

# New Church LIFE

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A monthly magazine devoted to the teachings  
revealed through Emanuel Swedenborg

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A Sermon by Bishop Kline

Elegy to a Teacher  
By Stephen B. Gladish

Final Part of Theology of Sexuality  
By Alain Nicolier

Declarations of Faith

Church News from West Africa

**September, 2008**

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A MONTHLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE TEACHINGS  
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NEW CHURCH LIFE (USPS 378-180)  
 PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY  
**THE GENERAL CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM**  
 The Rev. Dr. Erik E. Sandström, 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](mailto:datacenter@anc-gc.org)

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

## *Notes on This Issue*

Our sermon this issue is from our Bishop, Rt. Rev. Tom Kline, on the topic of College Education. It is most apt in time for Charter Day, which in 1877 gave legal standing for teaching the Heavenly Doctrines, and granting degrees. Priests are ordained to be Pastors, which incorporates teaching the truths and leading thereby to the good of life, something Pastors at the Bryn Athyn College do. The sermon was given after one such inauguration.

Several generations of students at the Academy, both High School and College, recall Prof. Charles S. Cole with much affection and an abundance of memories. One former student, now involved in Education, sums up our love for this man, and the name that endeared him to us all. Thanks to Stephen B. Gladish for this Elegy.

Rev. Alain Nicolier completes his study on the Theology of Sexuality, a needed light from the doctrines cast on ancient issues pressing our society. Much of ‘nature’ versus ‘nurture’ is involved, since all people have inherited tendencies which are either developed or traumatized. Alain looks into backgrounds to help therapy. The longer view must include the effects of spiritual history and of the Flood on our present-day mentality. He shows how the Lord in His Divine Human leads all towards order.

We also have some Communications, many thanks for the thoughtful contributions; and Announcements: are you looking for a job? Two are on offer. Don’t miss the searches for College President (page 387) and Swedenborg Foundation Editor (page 396).

Is the Church growing? Have a look at the Declarations of Faith. We rejoice over the increase of Priests, laborers in the Lord’s vineyard. After that, take a look at Announcements and the Church News, some of which dovetail with the declarations. New ventures draw our good wishes for success.

## WHY A COLLEGE?

BY THE RT. REV. THOMAS L. KLINE

This morning we have witnessed the ordination of a New Church priest into the pastoral degree of the priesthood. This is a priest who is now active as a teacher at the Bryn Athyn College, a priest who is dedicating his life to teaching and pastoral uses in the field of higher education in the light of the Heavenly Doctrines, now revealed.

It is also significant that just last month, at a special service; the chapel at the Bryn Athyn College was re-dedicated to the worship of the Lord Jesus Christ. In addition, the Academy of the New Church is making a significant effort to build a full college campus at the Bryn Athyn College. A priest pastor at our college, a re-building and re-dedication of our college chapel, and a new college campus—all of these are supportive of the cause of the New Church.

In light of these events, we wish to speak on the subject of New Church Education. Let us begin with the education of children: New Church education at the elementary school level. There are firm teachings and principles guiding the cause of New Church Education, principles that come from the Lord's three-fold Word, now revealed.

### **A principle of New Church Education:**

Something unique and invaluable happens when the human mind is ordered by the truths of the Lord's Word during early formative and developmental years. The Lord created the human mind, and true humanity comes from Him. The Lord created the human mind and has now revealed the very truths which can form and cultivate that mind from its earliest years.

Modern science tells us that the human mind is not formed all at once. Rather, the mind takes form, in a sense wiring itself, connecting itself, physically growing and coming into being, gradually over the first decades of a person's life. The human mind, as it comes into being, can be ordered and formed in many different ways. But if it is ordered and formed by the very truths of the Lord's revealed Word, it takes on a special form that prepares the person for adult life and the life of heaven.

When a little child hears and delights in the stories of the Lord's Word from an early age, we allow the Lord Himself to guide the growth of that new life.

**Another principle of New Church Education:**

When the human mind, from an early age, is taught to think on two levels, the child is prepared to see the spiritual sense of the Word as an adult. When we teach children a parable, and show them in a simple way that there is an inner meaning to the parable, we are leading those children to a place where they, when they are adults, can easily see the spiritual that is within the natural. When, in any subject, we teach the science of correspondences, even at an early age, we are leading to the ability to think and reflect on two levels, the spiritual and natural. To teach the little child that love has the same qualities as gold does in the natural world prepares that mind to eventually see the nature of the two worlds, the natural and the spiritual world that is within.

**A third principle of New Church Education:**

We are to teach children about the reality of heaven and the spiritual world, the truths about angels, the spiritual world and heaven. Children receive these truths with delight, almost as if their minds were created to perceive these truths before they hear them. In very fact, their minds were created by the Lord to receive and see these beautiful realities.

**A final and supreme purpose of New Church Education**, is to lead the child to see and behold the Lord Jesus Christ as the one God of heaven and earth, Father, Redeemer and Savior.

New Church Education is unique in the world. It is truly unique as we use the Word of the Lord to cooperate with Him in the formation of the minds and lives of children.

Usually, when we think of New Church Education, we think of the education of children. This morning we want to focus on higher education – education at the college level. As we will see, New Church Education at the collegiate level is just as important in the development of the human mind.

Elementary and high school education is a time when the student learns to think about truth. College, or higher education,

is a time when the student learns to think from truth.

Adolescence, and especially the years around the 20th year of life, is the beginning of a critical time of the transition from historical faith to what the Writings call “true adult faith.” Historical faith is what the student learns from parents, teachers and ministers. It is a childhood faith, important, but just a step on the way. True adult faith begins when the individual takes what has been learned and begins to ask the question, “What do I believe?”

Young adulthood is a time of the opening and development of the rational degree of the mind. Rationality is the ability to be able to make judgments, to see the relationship between ideas and truths, to think and to reason. It is the highest degree of the natural mind, and it is here, on the level of the rational, that we can receive the Lord as adults. This is why the Lord came again to reveal a rational revelation: “Now it is permitted to enter with understanding into the mysteries of faith.”

But why New Church colleges? Is it not enough to just learn truths presented from without: history, science, art, and religion, and form the rational from this? The key passage we read from the Writings this morning as our third lesson is on the development of the human mind where is what is called the “first rational.” Listen to this description: the first rational “is acquired by means of the experiences of the sense, by means of reflecting on the things that take place in life, by means of reasoning based on and presented through these, as well as by means of ideas of spiritual things obtained from the Word” (*Arcana Coelestia* 2657).

The study of art, the study of history, the study of science, even the study of the Word—notice the word study—is a reflection on things that come from without, the traditional idea of a college or a university. This study is an essential step in higher education.

But why New Church higher education? Because something else is added at the college level through New Church Education, a leading toward what the Writings call the genuine or second rational. This genuine rational comes not from

without, but from within, from the Lord. Hear a couple of passages from the Writings of the New Church:

“A person who has also followed heaven's route to rationality and morality is truly rational and moral, because he is this at the same time in spirit, speech and body” (*True Christian Religion* 564).

“The genuine rational is from good, but comes forth from truth. Good flows in by an internal way; but truth by an external way. Good thus conjoins itself with truth in the rational, and they cause the rational to be. Unless the good therein is conjoined with truth, there is no rational; although there appears to be” (*Arcana Coelestia* 3030).

These two stages of rationality are represented by Ishmael and Isaac in our lesson from the Old Testament. Ishmael is the first son born, born of the Egyptian handmaid, Hagar. Egypt here represents the ancient center of the sciences—facts and knowledge from without, facts originating from our five senses. In contrast, Isaac is the second son, born of Abraham's true wife Sarah. Sarah represents affection for spiritual truth that comes from within, from the Lord.

On a practical level, Isaac, the true rational, is a picture of the formation of the human mind in the presence of the worship of the Lord, in heart, in life and in use. It is a picture of the formation of the rational mind in a sphere of humility, teacher and student alike bowing down before the Lord Himself. It is the difference between academic study alone and academic study that looks toward use in the Lord's kingdom, the difference between the study of God and the worship of God. It is the difference between a professor of religion and a priest-pastor of religion.

There is another use for a New Church College: New Church higher education is a place for continued study in the light of the Lord's threefold Word. At the turn of the previous century, from the 1800's to the 1900's, the New Church was an active leader in world religious thought. Yet somehow over the years we have lost that place. So the question arises, how can we regain this influence of the New Church in world thought, culture and the

life of service? The answer: through institutions of higher learning dedicated to the cause of New Church Education, places of higher learning and study in all areas—the arts, the sciences, literature, politics and the life of service and use, places of learning for the continued development of world thought in the light of the Heavenly Doctrines now revealed. Again, the Lord has to be at the very center and core of this work.

The building of a college campus leading to a New Church University, the dedication of the Pendleton Hall Chapel, and today the ordination of a priest-teacher at an institution of higher learning—let these actions be a sign and testimony to our dedication to the cause of New Church Education.

Amen.

