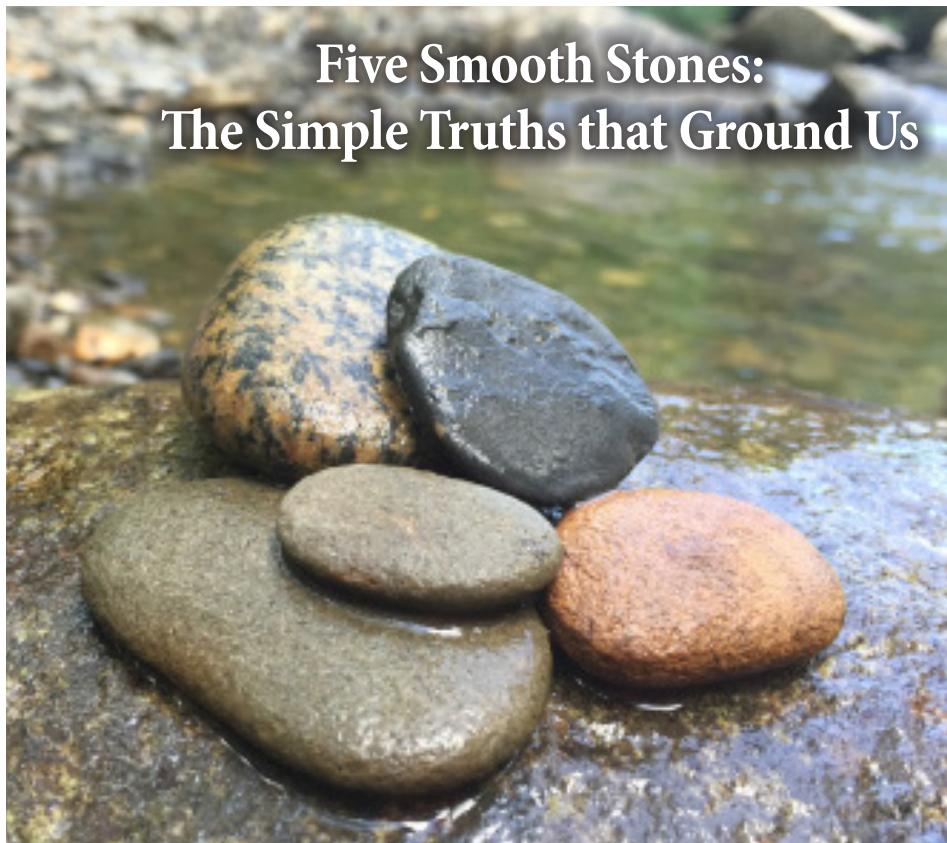


NEW CHURCH *Life*

A bimonthly magazine devoted to the teachings revealed through Emanuel Swedenborg, as they apply to life.

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2018

Five Smooth Stones: The Simple Truths that Ground Us



We find comfort and reassurance in the simple, familiar teachings in the Word, such as the five smooth stones David chose to slay Goliath, says the Rev. Derek Elphick in a sermon, *Power in the Familiar*. (Page 387)

Note: There is no extra cost for the use of color on the front page.

NEW CHURCH LIFE (USPS 378-180)

PUBLISHED BIMONTHLY BY

THE GENERAL CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM

Bruce Henderson, Editor

Rev. Walter Orthwein, Spiritual Editor

Michelle Chapin, Layout

SUBSCRIPTION: \$30 TO ANY ADDRESS. To order: 267-502-4990 or susan.wright@anc-gc.org.

Postmaster: Send address changes to: New Church Life, PO Box 708, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

e-mail: datacenter@anc-gc.org

New Church Life

A bimonthly magazine devoted to the teachings revealed through Emanuel Swedenborg, as they relate to life.

- 367 In this Issue
- 369 Editorials: *The Simple Truth • Bittersweet • The Quiet New Church Man*
- 374 Letters to the Editors
- 379 Pride, Humility and Self-Esteem — *The Rev. Erik J. Buss*
- 384 Introducing our Ministers: *The Rev. Derek P. Elphick*
- 387 Power in the Familiar — *The Rev. Derek P. Elphick*
- 392 Report on the 2018 Council of the Clergy Meeting
The Rev. James P. Cooper
- 399 Memorial Address: James Francis Jungé
The Rev. David H. Lindrooth
- 406 Chapter Two: Religion Misused and Corrected—*Alan J. Bedford, PhD*
- 419 My Personal God-Image: Living Waters from the Wells of Abraham
Dylan C. Odhner
- 423 A Jigsaw Puzzle — *Martin E. Klein*
- 425 Church News
- 444 Life Lines
- 453 Announcements

New Church Life is online at www.newchurchlife.org, with issues archived back to 2006. All issues of New Church Life can be searched back to 1881 at www.heavenlydoctrines.org.



Listen online or download:

The Importance of Reading the Word ~ Class
Marriage Seminar ~ Program
Gathering Small Groups ~ Talk
Rebuilding Our Temple ~ Sermon
Worship ~ Class on Ritual in the Church
Swedenborg and Modern Parapsychology ~ Address
Simulations of Love and Wisdom ~ Sermon
The Doctrine of Reflection ~ Address
Two Approaches to (the) Truth ~ Classes at Boynton
Beach Jacob's Creek Camp 2018 Recordings
The Doctrine of Life ~ Audiobook
The White Horse in the Apocalypse ~ Audiobook

www.newchurchaudio.org

More recordings will be added to our website thanks to private donations. To support this effort please contact us.

PO Box 277-C, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009
267-502-4981
Email: newchurchaudio@newchurch.org

In This Issue

Editorials (page 369) include:

- *Keep it Simple*: The Word is not always easy to read and understand, and the Writings can be even more challenging. But within them are simple, basic teachings to guide our lives.
- *Bittersweet*: How do we turn the bitterness of life into sweetness? Trusting in the Lord through spiritual battles leads to a sweet prize.
- *The Quiet New Church Man*: We gladly reprint a favorite of the Rev. W. Cairns Henderson's *Selected Editorials*, about the loyal and unsung men and women who are the backbone of any society

In a sermon on *Pride, Humility and Self-Esteem* the Rev. Erik J. Buss says that self-esteem and self-confidence can lead us astray and that "instead of self-esteem we should be focusing on the fact that the Lord esteems and values us. And because His view is true, we absolutely have value." (Page 379)

In *Introducing Our Ministers* the Rev. Derek P. Elphick tells how the love of the church drew him into the ministry and still motivates his service every day. (Page 384) In a sermon, *Power in the Familiar*, he tells how the Lord uses the familiar stories of the Word, for which we have such affection, to lead us to new and deeper truths we hadn't seen before. (Page 387)

The Rev. James P. Cooper reports on the Council of the Clergy meetings held in June in Bryn Athyn, featuring: the selection process and nomination of the next Executive Bishop of the General Church; plenary sessions, with several papers presented; and a number of workshops and sessions on professional development. (Page 392)

A Memorial Address for James Francis Jungé honors his commitment to service throughout his long and useful life – to his family, to the business institutions he led, and especially to the Church and Academy he loved. (Page 399)

In the second chapter of his proposed book – *Forming a Partnership: Reading True Christian Religion as a Personal Guide to Faith* – Dr. Allen Bedford focuses on "Religion Misused and Corrected." The preface and first chapter of this book appeared in the July/August issue of *New Church Life*.

Once the book is completed we will publish a review. (Page 406)

Dylan Odhner, a teacher in the Academy Secondary Schools, wrote an article for his doctoral program – *My Personal God-Image: Living Waters and the Wells of Abraham*. This includes reflections on a sermon by his great-great-great uncle, the Rev. N. D. Pendleton and the teachings of Carl Jung. (Page 419)

Do you ever feel that building your spiritual life is a little like putting together a jigsaw puzzle – ideally with your spouse? Martin Klein does. (Page 423)

Church News (page 425) includes:

- Highlights of the June General Church Board meetings, including several pastoral changes
- Colchester, England, bids a sad farewell to the Rev. Howard A. Thompson and family, while Sydney, Australia, opens its arms
- What the new academic year brings to Bryn Athyn College and the Academy Secondary Schools
- A preview of the upcoming Charter Day celebration
- The new Journey Campaign: *Love Over Ego*
- A report from the Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith on a special memorial service for Major General Fred Fiedler at the United States Air Force Academy
- A new book by Bruce Henderson, *A New Key to the Bible*
- Photos of new students being welcomed at Bryn Athyn College; the Academy Secondary Schools Summer Camp; and the memorial service for Major General Fred Fiedler at the Air Force Academy

Editorials

THE SIMPLE TRUTH?

Back in 1962 a prescient Broadway musical – *Stop The World: I Want To Get Off!* – resonated with anyone feeling overwhelmed by the fast pace of their world. And that was decades before upheavals in technology, science and culture really began complicating and stressing our lives.

Everything seems increasingly complex, and it's not just the marvels of computers. In almost every area of life demands have multiplied. We may look back wistfully at Henry David Thoreau, who escaped to Walden Pond in the starkly simpler world of 1854 “to live deliberately” so that he would not come to discover when he died “that I had not lived.” In his paean to *Walden* he wrote: “Our life is frittered away by detail. Simplify. Simplify.”

If he thought life was “frittered away” then what would he think of Google and Facebook and Wikipedia? We may long for the simpler world he sought to escape from with our own desperate plea: “Just let me live my simple life.” Despite brief vacation respites to our own Waldens, we cannot stop the world and get off. But we can simplify.

A reliable retreat is often the serenity of the Word and the Writings. Most of us have favorite verses and passages that offer peace and inspiration. But even here some may be easily discouraged. The Word can be hard to understand, especially in just the literal sense, and the Writings even more so. Modern translations make them more readable and understandable – but hardly “simplified.” The *Arcana* is still *Heavenly Secrets* to many a struggling reader.

We know that reading the Word is important because this is where the Lord talks with us. It is how we connect with Him and heaven. So we need to listen for what we can hear and understand, and always keeping in mind that the Word is built on simple concepts. It isn't meant to be incomprehensible. Yes, it is rich in detail and meanings that may escape us. But don't be discouraged. The Lord wants us to understand. We are told that angels delight in studying the Word to eternity, becoming ever wiser but always able to learn more, and that is something to look forward to. But we should never lose sight of the underlying simplicity.

Law libraries are filled with the intricacies of our complex system of laws, but all of it is rooted in the Ten Commandments, which are said to encompass the whole of the Word. The Two Great Commandments are as simple and straightforward as could be – love the Lord and love the neighbor – but on these two fundamental teachings “hang all the Law and the Prophets.” Everything in the Word springs from these basics.

The Lord did not give us the Word that we might feel overwhelmed and discouraged. He gave it to inspire and teach us and so lead us to heaven. He assures us that if we read the Word with a humble and affirmative heart we may become like His disciples – not always understanding everything but seeing clearly enough to feel loved and led by Him.

In His Second Coming He gave us the Writings, too – the Spirit of Truth – to infill and reveal the spiritual sense of the Word, but this can be even more challenging for searching readers. These books present an incredibly complex collection of doctrine but proclaim their own profound simplicity. *Secrets of Heaven* – the modern translation of *Arcana Coelestia* – states in 1799:4 that doctrines are what differentiate churches, but “if we considered love for the Lord and charity for our neighbor the chief concern of faith . . . those distinctions would simply be differences of opinion on the mysteries of faith.” Then, “One church would come out of all the different churches, and all disagreement due to doctrine alone would vanish . . . and the Lord’s kingdom would come on earth.”

It’s that simple and that profound. Love the Lord and love the neighbor. That is the underlying teaching throughout the Word and the Writings.

So we should not be discouraged by complexities but look for the simple truths that can guide our lives. The human body is a marvel of complexity but we generally take for granted the “simple” function of sight. We should be reading the Word for its saving influence in our lives, always realizing that while it was written in distant times, about people with no apparent relevance for us, it is always and directly about the reader. Abraham Lincoln said humbly: “I am busily engaged in the study of the Bible. I believe it is God’s Word because it finds me where I am.” It will “find” us too, if we let it.

What does the Lord require of us in the midst of all this “complexity” but simply “to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.” (*Micah 6:8*)

When we feel overwhelmed by the demands of life, let us remember the simple, comforting teaching: “Come unto Me, all you who labor and are heavy burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and my burden light.” (*Matthew 11:28-30*)

Love the Lord. Love the neighbor. Pray to the Lord. Read the Word. Shun

evil. Learn to do well. Be grateful. Be kind. Be useful. Be accountable. Keep it simple.

(BMH)

BITTERSWEET

Life in this world has its moments of sweetness. Heaven seems especially close at such times, giving us a taste of the peace and joy that prevail there. We might compare these "foretastes of heaven" to the promise the Lord made to the children of Israel of "a land flowing with milk and honey" that would be their own. It was with this high hope that Moses led them out of Egypt, and he often reminded them of it on their difficult journey through the desert on the way to Canaan.

At first they sang with joy and praised the Lord. Life was sweet. The future looked bright. But they found no water to drink and after three days they had grown very thirsty. Then they came to a place where there was water, but it was too bitter to drink. So they named the place *Marah*, which means "bitter." (*Exodus 15:23*) The Lord helped them, though, as He had before and would again, many times, as they faced one trial after another over the next 40 years of wandering in the desert.

Our life on earth is a journey from natural life ("Egypt") to the spiritual life of heaven ("Canaan"). And there's no getting from the one to the other without tasting the bitter waters of Marah along the way.

The spiritual truths that inspire us with the promise of heaven, and lead us toward it on our journey through life, are sweet. The Lord speaks to us through them, as He spoke to the Israelites through Moses, with hope and encouragement. But they are bitter, also, because there are times during our wilderness wanderings when the green pastures and still waters of heaven seem very far away, or only a mirage. Moreover, the Word tells us that we're not fit for heaven yet, and why. Even the "good news" of the Lord's Word can seem bitter when the goodness it describes seems unattainable.

We may think, what a sweet world it would be if everyone lived by the Ten Commandments. But how sweet are they when our own natural will asserts itself and we are tempted to disobey them? In *Revelation*, an angel gives the Apostle John a little book and tells him to eat it. "It was as sweet as honey in my mouth," he said. "But when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter." (*Revelation 10:10*)

Bitter feelings may arise from an injustice we've suffered, or some circumstance over which we had no control – "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune." The worst bitterness, though, comes from things we ourselves have said or done and deeply regret. "Peter remembered the words

Jesus had said to him, 'Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.' And he went out and wept bitterly." (*Matthew 26:75*)

And yet, in the Divine providence of the Lord, the bitter self-condemnation provoked by our own failings is a crucial step in the process of our regeneration and eventual salvation. "Blessed are those who mourn (their own evils), for they shall be comforted."

The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

More to be desired than gold

Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

Moreover by them Your servant is warned, And in keeping them there is great reward. (*Psalm 19:9-11*)

The power of hell is strong and fearsome, and would consume our soul. But if, with the Lord's help, we overcome it, that victory will be sweet indeed. We have a dramatic picture of this in the story of Samson:

"A young lion came roaring against him, but the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him" and he killed it with his bare hands. Later, when he went back to look at the carcass, he found a swarm of bees with honey in it. And "he took some of it in his hands and went along, eating." Samson made up a riddle about the incident: "Out of the eater came something to eat, and out of the strong came something sweet." (*Judges 14*)

When we emerge victorious from the spiritual battles we go through, bitter though they may be, we will walk away with a sweet prize.

(WEO)

THE QUIET NEW CHURCH MAN

(Note: An enduring favorite of the *Selected Editorials* by the Rev. W. Cairns Henderson, published by the Rt. Rev. Willard D. Pendleton in 1978, is this appreciation of *The Quiet New Church Man*. The church is blessed to have such humble, unheralded men and women who are "the backbone of any society." This editorial appeared in the October 1967 *New Church Life*.)

It is possible that in any society there are men and women who are not leaders. They hold no offices, serve on few if any committees; but if practical help is needed by those in distress, or with buildings and grounds, they are ready to serve, usually so unobtrusively that what they do is scarcely known to others. And they are faithful, steady in support of the uses of the church. They are never absent from services or classes, meetings or social functions without good reasons, and they radiate a quiet but strong sphere of affectional support by being there.

Such men and women will never try to dominate a group. They take no delight in argument, and would be embarrassed to find themselves the center of

attention in any gathering. In doctrinal discussion they are more apt to be interested listeners than active participants, and to express their views with diffidence; but when they do, it soon becomes apparent that their silence is not a cloak of ignorance. They often show a wider and deeper knowledge than they were suspected of having, and an ability to get quickly to the heart of the matter, and the affection of truth sounds out clearly in what they have to say. We have sketched here a composite of the quiet New Church man. He may be lacking in the executive ability and other talents that are needed to operate a society of the church, but his presence and unfailing support ensure that there is a society to operate! More important, his life is an unselfconscious example for all who are perceptive enough to realize it.

Let us not overlook the quiet New Church man in an age which puts so much emphasis on leadership or underestimate his worth. He is a follower of the Lord. As such he is the backbone of any society, and it may well be that he is the salt of the earth.

OUR NEW CHURCH VOCABULARY

Part of a continuing series developed by the Rev. W. Cairns Henderson, 1961-1966.

REFLECTION

We should be careful to distinguish this term from "meditation," which is the ruling love thinking. It may be defined in three ways. In act, reflection is a mental operation in which the mind considers, as from above, its external acts and processes and the functioning of the body. In effect, it is a mental view of the things that impinge upon the mind through the senses of the body, and of what their quality is. In essence, it is consciousness, and thus the essential of thought and sensation. It is, therefore, the faculty through which everything human comes to man, and without which he would not be man at all. (See *Spiritual Diary* 733-739)

Letters to the Editors

Our Role in the Lord's Prayer

To The Editors:

Bruce Henderson's editorial, "As In Heaven . . ." (*New Church Life*, May/June, 2018) has inspired me to add a personal spin on the subject.

"When we pray, 'Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done; as in heaven, so upon the earth,'" the editorial notes, "it is not meant to be rote recitation, without intent or reflection. Neither is it meant to be an impossible dream. It should represent a personal commitment, recognizing that we – as a church and as individuals – have a role in bringing the sphere of heaven more and more into the world."

Regarding the Prayer being an acknowledgement of personal responsibility as well as a cry for help is a somewhat new way for me to look at these words. Of course, it is an obvious viewpoint once it has been pointed out – a viewpoint that has always been included there without me paying much attention to it. If we don't *respond* proactively to these words, trying with all our might to implement the will of the Lord in the world around us – striving to bring His kingdom actually down into the earth – then it can be said that we are profitless servants, burying whatever talent we have been given, lukewarm despite our glorious heritage.

Occasionally I call on the Lord's Prayer with emotion when worldly news takes a serious turn for the worse. It is then that I need the childlike comfort of remembering that my Lord's infinite love and wisdom will surely "make it all better."

But, when my wife and I say our evening Prayer, I am mostly reviewing my day, observing my plusses and minuses and genuinely asking for help. This is our personal focus to keep us on the path. Even in the residual heat of knock-down, drag-out arguments we nevertheless ask daily, together, that His will be done, and that we may next day so conduct ourselves that His kingdom will finally come into our hearts as well as into our minds.

So, this editorial has shown us another way to look at the Prayer. Certainly we need help, but now we are more aware that it is a two-way street. Our help is from the Lord, but let us strive to help Him as He brings His help to everyone else upon the earth.

