

New Church LIFE

A monthly magazine devoted to the teachings
revealed through Emanuel Swedenborg

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The Temple of the New Church
A Sermon by Grant R. Schnarr

The Baptism of the New Church Part III
By Howard Roth

Gifts from the Lord
By Coleman Glenn

Academy Collections of Swedenborg Documents
By Marvin B. Clymer

January 2009

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Notes on This Issue

Our Sermon welcomes back Rev. Grant R. Schnarr in a concentrated look at the meaning of the Nunc Licet Temple. There is at least one thing we can all do to help the New Church succeed.

The series on Baptism continues with Part III, by Howard Roth, an experientially focused doctrinal study on the subtle distinctions between being baptized in the New Church, or not.

“Gifts from the Lord” welcomes Theolog Coleman Glenn, who volunteered to serve the Hurstville Society in Sydney last summer. His editorial in the July ‘08 Courier is here reprinted for everyone’s appreciation. In the New Year we think about the unwanted ideas floating into our minds, what we need to do about it and what the Lord then gives.

What are the “Green Books”? Most will say the green set of the Writings. Others lay their finger along the nose and wisely nod: “Ah, the ACSD files!” Yes, the Academy Collection of Swedenborg Documents have new life. Be astonished as Marvin Clymer informs you of their history, and their 2009 instant availability.

In the vein of Swedenborg’s Birthday month, Clymer also submitted Swedenborg’s own autobiographical letter to remind you that Swedenborg did talk about his own bio. This was last printed in *New Church Life* in 1902, — remember?

A poem honoring Swedenborg composed in 1815, found a few years back in the above ADCS files, is here translated into English rhyme for the first time. I kind of like it.

Please take note of Church News, the pictures of 7 new ministers of the General Church, inaugurated last summer, from Ghana and Togo, as reported in September *New Church Life*, 2008, together with their declarations of faith. Be prepared to welcome them when you see them.

THE TEMPLE OF THE NEW CHURCH
A Sermon in Preparation for Holy Communion

BY THE REV. GRANT R. SCHNARR

The Lord had promised His disciples that there would come a time when the Spirit of Truth would teach people openly and guide them “into all truth” (John 16:13). This promise was fulfilled at the inauguration of a New Church on earth brought forth by the Heavenly Doctrines of the New Jerusalem. Through the teachings of the Heavenly Doctrines a new spiritual era descended upon the earth, an era in which people could now see the Lord in His Word, understand Him, and also follow a path to Him clearly set out before them.

The beautiful temple Swedenborg was given to see in the spiritual world is symbolic of this “new and glorious heavenly truth” now unfolded in the New Church. As Swedenborg approached the magnificent building he noted the transparent walls made of crystal windows and a gate of pearl, similar in substance to the description of the New Jerusalem in the *Apocalypse*. The transparent walls represent the crystal clear truths of the Heavenly Doctrines, which allow one to see inside even from a distance, to behold the light of the Word. We are reminded that the Lord is the light of that city, and that this light will even shine far and wide, even reaching those who dwell in darkness, “A light to bring revelation to the gentiles” (Luke 3:32). We are told that, “Those outside the church who do not have the Word, nevertheless have light by its means,” and that, “it is sufficient that there be a church where the Word is, even if it consists of comparatively few, for even in that case the Lord is present by its means in the whole world” (*Sacred Scripture* 104). This is possible because the church will know the Lord

Jesus Christ to be the one God of heaven and earth, and from this knowledge bourn accordingly into life, the Lord reaches out to all His people. It is more than noteworthy to point out that the gates of pearl, both in this holy temple witnessed by Swedenborg and those of the Holy City New Jerusalem represent knowledge of the Lord. That means people enter the New Church when they acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ as their God and Savior, one God, one Creator, one Savior of the world – thus the gates are each made of not many but rather one pearl.

Inside this temple we see the Word set on a platform or pulpit. This Word is open and is shining so brightly that it is lighting up the entire temple. Notice the Word is open on the pulpit standing to the side. The pulpit signifies the priesthood of the New Church. The light coming from the open Word is said to be the revelation of the internal or spiritual sense of the Word. This is the light of the New Church, opening up the deeper mysteries once hidden, so they may be seen in light. These truths are to be explained by rational means, using the letter of the Word in its own light for confirmation, opening the window into the heavens and making the way clear for people to approach the Lord. (See *True Christian Religion* 508:5) The teaching of the deeper meaning of the stories of the Word, revealing how these stories and all the literal aspects of the Word have direct application to individual lives, is the calling and mission of the New Church priesthood represented in this Holy Temple. This is where people can come to a church and hear the Word like nowhere else, revealing truths not apart from the Word but lying deep within, not simply making shallow comparisons but bringing forth deeply valuable significations and correspondences of things not heard and seen since Ancient and Most Ancient times.

In the center of the temple is an open veil, signifying the

opening of the Word, revealing a shrine, which is said to be that place where heaven and earth meet, or the promise that this New Church will lead to heaven and conjunction with the Lord. A golden cherub brandishes a sword in all directions at this place signifying the literal sense of the Word, and the protection it still offers. This sense protects the inner sense, meaning that it may be twisted and turned in different directions by people trying to see the light within, but as long as people focus on the general truths of the Word in so doing, no harm will come of it. In other words, people are going to look at the Word in a variety of different ways, but as long as there is an acknowledgment of the universal truths, such as the doctrine of the Lord, the Word, and Life, this brings no harm.

Finally, in this description, Swedenborg notes the inscription over the door of the temple – “Now it is Permitted”, and he is handed a piece of paper by a celestial angel explaining it, “From now on enter into the mysteries of the Word which have so far been hidden: for each one of its truths is a mirror in which we see the Lord” (*True Christian Religion* 508). Isn't that the heart of what the New Church offers? Now it is possible to understand. Now things which have been hidden for so long are being revealed, each of them a reflection of the Lord Himself. This is the Second Coming, the revelation of the Lord Himself through the opening of the inner meaning of His Word. This is the essence of the church. This is the Lord's plan for the church. This is the way He desires for His church to know Him, to understand His Word, and this is how He desires to spread His newly revealed truth to all people. How do we know this? Because this is what the Word says.

In order to fulfill this great vision each one of us who have been touched by it need to start at the beginning. Our understanding of the Word counts. The doctrinal integrity of the church, meaning the depth of understanding of the people in the

Lord's New Church is what allows that light to shine transparent. The church and the people are one. The church is only a church according to its understanding of the Word and integrity of doctrine, and then a life there-from (*Sacred Scripture* 76-79). If you want to help the church, explore deeply what the Writings teach. If you want to share the church, share what the Writings teach. If you love this image of the temple and wish to be part of this heavenly city, live what the Writings teach. This is the responsibility of all who have been given the opportunity to enter this temple and to explore this Holy City.

At the end of the work *Apocalypse Revealed* the Writings tell us that it is the role of anyone who knows of these things, "that he who knows anything of the Lord's coming, and of the New Heaven and the New Church, thus of the Lord's kingdom, will pray that it may come" (#956). As we turn to the Lord in His supper this morning, let us pray that His Kingdom come. We pray that He enters our hearts as we dedicate ourselves to learning ever more deeply the truths of His revelation, and that He enter our lives as we seek to live by His ways. We pray that His kingdom may come to all people, that His truth may shine forth into the deepest recesses of the earth, and bring light to those who huddle in the darkness, dispelling fear, bringing hope, lifting into the light and warmth of heaven. *Amen.*

Lessons: Isaiah 9:1-2; John 16:12-16; *True Christian Religion*
508

The Rev. Grant R. Schnarr, was inaugurated into the priesthood in 1983, and ordained into the Pastoral degree in 1984. He served as Assistant to the Pastor in Glenview from 1983 to 1985, when he was made Assistant Pastor there, also visiting the Chicago New Church and groups elsewhere in Illinois. In 1988 he became the Pastor of the Chicago Circle, the well known "No Exit" venue. In 1991 he added the



role of Director of Evangelization, working from Glenview. In 1995 Grant took the role of Director of Evangelization to Bryn Athyn, Pa. until 2004, when he became Assistant Pastor to Bryn Athyn Society. In July 2009, Grant will be the first Pastor of NewChurchLive, the internet television ministry. Grant lives with Cathlin (Cole) in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania.

