

NEW CHURCH *Life*

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

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2015



‘For Unto You is Born this Day . . . ’

This scene of the Holy Family is part of the World Nativities exhibition at the Glencairn Museum in Bryn Athyn, on display through January 10, along with an exhibition of Christmas Traditions in Many Lands and a Christmas in the Castle Tour.

For more information see page 613. For more photographs see page 622.

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

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

In a Christmas sermon about the Lord's birth in Bethlehem – *We Found Him in the Fields of the Forest* – the Rev. Jeremy F. Simons says that the spiritual forest of our lives represents where the Lord is to be found. “Everyone wanders in the woods at times,” he says. “In this Christmas season, though, it isn't so hard to see that the path is lit with friendship and love, and that if we look with a full heart we will find Him in Bethlehem.” (Page 564)

In *Grace and Gratitude* the Rev. Dr. Andrew M. T. Dibb focuses on the implications for grace and gratitude in the Christmas story, but they also apply to the Thanksgiving season in North America and the current *Living Gratefully* Journey Program. “Most simply put,” he says, “gratitude is the reception of grace and the recognition that it is a gift to us that makes it possible for us to be saved and enter heaven.” (Page 570)

In his Charter Day Cathedral address – *Take Flight* – the Rev. David C. Roth made an analogy of airline flight with education. Passengers routinely ignore the safety instructions of flight attendants – unless they are preceded with, “We have to prepare you for a crash landing.” The Writings say that “All education is an opening of the way,” and we are all being led somewhere. We need to pay attention to the instructions provided if we are to find success on our journey. (Page 579)

In the Charter Day banquet program Bryn Athyn College offered a highly engaging dialogue: *Innovation in Learning About Democracy at the College Level and the Importance of New Church Content*. Banquet emcee the Rev. Dr. Thane Glenn, chaplain and professor at the College, described a semester-long course, “Reacting to the Past” – a role-playing examination of ancient Greece and the United States Constitutional Convention of 1787. Read a summary of the presentation, featuring Dr. D. Gregory Rose and Dr. Wendy Closterman. (Page 585)

The Rev. Dr. Ray Silverman found that some of the students in the College new to the Church were not saying the Lord's Prayer in chapel and wondered why. It was over confusion about our phrasing – “as in heaven, so upon the earth” – which differs from the wording used by many other faiths. That prompted a search of all the variations used in the prayer – and why we say the words we do in the General Church. (Page 588)

In *Introducing Our Ministers*, the Rev. Solomon J. Keal says he once considered himself too introverted to be an effective minister, and sought other life experiences – including producing his own popular piano CDs – before he felt ready for the call. Now he is a very successful and popular minister and teacher, known for the way his gentle,

extemporaneous style connects with his listeners. (Page 594)

In a sermon on “The Magi,” the Rev. Solomon Keal reminds us of the calling to give gifts and how the magi relate to our own spiritual journeys. The gifts can be simple acts of kindness to one another – the gifts we ultimately receive from the Lord and gratefully return to Him in the form of loving others. (Page 598)

In what we hope will become a recurring feature, the Rev. Dr. Andrew M. T. Dibb, Dean of the Bryn Athyn College Theological School, reflects on what the experience there is like today – what it holds onto from its origins and its past, and how it has adapted to meet new needs and challenges. (Page 602)

A wealth of Church News in this issue includes:

- Reports from the General Church Board of Directors, including an update on strategic planning, a proposed joint meeting with the Academy Board of Trustees, and a progress report from Bishop Brian Keith on board-clergy communication, clarifying decision-making streams in the General Church, and possible opening of the MDiv program
- A complete wrap-up of the Charter Day weekend, with two pages of photographs
- Christmas programs at Glencairn Museum, including a page of photographs
- A program jointly sponsored by Bryn Athyn College and the Swedenborg Foundation on last words of the dying and what clues they may offer to the spiritual world
- A wonderful new booklet by Donnette Alfelt – *Nobody Dies* – offering comfort to those who have lost a loved one
- A tribute to the late Rev. Robert H. P. Cole
- Announcement of the new Girls School Principal
- A report on this year’s Gathering Leaves conference
- High-tech outreach at the Swedenborg Foundation and with the New Christian Bible Study Project

This end-of-year-issue also includes the Annual Report of the Secretary of the General Church (page 636); the Clergy Directory for the Church (page 640); and the Index for 2015, beginning on page 660.

Editorials

PRACTICING THANKFULNESS

One of the faculties that make us human is the capacity for joy, and what would joy be without a sense of gratitude for the things that bring us joy, and their source? Thanking the Lord for the blessings He has bestowed upon us is not just something we *should* do, but *need* to do in order to fully appreciate those blessings. A life devoid of thankfulness would be a sad life.

As the Writings explain, the Lord wants us to approach Him in a state of humility, worship and thankfulness – not for His sake, but for *our* sake. This is because in these states the Lord can draw us away from the love of self and the evils which that love leads to, which stand in the way of the heavenly peace and joy which the Lord seeks to bring into our lives. (*Arcana Coelestia* 5957)

The things we are thankful for are things that bring us happiness. These include both natural and spiritual things, but from the Word, and from experience when we think about it, we know that natural things alone do not bring happiness – or at least not the deep and everlasting happiness that the things of heaven bring.

In fact, even the pain and loss we experience in this life are made, in providence, to serve in our spiritual development and help prepare us for our eventual entrance into the eternal happiness of heaven.

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.” (*Deuteronomy* 8:3; and verse 4:4 in both *Matthew* and *Luke*). It is the good of truth, the fruits of a life lived in accordance with the teachings of the Word, that bring the deepest and most lasting happiness. And of course the presence in our lives of the Bread of Heaven Himself.

Practicing thankfulness, then, is tied into the whole process of regeneration, which draws us more and more into the order of heaven, in which thankfulness is an essential element and recurring theme. We can't *make* ourselves feel thankful, but if we attend faithfully to the work of regeneration, thankfulness will come to us naturally and spontaneously.

Think of the life of religion as being like a beautiful tapestry, with thankfulness as a thread that runs through the whole work. Thankfulness is

not practiced in isolation from the various other strands out of which spiritual life is woven, but is part of the whole fabric of such a life.

Among the qualities that make up the life of heaven are humility, repentance, worship of the Lord, meditation on the Word, charity, looking for and finding the good from the Lord in other people, trust in providence, patience, perseverance, courage, appreciation of beauty, and so on.

But these things would be incomplete without conscious awareness of them and how valuable they are, and the inner peace and happiness they bring. As that awareness grows in us, gratitude to the One who gave us these gifts will also grow. And the feeling of thankfulness itself will become one more thing to be thankful for!

(WEO)

THE GIFT OF LIGHT

“In the beginning . . . let there be light.”

This is how the Lord coming into our lives begins – with a beam of light, a ray of hope, piercing the darkness and showing the way.

Christmas – when the Lord is born with us anew – is the season of light. It is lit with candles and stars, twinkling lights on trees and houses, a glow in the heart.

The birth of the Lord was announced to the shepherds by a multitude of angels appearing as a bright light in the dark sky, “the glory of the Lord shining round about them.” A bright star in the East led the wise men to Him.

This is God’s gift to us at Christmas: “I am come a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness.” (*John 12:46*)

This is why the Lord came on earth – and comes to us still: to save us from a darkness threatening to overwhelm the world and our freedom.

The darkness of the human spirit will always be with us – in hate and anger, jealousy and dominion. But the light of truth and peace and understanding dawns every day, just as the promise of Christmas is always in the present tense: “For unto us a child *is* born, unto us a Son *is* given.” And, “*I am* come a light into the world.”