Lessons: Genesis 21: 8-21; Luke 2: 41-50; *Arcana Coelestia* 2657.2,3,4



Our well known and travelled Bishop, the Rt.Rev. Thomas L. Kline, was inaugurated into the priesthood in 1973 and ordained into the Pastoral degree in 1975. He was ordained into the Episcopal degree in 2003. He began by serving as Assistant to the Pastor in Washington Society, visiting the Atlanta group in 1973. In 1975 he moved to be the Pastor in Atlanta, and visited the Southeast District, until 1981 when he was called to be the Assistant Pastor in the Bryn Athyn Society. In 1996 he became its Pastor. After first becoming Assistant Bishop, in 2004 Tom was called to be the Executive Bishop of the General Church and Chancellor of the Academy. He is also ex officio President of the General Church in Canada, in South Africa, and of the General Church International, Inc.

**AN ELEGY FOR 'CHARCOAL'**  
BY STEPHEN B. GLADISH, EDUCATOR

Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) once described a man he had known on earth, who communicated with him from heaven. This friend could manifest himself by pleasant and enjoyable representatives, such as beautiful colors of every kind, and colored forms, and by infants beautifully decorated and clothed (*Arcana Coelestia* 4412). From The Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, we learned that such a man's character corresponded to the outer covering of the eye. I immediately was reminded of our favorite subject—a favorite teacher, friend, and human being. With his warmth and effervescent sense of humor, his eyes shone magnificently like twin stars in The Big Dipper—twinkling both in the skies above us and in the classrooms—in front of us. I was privileged to be taught by him in the 'Fifties and 'Sixties, and appreciated him even more in the 'Seventies and 'Eighties': our teacher, Charles S. Cole, known affectionately among students as 'Charcoal.'

From Swedenborg again we learn that light which proceeds from the Lord flows into the first heaven and appears there as a paradise, a city with beautiful palaces. And a man who lived in love and charity, such as the teacher we honor, received that light and truth and presented it to us his students, just as the eye itself presents its finding to the brain.

Both Swedenborg's friend and our teacher acted with a soft and gentle influx, and insinuated themselves into the affections of others with the purpose of making our lives pleasant and delightful. Our teacher and mentor carried with him also the correspondences of hearing as well; he encouraged us with his sphere and love of being taught, guided, and affected. His correspondence of sight showed in his desire as a scientist and as a philosopher to obtain clear and distinct ideas, to become intelligent in spiritual things and wise in heavenly things. When

he taught Human Body to us in High School, we learned the physical attributes and the spiritual correspondences of the entire body, beginning with the digestive system, followed by the heart and lungs, and ending with the brain. We graded each other's papers—a first for me. He demonstrated trust in us to follow his teaching model and to act on his behalf. He could have been an angel. He treated us as if we were angels.

I like to think our teacher manifests himself through beautiful images of nature, just as Swedenborg's angel friend did. For example, when we run out into the back yard to see the infrequent rainbow glimmering in grey clouds still full of moisture, I think of our teacher. He had such a cheerful countenance, such a great sense of humor, such a beneficent and understanding heart; his presence had the same affect as a rainbow after a threatening thunderstorm.

His character and demeanor sparkled with hope, promise, love, and forgiveness in every kind of weather and through all four seasons. Sunlight glistened on the raindrops, and bands of vivid colors collected together in a unified arch across the sky — an invitation to travel into a new and beautiful country. Students of all kinds became the bands of light and hope mirrored in his eyes and minted in his classrooms. For decades he taught a plethora of science and philosophy courses both in the Boys School and in Bryn Athyn College. In addition he served as everybody's College Dean, and gave every student, every day — a chance to enjoy his or her place in the sun.

Another image or clue on the identity of this man can be experienced with the image of a campfire. His twinkling eyes remind me of two stars in The Big Dipper, the rainbow sparkling in the clouds, and the family campfire. He is easily able to illuminate the darkness and bring light and warmth to whole groups of gathered individuals during their natural and spiritual quests in his classrooms to determine their identity, their purpose, their mission, and their belongingness. At the same

time, he could easily warm and enlighten one person at a time, his compassionate and enthusiastic approach gathering them in close, as if he or she were the most important person in the world. Every visit to his office brought images and experiences of a friendly and fatherly campfire, the gentle flames jumping up joyfully and playfully from the logs.

So here I am, on July 28th of the year 2008: I sit at a small table in a Tucson, Arizona, Borders Bookstore Reading Room at two in the afternoon, drink an green iced-tea latte, take bites from a blueberry scone topped with an occasional small pat of butter from Glenview Farms, and read Tom Fiedler's essay, "Why Young People Leave the Church" in the latest issue of "New Church Life." I agree with Tom's conclusion that, "But in the New Church our failure to see the conflicting foundations of the way each generations thinks...will result in frustrated communication....Everything we wish to bequeath to following generations must be redefined.... It isn't going to be easy, but I bet it will be enlightening."

However, I must say for me it is easy, because of our teacher and friend, who illuminated and inspired my life for two decades in the classroom, who years afterward flew a thousand miles to our wedding and said, "In the tough times you will remember all the people in the congregation who stood up for you and who celebrated your wedding day with you, and that memory will get you through any rough roads." This man taught me by example how to treasure my wife, my daughters and sons, my students, and my fellow human beings; he taught me how to bring them harmony and hope. His kind and powerful influence kept me walking on the New Church path....

I glance out the window and for a moment I thought I saw a phantom rainbow in the sky. I close my eyes and feel the warm campfire presence of this mystery man and am warmed by the memories. I turn to the very last page in the "New Church Life," and see all that's left of my imaginary campfire. The embers glow, sparkle, and twinkle up at me. With dismay, I read in black print under Deaths: Mr. Charles Snowden Cole, at Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, May 18, 2008. 93....

I am astounded. No, no, no. He wasn't just Mr. Charlie Cole. He was Professor Charlie Cole. He was Dean Charlie Cole. I hear a bell ring in the Children's Reading Room nearby and think, "Charlie just became an angel." I think of meteor showers from the Orion Constellation, and console myself that, "The Orionides will remind me of Charlie Cole every October 21st." I remember how The Big Dipper's light from a couple stars takes years to reach us, but now, like Charlie Cole's twinkle, its gleam will be with us forever. Okay, Charlie's earthly body is gone from us. But everything he stood for, corresponded to and represented, lives. His campfire never dies. It just turns to the man we all called Charcoal. Charlie Cole (CharCole), still warm and light and alive, full of all the love he gave us; full of all the love we gave him back....

Here's a footnote to my elegy:

Even though The Boys School, The Girls School, and Bryn Athyn College today stand tall and demonstrate a quantum leap forward in sophistication and personnel forty years after my Junior College experience back in 1963—1965 and fifty years after my High School graduation, I believe it is the teachers and mentors of those times and decades who instilled the momentum and functioned as the catalysts in the pursuit of Swedenborgian Academic excellence. Each generation carries its own vocabulary and approach, but I believe God channels His Love and Wisdom in such a way with New Church teachers that they can motivate, lead, and inspire even those who think, believe, and live in a different world. Today's College and High School staff cast a long shadow, but they do so in part because they stand on the shoulders of such stalwart mentors as, for example, Charlie Cole, Sig Synnestvedt, Richard Gladish, Willard Pendleton, Bruce Glenn, David Simons, Lyris Hyatt, Margaret Wilde, and Emilie Asplundh.

## **THE THEOLOGY OF SEXUALITY Part II**

**BY THE REV. ALAIN NICOLIER**

### **Relationship with One's Father**

Another constant that is common among most of the homosexuals who have been willing to trust in a therapy or an exploration is found in the relationship with the father.

One must understand that the father has a definitive role in the socialization of his child. By his repeated, daily attitude he can stimulate or inhibit the capacity for self-acceptance and the ability to adjust to change, to meet diversity, to develop his communication with the world and with other people, and to accept his own uniqueness.

Unlike many children, the homosexual never had any desire to imitate or admire his father for one or several reasons. Some of these are: his too frequent irritation, fits of devastating anger, verbal and physical bullying, derision, extreme slothfulness, lack of affection, and no tenderness. These diverse reasons make it impossible for the little boy's budding masculinity to develop because of the emotional abuse and the feeling of having his individuality denigrated. So he will stifle his virility by detaching himself from everything the father should have been able to represent for him. Many homosexuals have made a secret vow to never be like their fathers. In the end this detachment is generalized to include other men as well, to the point that they totally separate themselves from symbols of masculinity. This induces a dichotomy between biological identity and psychological identity, a separation between the body and the mind.

Through Swedenborg we know that because of this separation an absence of correspondence results and Divine influx can no longer operate, which causes all kinds of behavioral disorders. Regeneration consists in re-establishing the correspondence,

being purified of the evil, and beginning the work of healing, but we will return to this later.

If the father is not in a love of God, he cannot be a good father, but will transmit evil heredity only. “A person is born into a state of evil....A person acquires the state from his father, from whom he has his soul....The seed which comes from the father is the first vessel receptive of life... being in the form of his love....It follows therefore that evils we call hereditary come from fathers, and so from grandfathers and great-grandfathers, being transmitted in succession from them into their offspring.” (*Divine Love and Wisdom* 269) “The interior man or spirit itself comes from the father, but the exterior man or body itself from the mother” (*Arcana Coelestia* 1815).