THE BAPTISM OF THE NEW CHURCH

Part III

BY HOWARD ROTH

The importance of the baptism into the New Church of those who have been previously baptized elsewhere, appears to us to arise out of what the ‘Writings’ teach about the necessity to order of distinct arrangement: - “In the spiritual world, by which we mean both heaven and hell, all things are most distinctly arranged, in the whole, and in every part, or in general, and in every particular. On the distinct arrangement there, the preservation of the whole universe depends; and this distinction cannot be effected, unless every one, after he is born, be known by some sign, indicating to what religious assembly he belongs...”

“What is order without distinction?, and what is distinction without indications?, and what are indications without signs, by which the qualities are known? For without knowledge of the qualities, order is not known as order. The signs or signatures in empires and in kingdoms are titles of dignities and rights of administration annexed to them; thence are subordinations, by means of which all are arranged together as into one: in this manner a king exercises, according to order, his regal power distributed among many, whence a kingdom becomes a kingdom. The case is similar in very many other things, as in armies: what avail would they have unless they were distinguished in an orderly manner into phalanxes, these into cohorts, and these into companies; and subordinate leaders were appointed over each, and one over all, who is supreme? And what would those arrangements be without the signs, which are called standards, to show in what station every one is to be? By such means all act in battle as one, and without them they would rush against the enemy, like troops of dogs with open mouths, howling and empty fury; and then all without strength would be cut to pieces by an enemy arranged in the proper order of battle; for what can the divided do against the united? By these things is illustrated this first use of baptism, which is a sign in the spiritual world that he is of Christians, where everyone is inserted among societies and congregations there according to the quality of the Christianity in him or without him” (*The Christian Religion* #678,680).

The whole tenor of this indicates the necessity of more particular distinctions than those most general ones between Christians, Mohammedans, and Gentiles.

Cannot every intelligent person see, that the form of understanding and of life, of one who in heart receives the doctrines of the New Church, and the truths of the internal sense of the Word, is very different from that of him who merely

understands and brings into life truths as they are presented in the obscurity of the letter? Can anyone doubt that they who live the life which is opened to the New Church by the revelation of the doctrines, and the disclosing of the spiritual sense of the Word, are, in heaven, distinguished from Christians who have made here no practical use of this revelation? The whole tenor of the 'Writings' teachings shows the importance of corresponding distinctions on earth. It seems clear that the sign of a most important distinction will be wanting in heaven, if a man who has been baptized elsewhere, is not, on coming into the New Church, baptized into it.

It may perhaps be doubted whether the administration of baptism in the New Church – the form being essentially the same there as elsewhere – can have any particular significance. But it cannot be doubted that it has. The Writings clearly show, that it is perceived by the angels, whether the men with whom they are associated receive the internal sense of the Word, or merely the external sense.

Hence, when baptism is administered, as well as when it is read of in the Word, the angels present perceive whether the spiritual or the natural sense is received. When baptism is administered by a Christian minister, whose mind, as well as that of the person baptized, the angels perceive not to be elevated above the letter, it is a sign to them of introduction among angels whose life corresponds; and when they perceive in the minister and the person baptized the recognition of the spiritual sense, a corresponding spiritual association is effected. Thus is one inserted into societies of heaven according to the quality of the Christianity in him; or, in the case of children, according to the quality of the Christianity in which they are to be instructed, and into which there is a desire to lead them. If we apply the instructions from the 'Writings' upon the importance of distinct arrangement in heaven and the Church, to the matter

before us, as the Writings apply them, the conclusion seems unavoidable, that baptism into the New Church, in case one has been previously baptized, is of very great use. If a Christian infant or adult that has not been baptized, is liable to be influenced by a Mohammedan or Gentile spirit to favor his religion, why should not the New Church child or adult, that has received Christian baptism, and not baptism into the New Church, be influenced to regard with favor the religious doctrines and practices of Christians that are unacquainted with the New Church doctrines of the Lord and other genuine truths, and that have no knowledge and acknowledgement of the internal sense of the Scriptures, and of the life that it teaches? For our part, we should expect that such consequences would follow the omission of baptism into the New Church; and our observation furnished us with what appears as very strong confirmation of this view.

We notice in persons not baptized into the New Church, whom we highly esteem, and who are in a general acknowledgement of the New Church and its doctrine, a lack of clear apprehension of the peculiarity of its spirit and life, together with a confounding of the New and Old together.

And it is important to a right conception of the spirit of the New Church, that children and adults should, by being baptized into this Church on earth, be inserted among those of the same religion in the spiritual world, this is even more emphatically important in the case of ministers of the New Church. These certainly ought not to confound things new and old. There ought to be, in the case of these, the least possible liability to be turned aside to other than strictly New Church religion, charity, faith and life. They who are to guide the faith and life of others, ought to omit nothing which is calculated to help them into right conceptions and feelings. There are good men of all religions. There are not only good Christians, but good Muslims and good

men of the various Gentile religions; and all good men, of whatever religion, enter heaven and become angels.

Now it is not necessary that a child, or a well-disposed man, should be baptized, in order to be associated with heaven. It is necessary, however, in order that one on earth may be in his proper place in heaven, where all are most distinctly arranged according to their religion, that there should be some sign on earth, by which it may be known in what religion he is, and is to be instructed. Christian angels and Muslim angels are very different from one another. They are so different that they must needs constitute different societies; and though they are all united in the one great heaven, they are distinctly separate from each other. If there were not some sign on earth by which Christian infants and men could be distinguished in heaven, they might come into connection with some other than the Christian heaven. These simple and plain deductions from the teachings of the Writings, confirmed by observation and experience, seem to us entirely conclusive of the usefulness and importance of the baptism into the New Church, of all those who receive its doctrines, even if they have been previously baptized into some denomination of Christians.

But it does not appear to be the case, that the very general adoption of the practice of baptism into the New Church among us, has arisen so much from an intellectual conviction that it is a thing of Divine order, as from a deep feeling, as it were, a dictate from Heaven, flowing into a sense of the need of aid from above, in removing from ourselves the obstacles to the reception of the high and holy principles revealed to us, and in bringing them into life. There is a very general impression, that where there is a new church or dispensation, there should be a new baptism. And finally, from a personal conviction, as one who converted to the Doctrines of the New Church from one of the sects of the Reformed Church as an adult, who was thoroughly distraught

and in the deepest spiritual anguish and confusion over the incomprehensible, and nonsensical doctrine of the Tri-person, or three gods in one, where Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were approached as separate entities, and yet to be considered as one. It was only when in a state of utter despair and confusion that in a state of total prostration before the 'Lord God of Heaven and earth', when He was implored to grant me a clear understanding of His Being and Majesty – that (by a series of wondrous events) He led me to (at that time in 1957) at the tender age of 28 to what was known as 'Leary's' book store on east Market Street in Philadelphia, whose origins dated back to the days of Benjamin Franklin – to the very top floor attic, while browsing, my eyes came upon a set of books entitled – *The Apocalypse Revealed* – by Emanuel Swedenborg. Inquiring further as to their price and never glancing at its contents, was informed that for \$1.50 they would gift wrap it (in brown paper) to which I agreed and took them home, put them on my night table, unopened, where they remained for the next three months. Coincidentally also, it was a continuing period of intense personal strife and emotional turmoil (all involving my inner states of spiritual uncertainty and discord). In a moment of quiet reflection I recalled those two books purchased at Leary's months before. I opened them and carefully reviewed the table of contents and fell on my knees in deep prayer to the Lord and besought His help in aiding me to perceive if there was anything of 'good' contained in those works, and began thereafter in a dedicated study of a work I was later to find out was an explanation and revelation of the inner/spiritual sense of the Book of Revelation.