Light is the perfect symbol of the season because it reaches out and includes. It illuminates and warms. Darkness leaves people on their own – fearful and trusting only themselves.

How we use the gift of light is left to us. There is power in light, but also power in darkness. In all of the drama before His crucifixion, Jesus said to the chief priests and elders: “When I was daily with you in the temple, you stretched forth no hands against Me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.” (*Luke 22:53*)

The power of darkness is always lurking, haunting, tempting. But we always have hope if we look to the light: “Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. . . . While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light. (*John* 12:35, 36)

We also have the warning: “Unless truth is lighted up by good, or unless faith is lighted up by kindness, there is nothing but darkness.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 4844.4)

The Lord came on earth to preserve our freedom – ultimately our freedom to choose to be with Him or against Him, to choose heaven or hell, light or darkness. Think about how these words in *John* apply to each of us:

“And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone that does evil hates the light, neither comes to the light lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that does truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.” (*John* 3:19-21)

And after Jesus had forgiven the woman taken in adultery, He said to the scribes and Pharisees who had tried to trap Him: “I am the light of the world; he that follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” (*Ibid.* 8:12)

As with the Lord’s first coming as “the light of the world,” so with His second coming as the Spirit of Truth – first as prophecy in *John*, then from John on the Isle of Patmos in *Revelation*:

“In the beginning was the Word. . . . In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shined in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not.” (*John* 1:1-4,5)

John was sent by the Lord “to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe. That was the true light, which lights every man that comes into the world.” (*Ibid.* 1:7-9)

And then we get the triumphant vision of the new light of revelation and of the Holy City New Jerusalem descending from God out of heaven:

“And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine on it: for the glory of the Lord did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it.” (*Revelation* 21:22-24)

“And there shall be no light there: and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord gives them light.” (*Ibid.* 22:5)

Almost at this end of this vision for the New Church comes the inspiring image: “I am the root and offspring of David, the bright and morning star.” (*Ibid.* 22:16) We are told in *Apocalypse Revealed* 954 that “the bright and

morning star signifies that He will come with new light, which will arise before His New Church, which is the Holy Jerusalem.”

So what are we to do with this constantly renewing gift of light? How do we give back?

After giving the Two Great Commandments, Jesus said: “You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit.” (*John* 15:16)

And in the Sermon on the Mount he gave us the charge – to make that gift of light a beacon in our lives, not just in this happy season but through all the days of our lives: “You are the light of the world. . . . Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” (*Matthew* 5: 14,16)

(BMH)

THE POPE AND THE NEW CHURCH

(Editor’s note: I wrote the following editorial, then headlined “The Pope’s Appeal,” for the broad audience of a daily newspaper in Pennsylvania on October 3, 1979 when Pope John Paul II visited Philadelphia. In late September of this year – 36 years later – Pope Francis became the second pope to visit Philadelphia (as well as Washington and New York). Both of these popes have shown how to combine strong leadership with gracious humility to inspire people throughout the world – and beyond the Catholic Church – to serve God, love their neighbors, uphold morality and live their values.

We have many doctrinal differences with the Catholic Church, and this pope, while enormously popular, is also somewhat controversial for both doctrinal and political positions. But he won people over during his visit to the United States with genuine love and compassion. We can all appreciate that he is serving the Lord as a powerful influence for good in the world. We know from True Christianity 457 that: “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.”

We may long for the day when the New Church approaches the vision of becoming “the crown of all churches that have hitherto existed in the world,” and one of our own bishops has such worldwide appeal and influence. Meanwhile, we can be grateful for the way the Lord is using people – including ministers, rabbis and popes – to breathe His love into others and help to spread His Church on earth.

This editorial took advantage of an opportunity to give a bit of a New Church spin to a topic that had everyone’s attention, and hopefully still has a message for all of us as well. – BMH)

President Carter came down from the Camp David mountaintop in July trying to rally us against a “national malaise” – and the nation yawned. Now comes Pope John Paul II to America – and to Philadelphia today – sounding a spiritual and moral challenge to the values of our materialistic world and escapist culture, and quickly enlivens the hearts and minds of Catholics and non-Catholics alike. Why? It is an important distinction, and the public’s perception of that distinction is encouraging.

The pope’s presence obviously has special meaning for Catholics. But beyond that role he is an important spiritual leader in the world. He is a symbol of a spiritual life who calls on that higher plane in each of us to elevate our awareness and thinking to a more spiritual perspective.

We tend to be preoccupied with the things of this world that grasp so blatantly for our attention: the demands of the job and the home, inflation, the “malaise” in Washington, the siren song of materialism. What the pope can do, which President Carter cannot, is to raise our consciousness to a level that gives broader perspective to our values and our worldly concerns.

What he says we have heard before – from parents, teachers, politicians, moralists. But because of his spiritual presence, he gives an important new focus to what is really important in our lives – especially for those with the faith, however tentative, that how we choose to live our lives has eternal as well as temporal consequences.

The spiritual message he is spreading has a universal appeal and pertinence to people who can elevate their minds from the world of the body to the realm of the soul. He set the tone with his first stop in Ireland, attacking “the moral sickness that stalks your society” – from pervasive materialism to the decadence of affluence and sexual license. And what we are hearing throughout his American stops – and will doubtless hear echoed in Philadelphia this afternoon – are variations on the theme, with relevance both to those who hear and those who don’t.

The appeal is to our higher conscience, made all the more ringing with exquisite eloquence. And the appeal is particularly to our youth – our future – but really to all of us who care about where we are going, individually and collectively.

So much of the lives of our young people and the larger “nation of sheep” is dominated by what is “in” – and organized religion has been “out” for years. And with the backsliding of morality so pronounced, the challenge is ever more acute to bring the flock back to spiritual principles.

“How many young people,” the pope asked in Ireland, “have already warped their consciences and have substituted the real joy of life with drugs, sex, alcohol, vandalism and the empty pursuit of mere material possessions?”

He held up to them a higher vision than the empty illusion of self-

gratification: “Like so many other young people in various parts of the world, you will be taught that changes must be made, that you must have more freedom, that you should be different from your parents and that decisions about your lives depend on you and you alone. You will hear people tell you that your religious practices are hopelessly out of date, that they hamper your style or your future, that with everything that social and scientific progress has to offer, you will be able to organize your own lives and that God has played out His role.”

He pleaded with them to shun the lures that draw them away from devotion to their God, and not to look for the easy way out when they encounter failure – that the only real peace and happiness comes with faith and a life according to it.

It is easy to hold up the ideal, of course, but it quickly loses its appeal back on the street, where the pressures of the world are often oppressive and it is so much easier to escape than to fight. But escape is as transitory and as hopeless as a heroin high. You have to come down. You can never really get away.

The pope offered an antidote: “Faced with problems and disappointments, many people will try to escape from their responsibility: escape in selfishness, escape in sexual pleasure, escape in violence, escape in indifference and cynical attitudes. I propose to you the option of love, which is the opposite of escape.”

Escapism is often self-justified as the exercise of freedom, when it is just the opposite. Here too the pope offered a keen insight: “Everybody wants full freedom in all areas of human behavior and new models of morality are being proposed in the name of would-be freedom. When the moral fiber of a nation is weakened, when the sense of personal responsibility is diminished, then the door is open for the justification of injustices, for violence in all its forms, and for the manipulation of the many by the few. The challenge that is already with us is the temptation to accept as true freedom what in reality is only a new form of slavery.”

