

# New Church LIFE

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A monthly magazine devoted to the teachings  
revealed through Emanuel Swedenborg

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**In this issue:**

The Importance of Fear in Our Lives  
A Sermon by Geoffrey H. Howard

Progressive States in Creation from the Creator  
Norman E. Riley

Beyond Number Boards  
Jonathan Cranch

A Russian Connection  
Richard Lindquist

Contacts for Worship

**October 2008**

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## *Notes on This Issue*

How many of our readers remembers having this minister as their Pastor or visiting Pastor? Rev. Geoffrey Howard has served in the US and in South Africa. In his sermon, he finds our answer to our fears: trust in the Lord.

The Rev. Norman Riley considers the timeless Creation story from Genesis in terms of our stages of spiritual development, shedding light from the Arcana series.

Do laypeople need to get more involved? This has been a recent theme from several sources, and here Jonathan Cranch who organizes the Palo Alto Circle in the Bay Area, asks us to think about all the uses of the Church in which we observe others are engaged. Can more be done?

Is there a link between a Russian Czar and some iron work in the Cathedral? Read the detective work done by Richard Linquist. The evidence is there, in metal.

There are a couple of Book Reviews for you to enjoy. What happened in 1749 and this year? And did you know what is happening in Kenya? Church News has the answer, and also from Britain comes a discussion, and Rev. Hauptman believes in an answer.



The Rev. Geoffrey H. Howard was inaugurated into the priesthood in 1961, and ordained into the pastoral degree in 1963. He first served as Assistant to the Pastor in Glenview, IL, then as resident Pastor to the Tucson Circle in Arizona. He accepted a call to be the Pastor of the Los Angeles Society in 1971, and then began as the Pastor of the Durban Society, South Africa in 1976. In 1988 he became the Assistant Pastor in the Bryn Athyn Society, and two years later took the post of Pastor to the Boston Society. Geoffrey has been retired since 1999, and lives with his wife Nadine (Brown) in Summerville, South Carolina.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF FEAR IN OUR LIVES

### A Sermon

BY REV. GEOFFREY H. HOWARD

*Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance. (Psalm 42:5)*

Many passages in the Psalms seem to speak openly and directly to our human states of trouble. They verbalize our otherwise intangible moods, and formulate them into questions that strike a chord. Such profound and personal questions stir our affections. They cause us to think and to reflect. Natural life is sometimes beset with most vexing problems. They weigh heavily upon our soul, causing us to feel trouble and anxiety. Yet each of us is endowed with a certain motivation which impels us to lift ourselves out of our distress. States of sorrow and dismay are uncomfortable to bear. We almost instinctively seek to remove their vexing influence. No one can bear to remain imprisoned in a world of mental turmoil. To raise ourselves above the dread of confusion and distress is an instinctive part of our human make-up.

We have all experienced, and continue to experience, times when we feel beset with turmoil, times when our course seems hopeless and disastrous. In such states we spontaneously identify with the words expressed by the Psalmist. We verbalize the same question. "Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me?" We need to discover the reason for the plight that bears upon us and which overwhelms us.

The very thing that causes us to feel anxiety is a sense of fear. Fear induces upon us a sense of dread. Yet, it is a most important experience in the arena of human emotions. Without it we would feel little motivation to change our lives or to alter our course. Without fear the human will would remain totally passive and unresponsive. It would become listless and complacent. Fear touches our will as nothing else can. It stirs us directly and

immediately. It affects us with uneasiness and uncertainty. Fear is an affection perceived to be of unpleasant quality. We perceive it with a sense of dread. We feel it as an encumbrance, as a yoke, and we feel impelled to cast aside the discomfort it breeds.

Yet if we regard fear from a higher light, we can begin to see that without it the Lord would have no leverage upon us. He would have no means by which He could lead us on our course to heaven. Yes, the Lord permits us to feel the sense of fear. He permits us to fear the consequences of our actions whenever we stray from the course of His order. This provision gives us the ability to distinguish between two opposite experiences, between comfort and discomfort. This experience applies to all planes of life, physical, moral and spiritual.

On the physical plane of life, we strive to provide for our physical security and comfort. We seek to provide an environment, which registers comfort and harmony according to the dictates of our physical senses. Also it is obvious that physical fear is essential if the body is to be preserved in a healthy state.

The Lord has implanted in each one of us a sense of self-preservation and this registers its influence on different planes of our awareness and consciousness. Immediately above the plane of our physical senses lies a higher degree of values, those which pertain to the moral well being of our person. The fear, which operates on our moral consciousness, produces a desire to preserve the honor and the reputation of our name. It also influences how we appear before others. On this moral plane of our mind the influences of heaven and hell both impinge. We sense something of the peace of heaven when we act from a true moral conscience and we do what is right. We sense the fear of going to hell when we do what is wrong. The concern for our reputation and honor in the eyes of others and the fear of the loss of them is motivated from within by the loves and fears which we experience. Yet unless the natural mind becomes subject to the powers of the higher spiritual mind, greed, avarice, and other evils soon consume us. We discover that such desires leave us

feeling hollow and empty within.

The spiritual mind is the highest plane of human life. This degree of life is opened through our knowledge and understanding of God, through an appreciation of His purposes, and above all, through bringing our will and our thought into conformity with His stated purposes. If the Lord is to rule in our lives, then it is up to us to choose to bring ourselves to act according to the principles of His will, because we want to return the gift of His love. We then come to sense spiritual fear, when we think evil thoughts, for then we fear the loss of His love if we break His commandments.

Thus we can see that the influence of fear plays upon all planes of life. Physical fear pertains to our physical safety and well being. Moral fear pertains to our concern for our reputation, while spiritual fear pertains to our relationship with God. Thus, there are many different degrees of fear. All are given for the purpose of providing the Lord with a most sensitive tool by means of which He can steer and guide our course. This implanted sense of fear is for the sake of our self-preservation. It evokes a response from us, causing us to strenuously avoid those conditions, which arouse our sense of fear.

Fear, then, is a sense of dread. Its focus is not for the things which beset us at the present, but rather for what might befall us in the future. We cannot change what has happened in the past, but our reactions do, in large part, have a profound bearing upon the present and how we decide to fashion our future. Even the Lord says, "Do not fear those who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10: 28). The fact that fear has its focus on consequences that might befall us in the future is an interesting fact to contemplate. Let us consider this.

For each of us the future is an uncharted course. Not one of us knows what the future holds. Only the Lord knows that. With the dawning of each new day, we step forward into the future. No one has any idea of what is likely to transpire in that new day.

We embark upon it with a trust in the constancy of what we have come to expect is likely to transpire. Nevertheless, we all have a keen sense of fear for the unknown. Nothing in our future is known with certainty.

For example, a child may feel a certain sense of fear when he goes to school for the first time. As he becomes accustomed to the experience his fear diminishes and may turn to enjoyment. He may later fear taking an examination lest he fail to make the grade. In adult life, we may fear to assume a position of responsibility, lest we prove unequal to what is expected of us. When a young couple enters into marriage, there is the lurking fear of what the future relationship may hold. When we have our children, a certain fear prevails lest they not survive, or lest perchance they be born in an unhealthy condition. The list of fears that can touch us can be multiplied indefinitely and can reach into every condition of life.