Martin E. Klein
Boynton Beach, Florida

Regeneration and the Internal Sense

To The Editors:

Following the letters by Mrs. Dawn Potts and the Rev. Erik Sandstrom published in *New Church Life* of May/June concerning the internal sense of the Writings, I have some thoughts, or perhaps questions, on this subject.

My understanding, and I might be completely wrong, is that the General Church believes that the Writings are the Word of the Lord; that they are the Lord in His Glorified Divine Human; that this new Word is for angels and men; that the 19th of June represents the establishment of the New Heaven and the New Church, both of which are based on the new Word and, of course, the new Lord, the Lord in his Glorified Divine Human; and that the Writings are the Lord in His Second Coming. If my understanding is correct, would it not then be illogical, and in fact a denial of those beliefs, to say that the Writings do not have an internal sense?

If the Writings are the Word and are for angels as well as men, and are the Lord Himself in His Second Coming on earth, then surely there would have to be an internal sense into which we come when in heaven, or on earth to the extent that we become angels on earth, that is, to the extent that we are regenerating? It seems to me that this is what the Writings themselves teach so very often, that there is an internal sense and we come into it with regeneration. There are many statements in the Writings which not only teach that there is an internal sense within the literal sense but that it cannot be seen by anyone unless they are regenerating. I also wonder how the internal sense of the Writings is then visible in the literal sense to anyone, whether good, bad, evil or indifferent.

Potts' Concordance has many pages of references on the internal sense and the following are of many which clearly indicate to me that there is an

internal sense within the literal sense and that man may come into that sense while on earth, but only as he becomes angelic, that is, with regeneration.

Arcana Coelestia 2242 (3): “This shows what is the nature of the sense of the letter, namely, that it is according to appearances; and if it were not according to appearances, no one would understand and acknowledge the Word, thus no one would receive it. . . . The Word as to the sense of the letter is for man, as to the internal sense it is for the angels, as also to those men to whom of the Lord’s Divine mercy it is given while living in the world.”

Arcana Coelestia 8106 (3): “The literal sense of the Word is called a ‘cloud’ because the internal sense, which is called ‘glory,’ cannot be comprehended by man, except one who is regenerated and also enlightened.”

We can study a complex worldly subject and initially find it quite obscure, but repeated reading and further study can give one greater clarity. Some might call this enlightenment, but I do not think this is what the Writings mean when they talk about enlightenment. To me that would be nothing more than a worldly accumulation of additional knowledge.

Do not the Writings make it clear that enlightenment does not come with repeated reading of the literal sense or that it comes regardless of one’s life and regeneration? From what I have read they make it clear in many statements that enlightenment comes from the Lord and only to the extent that one is regenerating. Is it not this enlightenment that allows one to perceive the internal sense of the Writings?

For example, *Arcana Coelestia* 10551: “Those who when reading the Word are in enlightenment see it from within, for their internal is open, and when the internal is open it is in the light of heaven. This light flows in and enlightens. . . . Everyone is deceived who believes himself to be in enlightenment, unless he loves to know the truth for the sake of truth and for the sake of the good of life, thus unless he loves Divine truth for the sake of life, because to live according to Divine truths from the Word is to love the Lord, and all enlightenment comes from the Lord when He is loved.”

“But those cannot possibly be in any enlightenment who have not as their end a life according to Divine truths from the Word; but who have as their end honor, gain and reputation; and who thus regard the Divine truths of the Word as means; for this end is worldly and bodily, and not spiritual and heavenly; and it therefore closes the internal man, and when this is closed no light can flow in from heaven and enlighten.”

“If such persons, when reading the Word, believe that they are in enlightenment they are quite mistaken; for they do not think from heaven, but from the world; thus not from the Lord, but from themselves, and in so far as they think from themselves and the world, so far they think from natural light separate from heavenly light. . . . If these persons persuade themselves that

they have seen something from enlightenment, it is a fallacy, for they perceive whether a thing is true solely from others by means of confirmations, which is to see truths from without and not from within."

To love Divine truth is to make it one's own, that is to live it. In one word, regeneration. It is regeneration that allows one to perceive the internal sense and allows for enlightenment.

I would, however, be hesitant to suggest that anyone can determine the internal sense for another, for coming into that sense depends on the stage of one's regeneration and enlightenment from the Lord and everyone is in a different state from another, apart from the arrogance of assuming that we are regenerating.

I would be interested to have answers to my queries and also would like to know the formal position of the General Church on this difficult matter.

Name withheld online by request
Canberra, Australia

Clarification

To The Editors:

You introduced my poem about the planets ("The Planets Play Their Parts," May/June 2018 *New Church Life*) by saying it was a response to the Rev. Willard Heinrichs's article, *Earths in the Universe: Teachings, Reflections and Speculations*, in the September/October 2017 *New Church Life*. Several readers have asked me what in Rev. Heinrichs's article disturbed me.

In truth, I was much encouraged by his thoughts, and almost stopped the long process of composing the poem when his was published. Because this seems to be confusing to readers of both articles, I feel a need to clarify: the letter which spurred me to write "The Planets Play Their Parts" was from William L. Weaver, in the March/April 2017 issue, suggesting ways the Writings could be interpreted so that we would not have to believe that there are men on the planets of our solar system.

Laurel O. Powell
Lenhartsville, Pennsylvania

Stimulating Reading

To The Editors:

I have enjoyed picking up the latest edition of *New Church Life* on a lazy August afternoon. The [Life Lines] articles in the back by the Rev. Walter Orthwein caught my eye. The scope of thought was appealing. I noted that the value of New Church education is one of our most vital endeavors. There are variations to the theme as we grow. The growing enrollment at Bryn Athyn College is very exciting.

Kenneth Blair
Sarver, Pennsylvania

OUR NEW CHURCH VOCABULARY

Part of a continuing series developed by the Rev. W. Cairns Henderson, 1961-1966.

REFORMATION

This is one of the major theological terms used in the Writings. Reformation is predicated of the understanding and is a state of thought, formed by the truth of faith, in which man looks with longing to the spiritual life. During it he is led by truth to good and is in a state of obedience in which truth predominates.

Man is in a state of reformation when he sees and acknowledges that good is good and evil is evil, and thinks that good should be chosen; and the process itself is a reforming of the existing content of the understanding – a reorganization effected through temptations by which knowledges of truth are centered in the Lord and heaven instead of in self and the world, and are thus prepared to receive a new will from the Lord. (See *True Christian Religion* 571)

Pride, Humility and Self-Esteem

A Sermon by the Rev. Erik J. Buss

Lessons: *Matthew 26:31-35, 69-75, 23:1-14; Arcana Coelestia 3417:2-3*

When Peter made his forceful assertion, “I will never forsake you,” he certainly meant what he said. In the light of the Lord’s response and the later events we can see it is an arrogant statement. But did Peter? He probably thought he was being sincere and strong, and was blind to the pride behind his statement that caused him so much pain later on.

The topic of this sermon is about pride and humility, and how they relate to self-esteem. In the world today we talk about pride positively – taking pride in your work or being proud of your children – yet the Lord almost universally uses the term in a negative way. How can we have a healthy pride without running afoul of the Lord’s teachings about this dangerous kind of pride that He spends a lot of time talking about?

If you think about it, all evil is about putting more value on what we think and want, than what the Lord wants, and at its root that is a kind of pride. It is worth finding out where pride shows up in us because pride blocks the Lord’s ability to be present with us, which is another way of saying that it blocks out the joy and peace the Lord yearns to give us. Pride cuts us off from the experience of true love and humanity. Pride does not allow for compassion, or tenderness, or mercy.

Let’s look at some elements of pride. The Pharisees in our story showed many of them. Here are a few:

1. *They wanted others to notice them; they wanted recognition.* They wore their phylacteries so that everyone who saw them would know that they were special people. New Church teachings say that when we are acting from our lower self three motives drive us: love of reputation, honor and financial gain. Yet, as our reading said, greatness comes in serving; power comes from the realization that we lack power: “[A person] has that power from the Lord in measure that he believes he can achieve nothing from himself and is accordingly the least. And he is able to have such a belief in the measure that

humility and an affection for serving others exist in him, that is, insofar as the good that is essentially love to the Lord and charity toward the neighbor is present in him." (*Arcana Coelestia* 3417:3)

These are wonderful paradoxical statements centering on the idea that we are not great, but the Lord is; we are not powerful, but He is. When we recognize that, we receive power and greatness from Him.

2. The Pharisees put burdens on others that they themselves would not carry.

We can expect a great deal of others, but we often come up with excuses for ourselves. Sometimes pride turns the other way around and leads us to hold ridiculously high standards for ourselves that we would never expect of other people.

3. The Pharisees thought they deserved more. It was not just that they wanted the best seats at feasts, but that they *expected* them.

The Lord says that whoever exalts himself will be humbled. Yet it doesn't seem as though it works that way. Externally it seems that shameless self-promoters get ahead, and in the short run this might be true, as we so commonly see in the political arena, where humble self-deprecating people seem to be passed over in favor of those who trumpet their own virtues. But internally those who exalt themselves are humbled. To the extent that we do things to earn goodness, to be better than others, we block out the Lord's blessing. We may receive momentary glory, but in the long run we end up empty. As the Lord says, it is fine to start doing good for the sake of reward, but the goal is to lose yourself in doing that good.

Another form of pride is criticalness. Michal's reaction to David illustrates this. David was bringing the ark back into Jerusalem after it had been recaptured from the Philistines.

"Now as the ark of Jehovah came into the City of David, Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window and saw King David leaping and whirling before Jehovah; and she despised him in her heart. . . . Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David and said, 'How glorious was the king of Israel today, uncovering himself today in the eyes of the maids of his servants, as one of the base fellows shamelessly uncovers himself.' So David said to Michal: 'It was before Jehovah, who chose me instead of your father and all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of Jehovah, over Israel. Therefore I will play music before Jehovah. And I will be even more undignified than this, and will be humble in my own sight. But as for the maid-servants of whom you have spoken, by them I will be held in honor.'" (*2 Samuel* 6:16, 20-22)

Michal despised David because he had exposed himself. That contempt is a form of pride. We look down on the failings of others. David's response is that he was not thinking about those people or about his position; he was

focusing on dancing before the Lord.

A theme that is woven into this discussion of pride is comparing ourselves with others – wondering how we match up. Michal did that; the Pharisees did it. When we are in states of pride we are always noticing how we compare to other people. This awareness can show up in two ways. One is our noticing all the ways in which we are better than others. The other is noticing all the ways in which we do not hold up well by comparison.

Deriving self-esteem from how we compare is actually also a form of pride because it is all about who is better and who is worse.

People spend a lot of time these days thinking about developing healthy self-esteem. Lots of people feel badly about themselves. That is very sad, something we know the Lord does not want. Over that last 40 years or so there has been an increasing focus on the need to develop self-esteem, yet by most measures people have lower self-esteem than ever. Studies also indicate that Americans, who focus more on self-esteem than anyone, actually have more problems with it.

New Church teachings do not focus on self-esteem at all. In fact the idea of self-confidence is spoken of only in negative terms. We know that the Lord wants us to feel good about what we can accomplish and who we are. Yet in New Church teachings self-confidence, or trust in oneself, is clearly a form of egotism. It is trusting in our own power to accomplish our goals, focusing on what we can do rather than on what the Lord can do in our life. This fits with the Lord's paradoxical statement that "whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." (*Matthew 23:12*)

All our lives we've been told to become self-confident, to know we can accomplish things. Yet the Lord asks us to have a different perspective. It comes down to the teaching in our reading: *We have no power of our own, thus we have nothing to be confident in.*

This is a very hard concept for some to hear, but it is important to rethink what it is that makes us able to accomplish anything in life. Instead of self-confidence, the Lord asks us to have confidence in Him. This kind of confidence is the trust that whatever happens the Lord will be with us. We move forward eagerly and with determination because of that trust.

We believe that the Lord loves us and is working in our lives with great power. We trust that if we do His will, good things will happen to us, that His

It is important to rethink what it is that makes us able to accomplish anything in life. Instead of self-confidence, the Lord asks us to have confidence in Him.

Humility, our awareness of our own inability to accomplish anything apart from the Lord, is the antidote to pride, at least if we approach humility the right way.

path is the path to happiness. We trust that with God all things are possible and that we are supposed to change the world through our lives – not because we are great but because the Lord is great, and He will act through us if we try to do His will. We trust that even when we notice our flaws and weaknesses the Lord sees the possibility in our lives. And even when nobody else notices us the Lord does and loves us completely.

Peter made what turned out to be an arrogant assertion, and he was forced to confront his pride after the rooster crowed. But what came after? We know from history that after the Lord rose Peter became as brave as he said he would be. Obviously he was able to take that initial pride in himself and his bravery and turn it into trust and confidence in the Lord and His power. In the book of *Acts*, Peter did not make bold statements about himself (“I will never desert you!”). He made statements about the Lord. His focus shifted.

Self-esteem or self-confidence is not what we need to seek after, because it is not something the Lord can bless directly. It is something that comes to us indirectly, as a consequence of other actions. Self-esteem is painfully closely linked to pride because both, when we seek after them, cause us to look in the mirror like the Pharisees did. We become too aware of who we are and not enough of who others are, or who the Lord is.

Humility, our awareness of our own inability to accomplish anything apart from the Lord, is the antidote to pride, at least if we approach humility the right way. True humility causes us to look outside of ourselves to the Lord, and trust or confidence in the Lord also causes us to look at Him. This allows Him to be present with us, and it is His presence that makes us happy, or able to do what is important, or love others, or accomplish anything good. And that in turn makes us feel good about ourselves. So instead of self-esteem, we should be focusing on the fact that the Lord esteems and values us. And because His view is true, we absolutely have value.

Ironically, when we compare ourselves to others we tend to feel badly about ourselves. Human nature tends to focus on the areas in which we are much better or much worse than those around us. Even noticing where we are better comes back to bite us because comparison-based thinking leads us to feel good only when we are better than others, and that's simply not possible much of the time. But if we turn to the Lord to receive our blessings we never

need to feel badly about ourselves. We know that in His eyes we are a beloved child whom He is holding and nurturing, and to whom He is giving many blessings.

Perhaps a useful way of thinking about this change from focusing on self-confidence to having confidence in the Lord is to think about the idea of having power to change things. If I have self-confidence in the way the world speaks about it, I believe I have the power to make a difference, or I can accomplish what I want. The term psychologists use for this is have “self-efficacy.” It means a belief that I can accomplish what I set out to do.

However, the Lord speaks of power this way: “Spiritual power is to will the good of another, and to will to give to another as far as possible what is within oneself.” (*Apocalypse Explained* 79) That’s not focusing on us; it’s focusing on others. When we realize that our job is to serve others we recognize right away that it is not something we can do by ourselves. Experience shows us that we need the Lord or we will fail. Inviting the Lord in gives us the power, and we end up feeling good about what we have done and our place in the world.

In closing, consider this teaching about peace and how it relates to self-confidence as the Lord uses the term: “All evil, especially self-confidence, takes away a state of peace. It is believed that an evil person is at peace when he is in gladness and tranquility because all things succeed with him. But this is not peace; it is the delight and tranquility of lusts which counterfeit a state of peace. . . . Peace has in it confidence in the Lord, that He directs all things, and provides all things, and that He leads to a good end. When a person is in this faith, he is in peace, for he then fears nothing, and no worry about things to come disquiets him. A person comes into this state in proportion as he comes into love for the Lord.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 8455)



The Rev. Erik J. Buss is assistant pastor of the Bryn Athyn Church. He served previously in Glenview, Illinois; Seattle, Washington; and as pastor of the Durban Society and principal of its Kainon School in South Africa and as regional pastor for Africa. He and his wife, Ann (Gladish), live in Bryn Athyn. Contact: erikjbuss@gmail.com.

So instead of self-esteem, we should be focusing on the fact that the Lord esteems and values us. And because

His view is true, we absolutely have value.

⌚ Introducing Our Ministers ☰

The Rev. Derek P. Elphick



For the Love of the Church

Derek Elphick reflects on when he first started thinking about becoming a minister: “My love for the church and my appreciation for the rational, orderly structure of the Writings matured in my late teens and early twenties. I found that I loved being with people, that the teachings of the New Church were undoubtedly the key to lasting peace and happiness, and that the New Church ministry would provide me the occasion to participate in this noble use.”

The fact that his father, the Rev. Frederick Elphick, had entered the ministry as a second career may have been a factor, but Derek felt his own calling,

He was born in London, England, and spent his childhood there. The

family moved to Bryn Athyn when his father decided to go to Theological School. Derek spent three years at the Academy Boys School, then returned to London with the family when his father was called as pastor of the Michael Church. Derek spent two years working in the city, trying his hand at various potential careers, including a brief stint at chef school, cabinet making and various office jobs.

Then perhaps that maturing love of the church gave him new direction. He graduated from Bryn Athyn College, earning a bachelor's degree in Religious Studies, married Gay Hodgett, and graduated from Theological School three years later.

He says that when he first attended the College he wasn't intending to enter the ministry. "But my studies in the systematic theology of the Writings made me convinced that I wanted to be a part of sharing the message of the Lord in His Second Coming." He credits several professors at the College "who were also highly influential in my decision to choose the ministry." That choice became clear in his third year at the College.

He was ordained in 1993 and became the assistant pastor of the Oak Arbor Church and School in Rochester, Michigan. From 1994 to 2002 he was pastor of the New Church at Boynton Beach, Florida, and visiting pastor to the Florida District. Then his ministry came full circle, returning him to Oak Arbor where he has been head pastor, director of the school and regional



The Elphick family, left to right: Peter, Rachel, Liam, Cailin, Serena, Derek, Gay

pastor of the Midwestern United States since 2002. There he and Gay have raised their five children, Peter, Cailin, Rachel, Liam and Serena.

He says: "I love all aspects of the ministry – preaching, leading classes

and discussions, and spending time with people one-on-one.” He especially loves teaching religion classes in the third through sixth grades. Last year he published his first highly successful book, a daily devotional reader, Daily Bread.

In his spare time he enjoys reading, traveling, gardening, walking and biking. And he enjoys the “surprised and amused response from parishioners when they discover that I’m a motorcycle and sports car fanatic. Ever since I was young, I’ve loved tinkering with all things mechanical – as long as it has a motor, preferably a powerful one. I find it to be a relaxing hobby and a nice change of pace from the intense book and office work associated with the ministry.”

His favorite passage from the Writings is *Arcana Coelestia* 6206:

Be it further known that all evil flows in from hell, and all good through heaven from the Lord. The reason why evil is appropriated to people is that they believe and persuade themselves that they think and do it from themselves, and in this way make it their own. If we believed as is really the case, then evil would not be appropriated to us, but good from the Lord would be appropriated to us; for the moment that evil flowed in, we would reflect that it was from the evil spirits with us, and as soon as we thought this, the angels would avert and reject it. For the influx of the angels is into what a person knows and believes, but not into what a person does not know and does not believe.

Contact: delphick@oakarbor.org

OUR NEW CHURCH VOCABULARY

Part of a continuing series developed by the Rev. W. Cairns Henderson, 1961-1966.

REGENERATION

In its wider meaning, this term refers to the entire process of man’s rebirth, but in a more restricted sense it relates to that part of the process which follows reformation. As distinct therefrom, regeneration is predicated of the will and is a state of love, formed by the good of charity, in which man becomes spiritual-natural.