Our culture too blithely dismisses the distinction between freedom and license, in spite of the inevitable unhappiness that license reaps. Freedom is a paradox to those who do not understand it. It implies responsibility, charity to the neighbor, and obedience to law – whether the natural laws of the highway, or the spiritual laws of our choices and behavior. Those who attempt to live by the Ten Commandments, to honor their faith and follow their God, are essentially more free than those who confuse liberty with license and assume it has no constrictions beyond personal whim.

Our freedom – as individuals, as a nation, and as a world – depends on self-restraint rooted in principle, but that conviction is easily and increasingly overlooked in our secular world. Our survival rests on foundations built more on sand these days than upon a rock, so that the spiritual leadership of the

pope provides an essential focus for lack of leadership – in our country and in our lives.

When the pope is gone, when the glamor is over, when we are left again with our consciences, we come down to the ultimate leadership of God in our lives and our willingness to follow Him – in freedom.

(BMH)

OUR NEW CHURCH VOCABULARY

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

DIVINE HUMAN

This term holds the central idea in the theology of the New Church. It is applied to the Lord Jesus Christ as He is after glorification – the Divine love in a human form. Note that the Divine Human is not identical with the Supreme Divine, in which case it would have vanished in the Infinite. It is the body of Divine truth which the Lord took on from the Father, and which He united with the Supreme Divine as a body with a soul, between which two there is an infinitely perfect correspondence.

The Divine Human is infinite because it is not a recipient of life, but is the esse of life from which life proceeds; but it is as if finite for the sake of reception. It is the sole object of worship in the heavens and in the Church on earth. (See *Arcana Coelestia* 2343, 2628, 5256; *Apocalypse Explained* 26; *True Christian Religion* 109)

Letters to the Editors

Our Loss

To the Editors:

I urge readers to take a good look at the Annual Report of the Secretary of the General Church of the New Jerusalem for fiscal year ending June 30, 2015 beginning on page 636 in this issue. I believe it reveals an historic first in net membership decline for the organization. According to past annual reports in *New Church Life* (search heavenlydoctrines.org), not once in the past 134 years has the General Church failed to add to its net membership rolls in any one year. Why is this happening?

In the past fiscal year, 56 new members were added to the rolls while 55 were called to the other world. However, what is perhaps most telling and distressing are the 19 resignations – a very high number - which show an overall net membership loss of 18.

These are not just numbers. They are people, a very important part of our community that is no longer there. I am aware that many resigned, at least in part, due to the policy of not allowing women to become priests in the General Church. Others, I am sure, had their own reasons.

In the past, I have had the privilege and honor, at times, of working with some of these former members who have been faithful volunteers, contributors and supporters of the General Church, often for decades. I ask you to please read their names and to remember their good works!

I am moved by their personal courage and the need to take such action; an action born of conscience. I am also deeply saddened by their loss and ours; a loss in talent, useful service and love that cries out for our clergy and the General Church Board to refocus anew their efforts on seeking solutions to the many critical issues – not just women in the priesthood – now facing our Church.

How many more resignations will it take?

Peter Boericke
Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

A Challenge for the Laity

To The Editors:

In politics today it is a common practice when an awful scandal erupts for the media manipulators, who favor the one adversely affected by the scandal, to emphasize a concurrent natural disaster or human tragedy or scientific breakthrough in order to take the scandal off the headlines.

Is it possible that the evil spirits would love to see the dire future for the General Church to be as suggested in the Rev. Willard Heinrichs' pass-fail piece and Peter Boericke's wake-up call comments? Are they using the potential disharmony in the Church of the women-in-the-clergy issue to divert our attention from facing the real problem?

Is our solution to a problem in the Church less in the clergy and more in the laity?

I think that over the past six or eight generations the General Church clergy (even if handicapped by an outdated format) have done a pretty good job: built churches, schools, libraries, held classes and special services and other pastoral works, all to accept the "*nunc licet*" challenge.

Can this "good job" be applied to us, the laity? In the six or eight generations that we have had the benefit of their work how have we done? Have we used the tools given us in application to our lives to become "better people" who may have a chance to reverse the present awful cultural decline and "save humanity" (which is what the core goal of the New Church is all about) by our presence and actions? I am afraid that the personal statistics of newchurchmen/women compared to those of the general public would be hard put to give more than a qualified "maybe."

So – what to do?

Those of you who favor women in the clergy – keep on "keepin' on", but spend a lot of your energy now joining with the clergy and *New Church Life*, the Swedenborg Foundation and other modern communication techniques figuring out a way to get more and more better people out of New Church homes with more tools to start saving the world.

Is it perhaps time to update our focus from "*nunc licet enterare intellectualiter in arcana fidei*" to include "*nunc necesse est arcana fidei in vita adhibere*"?

Ben McQueen
Chattanooga, Tennessee

Words to Live By

To the Editors:

Thanks very much for the September/October 2015 New Church Life. I find many articles extremely helpful and instructive. They are a great help in everyday living.

In “True Freedom,” the Rev. Ryan M. Sandstrom says, “We are to act in freedom according to reason.” Truly this is an enlightening truth to live by all the days and moments of life.

In “Love Languages of the Lord”, Caira Beven Bongers says, “The essential divine worship in the heavens does not consist of going to church regularly and listening to sermons but a life of love, thoughtfulness and faith in keeping with doctrine. The sermons in church serve only as a means of instruction in how to live.”

With deep thanks to you and to the writers of this fine edition of New Church Life.

Bill Hall
North Rockhampton
Queensland, Australia

Reaching Across the Pennypack

To The Editors:

Across the Pennypack Creek from Bryn Athyn The Lord’s New Church which is Nova Hierosoyma just celebrated (in October) a four-day Assembly with many speeches, meetings, singing and fun, picnics and a banquet.

Seventeen African ministers and five ministers representing Sweden, Serbia, Croatia and two from Ukraine arrived to attend the Council of the Clergy meetings with guests from around the world who came for the Assembly.

The Lord’s New Church is the smallest branch of the New Church but is very much alive and looking with energy to the future. We can report a very positive and productive Assembly.

When we get to the other world we are not going to be asked, “What branch of the New Church did you belong to?” We are told that the Lord loves variety and that every society in heaven is different and unique and yet the

different societies make one heaven.

It is a positive thing that the different branches of the New Church are communicating more and more without negativity. Without a doubt the increased communications between the different branches are the fruits of the International Women's *Gathering Leaves* Retreats which include women from all branches of the New Church.

We all know the quote that inspired them to reach out to each other: "When charity reigns, doctrinal differences do not divide."

We can all celebrate this accomplishment of outreach that now shows up in a variety of ways.

Dawn B. Potts
Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania

We Found Him in the Fields of the Forest

A Sermon About the Lord's Birth in Bethlehem

The Rev. Jeremy F. Simons

Lessons: Psalm 132: 1-14; True Christianity 226-228, 259

*"Lo, we heard of Him in Ephrathah, we found Him in the fields of the forest."
(Psalm 132.6)*

Ephrathah is an old name for Bethlehem. Today people might be surprised to hear it described as a forest, but up until fairly recently there was a dense pine forest there in the five miles between Jerusalem and Bethlehem.

In this old prophecy the forest – or “the fields of the forest” – is described for spiritual reasons, because of what a forest represents. David is speaking here about where the Lord was to be found, prophesying that He would be born in Bethlehem.

