

NEW CHURCH *Life*

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

JULY/AUGUST 2022



READING THE WORD

“Your Word is a
lamp to my feet
and a *light to my path.*”

(Psalm 119:105)

See a sermon by the Rt. Rev.
Brian Keith on the value of
reading the Word. (Page 299)

**NEW CHURCH LIFE (USPS 378-180)
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New Church Life

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

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In This Issue

Editorials (page 279) include:

- *The Arc of Providence*: Just as the Lord's providence courses through every aspect of our lives, so it is a part of our history and all that is going on in the world. There is nothing random in our history books or today's headlines. The arc of history really needs to be seen and understood as the arc of providence.
- *The General Church and National Politics* – The wall between church and state generally applies in the General Church as well as in government. We try to steer clear of politics in the church but the influence is all around us. Meanwhile, the ground is shifting – in the church and in government – but we still have teachings in the Heavenly Doctrine to inform and guide our political thought.

On Eagles' Wings is a sermon by the Rev. Jeremy Simons about the Lord's protection of the New Church. It is especially relevant as the church experiences conflict and challenges. The sermon asks: "How can the New Church survive in a world where so few seem to love its teachings? On the one hand, the answer is that those who love the church shouldn't be anxious. On the other hand, the answer is that those who love the New Church should do everything they can to intelligently guide the organizations that promote the New Church in this world." (Page 293)

In a sermon on *Reading the Word*, the Rt. Rev. Brian Keith says that simply reading or listening to the Word not only benefits us but angelic spirits with us. Just making the effort to read for a few minutes a day can make a big difference in our lives. "All it really takes is coming to the Word with a humble spirit and willingness to learn. Then the holiness of the Lord flows into us, enveloping us in His love. (Page 299)

The Rt. Rev. Peter Buss Jr. writes From the Bishop's Office about the familiar psalm: "*Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.*" This is a way of saying: "Lead me to the next level of faith. Help me to believe in You, Lord, more than I do now. Give me a greater understanding of who You are, and how You work." And when we put these principles into life, with all the foundational teachings

from the Lord, “We will discover a life of useful purpose that the Lord can truly bless.” (Page 305)

In his Commencement Address to the graduates of Bryn Athyn College, Charles Cole offered this advice: “Prepare for Risks; Persistence and Course Changes; and Your Values are Your Best Tool.” He said they would find the knowledge, experience, moral and faith-based values they had gained would serve them well for the challenges ahead. “During your time at Bryn Athyn College, you ‘connected more deeply’ and ‘thought for yourselves’ while ‘living for others.’ You are ready to use all this – to make your mark – to shape the world.” (Page 310)

Erik Odhner, who retired at the end of June after a 44-year career teaching in the Academy Secondary Schools, addressed his “fellow graduates” on the general subject of time. “Now it is permitted . . . to continue your education in whatever form it may take, to build a career, build a family, build a life, and most importantly and crucial to it all, to consciously decide what you believe, hopefully with the Golden Rule at the core, and to do all these other things in accordance with that kind of faith.” (Page 314)

Glencairn Museum is developing an interpretive approach to its distinctive collection of religious artifacts focusing on fostering empathy – what can be described as “walking in someone else’s shoes.” While celebrating the diversity of religious expression within the collection, “the Museum’s interpretive approach also aims to bring to light what unites people as human beings.” (Page 317, with photos on page 351)

A New Church woman who has suffered years of spousal abuse offers the lessons from her years of experience, plus what we know from the Word and the Writings – as well as professional counselors – to help others who may be suffering in silence. “Nothing will change and abuse in marriage will continue and harm future generations,” she says, “if we don’t shine the light of truth on this very serious evil.” (Page 323)

Three new ministers of the General Church offer their Confessions of Faith at their ordination service. (Page 334)

Church News (page 339) includes:

- Bryn Athyn College Commencement and Awards
- Academy Secondary Schools Graduation and Awards
- The inaugural conference of the Institute for Swedenborgian Studies at Bryn Athyn College
- A pastoral change in Toronto
- Glencairn Museum may be closed for a year of infrastructure projects but there is a lot going on
- The latest additions at the New Christian Bible Study

Editorials

Bruce M. Henderson and the Rev. Jeremy F. Simons

THE ARC OF PROVIDENCE

Is there a New Church approach to history – to teaching it, studying it, understanding it? Yes, there is, and to the extent that history is viewed through a New Church lens in our schools and college it is unique in the world.

Most scholars and historians have no concept of a spiritual dimension to history – of the overarching role of Divine providence. Their focus is on whether history is all just random occurrence or if there is some kind of a pattern to it all. And how do we tell the difference?

In a lengthy *Wall Street Journal* article in the spring – The Long Arc of Historical Progress – Stanford historian Francis Fukuyama was hopeful but still searching for that answer. Fukuyama is best known for his provocative book 30 years ago: *The End of History and the Last Man*. He's still searching for what that end – or purpose – is.

He quotes one historian who had written in *The Atlantic* that “there is no broad pattern to history or possibility of historical progress over time,” and that “outcomes are simply the result of actors duking it out over and over again.” This “scholar” contends: “There is no arc of history, nothing inevitable about either democracy or dictatorship. What happens tomorrow depends on what happens today.” Pretty shallow thinking from a historical scholar.

Fukuyama prefers Martin Luther King's optimism: “The arc of the moral universe is long, and it bends toward justice.” Dr. King at least had a sense of Divine purpose, even if he couldn't explain it – as Swedenborg does. But many a person lives with a similar simple hope: that there must be life after death and heaven because “somewhere there has to be justice.”

Somewhere – beyond the apparent randomness of historical events -- there must be design and purpose. We know that the Lord's ultimate purpose in creation is a heaven from the human race. Divine providence weaves through all of history toward that end.

We see that “arc of history” extending from the Lord's birth on earth and His

resurrection, through His Second Coming, the Last Judgment, to the vision of the Holy City New Jerusalem descending from God out of heaven.

We see this purpose throughout apparently “random events” in history. A horrific earthquake in Lisbon in 1755, for instance, was largely viewed as “punishment from God” for man’s abundant sins. But this wide-ranging calamity led – directly and indirectly – to all manner of positive reforms and developments, which affirmed this primary principle of the Lord’s providence:

Everything that happens which is called accidental and is ascribed to chance or fortune, is of providence. But the Divine Providence operates invisibly and incomprehensibly, in order that people may be in freedom to ascribe an event to either Providence or to chance. (Arcana Coelestia 5508:2)

Albert Einstein famously said: “*God does not play dice.*” And we regularly express confidence – even in the face of the tragic and the mysterious – that “everything happens for a reason.” The Lord teaches:

There is no such thing as chance; apparent accident or fortune is Providence in the ultimate order. (Arcana Coelestia 6493)

Indeed, Divine providence is invisible and we may glimpse its effects only in retrospect, not in real time. After the terrorism of 9/11, for instance, we witnessed goodness and hope – from the Lord – quickly overwhelming evil, and we lean on that hope as threats continue.

In this world we live with good and evil, but always in freedom to choose between them. All of the Word is a canvas for the endless battle of good vs. evil – from the temptations in the Garden of Eden to the apocalyptic visions in *Revelation*. Indeed, good vs. evil is a theme that courses through art and literature, from James Bond to Star Wars. There are always dark forces bent on taking over the world – and always a hero who triumphs. So does hope – hope in the Lord.

We know that Divine providence is not in what is transitory – the shouts of daily headlines and news alerts – but in what remains to eternity. Everything that happens in this world is directly linked to the spiritual world. That is the world of causes; ours is the theater of effects. Wars on earth are the product of combat in the World of Spirits. We are left to wonder what could be roiling the hells to manifest such horror in Ukraine; but there is comfort in knowing that the Lord’s love and providence are what keep us from feeling hopeless and overwhelmed.

And as we are taught that “*the Lord’s Providence is in the minutest things of all, from the first thread of a person’s life even to the last, and afterwards to eternity,*” (Arcana Coelestia 5894), that must also be true of the greatest things

of all – wars and earthquakes and epidemics.

Fukuyama finds hope for a positive direction in that “arc of history,” writing: “Every year, hundreds of thousands of people – sometimes millions – leave poor, violent and poorly governed countries in search of a better life. Their destination of choice is never China, Russia or Venezuela. Rather, they seek out well-governed liberal societies where their children will have greater freedom and opportunity. It is they much more than the complacent inhabitants of liberal societies who realize that there is, indeed, an arc to history, with justice as its terminus.”

Or as we verbalize in aspirational prayer in every day: “as in heaven, so upon the earth.”

What gives hope to that prayer is that for a heaven from the human race to be possible, we must live in freedom. So it is essential to preserve freedom to maintain the opportunity for free choice.

It is no accident that the United States has been a beacon for freedom in the world, despite its lapses, and that this light is mirrored throughout the free world. Freedom is always the bulwark. And for the sake of that Divine purpose – a heaven from the human race – it is essential to champion and protect freedom throughout the world.

America’s Founders were primarily men of faith, influenced by the Bible and their belief in providence. George Washington, who believed that the survival of democracy depended on its moral roots, set the tone as the nation’s first president: “It is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor.”

Benjamin Franklin, the oldest signer of the Declaration of Independence, wrote: “I have lived a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth: that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid? We have been assured in the sacred writings that ‘except the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain that build it.’ I firmly believe this; and I also believe that without His concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel.”

Our struggle is not – and has not been – without its challenges and lapses, but that is also the product of our freedom: choosing between good and evil. The study of all of history provides context for developing the moral conscience that allows us to choose freely and wisely.

We see the arc of history – of providence – stretching throughout the Word, from the fall of the churches to the establishment of the Lord’s New Church, always within the consequences and opportunities of freedom. In the New Church we see history, in its essence, as a manifestation of the Lord’s

providence, and how the human race responds to it. We also see that arc of providence stretching throughout our own lives, and are grateful for it. A New Church study of history gives us insight into the arc of providence – how the Lord’s love and leading help to move us all toward heaven – always within the framework of our own ability to choose. *This is the arc of history. This is the arc of providence.*

(BMH)

THE GENERAL CHURCH AND NATIONAL POLITICS

There has traditionally been an effort to keep the General Church separate from politics, and most New Church people affirm the principle of the separation of church and state. We do not want the clergy telling us how to vote, nor do we want the national government to dictate religious teachings. The Writings, however, picture governments that take a more active role in protecting religion than most countries do today.

A person may be compelled to speak in favor of religion, and to behave in accordance with it, but he cannot be compelled to think in favor of it out of any faith in it, or to will in favor of it out of any love for it. In countries where justice and judgment are preserved, moreover, everyone is compelled not to speak in opposition to religion or to behave in opposition to it, but still no one can be compelled to think and will in favor of it. (Divine Providence 129)

How would a country today compel people “not to speak in opposition to religion or to behave in opposition to it”?

Despite being ostensibly apolitical, many General Church members of previous generations were happy to identify as conservative members of the Republican party. This has been less true in recent years. While there are many reasons for this, one has to do with how conservative politics has changed over time.

In a May 2022 *Wall Street Journal* podcast, political theorist Yoram Hazony discusses how conservative politics in the United States has gradually distanced

itself from religion. Whereas the traditional conservative focus was on religion, patriotism, the protection of liberties and economic growth, there was a subtle change beginning in about 1960. The change was that the first two of these were increasingly “privatized.” That is, they were not spoken about publicly even though they were still affirmed privately. Increasingly then, conservative politics, or Republican politics, focused on liberty and economic growth, not religious or patriotic values. The result, according to this podcast, is that:

God and scripture and the structure of the family, the importance of the independent nation states, and even things like a marriage between a man and a woman, all of these kinds of traditional pillars or cornerstones of Anglo-American civilization, once they were privatized, they tended to drop away. I think that those things that are not discussed in public, that are not honored and endorsed in public by the leadership of the nation constantly and repeatedly, are things that come to be dishonored.

All of us are exposed to political messages of all kinds, many of which emphasize the same points “constantly and repeatedly.” These tend to be the things that are popularly believed, whereas things that are not mentioned may be gradually forgotten.

This may be one reason why there is less consensus in the General Church than in the past when it comes to political themes. There is less congruence between what political leaders say and what church leaders say, and there are fewer things said publicly about religious values at all. We accept this as part of the separation of church and state, and see it as a necessary part of an inclusive, diverse culture. But this is a more recent development than we may think. Hazony says:

The idea that there's a national government mandate to suppress public or government supported Christianity or religion comes very, very late in the history of the United States. The first time that we see the American Supreme Court arguing that there is a tradition of separation of church and state that has to be authoritative is in 1947/48. That's the first time that the national Supreme Court strikes down things like religious instruction in schools. And, of course, by the 1960s, that's already become more or less a ban on prayer in the schools and on devotional Bible reading in the schools. . . . During the Reagan years, Justice Rehnquist wrote a famous, powerful dissent in 1985 on the Supreme Court, (saying that) the separation of church and the state is alien to the American Constitution at the state level. And that the whole series of decisions

that descend from those 1940 cases are a wrong turn in American history.

Whether these decisions were a wrong turn or not, the point is that American politics has changed significantly over the years – as politics tend to do.

One lesson to take from this is the importance of what is “honored and endorsed in public by the leadership of the nation constantly and repeatedly.” Public and political culture may not “honor and endorse” New Church values, but it does allow for the freedom of communities to exist that do honor and endorse them. When we attend community and church events like worship services, classes, school programs, conferences and assemblies we may think of ourselves as coming to learn, to worship, and to gather with like-minded friends. But one of the most important functions of these gatherings is that they make a space for certain values to be “honored and endorsed in public by the leadership constantly and repeatedly.” We often hear the same things over and over again, and they contribute to feelings of belonging, to group identity, and to mindsets and beliefs held in common.

The teachings of the New Church are not aimed at any particular country or culture, and their fit with national politics will vary from place to place. Although they were written in the setting of the Northern European Enlightenment, and often require a knowledge of that place and time to be understood, their application has always been seen in the General Church as universal. Politics may change, but these teachings do not, and they can inform and guide our political thought wherever and whenever we may live.

(JFS)

Letters to the Editors

Letters may be sent to the Editors of *New Church Life*
Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009
or e-mailed to Bruce.Henderson@newchurch.org

The Choice is Ours

To The Editors:

What is the function of a church? Is it not a means by which the Lord can lead people to an eternal life of happiness in heaven? If that is so, doesn't it make sense that the holy books, the doctrines, and the priesthood of a church ought to teach to its parishioners what is right and what is wrong? What is the point of a church if it does not lovingly preach the truth of its doctrine?

In the January/February 2022 issue of the *New Church Life*, Bishop Peter M. Buss, Jr. courageously addressed the issues of marriage, sexuality and gender head on. These very issues are obviously having an enormous impact on family life around the world and within the New Church community as well.

True to the church's mission, the bishop cited 45 references both in the Word and in the Writings for the New Church concerning what the Lord has taught us about these matters.

Our holy scriptures are very open to us, the laity, especially when we use remarkable programs such as we find at www.newchristianbiblestudy.com. If we consider that the bishop's study has been biased or even misguided surely we have the opportunity, if not the duty, to try to find what it is that the Lord is really teaching us alternatively. The choice is ours. The Lord protects our freedom to choose as He would "the apple of His eye." The thing is, He warns us that our choices have eternal consequences. He also warns us in His daily prayer that we must forgive even as He forgives us. No room for hatred in that, is there?

Martin E. Klein
Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

A Dangerous Silence

To The Editors:

Thank you for another thought-provoking issue of *New Church Life* (March/April 2022). I would like to thank Dick Synnestvest for his excellent letter and you for publishing it. It begs reflection regarding where the General Church stands concerning the deluge of disorders and perversions openly taking place in the world and their strong influence on individuals within the Church.

As Mr. Synnestvedt suggests there are many “teachings in the Heavenly Doctrines relevant to the disorders rending the nation’s social fabric.” The laity bears personal responsibility to read the Heavenly Doctrines for themselves, but it also looks to the priesthood for leadership. It appears that many General Church pastors and ministers are reluctant to address these issues from the pulpit and elsewhere. Why? Preaching to “active states” does not take away freedom. Indeed, it can provide strength when most needed.

I believe this silence has contributed to an insidious outcome for the laity. That is, those who do not express happiness and/or support for the actions of friends or relatives who deliberately choose to live in pernicious disorders are looked upon as not loving their neighbor, being judgmental, not being supportive, etc. This is truly unfortunate.

Karen G. Heinrichs
Rochester, Michigan

Another Rewarding Day

To The Editors:

Each day there is a yearning for acceptance, love and for making wise choices. Today was another day filled with gratitude, learning and inspiration. It was a time to fill the heart with love and the mind with wisdom.

With all that is disturbing in our natural lives, this day – like many others that we are privileged to be a part of – began with normal activities, news and family. Then we heard Bishop Bradley Heinrichs’ sermon – His Mercy is Forever – and the opportunity for hope that is eternal for peace and goodness. He said that “to err is human and forgiveness is divine,” and that if we have hope “we are still in the game.” Without hope, life is without reason, and Providence provides the seeming impossible – the possibility for eternal life and all the Lord grants to us.

With our family the message had an uplifting of spirit and confidence that the Lord will lead to a good place if we are willing to follow.

This afternoon we listened to Bishop Brian Keith give an extraordinarily meaningful, nearly all-encompassing resurrection service regarding the life and impact of my classmate, Louise Stevens. Her passion in all things – like teaching and mentoring with uplifting joy, humor and precision – benefited her fellow man. The words from the Divine from Bishop Keith, and the selected music and its words, connected this natural preparatory life to the one she entered on her continued journey to eternity.

Today was another day among many moments to continue reflection, absorption and usefulness. Providence is amazing! The Lord provides our path of constant choices of love and rewards with intermittent jolts of sadness, confusion and disappointment. All is for a purpose often not understood in the present.

While the Bishop was addressing us, we were “in the moment.” On our back porch, we were surrounded by the beauty and lessons of nature. A pair of geese that stay together for life left their water habitat and walked directly within 30 yards, strikingly toward the sound of the church music. The grass that feeds our animals that give us life and sustenance, as with the surrounding trees, shrubs and flowers sequesters the carbon needed for their growth, and demonstrates interdependence, balance and never-ending recycling and rebirth right before our eyes.

Understanding the synergy of energy, food production and nature’s endless adaptation gave us a feeling of usefulness, participating in one of the Lord’s critical cycles of sustainable life.

The magic for my wife and me to hold hands and to think beautiful thoughts was “other worldly.” It can’t get better than this in the natural world, but if we are led by the Lord it will be even better in the world to come.