My daily occupation at that time was in heavy work of 12 hour days, 6 days a week and the only time to read was on lunch breaks or 15 minutes before crashing into my bed at night. But I persisted – and many months passed before its completion and

my utter profound amazement at which had been revealed to me!

I was convinced (at that time) that no religious system of belief that I had just been exposed to could exist in this foul and corrupt world – it was just too good to believe, it must have existed ages ago and disappeared from this black earth!

I put it out of mind and wiped away tears of grief and lament over the non-realization of what I saw as the perfect religion which was not to be.

A year passed and on an early fall day my wife and I were out for a leisurely drive in an area of the northern Philadelphia suburbs when glancing to my left at an opening through the hillside, a majestic Cathedral spire took my eye and I was hypnotized at the sight. I tried desperately to find a road leading to it but became lost in a deeply wooded glen and struggled for quite a time to find my way out. But that day was lost to my new excitement, and two more tries resulted in success when on the third effort I drove into a paved courtyard of a massive cathedral, parked and walked about and coming to a portal or *portecochère*, came up to a massive set of doors of intricate design and a beautifully carved panel with the ‘NAME’ – The General Church of the New Jerusalem – based upon the ‘Writings’ of Emanuel Swedenborg, servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. It hit as a bolt of lightning! He was the author of the two books entitled “The Apocalypse Revealed.” This was the church that I had convinced myself did no longer or could not possibly exist in a world with so many false and misleading religions! – Trembling from head to toe, I opened the door and met the most kind and endearing elderly gentleman who introduced himself as the curator, Mr. Will Cooper. After an hour of babbling my experience to him he introduced me to one of the church ministers and now as I write this recollection more than 50 years have passed and my love for the ‘Writings’ (all thirty volumes) and the Word Itself have increased from day to day in gratitude

to the Infinite loving and caring God, who is the Lord Jesus Christ. – Here in this religion, for me, all of my questions (and there were many), have been answered to my complete and everlasting satisfaction, and the internal sense of the Word which is the Second Coming of the Lord where ‘He’ has opened the spiritual sense of the Word which is so very far beyond the literal interpretation of the Bible which has poisoned and misled countless millions of Christians in false teachings contrived by the hands of self-seeking church leaders who could not receive those deeper hidden treasures as the time was not yet. Now it is permitted, and the Lord Himself is the teacher and revelator. No longer will men be able to interpret for themselves that Holy Divine Word, and only a humble and sincere mind and heart, in Love to the One, only God, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who is one with the Supreme Divine Father, and from Whom emanates the Holy Spirit.

It is One God with emanating powers – they are not and cannot ever be separate Divine entities! He alone is our guide and teacher, It is ‘He’ who enlightens and prepares each mind according to reception! The more we search and study the three-fold Word of God, the more the Lord can open and prepare our minds to increased reception of Good and Truth from His Word. It stands to reason that the Lord is the living Word with us, He is in it, - and from Him we live and have our being! This is the Second Coming of the Lord – the three fold Word of God is now opened as to its internal – spiritual sense, and we are no longer subjected to meaningless literalizing that close Heaven to our understanding. This is the reality and promise of the New Church on earth for all who seek the Lord in spirit and in Truth. It is that “Peace which passeth all understanding.” It is the Blessing of the New Baptism for all who hunger after righteousness, and desire to be instructed by the Lord. Oh taste and see, that the Lord is good!

GIFTS FROM THE LORD

BY THEOLOG COLEMAN GLENN¹

We often say that the Lord gives us gifts. This of course is true; the Lord gives us talents and abilities, knowledge and delight, wisdom and love, and the chance to live to eternity. It would be foolish to deny that the Lord gives us gifts. But there is an important point about the Lord's gifts to us that we need to keep in mind. *Divine Providence* n. 316 says, "All who are led by the Lord ... even see that what is in man originating from the Lord is always the Lord's and never man's." This is a profound statement about the Lord's gifts with us. Even the good things which we call "gifts" from the Lord are actually still the Lord's; they have not become our own; rather, they are continually being loaned to us by the Lord.

Thinking of the Lord's gifts this way is a valuable tool for letting go of pride. It is one thing to say, "My intelligence is a gift from the Lord," or, "My compassion is a gift from the Lord" – but it is another to acknowledge that even these things are not in us. The Lord has not given us intelligence and made it our own; rather, He is continually allowing us to understand through His intelligence, which He allows us to experience as if it were our own. It is a humbling thought, but also a freeing thought.

The truth that we have nothing of our own is, in fact, one of the most freeing thoughts there is. *Divine Providence* n. 320 states, "If man believed, as is the truth, that all good and truth originate from the Lord, and all evil and falsity from hell, he would not appropriate good to himself and account it meritorious, nor would he appropriate evil to himself and account himself responsible for it." I find this truth to be one of the most powerful truths in the Writings. We can do what is good and not ruin that good by taking credit for it. We do not have to blame ourselves for the evil that assaults us.

However, immediate objections spring to mind as soon as I hear this truth. *New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine* n. 160, for example, says, “Confessing one’s sins is recognizing evils and seeing them in oneself, acknowledging them, considering oneself guilty and condemning oneself on account of them.” How is this consistent with acknowledging that all evil is from hell and not considering oneself responsible for evil? At first glance, these two teachings are hard to reconcile. If we look closer, though, it is not too hard to see how these two truths can be consistent.

In the context of self-examination, we need to acknowledge that we have evil intentions – that is, that there are evil things we would do if we had the chance. We need to make ourselves guilty and condemn ourselves for it, or in other words, we need to face the fact that we have been choosing these things, or that we would choose them; and we need to acknowledge that if we do not remove them from our lives, they will take us to hell. But we also need to acknowledge that the evil ideas and affections did not originate with us. If an evil thought enters our mind, it is more useful and true to say, “That thought is from hell, and I do not want it in my mind,” than to consider that evil thought to be a permanent part of who we are, part of our character that we cannot change. We can hold ourselves guilty for intending sin, but still acknowledge that the inclination to sin and the thoughts associated with it are not a part of us, but are from hell.

There is another powerful implication of this teaching. The last number in the chapter, *Divine Providence* n. 321, says, “So far as anyone shuns evil and turns away from it so far he wills and loves good.” The same number says that those who believe that all evil is from hell pay attention only to the evils in themselves, which they shun and send back to hell. The point is this: because all life flows into us from either heaven or hell, if we shun evil then good necessarily flows into us. We do not

need to worry about what good to do or try to force ourselves to be good; if we shun evils, then we will want to do what is good, and it will give us delight. *Apocalypse Explained* n. 979 expresses this truth:

Good works are all works done by a person when evils have been removed as sins. For the works done after this are done from man only as if from him; for they are done from the Lord, and all works done from the Lord are good, and are called the goods of life, the goods of charity, and good works... Cease, therefore, from asking in yourself, ‘What are the good works that I must do, or what good must I do to receive eternal life?’ Only cease from evils as sins and look to the Lord, and the Lord will teach and lead you.

This double teaching – that all good is from the Lord, and that all evil is from hell – frees us from pride in ourselves, and it frees us from guilt for evil thoughts that enter our mind. It’s a perfect illustration of what the Lord taught when He was in the world: “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

¹ Reprinted from Sydney Hurstville Society’s July *Courier*, while Coleman was serving the pastoral needs there and in Australia during the summer.