The thought of the Lord being born in the forest, or that He is to be found in the woods, is a poetic one to many people. People often love to walk in the woods, and many of us feel the Lord's presence there among the trees. And of course pine trees are an important part of our Christmas celebrations.

Our topic today is the meaning of woods and forests, and why the Lord is said in this *Psalm* to be found there. The spiritual forest of your life is where the Lord is to be found.

Just as forests are not only beautiful, but also places where you can lose your way, the spiritual forest has its dangers and people cannot find the path safely through it without the Lord's help. So our topic is how to find

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the Lord in what is called “*the fields of the forest*” and also how to avoid losing your way.

What is a spiritual forest?

A forest means the Church in respect to its knowledge, thus its external aspects, as in David: “We found Him in the fields of the forest.” – (*Arcana Coelestia* 9011)

The Church is called a forest, a garden and a paradise. It is called “a forest” by virtue of its knowledge, “a garden” by virtue of its intelligence, and “a paradise” by virtue of its wisdom. For “trees” are perceptions of goodness and truth, and also the knowledge of them. Since “a forest” means the Church is in respect to its knowledge, thus in respect to its external aspects, it also means its religious practices. (*Ibid.*)

The meaning of the *Psalms*, therefore, is that you find the Lord in the knowledge of the Church, in its external aspects, and in its religious practices. It is an obvious statement. How else would a person know anything about the Lord?

A forest beautifully represents the quantity and variety of knowledge that are possible. It is the most densely populated of all habitats, both in numbers and the variety of life forms. When you walk in the woods you never know what you might find. At any point where you stand there are hundreds and even thousands of living things within only a few feet of you. Most of these are unseen, hidden behind leaves, overhead, inside of trees, or underground. Even in winter the woods teem with life.

The knowledges of the Church present you with a similarly large array of information and possibilities. Every part of the Word can be endlessly examined, and it contains vast truths hidden within it, like the hidden life of a forest.

A forest, however, only represents the external knowledge of the Church or the Word. In the *Psalms*, to find Him in Ephrathah means “to do so in the spiritual celestial sense of the Word,” (*Arcana Coelestia* 4585, 4595), whereas to find Him “in the fields of the forest denotes in the natural or literal sense of the Word.” (*Ibid.* 9406, 3220, 9011; also *Apocalypse Explained* 700)

You can find the Lord in the literal sense of the Word, for it frequently speaks of Him and describes Him. You can find Him more clearly in the spiritual sense of the Word, where the inconsistencies of a God who is sometimes angry and punishing, who prefers His chosen people to all others, and who is somehow pleased by animal sacrifice, disappears and is replaced by a Lord who is love and wisdom itself. This is Ephrathah.

The name Bethlehem takes this same idea to an even higher level. For Bethlehem is knowledge that is so full of heavenly love that the Lord is present there absolutely, a new state of knowledge that bridges the gap between earth and heaven. (See *Arcana Coelestia* 4585)

This is the true place that the Lord can be born in your life, which is why He was born in Bethlehem. He came into the world to bear witness to the truth, so that love could be restored to the human race. All this is contained in David's prophecy of the fields of the forest.

The forest also can be dangerous

In the opposite sense a forest is a dark and forbidding place – a place of danger, a place of where you can easily lose your way. Characters in ancient mythology often become lost in the forest. In the war between David and Absalom, when the battle raged into the forests of Ephraim, we are told that “the woods devoured more people than the sword devoured.” (*II Samuel* 18:8) When you are in the forest you can lose perspective about your position and, faced with a multitude of choices of direction, you move in endless circles, exposed to the elements and the dangerous animals that live there.

A person who is lost in the spiritual forest is not lacking in knowledge. Instead, that person is faced with facts and information that confuses him. We read that regeneration can be confusing:

Regeneration must take place through faith and charity. Without truths to teach and guide, it would be like riding a horse in a dark woods by night. (*True Christian Religion* 620)

The confusing and dark spiritual forest is described as the “entangled boughs of the woods” in *Isaiah*. The Lord not only guides you through it, He cuts down the branches in your way:

Jehovah Zebaoth will hew down the entangled boughs of the woods with an axe. (*Isaiah* 10:34)

“The entangled boughs of the woods” stand for facts. The reason why in the Word facts are called entangled boughs is that facts are by nature like thickets, especially when the desires of self-love and love of the world, and false assumptions, exert an influence on them. Celestial and spiritual love is a love that arranges into order the facts that belong to the external memory, whereas self-love and love of the world disrupt that order and bring confusion to everything there. (*Arcana Coelestia* 2831.10)

The teaching here is that the forest of facts in the Word becomes confusing especially to the extent that your own desires and prejudices prevent you from looking at its teachings objectively. For “anyone who reads the Word . . . gains instruction according to his intention and affection.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 3436) “People who attribute everything to their own prudence are like those who wander in dark forests and do not know the way out.” (*Ibid.* 6485)

Modern life provides people with access to great amounts of information. The Heavenly Doctrines give us a vast array of teachings about religion. Anyone can become confused in attempting to sift their way through it. These

passages teach that your intentions and motives play a major role in your ability to understand. If you read the Word for the purpose of doing what is right and understanding what is true you are likely to see things more clearly, for example, than if you are trying to prove or disprove some particular idea for the purpose of arguing about it.

The vital role of having a body of teaching

Another important key to finding the path, however, is what we read in our lessons from *True Christianity* about the importance of having a body of teaching to work from. That is, fundamental general ideas that organize and clarify the particular teachings of the Word. We read in our lesson that without this body of teaching, or doctrine, to serve as a lamp people will tend to misunderstand the Word. They will tend to seize on one idea or another, without seeing what is most consistent with the overall message.

For example, seeing that various characters in the Word are polygamous they may conclude that polygamy is permissible, without understanding the central importance of conjugal love between one man and one wife. Or seeing the emphasis placed on believing the truth, and reading that “he who does not believe will be condemned” (*Mark 16:16*), a person might think that non-believers are to be persecuted – unless they understand the more general teaching that true belief is only possible in freedom, and that it is the life that matters more than belief. The understanding that the Lord is a God of love who loves all people equally is essential to combatting racism and bigotry.

With a body of teaching or doctrine that is drawn from the Word as a whole people can find their way through the forest of particular teachings. They can find the Lord in that forest, without being confused by the multitude of paths leading in other directions. They will be able to see past apparent contradictions to see the consistency within every part of the Word.

Swedenborg once traveled through a large forest in heaven as he journeyed to visit the people of the Golden Age, guided by an angel:

The forest was thickly filled with trees of various kinds, so dense they made it dark. But the forest was cut by numerous narrow paths. The angel told me that all of these were a maze to lead people astray. Unless the Lord opened his eyes to see the olive trees wreathed in grape vines, and so to follow the path from one olive to the next, a traveler would stray into

Every person travels spiritually through a forest on their way to heaven. The only way to find the true path is if your eyes are opened to see the signs that the Lord provides.

Everyone wanders in the woods at times. It is difficult to know what to believe. In this Christmas season, though, it isn't so hard to see that the path is lit with friendship and love, and that if we look with a full heart we will find Him in Bethlehem.

Tartarus, which is the region surrounding this at the sides. The forest is like this to guard the approach. (*Conjugal Love* 75)

Swedenborg was led by the angel, or by the Lord, through this forest and into the heaven of the Golden Age.

It might seem strange that approaches to heaven would need to be guarded like this. Similarly it might seem strange that religious concepts can seem so contradictory and confusing instead of being clear and obvious to everyone.