Let us be filled with hope and gratitude that even with all our imperfections, lack of understanding, and devotion to the teachings of our New Church, its adherents and clergy give the best they can to help each of us find ourselves with the warmth and truth the Lord provides. We can fill each of our days and moments as vessels that lead to a wonderful life everlasting.

Glen Klippenstein
Maysville, Missouri

Words of Comfort

To The Editors:

I believe that many of us do approach the Lord during our shared marital companionship in the natural world. Yet it is most unusual for both husband and wife to enter the spiritual world at the same time. And then, living in separate worlds, our golden years may be tarnished with worries about almost everything. We may worry about our health, our ability to pay bills, the lives of our aging loved ones, etc.

A depressing sense of loneliness may haunt our days. And I would add that what I miss a great deal is not having a warm hand to hold in happy and in sad times. Nevertheless, in those instances where the marriage is genuine, the spirit of one dwells with the spirit of the other and both know that the Lord is there to comfort in times of a despair. We can turn to Him in our senior years as we have done many times before.

Consider the following poem, composed by Antoinette Goetschius (1886-1969):

*When I am sore beset I seek some quiet place
some lonely room or barren, windswept hill
And there in silence wait alone until
I see again the smile upon God's face.
I feel his presence fill me like the dawn
And hear once more his whispered, "Peace, be still"
And know again the strength to do his will
I turn to take my load and find it gone.*

Richard Linqvist
Huntingdon Valley
Pennsylvania

Problems and Progress

To The Editors:

I have been silent for most of my life concerning our General Church organizations and activities which are the umbrella for our cathedral, our numerous churches, societies, schools, etc., that have evolved over many years. But are the organizations, aims, achievements and people always perfect? Of

course not, but I strongly believe they are vastly more inclusive and loving than during my cloistered upbringing.

So let me tell you some of my background. I was born and raised in Bryn Athyn and so had that privileged education from kindergarten through one year of college. My family worshiped weekly in the cathedral for both the Family and Adult services. We never discussed what we heard, and never read the Word, except at Christmas.

My parents had many fights and I do not remember seeing happiness/friendship in their marriage. I wasn't asked what I was learning in school. I was punished with yelling and spanking. I wasn't told I was loved or even hugged. Consequently, I became fiercely independent, did not trust my parents, and sought paid jobs so I could successfully leave Bryn Athyn forever to become something other than a teacher, secretary or housewife.

When I drove away for my professional training, I heard from no one in Bryn Athyn. I woke up years later to my roots during the first Gulf War when the Rev. Wendel Barnett visited all deployed New Church military members. Until then, I knew I was forgotten and unimportant. Soon thereafter I began receiving mail from Bryn Athyn neighbors, acquaintances and elementary school children.

Since that time, I have gradually become more and more aware of my love of our doctrines and the need to share these with my non-New Church friends. I've successfully retired from a long and decorated military career. I rarely visit Bryn Athyn, elected to remain single, elected to not foster or adopt children, am very happy, have gay and straight friends, and have little contact with my family or relatives. Yet I've slowly expanded my monthly organization contributions to now include the new Bryn Athyn Church Elementary School Capital Campaign.

So now to address three matters in recent issues of *New Church Life*:

Bishop Peter Buss Jr. gave a typical discussion on the perfect marriage and then focused on gender choices that are not supported by our doctrines. (*Standing for Marriage in Today's World – A Church Perspective, January/February New Church Life*)

I have no idea what initiated that article and see that it has resulted in a firestorm of polarized opinions, considering there were immediate discussion groups held in the cathedral and we have been sent a video follow-up which has received divisive viewer comments.

In my humble opinion, alternate gender lifestyles have been and will always be a huge crisis in our church. They can quote numerous passages from the Word and Writings to support heterosexuality and conclude alternate gender lifestyles are sinful, but I don't think New Church mortals can solve these

issues. Too much is happening in our world with legalization and acceptance of those alternate lifestyles. For what it's worth, I often see my numerous gay friends having happier and more loving commitments/marriages and care of their children than I experienced in my childhood.

What the Bishop's article never stated was that the Lord will gently and lovingly resolve all these human issues in the World of Spirits prior to anyone choosing to go to heaven or hell. So on earth, in our semi-protected societies and schools, the issue will erupt royally – when it is not just identifying a gay New Church person or the other lettered acronyms used, but when one of our gay members asks to be married in the cathedral, become a minister, teacher, or when one follows through, with a transgender transformation. How will they deal with those persons trying to be their “real” sexual selves as students in our schools, in a marriage, as a teacher or minister, etc.? Will there be acceptance, loving understanding, disbelief, ridicule or rejection?

Instead, we need to listen, not judge, and provide loving support to all our people. Just remember how long it took the church to allow grape juice vs. wine in the Holy Supper and now it is given without blinking an eye.

How about really re-addressing the issues of domestic violence, dysfunctional heterosexual marriages, divorce, psychological abuse, sexual abuse of children/spouses, incest, child predators, pornography, alcoholism/drug abuse, adultery, abortion, bullying, women's roles in our church, etc. – all which have relevance in our lives.

Richard Synnestvedt wrote a fascinating letter (*March/April New Church Life – Good Value for New Church Education?*) which he humbly read during the public forum hearing about the new Bryn Athyn Church Elementary School building project and membership vote.

Not knowing of this public presentation, I initially thought it was an angry letter. I was wrong. He made valid points that need more in-depth discussion beyond my observations. His concerns were about little growth or commitment, etc., and tie in with the conclusion of an independent consultant (to the Academy Secondary Schools) who basically said: “You do everything right here but do not close the deal with your people.”

The generous endowment and grants started and still support the majority of our infrastructure and survival all over the world. Add in the generosity of several wealthy families and other large and smaller contributors for our financial support: we have come to expect and be comfortable receiving a lot from very few.

We are all allowed to bypass church offering baskets; attend church when we want to so our cathedral looks empty; aren't tithed; choose to be or not confirmed (our membership only counts confirmed persons making our

numbers statistically small); choose event attendance voluntarily; expect low tuition fees or get scholarships easily; have no return commitments for what we receive, etc.

Should the rules change in our church? I say no. We are an organization that focuses on freedom of choice to learn what is right and wrong and to make choices based on our true loves. The Lord's providence will grow us in His time.

Finally, I want to emphasize my distant observations of how I think Bryn Athyn is vastly improved since I was a kid. My list is not all inclusive nor in any particular order, so please forgive my memory omissions.

New Church Life has had numerous worldly issues discussed in recent years. Prior to current times, *New Church Life* was one doctrinal thesis after another.

Free Cathedral services are available to everyone online. In the formal adult services, ministers provide doctrinal readings from the Word and the Writings, but now they frequently explain how it relates to the individual or life. You can tune in and out on your time clock.

The church dress code is significantly more relaxed. Our Cathedral has fabulous music, vespers programs, theatrical tableaux, state-of-the-art camera work, archived services, and socialization, with refreshments in the Choir Hall after the adult services. The family services are now ad lib where the minister steps down from the pulpit to a platform to just talk to the attendees and he often shows illustrations of the lesson.

There are new translations of the Writings, making those books more readable. There are numerous alternative informal adult services outside these cathedral events – live services, a home-based church, informal children's church in the cathedral undercroft, and many ministers still conduct small group classes, etc. Many of our other churches advertise their online services on Facebook and elsewhere.

Our Deans, Principals and teachers have impressive credentials, are dedicated, and have teaching styles that extend beyond rote memorization. Their curriculums are updated. School textbooks are new and our multiple libraries are impressive. All campuses are beautiful. We have invited non-New Church students to all our schools, except the Theological School. And we have Theological Schools started overseas. There is the Master of Arts in Religious Studies (MARS) program.

We have Stephen ministers. Cathedral tours are available with trained volunteers. Marriages, memorials and other service rites can still be arranged with your minister of choice.

The college infrastructures are new and have many more degree opportunities.

There are numerous alumni organizations. Multiple publications are available: weekly *Bryn Athyn Post*, *Quarterly Alumni News*, Journals, etc.

Care packages are sent yearly to our college students not enrolled in Bryn Athyn College. We have dorm support mothers who visit students during exam weeks with treats. Military members are remembered by a Military Committee. Glencairn is now a Sacred Arts Museum with many programs and open to the public. Cairnwood hosts numerous social events. Cairncrest was repurposed as the General Church Office center.

We have the phenomenal Cairnwood Retirement Village near our large community garden. The Bryn Athyn Thrift Shop (BATS) will be relocated to continue its mission from the expanding new elementary school campus. And we're using computer technology to speed up all communications within our organizations and to members.

So I say we are really attempting to make the closed connection deal with our people and have many blessings to think about and cherish.

Name withheld
by request

Clarification

To The Editors:

As a careful reader of the article, *The Trouble with the Old Testament*, (New Church Life, March/April 2022) pointed out, none of the Exodus references cited in the third footnote as examples of laws that are literally to be “observed and done” pertain to homosexuality. I thank this reader for calling this to my attention, and apologize to him and others for that flaw in the logic of the article. Here is what I should have written, replacing the paragraph on page 131, beginning, “That said...”

In addition to this teaching (Arcana Coelestia 9349), however, there are numerous references in the Heavenly Doctrines that do refer to the laws on homosexuality listed in Leviticus 18 and 20 in rather unsavory terms. For example, Arcana Coelestia 6348, Conjugal Love 519, Apocalypse Explained 410:11 and 434:16 include these teachings as things that not only have terrible correspondences but are still “forbidden” or “prohibited.”

Again, none of this is intended by me (least of all by the Lord!) to judge or condemn any person, but simply to make the point that there are specific teachings about these things in the Word, and that we do need to honor them, just as we honor the Ten Commandments.

The Rev. Michael Gladish
Bryn Athyn

On Eagles' Wings

A Sermon About the Lord's Protection of the New Church

The Rev. Jeremy F. Simons

Lessons: Revelation 12:1-9,13-17; Arcana Coelestia 8764; Apocalypse Explained 759

The woman was given two wings of a great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness to her place. (Revelation 12:14)

The Woman Clothed with the Sun does not appear on the scene in *Revelation 12* with the intention of attacking the dragon. Still, he knows that the birth of her Child, who is to “*shepherd all nations with a rod of iron*” will leave no room for him in this world. His best option is to put an end to Him while He is small and weak.

The story this chapter tells is how the dragon's plans are foiled, and how both the Child and the Woman escape and find protection. Our topic here is what this means for us and how this story lives on today.

First of all, the Child, when He is born, is “*caught up to God and to His throne.*” There is no delay, no exposure to the dragon, and the protection is absolute.

The Child is the doctrine of the New Church, which is immediately secured in heaven by the angels as soon as it comes into existence. (*Apocalypse Revealed 545*) The doctrine itself is invulnerable. Nothing can happen to it. The drama here is not about the Child.

But the woman is vulnerable. She is the New Church itself. From the very beginning of the story, she is struggling. Her cries of pain in giving birth stand for “*the difficulty of the doctrine's being accepted owing to the opposition to it by people meant by the dragon.*” (*Ibid. 535*) For the same reason she flees as soon as He is born.

She flees into the wilderness, barren and inhospitable, where she will somehow be sustained.

The meaning is that the people of the church find themselves in a spiritual landscape where people have falsified or no longer believe the truths they have,

To be sustained in the wilderness means that the New Church will continue to exist and even grow even though few people believe its teachings.

or have no truths at all, and are not interested in them. (*Ibid.* 546)

The story gives the impression that the wilderness is somehow a safe place for the woman. But it isn't a safe place at all. She is still in danger from the dragon. Her environment offers her no protection. Yet she does find safety, and how this happens is our topic.

SAFETY IN THE WILDERNESS

How is it that she is in a *“place prepared by God, that they should feed her there”* even though she is in a wilderness? The answer is given in the events that immediately follow. To be sustained in the wilderness means that the New Church will continue to exist and even grow even though few people believe its teachings.

The moment the woman makes her escape the dragon is attacked and cannot pursue her. Michael and his angels fight with him, and there is “war in heaven.” “Michael” is not an individual archangel but is a ministry in heaven of those who believe in and follow the Lord. (*Ibid.* 548) Interestingly, we are told in the Writings:

Those who are Michael were chiefly from the ancient heavens. They have all remained in existence and were from them in those heavens who were from pagan peoples, and from children from everywhere now adults. (Spiritual Experiences 5747)

Wars in heaven, of course, are not fought with weapons but are contests between falsity and truth. Nor are there ever actually wars in heaven, since falsities can't exist there. But the war described here is about what kind of ideas belong in heaven and which do not.

It would make sense that the wisdom of these ancient peoples would come into play, since the state of Christianity was so weak. Over time, however, it seems that the Michaels were increasingly from Christians. (*Apocalypse Revealed* 564)

Michael and his angels defeat the dragon *“nor was a place for them found in heaven any longer.”* That is, the things taught by the dragon are shown to be untrue. They do not belong in heaven.

It would be nice to think that this ends the matter, and that the woman is now safe. But the dragon's downfall means only that he is removed from

heaven. Michael does not follow him down to earth to protect the woman. But she has other means of protection, and here is where the story becomes even more interesting for those who love the New Church.

TWO WINGS OF A GREAT EAGLE

Being thrown to the earth angers the dragon, and he pursues the woman. She is then defended in two specific ways. The first is with wings:

The woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time.

According to the *Apocalypse Revealed* these wings stand for “*the Divine circumspection on behalf of the New Church and protection while it was still among a few.*” (*Apocalypse Revealed* 561)

This doesn't seem to be saying much, other than that the Lord is watching over the church. But there is more to it. The eagle and his wings stand for the Lord's power, keen sight and understanding. He perceives and guards against what is harmful in that wilderness where few agree with its teachings.

Apocalypse Explained has a slightly different and complementary interpretation. We are fortunate to have both *Apocalypse Revealed* and *Apocalypse Explained* with their slightly varying explanations. *Apocalypse Explained* was written first – six volumes ending mysteriously in *Revelation 20, out of 22*, and never published even though it was prepared for publication. *Apocalypse Revealed* was then written and published in only two volumes. It is shorter and more direct, whereas *Apocalypse Explained* has long descriptions that bring in passages from many parts of the Word. The two works say basically the same thing. They don't contradict each other, but there are differences.

The meaning of the two wings is a good example of the differences. Here is what *Apocalypse Explained* has to say:

The two wings of a great eagle, signify spiritual intelligence and circumspection which the Lord gives to those who are of the Church.” *Apocalypse Explained* 759)

Whereas *Apocalypse Revealed* talks about the Lord's circumspection on behalf of the church, *Apocalypse*

The eagle and his wings stand for the Lord's power, keen sight and understanding. He perceives and guards against what is harmful in that wilderness where few agree with its teachings.

There are always cultural trends that present threats to true spirituality. They need to be seen, understood and defended against. Church organizations such as ours need to use their best judgment to provide for this.

Explained talks about how He gives this circumspection and intelligence to people. It amounts to the same thing, since the wisdom is His alone. But whereas the first assures us of the Lord's protection, the second reminds us that this reliance involves using the tools that He gives us.

How can the New Church survive in a world where so few seem to love its teachings?

On the one hand, the answer is that those who love the New Church shouldn't be anxious. The Lord is continually working to prepare the world to receive the doctrines meant by the woman's Child. The greater

cultural movements of humanity inevitably point toward the new spiritual era that the Writings call the New Church. The spread of technology, education, access to information and many other things move in that direction. Although it may not appear this way to us, the world is continually growing more peaceful, less violent, less prone to hunger and disease, and Christianity continues to grow rapidly. The factors that are guiding these enormous movements are so complex and subtle that only the Lord can be making them happen.

On the other hand, the answer is that those who love the New Church should do everything they can to intelligently guide the organizations that promote the New Church in this world. There are always cultural trends that present threats to true spirituality. They need to be seen, understood and defended against. Church organizations such as ours need to use their best judgment to provide for this.

Both of these answers are meant by the wings. That is why wings are so often mentioned in the Word as means of protection. The Lord says to Moses:

You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. (Exodus 19.4)

As an eagle stirs up its nest, hovers over its young, spreading out its wings, taking them up, carrying them on its wings, so the LORD alone led him. (Deuteronomy 32)

He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall

| *take refuge. (Psalm 91.4)*

Ultimately, these soft and beautiful feathers stand for the power and protection of the Lord's love.

THE DRAGON'S FLOOD

Still, it is not so easy to escape from the dragon. Undaunted, he continues to come after her, this time spewing "*water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood.*"

The dragon's flood activates the second form of protection in the story:

| *But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth.*

Here again *Apocalypse Revealed* and *Apocalypse Explained* have different but complementary explanations. *Apocalypse Revealed* puts it this way:

| *This symbolically means that the multitude of reasonings flowing from falsities that followers of the dragon put forward come to nothing in the face of the spiritual truths rationally understood that are advanced by the Michaels of whom the New Church is formed. (Apocalypse Revealed 564)*

The flood is a flood of false ideas, and the earth helping the woman refers to the fact that the doctrine of the New Church has answers to every one of them. "The Michaels" here, just as they did before are able to use these "*spiritual truths rationally understood*" to defend the New Church from these often-confusing assaults and accusations.

The *Apocalypse Explained* has a slightly different explanation, which is that there are

| *"those who are of the church that is not in truths who afforded assistance and did not receive the crafty reasonings of those who were in faith separated from charity." (Apocalypse Explained 765)*

That is, there are people all over the world who don't buy into the false and harmful ideas that the dragon continually disseminates. Ordinary people often don't understand the sophisticated justifications of harmful practices that scholars and the media often promote. They rely on common sense and can end up helping the woman. The New Church is protected by people of many different beliefs who resist the flood produced by the dragon.

The point of both explanations ends up being the same, which is that there are answers to the dragon's flood. It is important for people to know these

answers, and to have the wherewithal to avoid falling for the dragon's appealing, seemingly sensible, but ultimately harmful and hateful ideas.

All of these factors come together to protect the Woman Clothed with the Sun. She survives, and she is not spoken of again – although we often think of her as returning as the Holy City New Jerusalem in chapter 21. The dragon continues to make war on the rest of her offspring, until he is locked in the bottomless pit in chapter 20.

This story is about the protection of the New Church while it is still among a few, and it is very relevant to those of us who love it and who identify with the organizations and churches that believe in and follow its teachings.

The Lord gives this church wings and provides for the dragon's flood to be swallowed up. The wings lift it up to see the means for its protection, even as the Lord guides world events and trends in ways that are beyond our understanding. The flood is swallowed up by the spiritual truths rationally

understood that answer false ideas, while other factors lead people worldwide to resist those same ideas.