ACADEMY COLLECTION OF SWEDENBORG DOCUMENTS

BY MARVIN B. CLYMER

Researchers looking for information about Emanuel Swedenborg now have a substantial resource available for their use. The Academy Collection of Swedenborg Documents includes most of the known documents, correspondence and records relating to the life of Swedenborg, arranged in chronological order. The result of over 235 years of careful collecting and painstaking research, this collection is available once again to individuals and scholars around the world via the Internet.

Shortly after Swedenborg embarked on his final journey into the spiritual world on March 29, 1772, the question arose about what to do with his earthly possessions, since he had ignored suggestions to prepare a will. In London, where he had been living, his signet ring and some other valuables were gathered up and sent along with some papers and clothing back to



August Nordenskjöld

Sweden in case any of his relatives wanted them. The remaining items were given to various friends. A bundle of letters to Swedenborg from Voltaire, Rousseau and others was not considered worth saving and was tossed into the fire! When the box of Swedenborg's effects arrived in Stockholm two of his heirs, who were bishops in the Swedish Church, tried to have his papers burned as trash.

Providentially, the Swedenborg family decided to donate Swedenborg's manuscripts, diaries and papers to the Royal

Academy of Science, after removing certain pages from the diaries which described his earliest dreams. The manuscripts given to the Academy included *The Spiritual Diary* and *Apocalypse Explained*, which had not been published.¹

Two early Swedenborgians in Stockholm, August and Carl Fredrik Nordenskjold² (who were brothers), felt that if the Writings of Swedenborg were Divinely inspired it was essential to preserve for posterity everything written by him. August obtained permission from the Academy to catalogue and bind the loose documents at his own expense. In 1783 Carl took some of the manuscripts to London where they could be printed without the religious censorship present at that time in Sweden.



Dr. Rudolph H. Tafel

Other followers of Swedenborg saw the need to record the facts of his life to dispel false accusations of immorality and insanity that had been circulated by detractors who sought to discredit his theological writings. As the teachings of the New Church spread throughout Europe and the New World, the number of Swedenborgians grew and these hostile attacks on Swedenborg's credibility increased at the same time.

Based on the recommendation of William H. Benade, the General Convention of the New Church in America sent Dr. Rudolph L. Tafel to Sweden in 1868 to produce photolithographic³ copies of Swedenborg's unpublished manuscripts. While on this mission, Tafel discovered other documents relating to Swedenborg in the Royal Academy of Sciences and he seized the opportunity to learn what documentary evidence still existed in Sweden at that time. The

Royal Librarian in Stockholm, Mr. C. E. Klemming, assisted him in his search by inserting a circular in all the prominent Swedish newspapers and sending notices to many collectors and booksellers throughout the country requesting information concerning Swedenborg. The result was a large collection of documents about Swedenborg that had been unknown to New Church scholars. After translating and organizing these documents, Tafel published many of them in a three volume set entitled, *Documents Concerning The Life And Character Of Emanuel Swedenborg* in 1875 and 1877. These books have provided the foundation of what we know about Swedenborg today.⁴



Alfred H. Stroh

As the 19th century gave way to the 20th century the role of science became increasingly important in shaping the world. That prominence led to the formation of the Swedenborg Scientific Association in 1898 for “The preservation, translation, publication and distribution of the Scientific and Philosophical works of Emanuel Swedenborg.”⁵ A young teacher at the Academy of the New Church, Alfred Acton, felt the need for more complete information about Swedenborg’s work as a scientist and philosopher. He proposed that copies be made of all of Swedenborg’s scientific manuscripts. As a result, a young scholar by the name of Alfred H. Stroh was sent to Sweden in 1902 to produce a phototype⁶ edition of the Spiritual Diary. Like Tafel before him, Stroh uncovered many unknown documents



Cyriel O. Sigstedt

about Swedenborg and became committed to preserving them for posterity. His discoveries included Swedenborg's activities during his school days at Upsala University, some early poems including one that Swedenborg wrote in honor of King Charles XII of Sweden, the offer of a professorship at Upsala University and a letter referring to his marriage proposal to the daughter of a bishop. In 1909 Stroh was joined by Sigrid Cyriel Odhner⁷ who helped him combine his results with the work of other scholars, such as Rev. Eugene J. E. Schreck, Rev. Carl Theophilus Odhner, James Hyde in England and G. F. Lindh in Stockholm.⁸ The source of each document was carefully described and then they were arranged in time sequence which became the *Chronological List of Swedenborgiana*.⁹

The outbreak of World War I and Alfred Stroh's failing health brought the project to a halt until 1924 when the librarian at the Academy of the New Church in Bryn Athyn, Rev. Reginald Brown, arranged the material that had been collected



Dr. Alfred Acton

up to that time in six large folio volumes with green covers which became known as "The Green Books." From the beginning of his research, Mr. Stroh had attempted to obtain photographic copies or transcripts of as many documents as possible. In 1925 it was estimated that over 1900 pages still needed to be copied or photographed. So later that year Cyriel Odhner returned to Stockholm to continue the work. By the end of her visit she had gathered over

3,000 pages of transcripts and photographic copies for the collection.¹⁰

From his ordination in 1893 until his death in 1956, Dr. Alfred Acton was the primary force driving the research into the

life of Swedenborg. He used the documents collected by Alfred Stroh and Cyriel Odhner Sigstedt as the basis for *The Letters and Memorials of Emanuel Swedenborg*, a two volume set published in 1948 and 1955. Dr. Acton continued the work of collecting and organizing the documents up until the time of his death, with the assistance of Beryl Briscoe who typed thousands of pages of documents.



Beryl G. Briscoe

Rev. Dr. Hugo Odhner and Lennart Alfelt, later the Curator of Swedenborgiana, also helped with the translation of many Swedish and Danish documents.

When the Benade Hall fire struck in 1948, the Academy Collection of Swedenborg Documents was stored in a room directly over the origin of the fire. The next day it was discovered that the entire collection had been hastily moved out of harm's way before the flames arrived.¹¹

The collection grew in size with the addition of documents, translations and references. By the time the second edition was completed in 1963 it had grown from six to eleven volumes. The escalating Cold War between the United States and Russia led to concerns about the safety of the collection in the event of a nuclear attack. As a result, Charles S. Cole, Jr. arranged to have microfilm copies made of the collection which were sent to the Swedenborg Society in London and the Swedenborg School of Religion Library which is now part of the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California. The original collection is still located in Swedenborgiana at Swedenborg Library in Bryn Athyn.

These transcriptions of Swedenborg documents are especially important for scholars since some of the original

documents no longer exist. One scholar traveled from Sweden to consult “The Green Books” and its collection of Nordenskjold documents because the original Nordenskjold papers had been destroyed in a fire.

Though clearly an important resource for the New Church, the usefulness of the Academy Collection of Swedenborg Documents has been limited by the lack of easy access for researchers who do not live near Bryn Athyn. In addition, it has been difficult to locate information within the collection. While a chronological format is helpful in making connections between documents and events, it makes research more difficult if the existence of a document, or the date it was created, are not known.

Realizing the importance of preserving and making this collection more accessible to scholars, Swedenborg Library Director, Carroll Odhner, initiated the scanning of the documents in the summer of 1997 with the support of Charles S. Cole, Jr. Subsequent grants were obtained over several years from The Carpenter Fellowship Fund to complete the scanning.¹² The resulting digital files were searchable as long as the researcher knew which volume to look through. The collection was briefly made available online through the library website until a technical problem caused it to be lost in “cyberspace.”

In 2007 work began on a new digital library to make material from the library collections available to scholars and individuals around the world. Known as the Swedenborg Library Digital Collections, this resource has been made possible by grants from the Phoebe W. Haas Charitable Trust and the William Penn Foundation. It will include a selection of correspondence, photographs, manuscripts, journals, books, maps and other materials that document the history of the New Church, including the life and works of Emanuel Swedenborg.