During it man has a perceptive understanding of truth from good, and is in a state of affection in which good has the dominion. He comes into it when he begins to shun evils and do goods, and the process consists in the establishment of new will in the reformed understanding. This will, which is an entirely new structure, consists in the good of remains, which are then appropriated by the natural. (See *True Christian Religion* 571)

Power in the Familiar

A Sermon by the Rev. Derek Elphick

We find comfort and reassurance in the familiar. It doesn't matter how many times we watch a sunrise, feel the ocean breeze against our face, stroll in the woods or dive into a good book, each time it happens we find ourselves at peace with our little corner of the world. There's power in the familiar too; no words need to be exchanged when a couple in love walk hand in hand or when we touch the soft skin of a newborn child or when we catch the eye of a friend or loved one and exchange a knowing look.

So what is it about these familiar experiences that never grows old? We may have a daily ritual or a favorite biking route or a regular vacation spot which we use over and over again. The external trappings, the landscape, the views, the routines; these tend to change very little but something is changing in us! We grow and mature. Our tastes and sensibilities change. Priorities change. Perspectives change.

This is why we never tire of being in the presence of a newborn child or of watching the sun rise. It's because the Lord is using these external sense impressions, these fixed moments in time, as building blocks, as a way of adding new levels of affection and understanding in us, new states of mind. (See *Arcana Coelestia* 2272, 5804)

This is especially true of the Lord's Word. We have an affectional tie with the stories of Scripture going all the way back to childhood. This is why we take comfort in the familiar and recite the Lord's Prayer or the 23rd Psalm in times of crisis or need. We remind ourselves of the Golden Rule and Going the Extra Mile and Turning the Other Cheek when confronted with a challenging situation. Even though we've heard the stories many times, we find hope and promise in the Garden of Eden or Noah's Ark or Daniel in the Lion's Den.

There's tremendous depth and power in these well-loved stories too. Think of the gospel account of the Birth of Jesus Christ or the Woman Clothed with the Sun and the Great Red Dragon. Even though we know the ending (and in many of our congregations re-enact these sacred stories every year during Christmas and New Church Day) something deep inside us rejoices at the triumph of good over evil.

The Lord meets us in the familiar parts of His Word, the ones for which we have an affection, and He encourages us to look around, look closer.

that we may reach new levels of peace and understanding; so that we may, as one teaching says, become aware of new truths we “*did not, and could not, see before*” (See *Arcana Coelestia* 5804)

As with most things in life, we need to get comfortable with the basics, the general idea, before diving into the specifics, otherwise we’ll get lost in the details, lose patience and give up. (See *Arcana Coelestia* 5454)

So we have the basic storyline: the Philistine and Israelite armies are camped opposite each other in a stand-off. King Saul and his army are paralyzed by fear at the prospect of sending one warrior after another to face almost certain death at the hands of the Philistine giant, Goliath. The young shepherd boy, David, arrives at the Israelite camp with food for his older brothers, and through a series of remarkable events, becomes the unlikely champion to single-handedly eliminate the Philistine threat.

But as adults we yearn for more. We need specifics. We want to know how to face the “giants” in our lives; how to face our fears and regrets because life rarely unfolds the way we expect it to and we find ourselves ill-equipped to face our confusion and disappointment. So the Lord meets us in the familiar parts of His Word, the ones for which we have an affection, and He encourages us to look around, look closer.

We notice, for example, the description of Goliath’s armor and we discover the most complete, detailed description of armor ever mentioned in the Word. Not only is each piece identified – a shield, a helmet, coat of mail, a javelin, and greaves (leg armor from below the knees) – but we’re also told what kind of material each piece of armor is made of, and how much it weighs. (See *I Samuel* 17:5-7)

Why? Why does Goliath’s armor warrant such detailed attention in comparison to true heroes like Gideon or Joshua or Michael and his angels? One answer is because the Lord wants to teach us the tactics of the hells. He wants us to become so well-versed, so familiar with their strategies, their tricks,

their lies, that we simply no longer fear evil, just as the shepherd boy, David, demonstrated no fear of his opponent.

Goliath's full body armor represents the destructive nature of evil, how it is highly skilled at defending itself, protecting itself with clever arguments from head to toe – from the “head,” representing the thoughts evil spirits inject into our mind, to the “chest,” representing the unregenerate feelings they stir up in our heart, to the “legs,” representing the deeds they want us to carry out.

One practical way to think of Goliath's armor is to think of how we use justifications. There's the saying that *“the road to hell is paved with good intentions,”* but it would be more accurate to say the road to hell is paved with justifications.

Good intentions are what the Lord and His angels use to propel us forward. Yes, we are prone to procrastination, putting things off, saying one thing but doing another, but good intentions are nevertheless the spiritual fuel that keeps us going. Justifications, on the other hand, are like the full body armor of Goliath in that they “deflect” all personal accountability and responsibility.

With justifications we can explain away almost anything, claiming it wasn't our fault, we'll do it tomorrow, we didn't mean it, our problems are bigger than anyone else's, and so forth. And like Goliath, there's a defiance to our justifications in that we convince ourselves we are right and everyone else is wrong.

There's another thing we learn about armor; it can have a good or bad representation. We see both kinds in our story. Before the fight, David tries on King Saul's armor but takes it off again since he isn't familiar with it and hasn't had a chance to test it properly. Being the Lord's anointed, Saul's armor represents the truths of the Word which are used to defend and protect ourselves against evil and falsity. The fact that David wasn't comfortable in the armor and took it off illustrates, again, how the Lord leads us by means of the familiar.

We all learn truths from the Word. Over a lifetime we accumulate many, many truths. But like David, we don't have time to “test” all of this armor. Some of the truths we learn are not fully understood by us and then there are others that we haven't actually used or put into practice. The truths of the Word we don't fully understand or which we don't use immediately are like

There's the saying that
“the road to hell is paved with good intentions,”
 but it would be more accurate to say the road to hell is paved with justifications.

Saul's "untested" armor on David. Therefore, if we are to overcome the "giants" in our lives it becomes crucial that we use truths from the Word with which we are familiar.

We're taught that the influx of the Lord and His angels is into that which we "know and believe, not into that which we don't know or believe." (See *Arcana Coelestia* 6206) On the surface, this sounds obvious. We're not going to do something we don't believe in. But human behavior is not that simple. When we allow fear or anger or resentment and disappointment to cloud our thinking, the influx from heaven is temporarily distorted and interrupted. We start to believe the negative chatter in our mind. We look at the familiar and struggle to see anything special. We look at the natural beauty around us and fail to see the Lord in it. We struggle to find peace and order in our simple, ordinary days.

This is why the Lord encourages us, like David, to equip ourselves with what is comfortable and familiar – in David's case, with the tools of his trade, his staff, sling and five smooth stones picked out from a brook. And then the Lord draws our attention to another detail: these stones were taken from running water, not from the still water of a pool or well. The truths in our memory are represented by the standing water of a "pool" or "well," whereas the truths which we have made a part of our lives are represented by running water, an endless source of living, refreshing inspiration. (See *Arcana Coelestia* 7324; *Apocalypse Explained* 405:15; *Apocalypse Revealed* 956)

Taking the stones from the running water of a brook is a picture of how we need to use those truths from the Word that we have found to be effective in the past. And the emphasis on their "smoothness" points to the fact that whatever truth we use to do battle against the latest "giant" in our life needs to be "rounded out" by experience and frequent use.

All it took to bring down the giant was one smooth stone.

There's tremendous power in "one," in the simple but highly effective approach of deliberately compelling ourselves to do one small thing differently today than we did yesterday. Our effort needs to be "deliberate" because much of our daily routine runs on autopilot; we're not typically thinking deeply about what we say or do.

So we read: "If from [our] will and intellect . . . we **deliberately** refrain from one evil because it is a sin, [we] refrain from them all. For as soon as [we] . . . **deliberately** refrain from some evil because it is a sin, we are kept by the Lord in a purpose to refrain from the rest." (*Conjugial Love* 529, cf., 528)

This is the "one" smooth stone shot from David's sling. We disrupt the huge, looming sphere and influence of evil in our lives by confronting one tiny manifestation of it in ourselves, by deliberately choosing not to say that unkind word, by not clicking on that website link, by not responding with anger to

that email.

When the Lord was tempted by the devil in the wilderness, He did not argue or reason with him. Instead, the Lord used three short quotes from Scripture as His defense, three “smooth stones” as it were, and each truth which the Lord quoted destroyed the threat, the temptation, with deadly precision. The same is true for us. When we use a familiar piece of Scripture or one of the Ten Commandments or a New Church doctrinal concept that we love and find helpful, we open ourselves up to the Lord’s direct guidance and, with the precision of a slingshot, hit our target.

Hitting our “target” in everyday life is a process of becoming more and more aware of the Lord’s presence in our lives. It’s a process of inviting the Lord to take us to the familiar parts of His Word and then asking Him to show us something new, something we haven’t seen before.

It’s a process of doing the work of regeneration, of facing our “giants,” of breaking them down to size by doing one small thing differently today than we did yesterday.

This is how the Lord helps us grow and mature. When we do it, we find that our tastes and sensibilities change. We have a different perspective. Our priorities change. We see beauty in the ordinary. Everything seems to come alive (see *Heaven and Hell* 489), whether that be the simple routine of opening the Lord’s Word each day, or praying, or holding hands with a loved one, or taking a walk in the woods, or spending time with our children and grandchildren. We hit our mark. We find ourselves at peace in the world.

There’s an ancient proverb that says, “*the journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step.*” We face the big, looming “giants” in our lives by stepping forward with one, simple truth. With the confidence and trust of David we say to that “giant” in front of us, “*You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the Lord.*” (*I Samuel 17:45*)

Amen.

Contact: delphick@oakarbor.org

Hitting our “target” in everyday life is a process of becoming more and more aware of the Lord’s presence in our lives. It’s a process of inviting the Lord to take us to the familiar parts of His Word and then asking Him to show us something new, something we haven’t seen before.

Report on 2018 Council of the Clergy Meetings

The Rev. James P. Cooper

The General Church Council of the Clergy met from Tuesday, June 25, through Saturday, June 30, in Bryn Athyn. Attending were 103 ministers from 15 countries: Australia, Benin, Burkina Faso, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, India, Japan, Kenya, Korea, South Africa, Sweden, Togo, United Kingdom, United States of America.

The annual clergy meetings, whether full session or regional, are an important part of the life of a minister. Most of us work in relative isolation, daily struggling with trying to find the best way to understand the Word, to understand the life issues our people are dealing with, and then bringing the two together in a way that brings healing and peace.

Today, more than ever it seems, we are trying to do this in an environment that is increasingly hostile to organized religion of any kind. We struggle to express the Lord's teachings in ways that can be understood and accepted without making them of no effect. To spend a week with other people who understand the challenge, who get what you're talking about, and who have had similar experiences, is incredibly important.

The formal discussion of the major papers and the workshops are the main focus, but equally useful are the small groups that form during any free time. Add to that the need to select one of our own to lead us in this important work for the next decade or so, and you can see why so many of us look forward to the meetings – and go home exhausted.

Selection of the Next Executive Bishop

The main item of business was completing the process of selecting the next Executive Bishop. The process started when Bishop Keith announced in 2017 that he was ready to retire in June of 2019. This meant that a portion of the 2017 Council of the Clergy was devoted to reviewing our selection process and choosing a committee to oversee that process. The clergy elected the Revs. Jean

Atta, Stephen Cole, Coleman Glenn, Grant Odhner and Jeremy Simons (chair) to the committee.

During the year between the meetings, every member of the clergy was urged to take counsel from the lay members they served, whether in a school, a traditional congregation, or the isolated. After taking counsel, the members were invited to make a nomination, after securing permission from the person they wished to nominate. The nomination was sent to the Oversight Committee along with reasons for making the nomination. If a member received two or more nominations, he was added to the list of nominees who would be considered during the 2018 meetings.

Those willing to be nominated and receiving two or more nominations were, in alphabetical order: Rt. Rev. Peter Buss Jr., and the Revs. Erik Buss, Mac Frazier, Brad Heinrichs, David Lindrooth and Derrick Lumsden. Spring and early summer were spent in prayer, reflection, and taking further counsel as we each sought light to see the best way to assist the Lord in the building up of His church on earth.

The schedule for the 2018 meetings had set aside a number of sessions for members to discuss the uses of the church, issues facing the church, and the qualities of the various candidates. At the beginning, all six candidates were asked to leave the room so everyone could speak freely. It should be mentioned that we have a tradition of speaking to strengths rather than pointing out weaknesses.

Eventually we came to a point where everyone who wanted to had spoken and there was a sense in the room that it was time to take a vote and see where we were. After a prayer, the members filled out ballots that ranked all six candidates. First choice was number one, and so on. Members put all six names on their ballot, in the order they preferred, and then the committee left to feed the ballots into a computer program while the rest of us went to lunch.

The Rev. Stephen Cole explains: “The Council used the same method that was used in the last episcopal selection process. At that time, we agreed to use a process that would arrive at a Condorcet winner if there is one – the candidate who could beat each of the other candidates in a head-to-head match-up. Because we wished to allow for multiple rounds of voting, with discussion in between rounds, we used a method that permits us to rank candidates and drop those with lower scores as we go to the next round. The scores are computed by subtracting the number of losses for each candidate in head-to-head match-ups from the number of wins. This method of elimination is called ‘Nanson’s Method.’”

In the next session of the selection process, the Oversight Committee showed the results of the first round of voting. We try very hard to keep politics out of the process, so we first looked at the results without the names of the

candidates attached. The committee prepared several graphs to illustrate the results, and it could be seen that there were three candidates who had much stronger support than the other three.

It was decided to invite the three lowest scoring candidates back into the room, where they were received with a standing ovation and the thanks of the Council. You can't have a free process and make choices unless there are people willing to take part in the process. You can't choose between one thing. The Council is always grateful and appreciative of those who are willing to take part in this process. It's not just the candidates that deserve our thanks, but their wives too. It's an anxious time for everyone.

During the next session, we continued our discussion of uses and issues, and the three remaining candidates (again, in another room). Another vote was taken. But, although one candidate had more support than the other two, there was a sense of uneasiness that led to caution, delay and more conversation. No one wanted to be rushed into a decision by some external, artificial time frame.

We voted to bump other items from the program and continue working on the selection process. Eventually, a second vote on the three candidates was taken and after a presentation of the results of the vote, we agreed to drop the person in third place, who was then welcomed back into the room with sustained applause. We continued the discussion of the remaining two candidates. Eventually another vote was called for.

As there were only two remaining candidates there was no need for weighted balloting. Each member simply wrote the name of his preferred candidate on a paper ballot, and the committee counted the votes. A clear winner emerged, and as is our tradition, a written vote of affirmation was called for, at which point the Rt. Rev. Peter Buss Jr. was affirmed as our nominee for Executive Bishop. He, and the other candidate, were called into the room and warmly welcomed by everyone singing, "The Lord upon you send His blessing."

Since the choice ended up being our Assistant to the Bishop, there will be those who say, "What was all the fuss? He was the heir apparent." The difficulty is how to explain that there were a number of candidates who were also experienced, talented, energetic and well-qualified to be a pastor to the pastors, and lead the other aspects of the church, and it was not that easy to come to the final decision.

It took a lot of prayerful thought and discussion to arrive at that decision. It should be known that a lot of people, while speaking about the special qualifications of their own candidate, took the time to say that all the candidates were highly qualified and no matter which one was selected, they would be able to give their wholehearted support.

Plenary Sessions

No doubt some of these papers will be submitted to *New Church Life* for publication. The first paper was presented by Bishop Brian Keith: “Just What is the Lord Up To?” He provided this brief summary:

“In the church we talk about regeneration, human states (ups and downs), morality, use and a host of other themes taken from the Word that encourage people to lead a life of religion – an emphasis upon what people need to think or do. This is well and good, but what is the Lord doing in all of this?

“His leading is obviously a delicate give and take with our choices and actions. But His direct, although usually unseen, intervention in the world and in our lives is truly awe inspiring. He is present and causative to a degree in all the events of Scripture, world-wide movements, and most particularly in the lives (thoughts and feelings) of every individual. In all of this, He is pervasively involved in our regeneration and every step we take – much more than we could ever believe or know, at least apart from revelation.

“Knowing this should not leave us with arms hanging down awaiting His influx, but give us a sense of comfort and confidence that our efforts, be they ever so feeble, enable the full force of His Divine power to embrace and uplift us to heaven, and enable us to be fully thankful for His gentle leadership.”

The Revs. John Jin and John Odhner jointly presented a paper, “Making Disciples of All Nations.” There is a sense that China is gradually becoming more open to a variety of views, especially western religions and ways of thought. This paper takes a careful look at the history and culture of the Chinese people, and then attempts to answer the question: “In what new ways can we present the core doctrines and belief of the New Church to people with this kind of background?”

Some of the ideas the paper explores are building upon the religion they already have; emphasizing the teachings that especially speak to their states of life; and trying to discover what they need – are they spiritually hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger – and then responding appropriately.

The Rev. Grant Odhner’s paper was: “A Look at *Luke*: The Special Way in which This Gospel Connects Us with the Human God.” He summarizes his paper:

“All of the Gospels contribute to our understanding of the Lord Jesus Christ. The focus of this study is the *Gospel of Luke*, particularly how it presents the Lord. More fully than other Gospels, *Luke* gives us a picture of a Christ who is engaged in a developmental process. This connects our lives with the Lord’s.

“The Lord took on a human mind and developed it, addressing its inclinations and challenges. He raised that mind up to glory in the same way He regenerates us. *Luke’s* Jesus becomes both our Lord and our example. He includes us in His process. In *Luke* we are there at His conception, consenting

with Mary, ‘Let it be to me according to your word.’ We are there at His birth, at 8 and 40 days old, at 12 years old, at His baptism, age 30.

“We are those who ‘continue with Him in His temptations,’ dying at His side with the promise that soon we will be ‘with Him in paradise.’ Then in His resurrection He graciously walks with us, teaching us anew, enlightening our obscurity, leading us to a state of joyful knowledge of His eternal presence, and to ‘continual praise’ in His ‘temple.’”

The Rev. Eric Carswell’s paper was: “Epistemology of the *Arcana Coelestia* – The Story of Joseph.” Eric said he was looking at the story of Joseph in *Genesis* and trying to answer the question of how a human being comes to wisdom. He explains:

“The internal sense of Joseph’s life and interactions with his brothers powerfully illustrates the repeated teaching that a person’s first sight of truth is so flawed that what that person first recognizes as truth and good is actually falsity and evil. Regeneration is the only process that provides a person the opportunity to progress from this spiritual darkness to genuinely understanding what the Lord is trying to teach us.

“The first truths we learn are really a factual knowledge of truth. Through this knowledge and with the Lord’s help, we can be led away from destructive thoughts and behavior and toward good ones. As we work to shun evils as sins, the Lord can freely form within us new affections or a desire to do what is good. From this new love we will be able to recognize new truths that are quite different from our previous understanding.

“As a key passage states: ‘A person then not only sees from good [affections] the truths which he knew before, but also from good brings forth new truths which he did not and could not know before. . . . These new truths differ greatly from the truths which he had previously known.’ (*Arcana Coelestia* 5804) This new sight of what the Lord really intends for us helps us to be far wiser and far more useful.”