But in this regard we must be careful, for uncontrolled fear can have a crippling effect upon our life. Compounded fear can take away our freedom. It can override our faculty of reason. It can drive us into nervous disorders, which can completely disintegrate our mental sanity and stability. We need to be mindful of the fact that there are societies of hell, which strive to distort and exaggerate our sense of fear out of all proportion. We are all subject to the influence of these hells. If fear is not held in check, it will not be long before we develop uncanny phobias which cause us to feel suspicion and uncertainty about everything with which we are confronted. It is important then that we learn how to live with fear, and how to keep its effects upon us in bounds.

But how do we do this? How we regulate our fears ultimately hinges on one thing, our faith, our belief and our trust in the Lord our God. This answer is suggested by the Psalmist in our text. "Hope in God for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance" (Text). Faith in the Lord is the one and only thing that can truly bring balance to our mental outlook. Our

faith in the Lord is the only thing that can restore unto us confidence and trust, causing us to know that we are stepping forth into a course charted by the Lord. Only through the reception of His power can we feel that we will be led in safety. Only when we feel He is present with us can we feel confident within ourselves. This conviction is granted only when we know with the surety of our faith that we are doing His will. When we act from a true conscience, the Lord imparts to us the heavenly assurance that we have nothing to fear, for the constancy of His law is then written upon our hearts.

In this ever-changing world, few things are constant. The laws of nature, by which the universe is governed, are constant. But even then, natural catastrophes and disasters can strike seemingly at will. Our friends and loved ones can be taken from us suddenly and without expectation. We may watch them suffer and die. We depend so heavily upon those whom we love and trust. We fear the consequence of the loss of their earthly presence.

We trust others, and we depend upon them. Yet our trust in others is not to be compared with our trust in the Lord. We form friendships with others, but even in the very best of friendships, our relationships sometimes become strained, our confidence in them can become shattered by their failings and their frailties. In the whole spectrum of human experience, there is only One who is constant and unchanging, and that is the Lord. He alone is the rock of our strength, and our refuge (Psalm 62:7). The misfortunes that befall us in this world, the various spheres that periodically invade our minds, are permitted to occur by the Lord. In permitting these things to occur, He has one end in view, namely, that our adversities may be opportunities for us to turn to Him and to open our hearts more trustfully to Him.

The dawning of the realization that He alone is constant and dependable comes gradually. We yield our confidence in the values of this temporal world with great difficulty. Along the way the Lord is there, striving to lead us to appreciate the more permanent values of His heavenly kingdom. If on occasion our

temporal loves were not shattered, perhaps we would never think seriously about the values of the world to come. Probably we would never prepare ourselves to become worthy to enter that kingdom, and join those whom we truly love.

Mercifully our natural fears diminish and fade as our faith in the Lord becomes strengthened and developed. Such living and spiritual faith grows in one way only. It grows as we come to love Him with all our heart. It is formed as we do what we know He wants us to do. As we step forward into life, and act from a conscience formed from His Word, and live by it, the Lord will come to us and will give us the strength to face any obstacle that may befall us. Fears will continue to invade, but we will find that their quality and nature become different. When trust in the Lord becomes central to our thinking, and the implicit response of our heart, we will be stirred by “holy fear”. “Holy fear” or “reverential fear” is a fear of doing anything that will in any way separate us from the Lord and the gift of His love, upon which we have come to depend. We will fear to do anything that will disturb that blessed conjunction of love that He has established with us. Through regeneration we will come to discover the abiding constancy of His love. We will then fear to lose the most precious thing that we have found. We will fear to break His commandments. Faith of this quality is most beautifully described in the following quotation: “Those who trust in the Lord continually receive good from Him; so whatever happens to them, whether it appears to be prosperous or not, is still good, because it conduces as a means to their eternal happiness.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 8480:3). Let us therefore “hope in God... for the help of His countenance” (Text). Amen.

Lessons: 1. Ps. 42 2. Matthew 10: 27–39 3. *Arcana Coelestia* 2543, 2982, 8480:3. (Selected portions)

## **PROGRESSIVE STATES IN CREATION FROM THE CREATOR**

BY REV. NORMAN E. RILEY

God Who is Order Itself, operates according to His own Order. This order is seen in many things. First in what is called evolution. Each stage was not one thing developing from the preceding one, but out of it, by means of the descending order from the Creator by the discrete degrees of end, cause and effect. The end, being the purpose from the Creator, the cause being the Spiritual degree formed by Him as the means, thence into the effect in which they come to rest. In each it was the infusion into that which was being formed, as a matrix, out of which the new species could come into being, while the former could still continue to produce its own species. The three kingdoms of Nature have been created for Natural uses alone and are thereby not only created in the order of their use but also born into it. Into the last species of the animal kingdom, the one conceived became the matrix for the influx of a human soul, while the species out of which it had been taken could still continue to produce its own species. In the creation of this being, called man, the purpose was that he would be able to enter into Spiritual uses. For this reason he could not be born into those uses, since this would mean that he would be without the freedom of choice, which would be contrary to the nature of the Divine Creator.

This human being too had to pass through orderly stages of development, from infancy to adult life. The infant state is that of the innocence of ignorance, described in Genesis chapter one as the earth, "void and empty." By this is meant without any good or truth, since the infant has no knowledge by which choices can be made. This affectional state, out of the Celestial sphere of the Spiritual world from the Creator, the senses of the body are able to function, and the infant responds to the things which are pleasing to the senses. This is seen in the smiles etc, and the opposite when things harsh and noisy are presented. The infant

therefore should always be surrounded by what is pleasant, corresponding to the Celestial state of love. When this use is fulfilled, the state of innocence is formed in the internal, as remains for later development.

Now the spiritual influence becomes active in the period of childhood, which is witnessed by the desire to know about things, the hunger for knowledge. This is spoken of as the creation of light. Now follows the four stages of the adolescent ages, influenced by the Natural sphere, exhibited in the gathering together of knowledges, the learning of their purpose and use, followed by the recognition of doing to others as they would others do to them, even if not for an exalted reason, nevertheless it serves for later development. And finally the development of what occupation into which they would like to enter. Finally comes the adult age of the freedom of choice.

Throughout these ages, in an orderly structured life, there has been instruction from the Word of what is *meant* by good and truth, yet depending on the states of reception. Interesting to note that the “void and empty” state, is said to be that which precedes infancy and also regeneration (see *Arcana Coelestia* 7). This in the adult state, is when there arises the feeling, that though one knows about good and truth, they do not yet have them. This opens the seventh day—the Garden of Eden State—which is not the accomplishment of that state in one’s life, neither was it with those in the beginning, who also had to pass through the developing states mentioned. This is the reason Chapter 2 of Genesis is divided into two sections. The Garden of Eden State is that of the Perception of what life has to become. This is the reason for the words “it is not good that man should dwell alone,” since if a person remained in the state of Perception, one would feel that they were already regenerate and the loves of self would remain hidden, which is what has to be met in the course of regeneration. These states also have been ordered by the Lord. We therefore read in the *True Christian Religion* number 762, “That four Churches have existed on this

earth since the creation of the world is according to Divine order, which is, that there should be a beginning and an end to it before a new beginning arises.” “The four Churches” were the means of preparing the pathway of Regeneration. The Lord prepares the way, as the Shepherd going before the sheep. What He did for us was not instead of us: we have to follow, as those did in the Ages of preparation, when acting according to the truth revealed, in application to the use of the Age.