Grouped into three categories: Swedenborgiana, New Church Literature and Archives, material will be gradually added as the scanning progresses. The highlight of the Swedenborgiana section is the Academy Collection of Swedenborg Documents, which is now once again available online through the Swedenborg Library website: www.brynathyn.edu/academics/swedenborg-library - select *Digital Collections* and then *Swedenborgiana*. Users can browse through the documents or employ keywords to search for specific information. Unlike the original digital version that would allow searching only through one volume or document at a time, the Swedenborg Library Digital Collections now allows users to search the entire database with each query. The program will return a list of documents that include the search terms and once a document is selected it will jump immediately to the first occurrence of that term. If a term appears more than once in a document, clicking on the icon of a page with an arrow will skip to the next occurrence. For example, try searching for *signet*, *organ*, *candlestick*, or *tapestry*.

Due to difficulties in scanning the documents, users will find many spelling and layout errors in the Collection. In addition, some of the documents are still in their original Swedish language. Since it was decided that accessibility is more important than neatness and having translations of every document, the Collection is now available “as is.” Improvements will be made as time and resources allow.

The Academy Collection of Swedenborg Documents presently includes over 3,000 documents amounting to more than 5,500 pages of material. There are, no doubt, additional documents that could be added to this collection which was last edited in 1963. Actually, the collection will never be complete - requiring continual updating as more documents are discovered. In addition to educational use and private inquiry, this important

resource will support the future publication of scholarly editions of Swedenborg's works and collateral studies, providing access to sources which can shed new light on Swedenborg and the world he lived in. Now, in the 21st Century, this impressive collection of 18th century documents is available to anyone on the planet with access to an online computer.

Images courtesy of The Academy of the New Church Swedenborg Archives, Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania.

¹ Cyriel Odhner Sigstedt, *The Swedenborg Epic: The Life and Work of Emanuel Swedenborg* (New York: Record Press, 1952) 435 and 442.

² Also spelled as *Nordenskiold*. Pronounced as "Nordenshold."

³ An early version of a photocopy.

⁴ R. L. Tafel, *Documents Concerning The Life and Character of Emanuel Swedenborg: Volume I* (London: Swedenborg Society, 1875) Preface, V - VIII

⁵ From the purposes of The Swedenborg Scientific Association listed inside each cover of The New Philosophy.

⁶ Another early version of a photocopy.

⁷ She later became Cyriel Odhner Sigstedt

⁸ Cyriel Odhner Sigstedt, *The Swedenborg Document Work*, New Church Life, September 1955, 395 – 397.

⁹ Originally published by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences in 1910 as *An Abridged Chronological List of the Works of Emanuel Swedenborg*, by Alfred H. Stroh and Greta Ekelöf.

¹⁰ Sigstedt, *The Swedenborg Document Work*, 398 - 399

¹¹ Sigstedt, *The Swedenborg Document Work*, 400 - 401

¹² From an earlier Swedenborg Library website description of the Academy Collection.

A LETTER FROM SWEDENBORG

BY MARVIN B. CLYMER

Imagine what it would have been like to live in England during Swedenborg's time, to be among the first on this earth to read his Writings and recognize them as the Second Coming of the Lord! Think of the excitement you would have felt if you had the privilege of seeing Swedenborg, himself, in London and perhaps even speaking to him. What would you say?

The Reverend Thomas Hartley was one of those fortunate few who not only had the opportunity to speak with Swedenborg, but also to know him as a friend! Rev. Hartley was a clergyman of the Church of England, rector of Winwick in Northamptonshire (a day's journey Northwest of London) and one of the first receivers of his doctrines in England. On August 2, 1769, Rev. Hartley wrote to Swedenborg, "I consider myself most highly favoured and I rejoice from my inmost heart in having had the honour, which you lately granted me, of conversing with you; and also in your having been so kind and friendly towards me For who among kings, if he is of a sane mind, would not gladly converse with an inhabitant of heaven, while here on earth?"¹

Later in the same letter, Rev. Hartley asked Swedenborg for some details of his life which could be used in his defense, if necessary, after his return to Sweden. Swedenborg replied about three days later with a beautiful letter that not only tells his story in a nutshell, but reveals his outlook on life and his Divine mission in a very real and personal way – just two and a half years before his work on Earth was completed. It is interesting to note how little he says about his many scientific accomplishments.

I rejoice at the friendship which you manifest in your letter; and I thank you sincerely for both, but especially for your friendship. The praises with which you overwhelm me, I receive simply as expressions of your love for the truths contained in my writings; and I refer them, as their source, to the Lord, our Savior, from whom is everything true, because He is the Truth Itself (John 4:6). I have considered chiefly the remarks you make at the close of your letter, where you express yourself as follows: "If, perchance, after your departure from England, your writings should be the subject of discussion, and occasion should arise for defending you, their author, against some malignant slanderer, who may wish to injure your reputation by a web of falsehoods - as those are in the habit of doing who hate the truth - would it not be well for you, in order to repel such slanderers, to leave with me some particulars respecting yourself, your degrees in the University, the public offices you have filled, your friends and relations, the honors which, I am told, have been conferred upon you, and anything else that might be useful in establishing your good name, so that ill-conceived prejudices may be removed; for it is our duty to use all lawful means lest the cause of truth should suffer injury." After reflecting on this, I have been led to yield to your friendly advice, and will now communicate to you some particulars of my life, which are briefly as follows:

I was born at Stockholm on the 29th of January in the year 1689.² My father's name was Jesper Swedberg, who was bishop of West Gothland, and a man of celebrity in his time. He was also elected and enrolled as a member of the English Society, for the Propagation of the Gospel; for he had been appointed by King Charles XII Bishop over the Swedish churches in Pennsylvania, and also over the church in London. In the year 1710 I went abroad. I proceeded first to England, and afterwards to Holland, France, and Germany, and returned

home in the year 1714.³ In the year 1716, and also afterwards, I had many conversations with Charles XII, King of Sweden, who greatly favored me, and in the same year appointed me to the office of Assessor in the College of Mines, which office I filled until the year 1747, when I resigned it, retaining, however, the salary of the office during my life. My sole object in resigning was that I might have more leisure to devote to the new office enjoined on me by the Lord. A higher post of honor was then offered me, which I positively declined, lest my mind should be inspired with pride. In the year 1719, I was ennobled by Queen Ulrica Eleanora, and named Swedenborg; and from that time I have taken my seat among the nobles of the rank of knighthood, in the triennial sessions of the Diet. I am a Fellow and member, by invitation, of the Royal Academy of Sciences in Stockholm; but I have never sought admission into any literary society in any other place, because I am in an angelic society, where such things as relate to heaven and the soul are the only subjects of discourse; while in literary societies the world and the body form the only subjects of discussion. In the year 1734, I published, at Leipsic, *Regnum Minerale*, in three volumes, folio. In the year 1738 I made a journey to Italy, and stayed a year at Venice and Rome.

With respect to my family connections, I had four sisters. One of them was married to Eric Benzelius, who subsequently became the archbishop of Upsala, and through him I became related to the two succeeding archbishops, who both belonged to the family of Benzelius, and were younger brothers of Eric. My second sister was married to Lars Benzelstierna, who became a provincial governor; but these two are dead. Two bishops, however, who are related to me, are still living; one of them, whose name is Filenius, and who is bishop of East Gothland, officiates now as president of the House of the Clergy in the Diet of Stockholm, in place of the archbishop, who is an invalid; he

married my sister's daughter; the other, named Benzelstierna, is bishop of Westmanland and Dalecarlia; he is the son of my second sister. Not to mention others of my relations who occupy stations of honor. Moreover, all the bishops of my native country, who are ten in number, and also the sixteen senators, and the rest of those highest in office, entertain feelings of affection for me; from their affection they honor me, and I live with them on terms of familiarity, as a friend among friends; the reason of which is, that they know I am in company with angels. Even the king and the queen, and the three princes, their sons, show me great favor; I was also invited once by the king and queen to dine with them at their own table, which honor is generally accorded only to those who are highest in office; subsequently the crown prince granted me the same favor. They all desire me to return home; wherefore, I am far from apprehending, in my own country, that persecution, which you fear, and against which in your letter you desire in so friendly a manner to provide; and if they persecute me elsewhere, it can do me no harm.