These are some of the things that people celebrate as they pray for the New Church. This is just part of the story of the descent of the Holy City New Jerusalem and the peace that it is bringing into the world.

I will abide in Your tabernacle forever; I will trust in the shelter of Your wings. (Psalm 61:4)

Amen.

This story is about the protection of the New Church while it is still among a few, and it is very relevant to those of us who love it and who identify with the organizations and churches that believe in and follow its teachings.



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Reading the Word

A Sermon by the Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith

Readings: Exodus 24:3-7; Deuteronomy 17:18-20; True Christian Religion 238

One does not have to be associated with this New Church for long before hearing that one ought to be reading the Word – the *Old Testament*, the *New Testament* and the *Heavenly Doctrines of the New Church*. While this is done to a greater or lesser extent by members, it is a fundamental goal to have people go to the Word for themselves.

This has roots as far back as the beginning of the Bible. The Ten Commandments and the rest of the laws were proclaimed to the people on a very regular basis. (*Exodus 24:7; Joshua 8:34f*) Kings were told to read the Word daily to learn of the Lord, to follow its teachings, and to keep them humble. (*Deuteronomy 17:19, 20*) And when the Lord was on earth, on at least six occasions when He was questioned or challenged, He began by saying: “*Have you never read in the Scriptures?*” (*Matthew 12:5, 19:4, 21:16, 21:42, 22:31; Mark 12:10*) He expected them to have read His Word, and to know something from it!

Then in the New Church we have this injunction: “*Read the Word, and believe in the Lord, and you will see the truths which should make up your faith and life.*” (*Apocalypse Revealed 224:3*) And we are told: “*The church where the Word is read and the Lord thereby known, is as the heart and lungs*” of His kingdom. (*Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture 105, 110; True Christian Religion 268, 270; Athanasian Creed 2; De Verbo 17*) In essence, our turning to the Word and reading it is the basis for the church – in general and in our personal lives.

And if our eyesight is perhaps not as strong as in our youthful days, listening to any reading of the Word is equally useful. For “reading” includes listening. Thus, we find the frequent phrase “*truths which one hears or reads.*” (*Arcana Coelestia 2701, 5340; Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture 76; Apocalypse Revealed 881; Last Judgment Posthumous 338; Apocalypse Explained 545:3, 546C:3, 547, 721:8; see also Arcana Coelestia 10604:3, De Verbo 7:2*) This means that listening to the Word read in

church or listening to a recording, accomplishes the same end.

We have often heard that we ought to read the Word for the sake of the angels. And it's true – as pointed out by many passages in the Heavenly Doctrines. (*New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine* 259; *Heaven and Hell* 306; *White Horse* 10) But

The Word is not simply a book of knowledge. It also embodies all the goods from the Lord, all the caring affections and positive feelings that can exist. We, in effect, provide a conduit for the Lord to flow into the angels when we read, uplifting their spirits.

the effect is not just some vague “the angels like it.” Rather, it affects them in specific ways.

For one, as we read the Word, the angels associated with us learn new truths. (*Arcana Coelestia* 2249:3) Imagine that – we can instruct the angels! And it is more than just them learning new things; whenever we read the Word it clarifies their thinking, enabling them to set aside previous misconceptions and cloudy understandings. (*Ibid.* 2249:3) We are certainly not aware of this, especially when we read the natural stories, for the angels are in the spiritual sense. But this is something that we can do for the angels at any time.

Another way our reading the Word affects angels is that it touches their feelings. As the *Heavenly Doctrines* note: “*There flows in from the Lord a holiness into the good spirits who are with the person who is reading the Word.*” (*Arcana Coelestia* 9419:2, 8972:2) The Word is not simply a book of knowledge. It also embodies all the goods from the Lord, all the caring affections and positive feelings that can exist. We, in effect, provide a conduit for the Lord to flow into the angels when we read, uplifting their spirits.

Still another way that reading the Word affects angels is that it creates representatives before their eyes. Consider what Swedenborg once experienced:

When I was reading Joshua chapter 3 about the crossing of the Jordan, many [spirits] were seized with burning desire to portray to each other the crossing of the Jordan, because the land of Canaan symbolizes heaven, and so they would come into heaven. This was then granted them, and for a whole hour or more, they were portrayed crossing the Jordan, together with their families and their possessions, the ark going before them and staying in the midst of the Jordan until they had passed across. These particulars were all

depicted most beautifully before their eyes. . . . From time to time I sensed with what diligence and eagerness they were crossing, and how afterwards, when they had crossed over, they rejoiced at heart.
(*Spiritual Experiences* 2289)

Their desire to act out this Biblical event was inspired by Swedenborg's reading of it in the Word. Thus, when we read of something there, we provide an opportunity for spirits to enter more fully into the Word.

This leads to one last use to us reading the Word for the angels: it just makes them happy! We're told that it places them "*in a happy celestial state.*" (*Arcana Coelestia* 3690:2; see also 5398:3, 5249) Yes, angels have plenty of joy and happiness every day of their lives. But we can tangibly add to that happiness whenever we read the Word, giving them something they otherwise would not have.

So, the simple act of reading or listening to the Word has tremendous value for the spirits and angels around us. But it also has a many effects upon us also.

Obviously, we can learn new truths when we do it. (*Arcana Coelestia* 10400:2) This can be either new light shed on what we thought we knew before, or seeing something that had escaped us previously. (*Apocalypse Explained* 941:2) We are also affirmed or strengthened in truths we had before. Why else would there be such delight in the Christmas, Easter or June 19th stories, told over again each year; or hearing a treasured recitation?

Regularly reading the Word can be a compass for us, redirecting us again and again to the Lord's purposes for our lives. This constant slight re-aligning can keep us on the straight-and-narrow, reminding us of what is really important in life and how all the troubles of this world, while they may seem so huge, are really minor in the Lord's grand scheme of things.

More than that, we are told that "*they who are in enlightenment when reading the Word, see the Lord.*" (*Arcana Coelestia* 9411; *Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture* 57) Yes, we see the Lord most obviously in the stories of the New Testament but also in the Old Testament and throughout the Writings for the New Church. In fact, all the truths in the Word "*are so many mirrors of the Lord.*" (*True Christian Religion* 508e, 6:2, 11:3; *Apocalypse Revealed* 938:2; *Invitation to the New Church* 41) Every

So, the simple act of reading or listening to the Word has tremendous value for the spirits and angels around us. But it also has a many effects upon us also.

least idea reflects some aspect of the Lord and how He operates in our lives. How better to feel close to Him than by seeing Him in His Word?

Helping in this is the connection the Word provides between us, the angels, and the Lord. We are taught:

There are angels with everyone, who perceive his thoughts, and who apprehend the Word spiritually while he is reading it, and that through [the angels] what is holy then flows in from the Lord, and thus that through them there is conjunction of heaven with a person, consequently conjunction of the Lord through the heavens with him.

(Arcana Coelestia 10137:2, 5247:7)

This connection also benefits our regeneration. While reading the Word alone cannot create heaven within us – periodic repentance and daily self-compulsion being required for that – it is another way that the Lord instills good within us. We are taught:

“When a person reads the Word and draws truths from it, the Lord attaches good.” (Conjugal Love 128) When we read the Word our “interior or spiritual mind looks to the Lord, and the Lord then elevates it up to Himself, and with it the lower or natural mind, thus withdrawing it from our proprium.” (Apocalypse Explained 177:3, 714:10)

Every least idea reflects some aspect of the Lord and how He operates in our lives. How better to feel close to Him than by seeing Him in His Word?

Even more than that, if we come to the Word with an open heart and

desire to learn its truths to become better people, the Writings state: *“All evil and falsity are removed while we are reading the Word, because the Lord then enlightens us and leads us.” (Arcana Coelestia 10638:2; Apocalypse Explained 176:4)* It’s doubtful that just reading the Word will remove deep-seated feelings of superiority, lusts, or other serious evils. But it can modify them, lessening their impact on our lives. So what a wonderful way it is to help our spiritual development!

What’s amazing is how little effort or time this takes. We are encouraged to *“read the Word every day, one or two chapters.” (Apocalypse Explained 803)* And how long does that take? The time it takes to shower, or skim the headlines? For minimal time and effort the rewards can be astonishing – for the angels – for the angels and ourselves. And what a wonderful way for those who perhaps feel less useful due to physical challenges to make a real difference in their lives

and in the lives of spirits and angels!

Granted, we are not conscious of what the Lord is doing within. We are taught that the truths from the Word “*with the light of heaven, flow into the minds of people, even when they are unaware of the fact.*” (*Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture 41*) Amazing! The Lord touches our spirits and improves our spiritual lives while we seem to be doing a simple task, spending a few minutes a day reading, without us feeling a distinct difference.

This also addresses the question of how much of the Word do we have to understand in our reading. Certainly, the Word is meant to be

understood. If we could not see truths there that have meaning in our lives, it would not be read. And the Lord certainly uses it as His primary way of communicating with us. But we’ve all found sections where it is hard, if not impossible to gain a clear idea of what is going on.

Some of the portions of the prophets speaking of cities, people or events which are beyond our experience, or the seemingly trivial laws in Exodus and Leviticus, or some of the more challenging aspects of the Writings, discussing discrete degrees in the *Divine Love and Wisdom* or the subtle aspects of regeneration in the *Arcana Coelestia*, can leave us wondering if we understand any of it. Yet, we are assured that “*light flows in and enlightens, although the person is unaware of it*” (*Arcana Coelestia 10551:2; 3480:2, 1871, 5466*)

So while we may tend toward reading sections of the Word that are easier to follow – the Psalms, the gospels or *Heaven and Hell* – there is value in reading all of it, even the portions that may make little sense to us at the time. We should not shy away from occasionally picking up *Isaiah* or the *Arcana* – to expand our horizons and to let the Lord lead us by means of them.

All it really takes is coming to the Word with a humble spirit and willingness to learn. Then the holiness of the Lord flows into us, enveloping us in His love. It is not a “cure all,” saving us regardless of our life and loves.

But it provides a basis for that life of good. It holds untold specific and varied benefits for the angels around us and for ourselves. So let us embrace the treasure chest of the Word in our arms by reading and listening to it, and

What’s amazing is how little effort or time this takes. We are encouraged to “read the Word every day, one or two chapters.” And how long does that take? For minimal time and effort the rewards can be astonishing – for the angels and ourselves.

let us then throw it heavenwards, so that it reaches the angels, providing them and us with priceless gems.

All it really takes is coming to the Word with a humble spirit and willingness to learn. Then the holiness of the Lord flows into us, enveloping us in His love.

Amen.



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FROM THE BISHOP'S OFFICE

The Rock That Is Higher Than I

The Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss Jr.

Many of us resort to the Psalms as a wonderful reservoir of helpful and comforting perspectives that center on the Lord. Among them is *Psalm 61*, a psalm of David, which begins with the words:

*Hear my cry, O God;
Attend to my prayer.
From the end of the earth I will cry to You,
When my heart is overwhelmed;
Lead me to the rock that is higher than I. (Psalm 61:1-2)*

Our focus is on the last part of that quote, “*the rock that is higher than I.*” In that phrase there is a call to something solid, something higher, something bigger than ourselves. The rock is our faith. (*Arcana Coelestia* 8581) The rock is the Word. (*Apocalypse Revealed* 768) The Rock is the Lord Himself. (*Apocalypse Explained* 411:5-10) It is the Lord through His Word who can inspire our faith and lift us up in times of hardship and distress. He can bring us to a renewed sense of His presence and love, along with a sense of purpose and direction that brings enduring happiness to our lives.

Context.

I have often reflected, when reading the Psalms, that an actual person wrote them – someone who consistently and ardently turned to the Lord in the highs and lows of life. David is the author of at least half of the Psalms, and this one is attributed to him. For that reason, we can consider the specific challenge or series of challenges that might have inspired these words.

Was it when David was pursued by Saul who in his crazed state was intent on killing him? (1 Samuel 24) Was it when David and his soldiers returned from battle to find that their families had been carried away by the Amalekites? Of that tragic time it says: “*Then David and the people who were with him lifted up their voices and wept, until they had no more power to weep.*” (1 Samuel 30:4) Was it when David lamented the death of his beloved friend Jonathan? (2 Samuel 1:17-27) We do not know which circumstances inspired this psalm, but we see enough of David’s life to imagine what might have caused him to pour out his soul as he did.

The same is true for us. How many of us have our own versions of an overwhelmed heart? Many of us have endured the loss of a loved one. We’ve felt burdened by unending pressures with no visible solutions. We may have experienced states of dark depression. We may have gone through stages of life where we feel lost and purposeless, unsure of where we should put our energies. We may have come face to face with our own shortcomings and felt forlorn about our ability to make spiritual progress.

But this psalm is not about despair and the struggles of life. While acknowledging them, the intent is to communicate hope. We read in the *Heavenly Doctrines*, “*Despair exists to the end that life’s bliss which the Lord imparts may be felt.*” (Arcana Coelestia 6144) The Lord does not cause struggles, but He offers to lead us out of them to happier states.

Belief in the Lord. This is why we focus on the pivotal words of this Psalm that shift the tone from one of despair to hope: “*Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.*”

What does a higher level of faith in the Lord look like? To answer that it is helpful to look at a couple of other places where the symbol of a rock is used. There is a telling interchange that the Lord had with His disciples where He asked them, “*Who do people say that I, the Son of Man, am?*” (Matthew 16:13) They answered: “*Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.*” We know the next question: “*But who do you say that I am?*” to which Peter answered, “*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God*” (Matthew 16:15-16) It was because of this statement that Peter received his most positive praise from the Lord: “*Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah. . . . I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.*” (Matthew 16:17-18; see also *Arcana Coelestia* 8581:3)

In the same way we are called to believe in the Lord. As the Lord worked with His disciples to come to understand who He is, so He works with us. He wants this understanding to grow, for the more we know about our Lord the more we can believe in Him. From the first awareness of Him as a loving God,

we can come to see what He cares about most, how He oversees the whole of heaven and earth, His goodness and mercy, and His unceasing effort to lead us to greater states of genuine happiness.

All these teachings, and our absorbing of them, are “rocks” – solid and true concepts on which to found our lives. Like the Psalmist we too can pray: “Lead me to rock that is higher than I.” “Lead me to the next level of faith. Help me to believe in You, Lord, more than I do now. Give me a greater understanding of who You are, and how You work.”

Belief in the Lord.

This is why we focus on the pivotal words of this Psalm that shift the tone from one of despair to hope: *“Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.”*

What does a higher level of faith in the Lord look like? To answer that it is helpful to look at a couple of other places where the symbol of a rock is used. There is a telling interchange that the Lord had with His disciples where He asked them, *“Who do people say that I, the Son of Man, am?”* (Matthew 16:13) They answered: *“Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”* We know the next question: *“But who do you say that I am?”* to which Peter answered, *“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God”* (Matthew 16:15-16) It was because of this statement that Peter received his most positive praise from the Lord: *“Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah. . . . I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”* (Matthew 16:17-18; see also *Arcana Coelestia* 8581:3)

In the same way we are called to believe in the Lord. As the Lord worked with His disciples to come to understand who He is, so He works with us. He wants this understanding to grow, for the more we know about our Lord the more we can believe in Him. From the first awareness of Him as a loving God, we can come to see what He cares about most, how He oversees the whole of heaven and earth, His goodness and mercy, and His unceasing effort to lead us to greater states of genuine happiness.

All these teachings, and our absorbing of them, are “rocks” – solid and true concepts on which to found our lives. Like the Psalmist we too can pray: *“Lead*

“Lead me to rock that is higher than I.” “Lead me to the next level of faith. Help me to believe in You, Lord, more than I do now. Give me a greater understanding of who You are, and how You work.”

me to rock that is higher than I.” “Lead me to the next level of faith. Help me to believe in You, Lord, more than I do now. Give me a greater understanding of who You are, and how You work.”

Belief in what the Lord teaches.

But belief in the Lord doesn’t stop with who the Lord is. It extends to what He teaches or what He wants us to do as His people. One place where this becomes clear is the closing images of the Sermon on the Mount.

The Lord said: *“Whoever hears these sayings of Mine and does them, I will liken him to a wise person who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.”* (Matthew 7:24-25) *The rock here is His truth.* (Apocalypse Revealed 409:3)

The Lord says in His Sermon on the Mount: *“Love your enemies.”* (Matthew 5:44) *“Do not be angry with your brother without just cause.”* (5:22, paraphrase) *“Turn the other cheek”* instead of responding with vengeance. (5:39, paraphrase) *“Do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them.”* (6:1) *“Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven”* or *focus on the things of spiritual life* (6:20), and *“Whatever you want people to do to you, do also to them.”* (7:12)

Do we believe these simple and far-reaching statements about how to make life work? Do we see the relevance to our healthy relationships with others? Do we believe in the Lord as a God of wisdom whose guidance really does make life more enjoyable? If we do, then we found our lives on the “rock” of true faith.

If we put these principles to life, together with all the foundational teachings the Lord gives us, we will discover a life of useful purpose that the Lord can truly bless.

If we put these principles to life, together with all the foundational teachings the Lord gives us, we will discover a life of useful purpose that the Lord can truly bless. He will bless our relationships. He will bless the projects on which we focus our energies. He will bless us with the heavenly happiness that comes.

“Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.”

Reflect for a moment on the simple image of the phrase: “higher than I.”

Think of the raising up that is implied. For me it helps to think of climbing a mountain. I can picture myself at the base of the mountain obstructed by the trees and other things that line the mountainside. But as one climbs the sights change. The view gets broader. We can see where we were before. And when we get to the top there is nothing to obstruct our view.

Psalm 61 begins with a feeling of being overwhelmed but ends with praise and hope. The change is from a prayerful approach to the Lord that He raise up our spirits. (*See Arcana Coelestia 6954*) The Lord will lift us up to new levels of perspective in our lives. He will bring us a higher sense of purpose, a greater insight into what leads to blessing, a chance to look back and see all the ways that He has been protecting us and blessing us to date, and a greater level of confidence about the future.

It all hinges in this Psalm on our prayerful appeal that He lead us to “the rock that is higher than I.” Indeed, if we return to that Psalm, it continues:

*For You have been a shelter for me,
A strong tower from the enemy.
I will abide in Your tabernacle forever;
I will trust in the shelter of Your wings. (Psalm 61:3-4)*

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Prepare for Risks; Persistence and Course Changes; Your Values are Your Best Tool

Charles M. Cole

Congratulations Class of 2022 graduates. Well done!