We read further in the *True Christian Religion* number 583, “Regeneration takes place in a manner analogous to that in which a man is conceived, carried in the womb, born and educated.” In brief, the first eleven Chapters of Genesis deal with the life of Repentance, when man shuns what is from the Proprium, for the sake of the Lord’s ends, and out of this the love towards the Neighbor. This was the forming of the Celestial and Spiritual Kingdoms, which in a person are the ruling loves, out of which the human can be *conceived*. *Carried in the womb* is dealt with in Genesis chapter 12 to the end, as the state of Reformation, which is when the Understanding is being formed by the truth. *Born and educated* is dealt with in Exodus, which means ‘going out.’

The beginning of each Chapter deals first with Charity then Charity and Faith. This is when Good is received in the Understanding. The end of each Chapter deals with the Planets, and the Earths in the Starry Heavens. These we take it depict the qualities of Human life, the first as the External and the others as the Internal. Interesting to note that in this series there are six Earths in the Starry Heavens while in the work itself, *Earths in the Universe*, there are only five mentioned. In the *Arcana* series regeneration is taking place, so six signifies labor and combat, or, in other words, temptations. While in the work itself the complete Human is presented: the Planets the External, Earths in Starry Heavens the Internal, the Moon faith. Just as the Lord was born on this earth, so also do all things proceed from the Lord as from Primes, down to ultimate things, namely knowledges, and thence to intermediates, where the Internal and External are

conjoined. It therefore comes between the two sets of five, which together as ten signify all things of remains.

When mention is made of something coming to an end, in connection with the Churches, it does not in this context mean failure but their fulfillment according to their use, and also in relation to the states of a person's Regeneration. For instance in connection with the Most Ancient Church in respect to the people of that age, and also of our state, their *completion* is what is said at the end of Genesis Chapter 4, "then they began to call on the name of Yehowah"! This was when the temptations, meant by the serpent and Cain, had taken place in the state of Repentance, as mentioned above.

We read in *True Christian Religion* 532, "True Repentance consists in a man's examining not only the acts of his life, but also the intentions of his Will." And at number 587, "The first act of the new birth, which is an act of the Understanding, is called Reformation; and the second, which is an act of the Will and thence of the Understanding is called Regeneration." The progression is complete.

**BEYOND NUMBER BOARDS:  
ENGAGING THE LAITY IN CHURCH USES  
BY JONATHAN CRANCH**

*Reprinted from The California Digest.*

One of the important concepts in the emerging General Church Strategic Plan is "Engaging the Laity in Church Uses." In my view, there is no way we can have a million meaningful contacts in thirty years without lay involvement, an expanded clergy, and—most importantly—the LORD's help and guidance. It is, after all, an audacious goal which, based on past performance, we can't possibly accomplish without full trust in the LORD, and confidence in the laity. Priests are trained to teach the truth and lead thereby to the good of life. This is their specific use within the Church. Theirs is a leadership role. They

are not trained or expected to take on additional uses. It is rather our responsibility as the laity to step up and take on the uses that define us as a bold and thriving Church.

So, just what are “Church” uses? Number boards? Sunday School teachers? Mowing the grass? Serving on the Board? Playing music or conducting a lay service? Certainly these all support the Church. But do these represent all “Church” uses, and are these the only uses that count?

Another consideration is that what the laity is already doing differs from congregation to congregation, varying with size, growth and maturity of congregation and pastoral leadership. For example, a school society has “uses” that aren’t even on the radar screen of a congregation where the Pastor is only “visiting part-time.” Consider, too, that the expectations arising from the “Journey” programs are built around not only lay involvement but also lay development and lay leadership, supported by and in partnership with the clergy.

There are many examples of a laity engaged in uses, but the connection to “Church” often isn’t an obvious one, because they aren’t Church-centered or Church-sponsored. The Church is about Love and Wisdom combined in performance of a Use, and the LORD uses the variety of loves of each of us to accomplish His ends. We should be encouraging those good loves, and actions deriving from them, whether they have an obvious “Church” connection or not.

For the moment let’s think outside the box and consider Church uses more broadly. Try this one on for size: Identify what uses folks are passionate about, and support them in those efforts. I see it as a “Church” use to help them to see these efforts as examples of Charity, and strengthen their tie to the Church thereby. Perhaps it is working with babies or their parents, young marrieds, seniors, or the battered or abandoned. It could be the hugely important but everyday task of raising a child without a partner, keeping a marriage intact through challenges, or dealing with separation from a loved one entering the Spiritual World. It may

take the form of developing skills, monitoring environments, donating blood, coaching youth sports, or simply listening to a lonely soul. It might be volunteering in a shelter, hospital or hospice, or even military service. Heroic or everyday, these are all vital uses.

Imagine the welcoming feeling newcomers might experience if we helped them to appreciate that the passionate things of their lives were actually expressions of their love to the LORD and indeed (*truly in deed*), part of their active faith!

Look around at those with whom you worship. Notice the way they are serving others. Remember that the kingdom of Heaven is a kingdom of useful service. As our LORD said. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Maybe we should strike the word "Church" from this conversation and simply focus on engaging the laity in uses. Just a thought . . .

## A RUSSIAN CONNECTION BY RICHARD LINDQUIST

Below is information from page 61 of the book *Gallery of Mirrors*, (Swedenborg Foundation, 1998) by Anders Hallengren.

Turning back to the English *New Church Magazine* of 1917 and 1918, we find that the Russian revolution was met with great expectations. Some of the Russian revolutionaries, in their turn, looked back and discovered that they had nineteenth century forerunners. In 1925 the centenary of the Decembrist uprising was celebrated in the Soviet Union, and several books and documents were published that revealed that many of these revolutionary precursors were pious Christians, freemasons, theosophists and Swedenborgians. In addition, these sources revealed that the radical reform of 1861, the Emancipation of the Serfs, was propelled and inspired by Russian Swedenborgians.

This emancipation occurred during the reign of Czar Alexander II. My current interest focuses on the last Czar of Russia at the time of the revolution in 1917. He was Nicholas II, the last of the Russian Czars. The readers of *New Church Life* may recall that the wild monk Rasputin had a sinister influence over Czarina

Alexandra Feodorovna and the Russian government during Nicholas' reign. Also the name "Anastasia," one of Nicholas' daughters, who may not have died when the Czar and his family were killed, is part of popular history. Movies, books and intellectual studies have been made of this colorful time in Russian history.

Above I stated that my interest was in Czar Nicholas II. More specifically it is on his Imperial Palace in St. Petersburg and a man who worked on its construction.

I found that he was of German parentage, born in Hungary, where he served his apprenticeship and worked for several years. He worked also in Austria and Germany. In 1900 he went to St. Petersburg and devoted two years to work for Nicholas II on the Imperial Palace. Some of his metal work was exhibited in Paris. In 1903 he came to Philadelphia, where he worked for the Midland Metal Company. During this period Samuel Yellin, head of the famous Yellin Art metal firm, worked with Schmidt as the latter's helper." This information about Mr. Mathias Schmidt was written by Raymond Pitcairn and published in the *Bryn Athyn Post* on Sept. 22, 1933.

Mr. Schmidt eventually came to work on the Bryn Athyn Cathedral. He constructed the Chapel Screen, hinges for the West Door, most of the keys and probably many of the door handles. A photograph of him can be seen on page 131 of the book *Bryn Athyn Cathedral*, with text by E. Bruce Glenn and photographs by Michael Pitcairn.