In the absence of any good identification with the father and with men in general, masculinity is hidden and remains latent. This is why most homosexuals say they see nothing but absolute emptiness in themselves, no accessible internal, for the internal closes early on as it protects itself against external aggression. So the child grows up in total superficiality; and even if numerous homosexuals do have great sensitivity, intelligence, amiability and so on, their masculinity is non-existent, and their personal esteem and socialization remain very problematic.

Lacking access to the healthy and viable internal that comes from a good relationship with his father, the homosexual fills this void with phantasmagoric imaginings, projecting his sick psyche in deviant behaviors. He does not want to grow up; he hides behind appearances—the mask, the game, the theater. He does not want to become a man because he does not want to resemble his father; he does not want to become dominating, cruel and destructive.

However this is often what he does become, because the homosexual relationship is often fraught with domination, betrayal, lies, obsession and dependency, and culminates in depression, illness and suicide.

### **The Two Constants**

The constants among homosexuals are (1) an abused parent, often the mother—creating a situation of emotional incest—with one parent, and (2) an abusive parent, often the father—creating the impossibility of masculinization—with the other one.

This picture suggests neither a parental nor a marital archetype, just a pattern of brokenness and suffering. It is the homosexual tragedy.

### **Androgyny in ancient cultures**

It seems that history repeats itself, for the myth of the primordial androgyny of the first humans is found in all ancient cultures. Here again I am speaking of myth, for what was in the beginning a spiritual principle has been interpreted and understood in a biological and psychological way. What confusion! But isn't all this confounding of the spiritual with the material an effect of the fall?

In all the original cosmogonies one finds the idea of the cosmic, anthropomorphic egg that represents the initial androgyny in which opposites are mixed together and where duality is but one.

In the Tao, "One" produces "Two", which is how the primordial Adam, not male at all but androgynous, becomes Adam and Eve.

**Hinduism.** Shiva, an androgynous divinity, is identified as the informing principle of manifestation that is portrayed intimately entwined with Shakti, his own power. One notices traces of androgyny in Adonis, Dionysius, and the Sybil. The Chinese phoenix, symbol of regeneration, is a hermaphrodite, seen as the union of seed and breath.

**Plato.** He recalled the myth of androgyny in "Banquet", where he says, "At that time, androgynous was a distinct gender which, as to both form and name, derived from two beings that both had male and female qualities." (189)

Also for Origen, Gregory de Nyssa, Maximus Confessor, and

even Simon Magus who was a contemporary of the disciples, becoming One is the purpose of human life. In Adam they saw an image of androgynous God that was lost through differentiation with Eve, but found again in the new Adam, and glorified through the Christ. According to them “metanoia”, that is, conversion, causes an overturning of values that results in an individual becoming either male or female, or neither male nor female but in the image of God.

This is how they interpreted the words of the Lord when He said, “In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven” (Matthew. 22.30). Or the words of Paul, who said that by baptism: “there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28). They also use Christ saying “...that they may be one as We are” (John 17.11).

That theme has been taken up in certain apocryphal writing, such as the gospel of Thomas where Jesus supposedly said, “If you make male and female into a one, so that the male is no longer male and the female no longer female then you will enter into the kingdom,” (Logon 17-18) or in the gospel of Philip: “Christ came to restore what was separated from the beginning and to again unite the two.” (Doresse II, p. 157)

The epistle of Clement could be cited, or Philo of Alexandria, as well as the neo-platonic and neo-Pythagorean theosophists, and also the hermetics and a number of Christian Gnostics who fall back on ancient Greek theories, using only Christ’s words on Unity.

In ancient Greek mythology numerous divine beings procreated all by themselves, in fact. This parthenogenesis implies androgyny, an image and likeness of the Divine Creator who produced the Cosmos and its inhabitants from His own unity.

I won’t go into all the details, nor refer to all the authors who have written about the myth of androgyny, because it would fill an encyclopedia. Isn’t it amazing to see how fully and with what interest this subject has been treated?

Carl Jung took up this duality of gender in the mind of a human being using the terms *anima* and *animus*, which are also found in Swedenborg's *Arcana Coelestia*. In Genesis 1:27 it is said, "And God created man in His own image. He created them male and female." In the explanation of the internal sense of this verse, The Writings tell us that this passage treats of the Most Ancients who were interior, celestial people for whom marriage was a source of the greatest joy, and we find there this interesting sentence: "They called the understanding in the spiritual man Male and the will Female, and when the two acted as one, they called it Marriage" (*Arcana Coelestia* 54).

This celestial humanity, that existed before the fall and was in the image and likeness of God, considered the mental duality of the intellectual and affective functions "male" and "female." Other passages tell us that this duality emanates from the duality that exists in the Creator. We read elsewhere, "Being and expression in the human God are distinctly One like soul and body. A soul does not exist apart from its body, nor does a body apart from its soul. The Divine soul of the human God is what we mean by the Divine being, and His Divine body is what we mean by its Divine expression. To believe that a soul can exist and can think and be wise apart from a body is an error arising from misconceptions; for every person's soul exists in a spiritual body after it has cast off the material remains which enveloped it in the world" (*Divine Love and Wisdom* 14; see 17 and 34).

Those who wish to fully understand the subject of "distinctly One" should read the whole chapter. In a similar vein we read, "Man was created in such a way that those two parts should constitute one single mind, and no other difference should exist between them than, to use a comparison, between that of a flame and the light shining from it" (*Arcana Coelestia* 2231.2).

Before the fall the human mind was one, that is to say, a harmonious communion existed within it. But after the fall a disharmony was established, for the will became self-centered and evil.

The purpose of the Lord's incarnation was to offer humanity a new possibility of union between the two [mental] functions by a process of regeneration of the will. This was made possible by means of the revelation of the Divine wisdom that had been lost in the flood.

Before the fall, will and understanding were ONE. This does not mean that the celestial beings of that period were androgynous, but that harmony existed between their intellect and their feelings, or between their heart and their mind, between their soul and their body. Thus hypocrisy did not exist; what was outside was the same as what was inside and this was in communion with God. But, according to Swedenborg, these celestial beings were either male or female. What was different was that they could perceive in their conscience who their soul-mate was, and so they could enter into a conjugal relationship in late adolescence. Many examples are given where angels in heaven recognize their eternal partner as if by instinct.

It is otherwise today. With a divided mind it is difficult for us to recognize our soul-mate. At best we can, with a partner, prepare ourselves for conjugal life by learning to be honest, faithful, authentic, helpful, to love each other freely and to cleanse ourselves of evil and falsity.

To return to the subject of the sex of the soul, we read in the Writings that, "After death a man is still a man, and a woman is still a woman, and there is nothing in the soul, mind, or body which is not masculine in the male and feminine in the female; and the two sexes have been so created as to strive for conjunction, indeed for conjunction in order that they may become one" (*Conjugal Love* 46). According to this passage then, it is said that the male is male, even in his soul, and similarly the female, and that the gender of an individual is the same from inmost to outmost.

If it happens today that there are identity issues with many, this is due to the absence of parents who love each other, the absence

of archetypes, and the absence of role-models and points of reference. The gender identity crises with homosexuals relate to the absence of guidelines and have nothing to do with a wrong soul in a wrong body. The feeling of inadequacy is existential and emotional, and not due to an error of soul-body compatibility. Another passage tells us, “The soul is a human form, from which nothing can be taken away, and to which nothing can be added, and it is the inmost form in all the forms of the entire person. Moreover, because the forms which exist outwardly take both their essence and their form from the inmost one ...therefore... the form of the soul is fully... human” (*Conjugal Love* 316). This is why, in the conjugal relationship the masculine soul of the husband and the feminine soul of his wife become ONE, and many references speak of “union of souls.”

This union of two souls, male and female, becomes the image and likeness of the Divine Human who Himself is “distinctly ONE” in the union of Divine Love and Divine Wisdom, or in the union of His Divine essence with His Human essence.

From all eternity, God is ONE, and when He creates souls He creates them, as I understand it - and this is only me and my reading of the Writings - in pairs, in soul-mates, one male and one female. These souls, in their incarnation, are led to find each other by deepest human perception under the guidance of Divine Providence. This occurred instinctively during the golden age, whereas today, since the fall, it is a real obstacle-course. It nevertheless remains possible for those who allow themselves to be guided by the Lord and who have begun their regeneration.

I have mentioned before that in describing and explaining the mind, all the researchers and authors from ancient times up to the present have had, and still have, difficulty presenting a clear picture of how the mind works. This is mostly due to the fact that they do not know the doctrine of discrete degrees, which was revealed to Swedenborg by the Lord. This science, together with the science of correspondences, makes it possible to rationally

understand and explain the Divine nature, the nature of man, creation, the incarnation, revelation, the conjugal etc. I am not going to expound this science of degrees here because it would require whole books. Nevertheless you can read in the Writings (*Divine Love and Wisdom* 173-277) how they work and how they explain everything.

In conclusion, I will briefly show here how they can shed light on our subject.