The reason that things are not straightforward, and the reason that heaven is guarded in this way, is to allow people to think and do as they genuinely wish. This freedom means that no ideas or spiritual states can be imposed on us unless we freely choose

them. Our choices and loves sort these things out.

Every person travels spiritually through a forest on their way to heaven. The only way to find the true path is if your eyes are opened to see the signs that the Lord provides, pictured by the olive trees wreathed in grape vines in Swedenborg's story. The olive trees stand for love and charity. (*Arcana Coelestia* 886) The grape vines wreathed around them stand for the general ideas of doctrine that show the way to what is true. (*Ibid.* 1071)

If your intentions are good, and the general ideas are true, then you will find your way through that forest. It will not be a dark forest at all, but a forest of wonder and beauty, full of knowledge, a woods where you can find the Lord. We read:

My friend, as you approach the Word, go to the God of the Word and enter the sheepfold of the church through the Door. Then you will be enlightened. Then, as if you were on a mountain top, you will see the earlier tracks and mistaken turns in the dark forest at the foot of the mountain – not only those of many other people, but also your own. (*True Christianity* 177)

Everyone wanders in the woods at times. It is difficult to know what to believe. In this Christmas season, though, it isn't so hard to see that the path is lit with friendship and love, and that if we look with a full heart we will find Him in Bethlehem. We will see it in the Christmas trees and lights. We will hear it in the carols, and feel it among friends and family.

I will not give sleep to my eyes or slumber to my eyelids until I find a place for the Lord, a dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob. Behold, we heard it in Ephrathah; we found it in the fields of the forest.

Amen.



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OUR NEW CHURCH VOCABULARY

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

DOCTRINE

Even in the New Church this term is sometimes associated with abstract theology. Nothing could be further from the truth! Doctrine is all that in the Word which teaches how the Lord is to be worshipped and how men ought to live that they may be withdrawn from hell and introduced into heaven. Doctrine therefore has a vital relation to life and the good of life does not exist without it. (See *Arcana Coelestia* 3445)

It is necessary to distinguish between the “doctrine of genuine truth” and what is known to us as “derived doctrine.” By the former is meant that which appears plainly in the letter of Divine revelation, and which can be drawn thence and formulated into systematic teaching by a careful comparison of passages and an arrangement of them into a logical order and series.

Derived doctrine, on the other hand, is the formulation in which the Church expresses its understanding of what the Writings teach. The difference, and it is a vital one, is that the doctrine of genuine truth has Divine authority; derived doctrine does not, since it consists in human conclusions and is finite and fallible. (See *Sacred Scripture* 25)

Grace and Gratitude

Rev. Dr. Andrew M.T. Dobb

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. (Revelation 22:21)

Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!" (*Luke 1:26-28*)

The angel's words to Mary have echoed down the centuries, repeated annually in the Christmas story: "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you." As the woman chosen to bear the Lord, Mary is indeed favored above all women. She carried the Lord in her womb, bore Him in a stable, watched Him grow in "wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." (*Luke 2:52*) While there are any number of aspects of the annunciation we could consider, this article looks specifically at the greeting: "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you," with emphasis on the word "favored."

We often use words without always clearly defining them, and when we read a translation of the Word it is easy to forget that we are taking a step away from the original word, and sometimes the nuances of meaning in the original language get lost in the translation. The word "favor" is no exception.

"Favor" is used many times in the Old and New Testaments, but does the word translated as "favor" in the Old Testament mean exactly the same as the word translated as "favor" in the New? When the word appears in the Heavenly Doctrines, it is a translation of the Latin, which had differences from the Hebrew and Greek.

Behind the English word "favor" lies another word that is often used interchangeably with it: "grace." In the original languages the Hebrew or Greek can be translated as either. "Grace" is a word worth reflecting on even though we don't use it much, except in blessings. In the Roman Catholic translation of the annunciation Gabriel says: "Hail Mary, full of grace." This becomes the opening phrase for the Rosary. But "grace" is used in other places as well, as in the frequently recited blessing, "May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all." That phrase closes the book of *Revelation*, and so is the final statement

in the Word.

Following the meaning of a word and trying to see its relevance in our lives can take us through a study of the Word and dictionaries, and requires a bit of imagination to connect the facets of meaning to gain a picture of the range of meaning. Yet the picture is more in the impressionistic style than the sharp focus of an old master. Sometimes we have to close one eye and step back to get a sense of the whole.

This article does not focus on a one-to-one translation, but on how words contain many aspects that we at times take for granted. I am following the example of translators who render a specific Hebrew or Greek or Latin word as “grace” or “favor.” It seems that they are interchangeable. For simplicity sake, I’m choosing “grace.”

In the Word, the Lord is the source of grace or favor, and people receive it. The *Psalms* are filled with gratitude for the grace of the Lord. A very familiar one is, “O, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good. For His mercy endures forever.” (*Psalms* 118:1)

To be *grateful* is to recognize something given to us by another. This may be a gift, an opportunity, a word, an action, anything really that someone else gives us which stirs gratitude in our hearts. Part of experiencing gratitude is understanding what it is that we have been given. We can’t be grateful in a vacuum.

A person who experiences something as a right, or a due, really doesn’t have to be grateful for it. A child does not have to be grateful for being fed by his or her parents, because children have a right to food, and parents have a responsibility to feed them. Later reflection may show an adult that his or her parents exceeded their responsibility, they gave more, tried harder, were more supportive than was necessary, and for this, we should be grateful.

So gratitude is not the mere acceptance of what we are due, but the recognition of what we have been given freely by someone else. A friend who helps another is not obligated to give that help, but gives it from the kindness of heart. But when someone does a kindness from the heart, then gratitude is, or should be, the response. This is the connection between *grace* and *gratitude*. Grace is the giving; gratitude is the response.

The connection is apparent in the words themselves: *grace/gratitude/grateful*. When the grace comes from the Lord, our gratitude involves a recognition of Him, an acknowledgment of His presence with us, and a willingness to receive the things we receive by removing those aspects of our lives that would block them out.

As we explore the way the word rendered “grace” or “favor” is used in the Word as a whole, we find that as the languages are different, so there are slightly different emphases that overall complement each other. By examining these, it becomes possible to form a concept or idea of the Lord’s grace toward

humanity, and by extension, the kind of gratitude extended on our parts.

There are many examples in the Old Testament of people finding grace or favor in the eyes of the Lord. Consider Noah as an example. The world had grown increasingly wicked, “But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.” (*Genesis* 6:8)

The Hebrew word for “grace” in this verse is “*chen*” (*khane*). In the Old and New Testaments, every word has been assigned a number, the “Strong’s Number,” which makes it possible to track that particular word wherever it is used. The Strong’s Number translated as “grace” here is Strong’s 2580. The Hebrew word is sometimes translated as “grace” and at others as “favor” and appears many times in the Old Testament.

As in most words, there is a range of meanings that appear in the way it is translated into English: favor, grace, pleasant, precious, well-favored. The implications are that when the Lord looked at Noah, He looked at him with favor or grace. He found Noah pleasant, precious and well-favored. So the word “grace” begins to take on a range of interpretations.

However, the dictionary also shows that the word “grace” has interesting origins. The root of the word carries a wealth of meaning as we think of the Lord’s grace in our lives. At the heart of the Hebrew word is an action, for to give grace means, “to bend or stoop in kindness to an inferior; to favor, bestow.” (Strong’s #2602) This definition evokes the image of God reaching out from on high to people. He is the infinite, we are finite, yet He can stoop down and be kind to people, even though we are greatly inferior to Him.