It should not be too difficult for New Church people make use of these facts, to lead discussions with non-members to a knowledge of Swedenborg. In fact it could be an effective missionary strategy to talk about Mr. Schmidt's work in Bryn Athyn, and on the Czar Nicholas' palace, and then to talk about Rasputin, Anastasia and the liberating effect of New Church doctrines in Russia. Serfs were freed in 1861 but today Russians can *surf* the Internet and discover the mind-liberating truths of the New Church in the Russian language.

## ***Book Reviews***

### **BOOK REVIEW**

**Secrets of Heaven**, 2008, Swedenborg Foundation, 320 North Church Street, West Chester, Pa., 19380. Translated by Lisa Hyatt Cooper. Hardback and paperback. Price ca. \$49, or \$15 paperback.

The much anticipated series of translations of the New Century Edition of all of the Writings of Swedenborg, continues to satisfy expectations. Here is volume one of the planned fifteen volumes of the *Arcana Coelestia*, translated here as *Secrets of Heaven*. The Introduction by Hanegraaff, with notes by eleven contributors, makes the New Century Edition not only for the 21st century, but set to last until the 22nd!

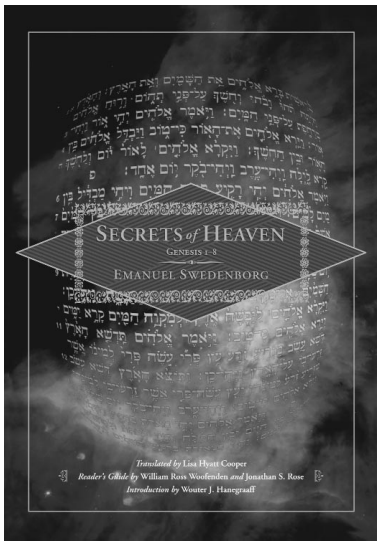
The volume size follows the original first Editions A-4 frame, keeping to the royal purple with gold script as previous volumes, which now comprise: *Heaven and Hell* 2000, *Divine Love and Wisdom*, *Divine Providence* (one volume, 2003), an Anthology of Essays, 2005; plus *True Christianity*, 2006. As the shelf space claims an ever widening margin, the impression grows linearly and exponentially. The impact on the world is not a matter of *if*, but *how great*.

The Contents are spacious and airy, followed by a Series Editor's Preface by Rev. Dr. Jonathan S. Rose. It forecasts Hanegraaff's Introduction, which relates the Arcana to Swedenborg's life in general. There is in fact a short account of Swedenborg's life at the end of this volume as well. Next follows the Translator's Preface, dealing with special challenges in words and vocabulary use, and how Swedenborg himself rendered Scripture quotations from Hebrew into Latin. How precise are the quotations? How does one stay loyal to the original texts? Every variation cannot be noted, there would be too many.

Another section is the Reader's Guide to this work, by William Ross Woofenden and Jonathan S. Rose. The very struct-

ure of the work is explained, and how various other MSS featured in preparing Swedenborg for this onerous *Arcana* task. The reader is shown actual pages of different parts of the work, e.g. the sum-mary of the contents of each chapter preceding the detailed examination.

Hanegraaff’s Introduction details several strands of the *Arcana*, from Method of Exegesis, styles of the Word, to “Development of Churches, i.e. Church History, the Lord’s own development, or glorification on earth, etc., which are the burden of the inner sense of Genesis! Inter-chapter material is also explained, with accounts that develop in later works into the memorabilia. He gives an example of the “code” of the Bible by simply listing a number of meanings of people, things or places,



examples which he says “can be multiplied at will.” Also he has produced a fascinating graph showing which chapters in Genesis deals essentially with “Historical Development of Religious Culture” and which deal with the “Spiritual Development of the Lord.” Some chapters do either or, some do both, something readers of the *Arcana* will have noticed from time to time.

Hanegraaff closes with the observation that the *Arcana* is a huge reservoir of religious ideas and concepts. He appeals to the reader not to treat the descriptions of heaven as imaginative accounts, or romantic inventions, but more as a “world-view based upon supra-rational revelation presented in rational terms and congenial to modern mentalities” (p. 118).

There is an Appendix, detailing the pages in which the various sections mentioned occur, e.g. where the essential nature

of the Word is dealt with, where Matthew chapter 24 is expounded, which paragraphs deal with which Genesis or Exodus chapter. After “Works Cited” there is a list of Swedenborg’s Theological Works, the ones he actually published himself, followed by the Posthumous ones—published for him after he left us.

The actual translation, starting with Swedenborg’s own Table of Contents, begins on p. 143.

One notices quickly some differences from other translations, for example instead of celestial there is heavenly, instead of signifies there is symbolizes. The Latin, significet, means literally just ‘means.’

Standard for each New Century Edition are the numbers in dark orange in the margin of the paragraph it refers to. Also, the Ornaments and borders used by Swedenborg in the original Edition (MCCXLIX) are preserved and reproduced more frequently than in the previous New Century works so far, for a real feel of affinity. These Ornaments were researched by Dr. Jonathan Rose, and published in Covenant, Spring 1998, noting how often each one appears, and where.

The Translation throughout reads the way one speaks the English language: effortlessly, and with a minimum of hills to climb, or scratches to the head. Anglo-Saxon is used whenever possible—sharp punchy English such as “bogged down,” “inner meaning,” “reborn.”

Copious Notes begin on page 595, making this truly a critical and scholarly publication. There is an index of works cited in the Notes, then a couple of Indices, one to all the material except the Arcana—if you wish to find who referred to Bilfinger! then to the Arcana itself. The latter is unusually rich, for e.g. detailing the various meanings of “wild animal,” making it a mini-concordance.

I believe if anyone is looking for reasons *not* to have a New Century Edition, they will change their minds when they see this baby!

- Ed.

**CIVIL WAR, DEATH AND RELIGIOUS BELIEF:  
A BOOK REVIEW**

BY REV. DONALD L. ROSE

This year saw the publication of a scholarly book by the president of Harvard University. The title is: *This Republic of Suffering*. The author, Drew G. Faust, has gathered together fascinating material about the Civil War. It was fascinating to see a reference to Swedenborg and the book *Heaven and Hell*. I wrote what might be called a mini review, which was published in *The Intelligencer*, a suburban Philadelphia newspaper. Here it is for New Church Life readers.

**In Their Words**

“We cannot hallow this ground,” said Lincoln, “the brave men living and dead who struggled here have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract.” Many of us could recite the words when we were in grade school. We could hardly grasp the import of this Gettysburg address. I gained a new grasp upon reading a remarkable new book. It is all about death and the civil war. The title is *This Republic of Suffering*, Knopf, New York, 2008.

The author, Drew Gilpin Faust, President of Harvard University, spent years putting the volume together. It contains numerous photographs and sketches of graves, of soldiers, of fields of battle, of women dressed in mourning.

Dr. Faust speaks of an impact on this country “that history has not adequately understood or recognized.” She lets us see our country as a nation “transformed by its encounter with death.”

There are touching poems, one of which speaks of:

*Many a grave that lies so lone,  
Without a name and without a stone.*

And when there were grave stones, they sometimes bore only one word, “Unknown.” There seemed to be funerals everywhere. “There is not a household exempt from the universal lamentation which ascends from a grief stricken people” (p 171).

“This was more than an abstract intellectual issue for the hundreds of thousands of Americans bereaved by the war. Loss demanded an explanation that satisfied hearts as well as minds” (p 174). “The very questions of life and death took on new salience” (p 251).