In the Writings the Eternal Creator is frequently called the Divine Human, especially in the *Arcana Coelestia*. Outside of time and space, which is to say in His transcendence, He is distinctly ONE; in Him exists the union of all dualities. When He creates in time and space, He does it from His Divine essence through the intermediary of His Human Essence. His Human is the form of His Divine, as His wisdom is the expression of His Love. His Human became visible in the incarnation of Jesus Christ, in whom dwelt the invisible Divine. This Human, masculine in form, enters into communion with His creation which is feminine in nature, as in a conjugal relationship.

Thus God is called the husband, and humanity, desirous of conjunction, is called the wife. However there is a discrete degree between God's intrinsic, transcendent duality, and His creation. The non-time and space communicates with the spatial-temporal by correspondence.

The influx of Life can pass from the Infinite Eternal to the finite temporal, because of the qualitative similitude. Similarly a discrete degree exists between the Divine Human and the duality of mind of the human being. In the light of the stated passages, we can understand that human souls are either male or female, but that in each one there is a duality, of intellect and affections.

A man has these two polarities, as does a woman, and it is frequently stated that in spite of the more intellectual nature of the male, and the more affectionate nature of the woman, a male can have an affectionate or sensitive side that is more

developed, and the woman can have a dominant intellectual and rational side, without either losing their sexual gender identity because of this. As I have said before, one can be a very sensitive, feeling male who loves being a father to his children, and still be male and not “effeminate” because of it; and similarly with a woman.

The confusion in sexual orientation is rooted in the absence of guidelines or direction on the part of parental couples. And because the homosexual did not receive appropriate guidance from his father or mother, he seeks to affirm his identity by having relationships with people of the same sex. This has nothing to do with his deep nature.

Parents who desire a conjugal union and are in the process of becoming one, enable their children to develop their identity in a harmonious way. We read: “The offspring born of couples who are in a state of truly conjugal love derive from their parents a conjugal connection between good and truth, from which they have an inclination and faculty, if a son, to perceive matters having to do with wisdom, if a daughter, to love the things that wisdom teaches” (*Conjugal Love* 202). “Everyone derives from [one’s parents] an innate character in the form of a disposition....The evils that the parents themselves have acquired and by transmission passed on to their offspring are those into which people are born” (*Conjugal Love* 525).

This explains why the process of becoming spiritual parents, as couples, is in spite of everything the means given for our regeneration in today’s world. This parental couple is the celestial father and the earthly mother; the husband and wife that I mentioned earlier, and who are spoken of in the Word. We are all called, then, to heal our wounds, to put right what is distorted and to purify ourselves in order to open ourselves at last to eternal, conjugal happiness.

“Let us be glad and rejoice... for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready... Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper...And the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come!’” (Revelation. 19.7-9; 22.17).

## DECLARATIONS OF FAITH AND PURPOSE

### **Derrick Lumsden**

I believe that “the Lord from eternity, who is Jehovah, came into the world [as Jesus Christ] in order to make the hells subject to Him and to glorify His Human nature; without [coming into the world] no mortal person could have been saved; and those are saved who believe in Him... [but it is imperative to understand that] to believe in the Lord [Jesus Christ] is to have confidence that He saves; and as only those who live a good life can have this confidence, this, too, is meant by believing in Him” (*True Christian Religion* 2). I believe that the Old and New Testaments and the Heavenly Doctrines are Divine revelation from the Lord and together these works teach about Him in fullness and power.

It is my intended purpose “to preach the good news that the Lord God Jesus Christ reigns and that His kingdom will be forever and ever” (*True Christian Religion* 791). I will bear witness to the importance of the two essentials of the New Church: the Divinity of the Lord's Humanity and the necessity of living a truly Christian and charitable life (see *Apocalypse Revealed* 493, 509). I will teach about the glory of the Lord and lead to the joy of heavenly life through the Word of the Lord and His doctrines.

Lord, I pray that Your kingdom may come to earth and that I may be a servant of that coming. I pray that You guide me in Your work, please send Your Holy Spirit to teach and lead me. Give me a humble and wise that I may better serve Your church for Your glory and the glory of Your kingdom. Nevertheless, not my will but Thy will be done.

### **Hennock Aggro**

I believe that the Lord from eternity, who is Jehovah came into the world to subjugate the hells and glorify His Human, and that

without this no human could have been saved. I also believe that those who are saved believe in Him—thus do His will.

I do believe that evils must not be done because they are of the devil and from the devil, and that instead, goods must be done because they are of God and come from God.

I firmly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; the Almighty and everlasting God, the Maker of the heavens and the earth, and Savior of the world. I believe in the sacred Scripture: the Word of God, the foundation of wisdom, the origin of Life, and the way to heaven; and I strongly believe in the second coming of the Lord, in the spiritual sense of the Word and in the Heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem.

I believe that to have faith in the Lord is to have confidence that the Lord will save, and that because none can have such confidence except some one who leads a good life, therefore this also is understood by having faith in the Lord.

I therefore beseech You oh Lord, to teach me the way of Your statutes, and I shall keep it to the end. Give me understanding, and I shall keep Your Law. Indeed I shall observe it with my whole heart (Ps. 119:33, 34).

My goal for presenting myself for ordination into the ministry is to make myself available to the Lord to use me as a vessel to reach out to other people by means of the Word, to save as many as possible from hell to heaven; as this is the greatest use of mankind.

### **Kwadwo Adu Amoako**

I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Divine Man as Jehovah God Himself who came into the world to deliver men on earth from the violence and assault of hell, thus from spiritual or eternal damnation.

I also believe in Him as the infinite, eternal, un-create, omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent One. He is life itself, hence the Source of life of the universe.

Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is to have the confidence that

only He can save from evils and deliver man into spiritual good. And because none can have such confidence except those who endeavor to lead a good life, leading a life of good from Him, is to be understood as having faith in Him.

I believe that every man is purposely created by the Lord for the good of others, and not for himself. Man must therefore be of use to fellow men so that he could assume the true human spirit and form.

The sacred Scriptures are the Word of the Lord. And the Heavenly Doctrines of the New Jerusalem are the expositions of the internal sense of the Word delivered to the human race by the Lord. They are therefore the fountain of wisdom, the source of life, and the only way to heaven when man applies them to life.

I believe that evils must be shunned, because they are from the devil and are exhalations from hell. Goods must be done, because they are of the Lord and from Him.

My main aim and purpose in offering myself for ordination into ministry, is to present my whole being: soul, spirit and body to the Lord to be used as an instrument to seek and to save those who are in spiritual darkness and in death. That, they could be delivered of the Lord from hell and unto Himself in heaven.

May God help me!

### **George Genya Dziekpor**

I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ: the almighty and everlasting God, the Maker of heaven and earth, the Redeemer and Savior of the world.

I believe that the Lord is our Creator, and the one God in whom there is the trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and from whom angels and men receive life.

I believe in the Divine authority of the Old Testament, the New Testament and the Heavenly Doctrines of the New Jerusalem. It is also my belief that by means of them there is conjunction with the Lord and affiliation with angels.

I believe that the Lord has made His Second Coming in the spiritual sense of the Word and in the Heavenly Doctrines of the New Jerusalem. I do believe in the repentance of life leading to regeneration, the life of charity, the life after death, and life everlasting.

It is in all humility that I present myself for ordination into the ministry, and I confess and acknowledge that I do that in response to a call from the Lord. I vow to be a worthy vessel for the Lord's work of salvation, and affirm my commitment to serve the General Church of the New Jerusalem with all my heart.

This I do in the presence of God and this congregation. So help me God!

My prayer to You is: O Lord, let your Word be a lamp to my feet and a light to my path (Ps. 119:105).

### **Roger Koudou**

*(Delivered in French for the sake of his family.)*

I Roger Koudou solemnly and humbly declare my faith before the Lord and this congregation that I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ: the Almighty and everlasting God, the Maker of heaven and earth, the Redeemer and Savior of the world. I believe in the Sacred Scripture: the Word of God, the Fountain of wisdom, the Source of life, and the Way to heaven.

I believe in the Second Coming of the Lord, in the spiritual sense of the Word and in the Heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem. I also believe that evils must not be done because they are of the devil and from the devil, and that instead goods must be done because they are of God and from God.

I thank God for calling me to serve Him, and I promise to serve Him and the church with my whole heart.

### **Israel Gyan Ampem-Darko**

I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Divine Man in the universe from Whom all men and creatures have their being. I

believe in the true God, the Creator, Redeemer and the Enlightener to Whom this Trinity belongs.

I believe in the same God the Infinite, Eternal, Uncreate, Omnipotent, Omnipresent and Omniscient. I believe that He alone is Life Itself and the Source of life of the universe.

I believe that He is the same Jehovah God in the Old Testament Who changed it to Jesus Christ in the New Testament. I believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is Love Itself; the only One God who wishes to give all He has to the other, but because there is nobody like Him in the whole universe, He created man to give him all His love.

I believe that the love the Lord gives is life which is the source of salvation, peace and happiness for mankind. I also believe that the salvation He gives is the withdrawal of man from evils and falsities or hell by means of man doing His commandments in the Word.

I believe that man is purposely created by God for others and not for himself; so that he may be of use to other people and have the true human spirit and form.