Finally, The Rev. Göran Appelgren gave a paper: “Singulars and Particulars – or God Almighty and the Temptation to Lose Oneself in the Details.” His paper aimed to remind us of the special power that comes from reading the Old and New Testaments. He explains:

“Jesus says: ‘My words are spirit and life.’ (*John* 6:33) One of the books of *The Four Doctrines* deals with the Sacred Scripture, that is the Old and the New Testaments. Unlike the Writings for the New Church, which are written with the purpose of explaining and teaching directly, ‘The Word Itself’ (*Sacred Scripture* 39) is written by means of correspondences.

“By means of these correspondences there is a structure of discrete degrees, or levels, all the way from the Divine Itself down to the literal sense. Through these discrete degrees, and by means of correspondences, there is influx from

the Lord into the souls of everyone who looks to the Lord for guidance in their lives. The quote ‘My words are spirit and life’ refer to Wisdom – Spirit and Love. (*Ibid.*) The influx of these two affects both the understanding (Wisdom) and the will (Love) in us. This influx and the effect it has on our inner being is ‘instantaneous.’ (*Ibid.* 63)

“My charge to the church is to read The Word Itself – the Bible if you wish – much, much more than we do, because there is a very special connection with the Lord that we miss out on if we ‘only’ read the Writings. The same little book, *The Doctrine of the New Jerusalem Concerning the Sacred Scripture*, says: ‘The style of the Word (notably The Sacred Scripture) is the Divine style itself.’ (*Sacred Scripture* 6; cf *True Christian Religion* 191) The main point here is that our affections, that are of our will, are affected in a Divine, mysterious way. We deprive ourselves of this if we neglect to read The Word Itself!”

Workshops and Professional Development

Every Council of the Clergy features a mix of doctrinal presentations, electives and workshops. Usually there are two or three choices for each time slot, which means that no one gets to everything, but it is nice to be able to pick and choose things that relate more closely to the kind of congregation or use being served. And it’s good for the various ministers to be able to present practical things that they have found useful – or just want their colleagues’ opinion on something before implementing it.

This year’s options included:

- The Rev. Jean Atta spoke about “Advertising the Gospel.”
- The Rev. Chris Barber led a discussion of a documentary film, “*Women in the Ancient World*.”
- The Rev. Derrick Lumsden presented “Thoughts on Discipleship and Biblical/Nouthetic Counseling.”
- The Rev. Kurt Nemitz asked the question: “Should Our Worship Services be Restructured?”
- The Rev. John Odhner led a discussion of how we can identify and meet the needs of people who are “Spiritually Hungry, Thirsty . . .”
- The Rev. Todd Beiswenger presented “Logopraxis” – a way of giving direction to a church congregation that is being developed in Australia.
- The Video Team from the Office of Outreach gave a workshop on “*Film and Social Media*.”

While the main work of this year’s Council was accomplished, and there was a good deal of personal and professional development, there is also the

recognition that the Church faces many challenges in today's culture and the determination to find new ways to communicate the Lord's truths so they can be heard, understood, loved, and lead to a happier and more fulfilling life for everyone in this world and the next.



The Rev. James P. Cooper is retired. Most recently he was pastor of the Olivet Society in Toronto, Canada, and regional pastor for Canada. He has also served, chronologically, in the Bryn Athyn Church and School; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Durban, South Africa; and Washington, DC. He currently serves as Chaplain of the Military Service Committee. He and his wife, Karen (Jorgenson), live in Toronto. Contact: *rev.james.cooper@gmail.com*

OUR NEW CHURCH VOCABULARY

Part of a continuing series developed by the Rev. W. Cairns Henderson, 1961-1966.

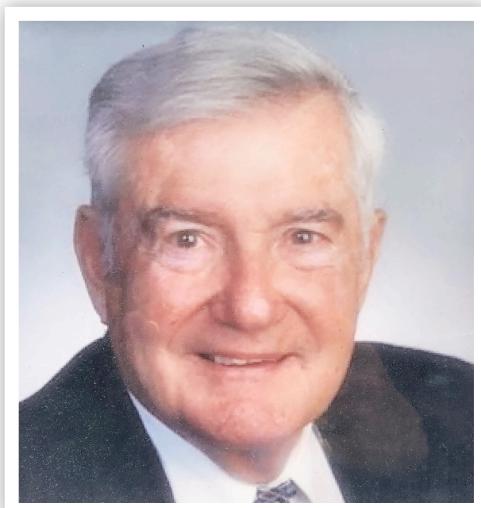
RELIGION

Religion is frequently thought of in the world as a system of belief, which may be held without being practiced. It is often implied that which system is embraced does not matter as long as it satisfies and one lives well, and the idea persists that religion was invented by men out of necessity from wonder or fear.

The essential idea, however, is that true religion is revealed and is of the life, but a life according to genuine doctrine. Belief and life cannot be separated, the Writings teach, since a man cannot live differently than he really believes or believe differently than he loves and lives. (See *Apocalypse Explained* 805)

MEMORIAL ADDRESS

James Francis Jungé



The Rev. David H. Lindrooth

(Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania – July 21, 2018)

Readings: Isaiah 41:10; Psalm 8:1-5, 9; Psalm 23; Jeremiah 32: 39,40; Psalm 118:23; Arcana Coelestia 10594-10595; Conjugal Love 200; Heaven and Hell 379; Apocalypse Revealed 875; Genesis 1:29; Secrets of Heaven 56-57

(Note: Indented portions of this address – unless otherwise indicated – are from the personal recollections of James Jungé, and were read by his granddaughter, Briene Lermitt.)

We are here to honor James Francis Jungé. Perhaps the most fitting way to honor him is to have so many of Jim's direct descendants, coming from all corners of the country to connect with each other, sharing love and support and now gathered together in this sacred place. He, with his wife Bethel Pitcairn, were parents to Danna Kistner, Dirk (and Judy) Jungé, Wenda (and George) Gantz, Kim (and Molly) Jungé, Nita (and Dean) Holmes, Kaye

(and Jay) Lermitté and Jan Jungé (who passed away in 1972). Jim and Bethy were grandparents to 27 grandchildren; and great grandparents to more than 50 sweet souls – what he clearly viewed as his greatest legacy. I would like to set the context of this address with a quote from the gospel of *John*.

Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. (*John* 12:24-5)

I love these words from the New Testament because of what they say about a human being and his ability to radically transform for the better. First, by comparison these words speak clearly about resurrection. The earthly body that we all, ultimately, will leave behind is represented by the hard, woody covering of a grain of wheat. It is limited and relatively dead in comparison to the living body that we receive as an angel when we enter the next life. This life is really just a preparation for life in heaven, when we begin to serve both God and humanity in ways that are indescribably helpful.

This brings us to the second, deeper meaning of this passage that is also helpful – and I believe lies at the very heart of what motivated Jim throughout his long life. The grain of wheat serves as a metaphor for change and growth that we all must go through in life, as we shed the limitations of our own egoistic thinking and its hard husk that prevent us from engaging with people the way we would really like. If we are willing, the Lord gives us the courage and strength to grow out of our ego into states that are more in “His image and likeness” and we become truly human.

In the New Church, we call this process regeneration or rebirth. Jim, like many people born in the early 20th century, learned to shed some of the crustier ways of responding to others – gained from an upbringing in a sometimes difficult environment – in favor of ways of interacting that were more human, more gentle, and better conveyed the love that he had for others.

For Jim, this wasn’t just a personal, or private, approach to life. By extension, it defined his approach for how he engaged in all his efforts in life. Whether at home with family, at work, in the board room or on the golf course, Jim had characteristic fearlessness around advocating for rational changes that he felt would improve his environment. He was someone who was strongly motivated to find solutions, fix things, and make them better.

In the New Church, we have teachings that angels in heaven think of death simply as a doorway through which a person passes from one life into the next. Jim knew this as he was preparing for his own transition in the last days of June. In fact, he was impatient, and wanted to move on, to be reunited with Bethy, questioning why he was still stuck in this old body that barely worked for so long.

The answer to that was simple. In the Lord's eyes, his life wasn't complete. He was still growing and there were still ways for him to impact others here on earth. There was still love to be given and love to be received.

So, with the angel's idea of death as a doorway, I would like to invite you to imagine for a moment what it was like for Jim to pass through that door. As he made his transition surrounded by family, we also know that there were angels surrounding him – angels who were instilling incredible states of peace and relaxation. This final chapter of life in his physical body had come to a close.

When it came time for him to wake up, some of those angels surrounding him would have been, no doubt, family members and close friends who passed before him whom he was eager to see – like Louis and Freya King, Leonard Gyllenhaal, and certainly Bethy. Jim would be gently awakened at a place he where he felt most at home – probably similar to the place that he and Bethy built on the mountain at Tonche.

There was a warm early morning light streaming in through the picture windows highlighting the summertime view below. One could hear the early morning songs of the birds as they welcomed the warmth. Perhaps, silhouetted in the frame of the window was the woman he has loved his whole life, with that characteristic twinkle in her eye and that pursed smile that without words says, "You are finally awake. I have been waiting. Come, there is so much that I want to show you." And so begins the next chapter of Jim and Bethy's life together.

Capturing 97 very active years of life would be impossible to do in this address. But there are themes in Jim's life that to me clearly paint the picture of who he really is as a person and what his interests and pursuits as an angel will be. To do this I have asked Briene Lermitté (one of Jim's grandchildren) to read excerpts from an extensive collection of stories that she collected from her grandfather as he narrated different aspects of his life. This gives us the privilege today of hearing something about Jim in his own words.

So, let's go back to the beginning. Jim was born June 18, 1921, in Glenview, Illinois. He was a child of what is sometimes known as "The Greatest Generation." Like many of his generation, he encountered significant challenges during the years of the Depression that had a huge impact on who he was, what he cared for, and how he approached life.

Well, I was 6 when dad died (in 1927). My brother Carl was 6 years older, that'd make him 12, and Uncle Bill was 14. Uncle Bill took over as the man of the family. Uncle Charlie Cole got him a job; the airport was being built about a mile-and-a-half away and he got him a job, which he shouldn't have been able to get until he was 18 or 20 years old. When the people realized that he couldn't do the physical work that an older man could do, he spent a lot of time as a water boy going all over to the crews that were working on the airport. And in those days a lot of the work was done with pick and shovel and wheelbarrow as opposed to bulldozers today.

Bill in many ways took over the role of being a dad to me, interested in teaching me sports.

One time I had a little spat with the family, and I decided that I would run away. I had three golf balls. I put those in a handkerchief and started off to run away from home. (At this point I was selling golf balls along the Pickwit Golf Course.) Bill followed at a discreet distance until he figured this game had gone on long enough. He came and caught up with me very quickly, said we're going home. I said "No, I'm running away." He put me under his arm and we went home.

After dad died, my mother had to make a living as a commercial artist. This meant that she would have to leave Glenview and live in Chicago to do that. She tried having me in there for about two weeks and realized it was not a good place to raise a kid. So, I went first to the Charlie Coles, who was my mother's sister Millie, and lived with them for, I don't know, a matter of several months, and then I was transferred over to the Louis Coles.

The Louis Coles consisted of five boys and one girl and they were all older than I was. The youngest one was Louis Cole Jr., who they called Wump and Wump was 7 years older than I was. I remember doing some things with him, skating and whatnot, but I really think that one of the reasons I learned to sing was that when we would do the dishes together, he wanted to practice the tenor part, and needed somebody to sing the soprano. So, he would teach me that, and if I failed to belt it out loud enough, he had a handy dish towel to give me a swap. So, I learned to sing.

These were hard times to grow up without a father particularly, as the family was overshadowed by the Great Depression, a time of overwhelming economic hardship. To get through it, the Jungé family, together with the community built around their church, banded together. One can see this as formative for Jim's lifetime strong desire to protect and care for both family and the community that formed his church. Clearly, he knew that his own life had depended on these two institutions, and as a result his own core values revolved around strong (maybe at times even too strong) advocacy for holding church and family together.

The community that Jim grew up in during the Depression knew that everyone had to contribute in order to survive. Therefore everyone, both young and old, was looking for ways to support each other to help everyone get by. Again, turning to Jim's narratives, we get a glimpse into how this stimulated his beginnings as an entrepreneur.

During the heart of the Great Depression, people in The Park (in Glenview) were looking for any way they could to make a few dollars. Uncle Louis Cole and Paul Carpenter owned a piece of land which we called Uncle Louis' Nursery that ran along the 17th hole of the Pickwit Golf Course. A few of us thought that we might be able to make a few dollars selling lemonade. We put a kitchen table adjacent to the tee, and as the golfers came along, announced that we had lemonade.

The place where we served the lemonade was about a half a mile from our home on Park Lane. I would make the lemonade in the crock, place it in a wheelbarrow and get two young boys to balance the crock while I wheeled it up to the lemonade stand, opposite the tee on the 17th hole.

I found that most golfers were satisfied with one large glass of lemonade and so my mother bought me some very inexpensive 14 oz. glasses. My sales pitch was, "All the lemonade you can drink for a dime!" The typical golfer would come up and say, "Kid, is that lemonade any good?" And I would say, "How do you make lemonade?" And they would say, "With lemon juice, water, ice and sugar." Sugar was only three cents a pound in those days and you could buy a dozen lemons for 30 cents.

In making the lemonade, I would throw all the skins of the lemon in around the block of ice in the crock and I would say to them, "There's more sugar on the table," and I'd save one lemon and cut it, "and there's more lemon there if you want more lemon juice in it." And so, they figured they couldn't lose and they would try it. The tartaric acid we used in our lemonade formula made the drink very sour and I would pour them a 14-ounce glass and they would take one sip and say, "Wow, kid, that's really full of lemon juice, that's really sour!" And they would start to put sugar in to sweeten it. Since sugar was only three cents a pound, I didn't mind how much sugar they put in.

Since the lemonade stand was on the tee at the 17th hole, it was also a good place to sell golf balls. We would look through the woods; any ball that was sliced into the woods, was fair game for us to pick up and sell back to the golfers.

One of the boys who helped find golf balls in Louis Cole's Nursery was Bishop Louis B. King, who is about seven years my junior and worked with me not only when I had the lemonade stand, he was one of the boys who would balance the five-gallon crock as we rolled it up to the table on the 17th tee, but he also worked with me during lilac season. I organized about six boys to help me sell lilacs and Louis King was my head salesman. At this point he was probably something like six years old and I was a young teenager. He had a wonderful smile and our sales pitch was, "Only a quarter for a great big bunch!" A lilac bush likes to be trimmed back, so it really is good for them to be cut and used each year. We would put a big tub of water up on the corner of Shermer Road and Glenview Road, which had the most traffic in the area. Two boys were the runners who would take the bunches that I had cut and tied together into the tub of water. Louis King would get them out as he sold them.

These experiences speak volumes about how he approached life as a chemical engineer at Gulf Oil during World War II; his work as a consultant; and then later his work at the executive level for companies such as PPG and Pitcairn. He worked hard, constantly keeping an eye on how to improve and guide things to better generate growth. From early on, he demonstrated this remarkable talent as a leader.

These experiences also speak to what formed Jim's values for service, teamwork and change that were central driving forces in his life. Here is Jim's

description about a key moment in his life that gave a voice to these core values:

During the years that Grandma and I lived in Glencairn while Danna was [little], we were invited to supper one evening when Bethy's parents, Raymond and Mildred, had Ike and Mamie Eisenhower over for dinner. At one point, President Eisenhower was asked how it was to move around from one military base to another during a large part of his life. He said that while it had been a challenge, he made up his mind very early on that he was going to leave each property that he lived in better than the way he found it for the next person. I thought this was a great philosophy of life and decided that I would try to do the same.

This credo fits with New Church theology about the importance of serving others. Here we are taught that heaven is nothing other than "a kingdom of useful service" (*True Christian Religion* 735); and that all love that is truly heavenly is directed toward helping God and humankind. (*Heaven and Hell* 557)

Jim lived by these principles and was constantly using his mind to try to solve problems, gather people together, create effective ways of communicating for the purpose of "leaving his areas of use" in better shape than he found them. And in these efforts he often made remarkable progress. One example is his involvement as a board member for the Academy of the New Church. Here he worked behind the scenes both reorganizing the endowment and then significantly growing it with the help of the Pitcairn Company. This gave both the school and its parent body, the Church, strength and an ability to reach out that they never had previously. Simply put, the two organizations developed significantly and were greatly enhanced by his efforts.

That said, to touch on the soul of Jim's being, one needs to reflect on the marriage he had with Bethel Pitcairn. Here is Jim's recollection of when he and Bethy first agreed that they were going to get married:

I remember a walk we went on near the end of the first year of college in Bryn Athyn when we sat down in the pinewoods and I made my pitch. In those days, you didn't ask a girl to marry you unless you had a job and knew that you could support her. So, I said, "Bethy, you know I don't have a job yet, but I'm going back to summer school in Chicago and onto the University of Illinois where I hope to finish up in two years or so, and then I'll have a job. I know I can't ask you to marry me, but would you promise that you won't say 'yes' to anybody else without first talking to me?" She promised.

This was the beginning to 67 years of marriage on earth and the start of what Jim referred to as "the Grand-family" with more than 100 direct descendants – and the family which he regarded as his highest accomplishment. In his life with Bethy, he was known to his kids as having absolute unwavering love and fidelity. Throughout his life when asked something that required decision-making in the family Jim's response would be, "Mommie and I think this is best." However, when once asked by Nita how he and Bethy had gotten through

so many years of marriage without ever disagreeing, he instantly replied: “We always did it her way.” Whether that is really true or not, it does speak about a husband who deeply appreciated the many ways Bethy brought light and life into their relationship. After Bethy passed in 2008, he was clear: “I am not a solo act,” he would say as he looked forward to reuniting in heaven. And it is completely clear that he was never “a solo act” – something that has inspired generations of family members and friends.

So yes, I believe that the Lord led Jim through life in a way that mirrored the resurrection metaphor of the seed falling into the ground, shedding its husk and then rising again with new life and to bear more fruit. He kept learning. He kept growing. He kept looking to see how things could be changed for the better. Always with optimism and an eye on the future.

He learned from hard times, learned from mistakes, he learned from family, he learned from observation, he learned from friends. He always had the courage to learn in order to try to make good on the credo to leave things better than he found them. He held on to that credo even while on hospice.

So, when Bethy welcomes him as he awakens in their heavenly home, he will continue to learn, grow, mature, and get his hands dirty, all for the purpose of helping his heavenly environs become a better, more beautiful place. And won’t it be wonderful when we one day join him, and he, with his Bethy, and his smile and wry sense of humor, get to show us around?



The Rev. David H. Lindrooth is Director of the General Church Office of Outreach in Bryn Athyn. He has served as pastor of the Stockholm Society in Sweden; assistant pastor to the Tucson Society in Arizona; and pastor of the Ivyland New Church in Pennsylvania. He and his wife, Aven (Pendleton), live in Bryn Athyn. Contact: David.Lindrooth@newchurch.org

CHAPTER TWO:

Religion Misused and Corrected

Allen J. Bedford, PhD

Note: This is the second chapter of a book-in-progress, *Forming a Partnership: Reading True Christianity as a Personal Guide to Faith* by Dr. Bedford. The previous chapter (July/August *New Church Life*) addressed two objections to faith – the challenge of pursuing belief in something that cannot be proven, and the challenge of knowing where to turn for reliable help in building one's faith. The objection to faith addressed in this chapter is that too often people and communities who profess great faith do great harm. If the type of faith we seek is one that blesses the world, then we need to understand and avoid those forces that make religious practice destructive. (We expect to publish a review of this book in *New Church Life* once it is completed.)