People of different religions felt closer together in “an unprecedented level of religious interaction and cooperation” (p 7). Among those who provided satisfying words was a young woman named Elizabeth Stuart Phelps. I was surprised to learn that her book, *The Gates Ajar*, was the second best selling book of the 19th century. It was reprinted fifty-five times.

Phelps was one of the writers who brought to public attention striking things about heaven as reported by Emanuel Swedenborg. This brings me to a part of Faust’s book that really caught my attention. On page 178 she emphasizes the historic significance of the book *Heaven and Hell*. It helped bring about “a softening view of heaven.” “Swedenborg and thinkers influenced by his views created the foundation for what now came to seem a necessary component of an adequately consoling portrait of paradise” (p 179). So, one outcome at that point in history was a benefit for many from “Swedenborg’s comforting ideas about heaven” (p 182).

This focus on the Swedenborg ingredient is only one facet of this historic piece of writing. It is a book of broad perspectives. The author brings to us grand panoramas and she zooms in on intimate particulars. A soldier cherishes a letter from his wife who writes of her greatest comfort, the belief that if he should fall in battle, “you will rest in heaven.” If it were not for that belief and hope, she wrote, “I never could bear up under the present distress.”

One man went unscathed through the battles until the last month of the war. He died only days before it was over. He left a letter to his wife telling her not to grieve for him because he would see her again in “bright mansions above” (p 176).

We think of such individuals, and we think of those vast numbers as we return to Lincoln’s address:

*From these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they here gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation under God, shall have a new birth of freedom.*

## ***Editorial***

### **WHY WE WORSHIP**

The main reason people worship God, is because of the Third Commandment, “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.” The Sabbath is one of the oldest “holy days” dedicated to worshipping the Lord. It was changed from Saturday to Sunday in the early Christian Church to make it a Christian Holiday, replacing pagan sun worship, because the Lord was crucified on Friday, and therefore He rose on Sunday! Sunday is therefore resurrection day too. The New Church being “genuine Christianity” now first dawning makes no issue over which day it should be, only that there ought to be worship. Sunday it is.

The Writings explain why we should worship the Lord: “The Lord wills a state of humiliation, adoration, thanksgivings in man *for his own sake*” (*Arcana Coelestia* 5957, added emphasis). The Lord our God “does indeed demand humiliation, adoration, thanksgiving...which appear like repayments.” But the Lord takes no glory in it! “The divine has no glory from man’s adoration...Anything of the love of self in the Divine is utterly inconceivable” (ibid.). Imagine the Lord being “pleased” while worshipped! Is that the reason He commands it? No, no. Worship is “for the sake of the man himself, for when in humiliation, he can receive good from the Lord.” The Lord can then “flow in with heavenly good” (ibid, cf. *Op. cit.* 4347, 4593, 7550, 8263, 10646, *Divine Love and Wisdom* 335).

It is like telling a child: Come here, and secondly giving him a gift. You can’t give it until the child comes. Unless we to come forward to face the Lord, and humble ourselves before Him, He

cannot give us all that He wills to give. In a state of worship He can instill His gifts as at no other time. That is why the Third Commandment is stated positively: “Remember the Sabbath...” We freely compel ourselves to worship the Lord, in order to receive the benefits of it from Him. That is why it begins, “Remember...” The fourth commandment likewise says, “Honor your Father and Mother...” All the other commandments begin “Thou shalt not...”

We can think of the Ten Commandments as having three “beginnings”! The first one is the First Commandment: no other gods before the Lord. We submit all other loves to Love to the Lord. By another count, the 3rd and 4th commandments form the ‘beginning,’ because we read “the sanctification of the rest of the commandments depends upon these” two, (*Apocalypse Explained* 965:2)! The fourth commandment of course turns us to “Honor” the Lord and the Church as Father and Mother. In other words, “Remember” and “Honor” are the *first* commandments we should obey, in order that the rest may also be sacred in our observances. The “third beginning” are commandments 9 and 10, since the 9th commandment warns against the love of the world, and the 10th against the love of self (*Apocalypse Explained* 1021:2, 1022:2). These two “lusts” review all the evils involved in the “thou shalt not” ones! We have to start again, and shun not only the actual evils mentioned there, but also the *desires* behind all evils. Then worship is also in life.

We learn to love worship of the Lord. It is one primary obligation of parents to teach their children Church behavior, and this is best started in Family Worship. There is nothing like parents at home sincerely kneeling and praying before the open Word to awe the 2-year old into a similar act. This activity also fulfils the voluntary oath taken by parents when their children were baptized: to teach the child the Lord’s Prayer, and the Ten Commandments. The parents but no others should do this. And who is not touched by the child at Church innocently ‘announcing’ the Lord’s Prayer?

There are other stipulations for New Church worship. Some people may find the rituals tedious. However, although the internal of worship is more important than the externals, still the “inner essential itself makes the external form or ceremony holy and living.” So it never means that “there should not be external worship,” i.e. rituals (*Arcana Coelestia* 1175). External rituals serve the function of maintaining order over the people’s own externals. Rituals maintain a holy sphere. They also invite us to spruce up our appearance for worship. Externals are ordered so they may receive internal things, especially by removing selfish and worldly things, or keeping these subordinate (*Arcana Coelestia* 1618). Rituals allow internals which have to do with the “love of truth for truth’s own sake” to flow in (*Arcana Coelestia* 10683). That is why in the New Church, internal things cannot be *without an external*. It is a command especially for the New Church: don’t ever have an internal without a proper external. The reason? Because the Lord is worshiped in His Divine Human (*Apocalypse Revealed* 918). That is why there has been such an emphasis on proper liturgics in the history of the New Church. We can’t incorporate rituals that may seem rousing and affirmative, from other churches, if they come with foreign internals or false dogmas already attached. New internals transform the format, or else angels would flee the scene.

That brings up the source for our worship. In worship, all material must have no other source than the Word: “only what is from the Word is serviceable for worship” (*Arcana Coelestia* 8943). If not, we risk idolatry! In fact “worship is prescribed in doctrine and performed according to it” (*Apocalypse Revealed* 880), which is why “doctrine comes first, and worship follows from doctrine” (*Apocalypse Revealed* 777). Does not this say that the primary point of worship is Doctrinal instruction? Only after “Divine truth is revealed” can “worship be internal,” provided people also “live according to the truth” (*Arcana Coelestia* 10570, 10460).

Was the Sabbath always a day of instruction? No, for

millennia, worship was representative of internal contents, and those contents are what today constitute instruction. The Lord changed the Sabbath day into a “day for instruction in Divine things and teachings about faith and love” when He Himself was on earth (*Arcana Coelestia* 10360:8). While in the world the Lord united His Human to the Divine, and this glorification was prophesied by representative worship, especially among the Children of Israel. All worship after the Flood down to the Advent was representative of internal things which had “respect to Him.” Consequently, when the Lord came, He “laid open” these internal things (*Arcana Coelestia* 4832). He did away with all representatives of Him, and turned the Sabbath into a day of “instruction” in those internals, which were matters of doctrine. From then on, the Sabbath became a day of “instruction, of rest from labors and of meditation on such things as relate to salvation and eternal life,” as also a day of “love towards the neighbor” (*Arcana Coelestia* 10360:8, *True Christian Religion* 301, cf. *Apocalypse Explained* 537). How did the Lord make this change? He did it by healing the lame man on the Sabbath, saying, “Take up your bed and walk,” which signifies instruction in doctrine!