My main aim for presenting myself for ordination into the ministry is to get the opportunity to offer my whole being for use by the Lord to save as many people as possible from hell to Himself in Heaven.

I want to spread the life-giving truths of the Lord and the equality of husband and wife or man and woman in the Lord; to make life comfortable and enjoyable to couples, men and women in this and the next world.

The Lord help me.

### **John K. Segbenu**

I believe in the teachings of the New Church that the Lord from eternity, who is Jehovah, came into the world to defeat the hells and to glorify His Human; and without this no mortal could have been saved; and those are saved who believe in Him.

By this assumption of the Human, the Lord admitted temptations into His Human to the last of them, which was the passion of the cross. Without this Divine work no mortal could have been saved and they are saved who live well and believe in Him.

A person is saved by means of the Holy Spirit which is the Divine operation proceeding from the only one God. This Holy Spirit enables a person to shun evils as sins against the Lord.

I believe also that there is life after death, and that everyone goes to heaven or hell according to the kind of life he or she leads during life in this world.

Now since it is essence of love to share what it has with others, therefore, it is my heart's desire to be ordained into New Church's priesthood. This ordination will enable me to help spread this new revelation from the Lord effectively. May the Lord's Word be a lamp to my feet and a light onto my path to enable me to be a sincere and faithful servant in His vineyard.

**Eric Messan Souka**

*July 20, 2008, Vogan, Togo (Delivered in his own language Ewe, for the sake of his family.)*

I believe in the Lord God Jesus Christ as one God of heaven and earth, in whom there is the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit.

I believe that the Lord has made his second coming in the Heavenly Doctrine.

I believe that the Old Testament, the New Testament and the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg are the Word of God; I believe in Conjugal love that it can be achieved only between one man and one woman.

I believe that baptism was instituted as a sign that a man is a member of the Church and as a memorial that he is to be regenerated.

I believe that the Holy Spirit cannot be controlled or commanded because it is God Himself.

I believe that it is the Lord alone who teaches, leads and establishes His church on earth.

I believe that no one can be introduced into the church and formed for heaven except by knowledge from the Word.

I also believed that He does that though the priest, who must

teach the truth from the Word and lead thereby to the good of life.

In presenting myself for ordination into the priesthood, it is my earnest desire, purpose and determination to be a humble servant of the Lord. I pray that the Lord preserves me from abuse of this sacred office, that I may be a faithful and loyal servant and that through me the Lord may build His New Church in the hearts and mind of His own people.

Let His will be done in my life now and ever.

### *Editorial*

## **THOSE WHO WILL BE IN THE NEW CHURCH**

Are you ‘New Church’? Of course you are. You are reading *New Church Life*! What could be more “New Church” than that? It is interesting though that the phrase “those who will be in the New Church” occurs 40 times in the *Apocalypse Explained* and *Apocalypse Revealed*, in fulfillment of verses of the Book of Revelation which prophecy the coming of the New Church. Only 8 more occurrences are found in other works of the Writings, six of these from *Prophet and Psalms* forecasting the next “New Church,” and one from *Arcana* and one from *True Christian Religion*. This last reads: “In that day’ means after His glorification, that is, after His perfect and absolute union with the Father. This Arcanum is from the Lord Himself, given for those who will be of His New Church” (*True Christian Religion* 154). It closely matches an early reference in *Apocalypse Revealed*, the very first number: “That this Revelation is from the Lord alone, and that it is received by those who will be in His New Church, which is the New Jerusalem, and acknowledge the Lord as the God of heaven and earth” (*Apocalypse Revealed* 1).

The entire Book of Revelation had to be received by people on earth before any New Church could be founded. The explanation of its contents had to come first (*Apocalypse Revealed* was published in 1766), and only “those who will be in His New

Church, which is the New Jerusalem” could receive it. Such people “acknowledge the Lord as the God of heaven and earth” as He is described in His Word. (*Apocalypse Revealed* 1)!

There are several groups of verses from the Apocalypse which refer to “those who will be” in the New Church in their internal sense. One group are the “twelve tribes of Israel,” 12,000 of each tribe referring to “those who will be in the New Church” (cf. *Apocalypse Revealed* 351, 352, 354, 361)! Another group has to do with “brother and companion” i.e. that angels and people are brethren and no one should bow to angels since they bow to no one but the Lord. Both angels and men are thus “in the New Church.”

Besides “those who will be in the New Church,” another phrase found exclusively in the Apocalypse is: “Those who are in the doctrine of the New Jerusalem” (*Apocalypse Revealed* 932, 946). This is meant by the “river of water of life” which specifically refers to the “book of Revelation which has now been explained and revealed” (*Apocalypse Explained* 932). Isn’t that interesting? The “river of life” means “The Apocalypse now explained and revealed.” The book *Apocalypse Revealed* is itself prophesied! People who accept that doctrine are also prophesied. Thus whereas the Seven Churches (Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatire, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laocidea) mean “those who will be in the New Heaven and the New Church” (*Apocalypse Explained* 91), the woman about to give birth means “those who will be in the doctrine of the New Jerusalem both as to faith and charity together” (*Apocalypse Explained* 712, 721, 765).

Are you in the Doctrine of the New Jerusalem and living by it? Who are such people? They are also meant in Revelation by: the “brothers” who were accused by the dragon “day and night” (Revelation 12:10, *Apocalypse Revealed* 554); and by the “Glory of God shining from the New Jerusalem, like jasper, like crystal” (Revelation 21:11, *Apocalypse Revealed* 897); by the

woman about to deliver, threatened by the dragon (Rev. 12:4, *Apocalypse Explained* 712, 721); by the wings of eagles for the woman in the wilderness (*Revelation* 12:14, *Apocalypse Revealed* 561), and by “thy brethren the prophets” (*Revelation* 22:4, *Apocalypse Revealed* 946). That’s who. The comforting thing about all these prophecies, is that if you consider yourself ‘New Church’, you may be a fulfillment of all these prophecies! You are “in the doctrine of the New Jerusalem,” and you are “in the New Church.” Congratulations!

We do know what type of New Church members are meant by the 144,000 of the Tribes of Israel we mentioned above, i.e. Gad, Reuben, Naphtali, Benjamin or the rest! The Lord knows who they are, i.e. “those who will be in the Lord’s New Heaven and New Church” (*Apocalypse Revealed* 351, 352, 354, et. al.). But we might enjoy thinking about some of the signs of belonging, namely the absence of the “love of self” and of “self-derived intelligence” meant by the city having “no need of the sun and moon to shine in it, for the glory of God has enlightened it, and the lamp of it is the Lamb” (*Revelation* 21:23, *Apocalypse Revealed* 919). The love of self—“sun”— here means lack of opposition to the Lord and a love for Him and His Word. A lot of people would love to identify with this description of themselves: they “have Divine truths inscribed on their life, and therefore they ‘walk’, that is, live justly in accordance with it, and also they see them inwardly in themselves just as the eye sees objects, who live in accordance with just precepts because they are Divine laws, just as a citizen (*homo civilis*) lives in accordance with just precepts because they are civil laws...A citizen of heaven...makes the civil laws that are of justice Divine laws also” (*Apocalypse Revealed* 920).

It is of course not all that easy to identify such conditions in oneself. It comes down to being a citizen of heaven. We are that when we obey spiritual law as readily as we stop at a stop sign,

or let a pedestrian cross. We at least wish to become such. And who knows what “self-derived intelligence” looks like? This the “moon” not needed. Most New Church people do know the urge to turn to the Writings on a constant basis, and just love hearing them. That is NOT self-derived intelligence, but intelligence relying on revelation. This is the “Glory of God, the lamp of the Lamb.” Again and again, the Writings make new sense and explain things not heard before, not even heard of! So certain was it back in ca. 90 a.d. when the Book of Revelation was inspired for John to compose, that such lovers of the Writings would be found, that the prophecy of the New Church could be stated in such uncompromisingly clear wording: “The seven lamp-stands are the seven churches...Those who will be in His New Church, which is the New Jerusalem” (*Revelation 1:20, Apocalypse Explained 91 et al.*).

“Those who will be.” It sounds like the New Church is destined to come regardless, and our decision is whether to be part of it, or just watch it pass by! We are part of it when we are “in the doctrine of the New Jerusalem, and do its commandments” (*Apocalypse Revealed 932*). When we love to hear the Doctrines, we are “in” them. This is to be “fellow-servants” to the angels (*Apocalypse Revealed 946*). John not bowing to angels means us knowing that people make angels, angels were people, and we are created for the end of a “heaven from the human race.” We are “fellow brethren, angels and us”! Angels become irate even when good things are attributed to them (*Heaven & Hell 9*)! During worship, angels and humans occupy adjacent pews in two worlds, kneeling before the same Lord. Those in the “doctrine of the New Jerusalem,” whether angels or men, are “associated as brothers with brothers” (*Apocalypse Revealed 818, 946*). Hence the angel’s words, “Worship God.”