Religion Misused

Why isn't religious practice making the world a much better place? If followed widely, the core teachings in the Judeo-Christian tradition of living lives of love to the Lord and to the neighbor (the two Great Commandments) would transform the world into an interconnected network of mutually supportive communities living in peace and prosperity. Instead, and despite committed religious followers found throughout the world, we very often live in fear of both real and imagined attack.

Instead of seeing other human beings as blessed creations of God, we too often see them as threats to our safety or ambition. And instead of seeing faith groups helping us overcome these dark fears, they too often seem to defend or even inspire them. Some current examples include American political leaders calling for a “total and complete ban on immigration from Muslim countries,” and some Muslim leaders calling for “death to infidels.” Another example is how some Christian church leaders in the American South still preach that interracial marriage is an “abomination” and worse than breaking any of the Ten Commandments. In my own community I often hear more skepticism of than appreciation for other religious groups who practice nearby.

To analyze the situation, assume that God exists, is purposeful, purely loving, and personally present with all people, and that the Judeo-Christian Bible is a reliable source of instruction about God and God's call to us. Further, assume that human beings are not just physical, biological beings, but are also spiritual, existing somehow in and also beyond the confines of the material world.

If God exists and if we humans are spiritual as well as material, as is widely accepted by many people of faith, and if this dual nature gives us an "inner person" and an "outer person," as suggested by Paul¹ and Swedenborg² and others, with the inner person being "spiritual" and transcending the material world and the outer person being "material" and rooted to the material world, then it may be that we humans have, as it were, split personalities.

To the degree that we attend to the outer person at the expense of the inner person, we think, feel and behave much as would an intelligent animal; and to the degree that we attend to the inner person at the expense of the outer person, we think, feel and behave much as we would if we were consciously in the presence of God.

If we view humans in this way, then we could explain the rarity of seeing the two Great Commandments being followed in larger part than they are today by concluding that most people are spending much of their wakefulness in their outer rather than their inner person. Much like bears or wolves, the outer person is concerned with one's own safety, food and shelter, and sees other members of its own species as real or potential threats to obtaining these necessities for oneself.

We would not expect a pack of wolves to be generous and accommodating to a competing pack of wolves. Neither should we expect the outer person to be willing to love others outside of one's own group. The outer person is no more capable of following the two Great Commandments than is a pack of wolves. Our living in the outer person more than in the inner person would explain why we experience tribalism more than we experience global mutualism; it would explain why we see others as threats more than we see them as blessings; and it would explain why we are able to live at peace psychologically even when we are aware of others outside our group who are living in misery and horror.

It could be that the great challenge we face in our physical existence is to overcome the ever-pressing outer self and empower instead the inner self. Doing this would awaken our transcendent potential. Our outer self is unaware

¹ See *Romans* 7.22-23.

² Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) is introduced later in this chapter. Swedenborg wrote extensively about the existence of an internal and an external person within each of us, and that there is conflict between these two. For example, see Swedenborg, *True Christianity* 596-600.

Unfortunately, the hellish side of our spiritual nature has an ally in our outer person. The darker side of our spiritual nature, the side that chooses not to cooperate with God, is more likely than our lighter side to guide our thoughts and feelings when we are alive mostly in our outer self.

material world, is not necessarily good, and this presents another challenge. Our spiritual nature can be tuned in, so to speak, to both heavenly and hellish channels. We can see this dark side to the inner human nature when we consider what happens in war and in other situations in which human cruelty is unfettered.

There are many examples of senseless, destructive human actions toward each other that have no parallel in the animal world. Predators hunt down, kill and eat their prey, but they do not gather vicious beasts into a confined area, starve those beasts, and then release victims into the space and cheer as the hungry predators rip their victims apart. The impulses toward this level of cruelty are not explained well by biological selection. It seems therefore that the human inner nature can make the outer person worse than an animal.

Most of us deny that we are capable of horrific acts that are much crueler than the way animals treat each other, but then we see this usually hidden hate spring into outward actions when opportunity permits such as in war or in other extreme conditions in which the normal order of society cannot be enforced.

Unfortunately, the hellish side of our spiritual nature has an ally in our

outer person. The darker side of our spiritual nature, the side that chooses not to cooperate with God, is more likely than our lighter side to guide our thoughts and feelings when we are alive mostly in our outer self. This is because the darker side of our spiritual self is more in accord with our outer self than is the lighter side of our spiritual self. It serves the purposes of our darker spiritual impulses to keep our attention on the outer self. Not only does this keep us asleep to the possibility of God's leading us, but it also keeps the action of those dark forces working deep in our psychology hidden.

What does that dark side want? It wants to feel its life as its own³; it wants to feel superior to others; it wants to possess riches and exercise power.

What does that dark side fear? It fears anything that stands in the way of achieving its desires. Fundamentally, this means that it fears others and it fears accountability.

How does the dark side achieve its agenda? It might, within us, work something like this:

1. Establish a material worldview. There's almost no difficulty at all in achieving this. We are born into the material, physical world and experience cold, heat, hunger, satisfaction, pain and pleasure, all rooted in natural phenomena. All that is needed is to keep us distracted with these physical experiences so that we do not wake to spiritual reality.
2. Once convinced of material reality, we will seek physical security and satisfaction above all else. An effective way of improving our security and satisfaction is to find reinforcements by identifying with a group. Most often, the group will be the one we are born into.
3. In addition to achieving better security through multiplying ourselves in the group's numbers, we also now can differentiate between those we are for (those in our group) and those we are against (those outside our group).
4. Because we care about self more than we care for others, and because we value the strength of the group, the next step is simple – seeing our group as superior to other groups.
5. We then work to advance our group at the expense of other groups.

³ One can argue that feeling life as our own is a good thing; it can lead to our taking responsibility for our actions. However, if we insist that our life is our own in the sense that we are accountable to no one for it, then we are ignoring the fact that we did not create or even ask for our life. Insisting that we owe nothing to anyone for our being alive is ignoring the most obviously remarkable and unaccountable element of our existence – the fact that we exist. The belief that our life is our own empowers a sense of unaccountability, that we should be able to act as we please. Our life is our own in the sense that it belongs to us more than it belongs to anyone else. But life is not our own in the sense that we did not plan or make it.

6. And we work to advance ourselves within the group, even at the expense of other members within the group.

The first five steps benefit the “outer person” of every member of the group. The last step benefits those who manage to ascend the pecking order within the group.

The purpose of this sequence is to achieve all power for our group and ultimately for ourselves. This purpose is entirely earth-bound and requires no obvious difference in our motivations and essential choices than are felt or made by the outer, biological person. If we become the most powerful member of our own group and if our group becomes the most powerful of all groups, then we will have achieved what that dark voice spoke secretly into our hearts all along. In other words, the hellish side of our inner nature achieves its purposes by masking itself in and riding on biological necessity (the things the outer person cares about) so that we act selfishly and even cruelly without noticing that we have gone beyond what even vicious animals do.

Joining any group could, in theory, advance our cause of gaining reinforcements and climbing the social ladder, but religious groups are more effective than others at realizing our desire to feel superior over others because religious groups can use the concept of God as a point of differentiation. Religious identification can also provide an all-awareness-encompassing worldview such that we become impervious to values or concepts outside our group. This creates an indestructible character to the group.

If there are dark forces beyond us at play behind our thoughts and desires, then it stands to reason that those forces would be at work either in blocking our consideration of spiritual reality or in substituting a pseudo-spiritual reality for the ones the Creator lays before us. The first strategy can explain the prevalence of strict materialism. The second strategy can explain religious practice that works against groups cooperating with each other to make the world a better place for all.

The second strategy is more destructive than the first because of the way that religious belief impacts the totality of how we picture reality. Religious belief rigidly held is impervious to evidence and counter argument. It creates a worldview from which we evaluate everything. There is nothing in our mental framework that is more powerful, and so our concepts of everything else bend to the religious framework rather than our religious framework bending to adapt to new information or experience. We hear but we do not hear, and we see but we do not see. (*Ezekiel 12.1*)

If hellish forces can overtake religious belief, then those forces would have the strongest possible position in human experience. Just as can be the case with the hellish side of our inner nature achieving its purposes through the

guise of biological necessity, it can also do so through the guise of religious belief and practice.

Groups can strengthen themselves by using the individual desires we all experience for feeling blessed above others and for living as we please. For example, our religious group might convince us that on our own we have no access to spiritual life and that we need to affiliate with our religious group so that certain ordained ones in that group can provide us with natural experience that, in their hands, become spiritual and therefore make us spiritual.

In other words, according to the understanding within the group, we are trapped in a natural existence with no escape except through the channels provided by the authorized religion practiced within our group. This keeps us locked in our group and disdainful of all other groups, especially other religious groups. It also keeps us from seeking an inner awareness on our own because we believe ourselves incapable of doing so.

The outer person, responding to biology and the dark, hidden whisperings of our sense of our own self-importance, wants to feel superior to others and wants to be free from accountability. These two desires are at work in our consciousness and find expression wherever they can. In religious groups the first desire drives us to differentiate our group from all others and view our group as most precious in God's eyes.

The second desire drives us to interpret our theology in such a way that we do not need to examine our hearts. We may need to accept certain rituals or rites that identify us as worthy of affiliation with the group, but if we can bend the theology itself so that our work to be in the group does not lead us to address and seek to change our inner desires, then we can live free from accountability regarding our intentions. For example, we may accept an external symbol of circumcision but ignore God's calling us to a circumcision of our hearts.⁴

It may be that if we look at religious practice in any faith we might find ways that that practice achieves both ends, having us feel superior to others and not calling us to account regarding our acting from love of self and love of dominion. For example, it is possible to find these characteristics in certain expressions of Christian belief.

Some Christians seem to believe that their identification with Jesus Christ so strongly sets them apart from other groups that do not acknowledge Jesus Christ that those other groups cannot be in God's plan or God's grace. This concept can be stringent enough that a church might teach that those people born before Jesus could not go to heaven. This desire to feel superior to others can lead to seeing Jesus as the great differentiator – the one who cares about

⁴ For example see Deuteronomy 10.16, 30.6, Jeremiah 4.4, 9.25.

certain people only and damns all the rest.

The second desire, to escape accountability regarding our hidden intentions, can find satisfaction by interpreting a religious path free of self-examination. Christians, for example, may come to embrace a concept of salvation by faith alone – the idea that Jesus did our work for us and that all we need to do is accept him as having somehow paid for the misdeeds done by our forefathers long before we were even born and then, if we acknowledge Jesus' sacrifice, we will be blessed and saved by God on Jesus' behalf.

Our desire to live as we please, of course, impacts what we do. If we can find a way to hold our faith such that we have no responsibility to care for others or for the earth itself, then we are free to exploit others and natural resources as we please. Our faith can support this attitude by teaching that God will someday come into the world and make heaven on earth. He will restore anything valuable that was lost and he will right any wrongs. Since we are fortunate to belong to the one only right group, we will find ourselves sitting on Jesus' right hand and benefitting from and maybe even running a restored earth.

Obviously, I have taken these examples to their extremes. The purpose is to play out the scenario to see where the trajectories lead when we use religion to empower our desire for superiority and unaccountability.

Religion Corrected

Fortunately, corrective forces exist that address our longing for superiority and leaving our inner desires unexamined. These corrective forces are displayed repeatedly in both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. They are also portrayed by many enlightened people of faith both inside and outside the Judeo-Christian tradition. Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) was one of these figures.

Swedenborg's background⁵ is important in his critique of 18th century, European Christianity. He was deeply religious, highly educated, keenly intelligent and well regarded. Swedenborg's father, Jesper Swedberg (1653-1735), was a Lutheran clergyman when Swedenborg was born and later became a bishop. Swedenborg's upbringing and sensibilities throughout his life were devotedly religious, but he was also intensely curious about the natural world and he focused his extraordinary mental abilities on understanding it.

Swedenborg studied at the University of Uppsala (1699-1709) and then

5 Much of the biographical information given in this and the next three paragraphs is from Richard Smoley's "The Inner Journey of Emanuel Swedenborg," published in Emanuel Swedenborg: *Essays for the New Century Edition on His Life, Work, and Impact*. West Chester, PA: Swedenborg Foundation, 2005.

worked under leading scientists in England, Holland, France and Germany (1710-1715) before returning to Sweden to apprentice as an engineer under Christopher Polhem (1661-1751). Sweden's King Charles XII (1682-1718) recognized Swedenborg for his brilliant work and appointed him in 1716 as an overseer of Sweden's vital mining industry, a position he held until 1747.

Queen Ulrika Eleonora (1688-1741), successor to Charles XII, ennobled Swedenborg, which gave him a seat in the House of Nobles. Swedenborg became a member of the Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences and was a well-received scholar, publishing scientific and philosophical works dealing with such diverse topics as mineralogy, cosmology, and anatomy and physiology.

In the early 1740s Swedenborg had a series of mystical experiences that led to his shifting his focus from scientific and philosophical work to theological studies. He asserted from this point to the end of his life that he could be conscious in the spiritual world, seeing and talking with angels and spirits. He maintained that through these experiences he came to see how the Bible is understood and faith is lived in heaven. Through the special insights he gained in these experiences he published 18 volumes of theological discourse, much of it in the form of biblical exegesis.

Throughout his theological writings Swedenborg takes a Christian view of God and creation, insisting that Jesus Christ is the One God of heaven and earth. But he also diverges from traditional Christian theology in several ways because, through his spiritual experiences, he saw that some foundational beliefs in the Catholic and Protestant churches of his day were contrary to what angels in heaven believed. Much of Swedenborg's theological writing can be understood as corrections to what he saw as misunderstandings in traditional Christian doctrine.

Among these corrections, the Swedenborgian concept of Christian theology addresses the three misconceptions discussed above and briefly restated below:

1. That Jesus Christ is the great separator, differentiating those God loves and saves (the ones who accept Jesus) from everyone else.
2. That Jesus did our work for us and that we obtain salvation not through any form of self-examination and changing our hearts but by simply accepting that Jesus is our Lord and Savior.
3. That Jesus will come into the world again and that therefore any ills extant in the world will be corrected at that second coming. It would be a display of lack of faith for us to seek to do anything about the disorder in the world. That is the Lord's work. Furthermore, stewardship of planet's resources such that the planet remains a healthy and habitable place for many generations to come is a faithless

Just as we did not create our physical bodies, we also cannot create the angel God wants us to become. Our role on earth is to demonstrate our willingness to let the Lord make us into that angel. Just as we did not create our physical bodies, we also cannot create the angel God wants us to become. Our role on earth is to demonstrate our willingness to let the Lord make us into that angel.

act because we would be betraying in that attitude a lack of belief that Jesus is going to come again and make heaven on earth.

According to Swedenborg's interpretation of Christianity the situation is shockingly different from the three concepts above. According to Swedenborgian theology:

1. Jesus Christ is the physical manifestation of God – not a separate being from God the Father. (*True Christianity* 81) Rather than being a differentiator by being known in history and in a particular church alone, God's physical manifestation brings God's presence everywhere in the entire physical universe and for all time. (*Ibid.* 127) Jesus Christ is, then, the great unifier: God's physical manifestation present with all people throughout the entire physical cosmos for all time, *leaving no one out*, whether or not they have heard of Jesus.
2. Rather than seeing Jesus' life as accomplishing salvation for us, Swedenborg taught that Jesus is our role

model and that He blazed a path for us and showed us how to follow that path. This path requires us to humble ourselves, examine our hearts, and follow the commandments. In short, take up our crosses and follow Him. (*Ibid.* 126) We are incapable of saving ourselves, Swedenborg insists, but at the same time God's plan requires that we be spiritually free, and because of this God cannot save us against our will. Jesus shows us the priorities and values we can choose to follow, and in our willingness to keep those commandments we open ourselves to the transformative work the Creator performs within us. Just as we did not create our physical bodies, we also cannot create the angel God wants us to become. Our role on earth is to demonstrate our willingness to let the Lord make us into that angel.

3. Rather than anticipating a second coming in which Jesus reenters the world and brings heaven to earth, Swedenborgian theology teaches that the Lord is not coming again into the world in a physical way because God's physical manifestation never left the world. (*Ibid.* 127, 140, 768, 776) Instead of waiting for God to come again and fix all the world's ills, we are given the opportunity to choose, freely, to answer the Lord's call in our lives, overcome our base selves – the parts of us that want to be superior to everyone else

and live as we please – such that we can be vehicles for God to work through us in blessing others and bringing heaven more fully on the earth through human actions that are in line with the divine design. The promised second coming is realized when we follow the paths of the heart that the Lord provides for us and carries us through, if we are willing. (*Ibid.* 787) On earth, the second coming is not an apocalyptic moment in which God intervenes in earth's history with a shattering physical event. Instead, the second coming is what happens inside each of us individually when we hear and follow the Lord.

On earth, the second coming is not an apocalyptic moment in which God intervenes in earth's history with a shattering physical event. Instead, the second coming is what happens inside each of us individually when we hear and follow the Lord.

Our lower self seeks to feel superior to everyone else and live as we please. These forces are at work in our psychology constantly and therefore influence all that we think and do. They are bound to appear in our faith practice. Swedenborgian teaching gives us insights about the outer and inner self, and about the forces that work on our inner and outer selves.

Swedenborg's theology also gives us a concept of a universally loving God who cares for all people, creates and sustains variety among people, and reveals the divine design through many religions. This concept calls us to see all people as God's beloved children and that we are neither superior or inferior in God's eyes to anyone. According to Swedenborgian theology, salvation is not possible unless we are willing to change our hearts through a process of self-examination, repentance and reformation. And Swedenborg teaches that

Swedenborg teaches that God will not be fixing society and the planet for us, but that God is calling us to do that work.

transcendent purposes.

These corrections highlight for me what I consider to be the most essential teachings of Swedenborgian theology – that God is a universally present and loving Creator who is calling all people to allow the Lord to work in our hearts so that, through our willing cooperation, we become blessings in this world and beyond.

Being a blessing in the world means participating in healthy ways in society. It does not mean withdrawing from society. In many cases our ability to be a blessing is strengthened by our affiliating in groups. It may be tempting, given the ways that organized religion can be misused, to avoid participation in faith communities. This hesitancy may be why many people say that they are “spiritual but not religious.” While this reluctance to join a faith group is understandable, I find this independent approach less satisfying than seeking instead to find, participate in, and support religious practices and communities that truly uplift human lives.

When we attempt to live our religion on our own or through our own sense of spirituality we are disconnecting from the communal aspects of the Quadrilateral’s four sources of authority (scripture, reason, tradition and personal experience). As I argued in the previous chapter, a balance of these four authoritative sources and the personal and communal aspects of each, is, I believe, necessary to help us develop our spirituality without becoming so much lost to our own version of reality that we are no longer healthy, contributing members of society.

Though it is possible to find examples of the two dark human impulses (that of feeling superior and escaping accountability) being empowered by religious beliefs and practices, it is also possible to find examples in many different faiths of how these two impulses are addressed and corrected. For example, Judaism’s tremendous reverence for and attention to scripture provides strong corrective forces. God’s love, justice and mercy, and God’s call to all people

are evident in the Old Testament, as are the foibles of human desires. Careful, honest, humble attention to scripture, which has been practiced for millennia in the Jewish faith, makes the world a better place.