What you have accomplished is remarkable. You have learned and grown through a storm of change and challenge. These profound and unexpected challenges have made your accomplishment more difficult and more impressive. In overcoming those challenges and hardships you've developed greater skills and resiliency. Because of this, you're more knowledgeable, more resourceful, more creative, stronger and wiser. You are readier.

I have three bits of advice that I'm eager to share with you today. The first two are common in commencement speeches – but I'll offer my extra perspective. The third relates to the best tool in your toolkits.

Prepare for Risks

First, take risks, but prepare well.

You've all been told to take risks. It is, indeed, better to take risks and fail than never to have tried – as long as you learn from your effort. Lessons learned from failure can be among the most valuable.

My additional advice regarding risks is that you should carefully choose the risks you take and prepare for them as well as possible. Don't shy away from setting challenging goals, but don't rush to risks that should be avoided or reduced. Prepare, plan, analyze -- without excuse, delay or distraction. Doing so will enhance the likelihood of success -- and, if you fail, you'll be better able to learn from your efforts.

You've all been told to take risks. It is better to take risks and fail than never to have tried – as long as you learn from your effort.

A friend once complained to me that he wished he'd started his

business much earlier than he had done. Oddly, he seemed to have forgotten all the valuable preparation that he completed prior to launching. He had forgotten the extent to which that preparation had reduced the risks of his start-up. If he had started the business earlier, he wouldn't have been as capable to run it as he later became – an earlier effort might have failed. By preparing for the risks methodically and carefully, he substantially increased the likelihood of success.

According to Nate Silver, a renowned statistician, a person who doesn't understand the odds they face and who doesn't act to create or exploit advantages, is called a "fish". A fish usually loses – and people who spot a fish know they can exploit the fish. Avoid taking bad risks and prepare well for the right risks. Take risks, but work to understand them and to create advantages. Don't be a fish.

Change Course for Good Cause

Persevere in pursuing your goals but change course for good cause.

The fact that you are receiving degrees today is evidence that you have all persisted through many years of sacrifice and hard work. Having done so in the face of the challenges of the past few years proves an even higher degree of steadfastness. So, you don't need me to tell you to be persistent.

My additional perspective on persistence is reflected in the words of Winston Churchill in a 1941 commencement address, in which he urged graduates: *"Never give in, never give in, never, never, never – in nothing, great or small, large or petty – never give in except to convictions of honor and good sense."*

Churchill used the word "never" seven times in a single sentence. That seems quite definitive, and yet, his advice is equivocal. In fact, Churchill was urging the graduates to press forward with conviction, without vacillation or distraction, unless there was a very compelling reason to change course. It is never, never, never OK to change course for minor reasons. It is right, however, and in some cases, it's advisable or necessary to make changes. But a change in plans or goals should only be made if it makes good sense, or if moral principles require.

In my case, I had insisted that I would never, never, never go to law school. Yet, after five years of experience working with analysts and lawyers, and some careful reflection, I made this major change. That change, made for sound reasons, has worked out well for me.

So, be willing to reconsider your plans in the face of new ideas, evolving circumstances, new opportunities, or new learning. Don't chain yourself to the ideas or decisions you may have embraced in the past. Your ideas and plans

Your values are a remarkably versatile and important tool. They work very well in combination with your other tools and can be highly effective in all contexts, especially in a professional environment.

can and should evolve and change, in some cases very quickly – for good reasons. Be focused, determined, persistent. Be a bulldog, but keep an open mind.

Your Values are Your Best Tool

Your moral and faith-based values are among your most powerful professional tools.

You've all forged three basic types of tools: the knowledge you've gained in the course of your education; the experiences you've gained during your personal,

academic and professional lives; and the moral and faith-based values you've learned from family, from friends, at church, and here at Bryn Athyn College.

Your values are a remarkably versatile and important tool. They work very well in combination with your other tools and can be highly effective in all contexts, especially in a professional environment.

I was once asked whether adhering to my values put me at a disadvantage in a business environment. The notion being that my values may prevent me from acting in ways that promote my self-interest, or that they may render me vulnerable to being outmaneuvered by competitors or colleagues.

I was surprised by the question because I've always believed that my values and faith are a distinct and powerful advantage for me at work.

I try to integrate my moral and faith-based principles into my decisions, actions and professional pursuits. I believe that to the extent I have succeeded in this, I have been far more effective and, because of this, my personal interests have never been compromised, nor have I fallen behind colleagues or competitors as a result of adhering to my values.

I'll describe two examples of value-based principles that I try to employ in my work. The first is seeking to be useful and to serve others. A commitment to serving others can inspire us and can make the stresses, challenges and efforts of work more meaningful. Aligning our problem-solving efforts and our goals with our commitment to serving the needs of others can help us maintain a higher level of motivation and can make the efforts and the outcomes more enjoyable and rewarding.

The second principle is to identify and examine our motives as we set goals and make decisions. This should entail a very deep and very honest

examination. We should ensure that we act for the best interests of all involved, that we are doing the right things, for the right reasons.

Checking our real motives can help us identify and remove personal biases, preferences and self-interest from our actions and decisions – and always leads to better actions, better goals, better decisions, and better outcomes – all of which give us an advantage in our professional lives.

So, use your values together with your other tools. Your values can be your most important professional tool.

Challenges Ahead

As you set out from here, you'll find that your knowledge, experience and moral and faith-based values will serve you well for the challenges ahead. During your time at Bryn Athyn College, you “connected more deeply” and “thought for yourselves” while “living for others.” You are ready to use all of this -- to make your mark – to shape the world.

We can't wait to see what you achieve.



CHARLES M. COLE

has practiced law in Washington, DC, and Maryland for the past 29 years. He has served as a partner in international law firms and in 2020 founded a law firm of which he is Managing Partner. He has been a member of the Bryn Athyn College Board Committee since its inception, has been a member of the Academy Corporation since 2010 and a member of the Academy Board of Trustees from 2011 through 2020, including service as Vice Chair for four years. He attended Bryn Athyn Church School, the Immanuel Church School in Glenview, Illinois, and the Academy Boys School. He is a graduate of Lehigh University and the American University Law School, where he was Editor in Chief of the International Law Review. He and his wife, MaryLou, live in Clarksville, Virginia. They have three children, including James, who graduated this same day from Bryn Athyn College.

“Now It Is Permitted . . .”

B. Erik Odhner

(Note: Erik Odhner retired at the end of June after a 44-year career teaching at the Academy of the New Church.)

Fellow Graduates: Are we ready to commence?

The scientists have told us that time is relative, but they haven't really told us, "relative to what?"

You and I are commencing a post-graduate year. In relative terms, as a percentage of our conscious lives, this coming year will be 10 times shorter for me than for you. Though in reality, its length will be determined by our relative states of mind.

At the end of this next year we will look back on it, and some part of us will feel like it was gone in a flash, and another part of us will feel like the clock, or the calendar, stood still. The relativity of time depends on the level of our enthusiasm, and paradoxically, if we embrace the coming year with enthusiasm it will both end in a flash yet also seem to last forever. Our enthusiasm, and the thoughts triggered by it, takes us out of earthly time, and into a place where minutes and hours, years and decades, don't seem to matter.

I hope you had times like that during the past four years. Timeless memories, some might call them.

I hope you also will take time to reflect on situations during the last four years where time was too short or too long. Times where you worried too much about the future or the past, and lost track of real time, of the Now. Such reflection is valuable and can help us value time for what it truly is.

I would direct your attention behind me, to the Academy Banner. Every year for some years I carted old Leo from the Academic Awards Night at the Mitchell Performing Arts Center down here to the Field House, and I have gotten to know Old Leo a bit.

I particularly want to draw your attention to the words in Latin: "*NUNC LICET*." They're in Latin because Latin is a classy language, but also because these words convey a meaning that is difficult to express succinctly in English. For one thing, the word *Nunc*, often translated "now," is a relative term. It can mean "now" in the future, meaning "then," or in the past, also meaning "then," or it can mean "right now."

In this context its meaning is timeless: "any time now, why wait, you're ready, stop wasting time, get on with it, commence already."

The word "*Licet*" means something is legally allowed. At ages 16, 18, 21, there are certain things you are now allowed to do according to the civil law. Here you are being told you may do this thing right now, this very moment, and not according to the civil law but according to a much higher law.

The rest of the phrase tells you what it is that you are now allowed to do: consciously explore the sacred mysteries of true faith, and if you are willing, embrace them.

Again, I hope that in the past few years you have taken the time to do this on some level, that is, thought about it with some level of enthusiasm. But it is in the coming few years in particular that you have the opportunity, under divine law, to use the advantages of an education and mental maturity to reflect on this. Up until Now, you really didn't have much of an opportunity, but Now, you do.

In some senses, maybe, your opportunity has been delayed or compromised by odd circumstances. Your class will go down in history as having a large chunk ripped out of your high school experience. Other classes have had to endure difficulties.

If you examine the banners behind you, there is a banner of a class that dealt with the Spanish Flu, more dangerous than covid. There is the banner of a class that sent members to World War I, some of whom did not return, and likewise with World War II. And over there are banners of classes that graduated into the Great Depression. Other graduating classes suffered subtler, but perhaps even more damaging, setbacks.

Despite that, I think you are ready. Maybe you have had to, and will have to, work a little harder than you otherwise might, to catch up on some things. But Now it is permitted . . . to continue your education in whatever form it may take, to build a career, build a family, build a life, and most importantly and crucial to it all, to consciously decide what you believe, hopefully with the Golden Rule at the core, and to do all these other things in accordance with that kind of faith.

So someday, return for a graduation, or Charter Day. Look at your banner on the wall. Remember that right Now you consciously decided that your

commencement year would be a great year; a year of engaging in your interests, a year of accomplishment, a year in which your enthusiastic engagement made time seem to stand still but also to pass in a flash. After all, time flies when you're having fun, but a commencement address can go on forever.

Let's you and I commence.



ERIK ODHNER

during his 44-year career at the Academy, taught courses in History (at all levels), Economics, Civics, Geography and Latin (at all levels). Among many duties he has been Curriculum Coordinator; Accreditation Coordinator (1993, 2003, 2013, 2020), and Summer Institutes Director. He and his wife, Danielle (de Chazal), live in Bryn Athyn.

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Walking in Someone Else's Shoes: Fostering Empathy at Glencairn Museum

This article was adapted from an essay in Glencairn Museum News published online (May 2, 2022, www.glencairnmuseum.org). See photos on page 351.

Over the past several decades, museum professionals across the United States and abroad have been exploring ways to make museums more accessible to their visitors by becoming less “object-centered” and more “human-centered.” At Glencairn Museum we are developing an interpretive approach that includes the goal of fostering empathy – a term that is sometimes defined as “walking in someone else’s shoes.”

According to Jordan S. Potash, editor-in-chief of *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association*:

Museums have the potential to serve as communal gathering places in which visitors encounter new perspectives, challenge preconceived notions, and develop personal connections to social issues. Implied in these ideas is that viewers must be able to understand another’s circumstances, appreciate their emotional state, and perhaps feel moved to take action. In other words, the bridge between viewer and subject is empathy. (“*Response Art: Using Creative Activity to Deepen Exhibit Engagement*,” in *Fostering Empathy Through Museums*. 77)

Glencairn Museum’s mission is founded on principles within the theological works of Emanuel Swedenborg. Key concepts include the belief that people throughout history have experienced genuine connections to God; that in God’s providence there are universal spiritual concepts through which people may be led to heaven; and that religious life should be expressed through kindness and useful service.

The Museum interprets art, artifacts and other cultural expressions of faith as illustrations of religious beliefs and practices around the world and through time. There is a beautiful variety in the way that people from various cultures

and faiths have answered the enduring spiritual questions that all humans share in our common endeavor to find meaning and purpose in our lives.

While celebrating this diversity of religious expression, the Museum's interpretive approach also aims to bring to light what unites all people as human beings. Our exhibitions, programs and tours are designed to stimulate reflection, build understanding and foster empathy by recognizing these universal spiritual concepts within diverse religious traditions.

According to Crispin Paine, author of *Religious Objects in Museums: Private Lives and Public Duties*, "museums should make explicit the religious meaning of the objects in their care, both out of concern for the feelings of people to whom such objects are significant, and in order to help visitors understand them more fully."

By creating opportunities for Glencairn's visitors to encounter religions that differ from their own, we hope they will go home with a deeper understanding and appreciation of them. And because the Glencairn Museum collection includes works of art from both ancient and modern religions, we hope that engaging with these objects will help our visitors "walk in the shoes of" religious practitioners, both past and present.

But how can museum educators help visitors cultivate empathetic feelings for people who practiced their religion thousands of years ago? In an essay for the book, *Religion in Museums: Global and Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (2017), Ed Gyllenhaal, Glencairn Museum's curator, suggests one possible approach:

For example, ancient Egyptian beliefs and practices relating to the afterlife often appear mysterious and bizarre to museum visitors. An educator in a museum's Egyptian gallery may therefore, intentionally or unintentionally, find himself or herself emphasizing the 'otherness' of Egyptian funerary religion while interpreting tomb reliefs and objects from burial chambers. However, in doing so the educator will have missed an opportunity to provide a space for the cultivation of empathetic feelings within the group toward the 'other' religion. What if, instead, the educator were to ask the group if they would be willing to share what they know and value about funerary prayers, rituals and monuments from their own religious traditions? While in many instances these will differ greatly from ancient Egyptian beliefs and practices, there will also likely be similarities. Many funerary customs – past and present – meet the same human needs to grieve and to pay tribute to loved ones who have passed on. (*Religion at Glencairn Museum: Past, Present, and Future*)

In the case of contemporary religions, one of the best ways for museums to generate interfaith understanding is to provide visitors with opportunities to encounter actual religious practitioners from source communities. For example, nearly every year since 2010, as part of Glencairn's annual Sacred Arts Festival, the Venerable Lama Losang Samten has been invited to create a Tibetan Buddhist sand mandala in Glencairn's Great Hall.

Samten also works with Museum staff to build a large altar near the sand mandala platform. The altar includes Buddhist objects from the Glencairn Museum collection alongside Samten's own traditional implements such as offering bowls, incense, bells, beads and textiles painted with the eight auspicious symbols of Tibetan Buddhism.

In the early 1980s, Samten was a master of ritual dance and sand mandalas, and also the personal attendant to His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama. In 1988, he was asked by the Dalai Lama to demonstrate the creation of a sand mandala for a Western audience – an unprecedented event that took place at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. Since then, Samten has created sand mandalas at a variety of venues throughout the United States, including many museums. In a 2014 interview with *Glencairn Museum News*, Samten said:

When I first came to the United States in 1988, of course, the sand mandala I displayed was my main purpose. But personally, in my heart, another reason for coming was my desire to truly learn more about Christianity and Judaism. The more I learn, the more I see similarities, and this is such a wonderful thing. . . . We tend to have a problem if we don't really know another religion well, if we only know it superficially, and miss the true message of that religion" (*Glencairn Museum News, Number 4, 2014, Tibetan Sand Mandala at Glencairn Museum: An Interview with the Venerable Lama Losang Samten*)

In June, 2016, Elif Gökçığdem, Ph.D., a historian of Islamic art, traveled to Glencairn to spend a day with the Museum staff exchanging ideas about empathy-building in museums. In recent years, Gökçığdem has become a thought leader in the area of empathy and its role in informal learning platforms (museums, zoos and similar institutions). She has edited two groundbreaking books on the subject: *Fostering Empathy Through Museums* (Rowman and Littlefield) and *Designing for Empathy: Perspectives on the Museum Experience* (American Alliance of Museums & Rowman and Littlefield).

In November, 2019, Gökçığdem led the "Designing for Empathy Summit" in Washington, D.C. The summit brought together museum professionals, artists

and scientists to share the latest research and evidence-based approaches to empathy-building. Christine McDonald, who at the time was Head of Education and Program Development at Glencairn, attended the summit on behalf of the Museum. She said:

It was such an honor to be part of this collective inquiry into the nuances of empathy and the role it plays in shaping our experience of ourselves and the world. The summit provided a much-needed space for professionals across disciplines to come together and commit to researching, testing and sharing ways in which we can contribute to strengthening empathetic awareness and abilities through experience. As a museum educator and experience designer at Glencairn Museum, I came away from this shared time deeply inspired, and equipped with new ideas and resources that immediately impacted our programming.

In April, 2021, Glencairn hosted its own virtual *Designing for Empathy* workshop on the theme: *Concept to Action: What is Empathy and What Does It Look Like in a Museum?* Gökçığdem was the keynote speaker, and Glencairn Museum Director Brian Henderson served as host and discussion moderator.

One of the presenters, Zorana Ivcevic, Ph.D., a senior research scientist at the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, addressed the workshop's theme from a scientific perspective. She studies the role of emotion and emotional intelligence in creativity and well-being, as well as how to use the arts to promote emotion and creativity skills. She stated:

Schools should not be the only places for learning. . . . Because museum-goers are not explicitly evaluated on their behavior and thinking, they are likely to feel freer to engage their curiosity, making museums well-positioned to stimulate the exploration of different perspectives that is key for developing empathy. (Zorana Ivcevic and Fundación Botín, introduction, *Designing for Empathy: Perspectives on the Museum Experience*)

In October 2021, Glencairn Museum co-sponsored a virtual *Designing for Empathy Summit and Workshop*, alongside The Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, The George Washington University Museum, The Museum of Us, The Seattle Aquarium, and several other institutions. Brian Henderson participated in a panel discussion about how empathy manifests itself in our world, and how cultural institutions can help cultivate it. He noted:

During their visit to Glencairn, we encourage visitors to attempt to understand other religions 'from the inside' – that is, to prioritize

the perspectives and testimonies of the believers themselves, rather than our own preconceived notions about them. This does not mean that we change our own beliefs, but that we gain a deeper understanding of how other people have answered the universal questions that unify us as human beings. At the same time, this empathetic approach may lead to self-reflection, bringing our own beliefs into sharper focus.

The following year, in March 2022, Glencairn hosted an in-person workshop led by Gökçığdem. Using objects from the Glencairn Museum collection, *Designing for Empathy II*, it encouraged participants to develop empathy-building skills through group discussions, prototyping exercises and facilitator feedback. The workshop explored the theme, *Othering, Belonging, and Becoming One*. According to Gökçığdem:

In a time when our world is facing complex social and environmental problems, exploring our capacity to hold empathy and love for each other is more essential than ever. Taking action beyond divisiveness and fragmentation toward healing and unity, is a choice – a choice that requires empathy: our ability to imagine another's feelings, emotions and perspective. Empathy can be a portal for love, and the best way to learn it, is through experience.