This idea of the Lord coming down to the level of people lies at the heart of the Lord coming into this world. By being born a baby He took on the human weaknesses in such a way that He could throw them off and redeem the human race. The advent of the Lord, then, is the perfect grace, or favor, that the Lord gave the human race.

Most of the instances where this Hebrew word is used in the Old Testament show people who seek to “find favor” in the eyes of the Lord or others above them – a leader or king. For example, Abram hoped to find “favor” in the eyes of the angels who visited him. (*Genesis* 18:3)

The most frequent use of “grace” or “favor” in the Old Testament falls into this category – people who hope for kindness from another. In each of these cases, the root concept of “grace” or “favor” is apparent in the hoped for action: that the leader or king would stoop down and render a kindness to the supplicant. What is interesting in considering these examples is the connection between the action on the part of the supplicant and grace given as a result.

Interspersed with people seeking grace are passages where the Lord declares that He bestows grace on those who walk in His way. In these passages, the promise of grace is an incentive to obedience. For example, in the *Exodus* story God promises Moses that He will give the Israelites “favor in the sight

of the Egyptians” so that they would not leave Egypt empty handed. (*Exodus* 3:21) This promise was fulfilled at the end of the 10 plagues:

And the LORD had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they granted them what they requested. Thus they plundered the Egyptians. (*Exodus* 12:36)

In the *Psalms* we read of how it is part of the Lord’s nature to give grace and He does so freely:

For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly. (*Psalms* 84:11)

In the New Testament, the concept of grace is a bit different from that of the Hebrew. While the words have a similar meaning, the root of the Hebrew word – the stooping down of God to people – is less present in the Greek. The actual word for grace in Greek, *charis*, is only used in the Gospels of *Luke* and *John*, and later in *Revelation*.

It is used sparingly in these Gospels, but extensively in the Epistles, which perhaps explains why the term is seldom used in the New Church, where only the four Gospels are regarded as canonical, but extensively in the Christian Church which draws the bulk of its teaching from the Epistles. Indeed the concept of God’s grace plays a central role in Christian theology. (More on this later.)

The Greek word, *charis*, is less about the Lord stooping to bestow kindness, and more about the activity of the Lord in people. Strong’s Dictionary defines *charis* as “especially the Divine influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life; including gratitude.” (Strong’s #5485) In this definition, grace becomes the activity of the Lord in a person’s life, although the requisites of the Old Testament remain: this is given to “those who walk uprightly.”

We see this blessing well presented in the Christmas story. When the angel, Gabriel, appears to Mary, he says: “Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!” And later, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.” (*Luke* 1:28 and 30)

As in the Old Testament, the word “favor” here is a translation of the word for grace. (In the Catholic “Hail Mary”

(Grace) is used sparingly in the Gospels, but extensively in the Epistles, which perhaps explains why the term is seldom used in the New Church. . . . Indeed the concept of God’s grace plays a central role in Christian theology.

In the Christmas story, the activity of the Lord in Mary's life becomes very clear.

Mary's willingness to cooperate with the Lord, in spite of her early misgivings, was a sign of this grace, and it was through her that the Lord gave grace to the whole human race.

the Greek is better preserved, for it quotes Gabriel's words as recognizing Mary as "full of grace.") Mary was full of grace because she led a blameless life in the sense that she was adhering to the rules of betrothal and marriage, and was, therefore virtuous.

In the Christmas story, the activity of the Lord in Mary's life becomes very clear. Mary's willingness to cooperate with the Lord, in spite of her early misgivings, was a sign of this grace, and it was through her that the Lord gave grace to the whole human race, in the Hebrew sense of the word, by stooping down to become a human being in order to save all people.

Another instance of grace in the New Testament is found in *Revelation*, which opens and closes with the promise of grace. The first words John

addresses to the seven churches of Asia are a promise of God's grace: "Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come." (*Revelation* 1:4) And the book closes with the very familiar words, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen." (*Ibid.* 22:21)

There are many ways of thinking about the book of *Revelation*, but one way is to begin at the beginning with the seven churches of Asia. The *Apocalypse Revealed* explains that these churches represent all the people from the Christian world who knew the Lord and lived according to His commands, and will therefore become the foundation of the New Christian Heaven.

From this point of view, the entire Last Judgment described in *Revelation* tells of how the Lord sought out these people, exposing the evils and falsities of the church in the process, and setting the salvable free from its influence. The book begins and ends with the promise of grace upon this new heaven, and a new church on earth once the judgment is done.

Revelation is, in many ways, the perfect example of grace as it is depicted in the Greek word *charis*, for it is brought about by the influence of the Divine in people's lives – the continual influx of goodness and truth to which people must respond. Those who rejected this inflowing rejected the Lord and heaven, preferring to cast themselves into hell. But there were the great multitudes who responded positively, who opened their minds and lives to this influence and

heaven was formed within them. They received the Lord's grace, His influence, and expressed their gratitude in the many songs of praise found in *Revelation*.

Although the word "grace" is used sparingly in the Gospels and *Revelation*, it appears frequently in the Epistles, and so the idea of grace is central to Christian theology. If grace is the activity of God in a person's life, then the object of life should be to prepare oneself to receive it. But herein lies a challenge: how do we prepare?

Over the centuries the Christian Church grappled with what to do with the original sin of Adam, so inimical to grace. With such a corrupt and fallen nature, how could people prepare to receive grace? Gradually the idea developed that people could do nothing. Grace came to be seen as a free gift from God, given to whomever He wills, and withheld from those who He judges to be unworthy.

In the early church the idea developed that the vehicle for grace was baptism, so that when an infant was baptized, original sin was neutralized, restoring a person to a state of spiritual freedom to choose between good and evil. In time questions arose about human freedom and the concept of predestination rose up to snuff out the active human response to the Lord. By the time of reformers, people came to believe that they could do nothing to influence their salvation. It lay completely in the hands of God to decide who would be given the grace of salvation and who would not.

These doctrines greatly influenced the Christian Church, leading to some damaging ideas about God, for, if on the one hand He could grant grace to those whomever He will, He could also withhold it from others. God came to be seen as arbitrary, angry and implacable – a far cry from the God who stoops down to the lives of people in kindness and becomes active in their lives.

In the New Church "grace" plays a different doctrinal role than it does in other churches. Aside from the familiar blessing at the end of services, we hardly hear about grace in preaching and teaching the New Church. Probably a lot of this has to do with the careful avoidance of Christian doctrine. But the doctrine of grace is there and needs to be examined if we are to know what it is to live a life of gratitude.

The word for *grace* in Latin has different nuances from both the Hebrew and Greek. "Grace" in Latin is the word *gratia*, and the Oxford Latin Dictionary gives nine definitions, showing a spread of concepts that are really variations on a theme. In its most basic form, *gratia* means favor shown to another, or goodwill or kindness to someone else out of the goodness of one's own heart.

This idea is developed in further definitions to include a level of friendship with another. As in Hebrew and Greek, the idea of grace involves not only the giving of the favor, but also the reason for it, that the recipient deserves the grace. So the dictionary describes *gratia* as "favor shown by word or deed for

services rendered, gratitude and thanks.”