The Roman Catholic practice of confession and emphasis on charity lead its participants in self-examination and repentance and in reaching out in kindness to help people in need. And the Protestant emphasis on faith and the idea that we cannot earn salvation through our own merit reflects a deep wisdom about the human flaw of seeking to empower self.

Walking away from the hard-earned wisdom and support of long-standing faith groups may not forward us in our faith quest. A better strategy may be to look for what is helpful in the faith communities we have access to and to make our spiritual home among them, while being aware of how any community may be misled by those human desires for self-importance and power. If we can be a healthy member of a faith community, then we may help that community build on its true strengths and address its weaknesses.

When we pursue faith we have to be on guard to avoid latching onto ideas or doctrines that empower self, degrade others, or make us unaccountable before our Creator.

Summing Up

A powerful objection to pursuing faith is that history and current events demonstrate that people and communities of faith sometimes behave in atrocious ways and use their faith as their reason for doing so. Because faith involves the innermost parts of our consciousness, destructive faith is difficult to see in oneself. Therefore, we need to be aware of destructive tendencies in ourselves so that we can be on guard to avoid empowering these tendencies through our belief system.

Two destructive tendencies most if not all humans possess are seeing oneself as more important than anyone else and seeking to be free from the consequences of one's selfish actions. Religious ideology and practice can be subverted to empower these two destructive tendencies, and when this happens people of faith may become more damaging to themselves and to others than would have been the case if they were not religious.

When we pursue faith we have to be on guard to avoid latching onto ideas or doctrines that empower self, degrade others, or make us unaccountable

before our Creator. If we seek a faith that is in line with the fundamental assumption that religious practice should bless the world, then we can use that characteristic as a touchstone against which we test the concepts and practices we encounter.

While it is true that religion can be a destructive force in the world, it is also possible to safeguard ourselves against becoming agents of destruction while we pursue a faith that enlivens our inner and outer selves. The next chapter introduces Swedenborg's theology and his work *True Christianity* as a guide for living faith in a way that blesses ourselves and others.



Allen Bedford is associate professor of chemistry at Bryn Athyn College, where he has also served as Dean of Academics. He and his wife, Gillian (Gladish), live in Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania. Contact: allen.bedford@brynathyn.edu

OUR NEW CHURCH VOCABULARY

Part of a continuing series developed by the Rev. W. Cairns Henderson, 1961-1966.

REDEMPTION

Here is a theological term which has an entirely different meaning in our doctrine from that which is given to it in Christendom. To redeem is to buy back, and the Christian Church teaches that the Lord bought back the souls of the elect with the blood shed on the cross. The Writings teach, however, that redemption itself was the subjugation of the hells and the arrangement of the heavens into order, and thus preparation for a new, spiritual church. So the passion of the cross was not redemption, though, as the last of the Lord's temptations, it was a means of redemption because of glorification. (See *True Christian Religion* 84)

My Personal God-Image: Living Waters from the Wells of Abraham

Dylan C. Odhner

Note: I wrote the following for *Evolving God Images and Postmodernity* — a third-year course in the Ph.D. in Mythological Studies with an Emphasis in Jungian Depth Psychology program at Pacifica Graduate Institute, in Carpinteria, California. To conclude the course, we were asked to present a short exploration of our own personal god-image or relationship with the Divine, and then rework the presentation into a short essay.

When reading Carl Jung, it is all too easy to get swept away in his many revolutionary ideas, and forget that he, too, came from a particular cultural and intellectual lineage. He was greatly influenced by thinkers, by concepts, and by perspectives which came long before him.

I was almost entirely unfamiliar with Jung before this program introduced me to his psychology. I was therefore surprised to find his style extremely familiar. This could be explained in a number of ways: perhaps the culture as a whole has taken on a Jungian bent; perhaps my high school teachers and college professors were well versed in Jung's writings; perhaps my own recent ancestors were actively engaged in Jungian thought, even if I was not. These explanations all, in fact, prove to be true and yet I don't think that they reach to the heart of the matter.

For my presentation on my personal God-image, I conducted a sort of thought experiment in which I briefly looked at the writings of my great-great-great uncle, the Rev. N. D. Pendleton (1864-1937). My hope was that a collection of his sermons from the 1910s and 1920s – before he realistically could have been influenced by Jung – would help to demonstrate why the Jungian approach felt so instantly familiar to me.

One of his sermons, "The Wells of Abraham," deals with a single verse from the Bible: "*And Isaac returned and dug again the wells of water which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father, for the Philistines had stopped them*

up after the death of Abraham. [And Isaac] called [the wells] by the names his father had called them.” (Genesis 26.18)

Before revealing Pendleton’s interpretation, I asked my audience of peers to use their training to dissect the verse. In other words: What would a Jungian interpretation of this verse yield?

I had some minor fears that the collective train-of-thought would take them in an unexpected direction, and that my intended point would fail to get off of the ground. But my fears were soon put to rest, and I was amazed at the consistency and immediacy of my class’ response.

Consensus was found in a few short comments (paraphrased):

- The wells are reaching down into the waters of the collective unconscious.
- The wells themselves are archetypal forms giving shape to the unconscious.
- The Philistines stopping up the wells is the cynicism of science and the modern age.

I then was able to read my great-great-great uncle’s interpretation, and the similarities are evident without much comment:

“Life’s treasures ever come out of the past, and the deeper the past, the greater the treasure. An especial sanctity pertains to the early store of life’s impressions, and also a high degree of power. Childhood memories are [mankind’s] holy of holies. . . . It is in these early days that the wells of Abraham are dug, which later are closed by the Philistines – by the pessimism of [adulthood]; and yet these wells of water may and must be reopened. . . . It is also revealing that [Isaac called the wells] after the names which his father had called them. The rational mind must interpret the representatives of the Ancients and the dreams of childhood, but not in the hard light of natural reason. This would be to destroy them. The spiritual rational interprets them perceptively, sympathetically, and with reverence, maintaining their integrity and their sanctity. Only so will they yield their contents of ancient truth and their wisdom of life’s beginnings; only so will they become wells of living water.”

So what is the point, and how does this relate to my own God-image? The mode of thinking demonstrated above is just one, albeit stellar, example of the worldview I grew up within. My family – continuing back generations in every direction – was raised immersed in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, an 18th century philosopher, scientist and theologian.

The unique little religion that formed around these writings is Christian, vaguely Protestant, and has all the oddities and controversies that go along with a small sect. But more than anything else, for me the religion is based on the idea that the Bible is not meant to be taken literally. Far below the literal interpretation of the text, there is an endless well of Divine Wisdom. I believe that this deeper meaning is part of the very fabric of the universe. It is the source of its creation and its organizing principle.

My personal God-image goes hand-in-hand with a Jungian approach. In our modern wasteland, it is vital that we “[return] and [dig] again the wells of water.” (*Genesis* 26:18) Jung called these wells archetypes, which tap into the collective unconscious. My great-great-uncle called them the internal sense of the Word. Isaac called them by the names which his father had called them. Me? I’m still not certain what to call them.

Searching for the words and images to articulate something as personal as a God-image is no easy task, and it requires unconventional and often uncomfortable paths to be traversed. We must search our memories for not only the bright moments of joy, but also the shadowy moments of pain and heartache. In *Re-Visioning Psychology*, James Hillman speaks to this process by inverting the typically negative conception of pathology – the study diseases – and instead calls pathologizing the “royal road of soul-making.”

With this in mind, I finished my presentation by reading an excerpt from a book which has always spoken directly to my soul, eliciting both pain and joy in immeasurable quantities. I did not – and largely still do not – understand why Richard Llewellyn’s *How Green Was My Valley* has affected me so deeply, but whenever I feel that I need to cry, I simply opened up to the very last page (here truncated for space):

An age of goodness I knew, and badness too, mind, but more of good than bad, I will swear. At least we knew good food, and good work, and goodness in men and women. But you have gone now, all of you, that were so beautiful when you were quick with life. Yet not gone, for you are still a living truth inside my mind. So how are you dead, my brothers and sisters, and all of you, when you live with me as surely as I live myself?

[...] Is Mr. Gruffydd dead, him, that one of rock and flame, who was friend and mentor, who gave me his watch that was all in the world he had, because he loved me? Is he dead, and the tears still wet on my face and my voice cutting through rocks in my throats for minutes while I tried to say good-bye, and, O God, the words were shy to come, and I went from him wordless, in tears and with blood.

Is he dead?

For if he is, then I am dead, and we are dead, and all of sense a mockery.

How green was my Valley, then, and the Valley of them that have gone.

As I search my mind for how these elements – *The Wells of Abraham*, the psychology of C. G. Jung, and *How Green Was My Valley* – might combine and trace back to my deeper God-image, I am struck with a number of themes – themes of family, ancestry, and archetypal connection to the land.

To begin with, *Genesis* 26:18 tells of one patriarch, Isaac, returning to the land of his father Abraham. It is a story of ancestry, and of ancestral lands. By

digging again the wells of water, he connects himself to his fallen kin, and by *calling them the names his father had called them*, he takes on the wisdom of the past. And what's more, the particular sermon referenced was written by my own ancestor in the very same town that I live in 100 years later. Lastly, it is telling that the last pages of *How Green Was My Valley* feature an aging man looking back at the people he has lost and the land of his youth which now exists only in his mind.

Just moments ago, I read Llewellyn's dedication in *How Green Was My Valley* for the very first time, and it truly cut deep:

TO
MY FATHER AND
THE LAND OF MY FATHERS

In this modern world of progress, I do an admirable job at keeping up with the technical advancements and social movements that come with each new day, month, and year. But I have learned that my own worldview – my God-image – is rooted in the past. Devoting my life to the study of myth is an act of *digging again the wells of water*. I will look back at my own memory, the memory of my ancestors, and the memory of humanity as a whole, and say, “How green was my Valley, then, and the Valley of them that have gone.”



Dylan C. Odhner graduated from the Academy Boys School in 2005 and Bryn Athyn College in 2009. He has worked for the College and now teaches in the Academy Secondary Schools. He is enrolled in a PhD program focusing on Comparative Mythology and Depth Psychology at Pacifica Graduate Institute in California. He lives in Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania.
Contact: dylan.odhner@ancss.org

A Jigsaw Puzzle

Martin E. Klein

It occurs to me that our spiritual life develops very much like doing a jigsaw puzzle. First we see on the lid of the box a good rendition of the picture we want to assemble. It becomes our goal.

This is a bit like pictures we learn to love as children when we hear stories from the Word: Joseph, wrongly imprisoned but then made ruler of the land; Moses bravely leading his people through terrible trials right to the borders of the Holy Land; Jesus, the God of the whole world, born humbly in a stable.

But for now, as in our school years, the picture is all jumbled – dumped out on the table. We must begin to sort out the pieces. Some are wrong side up, several have one straight edge, and there are endless changes in color. It isn't a lot of fun getting our thousand bits of knowledge all facing up, perhaps with some of the colors crudely grouped as like items, but happily we have all been gifted with an urge to see how things work – an affection for learning – and it is important work.

Finally, as we matriculate into the next stage of life, we begin to pull a few pieces together – a corner here, two straight edges there, and another next to these. Gradually a framework begins to emerge and we start to fill in a few consecutive groups that fit nicely within our border. What frustration we feel when we simply cannot find a right fit, no matter how hard we try. But, what triumph we feel when a floating group of pieces clearly fits snugly into our previous work.

One of the best parts of doing a puzzle is doing it with someone we love, both of us striving to create the same, unified picture according to the original plan but each with a slightly different perspective. A spirit of cooperation and love seems to lend warmth and meaning, not just to the picture taking shape, but to the very work of assembling it.

As our construction begins to fill in we get better at finding elusive pieces. With constant references to the picture on the box lid – to the Bible of our heritage – we perceive how important are the nuances of color and not merely the facts of shape. This is the art of science; the love of truth.

The more pieces we put together the more certain we are in our choices,

and the more quickly we find them. As we near the end, more and more we feel an elation – a sense of accomplishment. As we place the final pieces of the puzzle we feel as if we have created the whole, and that in a sense we own it.

And it's OK to feel that way as long as we remember that the whole thing was provided for us and that continual guidance was given along the way – that the whole achievement was and is a gift from the Lord.



Martin E. Klein lives with his wife, Pat (Kuhl) in Boynton Beach, Florida. Contact: *martpat2@gmail.com*.

OUR NEW CHURCH VOCABULARY

Part of a continuing series developed by the Rev. W. Cairns Henderson, 1961-1966.

RELIGIOSITY

This term, found only occasionally outside of the Writings, is used by them to describe an organized external worship which has no internal whatsoever. Thus they always speak of the “Roman Catholic religiosity” rather than “church” because Rome does not worship the Lord. (See *Arcana Coelestia* 4440)

Church News

Compiled by Bruce Henderson

GENERAL CHURCH BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Council of the Clergy had met just prior to the June 29-30 meetings of the General Church Board of Directors. The clergy's nomination for the next Executive Bishop – the **Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss Jr.** – was presented to the Board, which interviewed him in executive session. Discussion continued the following day, after which the Board affirmed his nomination as Executive Bishop and President of the General Church. (The nomination has since gone out to the membership of the Church for affirmation.)

Bishop's Report

Bishop Brian Keith reported these pending pastoral changes:

- **The Rev. Coleman Glenn** continues to teach at Bryn Athyn College and serve as Young Adult Coordinator for the General Church but is no longer teaching in the Secondary Schools. (Coleman reported that he is coordinating with pastors on how best to connect with 18-to-35-year-olds.)
- **The Rev. Matthew Genzlinger** has been hired by Bryn Athyn College and will also teach in the Secondary Schools. The Boston congregation – most recently based in Concord, Massachusetts – will be serviced by visiting ministers. The congregation is selling its church building in Concord and regrouping for the future.
- **The Rev. Garry Walsh** has resigned as the pastor in Phoenix, Arizona, to seek secular employment near Pittsburgh for personal reasons.
- **The Rev. Jean Atta** will serve as resident pastor in Phoenix and travel as a visiting minister in the Western United States.

Executive Director

David Frazier reported that the Information Security Policy had been approved. This is an overarching joint policy shared with the Academy of the New Church, governing the protection of personal identifiable information.

The Budget and Audit Committee reviewed risk management and insurance policies covering potential loss and deemed them to be adequate.

Advancement

The total number of donors for the past fiscal year – 783 – was equal to the previous year and is increasing. Total contributions increased by about \$800,000, thanks to several major gifts.

International Church Committee

The goal is to invest in 2-5 pilot congregations, seeking to lead more people to increase their ability to utilize the Heavenly Doctrines; more members engaged and participating in spiritual growth; and more documentation and shared lessons learned.

Proposed measures of growth include:

- Number of people baptized
- Church attendance
- Holy Supper participation (capturing increased engagement and spiritual growth)
- Number of service events and congregants participating
- Number of giving units

Budget and Audit

Actual results vs. budget through nine months ending March 31, 2018, revenue was \$3.8 million – increased about 3% or \$133,000 favorable to the budget. Expenses were \$3.5 million – down roughly 7% or \$250,000 favorable to the budget. The net surplus for the period was \$352,000.

Theological School

The Revs. Jeffrey Smith and Judah Synnestvedt were ordained in May. Five students are expected for the new academic year.

Board Self-Assessment Survey

The Board agreed to work on areas where it has consistently underperformed over the past 10 years, predominantly concerning communication with constituent groups and tracking performance measurements of the church against the strategic plan.

Outreach

The Journey Program is being restructured to focus on reaching out to build new online and in-person communities not presently involved with existing congregations. These communities offer mutual support in living the life of

faith, pathways that deepen that faith, and opportunities to serve others in the life of the New Church. The goal is to involve 1,000 people by 2022 and to deepen their engagement by regular participation in online communities.

FAREWELL AND WELCOME

The Rev. Howard Thompson, his wife, **Debra**, and family left their beloved Colchester Society in England at the end of July to take up a new pastorate in Australia. They have left the land of William Shakespeare, and the bard of course had a phrase for such mixed feelings: “Welcome ever smiles, and farewell goes out sighing.” (*Troilus and Cressida*)

In the July issue of the *Newsletter for the New Church in Great Britain*, Howard wrote a poignant “Farewell but Not Goodbye” to the friends they have served in Colchester, which said in part:

“When I announced to the society, in June of last year, that we had accepted a call to serve the Sydney Society of the New Church, Roseville, a year seemed like plenty of time to say ‘goodbye.’ At the time, however, I did mention to the society that Debra and I both felt it was much easier to come to Colchester than it will be for us to leave. And so we are finding it.

“Several ‘lasts’ have come about in the past few weeks and Debra and I have ‘kept it together,’ neither really wanting to acknowledge the deep hurt that lies just beneath the surface. Don’t be concerned, of course; the deep hurt is the sadness we feel at having to say goodbye to so many people we have come to love and so many people we have come to rely on for support. . . . Chances are good, however, that I will not be able to complete the writing of this, my last submission as editor-in-chief of the *Newsletter*, without shedding a few tears.”

“The greater Colchester community has changed dramatically in just the last 30 years. Today, more people live in the town who did not grow up here than who did. This leaves people longing for a sense of community which has typically come from inter-generational ties. My prayer for the society is that you are able to find a way to meet this need in the greater community and help people see that Charity is more than the name on a shop or a regular direct debit to support a worthy cause.

“Certainly one of the highlights of our time here is EA 2017 – the European Assembly. When the Assembly Committee first met nearly two years before the actual event, I said that I thought we should look to have 100 people attend. There were more than a few skeptical faces looking back at me around that table. Yet August 2017 came, and wouldn’t you know, we very nearly had 100 people attending.

“The energy around the Assembly gives me hope that many people still are seeking the spiritual guidance that the Lord provides by means of the Heavenly

Doctrines. Maybe, just maybe, the Lord really can move us ‘from where we are’ (the theme from EA 2017).

“Of course, no reflection on our time here would be complete without talking about the British Academy Summer School. In a few short weeks, my departing act as minister in the UK will be to serve as the headmaster of the 60th (and my 6th) British Academy Summer School. What an honor it has been to continue this legacy.

“The stories of young people’s spiritual eyes being opened and their hearts swelling because of experiences they have had at BASS could fill a book. Lives are transformed at BASS every year and it is a pleasure to be a part of it. The Church’s ongoing commitment to supporting BASS is, without a doubt, one of its highest and best uses.

“The memories and experiences we have had here will go with us and inform our ministry in the future. Our last goodbyes will be hard no doubt and I feel as strongly as ever that leaving Colchester and the UK will be much harder than coming here. But, with special thanks to the **Rev. David Roth**, who is known to read BASS students to bed with *Winnie-the-Pooh*, I am left to ponder simply: ‘How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard.’” (*Winnie-the-Pooh*, A. A. Milne)

BRITISH ACADEMY SUMMER SCHOOL

The Rev. Ethan D. McCardell

Reprinted from the September Newsletter of the New Church in Great Britain
 I believe it was e. e. cummings who said: “It takes courage to grow up to become who you really are.” For some reason, this quote rolled through the back of my mind when considering the students and experiences that made this year’s British Academy Summer School so special. Generally speaking, those who choose to attend BASS are not students who are antagonistic to matters of religion or a focus on their spiritual life. This year was no exception.