Thus, upon entering the New Church, a mask drops: angels are

not created from the beginning, but they are aunts, uncles, grandparents who have gone ahead, ancestors from all ages. “Meet angel Jones!” Every memorial service reminds us of the reality of the after-life, as we talk of our departed friends as already awake and aware of the degree reality which it only takes reading *Heaven and Hell* to accept. Death as the end to everything, or a vague fear of a Day of Atonement or Armageddon, is the first burden newcomers can heave off their shoulders. The substantial existence of our own soul is an individual reality with an excruciatingly detailed memory of absolutely everything of one’s entire life, one’s “Book of Life” (*Heaven and Hell* 462b, *Conjugal Love* 183, *Divine Love and Wisdom* 257). It is preserved as the inner substance of our spirit yet touching the world most pointedly, i.e. the “limbus” or border between the two worlds (*True Christian Religion* 103) which forms the basis for eternal existence. The spirit constitutes a real life after the death of the body in a world of the spirit, i.e. the spiritual world. It is more real than this world. I sometimes ask my students, what is more real, a stubbed toe or a hurt feeling? The hurt feeling wins, and demonstrates the superior reality of our mind, and thus the reality of an after-life compared with the inferior ‘stubbed toe’ reality of life on earth!

“And do its commandments.” What does this mean? It means the oft-repeated refrain of every New Church person: all that is really required is to live by the Ten Commandments. It is still true. The Lord in the New Testament restored or maintained the Ten Commandments as vital and vibrant. The Writings now explicate in detail how they not only are to be obeyed in their literal statements, but how they are to be obeyed on the spiritual and celestial levels also. This starts us off on “doing the commandments of the Doctrine of the New Jerusalem.” We live by the spiritual sense of the Word! The spiritual sense when stated on its own, is Doctrine (*Arcana Coelestia* 9380, 10400,

*Heavenly Doctrine* 7), and “the Lord's New Church as to doctrine” was seen by John “in the form of a city” (*Apocalypse Revealed* 896, cf. 194, 880, *Apocalypse Explained* 222). When we are “in” that doctrine, i.e. living in the Holy City Jerusalem, we are consciously aware of its teachings. While always obeying the literal Ten Commandments, we also notice when their spiritual or celestial senses come to bear in our lives. That is more subtle. For e.g. we “shun” the evil of murder as a sin against the Lord, thus in the celestial sense of that text, when we shun claiming any credit for what belongs to the Lord (cf. *True Christian Religion* 236). We can't act any of His roles! This way, the doctrines become our constant guides. We never know when a doctrine will be tested in our life. The Sunday sermon may “strike” on Wednesday the following week! The Heavenly Doctrine forms as it were a “grid” which spans every person's entire life. Any moment we are in the ‘cross-hairs’ of one passage or other. No issue escapes a relevant passage clarifying what we should do next. We apply doctrine to life when our knowledge of doctrine prevents a wrong deed or word. Thus living by the doctrines is more like living *with* them! They form our conscience. If we only love them, they make themselves known when something isn't quite right. We shy away from thoughts, words or deeds which just are not according to doctrine. That is shunning evils as sins. We may not realize that we have just shunned an interior evil as a sin, for e.g. cleared up a mental state which before was fired with lethal anger from hell against someone. However this is what is meant by keeping the two last commandments not to “lust” after evils, i.e. “thou shalt not covet.” It is being aware of evils of our will (*Arcana Coelestia* 8909). These deeper evils are shunned as regeneration progresses, armed with doctrinal knowledge of the deeper senses of the Ten Commandments.

We can now understand why the New Church is not

established by miracles, as the Christian Church was. Mind you, there *were* miracles! If it had not been for miracles, the Lord would not have been received (*Spiritual Experiences Minor* 4724)! Today, however, the same kind of miracles would harm us instead, and force belief which would next threaten profanation. And so, no miracle for the New Church, other than the event of Swedenborg's eyes being opened, and the Lord using angels and spirits to demonstrate the spiritual world to him. Surprisingly, perhaps, the Writings say this event was "not" a miracle, since Swedenborg's intellect was just separated a little to witness an already existing reality of two world (*Coronis Miracle* V). People are already spirits! Where's the miracle? Anyhow, we know that the Lord personally inspired the writing of the Writings. No angels "wished," no spirits "dared" to say "anything about the Word or doctrine drawn from the Word, but this was revealed to me by the Lord alone, who appeared to me" (*Divine Providence* 135). This intromission into the spiritual world—even though we just saw that it was not really a miracle—"surpasses all miracles," because it has not been granted "since creation" (*Invitation* 52, cf. 39, 43, 55). No one in the history of mankind has experienced the kind of total awareness of the afterlife that Swedenborg enjoyed. Except one. The Lord Himself, of course, experienced this, but the phrase "has not been granted" refers to mere mortals! The Lord is Infinite Divine. Still, on earth He also enjoyed double vision (*Arcana Coelestia* 1806e, 1807e) and saw all things that concerned Himself, in the universe, heaven, world of spirits, and hell (*Arcana Coelestia* 1701,1786,1919). That is how He could grant the experience again to Swedenborg, but only once. For the Lord does everything perfectly, thus once only. This fact is meant by "surely I come quickly, Amen." Because the Lord had already appeared in Person on earth once, His Second coming cannot repeat the first coming, thus "cannot be in Person" but in

the “Word which is Himself” (*True Christian Religion* 776). It is clear that the Lord could do this “only by means of a man who is able not only to receive these doctrines in his understanding but also to publish them by the press” (*True Christian Religion* 779). Being “of the New Church” and “in the doctrine of the New Jerusalem” means accepting this method of making the Second Coming, as historical fact: “the Lord manifested Himself before me, His servant, and sent me to this office, that He afterward opened the eyes of my spirit and thus introduced me into the spiritual world” (*ibid.*). Swedenborg is inspired here to refer to himself as the instrument of the Lord’s Second Coming.

It is clear that this doctrinal information “was not in the former Church” because “it would not have been received” if it had been given at the time of the Advent, or any time down to Luther’s Reformation (*Lord* 65). Today, however, we just pass out this information freely, as part of missionary work. We give and give, and those who are of the light will come to it! “Those who will be in the New Church” are always out there. Those with whom the message remains are then those “who approach the Lord alone, and acknowledge Him as the God of heaven and earth” (*ibid.*). Those who live well from all religions, have this potential New Church faith imbedded in their goodness, and are potential converts (*Arcana Coelestia* 3263:2).

The center of the faith of the New Church, the *raison d’être* of the General Church in all its worship and activity, is the doctrine of the Divine Human. Now that the New Jerusalem, i.e., the doctrine of the New Church, has descended from Heaven to earth, and “Christianity is for the first time beginning to dawn” (*True Christian Religion* 668, 700), just Who the Lord God is and why we worship Him, is made crystal clear. Well, actually many of you who have studied the subject and attended Arcana Classes may feel hard put to explain it adequately. The subject however centers on what we so often repeat, and know and love

by heart: “God is one, in whom is the Divine Trinity, and He is the Lord God the Savior Jesus Christ” (*True Christian Religion* 3). That is good enough, all you need to know and say. It is of course explained everywhere, but also in the same number: “Jehovah God is Love itself and Wisdom itself, or Good itself and Truth itself. He came down in the form of Divine Truth, which is the Word and which was God with God, and took upon Himself human form, so as to reduce to order everything in heaven, in hell and in the church” (ibid.). That God HIMSELF came down as a Divine soul to the body taken on from Mary, a body which had OUR human nature, subject to the SAME temptations we have from human heredity, a heredity so full of evil that it was collapsing all the defenses of the human race against the hells invading and snuffing it out; and that the LORD from infancy onwards CONQUERED all the evils of human heredity, thus also the hells backing them, thereby MAKING HIS HUMAN COMPLETELY DIVINE, with no maternal or mortal remainder; and that He did this by REPLACING THE MATERNAL HUMAN WITH DIVINE COUNTER-PARTS, id est, “with the Lord the earlier forms which came from His mother were completely *destroyed* and *rooted out* [prorsus deletae et extirpatae sunt], and Divine forms were received and *replaced them*” (*Arcana Coelestia* 6872e, emphases added), this in sum is the doctrine of the Divine Human. Nothing was converted from natural to the Divine (*Lord* 35), but Divine forms *replaced* the exact bodily forms of the natural which were completely and utterly destroyed, extirpated, dissipated and annihilated. These are the terms used. The Risen Lord was thus made Divine, glorified, as to the Natural also, meant by “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I Myself; handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as ye see Me have” (Luke 24:39, 40, John 20:20, *Lord* 35). Thus He became Jehovah also as to the Human Essence (*Arcana Coelestia* 1502, 1568, 7014).

This doctrine is what makes the New Church unique. Every other interpretation of the Crucifixion makes the human of the risen Lord still “like us” except without sin, – the building-block for persons in the Trinity. All creeds perpetuate such false faith, rescued only by the Athanasian Creed rightly understood, as reworded verbatim in *Lord 58*.

Instead, we have simply: “The Lord God Jesus Christ Reigns, whose kingdom shall be for ages of ages” (*True Christian Religion* 791). We now see.