Certainly empathy, as both a concept and a practice, is something that is vital, not only for museums, but for any organization that exists for the purpose of improving people's lives. Workshop participant Nina Dewees, who works for Bryn Athyn Church, shared her thoughts with us about her experience at Glencairn's workshop this past March:

I was deeply moved and inspired by the *Designing for Empathy II* workshop and Elif Gökçığdem's compassionate leadership. In my role for Bryn Athyn Church as Support and Engagement Coordinator, it is essential that I show up daily with empathy. I need to appreciate and understand where people are coming from – feeling and acknowledging their hopes, needs, values and experience. Elif sensitively arranged and shepherded the workshop activities, which built on each other to gradually develop trust among the participants and led to many personal and professional insights. Sincere thanks to Glencairn Museum and Elif, for creating this opportunity for such profound learning and personal expansion.

How can we design interpretations at Glencairn that encourage our visitors to explore the perspectives and feelings of the people who created the magnificent works of art they encounter throughout the building? We will continue to explore new theoretical models and interpretive methods for the purpose of creating exhibitions, tours and programs that – we sincerely hope – will help build understanding and cultivate empathy.

Abuse in Marriage: A Cry Out of the Silence

Susan C. Hill

As a church, we need to begin to engage in a loving, wise and useful conversation on abuse in marriage. My hope is that together we can shine the light of truth on the harm the hells have been causing in marriages and find a way to help those being harmed.

The obvious harm is to the abused spouse, and to the innocent children in the family who are witnessing the abuse of their parent or who are also being abused themselves. It is vitally important that we support victims as they talk openly about the abuse they are suffering or have suffered in the past. It is not disloyal to talk about abuse, as it is not disloyal to talk about mental illness or addiction. Nothing will change and abuse in marriage will continue and harm future generations if we don't shine the light of truth on this very serious evil.

It is also important to recognize the serious spiritual harm that the spouses who choose to behave abusively are causing to themselves. There is no lying in our "book of life"; the Lord sees everything. Many abusers experienced past abuse themselves as children, and many abusers did not. Past abuse is never, ever an excuse for abusing another person. However, it is very important that we support abusers who sincerely want to stop their abusive behaviors and want to heal from any past

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abuse they may have experienced as a child.

Although it is much more common for husbands to abuse their wives (the statistics show that the vast majority of abusers are men), there are also men who are abused by women. The love of dominion is a temptation for both sexes, but it is much easier for a man to achieve dominion (e.g. physical, financial) over a woman than vice versa. And it is not uncommon for an abusive husband to say, and even seemingly convince himself, that he is being “abused” by his wife, when what he really means is that she sometimes fights back against his dominion and is not willing to be subjugated.

MY STORY:

I had a loving 13-year marriage. I also had an abusive 18-year marriage. Both of these marriages were to the same man. My husband and I dated for five years while attending college together. We spent the next 13 years happily married as we pursued careers, went through graduate school together, and started a family. After the arrival of our second child, my husband’s behavior changed dramatically. I spent the next 18 years in an abusive marriage (primarily emotional abuse, but also physical abuse). Just as our children approached adulthood, my husband abruptly stopped most of his abusive behaviors.

In my personal situation, my husband’s behavior was like that of the fictional characters Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. His behavior was exemplary around everyone but his wife and children; but when our family was in private, his behavior was very different. In private, he was often mean, contemptuous, belittling, intimidating, and even physically scary. If I stood up for myself, he retaliated with verbal attacks, punitive punishments or intimidation.

I learned to emotionally protect myself against his abusive behavior, but his willingness to hurt the children was his one, very effective way to get my compliance. My husband had us all walking on eggshells. Although he said he loved me and loved our children, he was willing to engage in abusive behaviors in order to get what he wanted.

I struggled to figure out exactly what it was that he wanted. And what did he want? He wanted his way. He didn’t want to compromise, or take turns, or share, or accommodate, or do anything he didn’t want to do. Wanting our way is a common feeling that we all have on occasion. The difference between an abusive spouse and a non-abusive spouse is the behavior they choose when they experience these normal feelings. Abusers tell themselves that they are entitled and justified to engage in ways that satisfy their own needs, regardless of the effect on others. The truth is that no one is entitled to inflict abuse on another.

RELEVANT INFORMATION FROM THE WRITINGS AND FROM AN EXPERT

The Writings describe this selfish love of dominion in marriage and the significant impact it has on both the abusive spouse, the spouse who is abused, and the marriage relationship:

The love of dominion of one over the other entirely takes away conjugal love and its heavenly delight, for . . . conjugal love and its delight consists in the will of one being that of the other, and this mutually and reciprocally. This is destroyed by love of dominion in marriage, since he who domineers wishes his will alone to be in the other, and nothing of the other's will to be reciprocally in himself, which destroys all mutuality, and thus all sharing of any love and its delight one with the other. And yet this sharing and consequent conjunction are the interior delight itself that is called blessedness in marriage. This blessedness, with everything that is heavenly and spiritual in conjugal love, is so completely extinguished by love of dominion as to destroy even all knowledge of it; and if that love were referred to, it would be held in such contempt that any mention of blessedness from that source would excite either laughter or anger.

When one wills or loves what the other wills or loves, each has freedom, since all freedom is of love; but where there is dominion no one has freedom; one is a servant, and the other who rules is also a servant, for he is led as a servant by the lust of domineering. But all this is wholly beyond the comprehension of one who does not know what the freedom of heavenly love is. (Heaven and Hell 380)

Most people don't really understand what an "abusive" marriage looks like and feels like, nor do they expect to find themselves in such a situation. I certainly didn't. When my husband's behavior toward me first became abusive, I thought that we were just having a difficult state in our previously healthy marriage of many years. Gradually I came to realize that his abusive way of treating me was a new pattern of behavior and was very different than a difficult state in a healthy marriage.

The best book I found on abuse in marriage is *Why Does He Do That? Inside the Minds of Angry and Controlling Men* by Lundy Bancroft. It helped me to understand the reasons why a man chooses to abuse his wife. Before I read this book, I really could not understand why a man would choose to risk losing the love and respect of his wife by abusing her.

So how does the love of dominion in marriage take root? How does a loving husband become an abuser?

From Why Does He Do That? by Lundy Bancroft:

One of the questions about abuse that I am asked most frequently is: when an abusive man is being charming at the beginning of a relationship, is he already thinking ahead to abusing the woman? Does he have it all planned out? Is he deliberately hooking her emotionally so he can be cruel to her later? The answer is usually no. The abuser doesn't picture himself yelling, degrading her, or hurling objects at her. As he falls in love, he dreams of a happy future of conjugal bliss, just as the woman does.

So if he isn't laying plans to hurt her, what is going on in his mind? First, he is gazing longingly at the image he holds of the future, where the woman meets all of his needs, is beautiful and sexy at all times of the day and night, has no needs of her own, and is in awe of his brilliance and charm. He desires a woman who will cater to him and never complain about anything he does or darken his day with frustration or unhappiness about her own life.

The abusive man doesn't expose these self-focused fantasies to his new partner. In fact, he is largely unaware of them himself. So she has no way of knowing that he is looking more for a personal caretaker than for a partner. In fact, abusers tend to use the language of mutuality during the dating period. He may truly believe his own promises, because he wants to see himself as a generous and thoughtful partner, one who does not use or disrespect women. Later, when he begins to control the woman and take advantage of her, he will find ways to convince himself that it's not happening or that it is her fault. Abuse is not his goal, but control is, and he find himself using abuse to gain the control he feels he has a right to. [Often an abuser] doesn't consider manipulation abusive.

So how does a woman know when her difficult marriage has become an abusive marriage? (i.e. Is the way he is treating me abuse?)

More from Lundy Bancroft:

The defining point of abuse is when the man starts to exercise power over the woman in a way that causes harm to her and creates a privileged status for him. The lines where subtler kinds of mistreatment end and abuse begins include the following actions:

(1) He retaliates against you for complaining about his behavior. (He punishes you for standing up to him. He doesn't believe that you have the right to defy him and he tries to hurt you so that next time you won't.)

(2) He tells you that your objections to his mistreatment are your own problems. (He discredits your complaints of mistreatment. He seems to believe

that you have no right to object to how he treats you. And you can't be in a fair and healthy relationship if you can't raise grievances.)

(3) He gives apologies that sound insincere or angry, and he demands that you accept them.

(4) He blames you for the impact of his behavior. (He can reverse cause and effect in a mind-twisting way.)

(5) It's never the right time, or the right way, to bring things up.

(6) He undermines your progress in life.

(7) He denies what he did.

(8) He justifies his hurtful or frightening acts or says that you "made him do it." (The abuser uses your behavior as an excuse for his own.)

(9) He touches you in anger or puts you in fear in other ways.

(10) He coerces you into having sex or sexually assaults you.

(11) His controlling, disrespectful, or degrading behavior is a pattern.

(12) You show signs of being abused. Here are questions to ask yourself.

[a] Are you afraid of him?

[b] Are you getting distant from friends or family because he makes those relationships difficult?

[c] Is your level of energy and motivation declining, or do you feel depressed?

[d] Is your self-opinion declining so that you are always fighting to be good enough and prove yourself?

[e] Do you find yourself constantly preoccupied with the relationship and how to fix it?

[f] Do you feel like you can't do anything right?

[g] Do you feel like the problems in your relationship are all your fault?

[h] Do you repeatedly leave arguments feeling like you've been messed with but can't figure out exactly why?

Note that the above distinguishing features of abuse include little mention of anger. While chronic anger can be one warning sign of abusiveness, the two are sometimes quite separate. There are cool, calculating abusers who rarely explode in anger, for example, and at the same time some non-abusive men feel or express anger often. You might decide that you don't want to be with a partner who is angry all the time – but it isn't abuse in itself.

For some abusers, their continually repeating cycle of abuse falls into a pattern made up of roughly four stages. These include the building of tension, the abuse incident, the reconciliation, and a period of calm. During the reconciliation phase, an abusive man often expresses regret for his abusive behavior. But is he really sorry?

Following is a quote from Lundy Bancroft:

When an abusive man feels sorry for his abusive behavior, his regrets collide with his entitlement. The abuser's self-focus and victim blaming orientation tend to cause his remorse to fade. So in a day or two his guilt is vanquished, driven out by his internal excuse-making skills. Most abusers are truly sorry – though perhaps largely for themselves. The abuser's actions have the effect of keeping the family focused on his needs. Remorse usually tends to decline as abusive incidents pile up. The genuine aspect fades as the abusive man grows accustomed to acting abusively and tuning out his partner's hurt feelings. They feel ashamed of having behaved like cruel dictators and want to revert quickly to the role of benign dictators, as if that somehow makes them much better people.

Then comes the most important question of all: Is he likely to stop his abuse?

More from Lundy Bancroft: Of course, an abusive man can stop his abuse any time he decides to . . . but very few decide to. Why? Because “abusers attach themselves tightly to their privileges and come to find the prospect of having equal rights and responsibilities, living on the same plane as their partners, almost unbearable. They resent women who require them to change and persuade themselves that they are victims of unfair treatment because they are losing their lopsided luxuries. But an abusive man can't change unless he is

willing to relinquish that special status.”

In addition, an abusive man must confront “his lack of empathy for his partner and his children.” In order to truly change, he has to listen to and empathize with the feelings of those he has harmed, and he has to see and honestly acknowledge the damage he has done. Few abusive men are willing to do this. When faced with the necessity to change both internally as well as externally, most abusive men refuse.

DOCTRINAL TRUTHS THAT HELPED ME

Eighteen years of being treated abusively by the husband I had dearly loved and felt dearly loved by was as painful and devastating as it sounds. But it also forced me to seek a much deeper relationship with the Lord out of pure necessity. There are several doctrinal truths that have been especially helpful to me and that I have had to learn to live rather than just know.

(1) We are not good or evil; instead, we are vessels. We have both good and evil influences and we are continuously choosing which we predominately want to flow into us. This choice can be changed at any time. We are fully responsible for our behavior. It does not matter what another person says or does, we remain fully responsible for our behavior, both in thought and deed.

(2) Loving another person does not mean loving the evil in them; it means loving the good in them from the Lord. And while we are in this natural world, there is always some good in a person from the Lord. The Lord and the angels see all of our faults with great clarity, but they focus on the good in us from the Lord.

(3) People who choose evil are enslaved by that evil, and evil destroys our eternal happiness and peace; people who choose good are free, and good brings eternal happiness and peace.

(4) Repentance: The process of repentance requires admitting our sin and accepting personal responsibility, followed by asking the Lord for help to change, and then making the change. Making external changes in behavior without admitting our sin and taking personal responsibility is

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not really repentance, as external changes alone can be done out of self-interest. Until we complete all the steps required for repentance, we will continue to experience the spiritual consequences of the harm we intentionally or callously caused to others.

(5) Judging: We are to judge the behavior of ourselves and our family members with love and wisdom, not unlike how we judge the behavior of children and how the Lord judges us. However, there are consequences for bad behavior, as children and the people in hell are well aware.

(6) Forgiveness: Our own trespasses will be forgiven in the manner we forgive the people who trespass against us. To me, this means letting myself experience the negative thoughts and feelings I have in response to being hurt by my abuser. I acknowledge them, experience them for as long as is useful, and then I ask the Lord for the wisdom and strength to discern which ones are not good for me and to let go of the ones that hurt me spiritually (e.g. wishing pain to another person, resentment, self-justification, etc.). I hold my abuser responsible for his own behavior, but not for my reaction. My reaction is my responsibility. Forgiveness does not require forgetting or reconciliation, but it does require love and compassion.

MORE OF MY STORY:

I want to mention a few important things here. Many people ask me why I did not divorce my husband when his behavior became abusive. I did not divorce him for the welfare of our children. Because of his exemplary public behavior, he would have gotten joint custody of our children. It was very clear to me that he would have continued to abuse them as retribution for divorcing him and to gain my acquiescence to his demands during and after the divorce. I wasn't willing for our children to go through that abuse alone. At least while we were all in the same household, I could somewhat protect our children and also see when harm was done to them and provide loving comfort, support and guidance. As an attorney it was clear to me that I had no good choices from a legal perspective, only bad ones.

Also, at the very beginning of my husband's abusive behavior, I realized that someone in our family had to behave in a mature, loving manner so that our children had a role model to follow. And since that role model obviously wasn't going to be my husband, I realized that it would have to be me. My love for our children was what the Lord used to teach me patience, to support me in telling the truth with love, and to sustain me through 18 years of abuse. I felt constrained by my external circumstances, as we all are to some extent, but I felt free to choose my reaction.

I love the wonderful qualities in my husband that are from the Lord. And I

was very angry, deeply hurt and am still deeply saddened by the abusive way he behaved toward me and our children for 18 years. When I saw how easy it was for him to stop his abusive behavior after 18 years, I was even more angry – angry that he could have stopped his abusive behaviors any time but chose not to.

I spent a year and half being extremely angry and grieving the pain and suffering that my husband's selfishness had put our children and myself through. Then I got tired of being angry and asked the Lord to lift that burden. I forgive my husband. I love the good in him from the Lord, and I hold him fully responsible for the choices he made and continues to make. And I do the same for myself. In fact, I am currently helping my immunocompromised husband through a life-threatening illness and several years of gradual, and hopefully full, recovery.

My husband is not a monster. He is a man who made very selfish choices for 18 years and intentionally abused and hurt the wife and children whom he loved. Now, my husband would like to pretend that his abusive behavior rarely happened or wasn't that bad. But such pretending or minimizing is unhealthy and stands in the way of him taking full responsibility for his abusive behavior.

Repentance requires acknowledgement of our sin and taking full responsibility for our evil intentions and behavior. And the Writings make absolutely clear that there is no avoiding repentance on the path to heaven. It takes a lot of courage for an abusive man to face the pain and suffering that he caused to the wife and children that he loved and yet hurt so deeply with his abusive behavior; but that is what the Lord requires us to do.

My love for our children was what the Lord used to teach me patience, to support me in telling the truth with love, and to sustain me through

CONCLUSION

There is no excuse for abuse. There are certainly some explanations for abusive behavior that deserve our compassion and understanding, but they do not provide a free pass to abuse. Help is available for people with issues involving alcohol, drugs, mental health, childhood abuse, trauma, or any other issue. If you are engaging in abusive behaviors, please get help. It is the most courageous, mature, helpful action you could take, both for your family's welfare and for your own spiritual welfare.

If you have physically or emotionally abused someone in the past, stop

If you are engaging in abusive behaviors, please get help. It is the most courageous, mature, helpful action you could take, both for your family's welfare and for your own spiritual welfare.

denying it, stop minimizing it, and stop making excuses. Take responsibility for your past abusive behavior and acknowledge how hurtful it was to your family, including the children you love. Your willingness to admit the truth of your abuse is essential for your own spiritual welfare and may help to break the generational cycle of abuse being passed on to your children and grandchildren.

NOTE FROM A COUNSELING PROFESSIONAL - Mark Carlson

Getting help if you feel you are abused can seem daunting. It can also be frightening, particularly as it requires you to "tell" another person those things which you have been made to believe are secrets. Professional counselors are governed by the same privacy laws as other health care professionals. Licensed counselors are bound by confidentiality and are not able to talk about anything said in the counseling session with anyone, with few exceptions (e.g. if there is suspected abuse or neglect related to children, elders or dependent adults; if you are of danger to yourself or others; if the counselor receives a court subpoena for a release of records).

When looking for a counselor, it is important to find someone who has experience with trauma and with whom you feel comfortable. It is preferable that the counselor have experience with domestic abuse. It is okay if you don't talk about everything at first; it can take time to build a trust relationship with someone else.

Those who have experienced abuse have been taught that their experience is not valid or that they should/should not feel a certain way. Within a trusted counseling relationship, you will learn that your feelings and experience are both valid and real. The counselor will not tell you what you should do, but can help you to fully realize the best path for you and to help you see yourself as a person of value and worthy of respect.

Some countries have a National Domestic Violence Hotline which you can call to get confidential support, such as (800)799-7233 in the United States. There are also websites such as <https://www.thehotline.org/> and <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help#get-help-and-support> that provide useful information and support. If you want help with an abusive relationship, find out what resources are available to help you and then reach out for the help you need.