The students were mature, engaged with the material, excited to be there, sensitive and caring. They were a spiritual community to one another, shown in how they played together, talked, connected, worshipped and learned.

Our theme this year was about what constitutes true wisdom (according to the Writings). We related it to a broad range of subjects, from “defense against the dark arts” (how to deal with the influence of the hells) to “Reputation” (dealing with public shaming in social media). The two weeks were capped off with student-led vespers and a first opportunity for the students to learn about and then take Holy Supper if they chose. I think it speaks volumes about the group that most did choose to partake.

In a world where sacred space is shrinking, I am awed by the experience of being with these young people. It gives me great hope for the future of our church and world.

This year (his fourth as Headmaster) we also said goodbye to **Howard** and the **Thompson** family. The speeches and gifts after talent night made it clear what a legacy they leave for Summer School and how much we will miss them.

THE NEW ACADEMIC YEAR

BRYN ATHYN COLLEGE

Angella Irwin – Marketing Communications Manager

New Student Union Construction Underway

The new Student Union is under construction, slated for a fall 2019 opening. Those on campus over the summer enjoyed watching the preservation and relocation of a number of trees from the building site to their new homes around the College. Once completed, the Student Union will offer much-needed recreational spaces and a fitness center for students, as well as offices and conference rooms on the second floor.

Pendleton Hall Gets an Upgrade

To better serve students and faculty, new offices and meeting areas were constructed in two areas of Pendleton Hall. The Student Success Center is now centrally located for students' academic advising and experiential education needs, and there are additional rooms available for student groups to use for brainstorming and organizing events and programs.

New Glass Study Areas in Library

The second floor of the library is now home to glass-walled meeting rooms. The new spaces take advantage of the natural light that streams into that part of the building, and also eliminate any noise pollution from group study sessions or other meetings. The Academic Success Center is located in this area, which continues to support students in math, writing, science and research, free of charge.

Start of BFA in Building Arts

A new signature program at the College, the Bachelor of Fine Arts in building arts, has eight students in its first class. Focusing on two main areas of specialization, glass and metals, the BFA allows students to engage with

various aspects of traditional and modern building practices. The strength of the program's faculty and the incredibly unique opportunity to study and gain inspiration from the Bryn Athyn Historic District, give building arts majors a special advantage as they train in this field.

MSpEd with Literacy Emphasis approved by PA Dept. of Education

State application for the approval of the new Master of Science in Special Education (with a concentration on literacy) has been granted. The program is specifically designed to emphasize strategies and skills needed to support students with language-based learning differences. Spearheaded by **Kelly Ballard**, EdD, the unique 10-month program will be marketed and recruitment will begin for the summer 2019 cohort.

Enrollment

Enrollment results for 2018-19 express a combination of challenges and opportunities. While the number of new students was lower than anticipated, the freshman and new transfer academic qualifications showed continued increases, and financial aid benchmarks were held. This means that the students who enrolled this year are on average more academically prepared for the academic rigor at Bryn Athyn College than previous incoming classes, and institutional aid was kept within targeted parameters.

Summer Writing Retreat and Athletic Camps

Author and adjunct professor **Chandra Hoffman** ran a successful Bryn Athyn College Writing Retreat, attracting students and writers to campus for the four-day/night immersion. Bryn Athyn College continued to expand its rental and visit activity this summer. With returning and new soccer and lacrosse camps held in July and August, along with prospective student tours and events, there were more than 1,000 visitors on campus.

ACADEMY SECONDARY SCHOOLS

James M. Adams – *Managing Director*
Kira R. Schadegg – *Girls School Principal*
Jeremy T. Irwin – *Boys School Principal*

Faculty Changes in the Girls School:

At the end of last year we bade farewell to **Erica Cantley**, **Brenda Rydstrom** and **Spring Silverman**. They will be missed.

New employees: We are thrilled to welcome **Jackie Cappellano** as the new Girls School Athletic Director. **Tara Soneson Smith** is assisting **Nancy**

Metroka in Instrumental Ensemble and **Abby Synnestvedt** is teaching photography. We are excited to have them join our faculty.

Changes: **Cheryl Buss Cooper** is the new sophomore girls English teacher and Theta Alpha liaison, **Mary Williams** is teaching senior girls English, **Kendra Knight** is the new manager of the Student Center, and **Natasha Keys** is the new head of Student Support.

Girls School enrollment is 88 girls, including 62 day students, 26 boarding students, 17 freshmen, 23 sophomores, 25 juniors and 23 seniors.

The theme for the year is: *This is the day which the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. (Psalm 118: 24)* There is a sense of excitement in the Girls School about the new school year that is invigorating.

Faculty changes in the Boys School:

We are sad that **Simon Daum** did not start the year with us as he has found opportunity in Colorado, and the **Rev. Coleman Glenn** is not teaching at ANC as he has shifted his focus to Bryn Athyn College. We are also going to dearly miss **Rich Show** who has closed his chapter as Assistant Housemaster. But we are glad to welcome **David Steen** as an Assistant Housemaster (taking over the role vacated by Rich Show) and the **Rev. Matthew Genzlinger** (taking over the role vacated by Rev. Coleman Glenn) in a part-time capacity. Matthew is teaching at Bryn Athyn College in addition to teaching all sections of sophomore boys Religion and one section of junior boys Religion. **Steven Gunther** has served for a time as a homework coach, and he is adding Sigma Assistant Adviser to his plate.

The very large class of juniors creates some staffing challenges. Typically, we offer two sections of a gender-grade-level course, essentially splitting each class roster in half. As most of our classrooms cannot legitimately handle half of this large junior class, we have had to make some internal staffing adjustments. Some of these include **Jeremy Fehon** teaching a third section of Honors Chemistry and **Ben Cole** teaching a third section of English.

Some of the other internal changes include **Dylan Odhner** as Sigma Adviser and **Jeremy Fehon** becoming Junior Class Adviser. **Doug Reuter** and **Baird Kistner** are each going to take on a portion of the Introduction to Film course previously taught by **Erica Cantley**.

We have 131 boys enrolled in the Boys School: 24 freshmen, 36 sophomores, 44 juniors and 27 seniors. We have 102 day students and 29 boarding students.

One of the projects the Boys School began this summer is an effort to spruce up the walls of de Charms Hall with artwork created by New Church men. The Girls School has had great success with a similar project, with artwork created by New Church women. We have reached out to a number of artists and are very happy with the supportive responses we've received thus far. If

this is a project that you want to be part of, either as an artist or a contributor (we need money to pay for art, framing, hanging, lighting and signage) we would welcome your support. Please contact **Lisa Knight** (267.502.4872 *lisa.knight@ancss.org*), the resident expert spearheading this effort.

de Charms Hall Renovations

This summer, thanks to a generous donation from the Glencairn Foundation, we were able to do minor renovations in three of the bathrooms in de Charms Hall. We are always working to maintain and improve our facilities for our students.

ANC Summer Programs



ANC Performing Arts Camp 2018

June 20-30 the seventh annual ANC Performing Arts Camp welcomed 47 campers to the Mitchell Performing Arts Center. There were 9 boys and 38 girls; 19 of whom were from Bryn Athyn Church School, another six from New Church families, and 22 from other area schools.

After just seven days of rehearsals the campers gave two performances of Disney's *Aladdin Jr.* to packed houses. The goal of the ANC Performing Arts Camp is to introduce the ANC Performing Arts Program to potential students. Check out our Facebook page for photos.

Summer Camp

We had 91 students attend our very popular summer camp. Students finishing eighth and ninth grades are invited each year to attend our camp. This year's camp was held July 8-14. Students gathered from across the United States and Canada to attend this week-long adventure that provides a perfect taste of what life at ANC is like.



French Exchange

Twelve ANC students and their French teacher, **Holly Connelly**, were in Soissons, France, for the second half of the French Exchange. Students and their hosts enjoyed local cuisine and visiting beautiful chateaux. Our students also learned about fun and interesting cultural differences, including a few great local expressions!

NEW DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Duane Hyatt – Treasurer of the Academy of the New Church

We are pleased to announce the hiring of **James Kalavik** as the Director of Public Safety for the Academy.

Over the past several months a search process has been underway to hire

a Director of Public Safety reporting to the Treasurer of the Academy. This search began as part of early preparations for **Scott Cooper's** retirement next year and as part of the findings of a study of our Safety and Security conducted by an outside consultant.

The search was long and meticulous, ending with three of the top candidates each spending a day on campus, meeting with the various organizations and departments served by the Security and Safety Department. The search committee was presented with a difficult decision in selecting the best candidate as each brought a wealth of experience in public safety and security, as well as each having worked in educational institutions. After much thoughtful consideration, James Kalavik stood out.

He has spent the last year as the Assistant Director of Public Safety at La Salle University in Philadelphia. Prior to that he spent 13 years at West Chester University in the Department of Public Safety, with positions including Special Investigator, Clery Compliance Officer, and as a commissioned police officer. James has a Bachelor of Science from California University of Pennsylvania and a Masters in Campus Public Safety Administration from New England College. He began work on August 20.

CHARTER DAY 2018

This year's Charter Day activities – October 11-15 – with all of the class reunions and sporting events, also will include:

- A Friday morning Cathedral address by the **Rev. Dr. Ray Silverman**, teacher of Religion in Bryn Athyn College
- The Theta Alpha luncheon on Friday featuring **Angela Rose** of Bryn Athyn College, speaking on **Bishop George de Charm's** *Philosophy of New Church Education*, plus a performance by Secondary Schools dancers
- A banquet program on Saturday sponsored by the Secondary Schools – *Best of Both Worlds* – with **Erik Odhner** as emcee. (See below for more detail.)
- A continuing Alumni Art Show in the Fine Arts Building (Old Library), with an opening reception 4-7 p.m. on Thursday.
- A complimentary concert open to alumni and friends Thursday at 8:30 p.m. in the Mitchell Performing Arts Center.
- The annual Kite Day Friday 1-4 p.m. on the College North Campus
- Bryn Athyn College Alumni and Friends Reception Friday 8-10 p.m. in the Brickman Center
- The ANCSS Charter Day Dance in the Dining Hall Friday 8-10 p.m.

- Secondary Schools coffee-and-conversation tours with student ambassadors on Saturday, 10-11 a.m.
- Football tailgate party Saturday at 12:15 before the game
- The annual Academy Scholarship Golf Outing at Philmont Country Club on Monday

As an introduction to the banquet program, the leaders of the Secondary Schools note: "Our mission is to prepare our students for a principled and useful life in both the spiritual and natural worlds. We strive to offer the best of both spiritual guidance and secular instruction. We are proud of how our New Church Doctrines connect us with our past through enduring spiritual principles and at the same time these doctrines are the foundation of our efforts to provide current, relevant educational experiences as we help prepare our students for their future lives." The website for online registration and tickets is www.charterday2018.eventbrite.com.

Journey Program:

PUTTING LOVE OVER OUR EGOS

Sasha Silverman and the Rev. John Odhner

We are all born with a tendency to see our own needs more clearly than we see the needs of others. We are born with an ability to feel our own pleasure and pain, so we naturally do the things that make us happy and give us pleasure, and when anything causes us pain or displeasure, we try to make it go away or change. We come to identify anything that gives us pleasure as good and anything that causes pain as bad.

We may even become demanding, angry, self-righteous, grasping or cruel in order to get what we want. If we hold our personal happiness as the only and ultimate goal, it makes our lives worse. Ego-driven thinking leads to misunderstandings, anger, rejection, addiction and conflict. If we look carefully at the world's wars, murders, violence, abuse, cruelty and oppression, we can usually see at the root is a conflict between one person's desires and another person's desires, where one of them is – and usually both are – putting self and ego first.

So, our self-concern motivates us to develop and grow. Our developing ego is critical to our sense of identity, our freedom, and our full participation in life. In the first part of our life ego takes charge – and has to take charge. In the meantime, our ability to have love, compassion and integrity matures in the shadow of ego like Daniel in the shadow of Nebuchadnezzar. And if we courageously follow the path of love, love can outlast ego.

This is why General Church Outreach is so excited about our newest Journey Program, *Love Over Ego*. This program follows the biblical story of

Daniel from his early days as a child captive in Babylon, to becoming one of the most respected leaders of the nation. Throughout each chapter, we witness the clash between the ego of the Babylonian rulers and the humble confidence of Daniel and his friends. The story offers a rich narrative for exploring questions such as: What is the difference between arrogance and genuine confidence? What is our true identity?

As Daniel and his friends boldly face the powerful Babylonian rulers, we glimpse ways that vanity, manipulation and desire to control never hold up to the grounding power of confidence, love and true self-worth. These themes are as relevant today as they were thousands of years ago.

Like Daniel who stands amid lions, and his friends stand in the middle of fire, we also have the option to stand true to our values even in hard times. We invite you to join us in this program, as we practice letting genuine love take priority in our lives.

In the daily readings that follow each small group session, participants are encouraged to practice some element of choosing love over ego. We have included various meditations and other activities in the appendix, as well as in-depth sermons by the **Rev. John Odhner**.

Also, as with previous Journey Programs, the plan for congregations is for the minister to begin each week with a sermon on the week's topic. The groups will then begin their first meeting sometime during the week. The final, sixth week of the program offers a chance for a final group wrap-up and celebration.

The General Church Education has gathered an amazing array of projects for Sunday school students to accompany each of these stories, so we invite you to take advantage of these resources to provide a rich experience of worship, growth and community for your whole congregation.

It is exciting to know that around the world, New Church members and friends will be focusing together on putting love over ego. Please let us know how we can best support you and your congregation with small groups. The coordinated fall launch kicks off on September 30, 2018, with the coordinated spring launch on February 3, 2019. Workbooks and materials can be found at www.newchurchjourney.org and www.newchristianresources.org.

True happiness lies in setting aside ego and listening with love, experiencing other people's joy and pain as if it were our own, being thoughtful of others, willing to help, grateful, and ready to admit mistakes. For ultimately love is the only thing that makes life worth living. In a more spiritually advanced state we recognize that God is in control and provides us with everything we truly need from His bountiful love for all people. "The Lord is my Shepherd. I have everything I need."

BRYN ATHYN COLLEGE WELCOMES NEW STUDENTS
(Photos by Serena Sutton)



ACADEMY SECONDARY SCHOOLS SUMMER CAMP
(Photos by Joy Cole)



ACADEMY SECONDARY SCHOOLS SUMMER CAMP



MILITARY MEMORIAL FOR MAJOR GENERAL FRED FIEDLER
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY
(Photos courtesy of Gretchen U. Keith and the Fiedler family)



Lt. Gen. Dick Reynolds, a close friend, salutes Fred as his wife places flowers at his grave



Fred as a pilot



Fred and Barbara as friends and family like to picture them



Son Daniel presents the U.S. flag to his mother, Barbara



The Honor Guard leaving the Air Force Academy Chapel



The Honor Guard folding the flag



Flag at half-staff outside the pavilion

A MILITARY FAREWELL

The Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith

Major General Fred Fiedler's entrance into the spiritual world created quite a vacuum in the lives of many. His family, the Phoenix New Church, the General Church and the Academy of the New Church all were enriched by his love, support and service. Two memorial services were held for him: one providing for family and friends locally, and a second provided by the military.

The first service, held at the Phoenix New Church building, was for family and local friends. The **Rev. Dan Goodenough** gave a wonderful address, which was published in the May/June 2018 issue of *New Church Life*.

The second service was held at the Air Force Academy chapel in Colorado in July. This service, having all the pomp and ceremony that the military does so well, brought together 40 surviving members from all over the country of Fred's graduating class at the Air Force Academy. The **Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss Sr.** gave the address, noting Fred's passion and accomplishments in serving his country, his supreme dedication to his family, and his service to the church. There was also a poignant lay eulogy by Lieutenant General Dick Reynolds, a close family friend.

The service began with the color guard marching up the aisle of the beautiful chapel and placing a folded American flag at the front. After the service, we moved to a building near the burial place. There, the color guard formally refolded the flag and presented it to the family. Fred and Barbara's son, **Daniel**, who is in the Air Force Reserves, received the flag in his uniform and presented it to his mother – a wonderfully moving experience.

Then, after a 21-gun salute and the playing of Taps, Fred's mortal remains were set in the ground, with family and friends placing flowers on the grave, and with an occasional final salute. After that, at a reception on the base, family and friends recounted stories both humorous and touching about Fred's life and his caring and powerful effect on others.

These services were a fitting tribute to a brave soldier whose self-sacrifice and life of dedication to the New Church, his family and his country stand as a testimony of love for the Lord and his neighbor.

He who loves his country, and from good will benefits it, in the other life loves the Lord's kingdom; for there the Lord's kingdom is his country. And he who loves the Lord's kingdom, loves the Lord, because the Lord is the all in all of His kingdom.

(*Arcana Coelestia* 6821)

(See photos from this memorial service on opposite page.)

'A NEW KEY TO THE BIBLE'

A new book by **Bruce Henderson** – *A New Key to the Bible: Unlock its Inner Meaning and Open the Door to Your Spirit* – has been published by the Swedenborg Foundation. The Foundation notes on its website, www.swedenborg.com: “As a spiritual and moral guidebook, the Bible can often be confusing and contradictory. But what if the apparent contradictions were really just a code that hides a deeper meaning? Based on the Writings of 18th century spiritual teacher Emanuel Swedenborg, Bruce Henderson’s *A New Key to the Bible* presents a transcendent way to read the familiar stories and parables and apply them to our own life journeys.

“If the Bible is a divinely inspired moral guide for personal and social good, why does it contain so many stories that seem to glorify violence and the mistreatment of others? Why does God sometimes seem so angry and cruel? And what about the parts of the Bible that just don’t make sense?

“In his vast Writings, Swedenborg offers clarification: beneath the often-confusing literal text of the Bible is a clear inner meaning that directly points to an inclusive, always-loving, always-present God. (This book) guides the reader through Swedenborg’s interpretation of the Bible, offering up a thought-provoking yet digestible way to understand the Creation story, as well as other famous parables such as Adam and Eve, Noah’s Ark, Abraham and Sarah, Moses, the life of Jesus, and the apocalyptic imagery of Revelation. At each step of the way, Henderson shows how these Scripture stories written thousands of years ago reflect our own spiritual paths and give meaning to the challenges we face along our journey in the present day.

“For readers new to Swedenborg, *A New Key to the Bible* serves as an overview of the thousands of pages Swedenborg wrote about the inner meaning of the Bible. For spiritual seekers who feel a connection to the Bible but are sometimes troubled by its contents, Swedenborg reassures with a transcendent level of understanding about how God wants to inspire us through sacred text.”

This is the third of a trilogy of books by Bruce Henderson introducing readers to New Church teachings conveyed through Swedenborg, including *Window to Eternity* and *Why Does God Let it Happen? A New Key to the Bible*. It is available from the Swedenborg Foundation, the New Church Bookstore (www.newchurchbooks.com), and such websites as amazon.com. There will be a review of the book in the November/December issue of *New Church Life*.

LAST JUDGMENT/SUPPLEMENTS

Also recently published by the Swedenborg Foundation is the latest New Century Edition, *Last Judgment/Supplements*. It was translated by the **Rev. Dr. George F. Dole** and the **Rev. Dr. Jonathan S. Rose**. The Foundation notes:

“This volume comprises two short works, originally published separately, which both describe the Last Judgment. In *Last Judgment*, first published in 1758, Swedenborg asserts that the Last Judgment as foretold in the book of *Revelation* has already happened in the spiritual world and was done by the Lord in order to restore the balance between good and evil there and on earth.