While the Latin word gives some indication of the meaning and nuances of *grace*, it is necessary to turn to the Heavenly Doctrines to see with greater clarity what “grace” involves. One of the earliest definitions of grace in the Doctrines comes in the explanation of the Noah story, where we are told that Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. In this passage we are told that “The Lord’s mercy involves and looks to the salvation of the whole human race; and it is the same with His ‘grace’ and therefore the salvation of the human race is signified.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 598)

This definition of grace brings the meanings of the Hebrew word *chen* and the Greek *charis* into a single focus. The salvation of the human race is the Lord’s entire motivation, for His goal is a heaven from the human race. To do this, He has to stoop down to our level, an idea that lies at the root of the Hebrew word for grace, and influence our hearts, incorporating the concept behind the Greek word.

Thinking of grace as a part of salvation brings us to the thought of mercy, and the two are closely connected but not identical. In defining grace in the Noah story, the *Arcana* points out that even though they appear similar, there is a distinction between mercy and grace, and both are necessary for salvation.

Arcana Coelestia 598 makes this point: “‘grace’ relates to spiritual things, which are of faith, or of the understanding, [...] ‘mercy’ relates to celestial things which are of love, or of the will.” In terms of salvation, it would seem that the Lord saves people from His love, or from mercy (which is sometimes defined as “love grieving”) but the means of salvation are the truths. For this reason, the Lord, out of love for the human race, appeared as the Word who “came down and dwelt among us.”

The Lord’s grace, leading to our salvation, is given to us by an inclination toward and an affection for truth:

In general, Divine grace is all that is given from the Lord. And as all that is so given has relation to faith and love, and faith is the affection of truth from good, this is meant in particular by Divine grace. To those in the spiritual kingdom it is granted by the Lord to be in the affection of truth for the sake of truth; and this Divine is what is called grace; . . . nor is there any other Divine grace with man, spirit or angel, than to be affected by truth because it is truth, since in that affection there is heaven and blessedness for them. (*Apocalypse Explained* 22)

The affection for truth that we experience is the Lord’s grace toward us, for only by means of truth can people enter into a relationship with Him: truth teaches us who He is, what He does for us and what we should do for ourselves. In the absence of an affection for truth, our entire being would be closed to the Lord. So the Lord is continually working in us to stir and stimulate that affection, encouraging us from within to be receptive of His presence, and this is His grace in our lives. So we read:

“And I will be gracious to whom I am gracious, and I will show mercy to whom I show mercy” means that Divine Truth and Good will be revealed to those who are receptive. This is clear from the meaning of “being gracious” as endowing with spiritual truth and good, in this instance revealing it, since the subject is the inner substance and the outward form of the Church, worship, and the Word; and from the meaning of “showing mercy” as endowing with celestial truth and good, in this instance revealing it. The reason why among those who are receptive is meant is that the internal things of the Word, the Church, and worship are revealed to none but those who are receptive. (*Arcana Coelestia* 10577)

But the Lord’s grace, or activity in people, is more than an affection for truth. An affection for truth is an interest in the truth, a desire to learn, a willingness to understand; in short it involves the complete mind of a person.

Remember the Hebrew definition of grace as stooping low with kindness? In instilling an affection for truth in people, the Lord adds kindness to that by stirring a sense of delight or enjoyment of the truth, so that truth is not simply something to be learned by rote, but something to be enjoyed, to be savored and willingly incorporated into one’s life. Again the Doctrines express this very clearly, speaking to those of the spiritual kingdom who are those who are led and regenerated by means of truth:

To those in the spiritual kingdom it is granted by the Lord to be in the affection of truth for the sake of truth; and this Divine is what is called grace; so far, therefore, as anyone is in that affection is he in the Lord’s Divine grace; nor is there any other Divine grace with man, spirit, or angel, than to be affected by truth, because it is truth, since in that affection there is heaven and blessedness for them... (*Apocalypse Explained* 22)

If the grace of the Lord is the salvation of people by means of truth, which He accomplished by instilling into people an affection for truth and a delight in it, then one can see in this concept of grace the workings of the Holy Spirit:

Generally speaking, the Divine actions and powerful effects meant by the Holy Spirit are the acts of reforming and regenerating us. Depending on the outcome of this reformation and regeneration, the Divine actions and powerful effects also include the acts of renewing us, bringing us to life, sanctifying us, and making us just; and depending on the outcome of these in turn, the Divine actions and powerful effects also include the acts of purifying us from evils, forgiving our sins, and ultimately saving us. These are the powerful effects, one after the other, that the Lord has on people who believe in him and who adapt and modify themselves in order to welcome him and invite him to stay. Divine truth has these effects. (*True Christian Religion* 142)

The Lord’s grace never ceases and is never withdrawn, for if it was, people would not be able to enter heaven, and the purpose of the creation would be thwarted.

With these thoughts in mind, we can turn to the idea of living in gratitude. Most simply put, gratitude is the reception of grace and the recognition that

Most simply put, gratitude is the reception of grace and the recognition that it is a gift to us that makes it possible for us to be saved and enter heaven.

it is a gift to us that makes it possible for us to be saved and enter heaven. It is the reception of the Lord's grace that makes spiritual things possible in our lives. As we receive the affection for truth, so we learn truth, come to see it as true, and find ways of applying it. The greatest gratitude we can show the Lord for His grace is a life according to His Word.

The results of this may be states of conflict and temptation as we face our hereditary evils, when we have to

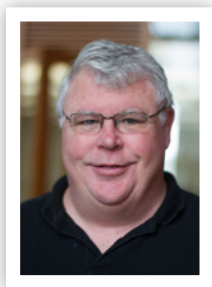
repent from things we have done, or not done, and begin a new life. In these times the Lord's grace may not seem so wonderful to us. There may be times when we are not as receptive as we should be, when we backslide and fall into our old evil ways. Yet the Lord's grace is always there and should we receive it in gratitude it will give strength, as it gave courage and strength to many people in the Word.

When Gabriel told Mary she had found favor or grace and that the Lord was with her, she was willing to accept the commission before her. She could bear the child who became the Savior of the human race.

In one sense, Mary was singled out of all humanity to do this, but in another sense, we all receive grace from the Lord and the commission to bring our lives into harmony with His, and as this happens, we receive the blessings He wants to give us.

As we think about grace, especially during the Christmas season, it helps to fill the word "grace" or "favor" with some of the root meanings from Hebrew, Greek and Latin, and reflect on how the Lord has stooped down to our level, and worked the kindness of inspiring us from within to learn His truth.

"May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all."



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Take Flight

Charter Day Cathedral Address

The Rev. David C. Roth

Have you ever taken a trip on an airplane to a place you've never been to before? It can be a bit nerve wracking, especially for an international destination. Most likely it's a bit exciting as well. You get on the plane, find your seat, put things away and then the flight attendants come on with the spiel about putting your luggage in the overhead bins or under the seat in front of you, show you how to use your seatbelt and where the exits are, tell you that the seat cushion will work as a floatation device if you need it, and where the lavatories are. Notice what happens when they are giving you all this information. Everyone ignores them. They tune it out. No one looks up from their smart phones. No one puts down their magazines. They just keep doing what they were doing.

To my mind taking a trip on an airplane is a bit like being in high school or college. It's exciting and fun – like an adventure. And it can feel like you are trapped – just stuck in a plane. “Why did I get the middle seat?” “All there is to eat are these peanuts and there are five more hours to go.” You can't get up to go the bathroom whenever you want to. And there are the social pressures. “Do I talk to the person next to me or do I pretend I'm asleep?”

I have been on enough flights to know that sometimes it goes smoothly and quickly, and sometimes it can feel like a nightmare that will never end. One time I was on a flight to South Africa – a 17-hour flight, with a two-year-old on my lap. And soon after we took off his diaper leaked all over me. So I flew drenched.