And when did the Lord begin instruction in Divine things? Every time the Gospels state “Jesus said” is when He did just that. So representatives in Church worship “ceased” when the Lord came into the world, and internal worship could begin. Representatives, i.e. symbolic rituals and rites such as in the Tabernacle and later the Temple, communicated by correspondences with the internals that the angels were in. Angels, buffered by simple naïve spirits, witnessed the rituals of the Sons of Israel, and their presence was betokened by the pillar of fire and cloud (*Arcana Coelestia* 8588:6, 8788, 8192). These forms of worship had turned the previous disorders towards order: i.e. the persuasive idolatry of ‘Nimrod’—forcing internal worship to be merely external (*Arcana Coelestia* 1173, 1175, 1176), and the even earlier tendency to ancestor worship which was a factor in the fall of Most Ancient Church, i.e. comparing what ancestors had

said with what the angel of the Lord now said (*Arcana Coelestia* 125, 194, 205)—the worship in Israel erased all such previous perversions. At the Advent, however, with the establishment of Christianity, the Temple rituals were transformed into Baptism and the Holy Supper, plus instruction in Doctrine; and the same again with the establishment of the New Church, but this time together with ample Divine explanations in the Writings.

This change made by the Lord, makes even more sense when we realize that the Divine Human is the object of our worship, and it was formed during the Lord's glorification while in the world.<sup>1</sup> "The Lord's Divine Human is essentially present in all worship and all doctrine, so much so that it is the very essence of worship itself and doctrine itself" (*Arcana Coelestia* 2811). We see how important the Divine Human is in our worship. Because of this, "all the treasures" that existed in forms of worship in the past, can now be "dug up" and be "brought to light" by the spiritual sense of the Word, "now disclosed for the New Church, for its use in the worship of the Lord" (*True Christian Religion* 669). We can understand all previous forms of worship, and see why they were conducted that way, and revive the same essence, but in our new forms. That is why the sacraments of baptism and the holy supper, preserving various ancient rites of purification and sacrifices, are restored to their integral order for worship in the New Church. We have to see the "holiness contained" in them (*True Christian Religion* 700).

Who leads in worship? Worship is under the charge of ordained priests of the New Church, who should receive "honor and dignity" for the office they serve in administering the holy things of Worship (*Heavenly Doctrine* 317). Thus all "divine worship belongs to the office of the priest" and that office

1. After the Resurrection, the "Divine Human" became "the same as before" the Advent, cf. *Arcana Coelestia* 4687, 5663, 6831, but it differed from before the Advent because it was only in "potential" before the Advent, while it was "actual" after the Advent. *Divine Love and Wisdom* 233. Becoming "actual" is called an "addition" but it is essentially "the same", because the Lord God does not change. He only came closer to creation in the Divine Natural, i.e. the Divine Human.

belongs to the Lord as Savior (*Arcana Coelestia* 9809:2, 6, *Heavenly Doctrine* 317). Although the Lord Himself is the High Priest of His Church, the Lord has transferred to priests the work that the Lord Himself did on earth, or the work that angels and prophets of the Lord did prior to the Advent: namely to instruct in the Word, and in the doctrine found in the internal sense of the Word. Thus when Malachi said “The priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and [the people] should seek the law at his mouth, because he is the angel of Jehovah” (Malachi 2:7) this does *not* mean that the priest *is* “the angel of Jehovah, but the Divine truth which he teaches is” (*Apocalypse Explained* 130.8)! The Divine Truth that New Church priests now teach, are the same truths once taught by the Angel of the Lord! The truth is the same, renewed with each new generation.

Instruction is now the main use of worship, and it is achieved by means of conjunction by means of the Word with the Lord and with heaven, and consociation with angels through doctrine (*Apocalypse Revealed* 818, 946). The role of the New Church priest is accordingly to “teach the truths of faith, and to lead *thereby* [per, secundum] to the good of life” (*Heavenly Doctrine* 315, 316, added emphasis). The truths which are taught are what lead to the *good of life*. The Good of Life is the *summum bonum* of the regenerating members of the New Church. It means confidence in the Lord, contentment in uses, the joys of friendship, and enjoying the feasts of mind and body.

Now, “regeneration is one thing and worship another” (*Arcana Coelestia* 10206). They are not one and the same. We are *not* regenerated by going to Church! Worship has a separate function, which is why it is the first positively stated of the Ten Commandments. Worship is an act of conjunction with the Lord and with heaven, and consociation with angels; of holiness with humility. It is accomplished then and there, every time. Nonetheless “worship itself” extends into our regeneration, for worship is not just going to Church, but it is also “performing uses” in society. “Anyone who thinks that serving the Lord consists solely in going

to church regularly, listening to the preaching there, and saying his prayers, and that that is sufficient, is much mistaken. True worship of the Lord consists in performing useful services; and such services during a person's life in the world lay in a proper fulfillment of his function by each person, whatever his own position, that is, in serving his country, its communities, and his neighbor with all his heart" (*Arcana Coelestia* 7038).

We take worship with us into the world where we are regenerated, and we bring our regeneration in the world with us when we enter Church. "Worship is according to the state of regeneration" (*Arcana Coelestia* 10206). Still, they differ as "one" and "another"! We are not regenerated by going to Church, but our worship is qualified by our level of regeneration. And after worship is over and observing the Sabbath commandments has served its purpose (meant by the Word being closed after worship, just as Jesus "closed the book" of the Torah, Luke 4:20), the "life according to the truths taught" carries our worship over into life. "This is to be in the marriage of good and truth, not just in the doctrine of the church." Then the members of the church have the "church in them" not just "with them" (*Arcana Coelestia* 4899).

We worship the Lord Jesus Christ as the One God of heaven and earth. The main message of our instruction is that *The Trinity is in the Lord*. This is the doctrinal message meant by "All power is given unto Me... Go and baptize all nations in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit...Behold I am with you always" (Matthew 28:18-20). The words "given unto Me" and "I am with you" which the Lord said just before and after naming the Trinity here, means that "the Trinity is in the Lord" (*Apocalypse Revealed* 750, *Brief Exposition* 32, *Divine Providence* 262, *Lord* 46, and *True Christian Religion* 164). We teach all people who come to the New Church this main doctrine. We must teach it. For the Lord is The Divine Human; Father, Son and Holy Spirit dwell in HIM, as soul, body and saving work. Here is the primary 'euangellion [evangel] of the New Church. We invite the whole world to join us in kneeling before the Divine Human who is the "all of worship."

## *Communications*

To the Editor:

It is a great pleasure to be receiving New Church Life as a new member of the Church. For decades I thought I was a member. I grew up in Bryn Athyn, attended schools and Church there. It is an unusually thought-provoking feeling to be welcomed to the Church at my age, especially since I thought I was an old hand. It is quite revitalizing! I recommend it to everyone, because it renews enthusiasm. It is lovely to feel welcomed.

Regards, Mim Lockhart

## *Church News*

### **REPORT FROM RIOUNDE NEW CHURCH, KENYA**

The Riounde New Church School in Kisii, Kenya, have a good flock of children, almost 200, both orphans and others, which the Lord has brought under our care to educate and raise in the light of the Heavenly Doctrines. First of all, we want to thank you from our hearts for all the support you have been to us up to this point—inspirationally and physically through the coming of Duncan Smith and others who have gotten so many things rolling. Thank you for providing the facilities and resources in the library for us to know and receive the One God as He shows Himself in the Writings.