MARK CARLSON

is a masters level Pennsylvania Licensed MFT (Marriage and Family Therapist) with more than 40 years of experience. He is trained to work with individuals, couples and families.

Contact: mark_carlson@verizon.net

Confessions of Faith and Statements of Purpose

Ordination Service – Bryn Athyn Cathedral – May 29, 2022

THE REV. STEVEN GUNTHER

I believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the one God of heaven and earth. I believe that He created the world and the human race so that we may live together in His heavenly kingdom, experiencing the immense peace and joy that comes with receiving and reciprocating His unceasing love. I believe that the Lord has given us the Word in the Old and New Testaments which teaches us how to live the life of heavenly uses, and that He has given us the Heavenly Doctrine through the works written and published by Emanuel Swedenborg – which is the Lord's Second Coming – so that we may enter with understanding into the layers of meaning contained in the Old and New Testaments and accept them in genuine freedom according to our rationality. These layers of meaning serve to help us as we grow, mature, and walk our way through the life-long process of regeneration as we work to shun evils, turning away from our selfish hereditary nature and focus ourselves on loving the Lord and our neighbor.

I believe that the Lord is never angry and never delights in the punishment of anyone, but rather He always looks to our potential to grow. I believe that His influence through both the truths contained in the Word and Heavenly Doctrine and His Divine Providence is constantly at work bending us and leading us toward good. I believe that heavenly joy may be experienced on earth through the life of charity and the development of true married love.

As I enter into this use I am committed to bringing the Lord's truths to people where they are so that they may understand and accept the Lord's guidance for themselves in freedom. Likewise, I am committed to supporting and helping people as they work to apply those truths to their lives as they grow and mature. Through teaching and leading I hope to help people foster healthy relationships with the Lord so that they may experience the genuine peace which comes from living a heavenly life.

In both my personal and professional life I seek to uphold for myself and inspire in others the simple standard the Lord set out in the sixth chapter of Micah:

*He has told you, O man, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, to love mercy
and to walk humbly with your God?*

THE REV. CALVIN HEINRICHS

I believe that the Lord God, the Savior Jesus Christ, is the one God of heaven and earth, and that in Him is a Divine trinity of perfect love, wisdom and use. (*cf. True Christian Religion 167, Divine Love and Wisdom 230, Matthew 22:37, John 20:28*)

I believe the Heavenly Doctrines for the New Church are in fact the promised Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in conjunction with the Old and New Testaments, completes the Lord's Divine Revelation to His people. Contained in His successive Revelations are the laws of life that lead to eternal happiness. (*cf. True Christian Religion 776-780, Matthew 24:30*)

I believe that the New Church is the crown of all the churches that have hitherto existed on the earth, because it is to worship one visible God, Who is all-powerful, all-knowing, everywhere present, and can be pictured as a man spreading forth His hands and inviting all who are willing into His arms. (*cf. True Christian Religion 787, 49; Revelation 3:20*)

I believe that evils should not be done, because they are of the devil and from the devil, and that shunning evils as sins against the Lord is the first principle of charity, and consequently that repenting from sins is the first step and the primary duty of the Church in order that sins may be forgiven. (*cf. True Christian Religion 3; 510:2, Charity 1*)

I believe that genuine Christian charity must be discriminate, intelligent and prudent lest a person out of ignorance enables what is evil and hurtful. Thus, that there should always be a perfect balance of mercy and judgment and of good and truth in order to treat our neighbor in a way that is truly loving and just. (*cf. Charity 50-51, New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine 84-85, Psalm 25:10, 85:10; Arcana Coelestia 2258*)

I believe in the eternity of marriage and that the conjugal union of one man with one wife is the precious jewel of human life and the repository of the Christian religion, and that true Conjugal Love can only exist in a marriage if the Lord is the center of it. In order for the New Church to thrive and for Conjugal Love to be restored once again upon this earth we must hold these ideals as sacred and defend them with zeal. (*cf. Conjugal Love 457, 70, 80:2, 81:5*)

I believe that women and men are created to be entirely equal, deliberately

distinct, and completely conjunctive, and consequently that there are different roles and duties appropriate to each. To the extent that we as a Church can honor the unique feminine and masculine abilities given by the Lord to each and learn to work together in a way that is faithful to the teachings in the Heavenly Doctrines, the Church will be blessed by the Lord and flourish. (cf. *Genesis 1, 2, Conjugal Love 32-33, 90-91, 125, 157-175, 193-195*)

I believe that a heaven from the human race is the essential end of the Lord's Divine providence and consequently having children, educating them in the light of the Word, and raising them to become angels of heaven are the primary uses in marriage. (cf. *Genesis 1:28, Conjugal Love 387, 183:4-5, Arcana Coelestia 2039; Divine Providence 27*)

I believe that in order to achieve this primary goal in the Lord's creation, we must teach our children the Lord's words diligently, and talk of them in our houses, when we walk by the way, when we lie down and when we rise up. (cf. *Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Revelation 22:14, Psalm 23:6*)

I believe that an affirmative attitude leads to all intelligence and wisdom, which is done by believing that the truths in the Lord's Word are true, simply because He said them. (cf. *Arcana Coelestia 2568:4, 2588, 6479*)

I believe that collectively we must be willing to take a stand for the Word and its healing truths. We must be willing to defend those truths even when it is not popular, and not resign them to being out of date, culturally bound, or even in error. Instead, may I say: "All that the Lord has spoken we will do and hear!" (cf. *Apocalypse Revealed 936, Mark 8:36, II Kings 23:2-3, Exodus 24:7, Miracles and Signs 11*)

I acknowledge that I am a morose and stiff-necked person, hard of heart, and that of myself I am utterly unworthy, even vile and filthy, but that the Lord from His infinite mercy continually withdraws and holds me back from hell and pray that I might be a suitable instrument in His hands to serve the people of His New Church. (cf. *Exodus 33:5, Mark 3:5, Arcana Coelestia 1594:4, 2327, 3994, 7550, John 15:5, Matthew 19:23*)

I acknowledge that as I take on this new office that I am but a little child and do not know how to go out or how to come in and I pray that He will give me a wise and understanding heart to discern between good and evil so that I might ably serve the people of His Church. (cf. *I Kings 3:7-12*)

I pray that the Lord gives me the strength to do the His will and not my own, and that whenever I hear the Lord calling me to serve His New Church, saying: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" That I may answer the call and say, "Here I am! Send me." (cf. *Isaiah 6:8*)

THE REV. HYUN-JIN YANG

I believe in one God in heaven and on earth who is the Creator of everything and who reigns in all things. And He is the Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and Savior.

I believe that He is present in every person, evil as well as good, and that it is a person's response by living according to order that allows him or her to be in Him. (*True Christian Religion* 70:1-2)

I believe that God created us in such a way that we, no matter who we are and where we stand, can respond in our freedom to His presence and work. We can do so by shunning evils as sins against God as if of ourselves but believe that it is the Lord who does so in us. And this brings about the conjunction between the Lord and us. (*True Christian Religion* 3)

As the single goal of creation is a heaven from the human race (*Divine Love and Wisdom* 330), it is also our life goal to progress toward heaven, that is, toward love of the neighbor and the Lord. (*See Arcana Coelestia* 3016) And as we do so, the Lord freely gives us blessed states of good, truth, innocence, and peace.

The Threefold Word

I believe in the Lord's Second Coming, in and by means of the Heavenly Doctrine for the New Church. (*True Christian Religion* 200, 776, 779)

I believe that in the threefold Word, of the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the Heavenly Doctrine, the Lord shows Himself, His love for the human race, His mercy to share His life and its joy with us, and His endless calling of us to turn around and to meet with Him in His truth and guidance.

The Lord's Divine Providence

I believe in the Lord's Divine providence. The Lord "leads us and makes provision so that all that happens, whether sad or joyful, may bring us what is good." (*Arcana Coelestia* 6303)

I believe that "He loves all people out of the love in Him, and He guides all out of the wisdom in Him" (*Divine Love and Wisdom* 29), and that His providence in guiding us "partakes equally of Divine love and Divine wisdom." (*Ibid.* 37)

The Function of the Priesthood

Lord, help me, so that I can always guard against my ego, love of self, dominion of others and conceit in self-intelligence as evils, and shun them as sins against God. (*True Christian Religion* 661:6; *Divine Providence* 313) I believe that the Lord is more present in me in times of temptations than any other times, and

that He will lift me up again, again, and over again. (*Arcana Coelestia* 2819)
And I will not yield in temptations. Help me, so that I can serve as nothing but a humble servant who goes to You, Your Word, and Your wisdom. Strengthen my heart and will, so that I seek Your will, not my will. Let my heart not be deterred from studying Your Word daily not for the sake of study, but for the sake of learning how to better love the church and people that I will serve, in wisdom and prudence that is from You alone. And let this servant do the work of teaching truths and thereby leading to the good of life honestly, justly and faithfully. (*New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine* 315; *Charity* 160)

Give me genuine affections for reaching out to people, in and outside of the church, and being willing to see where they are and to march together toward the way of Your truth and thereby Your love. (*Apocalypse Revealed* 933)

Hear my prayer: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." (*Psalms* 51:10)

Church News

Compiled by Bruce Henderson

MINISTERS MEETINGS

General Church ministers from around the world met in Bryn Athyn the week of June 20-24 – the first international meeting in several years due to covid restrictions. These meetings occurred just as this issue was going to press. A full report will appear in the September/October issue of *New Church Life*.

BRYN ATHYN COLLEGE COMMENCEMENT AND AWARDS

Bryn Athyn College of the New Church awarded 57 degrees at its 145th commencement on May 28. This included 30 Bachelor of Arts degrees (12 *cum laude*), one Bachelor of Fine Arts, 14 Bachelor of Science (eight *cum laude*), nine Master of Science in Special Education, and three Master of Divinity.

The graduates represented five countries (Australia, Canada, Cuba, South Korea and the United States) and six states (Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania.) See photos of the commencement ceremonies on pages 348 and 349

Charles Cole, who graduated from the Academy Boys School in 1981, served on the Academy Board of Trustees – including four years as Vice Chair – and is Managing Partner of a law firm he founded in Washington, DC, spoke to the graduates about: *Prepare for Risks, Persistence and Course Changes, and Your Values Are Your Best Tool*. (See page 310)

Below is a list of the graduates and awards:

Bachelor of Arts (* indicates *cum laude*)

Aiden Quaglino – Brewster, New York	Haybert Louchie – Long Pond, PA
Alexis Mitchem – Trenton, New Jersey	James Cole – Clarksville, Maryland
Breca Lawing* -- Meadowbrook, PA	James Koniecki – Southampton, PA
Chloe Levan – Whitehall, Pennsylvania	Jettaka McWilliams* -- Philadelphia, PA
Danielle Hughes* -- New Freedom, PA	Jordan Brunne – Queensland, Australia
Derek Cronlund* -- Abington, Pennsylvania	Joseph Kees – Huntingdon Valley, PA
Douglas Naranjo* -- Havana, Cuba	Kailey Brower – Baldwin, New York
Elizabeth Allen* – Rydal, Pennsylvania	Maxwell Nelson – Shillington, PA
Eve Miller* -- Millville, New Jersey	Michael Jones – Tobyhanna, PA

Michael Varley – Philadelphia, PA Thomas Jackson* -- Bryn Athyn, PA
Nasir Mosley* -- Tobyhanna, PA Thomas Kozlowski Jr. – Olney, Maryland
Nora Connelly* -- Huntingdon Valley, PA Tristan Banks – Perkasie, Pennsylvania
Simone Raso – Westbury, New York Valysa Durandisse* -- Tobyhanna, PA
Stephanie Charles – Cheltenham, PA Zachary Pamaylaon – Aiea, Hawaii
Thomas Frazier – Mitchellville, MD

Bachelor of Fine Arts

William Gartner – Philadelphia, PA

Bachelor of Science

Ashley Rivera* - Southampton, PA Kailey MacDonald* -- Philadelphia, PA
Chelsea Czarnik* - Philadelphia, PA Savannah Zazulak – Philadelphia, PA
Gretchen Roscoe* - Bryn Athyn, PA Kiaeem Comegys – Allentown, PA
Dante Lanzetta – Howell, Pennsylvania Maylissa Clarke – Mount Holly, PA
Victoria Titano – Elkins Park, PA Danielle News – Bensalem, PA
Jenessa Lombardi* - Whiting, New Jersey Paulina Storck* -- Philadelphia, PA
John Tracey* - Jenkintown, PA Yuliya Hulyk* -- Philadelphia, PA

The valedictorian was **Eve Miller**.

Master of Science in Special Education

Aaliya Gunther – Bryn Athyn, PA Gracelyn Bullard – Boston, Massachusetts
Amber Gandy – Cheltenham, PA Cartina Hogue – Reading, PA
Colleen Day – Warminster, PA Susan Barber – Hatboro, PA
Elizabeth Larcher – Levittown, PA Wendy Tepoz-Pacio – Philadelphia, PA
Eric Higgins – Richboro, PA

Master of Divinity

Calvin Heinrichs – Ontario, Canada
HyauJin Yang – Seoul, South Korea
Steven Gunther – Bryn Athyn, PA

Steven Gunther was the valedictorian.

CHURCH NEWS

Scholarships and Awards for Academic Performance	Religion and Philosophy Department Award – Thomas Frazier
IAG Scholarships: Danielle Andreini, Ivan Clark, Kalie Soulsby	2022 Academic Award - Nora Connelly, Danielle Hughes
Biology Student Scholarships; Carling Brock, Trenton Hiatt	Athletic Awards Bryn Athyn Service Award: Kiaeem Comegys
Cole Foundation Human Society Award: John Grumbach	Academic Student-Athlete of the Year Ashley Rivera
Colonial Williamsburg Teacher Institute Scholarship: Ivan Clark, John Tracey	Nasir Mosley Student-Athlete of the Year Peyton Gormley
Dristy Farrell Fund Scholarship – Evelyn de Chazal, Anne Grace Glenn, Jennica Nobre, Elizabeth Parker	Tim Ragan Three conference championships
Spillman Farmer Architects Scholarship – Teagan Dewees	First ever – Individual championship in cross country – Rafe Williams
Science Department Award in Biology Kiaeem Comegys, Kailey MacDonald	First ever – Team championship in women’s soccer
Business Department Award Eve Miller	First ever – Team championship in women’s lacrosse
History and Human Society Department Award Derek Cronlund, Danielle Hughes	
Language and Literature Department Award – Nora Connelly	

ACADEMY SECONDARY SCHOOLS GRADUATION AND AWARDS

The Academy Secondary Schools graduated a smaller than usual class on June 11 – just 16 girls and 36 boys – but they were a spirited and accomplished group. Eight of the girls graduated with honors and 10 of the boys. The graduates hailed from Canada and China, as well as the United States, and from Illinois and New York in addition to Pennsylvania.

The commencement speaker was Erik Odhner, who retires this year after 44 years of distinguished service as a teacher in several disciplines. His commencement address, “Now It Is Permitted . . .” appears on page 314. (See graduation photos on page 350)

Below is a listing of the graduates and awards:

Graduates of the Girls School (* indicates With Honors)	Graduates of the Boys School (* indicates With Honors)
Angeliese Wahl* -- Philadelphia, PA	Anthony McCall – Philadelphia, PA
Annia Mejia – Philadelphia, PA	Brendan Johns* - Huntingdon Valley, PA
Celeste Friend* - Huntingdon Valley, PA	Christopher Fox* -Huntingdon Valley, PA
Deidré Bongers* -- Huntingdon Valley, PA	Dylan Coq – Queens, New York
Dylan Blumenthal* -- Abington, Pennsylvania	Gabe Harris – Philadelphia, PA
Emma Bryntesson* - Bryn Athyn, PA	Gavin Bochner – Bryn Athyn, PA
Genevieve McManus – Philadelphia, PA	Griffin Wyncoll – Mountain Grove, Ont.
Hira Tomlinson – Warminster, PA	Hayden Sabato – Philadelphia, PA
Jennica Russell* - Glenview, Illinois	Ian Zenak - Philadelphia, PA
Kiana Frazier – Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania	Isaiah Milien – Queens, New York
Leah Synnstedt – Hatboro, PA	Jack Joyner* - Hershey, PA
Maria Joseph – Philadelphia, PA	Kevin Li* - NingXia, China
Maya Earnest-Hunsiker* – Hatboro, PA	Levi McFall* - Hatboro, PA
Naida Navarro* - Bryn Athyn, PA	Logan Wilson* - Yardley, PA
Rebecca Clark – Abington, Pennsylvania	Malcolm Synnstedt* - Bryn Athyn
Sabrina Brock – Huntingdon Valley, PA	Maximilian Hoffman* - Bryn Athyn, PA
	Niko Boulajeris – Philadelphia, PA
Girls School	Orson Asplundh – Bryn Athyn, PA
The valedictorian was	Patrick McCabe – Churchville, PA
Emma Bryntesson	Pehri Rhodes* - Bryn Athyn, PA
	Ryan Blumenthal – Abington, PA
Boys School	Ryan Givhan – Huntingdon Valley, PA
The valedictorian was	Ryan Kelly – Hatboro, PA
Max Hoffman	Ryo Takano - Toronto, ON, Canada
	Stephen Steigerwalt – Warminster, PA
	Taj Odhiambo* - Brooklyn, NY

CHURCH NEWS

A Theta Alpha Gold Medal *Faculty Commendations:*
was awarded to
Deidré Bongers Girls School
Deidré Bongers

Honorary Girls School Diplomas **Emma Bryntesson**
were awarded to: **Angeliese Wahl**

Beth Laidlaw Bochner Boys School
Hilary Jane Bryntesson **Christopher Fox**
Dr. Keri Lyn Heickert **Jack Joyner**
Kevin Li

Boys School Gold Faculty Award: **Patrick McCabe**
Levi McFall **Levi McFall**
Taj Odhiambo

Boys School Silver Faculty Award: **Pehri Rhodes**
Taj Odhiambo

Boys School Honorary Diploma: *Athletic Awards:*
David Steen

Academic Excellence Awards: Elaine S. Asplundh Award
Rebecca Clark

Girls School: **Deidré Bongers** Marah P. Boyesen Award
Christina Jungé **Emma Bryntesson**

Boys School: **Evan Buss** Boys School
Levi McFall Payson Lyman Award
Gareth Mergen **Patrick McCabe**
Stanley F. Ebert Award
Jack Joyner

Emilie K. Asplundh
Scholarship Award:
Anya Durand
Maggie Stine
Paige Swierczyski

SWEDENBORG STUDIES

Dr. Daniel Synnestvedt and the Rev. Dr. Thane Glenn

The inaugural conference of the Institute for Swedenborg Studies was held on April 23-24, 2022. The Institute is housed at Bryn Athyn College and the 60 participants attended both in person and online.