But all that I have thus far related, I consider of comparatively little importance; for it is far exceeded by the circumstance, that I have been called to a holy office by the Lord Himself, who most mercifully appeared before me, his servant, in the year 1743; when he opened my sight into the spiritual world, and granted me to speak with spirits and angels, in which state I have continued up to the present day. From that time I began to print and publish the various arcana that were seen by me and revealed to me, as the arcana concerning Heaven and Hell, the state of man after death, the true worship of God, the spiritual sense of the Word, besides many other most important matters conducive to salvation and wisdom. The only reason of my journeys abroad has been the desire of making myself useful, and of making known the arcana that were entrusted to me. Moreover, I have as much of this world's wealth as I need, and I

neither seek nor wish for more. Your letter has induced me to write all these particulars, in order that as you say “ill-conceived prejudices may be removed.” Farewell; and from my heart I wish you all the happiness both in this world, and the next; which I have not the least doubt you will attain, if you look and pray to our Lord.

Eman. Swedenborg

Hartley had some additional correspondence with Swedenborg before he left for Sweden in October of 1769. Then in the summer of 1771 Swedenborg returned to London where he spent the remainder of his earthly days. Hartley had the pleasure of visiting him about twenty times during the last year of Swedenborg’s life on Earth, spending about two hours with him on each visit.⁴ What marvelous conversations they must have had!

The letter above can be found in:

Posthumous Theological Works of Emanuel Swedenborg: Volume I (New York, Swedenborg Foundation, 1954) page 5.

Documents Concerning The Life And Character Of Emanuel Swedenborg: Volume I, R. L. Tafel (London, Swedenborg Society, 1875) page 6-9.

Letters and Memorials of Emanuel Swedenborg, Alfred Acton (Bryn Athyn, Swedenborg Scientific Association, 1955) page 676-679.

1 R. L. Tafel, Documents Concerning The Life And Character of Emanuel Swedenborg: Volume 1 (London, Swedenborg Society, 1875) page 1.

2 This date has generally been considered a printing error since he was actually born in 1688, however General Tuxon related that Swedenborg told him that he had originally written “1688”, but an

angel had instructed him to change it to “1689” because of the correspondence of that number (see Letters and Memorials of Emanuel Swedenborg: Volume II by Alfred Acton, 1955, page 676 and Documents Concerning Emanuel Swedenborg: Vol.2, Pt.1 by R.. L. Tafel, 1875, page 436).

3 The actual year was 1715.

4 Thomas Hartley, *New Church Life*, September and October 1895, pages 135-137 and 151-153 and Academy Collection of Swedenborg Documents: Vol. IX, #1465.12: <<http://digitalcollections.swedenborglibrary.org:8080/awweb/guest.jsp?smd=1>> (Search for 1465.12)

SKALDE-BREF, TILL ASSESSOR SVEDENBORG

Discovered in the Academy Collection of Swedenborg Documents (the Green Books), # 1675.13, a Poem to Swedenborg, by C.J. Brunjeanson, first printed in *Afton Bladet*, i.e. *The Evening Post*, a Swedish evening newspaper, on Friday 10 Mar. 1815. First, the Swedish original, then a translation.

Skalde-Bref, till Assessor Svedenborg.

Du sluge Svedenborg! som verdens undran väcker,
Som dina tankars vidd, til Andars Rike sträcker;
Som talar, när du vill, med fordne Birger Jarl,
Med Rysslands tappre Czaar och Svergies Tolfte Carl,
Som i Din tryckta Bok, den satsen vil försvara,
At Valhallas skuggor ock, sig kärligt kunna para,
Förlåt, jag dig förstör, uti din ljuva ro,
Jag ej bestrider dig, när många på dig tro,
Jag endast ber om lof, dig några frågor göra
Och att med tålmod, du ville därpå höra,

Hvar har du lärdt din konst? hvem har dig gjordt så vis,
At til Tartaren gå och sällas Paradis?
At med en Martvills själ, förtroligt sällskap hafva,
När man dess döde kropp, knapt hunnit at begrafva?
At visa stället ut, där han den Sedel lagt,
Hvarför i dubbel sorg, dess Enka blifvit bragt?
At när en Preussens Prins, för döden måste vika,
Med Wilhelms dolda tal, förfära Vår ULRICA?
At när i värdigt Lag, du satt i Götheborg,
I glädjen, blifva rörd, af svår och nära sorg;
Vid bordet ropa ut, at Stockholms Förstad brinner,
Och at ditt kära Hus, med möda räddning vinner?
Allt detta sanning är, som ingen nekat har.
Förnöj mig Svedenborg, och unna mig ditt svar.

Du stadnar, ser dig om och väckes ur din dvala;
Du tänker ganska djupt och ärnar snart at tala;
Nu öppnar du din mun och jag nyfiken står,
Jag väntar stora ting, men detta höra får:
Låt förvett, käre Vän! din hjerne ej förvilla:
Låt dumma frågor ej din ädla tid förspilla.

Now the rhymed Translation of C.J. Brunjeanson's 1815 Poem,
by Erik E. Sandstrom.

Poetic Letter To Assessor Svedenborg¹

You clever Svedenborg, rousing admiration,
So broadminded, the spirit-world your destination,
Who speaks whene'er you wish with ancient Birger Jarl,²
With Russia's valiant Czar³ and the Twelfth of Sweden's Karl.⁴
Who pleads the *way it is* in all your printed work,
What one would love to match e'en with Valhalla's mirk.

Pardon me for troubling your peaceful slumber,
Don't count me as a foe, your friends do them outnumber,
I merely beg your time some questions here to place -
Should giving ear to them just lie within your grace.

Where did you learn this art? Who made you oh, so wise,
That you can visit Tartary *and* Paradise?
Had you with Martville's⁵ spirit really conferred,
E'en when his body had but hardly been interred?
And shown where he had placed the missing sale-receipt
Which doubly had his widow vexed with so much grief?
And when a Prussian Prince⁶ must answer to death's call,
And William's secret converse cause Ulrica's⁷ fall?
Then while in Gothenburg to festive meal you sat,
Your mood was much disturbed by fire's hard-by threat,
Called out that Stockholm's suburb now in ashes lay,
And your own precious home but scarcely snatched away?⁸
All this is counted true, as no one will deny.
Do not begrudge me, Svedenborg, please do reply.

You glance and steady up, and stir yourself from rest,
You think at some fair depth and soon your voice will test;
You part your lips, as I stand there in curious fear,
And I expect a marvel, but I've earned a mere:
"Do not let nonsense fret your mind, my dearest friend:
Do not let silly doubts your precious time expend."

¹ Svedenborg: Swedish spelling

² Early Swedish state reformer, ca. 1210-1266

³ Peter the Great, 1672-1725, warred against Charles XII of Sweden.

⁴ Charles XII King of Sweden, 1682-1718, warrior King, Swedenborg's first employer as Assessor Extraordinaire of Mines.

⁵ Martville's widow asked Swedenborg about a lost receipt for a silver set.

Later, in her dream Martville told her where to find it.