In the discussions we have shared as teachers of the New Church School here, we have come up with uses that we are serving and how we see they may be supported. The uses are of three categories: one is the education of the children, the second is caring for our orphans, and the third is education of our teachers for the sake of serving the children and the church community. All these categories would be supported by better external facilities. Foremost in our concern is the immediate application of the Heavenly Doctrines into our curriculum while

at the same time allowing the children to learn the knowledge, including awareness of Old Christian doctrine, they require for the sake of passing important examinations that allow them to continue their education and find good jobs here in Kenya. In support of this concern, we now have a wonderful library with the Writings themselves and many supplemental resources that we are eager to use. To aid us in this process, we have Isaac Synnestvedt now living with us with this very goal for his work. We look forward to receiving the box we know is on the way and will work right away to put these new materials to good use.

Many of the children are too poor to buy textbooks for their education. As a result, even the bright children are left behind or at a disadvantage when it comes time for the standardized examinations. If the school had funds to help the children buy textbooks, not only would their test scores surely show improvement, but it would be easier for our teachers to show them the distinctiveness of the New Dispensation from the Lord. Thanks again for the many binders brimming with the methods and experience of the New Church teachers in America .

Our facilities are still in the beginning stages of development. What we have has served us since we opened our school and orphanage from scratch in 2004. Now the boat is sinking. The fishes are too many. That's what comes of casting the net on the right side when there are many in need around you. Our washrooms were non-existent until now, but with the work of Duncan, they are on their way to become sanitary and acceptable to a respected institution. Our kitchen is a slapped together smoke-shack where corn and man are cooked together in harmony. Our faithful cook and man-of-all-work, Peter, bends for hours each day over the open flames, squinting to see the porridge or tea he is cooking. The smoke comes seeping and billowing out in all directions, affecting children in class and in the girls' dormitory. Thank you, Peter, we have to eat! We are looking forward to the day we can have a real kitchen with contained fire. Adjoined to the "kitchen" is the girls' dormitory

which is one small room with too many beds and many more girls. The boys dormitory is a little better and has its own place up on the hill, though repairs and renovations are in order including pouring concrete on the mud floor and sealing the open ventilation of windows and eaves with mesh and screens to keep beasts and bugs out.

Our teachers' salary amounts to 15 dollars a month, which we are very thankful to receive, though it makes life rather tight. If we were to desire families, for example, we would hope to receive a salary that could support them also, so our New Church School may continue and prosper. The first years we were giving all our lives and time freely to begin this school, and with the visitation of Rev. David Lindrooth in 2006 came the salaries that have sustained our uses until now. We pray to move forward that we may continue serving the children until they are grown.

Our meals are simple, maize and cooked green vegetable, and portions are often rationed for the orphans. Because of limited funds and help, breakfast does not happen. The children would be more energetic if there was someone to make them breakfast and more food to offer as well as some variety of nutrition.

Our water is drawn from a nearby stream by Peter and the children. Unfortunately, we do not often have the gas or fire necessary to boil the water before drinking, which almost certainly contributes to the periodic health issues that plague us. If we had consistently boiled or even purified water, we would drink more freely and willingly.

The "mother" and "father" of the orphans are also teachers in our school. They have many duties to care for the children as well as teaching classes, so there are some needs that simply cannot be met. We have had the dream of finding an older couple to stay here and help raise and care for the children. This also could be supported by funds to give them a place to live.

It is our hope in the coming years to expand our school beyond 8th grade, right on through 12th. This could be done one year at a time beginning when we have the facilities and staff to

do so. The students are already here, and we are sad to see them go off to another school! If we served and taught them here through high school, it would greatly increase their connection with the church, and more of them would be prepared to come to the Bryn Athyn College to further their education in the Word, or stick around and serve our community. Perhaps one day we would have so many youths in the church here that we would be able to begin a college here in East Africa, then perhaps a theological school here in Kenya like the one started in Ghana to receive the influx of students from Uganda, Tanzania, and Kenya. This is our dream, and we must take the first steps. If another one of our teachers was accepted to the Bryn Athyn College, this would greatly support our dream of beginning a 9th grade with qualified teachers. We are glad Nicks is there now. There are several of us willing to come for higher education, and for of us men here who want to become New Church Pastors. We are waiting on the Lord and serving His children until such time as we are given the opportunity to pursue our educational goals. The four men who very much want to attend theological school are also key members of our faculty. We must be aware and prudent about the steps we take to pursue our education so we do not leave our school hanging. One very viable option for any of our teachers, all of which are untrained, is to attend education classes at a nearby college during the three (separated) months of school break. In this manner, any teacher could receive a teaching certificate within two years without affecting the operation of our school. This would cost approximately 1,000 dollars per teacher.

We know the Lord has a plan for our school and the church in Kenya . It is our duty, honor, and pleasure to look to Him for the guidance He will surely give us. We are ready and willing to receive all the love and support He is giving us from within and without. Thank you for your inquiry about our hopes for our school and how we see these hopes may be supported. We pray that our synopsis of our current situation will be of service to any

support you can give us along the way in our plan for moving forward.

Sincerely, Reverend Khalid Obiri, Pastor

Robert Ontarige, Lay Leader

George Omosu Magero, Head Teacher

Benard Onsamo, Deputy Head Teacher

Rebecca Oyagi, Senior Teacher

Hyline Rabera Marisa, Secretary and “mother” of orphans

Benson Ombiro, Teacher and “father” of orphans

Evans Nyambane, Teacher

Fred Angasa, Teacher

Julius Getunani, Teacher

Dennis Onwonga, Teacher,

Josephine Nyangena, Nursery Teacher

Isaac Synnestvedt, Implementer of Heavenly Curriculum and draftsman of this letter.

We are happy to read the following passages from the Word:

If we pray from love and faith, and only for heavenly things, then there comes forth in prayer something like a revelation which is manifested in our feelings when we are praying; as to hope, or a certain inward joy. (*Arcana Coelestia* 2535)

The voice of joy; and the voice of gladness; the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say praise the Lord of Hosts; for the Lord is good; for His mercy endures forever. (Jeremiah)

Dear Rev. Khalid, Teachers and Friends:

Having read your letter I cannot but pray that the plans being laid to help your people that from centers like yours the Lord' New Church can be spread through out the lands that we inhabit. Here is an outline of directions I hope to start within two weeks of this coming Easter; all being in agreement with your people:  
**A three year challenge Riounde, Kisii, Kenya:**

\* First year: projects that effect health and living conditions for the souls of, namely nutrition, clean water source, 12 volt solar

electricity enabling lighting, computer and phone use to office and the Swedenborg library. Need to add any reasonable items that will improve the living conditions in the buildings we have.

\* Two important buildings to be completed as soon as possible: Girls dorm and kitchen dining pavilion.

\* Second year: additional classrooms.

\* Build a church and future buildings, finding an affordable and convenient site with utilities close to Ogambo and road access.

\* A good scholarship awarded for someone to study with *nutrition and health*, with a commission to write outline of sustainable applications, with a guarantee two years employment to the schools following course completion.

\* Supplies needed to do the job. Let Khalid and Nicks know, and let us start to erase some of these items.

I am actively soliciting funds that will enable us to do these things. Contributions can be sent via:

Duncan G. Smith  
77 Park Dr.  
Glenview , Il. 60025

They will be confirmed by the Glenview Chapter of Uses Worldwide. Code # 5KEKI101

May we continue to be led by the Lord and His providence.