Entitled “*Swedenborg’s Prism: Applications of Swedenborgian Spirituality*,” the conference hosted presenters from the United States, Great Britain, the Netherlands and Japan and featured a variety of topics related to the theme, including theology, science, psychology and Swedenborg’s influence on historical figures.

Five faculty members from Bryn Athyn College gave presentations: **Rev. Stephen Cole, Dr. Martha Gyllenhaal, Dr. Angela Rose, Rev. Dr. Ray Silverman and Dr. Dan Synnestvedt.**

Papers included an examination of how Swedenborg’s concept of spirituality relates to the growing “spiritual but not religious” movement; a Swedenborgian theology of social justice; points of connection between quantum physics and the role of influx in Swedenborg’s model of consciousness; and Swedenborg’s influence on 19th century British infant school pedagogy—among many other interesting subjects.

The keynote address after the dinner was given by **Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence**, who spoke about “*A Daily Swedenborgian Practice Based on Swedenborg’s Rules of Life*.” Participants enjoyed the opportunity to learn about new people and ideas while sharing research and posing questions.

If you are interested in membership in the Institute for Swedenborg Studies at Bryn Athyn College, please visit our webpage: <https://brynathyn.edu/academics/institute-for-swedenborg-studies>. You can read a full report on this seminar by **Dr. Dan Synnestvedt** in the September/October issue of *New Church Life*.

PASTORAL CHANGE

The **Rev. Michael K. Cowley** resigned as pastor of the Olivet Society in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, as of June 30, 2022. He had served as pastor for the past seven years. He has accepted a part-time Western Pastoral position within the General Church in Canada, coordinated by the **Rev. James Cooper**, Executive Vice President of GCIC, with the support of **Executive Bishop Peter M. Buss Jr.**

Bishop Buss has appointed the **Rev. Jong-Ui Lee** as Interim Pastor in Toronto, following his service this past year as Assistant Pastor. This is expected to be a two-year appointment with a formal pastoral selection process expected

to begin in September or October of 2023.

During this year the Rev. Lee will be assisted by the **Revs. James Cooper, Justin Schorran** and **Steven Gunther**, and possibly others.

GLENCAIRN MUSEUM

From the Glencairn Museum News

Between February and April the Museum's Education Department offered 43 programs to more than 500 students from regional schools and homeschool groups. On April 18 the Museum hosted 204 homeschoolers for a stained-glass program featuring live glassblowing demonstrations, an exploration of the medieval stained-glass collection, and hands-on crafts. This annual event sold out six weeks in advance. One attendee said: "I love that the staff were expecting homeschoolers, and they were excellent at answering questions. They made my kids feel important and heard."

While the Museum is closed for extensive infrastructure projects the Education Department will continue to expand online educational offerings.

Medieval Festival

A 10-year record-breaking 732 visitors enjoyed the annual Medieval Festival April 24, including demonstrations of glassblowing, falconry, medieval musical instruments, illuminated manuscripts, early printing and medieval weaponry.

A new Global Middle Ages Scavenger Hunt led explorers throughout Glencairn to discover what the world looked like then. Another new activity featured medieval Islamic tile art, with visitors invited to decorate a tile and add it to a collaborative tile wall.

Exhibitions and Special Events

The Collections staff worked with the Philadelphia Museum of Art to display several treasures from the Glencairn Museum medieval collection while the Museum is closed. This relationship dates back to 1931 when **Raymond Pitcairn** loaned dozens of sculptures, tapestries and pieces of furniture to the Philadelphia Museum. A member's trip to the museum will be offered in the fall.

On May 14 members were treated to an exclusive tour at the Cloisters at the Metropolitan Museum in New York City. The tour was led by **Dr. Julia Perratore**, who worked as an intern at Glencairn in 2012.

On May 12 Glencairn Museum hosted its first outdoor, off-site concert at Bryn Athyn College, geared especially for families.

See the article – Walking in Someone Else's Shoes: Fostering Empathy at Glencairn Museum – on page 317, with photos on page 351.

NEW CHRISTIAN BIBLE STUDY

Steve David

New featured articles:

- The Rev. Dr. Ray and Star Silverman have just finished their Commentaries on Luke, chapters 22-24.
- The Rev. Julian Duckworth has put the finishing touches on his Commentaries on the Psalms.

Bibles for Everyone:

We've started adding a brief summary for each book of the Bible so that people can get an initial sense of each book, and how they all fit together. We're up to Isaiah. Many thanks to the New Church clergy in Australia for their permission to base these on the book they've put together.

New translations of Swedenborg's theological works:

- We just posted the last piece of *Secrets of Heaven* in Chinese. More than a billion new people can now get deep insights into the inner meaning of the books of Genesis and Exodus, and by extension, the whole of the Word. It's a monumental achievement by the translation team.
- Also in Chinese, there's a brand-new translation of *Doctrine of the Lord*.

Latin grammar search:

Some of the things we do are aimed at a wide audience, and some aren't. This one isn't, but it is really useful to translators, and translators are really useful to the wide audience, so it works. We just rolled out a brand-new version of a Latin search tool that lets scholars find words used in various specific forms in Swedenborg's works, linked from our main search page.

BRYN ATHYN COLLEGE THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL Graduation and Ordinations



Three generations of Heinrichs in the Bryn Athyn Cathedral: the Rev. Dan Heinrichs, at 93 the oldest living General Church minister; his son, the Rt. Rev. Bradley Heinrichs; and his grandson, the Rev. Calvin Heinrichs at his ordination. There are actually four generations of Heinrichs ministers: Dan's father, the Rev. Henry Heinrichs, served as an assistant in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada. Dan began his ministry in Westville, South Africa, where Calvin is also beginning his career.



HyunJin Yang, Calvin Heinrichs, Steven Gunther



Preparing for their ordinations in the Cathedral: left to right, Hyun Jin Yang, Calvin Heinrichs, Steven Gunther and the Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss Jr



Steven Gunther delivers the valedictory at the Theological School commencement



Theologs: HyunJin Yang, Dean Andrew Dibb, Calvin Heinrichs, Steven Gunther

BRYN ATHYN COLLEGE COMMENCEMENT

(Photos by Serena Sutton and
Michelle Chapin)



Procession in the Asplundh
Field House



Members of the Faculty



Chancellor Peter Buss
leads worship



President Brian Blair



Cap toss



The Graduating Class



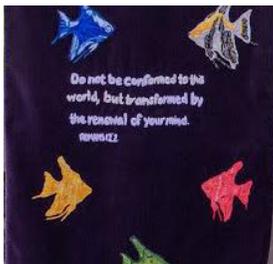
Valedictorian Eve Miller

ACADEMY SECONDARY SCHOOLS COMMENCEMENT

(Photos by Serena Sutton and Holly Adams)



A selfie moment with Principal Jeremy Irwin



The Senior Class banner



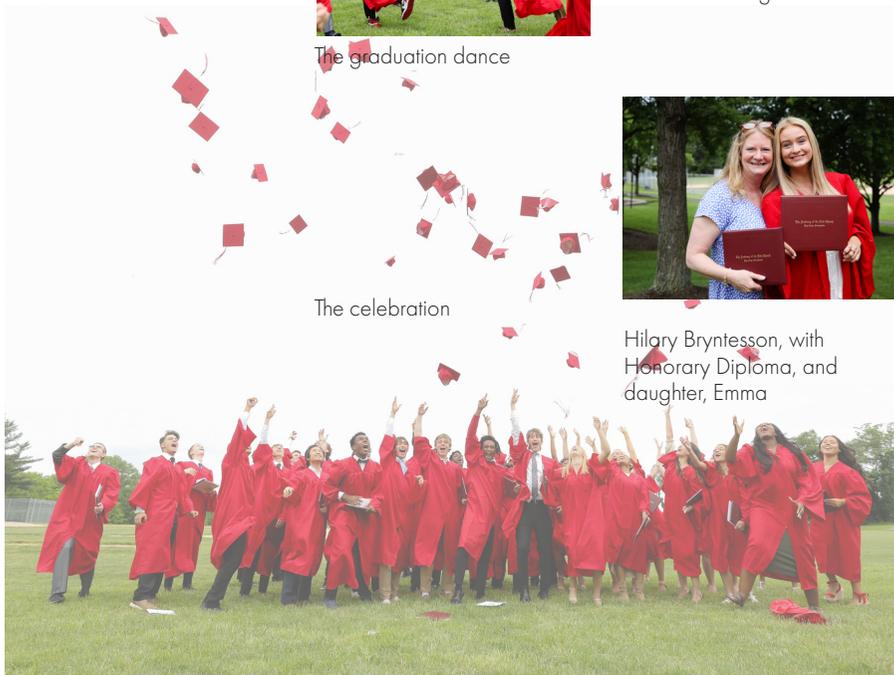
Honorary diploma recipient Dr. Keri Heickert



The graduation dance



Flowers for the graduate



The celebration



Hilary Bryntesson, with Honorary Diploma, and daughter, Emma

WALKING IN SOMEONE ELSE'S SHOES: FOSTER EMPATHY AT GLENCAIRN MUSEUM (See article page 345)



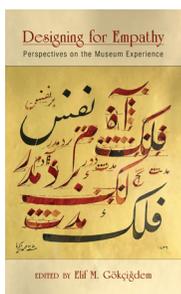
The Venerable Lama Losang Samten and Museum visitors with a Tibetan sand mandala he created in Glencairn's Great Hall in April 2018.



Throughout history, funerary customs have varied widely among cultures but humans have always shared a need to grieve for family and friends. The Embalmer's Art, a series of miniature dioramas in Glencairn's Egyptian Gallery, presents the practice of mummification as a religious ritual, not just a physical process.



In 2014, the Venerable Lama Losang Samten worked with Museum staff to build this large altar near the sand mandala platform to show what Tibetan Buddhist altars look like, how they are used, and what the elements represent.



Designing for Empathy: Perspectives on the Museum Experience, edited by Elif Gökçığdem.



Two young Glencairn visitors are shown how to pour colored sand on a mandala, using a tool called the chakpur.

Life Lines

Bruce M. Henderson and the Rev. Jeremy F. Simons

HEARTS OF DARKNESS

Almost every day we hear of shootings in our major American cities. In the spring our anguish was fueled by horrific mass killings at a supermarket in Buffalo, New York, and a primary school in Uvalde, Texas. Public response quickly turned to guns and mental health and political issues – and to prayer. What we need to be focusing on is the evil festering in the hearts of the shooters and the loss of spiritual conscience in our society. And the need for prayer.

Mental health issues have become epidemic in the wake of covid but the crisis has been brewing for decades. Some of it can be traced to taking God and religion out of public schools in the United States, climaxing in a Supreme Court decision in 1963. But that only fueled an even more alarming trend which has never been prohibited: the increasing abandonment of religion in homes across the country and throughout the world. Indeed, there is a surging wave of biblical illiteracy, with alarming numbers of young people never having heard of David and Goliath, Noah and the Ark, Moses and the Ten Commandments. The Bible used to be the foundation of our common morality. Too many people look now to social media instead and we witness the fallout – including the epidemic of gun violence.

In the wake of the covid pandemic has arisen an epidemic in mental health, especially among young people denied normal, healthy interactions with peers and role models. Too many have been left to flounder. Too many grow up in fatherless homes, lacking role models. Too many are victims of bullying and ostracization. Too many have turned to drugs and guns, isolation and violence.

Contributing to all of this is that church attendance has been declining throughout the world for decades – including in our own societies. Covid isolation has had a devastating effect in the past two years, but a recent survey found that only 67% of churchgoers have returned to the pews once restrictions were lifted. One consequence is a decline as well in spiritual values and

spiritual mooring. Thoughtful response too often is overwhelmed by raw emotion. The abandonment of spiritual conscience as a common bond of society invites evil into the moral vacuum.

Our schools and churches, homes and families, used to be anchors of our moral consensus, but that influence is declining as people turn to government for solutions – or the internet. What plagues our communities these days essentially has spiritual roots – but the spiritual conscience we used to count on is giving way to hopelessness and helplessness.

One antidote is New Church education. Back in 1985, when Bishop Willard D. Pendleton published his seminal book, *Education for Use*, the world was a lot more innocent than it is today. But even then he spoke of “the modern educational system” as “a values vacuum.” We are just further down the descent.

Bishop Pendleton asked: “Where in our public schools is to be found a course in public morality? Where on the university level, apart from an optional course in ethics, is serious consideration given to the critical questions of good and evil, of right and wrong?” The retreat is only more pronounced on campuses today.

He continues: “Certainly the vast storehouse of knowledge which man has acquired over the years is a tribute to the capacity of the human intellect, but the true measure of man is not what he knows, but what he does with the knowledge he has accumulated.”

All of this “emphasizes the need for an educational system which recognizes that the ultimate welfare of society is dependent upon the cultivation of a moral and spiritual conscience in the individual.”

The Lord’s gift to all of us is His love and mercy and goodness. He commands us simply to love Him and to love one another – to really live His commandments. That is all we need to overcome evil.

Without that prevailing conscience we are left more and more to the tragic fallout from hearts of darkness.

(BMH)

LET US PRAY

In the echoes of the anguish of the Texas school shooting arose a desperate call to prayer. Cynics mock “thoughts and prayers” for victims and families as hollow incantations. But for most of us the instinct to pray is a sincere concession that the crisis is greater than each of us and all of us, and that we need God’s love, wisdom and mercy to bring comfort and peace, strength and hope in the depths of despair.

We feel almost helpless amid the rising phenomenon of angry, isolated young men inflicting their demons on the most innocent among us. What can

we do – in the immediacy of the moment and the horror – but pray?

Such heartfelt, anguished prayer is the antidote to evil. It expresses innocence, humility, trust. Ultimately, we pray, as the Lord teaches us: *“Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, as in heaven so upon the earth.”* Prayer opens our hearts to the Lord – to His will that we simply love Him and love one another in the way that we live our daily lives. Help us, we pray, to bring Your peace and promise into our hurting world.

Prayer creates a community of hope: that together we can change our cultural environment – but we have individual responsibilities and opportunities as well.

When we pray “as in heaven, so upon the earth” we each have a role in the aspiration. It is not easy for any one person to have an impact in a world awash in evil, but our power lies in the Lord’s love within us. Each in our own way – and many of us together – bring the Lord’s loving, healing sphere into our communities and our world.

You continually pray when you are living a life of kindness, although not with your mouth yet with your heart. That which you love is continually in your thoughts, even when you are unconscious of it.
(*Apocalypse Explained* 325)

So, what can we do to help to bring peace on earth? Helen Keller may have been blind, but she saw life clearly: *“I long to accomplish a great and noble task, but it is my chief duty to accomplish small tasks as if they were great and noble.”* That is the nobility in the doctrine of use – and the humility.

We all love the profound and simple calling: *“He has shown thee, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?”* (Micah 6:8)

Helen Keller was a devoted reader of Swedenborg who felt that the greatest handicap we can experience is not to be blind but to have no vision. In a speech to a national conference of Swedenborgians almost 100 years ago in Washington, DC, she challenged the church – and challenges us still: *“It seems to me the New Church has a great mission in the world. The people are in need of just the message that Swedenborg gave to mankind. Instead of merely listening to that message, we should go out and teach it. I want to see the New Church put on its beautiful garments and shake itself from the dust of aloofness.”*

We all have “The Great Commission” from the end of the *Book of Matthew* to “go out and teach all nations” – to shake off that dust of aloofness and bring His love and peace more and more visibly into the world. That charge was not addressed just to the disciples but to all of us. We are all asked to do what we

can to make known the Lord in His Second Coming. We have the doctrines; we have collateral works; we have all the resources of the church, and we have our own convictions. We become disciples simply by using these resources, by loving the Lord in the way we live our lives, by bringing the promise and beauty of heaven into the world by simply modeling it in our own lives. This is how we – along with all the prayerful people radiating from Uvalde, Texas – bring the light and hope of heaven into a needy world. “As in heaven, so upon the earth.”

Our prayers alone will not reform a culture that has been drifting off course for decades but still we pray, knowing that only the Lord can make us spiritually whole. We recognize His power and our inadequacy. But He actually needs our help:

God loves each and every human being, and because He cannot do good to them directly but only indirectly by means of other people, He therefore breathes into people His love. (True Christian Religion 457)

Let us pray.

(BMH)

THE ONLY QUESTION THAT REALLY MATTERS

We live with tragedy every day but something as chilling as gunning down children in classrooms raises the ultimate question: Why does God let it happen?

Indeed, a letter to *The Wall Street Journal* – The Big Question After the Texas Shooting – asked: “How does a benevolent, all-powerful and all-knowing God allow such evil to happen to innocent children? I don’t know how believers carry on at times like this.”

Rabbi Harold Kushner, who wrote the best-seller *When Bad Things Happen to Good People* in 1981, said the issue of why God lets innocent people suffer is the ultimate question of faith – “the only question that really matters.”

That question became intensely personal for him and his wife when their son was diagnosed with a disease that would let him live only to age 14. His book was an honest and tortured search for answers. He did not get to the understanding of the Lord’s love, providence and protection of personal freedom revealed through Emanuel Swedenborg – but he came close.

When confronting an issue such as where was God in the horror of the Holocaust, he concluded: “He was there, loving and agonizing with the

victims but without controlling our ultimate choice between good and evil.”

“The God I believe in,” he wrote, “does not send us the problem. He gives us the strength to cope with the problem.”

We are blessed in the New Church to know how the Lord’s love and providence work, permitting what He does not will only for the sake of a good end, and always protecting our free will – even when innocents are victimized. Still, we can wonder ourselves at some of the horrors inflicted on the world. But we do have the comfort of our informed faith to share with others and we should be doing all we can to promote our teachings, through books, videos and personal testimony.

This is why I wrote my books *Window to Eternity* (life after death) and *Why Does God Let it Happen?* (the Lord’s providence) which have comforted a great many people all over the world. Some have even joined the church, others have said this insight from the Lord transformed their lives, and hopefully many more have been helped in ways we will never know.

When I was writing *Why Does God Let it Happen?*, the Swedenborg Foundation sent the manuscript to Rabbi Kushner, asking him for a comment. He resisted at first because he had seen so many books like this. But when he did read it, he exclaimed: “This is the best consideration of God’s role in tragedy from a traditional perspective that I have ever read.” He kindly let us use that endorsement on the cover.