⁶ William, or Vilhelm, Prince of Prussia, died in 1756, brother to Frederick the Great, 1712-1786, and brother to Queen of Sweden, Ulrica. The Queen had been publicly reprimanded for a plot in 1756, at which time 10 conspirators were hanged. The plot was to restore despotism to Sweden.

⁷ Lovisa Ulrica, Queen of Sweden, 1720-1782, sister to Frederick the Great. The plot here is the well known "Queen's Secret." Swedenborg Epic 280-281, 340.

⁸ The Stockholm Fire, Swedenborg's vision of this at Sahlgren's home in Gothenburg, June 1759.

Swedenborg knew history, one chronology starting
from the Return from Captivity

JERUSALEM AND THE TEMPLE AFTER THE CAPTIVITY

The building of the temple commenced in the year 72 after the captivity; completed as to the interior portions in 91, 94. Jerusalem built, 163. Haman wishes to massacre the Jews, 215. The Temple is pillaged, 439. The Jews are driven to idols by Antiochus, 441. The Temple cleansed, 444. Alcimus begins to destroy the Temple wall, 449. Hyrcanus, Anstabulus, Alexander Jannicus reign in Judea, 504, 505, 506. Aristabulus (II.), till 542. Pompey takes Jerusalem, 545. Antigonus takes possession of Judea, 568. Herod is then declared king of Judea, 568. Herod besieges and reduces Jerusalem, 571, 572. Augustus sets about building the Temple, 586. The building of the Temple finished, Herod celebrates the dedication, 595. The Temple polluted by the Samaritans, 615. The building of the Temple discontinued, 631. The Lord is born, 605. (*Spiritual Experiences* 6082)

Editorial

RENEWAL

The New Year with its traditions of resolutions to overcome bad habits, has the promise of “change.” There is something totally new I want to tell you about. It started 2000 years ago. It was a renewal in our thinking ability which began with the Lord’s glorification, when “He introduced Himself by successive steps, in order that He might thus unite His Human to the Divine, and make it Divine; and this by His own power.” He thus “introduced Himself (into a super-eminence of wisdom and intelligence) by successive steps...by His own power” (*Arcana Coelestia* 2500:3).

Although the Lord had all knowledge “prior to learning” from birth, because He was omniscient as to the Divine in Him, still He had to make progress towards the final union with the Divine. Therefore He was “born a man, and was to progress as a man according to Divine order” (*Arcana Coelestia* 2500). By the time the Lord said, “All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth” (Matthew 28.18), His Resurrection had been accomplished. He was now the Lord God Jesus Christ, God in One Person, holding the reign to all power. The Lord God was then the same God who “created the heavens and the earth” in the beginning (Genesis 1:1). That is why Jesus had said: “O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.” (John 17:5).

Before the world was, means “in the beginning.” “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” This means soul and body. The renewal we mentioned is the new light that the risen Lord God now gives to both our internal and external man. Before the Advent, only the internal man received this influx. However, because the Lord glorified the same body that we have, by overcoming the temptations from hell, and

conquering them one by one, He made His Body Divine, as already was the soul. His Divine Essence, or soul, was reciprocally united with the Human essence or body, making them to be completely at one. This came to be called the At-One-Ment, now misapplied as the Vicarious Atonement.

The actual result of the Atonement, was *one God in one Person*, the *Divine Human*. This is the visible Lord God, “our Father who art in the heavens,” who could at that point illuminate the heavens: “The Divine Itself ...took on the human and ... when this was made Divine, He could thereby illuminate not only the celestial heaven itself but also the spiritual heaven, and likewise the human race” (*Arcana Coelestia* 4180.5). A *new light* began for all angels and human beings after the Advent. It started affecting the human mind: “The Lord willed to put on by birth the human itself; for thus He could illumine not only the rational but also the natural things of man; for He made both the rational and the natural in Himself Divine, in order that He might also be a light to those who were in such gross darkness.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 3145.3, cf. 2776.3) The Lord now could inspire both the human rational, and his natural mental levels.

That is the renewal we are talking of here. Why is that important now?

Well, it is 2009, and we are thinking of the New Year. But still that light that began 2000 years ago, was shrouded in murk soon thereafter, and only since 1757 has it again been restored – sevenfold at that! This same light is mentioned by Matthew: “The people who sat in darkness saw a great light, and to them that sat in the region and shadow of death, did light spring up” (Isaiah 9.2, Matthew 4.16). For the last 250 years, both the top and bottom halves of our conscious mind could receive light from the risen Lord, through heavens which themselves were also lit up anew. The Modern Age had begun.

Let us suppose for a moment that the resurrection happened, not 2000 years ago, but this last Christmas of 2008. By this time,

in January 2009, the new light would just be beginning to affect us. If you did not know the above passages on the new enlightenment from the risen Lord, we could say that this new light has started with your discovery of them. Our rational and natural can be enlightened simultaneously. It is not enough to have just the one or other lit up. Thus it is re-iterated: “The Lord, having now put on also the Divine natural, enlightens both the internal spiritual man and the external natural man; for when only the internal man enlightened, and not the external as well, there is shadow; and the same is true when the external man is enlightened and not the internal” (*True Christian Religion* 109).

Both have to be enlightened at the same time. There would be shadow if only one half were enlightened, and the other not. Only one or the other received light, for centuries! After the Council of Nicaea in 325 a.d., “a dense cloud intervened, under which the day advanced to evening, and afterward to night, in which the moon arose for some, by the dim light of which they saw something from the Word, while others went on so far into the nocturnal darkness that they saw no Divinity in the Lord’s Humanity” (*True Christian Religion* 638).

For the next 1500 years of Christian history, the scant light was preserved in Providence, until the last of it snuffed out, and the darkness of Judgment fulfilled all prophecies: total damnation stood “threatening at the door” again, as at the first advent (*Brief Exposition* 117). A second Judgment completed the first one performed on the Cross, and again that light was liberated, meaning that for the last 250 years, both halves of our mind have been enlightened, influencing both the world of Religion and the world of Science.

“It is to be known that when a last judgment is being effected the Lord appears in the heavens in much greater effulgence and splendor than at other times, and this because the angels there must be more powerfully defended” (*Apocalypse*

Explained 401:10). That greater effulgence restored to the human race the faculty of seeing higher things *within* the lower things: “For the understanding converts things belonging to the superior light of heaven into those belonging to the inferior light of the natural world, as a consequence of which the former are then seen within the latter in the same way as a person’s inner affections are seen in his face when it lacks all pretence” (*Arcana Coelestia* 6125:2).

See the “former in the latter.” That is the key for explaining how genius works. Thus it is the Lord alone who enlightens both our internal man and our external man. We can see all things in the light of heaven, and at the very same time see all things in the light of nature. We can look at natural things and think about spiritual things. We can think of spiritual things, and carry what we see “over into” the natural concern, and “see the former in the latter.” We can look at someone’s face, and see that person’s loves and ideas. We can look up at the starry sky and “be carried a bit beyond ourselves” to see God’s Kingdom (*Arcana Coelestia* 1806). Universal Nature, the Writings tell us, is a “theater representing the Lord’s Kingdom.” We can renew all we see by a new way of looking. Such sight was part of the wisdom of the Most Ancient Church, described by the four rivers and substances in the Garden of Eden: “The intelligence of the faith that is from love; intelligence of the good of love, and intelligence from the good of faith from love, and intelligence of the truth of love, and the intelligence of the truth of faith from love” (cf. *Arcana Coelestia* 107, 110).

