach Magazine* regularly features articles by individuals around the world, featuring their perspective on how they share their New Church faith. To share your reflections on how you communicate about your New Church faith, we invite you to email [outreach@newchurch.org](mailto:outreach@newchurch.org).

But, what if you think that your new friend is really interested in what you are saying? Your answers could be as varied as the stars in the sky, and could go like this: “Yes I go to the New Church. We are Christians and believe that the Bible has a meaning more profound than just the historical sense of the written word. This ‘new’ meaning is what makes us ‘New Church’. We read the Old Testament, the New Testament and the Revelations of Emanuel Swedenborg. I was so excited to learn that there is a life after this world and one in which we have all of our senses in a spiritual body; we will have uses that we love and do each day; and we will be married to our true love to eternity. Doesn’t this sound like heaven to you? If you are interested, I have a book here in my bookcase called, *Heaven and Hell*. If you’d like to explore what our life is like after we die, I will be happy to share it with you.”

Being a friend is an essential part of the equation in order to be an effective catalyst. (New relationship + you = trust, friendship and credibility.) Each time you make an effort to get together with your friend, a new doctrine may be gently revealed and briefly discussed; an invitation to come to a social event in a church member’s home may be appropriate; an invitation to come to a spiritual growth class or a sermon at church may be part of an ongoing, developing relationship.

These invitations are softly offered, and your time together is balanced between spiritual and secular topics. Of course, as your relationship

grows, you respond to the pace your friend, not you, is setting. If his or her thirst is unquenchable, you may share as much and offer as many resources as are appropriate. You will know by your friend’s reaction. Being sensitive is critical. In my opinion and experience, the only effective way to meet your

**In my opinion and experience, the only effective way to meet your friend and bring him or her forward is by starting where your friend is not where you are.**

friend and bring him or her forward, is by starting where your friend is—not where you are. What we say, what we believe and what we do are united in this welcoming effort.

I believe from experience and from the experiences of others who have come into the New Church as adults, that the Lord calls the person, and it is with you as His partner that the person is led to freely choose the path he or she wants to follow the rest of his/her life – both in this world and in the next. What can you say? With a few communication techniques as a basis of knowledge and sincere motivation as the wind in your sails, the right words will flow from the Lord through you, taking you from

## Great Resource!

To help you in connecting with people about the New Church, we publish this quarterly magazine *New Church Connection*. The purpose of *New Church Connection* is to inspire, inform, and connect people who are interested in the New Church. Each issue contains background information on the teachings of the New Church, inspirational content from personal testimonies and quotes from the Word, and clear information about the organized New Church, how to get connected, and how to get more information.

To order a subscription of *New Church Connection* for yourself or a friend, visit [www.newchurchconnection.org](http://www.newchurchconnection.org).





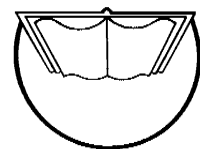
“It can be seen...that angels are forever becoming more perfect, that is, they grow constantly in goodness and truth; yet they cannot possibly attain a full degree of perfection. Unlimited possibility for growth always remains; for truths have no numerical limit, each truth has unlimited facets, and so on.” *Arcana Coelestia* 6232

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