So, beyond sharing what we have in whatever ways we can with those in need, how do we “carry on”? How do we help those struggling with this “only question that really matters” – who are in the throes of trying to reconcile the God they love with all the evil and misfortune in the world? A simple trust in God – even in the face of such personal and aching tragedy – is where it starts and where faith triumphs.

Peace has within it confidence in the Lord, that He directs all things, and provides all things, and that He leads to a good end. (Secrets of Heaven 8455)

(BMH)

A MONTAGE OF INNOCENCE

The highlight of Bryn Athyn’s annual society meeting in the spring is always the same for me: a simple slide show of happy students at the Bryn Athyn Church School: a montage of innocence. Contrast that with the pictures of the 19 children killed in Texas – a heinous attack on that very innocence.

We treasure the innocence of children and are grateful to our church

schools and homes for their vital role in protecting them in an increasingly hostile environment. But their innocence is under attack – beyond crazed young men with guns. Children are the collateral damage of the social media they are exposed to every day. There is no escaping the influence of a culture increasingly steeped in immorality. We do all we can, providing sanctuaries of innocence in our homes and schools to stave off what is “cool” and “trending” – all that would lead them astray – for as long as we can.

As much as Hollywood and Tik Tok and graphic music lyrics are the enemy, we who cling to hope know that innocence must be forever championed and protected.

That innocence and peace go together like good and its delight can be seen in little children, who are in peace because they are in innocence, and because they are in peace they are in their whole nature full of play. (Heaven and Hell 288)

Those bright, playful faces we see in our schools and playgrounds stir hope for their potential. Indeed, they are the hope of the future – the hope of the Church. They also model the innocence we all are called to recapture if we are to enter heaven.

Recall the disciples who came to Jesus, asking: “Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” Jesus called a little child to Him and said: “Unless you become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in heaven.” (*Matthew 18:1-4*)

That is a humbling and trusting challenge – to call on all the remains of our childhood innocence to want to be led, first, by the Lord, and to reject all the habits and impulses we have nurtured throughout our lives, offering the comforting illusion of having served us well.

Innocence is wanting to be led by the Lord and not by oneself, so that the extent to which we are in innocence determines the extent to which we are freed from the pre-occupations of our self-image. (Heaven and Hell 341)

The charm of innocent children is that they are devoid of self-image and self-will. We see that charm echoed in the elderly – becoming as little children again, content in simply turning back to the Lord: “Thy will be done.”

Look around in church at all the gray heads, at peace in their prayer and in their lives. There is a montage of innocence there too – and hope.

(BMH)

THE GIFT OF HOPE

Between the innocence of childhood and becoming again “as little children” so that we may enter heaven, there are trials and temptation, encouragement and discouragement, regeneration and redemption.

The hells strive always to undermine hope. They want us to feel helpless and hopeless. They help us to excuse our own behavior and lapses, and to doubt that we can overcome our obstacles. That is the test in all temptation: casting what we love into doubt. But the Lord always restores hope:

The eye of the Lord is on those who fear Him, on those who hope in His mercy. Let Your mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we hope in Thee. (Psalm 33:18,22)

The Lord came on earth to give us hope. He walked with us to be seen by us as a visible, knowable, reachable God. He left this world in sorrow but with the promise of eternal life with Him in heaven – of realized hope. Indeed, the Christmas and Easter stories are steeped in hope – for the human race, for each one of us.

The Lord came into a world lost in darkness as “a new light,” so that His Word and His presence may dispel fear and doubt and light the way to hope. That is the Christmas gift.

I am come a light into the world, that whoever believeth on Me should not abide in darkness. (John 21:46)

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwell in the valley of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined. (Isaiah 9:2)

In the Easter story, when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, He was hailed as a king. But the people wanted Him to be a political king, supplanting the despised Herod and the government of Rome. They did not understand that the kingdom He rules is heaven.

So it was that for all the “Hosannas!” awaiting Him that day, as He drew near to the city, He wept. He knew what was to come and He wept – as He weeps still for all of us – not for Himself but because people were not accepting or believing what He taught.

When He was crucified, the hopes of those who followed Him were dashed. We weep as well as we survey a world dominated by wanton war and an increasingly dystopian culture. But those who followed Him experienced a new light – a new hope.

The women who came to the tomb to tend to His body were told: “Why do you seek the living among the dead?” What is “living” is what comes to us

from the Lord: truth, good, love, hope. What is “dead” is everything contrary to life: evil, hatred, hopelessness. The Lord rose from the dead to show us that He is the God of the living – the God of hope.

The Lord’s love, hope and mercy are the greatest gifts we have and are so sorely need – for ourselves, for our church, for our country and for the world. The Lord came on earth to give us hope.

His resurrection gives us hope.

His Second Coming gives us hope.

His Word gives us hope – always.

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear. (Psalm 46:1,2)

I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not for evil, to give you a future and hope. (Jeremiah 29:11)

(BMH)

MONOTHEISM AND POLYTHEISM

When I was in college in Philadelphia in 1973 my Sociology 101 textbook was dogmatic about the idea that monotheism evolved out of polytheism. I knew that the opposite was the truth, as it is explained in the Writings:

The Ancient Church . . . always worshipped but one God who was revered under so many names, for the reason that by 'name' they understood the essential nature. (Arcana Coelestia 2724)

But when the Ancient Church declined, they began to worship as many gods as there were names for the One Only God, and also of themselves added to them many more. This practice at last became so prevalent that every family had its own god. (Ibid. 5628)

I naturally felt guilty regurgitating the textbook’s false ideas in order to get an A in the course. But in the April 10, 2022 *Inside offTheLeftEye* podcast, the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Rose made me feel better. He quoted this gem from *Arcana Coelestia* 3035:

In the literal meaning here and elsewhere, it looks as though “Jehovah” means some other person who is higher up, but that is what the literal meaning is like; it separates what the inner meaning unites. The reason for the separation is that people on earth, who

need to learn from the literal meaning, cannot picture one unless they first picture many. With us, what is singular forms out of what is plural. To put the same thing another way, that which is simultaneous forms out of that which is sequential. Within the Lord are many different things, and they all constitute Jehovah. So it is that the literal meaning separates the two. Heaven never separates them, however, but acknowledges one God – no other God than the Lord – under a single mental image.

I had never noticed the truth that “*with us, what is singular forms out of what is plural.*” In a sense, then, it is true that polytheism preceded monotheism.

Ironically, the idea that monotheism evolved out of polytheism is no longer the accepted understanding in sociology. In any case the question should have been about the prevailing theory “according to the textbook.”

Similarly, people often wonder why the New Testament so easily lends itself to the idea of a trinity of persons in God. Maybe this is why.

Beyond the question of monotheism and polytheism, however, the truth that “*what is singular forms out of what is plural*” and “*that which is simultaneous forms out of that which is sequential*” has application in other areas of thought. It often takes years for us to integrate the many ideas that we are exposed to into a single understanding of a subject. This is especially true when there are apparent contradictions.

In fact, the confounding polarization of opinion on many controversial topics can be seen as a long-term advantage when seen from this point of view. When traditional ideas are challenged and debated the truth of the matter may eventually become clearer and more strongly held than it was before. Long-standing debates over topics as diverse as climate change, mass murder and sexuality may illustrate this. “What is singular forms out of what is plural.”

Contradictory points of view are often founded on varying truths that seem to be inconsistent with each other. Over time, however, these truths, if they are true, may become reconciled in people’s minds, and integrated into single concepts. Traditional views of sexual morality, for example, are often seen as contradicting core principles of love and acceptance. Public safety precautions may seem to encroach on important liberties. The awareness and understanding of these seeming contradictions serve an important use. *Arcana Coelestia* 7298 describes it this way:

In the next life as soon as some truth is presented through plain experience to good spirits, some opposing idea giving rise to doubt is presented. In this way they are led to think and ponder over whether it is indeed a truth, gather reasons in support of it, and so introduce that truth into their minds by the use of reason. This enables their

spiritual vision in respect of that truth to be broadened, seeing even into the ideas that are opposed to it. They therefore see and perceive with their understanding every characteristic of the truth, and from this are able to let in the influences coming from heaven as the situation demands; for truths take varying forms as dictated by circumstances.

This is the value of considering opposing views. They broaden and soften our understanding, and, often contrary to the appearance, can “*let in the influences coming from heaven as the situation demands.*”

There is only one Lord. Polytheism is simply wrong. The same is true of many of our popularly held views. But alternate views can serve an important use, because “*people on earth . . . cannot picture one unless they first picture many. With us, what is singular forms out of what is plural.*”

(JFS)

HEROINES OF THE CHURCH

At the ordination of three new General Church priests in the Bryn Athyn Cathedral on May 29, I reflected on the ordination of my own father almost 90 years ago in 1934.

That fledgling minister, the Rev. W. Cairns Henderson – like these three newly ordained men – was pledging then to serve the Lord and His Church, without knowing where that service would take him. He just knew that he was ready and eager to serve, wherever called.

Seated with the congregation that day was Eva Sandstrom, a young lady who had come from Sweden to study in the College – and gave her heart and life to that dashing young Scot. At that ordination service she was silently making a pledge as well – to do her part in serving the Church with her husband-to-be, wherever that took them.

Seven months later they were married in Colchester, England, and then the journey began. They were called first to 11 years in Australia – about as far from home as they could imagine – launching a career and a family in most challenging circumstances of World War II. They never left Australia until the call came from Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, and then Bryn Athyn.

My Dad’s service was exemplary – and still is honored in the Theological School and *New Church Life* – both of which he served for decades. My mother was beside him and behind him all the way – never complaining, always making do, content to serve in the background.

Each of the three newly ordained ministers has eagerly plunged into his pastoral assignment – in Oak Arbor, Michigan, in Westville, South Africa, and

in Korea. As Steven Gunther noted in his valedictory the day before: “The sun will never set on our class.”

But even though two of them start their work far from home, with unknown horizons, they are not alone. Each has a loving wife, looking on with pride at their ordinations, and equally devoted to serving the Church as a pastor’s wife.

We rightly celebrate these new pastors and their lifelong commitment, and we welcome the hope they represent for the Church. But let us celebrate and honor their wives as well, who join a special sorority. Throughout the history of the Church these ministers’ wives are unsung heroines – who also serve in countless loving, devoted ways and are to be forever valued and appreciated.

(BMH)

Announcements

ORDINATIONS, First Degree

And I will give you pastors according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding. (Jeremiah 3:15)

Gunther, Steven Paul – At Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, May 29, 2022, Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss Jr. officiating.

Yang, HyunJin – At Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, May 29, 2022, Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss Jr. officiating.

Heinrichs, Calvin Bradley – At Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, May 29, 2022, Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss Jr. officiating.

BAPTISMS

Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it. (Mark 10:13-15)

Agnes-Hilane, Neomie Aven – At Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, March 29, 2022 (born November 6, 2021), daughter of Sylvain and Berenge Agnes, Rt. Rev. David H. Lindrooth officiating.

Brugger, Hailey Mae – At Kempton, Pennsylvania, May 29, 2022 (born March 5, 2015), daughter of Charles Hershberger, granddaughter of Nancy Yoder, Rev. Brett D. Buick officiating.

Black, Ella Grace – At Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa, May 14, 2022 (born October 10, 2021), daughter of Matthew and Candice Edmunds Black, Rev. Malcolm G. Smith officiating.

Brugger, Lily Marie – At Kempton, Pennsylvania, May 29, 2022 (born September 23, 2013), daughter of Charles Hershberger, granddaughter of Nancy Yoder, Rev. Brett D. Buick officiating.

Bowyer, Broderick Keaton – At Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, June 5, 2022 (born January 18, 2020), son of Brian and Danielle Bowyer, Rev. Kurt Hy. Asplundh officiating.

Buss, Fiona Joy – At Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, June 16, 2022 (born June 5, 2022), daughter of Jared and Justine Brannon Buss, Rev. Erik J. Buss officiating.

Glunz, Hazel Lynn – At Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, June 12, 2022 (born October 9, 2014), daughter of Derek and Teryn Genzlinger Glunz, Rev. Philip B. Schnarr officiating.

Glunz, Ivy Bell – At Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, June 12, 2022 (born March 25, 2017), daughter of Derek and Teryn Genzlinger Glunz, Rev. Philip B. Schnarr officiating.

Gouws, Ernst Ted – At Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa, April 23, 2022 (born November 8, 2021), son of Ernst and Lara Browne Gouws, Rev. Malcolm G. Smith officiating.

Govender, Declan – At Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, April 30, 2022 (born December 22, 2014), son of Dillon and Karen Naidoo Govender, Rev. Malcolm G. Smith officiating.

Govender, Karen – At Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, April 30, 2022, Rev. Malcolm G. Smith officiating.

Govender, Kaydin – At Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, April 30, 2022 (born September 15, 2010), daughter of Dillon and Karen Naidoo Govender, Rev. Malcolm G. Smith officiating.

Gruber, Bennett Paul – At Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, April 15, 2022 (born October 31, 2021), son of Todd and Michelle Synnestvedt Gruber, Rev. Charles E. Blair officiating.

Gruber, Lenox Joan – At Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, April 15, 2022 (born October 31, 2021), daughter of Todd and Michelle Synnestvedt Gruber, Rev. Charles E. Blair officiating.

Gunther, Maeve Riley – At Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, April 24, 2022 (born October 15, 2021), daughter of Theodore and Katelin Weil Gunther, Rev. Scott I. Frazier officiating.

Heilman, Theodore Edward – At Kempton, Pennsylvania, April 24, 2022 (born September 12, 2021), son of Tor and Stacy Armstrong Heilman, Rev. Andrew J. Heilman officiating.

Hendricks, Maraika Celestin – At Kempton, Pennsylvania, June 12, 2022 (born October 25, 2021), daughter of Mark and Genta Jungé Hendricks, Rev. Brett D. Buick officiating.

Hershberger, Charles J. – At Kempton, Pennsylvania, May 29, 2022, Rev. Brett D. Buick officiating.

Lucero, Brynn Candace – At Valparaiso, Florida, May 21, 2022 (born October 28, 2021), daughter of Christopher and Kelly Zeigler Lucero, Rev. Richard M. Glenn officiating.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nelson, Aidan J. – At Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, May 22, 2022 (born September 29, 2021), son of Derrick Nelson and Jennifer Lopez, Rev. Jeremy F. Simons officiating.

Nowak, Anya Wren – At Sciota, Pennsylvania, April 2, 2022 (born December 1, 2021), daughter of Christopher and Brittany Nowak, Rev. Charles E. Blair officiating.

Rogers Citalan, Shawn Xavier – At Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, April 22, 2022 (born July 31, 2017), son of Christopher and Gloria Rogers, Rev. Philip B. Schnarr officiating.

Schorran, Keida – At Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, May 22, 2022 (born May 16, 2022), daughter of Justin and Denali Heinrichs Schorran, Rt. Rev. Bradley D. Heinrichs officiating.

Smith, Arlin Raymond – At Kempton, Pennsylvania, May 30, 2022 (born June 9, 2021), son of Anders and Juliet Kocieda Smith, Rev. Lawson M. Smith officiating.

Synnestvedt, Anya Eve – At Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, May 8, 2022 (born November 29, 2021), daughter of Gregory and Ivy Daum Synnestvedt, Rev. Solomon J. Keal officiating.

Tormey, Colton Ryan – At Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, May 21, 2022 (born July 13, 2021), son of Travis and Caitlin Rotondo Tormey, Rev. Eric H. Carswell officiating.

Weaver, Alice Margaret – At Yardley, Pennsylvania, April 9, 2022 (born September 8, 2021), daughter of Noah and Suzanne Bolger Weaver, Rev. Charles E. Blair officiating.

Yoder, Nancy L. – At Kempton, Pennsylvania, May 29, 2022, Rev. Brett D. Buick officiating.

MARRIAGES

Love truly conjugal is from the Lord alone, and exists with those who are in the conjunction of good and truth from the Lord. When two minds are conjoined as to be one mind, there is love between them.

(Apocalypse Explained 983)

Allen-Simons, Robert Asplundh Allen and Bronwyn Marianne Simons – At Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, June 4, 2022, Rev. Thomas H. Rose officiating.

Heilman-Pentland, Ian Heilman and Erika Pentland – At Butler County, Pennsylvania, May 29, 2022, Rev. Garry B. Walsh officiating.

Hogg-Damm, James Andrew Hogg and Anna Louise Damm – At Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, May 7, 2022, Rev. Charles E. Blair officiating.

**Heiter-Luse, Samuel Michael Heiter
and Makayla Ranae Luse** – At
Kempton, Pennsylvania, June 4, 2022,
Rev. Lawson M. Smith officiating.

**Olszewski-Schorran, Timothy
Russell Olszewski and Renée
Schorran** – At Kempton,
Pennsylvania, May 21, 2022, Rev. Paul
E. Schorran officiating.

IN MEMORIAM

*Let not your heart be troubled;
you believe in God, believe also in
Me. In My Father's house are many
mansions; if it were not so, I would
have told you. I go to prepare a place
for you. And if I go and prepare a
place for you, I will come again and
receive you to Myself; that where I
am, there you may be also. (John*

Bowyer, Brenda – February 13, 2022,
of Cheddar, Somerset,
United Kingdom. 97.

Chappell, Helen Elizabeth Echols
– May 28, 2022, of Signal Mountain,
Tennessee. 80.

Clark, Barbara Tryn Grubb – May 1,
Tempe, Arizona. 2022. 78.

Cranch, Jonathan Pearse – April 19,
2022, of Palo Alto, California. 81.

Greenwold, Ruth – June 24, 2021, of
Colchester, Essex,
United Kingdom. 89.

Howard, Hélène – April 1, 2022, of
Lebanon, Ohio. 93.

Jones, Nancy Brewer – May 28, 2022,
of York, Maine. 87.

Ludwick, Althea Mae Lynn – May 29,
2022, of Southampton,
Pennsylvania. 94.

Mealing, Brian – May 5, 2022, of
Colchester, Essex,
United Kingdom. 61.

Pitcairn, Kean – May 5, 2022, of Bryn
Athyn, Pennsylvania. 60.

Roebuck, Allan – July 14, 2021,
of Ossett, West Yorkshire, United
Kingdom. 82.

Rosenblum, Peter Steven – 2022, of
Chandler, Arizona. 74.

Smith, Donald Goodwin Cole –
February 25, 2022, of Yuma,
Arizona. 69.

Synnestvedt, Edwin Day – May 1,
2022, of Warminster,
Pennsylvania. 61.

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