That is an awful lot of intelligence! Although it was lost after the end of the golden age, this intelligence *was* restored after the flood. In the Ancient Church people had *profound* thought (*Arcana Coelestia* 605), and had a greater insight into the “illimitable secrets” of man’s interiors than exists among people of today (*Arcana Coelestia* 3179). It was again lost, this time by the “Tower of Babel.” This intelligence is what can now be

restored, because the “obstacles” have been removed, the world of spirits has been cleared. “This state of predominance on the part of hell was completely broken by the Last Judgment, which has now been accomplished” (*Divine Providence* 263). Ever after that Judgment, and thus to-day, “everyone who desires it may obtain enlightenment and wisdom.” (*ibid.*)

Not only that: our very ability to be reformed, to understand the Word and resolve to live by it, was restored. For after Nicaea in 325 a.d., there could be “no spiritual temptations” (*True Christian Religion* 597), meaning that no one could complete their regeneration while on earth. But after 1757, people could again receive light to be reformed, pre-requisite for regeneration, - - loving to live it. How dark it had been for centuries, with good people suffering: “How long, O Lord!” Now, post 1757, with “the interposing obstacles removed” we are living in the age of the “New Heaven and New Earth,” and of the “Holy City Jerusalem” (*Continuation of Last Judgment* 12).

The New Jerusalem refers to the truths of the New Church. The Lord has made “everything new.” Many of you have been reading or hearing these all your lives! They were intended for the human race even at the *first* Advent, when the Lord *began* to give instruction in these truths. “This same doctrine was indeed given before in the Word” (*Lord* 65). But then, as was said, the Christian church fell away, and was first “turned into Babylon, and afterwards with others into Philistia,” referring to the Catholic era followed by the Protestant or Reformed. Consequently, this “doctrine could not be seen from the Word; for the Church views the Word only from the principles of its own form of religion and doctrine pertaining to that religion” (*ibid.*). Now all that is over.

So when someone asks, what is “new” about the New Church? will you know exactly what to say? Well, remember this list of blinding new light:

1. God is One in Person and in Essence; and the Lord is that God.
2. The whole Sacred Scripture treats of Him alone.
3. He came into the world to subjugate the hells, and to glorify His Human.
4. By the Passion of the Cross He did *not* remove sins, but bore them. He suffered Himself to be treated the way the Word had already been treated.
5. The imputation of Christ's merit is only given following our own repentance (cf. *Lord* 65).

Will anyone notice this change which took place 250 years ago? Has anyone noticed the “restoration of spiritual freedom in thinking about matters of faith, about spiritual matters having to do with heaven” (*Last Judgment* 73:2)? No. “People will be unaware of this change of state, since they do not reflect on it, nor indeed do they know anything about spiritual freedom or influence from the spiritual world” (*ibid.*). Nor has anyone reflected on the fact that “because people have had their spiritual freedom restored,...the spiritual sense of the Word has now been disclosed, and by this means Divine truths of a more inward kind have been revealed” (*ibid.*)

The Writings consist of more inward truths. That is why they are heavenly doctrines, miraculously put into human language. That is why they are brilliant. Let us resolve this New Year to thank the Lord and be in awe of the new light given, to allow us once again to be intelligent throughout the entire “Eden” of the human mind.



CHURCH NEWS

Here are our new friends from Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire, ordained during the summer visits by the Rev. David Lindrooth, and Bishop Brian Keith, as reported in the September New Church Life, p. 388. Their declarations of Faith and Purpose are also in that issue, p. 365 to 371. Please welcome them as they travel to Bryn Athyn for the Clergy Meetings in a few weeks.

Roger Koudou



Israel Gyan Ampem-Darko



Eric Messan Souka



Kwadwo Adu-Amoako



Hennock Aggro



John K. Segbenu



George Genya Dziekpor



THE JOURNEY INTO THE NEW YEAR

Development of the 2009 Journey Campaign spiritual growth program is under way. It will be the 4th of such programs. Next year's workbook is being written by Rev. Peter Buss Sr., together with Star Silverman, and with the support of General Church Outreach.

Journey Campaigns are carefully constructed to provide life oriented spiritual themes that are helpful to both newcomer and long term members alike. The programs use regular, daily reading of the Word, small group meetings, prayer and discussion coordinated with the Sunday sermon to get everyone talking about how these themes work in their own lives. The result is that the congregation comes alive with common conversation about how the concepts apply in individual life situations.

The theme of next year's program will be *Living Courageously*, based on the Old Testament portrayal of the prophet Elijah (I Kings 17 – 22, II Kings 2). Courageous living begins with looking within, disciplining our minds and strengthening our connection with the Lord in order to serve others. This seven week program will give participants the opportunity to look at their spiritual lives, and connect with profound insights of this biblical story to support their spiritual path.

The team at General Church Outreach is looking forward to sharing this exciting program. Information on training, grants, and support materials for this program will soon be available to groups and congregations interested in running it in the 2009-10 calendar year.

Fall of 2008 saw the successful launch of **Building Healthy Relationships** in 19 congregations world-wide. We had 1,497 registered participants in this run of the campaign, but found it difficult measure the wonderful impact beyond those registrations. Six percent of participants were new to a New Church congregation.

One place where such impact was present was the *USS Stennis*, a United States Navy aircraft carrier. The **Rev. Martie Johnson**, the only New Church chaplain in the Navy, launched the campaign at sea, with 40 small group participants. In addition, the ship's closed circuit television station ran ads on the program to an audience of over 5,000 sailors and marines. Martie forwarded an e-mail containing insight into what the program was doing for the sailors on his ship:

I was speaking with one of my sailors (he came to me) and he's been having significant marital problems... Divorce was spoken of – and

it absolutely tore him to pieces to talk about - and he feels hopeless in it all. At that point, I did refer that “Building Healthy Relationships” book/class. He took a look at the book I currently have, and decided to type the “Week 1, Day 1” to her – and then type his thoughts on the lesson from last week.

Anyways – the point I am getting to: Do you have anymore of those books? I’ve been speaking much praise of the book/class – and my “family” in my shop are interested in attending. All of us may have our individual issue with our relationships – and are open to making those better (whether it’s between us as friends and family up there, and communication – or personal relationships at home. We’re interested in it – are there anymore books? Thank you very much for your help, Sir.

Building Healthy Relationships explores the sacred lessons from the Sermon on the Mount from the Gospel of Matthew, using the transformative power found in the teachings of the New Church to provide participants with the tools to experience positive growth in our relationships. The program nurtures our spiritual growth – as individuals and as a church – and brings joy and fulfillment into our lives.

The campaign is building a spiritual community throughout the world – linking people in seven countries, and from the Internet to the *USS Stennis*. Nineteen congregations ran the campaign this fall – with another 19 ready to join in 2009 – in the United States, Canada, Denmark, South Africa, Australia and the Philippines. Also participating in the program are a number of churches from the Convention and the Lord’s New Church.

A team in South Africa hosted a training session in November in the Kwa-Zulu Natal area, and is working to have all 10 South African societies and circles participate in the spring of 2009. **Rev. Merlita Rogers** is going to the Philippines to train three ministers there to run the campaign. Merlita writes,

One member said, that he wished his wife can join with us. Apparently he is changing his outlook in life and the lessons touched him very much... This program is really very exciting and you can easily see its effect to the people participating in the program.

The seven-week program has a workbook for participants and is linked through the General Church website, www.newchurch.org, for those who would like to participate online and follow along with the daily readings, tasks and reflections.

CHURCH NEWS

Also available is **Reflections in the Story of Joseph**, a useful guide for parents and educators that links the Sunday School program with the adult materials. This year, the Office of Education developed four age levels of **Sunday School** materials to be used in conjunction with *Building Healthy Relationships*, so that children can participate along with their parents. The material is available in an easy downloadable format, and can be accessed weekly in the right hand column of the *Building Healthy Relationships* page online.

For more information, contact Lydia Boericke: lydia.boericke@newchurch.org or 267-502-4915. We welcome your questions and inquiries.

The Rev. Martie Johnson's Journey Program, Chapel, USS Stennis