For such reasons, the New Church is established by a new revelation, and the belief that the Writings are that revelation so long foretold, the “speaking plainly of the Father” (John 16:25), the “power and great glory” of the internal spiritual sense of the Word, seen in the “clouds of heaven” of the literal Biblical text (*Coronis* LI, *Invitation* 0, 1) is central to the faith of New Church members. That is why “spiritual peace and internal blessedness and conjunction with the Lord is promised to the New Church” (*Coronis* LIII). The New Church was in fact “foreseen from the creation of the world” namely that it would be the “crown of the four preceding churches, because it is to have true faith and true charity” (*Coronis* LII). The prophecy “the time is near” (Revelation 1:3) and “except those days should be shortened, no flesh should be saved” (Matthew 24:21-22) mean that “unless the New Church should arise, which acknowledges these two essentials [one God and repentance of life] and lives accordingly, no one can be saved” (*Apocalypse Revealed* 9). That makes the establishment of the New Church by the books published and read between 1749 (Vol. I of *Arcana*) and 1771 (*True Christian Religion*) and thereafter, of historical indeed epic proportions!

And the Revelation prophecy of the “time is at hand” in chapter 1:3 involving the dire prediction of the end of the world if the New Church did not come “shortly,” is followed by the

words “John to the seven Churches in Asia” (*Revelation* 1:4). It means an “invitation to the entire Christian World to enter this [New] Church, and an exhortation to worthily receive the Lord” (*Coronis* LV). For the seven Churches mean “All who are in the Christian world where the Word is, and by it the Lord is known. These, if they live according to the Lord's precepts in the Word, make the church itself” (*Apocalypse Revealed* 1, 10). The New Church had to grow just as soon as the books were published. And it did.

In the New Church, the Lord alone is approached, “directly” without mediators of any kind (*Apocalypse Revealed* 476), and He is seen to be “one, both in person and essence, with the trinity in Him, namely the Lord.” (*Lord* 61) He alone is acknowledged as God, together with the Life according to the Ten Commandments and repentance of life (*Apocalypse Revealed* 9, 491). Because it is “now permitted to enter understandingly into the mysteries of faith” (*True Christian Religion* 508)—mysteries which have bedeviled the entire history of Christianity—the New Church will “receive illustration from the Lord, from the Word” (*Apocalypse Revealed* 43) to understand “all of the Word, which is now translucent from its spiritual sense” (*Apocalypse Revealed* 897, 911), and penetrate all its secrets which can then be confirmed from the literal texts of the Word (*True Christian Religion* 508). The promise is made to the New Church that its members can come into the Good of Love (*Apocalypse Revealed* 17) and receive Conjugal Love together with the reception of the Lord's New Church (*Conjugal Love* 43).

There are other symptoms of belonging to the New Church, beyond the obvious one of loving the doctrines and hearing sermons and classes where the quotations from the Writings do the teaching and leading. Some of these symptoms are found in worship services where the Third Commandment to “Remember the Sabbath Day” are fulfilled: “In the New Church there is to be

no external separated from an internal, because the Lord Himself in His Divine Human is approached, worshipped and adored. From Him is all of the Church” (*Apocalypse Revealed* 918). This of course makes the doctrine of the Lord again of central importance, since it is according to our understanding of the Word that the Church exists (*Sacred Scripture* 76 et. al.). Of course, this understanding now constitutes the Heavenly Doctrines themselves, as translated and published in barely countable numbers world-wide. These books “are” our understanding of the Word, “given for us to understand” by the Lord Himself making His Second Advent in and by them. Our understanding of the Word of Sacred Scripture now stands defined, and we just run or jog to keep up with our personal grasp and view of them.

It is clear to all readers of the Writings in the New Church that the above law for worshipping the Lord in His Divine Human, to have “no external separated from an internal,” applies to rituals of worship. For worship is internal and external. Externals such as rituals, are flexible, but should contain the internals without fail. Indeed we are fairly scared into compliance here, since we read this warning: “unless there are internal things within external ones, that is, unless men think of internal things when they are in external ones, and unless they are at the same time affected by the internal things, or at least unless they are affected by external things for the sake of internal things, there is not anything of the church” (*Arcana Coelestia* 4433)! Nothing of the Church! If you drift off during the sermon, or stand with hands in pockets and think of dinner, is this to chuck your membership of the New Church out the stained glass window? No, no, you are just concentrating on the contents! Or perhaps angels are talking to you, which happens without our own awareness! (*True Christian Religion* 14e, *Heaven and Hell* 438, 453) In any case, internal things clothe themselves with

natural things, so that they may be “there” and we can “lead a life in them” (*Arcana Coelestia* 6275:2). We have to pay attention from time to time so that the contents govern and match the format.

We are however fairly safe, because “the quality of the worship is derived from the goods and truths of the doctrine; for worship is nothing but an external act in which the internal things that are of doctrine should be. Without these worship is without its essence, life, and soul” (*Apocalypse Revealed* 777). And doctrine, i.e. teachings and quotes from the Writings are what we love! We read the Word of Heavenly Doctrine as a lesson in worship, right after the Word of Sacred Scriptures. Teachings from the Writings or doctrine should form the kernel of every sermon, i.e. what is taught is noticeably from the Writings.

Then comes the “faith” of the New Church, which is the essence of the membership of the New Church, namely “confidence in the Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ,” and a “trust” that if we live right by what we believe, “we will be saved by Him” (*True Christian Religion* 344). The essence of our faith is then in the “truths from the Word,” which involves a spiritual sight of them, seeing their harmony, being convinced by them and acknowledging them in our mind. With New Church Education well established and running for a century plus, we can welcome the evidence of the stages of the New Church faith: its infantile form, youthful faith, then adult faith. We can distinguish between faith in appearances of truth and in genuine truths; between faith from memory or from reason, but then from enlightenment. We can separate natural faith from spiritual faith, and appreciate what celestial faith might mean. We know there is miraculous faith, but the New Church is not established by miracles! Miracles still must be taught, because they are part of the Word, and once they did happen. ‘How’ is another story. They have their place with infants and young people, but when

they become adult, from compelled faith, people enter on “free faith” (cf. *True Christian Religion* 344).

What of the benefits of being “in the doctrine of the New Jerusalem” and of being “those found who will be in the New Church”? Those who have “accepted the doctrine of the New Church concerning the Lord” and have done “the good works of charity from religion” and thus not “committed evil” are in heaven “clothed in garments of a red color,” and after initiation into the “goods of the New Church” they are “clothed with garments of a purple color, which acquire a beautiful golden glow in proportion as they also receive truths” (*True Christian Religion* 537). Perhaps taste on clothing varies, but whatever clothing is worn in heaven, it will be nice anyhow!

How have you fared? Are you “New Church”? Have you “been found”? Please find yourself in the New Church.

## COMMUNICATIONS

Dear Editor,

I write to express appreciation for the editorial in the July, 2008 issue of *New Church Life* entitled “Male and Female Created He Them.” In an era when the sanctity of marriage appears to be increasingly overlooked the effect on the New Church is obviously taking its toll (the divorce rate). Even the spiritual sphere that should surround New Church weddings seems to be more and more absent. We are taught in the Word for the Second Coming that marriage is one of the holiest acts of worship stemming from the marriage of Good and Truth in the Lord Himself. The article points out that the progression of states from engagement, through betrothal, to the marriage itself provides an orderly and protective approach to an eternal relationship established by the Lord for the purpose of creating a heaven from the human race. Therefore every detail leading up to the conjunction of the man and the woman is of Divine importance.

The wedding itself is a solemn yet joyous occasion in which the changing relationship between the man and the woman and the Lord is of crucial significance. This change is actually carried out representatively on the chancel where the betrothed couple approaches the Lord in His open Word, the bride to the right of the groom. After giving their mutual consent, the officiating minister pronounces them husband and wife with the admonishment “What God has joined together let not man put asunder.” The groom then turns to the bride, lifts her veil, and they kiss. Lifting the veil has spiritual significance (*Arcana Coelestia* 32e). The veil represents the clothing of good with truth (*Arcana Coelestia* 3207) and the face signifies the interior affection of truth from good which now spiritually establishes their new relationship (*Apocalypse Explained* 64:2). Then the new husband moves to the right hand side of the wife because now the husband and wife *together* represent the Church, bride and wife of the Lord.

After the minister closes the Word and retires, the recessional is played while the congregation is seated and the husband and wife and the wedding party process out of the church. There should be no clapping or other celebration in the sanctuary in honor of the Lord’s house.

My reason for re-emphasizing some of the points made in the editorial stems from my eleven years as Cathedral curator where I helped supervise many wedding rehearsals, and often had to gently remind the participants about respecting the holy sphere proper to the Lord’s House of Worship, and the holy ceremony in which the principal couple were about to exchange life-altering vows.

I believe that unless those externals of order are scrupulously observed by all concerned the power of the hells to subvert the marriage may gain a foothold and lead to its destruction, turning a beautiful promise to ashes.

Sincerely, Carl Gunther

To the Editor:

Your editorial *Male and Female Created He Them* (July, 2008), is the type of publication the New Church needs to establish that the New Church is our essential source for a durable, generation to generation worldview. In a world that seeks to deny fundamental differences between men and women, and reduces mankind to evolved stimulation determined primates, this piece on the need for marriage comes as a refreshingly candid presentation. It demonstrated to me that I thought I knew much more about marriage and the Lord's Will for us all than I do. In other words there are many truths explained in your editorial I had not observed before.