Duncan G. Smith

## **GATHERING LEAVES 2008**

*July 11-14, 2008, at the Purley Chase Centre*

### **The tree of life in Genesis and Revelation**

Five women from the General Church in the UK went to Gathering Leaves 2008: Glynis and Oula Williams came early on Saturday morning and stayed until Sunday evening; Kerry Burniston, Jody Morris and I (Dale Morris) were there for the whole 4 days, and we led worship on Monday morning.

The team who organized the whole amazing weekend was excited to have us coming, apparently. We went with some

apprehension, since none of us had gone to the first two events held in the USA, and we didn't know what it would be like with female ministers (and candidates, too)—but I think all of us were able, if not to put aside our differences, at least to not focus on them, and to discover wonderful bonds of friendship with many people we'd never met. Where the women came from was irrelevant, except in providing hugely varied life experiences—we all had in common the rich, rewarding, challenging and satisfying Writings given through Swedenborg, and we are all trying to bring them to the wider world in our own ways. Each of us is uniquely talented, and we should trust our perceptions and do what we can, wherever we feel able. And sometimes we need to be brave about it, too, and trust that the Lord will be with us in our efforts.

It felt a bit like Summer School for grown-ups. There was plenty of social time; worship morning and evening; four sessions to attend (before going we had to choose from 18 different options—mine were on Happiness—a spiritual perspective; Speak, Lord, UK Newsletter September 2008 for your servant is listening, about perception; The female disciples of Jesus, an academic study; and How do we reach out and engage with seekers?); an evening of folk dances and silly games; a day trip to Stratford; interludes for yummy meals; much laughter and many intense conversations; lots of singing; and a very moving church service on Sunday—12 women spoke 'their' stories of why they had followed the Lord in the world, and each of us was invited personally by one of these women to come forward for Holy Supper. Some people chose not to take part in some or all of these things; there was no pressure. As the weekend progressed, many of us decided to move 'out of our comfort zone' and try new things. Our last official act was to plant a new tree in the grounds, which had been in the marquee throughout the weekend as a backdrop to our different activities.

One highlight was an evening when we had to split into one of four groups—art, dance, music, and discussion—and spend just 20 minutes developing a response to a poem by e. e. cummings.

The artists paraded their individual pieces of art around the circle the rest of us sat in; the dancers gave a moving performance in the centre; the discussion brought up several relevant and apt thoughts; the musicians sang a barbershop song, with harmonies!

Another highlight was the differing forms each worship service took. The one we led was by far the most formal, and held in the chapel rather than the marquee: but numerous people commented how much it had meant to them, and one appreciated the ‘logical’ approach (readings, definitions of correspondences, and a talk) which gave her an opportunity to organize her thoughts.

Other reactions? The Lord’s prayer had numerous wordings, but all were accepted as what was usual for each person. The reference to ‘mother-father-God’ that one or two people used made me a little uncomfortable, but the reasons for this different ‘definition’ were talked about somewhat, and I don’t think anyone was made to feel their thinking was wrong. There was a focus on feminine strengths but no shortage of logical thinking and academic research; there was real enthusiasm for the New Church, in all its forms. It struck me that there were often clear indications of how ‘the male mind’ played its part in the female thinking over the weekend: the conjugal principle seems to be alive and well. Anne and David Gaffney joined us for church—it was lovely to hear his deep voice just a few chairs down from me. It was good to meet some of the Conference women from other parts of the UK.

This was a valuable interlude in many busy lives. It took us away from our daily concerns without denying their importance, and gave us the chance to reflect, study, laugh, pray, stretch our minds and hearts to ‘breathe a softer air.’

- Dale Morris

## **MEN & WOMEN IN THE MINISTRY**

BY REV. OLAF HAUPTMANN

I enter this debate reluctantly. However, because it is not going away, there is no use keeping silent. If we do keep silent,

we could forget why we believe as we claim.

Before discussing the doctrinal basis for why the General Church keeps insisting that the ministry is for men only, it is good to take a look at the General Church itself.

The General Church is a splinter group which broke away from the Convention church in 1890 (It is an interesting side note that the societies of Colchester and Michael Church<sup>1</sup> in England soon after split from the British Conference to join the General Church).

The grounds for the split were a disagreement on the authority of the Writings. The people who became the General Church held the belief that the Writings are the Word of the Lord. The Convention and the Conference were not quite ready to make such a declaration. Some of them it seems, felt quite sympathetic to the General Church position, but for various reasons they did not feel compelled to split from the church to which they had initially given their allegiance.

The point to be made here is that the General Church was not formed as a simple gathering of people who read Swedenborg. Rather the General Church was formed by people who deeply believed that the Writings are the Word of the Lord. People who felt compelled by their beliefs and convictions, broke away from the original church organization to form their own group where they would be free to practice their beliefs. There were several specific points of contention. Amongst others, they wanted to be free to run their own theological school according to the principles that they saw in the Writings. We could say that the General Church is an ideological organization to a very high degree.

When we know this, then it becomes easier to understand the General Church through the ages. In whatever question that has come up, the reaction has more or less been to go to the Writings to see what they say about it. To the General Church, the Writings have been what the Urim and Thummim were to the  
1. You can read about this in Nancy Dawson's inspiring History of Michael Church on our website. Click on [newchurchuk.org](http://newchurchuk.org)—London—History. This is a beautifully clear description of the controversy over the authority of the Writings and the strong values of the 'Academy Movement' that still inspire us today.

Israelites: the place where the minister would turn to get all his answers. The same is the case with the General Church when it comes to the issue of women in the ministry.

As we read through the book *Conjugal Love*, we see men and women described very differently. They each have their way of looking at things, and they each have jobs or uses according to their disposition. It says:

A husband has duties appropriate to him, and wife duties appropriate to her, and a wife cannot enter into duties appropriate to her husband or a husband into duties appropriate to his wife and perform them properly. There is no need to illustrate by recounting them that there are duties appropriate to a husband and duties appropriate to a wife, for these are many and various in nature. (*Conjugal Love* 174)

We are told that there is no need to enumerate the duties; but we might sometimes feel that it would have been a whole lot easier if these duties had been enumerated and called by name. Then, all our searching of the Scriptures could have ended here. However, it seems that the Lord likes to keep us searching. We read in the next paragraph that “women” cannot enter into the duties of “men” because they cannot raise their understanding to the same level as men, nor can “men” enter into the duties of “women” because they cannot enter into the affection of women (*Conjugal Love* 175). Five or six pages earlier we are told that because of this difference, women do not speak in gatherings where intellectual wisdom is discussed. It is not because women do not have intellectual wisdom, for it says: “Nevertheless wives still have these things [of intellectual wisdom] in them inwardly,” (*Conjugal Love* 165, see also *Arcana Caelestia* 8994). Women have it all, but it is just that the job of speaking from intellectual wisdom falls on men.

All of this can naturally seem very old fashioned to us today. Western people of this day and age like very much to think of themselves as being on the very pinnacle of development and understanding. From this vantage point, we may feel a certain liberty to discard the thinking and writing of the past centuries and millennia. In the General Church however, we like to see the

Writings as our vantage point, the litmus test to which everything else has to measure up, or be disregarded. This organization has chosen to bind itself to the threefold Word, come what may, which is why it will keep insisting that the ministry is for men only.

As modern people we many not feel entirely comfortable when we are told that some uses are for men and others for women. It is not exactly the tune which the world around us seems to be humming. However, as religious people, we must refrain from disregarding the Word of God. This way, when we look again at the men and women around us, we will know and appreciate each for their virtues.

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