“In *Supplements*, Swedenborg introduces his understanding of the connection between heaven and earth, and how that connection has played out over the course human history.”

BOYNTON BEACH RETREAT

An early preview for the Boynton Beach Retreat 2019 shows that three basic things have not changed: the dates – January 27-31; the venue – the Duncan Conference Center; and the rates for rooms at Duncan and tickets for the banquet. Presenters this year are all returnees: the **Rev. Eric Carswell**, the **Rev. Jeremy Simons**, and the **Rev. Dr. Ray and Star Silverman**. Watch for further information. Housing forms and registration forms are available by email request from bbretreat@newchurchboyntonbeach.org

Life Lines

JIM JUNGÉ: A LEGACY OF SERVICE

In his Memorial Address for James F. Jungé, the Rev. David Lindrooth quoted from Mr. Jungé's personal recollections, including a story that had greatly influenced his approach to life. He and his wife, Bethel, had been invited to dinner at Glencairn to join her parents, Raymond and Mildred Pitcairn, with former U.S. President Dwight and Mamie Eisenhower.

At one point Eisenhower, who had been the highest ranking general in the U.S. Army and leader of the Allied Forces in World War II, was asked what it was like to move constantly from one military base to another. He said it was a challenge but that he "made up his mind very early on that he was going to leave each property that he lived in better than he found it for the next person." Mr. Jungé wrote: "I thought this was a great philosophy of life and decided that I would try to do the same."

Indeed he did. Throughout his career – both as a successful business executive and dedicated volunteer, he was committed to serving others and making their lives better. Much of this was in direct service to the Church and Academy, on boards and committees. A close friend said he often also did things quietly and generously to help people and never talked about it. Even his family may not have known all that he did for others.

He joined the Academy Corporation in 1960 and served throughout his life – almost 60 years – becoming an emeritus member. In 1965 he was elected to the Academy Board of Trustees – the first of three 12-year terms. He also served on the General Church Board of Directors for the better part of 30 years. Wherever he served he chaired numerous committees – many focused on finances, salaries and benefits, housing and long-range planning – always working with others to make things better for the institutions and their employees.

In a letter to the Academy Board and Corporation after Mr. Jungé's passing, Chancellor Brian Keith noted that he had come to the Academy from Glenview and immediately made his mark. He was president of the Phi Alpha and earned the Academy Silver Medal.

Bishop Keith said, "His financial expertise was gladly shared" throughout his life. He chaired the Joint Financial Planning Committee, providing 10-

year projections, and headed a committee that helped establish a salary and benefits program that “significantly improved the lot of teachers.”

With the General Church he led many efforts to improve contributions from members, “helped financially to establish the Midwestern Academy, and was instrumental, with the Glencairn Foundation, in providing a basis for the growth of the Durban, Kitchener and Washington congregations.”

“Perhaps most significantly,” Bishop Keith said, “he led a committee that formed the New Church Investment Fund – an innovative combining of multiple church funds to leverage financial services. This [endowment] has been the financial backbone of the Academy and General Church ever since.”

But Mr. Jungé also worried that creating this financial security had an unintended consequence – “a Church membership that grew complacent: ‘You have a big endowment. Why should I contribute?’” Many a Development and Advancement officer has wrestled with this challenge. Mr. Jungé tried to do something about it. He led many an effort to get members to increase their support for church uses, including setting up funds for matching contributions.

In 1969, when daughter Wenda was graduating from the Academy Girls School, he was invited to give the commencement address. After reviewing the many problems and challenges of the turbulent sixties, he asked: “How can you meet this challenge? By thinking for yourselves and by having the courage to apply the truths of the Church to real-life situations. . . . With all these problems, with all these aggravations to men of every age, where then do we find the basis for relevance? I am sure that many of you may have anticipated my answer. It is in the New Church doctrine of use.”

Jim Jungé modeled that doctrine of use throughout his 97 years on this earth. In his letter to the Academy Corporation and Board, Bishop Keith concluded: “Jim’s care for the Academy and the Church continued throughout his life. Even when he was not chairing committees or serving on boards, he was mentally engaged, advising administrators with practical wisdom and humor that helped guide these institutions.”

He left his world – especially the Church and the Academy he loved – better than he found it.

(BMH)

REUNION

When someone like Jim Jungé passes into the spiritual world, after a long and productive life and a devoted marriage interrupted by the spouse’s death years before, it is deeply heartwarming for family and friends to picture them happily reunited.

Every day Lori Odhner delights her many followers with charming and

insightful emails about marriage called Marriage Moats. A recent one paid tribute to the example and inspiration of Jim and Bethel Jungé:

"I went to a memorial service for a man whose legacy was deep and wide. His hundred descendants sat in the pews and listened to the story of his long life. At the reception afterwards, there were both laughter and tears as his children and grandchildren shared tidbits about a man bursting with generosity and dreams. On everyone's mind was his beloved wife of almost three-quarters of a century. She was waiting for him, and he for her. 'I'm not a solo act,' he had said."

She added: "Looking back at his 97 years, the pieces of his life create a mosaic. Even the difficult times – selling lemonade during the Depression to make a few dollars, or having his father die when he was just six – became fuel for his resourcefulness. Even with heartache intertwined with success, it all became part of who he was.

"For the people left behind, holding only their memories, and each other, this man had accomplished a great deal."

But beyond the memories and the accomplishments, one image made everyone smile: Jim and Bethy together again, never again to be separated.

The conjugal union of one man with one wife is the precious jewel of human life and the repository of Christian religion. In a word, a person is a living soul as a result of that love. (*Conjugial Love* 457)

(BMH)

NATURAL LAW

As human beings we are able to reason spiritually as well as naturally. Spiritual rationality consists in understanding, not just how things on the natural plane of life relate to each other, but how the whole realm of natural existence is related to the higher spiritual reality from which it is derived.

Natural law theory is based on the fact that human beings have an innate perception that there is a transcendent spiritual order that ought to govern how we act on the natural plane of life; an instinctive recognition that there is more to human nature than our physical body, natural senses and thoughts.

That reality can be intellectually denied, the sense of it can be dulled, but it is an essential quality of humanity. It is natural for human beings to be more than natural.

According to "natural law," there are rules of life that are so basic to what makes us human that we can't not know them. They are "written on the heart."

"**Natural law**" refers to the moral sense that influences us from within to act in accord with the spiritual order of human life. "**Positive law**" refers to the civil laws made by man to impose order upon our lives from without. And "**the**

laws of nature," discerned by science, explain the formation and operation of things in nature, including our natural bodies.

Ideally, these three kinds of law should be in harmony with one another. Civil laws should rise out of and reflect spiritual and moral laws. And the laws of nature, to the extent they are truly known and understood, will confirm and illustrate the spiritual order of creation.

Today we might say that there is a moral impulse in our DNA – which isn't a bad metaphor. There is "spiritual DNA" that governs our spiritual formation, just as natural DNA guides the formation of our body.

I think the idea of natural law is true and very important. As a theory it is speculative and takes on various forms, but the general truth of it is confirmed, expanded, refined and clarified by the teachings of the New Church.

(WEO)

PERSPECTIVE

We've all had the experience of standing in a vast open space at night, with stars arcing forever overhead, and feeling the awe of insignificance.

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork.
(*Psalm 19:1*)

A fascinating new book by the Rev. Dr. George F. Dole – *The Universe and I: Where Science and Spirituality Meet* – opens with this beautiful Epigraph:

Astronaut Edgard D. Mitchell came back from space with a message. (*Outer Space to Inner Space: An Astronaut's Odyssey* – *Saturday Review*, February 1975)

It began with the breathtaking experience of seeing planet earth floating in the immensity of space – the incredible beauty of a splendid blue-and-white jewel floating in the vast, black sky. I underwent a religious-like peak experience, in which the presence of divinity became almost palpable, and I knew that life in the universe was not just an accident based on random processes. This knowledge, which came directly, intuitively, was not a matter of discursive reasoning or logical abstraction. It was not deduced from information perceptible by the sensory organs. The realization was subjective, but it was knowledge every bit as real and compelling as the objective data the navigational program or the communications system was based on. . . .

Then my thoughts turned to daily life on the planet. With that my sense of wonderment gradually turned into something close to anguish. I realized that at that very moment people were fighting wars; committing murder and other crimes; lying, cheating and struggling for power and status; abusing the environment by polluting the water and air, wasting natural resources, and ravaging the land; acting out of lust and greed; and hurting others through intolerance, bigotry, prejudice and all the other failings that add up to man's inhumanity to man. . . .

As I survey the challenge[s] facing humanity today, I see only one answer: *a transformation of consciousness . . .*

The value-free rational-objective-experimental mode of Western science, based on materialism, is not sufficient by itself for coping with the ever-increasing planetary crises besetting civilization.

My thanks to the Rev. Dr. Dole for this important reminder about our world and – in the Lord's eyes – our place in it.

When I consider the heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and stars, which Thou has ordained, what is man, that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man, that Thou visitest him? For Thou hast made him less a little than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet. (*Psalm 8:3-6*)

Our greatest gift from the Lord is our freedom – our freedom to inflict our inhumanity on the world or to steward it with care and respect. We need to remember – when we are humbled by the enormity and intricacy of God's creation – that we were created in His image. And to act like it.

(BMH)

LOVE SPEAKING

There is miraculous power in the speech of angels to heal and transform those to whom they speak. It comes from the love and wisdom their words express, and affects "not the ears only but also the interiors of the mind of those who listen to it." We are given a beautiful example in the work we call *Heaven and Hell*, the full title of which is *Heaven and Its Wonders, and Hell, From Things Heard and Seen:*

"There was a certain hard-hearted spirit with whom an angel spoke. At length he was so affected by what was said that he shed tears, saying that he had never wept before, but he could not refrain, for it was love speaking." (*Heaven and Hell* 238)

We all are relatively hard-hearted in our merely natural state. Even a very good person who comes into the spiritual world from this rough world and is spoken to by an angel will be deeply affected and uplifted by what they hear.

But this is not just an interesting tidbit about how angels speak, it implies something about how we, who hope one day to go to heaven ourselves, should speak. Namely, from love. As well as whatever wisdom we're able to muster, of course – but love brings its own wisdom with it.

We might ask ourselves, before speaking on some important or sensitive subject: "Is what I'm about to say love speaking?"

(WEO)

HEAVEN ON EARTH

The purpose of life in this world is to prepare us for life in heaven, and that is the special use of the Church, which it accomplishes by teaching the truths that conjoin us with the Lord. In this way the Church is like a bridge leading to heaven.

But it is more than a bridge. One of the ways in which the Church teaches is by providing a community dedicated to the practice of living spiritually with others who are trying to do the same thing. In this way the Church is a kind of "laboratory" in which experiments in heavenly living are carried out.

"Heaven with us is according to our reception of love and faith from the Lord. And those who, during their life in the world, receive heaven from the Lord, come into heaven after death." (*Heaven and Hell* 232; 349)

This is why our stewardship, governance and involvement in the life of the Church is so important. It introduces us to the life of heaven and helps us get acclimated to it.

In fact, at its most perfect, the Church is heaven, here and now. "The Lord's heaven in the natural world is called the Church, and a member of the Church who is conjoined with the Lord is an angel of that heaven. After leaving this world, such people become angels of the heaven that exists in the spiritual world." (*Divine Providence* 30)

Our experience of "the Lord's heaven in the natural world" (the Church) serves as a "trial run" for becoming angels in the spiritual world; and, when the time comes, will make our transition into that world much smoother.

(WEO)

ORIGIN STORIES

Michael Gerson, a columnist for *The Washington Post*, writes: "I would not normally recommend a book on the history of the universe as beach reading, but David Christian's *Origin Story* is a welcome exception."

It sounds like the beguiling book by Bill Bryson, *A Short History of Nearly Everything* – which makes nearly everything sound interesting. Gerson says: "Christian has achieved something remarkable: an engaging guide to the physics, chemistry, biology, anthropology, linguistics and sociology that constitute the story of history itself." He calls it "wildly ambitious," but, in the end, "not ambitious enough."

The problem is that he has written a book "that succeeds at everything except its stated purpose." That is because he looks at the history of the world through the single lens of science. Thus he limits himself. He is unable to explain ultimate beginnings, such as: "Why did the universe start in a high state of order? Why did the newborn universe have operating rules that allowed for

the emergence of form and structure?"

And he won't even consider Divine origin. Christian writes: "Most versions of the origin story no longer accept the idea of a creator god [his lower case] because modern science can find no direct evidence for a god." Modern scientists are too busy studying test tubes to gaze at a flower.

Indeed we are warned in the Writings about believing only what we see with our natural eyes. This is called the "single evil" that has afflicted the church – "the evil of not believing the Lord or the Word but trusting oneself and one's senses." (*Secrets of Heaven* 231)

Christian, Gerson writes, "thus repeats the defining mistake of scientism: the unquestioned assumption that all rational knowledge is scientific knowledge. This is anything but humble. It is a kind of epistemological imperialism that excludes knowledge coming from moral and philosophical reasoning, from theological argumentation and from historical investigation based on reliable witnesses. Not to mention the kind of knowledge that someone loves us. Christian attempts to increase the certainty of knowledge by limiting it to less consequential things. It makes the Cosmic Egg more like a Faberge egg – ornate, beautiful and, ultimately, useless."

Interesting as it may be, I doubt that Christian's *Origin Story* will become a popular beach read. Those who side with the scientific view of creation may feel at home in this echo chamber. But most people, hopefully, will still prefer the original "origin story," the one that begins: "In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth . . . and saw that it was good."

(BMH)

A PRAYER FOR UNITY IN THE CHURCH

The Lord prayed for His disciples "that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me . . . that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me." (*John* 17:21-23)

Notice how the disciples' oneness with each other is linked to the Lord's oneness with His Father, and that the world's knowledge and belief in the Lord is twice linked to the unity of His disciples.

Two important lessons to be drawn from this are: that unity in our Church depends upon our shared relationship with the Lord; and that unity and peace within the Church is an essential precondition for us to be effective in bringing the Church to others in the world around us. Each one of us has a part to play in achieving these two intertwined goals.

"All who are in the heavens and who are in the Church must be one through mutual love from love to the Lord. An angel in heaven and a person

in the Church who does not thus make one with the rest is not of heaven nor of the Church." (*Apocalypse Explained* 1004)

Changes in the popular culture that go against the Lord's Word have made it difficult for all churches to thrive, even those that embrace the changes. Our Church can't help but be influenced by the sphere of the world, but our more immediate concern is internal. When the Church is strong within – strong in its worship of the Lord, and united by mutual love and a shared reverence for the Heavenly Doctrine – "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (*Matthew* 16:18)

(WEO)

DOCTRINE AND CHARITY

It was a founding principle of the General Church to base all its organizational policies on the teachings of the Writings, through which we believe the Lord is speaking to us. Church policy issues, therefore, are essentially doctrinal issues.

The General Church made a point of not having a written constitution other than the Writings themselves. The Heavenly Doctrines constitute the Church. They are not just a resource the Church consults, they are the Church, because they are from the Lord and are the Lord with us.

We, of course, can separate doctrine and charity, but they are not inherently separate but united. To be true to one or the other is to be true to both.

The truth that "charity makes the Church, and not faith separated from charity" is a doctrinal truth. (*The New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine* 246, et al).

Doctrine, therefore, is not an alternative to charity, but the means for establishing and preserving charity.

(WEO)

A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH

Death is a fact of life, truth *is* life. Our experience of life on the natural plane of existence comes to an end; but the life itself that made us conscious of our temporary home in nature never ends. It continues because of our connection to the Lord, who said: "Because I live, you will live also." (*John* 14:19)

Life continues because of the truths He has revealed to connect us to Himself, and thus prepare us for eternal life and introduce us into it. 'It is the Spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.' (*John* 6:63)

There is really only one Life, the Lord's. We can't lose it because it isn't ours to lose. He shares it with us. We participate in it. The only question is how we choose to participate in it: fully, gratefully and joyously in heaven; or resentfully, rebelliously and miserably in hell.

The choice is ours, but the Lord has gone to great pains – literally – to help us choose wisely. "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep." (*John* 10:10-11)

(WEO)

PREVIEW

Our days are filled with choices – conscious and unconscious – all leading us toward heaven or away from it. Every choice, on whatever scale, presents an opportunity to choose to act from love or to respond with anger, resentment, blame, negativity.

We are told that: "They who have heaven within themselves come into heaven." (*Heaven and Hell* 319) And, "All who become angels carry their own heaven deep within themselves, because their love is the love that constitutes their heaven." (*True Christian Religion* 739)

So heaven is that place we glimpse every so often where everyone acts from love – all the time. That's certainly something to aspire to – and practice every day.

(BMH)

BEHIND THE SCENES

New Church Life is a team production but most of the team is behind the scenes. Throughout the seven-plus years of the new *New Church Life*, the formatting – the last stage before it goes to the printer – has been expertly done by Serena Sutton and Holly Adams. Their skill and professionalism have been greatly appreciated and they have been a joy to work with. But they can no longer continue this work because of the growing needs of the Bryn Athyn College Marketing Department, where they are employed. We thank them deeply. They have been a joy to work with and will be missed.

Stepping in to replace them with this issue is Michelle Chapin, assistant program manager for General Church Outreach. Because of her skill set she very quickly got up to speed, so the quality we have come to depend on continues, and we are grateful for that.

Other key contributors off stage are Sue Wright, who maintains the General Church data base and keeps track of subscriptions; our indomitable proofreaders, Noelene Rose and Alaine York; and General Church Secretary Anita Halterman, who prepares the Announcements for each issue with Noelene, as well as the annual Secretary's Report.

They are all at the heart of every issue of *New Church Life* and we should all be grateful.

(BMH)



A Planned Gift is a special way to support the uses of the Academy and the General Church.

A planned gift to the General Church, your local society, the [Academy Secondary Schools](#) or [Bryn Athyn College](#) can help for generations to come. These kinds of planned gifts are simple to arrange and often return benefits back to you.

For example:

- » Using your **will**, make a gift today that costs you nothing during your lifetime.
- » With a **Charitable Gift Annuity**, receive guaranteed payments for life in return for this gift.
- » Save money on your taxes and avoid capital gains by giving appreciated stocks, bonds, mutual funds or real estate.
- » Make a gift from your **IRA** and minimize your taxes.

Best of all, you are making sure the uses you love will flourish.

Interested?

Contact us today.

Mark H. Wyncoll

(267) 502-2423

mark.wyncoll@newchurch.org

nc.plannedgiving.org

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."
Matthew 6



OFFICES Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

PUBLISHED BY General Church of the New Jerusalem

EDITORS **Bruce Henderson**, Editor

Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Bruce.Henderson@newchurch.org

Rev. Walter Orthwein, Spiritual Editor

Walter.Orthwein@verizon.net

SUBSCRIPTIONS New Church Life, Box 708, Bryn Athyn, PA
\$30 for any address, \$5.00 a single copy

TELEPHONE 267-502-4990



New Church Life

Published bimonthly by
the General Church of the New Jerusalem
Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009
U.S.A.
www.newchurch.org
www.newchurchlife.org
September/October 2018