My concern had been that our Church was not fighting the culture war—that we have allowed the culture to influence the Church more than we have applied the Church to influence the culture through our individual lives. Since you have been Editor of the *New Church Life* that concern has abated dramatically. The articles you write and publish are more applicable to daily life as opposed to theologically abstract expositions. And that is the best way to wage the cultural war.

Gratefully, Tom Fiedler

**Errata:** In *New Church Life* August Issue, 2008, in Julie Conaron's article "The Transition," the Bibliography p. 311 should refer to Elisabeth Kubler-Ross' "On life after death," *Celestial arts*, Berkeley, CA (1991), not to "Death, the final stage of growing" which was used elsewhere in Conaron's dissertation; and should also include pages 309-319 of "Having a loved one on the other side" (*New Church Life*, July 1996) by the Rev. Grant H. Odhner. The references to Odhner on *New Church Life* pages 304 and 306 were not the Rev. Hugo Lj. Odhner, but to Rev. Grant Odhner, in this series on "Having a Loved on the other side." On page 307 the reference was to Hugh Lj. Odhner. Apologies for these inaccuracies of publication.

**ANNOUNCEMENT:  
BRYN ATHYN COLLEGE OF THE NEW CHURCH  
PRESIDENT SEARCH**

We are starting the process of looking for a President for Bryn Athyn College in order to have that individual assume the role July 1, 2009.

Applicants are invited to send letters and curricula vitae, together with a statement about their understanding of the mission of the Bryn Athyn College, to the Rev. Eric Carswell, Box 711, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009 USA. In addition, anyone who may have an interest in this position or questions about it is encouraged to contact President Carswell (e-mail [Eric.Carswell@ANC-GC.org](mailto:Eric.Carswell@ANC-GC.org)). Applications and supporting material are requested by September 30.

**JOURNEY AT SEA**

The Rev. Martie Johnson, Chaplain in the U.S. Navy, is serving on the Aircraft Carrier Stennis. This is the same aircraft carrier that was the focus of a popular and compelling documentary series aired on PBS in the spring.

Martie will be running the Journey campaign for 6,000 ship mates over a six-month period at sea beginning in October. On the ship's next tour, he plans to offer this year's "Building Healthy Relationships" and last year's Journey – "Realizing Spiritual Freedom." This opens another chapter in the General Church's quest for meaningful contact with at least a million people. General Church Outreach is gearing up to support the effort. The Rev. David Lindrooth, Director of Outreach, says, "I cannot think of a higher impact use of this material. General Church Outreach wants to extend its gratitude to Chaplain Johnson for his vision and leadership in making this happen."

Lydia Barrett Boericke  
Program Manager, General Church Outreach

*Church News*

**VISIT TO WEST AFRICA.  
BY THE REV. DAVID LINDROOTH**

There are some wonderful things happening in West Africa. I thought it worthwhile sharing some highlights from my time here together with Brian and Gretchen Keith.

My trip started in Abidjan (Brian and Gretchen went straight to Accra to prepare for ordinations). Sylvain Agnes has two groups in greater Abidjan and Roger Koudou (whom I hope you will meet in February) has one. The Abidjan trip began early Saturday morning at the river where we baptized 19 adults and 4 children. There is a strong custom in Abidjan to baptize in a river, which makes sense because the water is always warm and it is more similar to the Jordan experience than using a bowl.



After the baptisms we traveled to look at some land that Sylvain has purchased for two churches and the Francophone theological school he started several years ago. This involved meeting the local chief and conversation about how a new church theological school will help his local village. The picture is of the chief.

The Theological School is a real source of excitement. There are currently six students with the first two due to graduate in two years. Also, noteworthy, Sylvain has gained state registration

for the school and it will be able to confer degrees. The curriculum was developed by Sylvain, Alain Nicolier, Andy Dibb, Eric Carswell, Dan Goodenough and others. Dan, Göran Appelgren, and Alain (ministers who speak French) all help with grading papers.

While only General Church ministers teach theology, there are other teachers employed to teach church history, African traditional religion and philosophy and other courses deemed essential to the program.

The theological school gives a strong root from which the French speaking New Church can grow from. The school gives a doctrinal strength and stability to the Cote D'Ivoire, Togo, Benin, Burkina Faso and other Francophone African countries where the church is getting a start. There are probably close to 200 regular church goers in Cote D'Ivoire right now and another est. 100 in Togo.

While I was preaching in Abidjan in two churches on Sunday, Brian was ordaining six men into the priesthood in Ghana, – Hennock Aggro, Kwadwo Adu Amoako, George Genya Dziekpor, Roger Koudou, Israel Gyan Ampem-Darko, John K. Segbenu, and in Togo, Eric Messan Souka! One of them, Roger Koudou, has been leading lay services in Cote D'Ivoire since the early 80's. The other five were trained in Accra and tested for proficiency by the Academy of the New Church Theological School. In addition, Jacob Borketey-Kwaku, Godwin Zattey-Agboga, and Eshun Ekow were ordained into the 2nd degree. More ordinations happened in Togo the following Sunday: Brian ordained Eric Souka into the first degree and Segno Kodjo Ayi, into the second. So all told that is 6 new priests and 4 who were elevated into the 2nd degree.

In two Sundays the whole face of the church in West Africa changed. There are now fifteen priests working in West Africa, four of them serving exclusively French-speaking congregations.

Sandwiched between the two Sundays, we had West African Clergy Meetings in Accra. These were precious. There was a strong doctrinal focus with papers about the Lord and the Word. The presentations were thoughtful with a focus on thinking about how these doctrines applied in the Sub Region. One highlight was Ankra-Badu's workshop looking at the traditional African religion's view of one God and how that created an attractive environment for the New Church. The indigenous religion has a strong belief that there is one God, an omnipresent, eternal, loving Creator. This ancient belief opens the way for the New Church.

Following the meetings Brian, Gretchen and I traveled to Togo for worship, the second round of ordinations and meetings with the people there. Togo has a sort of a 'wild west frontier' feel to it. Getting there involves a long drive with many police check points where the police extort bribes. One police said, as he gently points his AK47 through the window, "Don't you know that when I ask to see your license that is code meaning that you must pay me off." On the way home Ayi's wallet was stolen at the boarder crossing but recovered by a miracle since a truck driver witnessed it. Later, at one of the police check points a cop took his driver's license, wrote him a ticket for not wearing a seatbelt (there is no such law in Ghana) and wouldn't give the license back until the bribe was paid. You have got to have respect for Gretchen for braving all this—and for Katie Ayi who lives in Togo with her husband, Rev. Kodjo Ayi.

Another unforgettable experience that was an aside was the outing we took during the clergy meetings to Elmina Slave Castle. This fortress built by the Portuguese in the early 1600's served as a prison for gathering and shipping slaves. In the 200+ years that it served this horrific role, it housed more death and atrocity than is comprehensible. More than 20 million passed through those gates and with a death rate of over 50% the horror

is incalculable. I am reminded of how vital the New Church doctrine of freedom is for our world.

While West Africa is challenged with poverty, disease and corruption, it is a place where the New Church thrives in all its integrity. People here love the doctrines straight up – as a welcome relief to the ‘snake oil’ they are often offered in the name of Christianity. Africa has a big heart, and I feel intensely blessed to be able to witness the Lord working here. I am certain that supporting church in West Africa is a vital use of the General Church.

**A NEW BEGINNING**  
**THE SEATTLE NEW CHURCH PROJECT**  
BY THE REV. ETHAN MCCARDELL

On August 10th, a group of dedicated people from all around the Puget Sound region gathered to worship the Lord God Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, and how this symbolizes the process of our own reformation, the first movement of the Lord’s truth in our spiritual life. Our mind has to change, our context has to shift, from being one of worldliness and egocentrism to selflessness and service to the Lord and the neighbor. In other words, we have to overcome the bondage of selfish and worldly thinking that prevents us living the life of heaven.

We talked about how important it is to pray for strength to endure temptation (the means of our spiritual formation) rather than “the Quick fix”—for God will never interfere with our freedom to respond to struggle in our lives. We may not be in charge of the circumstance, but we are always in charge of the response, and our response to struggle determines the measure of our faith and love to the Lord.

After connecting these points to overcoming the “temptations”

of embarking on a new church, we asked ourselves three key questions after worship:

1. What do you love about the New Church?
2. What are the potential barriers to its growth?
3. How might we “cross over?”

In a future article, I hope to share with you the inspiring responses we got to those three questions—enough to fill three typed pages of minutes! We are indeed blessed to have a core of dedicated people, an area of the country that is at once beautiful and open (including mindset), and a Church that is convinced of the need to put the “megaphone to the message” in a setting such as this.

Look out Seattle! Here comes the New Church, providing a picture of a three—dimensional God of love out for the salvation of all His Children. “Seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you. Do not fear little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:31, 32).



*The Rev. Ethan McCardell and Family*