Think about the definition of the word education. It means, “to lead forth.” The Heavenly Doctrines given through Emanuel Swedenborg say, “All education is an opening of the way.” The questions then are: “Where are you going?” “What way are you headed?” Well, you might say, “I'm buckled in – I can't go anywhere!”

The Heavenly Doctrines given through Emanuel Swedenborg say, “All education is an opening of the way.” The questions then are: “Where are you going?” “What way are you headed?”

Sometimes we question the point of school. We question just having to sit there and study and learn. “When do I get to do something that is practical?”

Well, that’s good. We all have that desire to be useful and put things into practice – to DO something. And we have a very strong, built-in desire for freedom. And that is by Divine design. Anything that is really going to become part of who we are has to be chosen in freedom and done from a place of full rational sight. There is a tension there because we all want to be free.

But the adults in our life don’t always agree that we are ready for that. They say we are in a development stage.

Well, you are in a developmental stage of your life where you are working on developing and perfecting your rational mind. The rational is that part of your mind that sees evidence in the world around us, the things of nature, of sensory evidence. Then it compares that with what we know in our spiritual mind – the truths we know, the information we have learned about higher things. And it compares those two sets of information and tries to make a choice – hopefully, a choice that is good.

I like the airplane analogy, especially sitting here on the grounds of this church and this religious institution, because the airplane has that ability to rise above our normal plane of life – to rise above the ordinary and view things from a higher perspective. Education does that for sure.

Think of all the incredible things that one can learn and create. You can be given a chance to express yourself through different mediums: maybe it’s art, or music, or poetry, or dance. Or to be able to imagine incredible possibilities through mathematics, science, physics and biology. Or be carried away by compelling events in human history, and take some of those lessons you learned and use them for life today. Or learn about strategy, sportsmanship and teamwork through sports. Or open up to new cultures by learning a new language. There are so many other things I could talk about.

Even more amazing than that to me are the higher truths – the spiritual truths – we can learn that help us: to start to understand who the Creator of the Universe is; what the plan for human life is; what is the purpose of being. We are taught that we are not born for our own sake but for the sake of others. Just think about that for a moment: “I am here, not just for me, but I am here

for the people around me. To serve. To contribute.”

You are not an accident, you are not a mistake. You are created from a Divine intention and purpose because you have a part to play – a part that matters, and that is vital. Think about the example the Lord gives us of the human body – all of these different parts. They are so very different but work and function together as one.

What if I were to ask you which part you would be willing to give up? Can I have your hand, take your liver? Which one are you ready to give up? We are kind of attached to all of them. We like them. We find they are useful.

And you are created to be free, to have choice. All kinds of blessings and opportunities are not going to just fall into your lap. You have to use your free will. You have to make choices. You have to summon up somewhere within yourself that drive – to discover your passion, to discover who you are and then you have to learn about it. And then practice, and practice some more, and then some more.

Well, Charter Day is a celebration of obtaining, and being granted the right, as an institution, to help you, and many who have come before you, and many who will come after you, to realize their dreams and pursue their calling. And hopefully, like in the story of Jacob, those dreams will draw their inspiration from something higher, something that considers the greater good.

In that story think of the angels ascending. We might say, “What good, Lord, are you asking of me?” As we go about our life, “What is it that I can do?” Those angels ascending.

Then think of those angels descending: listening for that guidance, for those messages or inspiration from above. They can send you up as high as you are willing to go in finding value, and finding meaning, usefulness and eternal happiness. And we are not talking about in some far distant future, but now – today and every day. That is a pretty amazing thing.

Think back to that flight analogy for a moment. What is the part of the flight that everyone ignores? It’s the instructions on safety. “Yeah, yeah, I’ve heard that all before.” In one sense I think of spiritual and religious instruction being about our safety – about our comfort and happiness. Just like on the airplane, a lot of people

Charter Day is a celebration of obtaining, and being granted the right, as an institution, to help you, and many who have come before you, and many who will come after you, to realize their dreams and pursue their calling.

ignore it, tune out. And that might not be the best strategy for success.

One time my wife and I were on a flight from Denver to London, but had to stop in Washington, DC. So on that first leg we did all the normal things: we ignored the flight attendants as they gave us the information we needed. Everyone continued what they were doing.

A couple of hours into the flight someone came on the intercom and said, “The tire blew up when we took off and we need to prepare you for a crash landing,” then added, “We are going to go over the safety instructions again.” This time EVERYONE paid close attention.

As we descended I held my wife’s hand and prayed and thought about a lot of things. There were a lot of those “should haves” that I thought about and those “what ifs”. As we got closer you could see out the window all the fire trucks and ambulances arriving alongside us. And we landed safely. There had been an error in reading the tire. It had mistakenly said that the tire had exploded.

Life can be difficult. We can have our fair share of crash-landing moments. You have a unique opportunity to learn all about things that really matter in your life – more than anything else you learn in life ever will. Things that will last forever. Things about your eternal life. Not only how things function but the deeper questions of *why*? For what reason? How is God present in the world? How is God present in these tragedies? Why didn’t He stop them? Could He have stopped them? What is true happiness and how do I find it? So I invite you to pay attention to those safety instructions. There is vital information there for you!

The greatest thing you will learn in your lifetime – and it will take your whole lifetime – is to learn how to love. To truly love – to love selflessly, to love wisely. And we need Divine help to show us how. We need Divine truth and revelation to show us.

We are on a journey.
We are being led
somewhere. We may not
know exactly where it is,
but we need to trust that
the Lord is there and
He is with us on every
step of that journey.

From many years of trying I can tell you it is tough! I still have so much to learn, so much to practice, and so much to change about myself. Part of me wishes I was just like a dog or some animal where I just could follow my instincts – eat, sleep, catch some Frisbees, be off the charts excited about just about everything. Where I don’t have to learn everything; it’s just built in. If I make a mistake I will be told, “Bad boy!” If I do the right thing I am told, “Good boy, that’s a good boy!”

And I get some treats.

But I know that being a human being with all of its challenges is such a gift. It is wonderful to keep learning and growing and exploring. There is so much to discover. We are on a journey. We are being led somewhere. We may not know exactly where it is, but we need to trust that the Lord is there and He is with us on every step of that journey. And sometimes you will get those Stairway-to-Heaven moments like Jacob. I want to tell you about one of those moments for myself.

We had two children and were thinking of adopting some more. So we signed up with the Foster-to-Adopt program in Denver, Colorado. We worked with them doing all the training for many months. Then after a while a couple of opportunities came forward but they weren't right for our family. It was heartbreaking.

We finally decided to go with a private agency in a city north of us. Part of that process was to consider names we would use if we adopted a child. One day my wife came home with a name that she really liked. It was Malik. So we talked about it. "Yeah, that is a really nice name for a boy." And we went on with our lives.

Then one day we got a phone call from the adoption agency. It was the Friday of the Martin Luther King Jr. weekend. They said, "There is this little boy in Tupelo, Mississippi, that we want you to think about adopting. He was born prematurely so he is still in the hospital. It will be a couple of weeks before you can go gather him if things progress. We want you to think about it."

So that is what we did that whole long weekend. We talked about it with our family and with our children. We told the children: "There's this little boy who we have the possibility of adopting. We need to talk about it and think about it." My nine-year-old daughter said, "We are going to adopt him and his name is going to be Malik."

I said not so fast. But she was insistent. "Well, we ARE going to adopt him and his name IS going to be Malik."

We responded, "We might not be able to adopt him and he might already have a name. That might not be the right name for him."

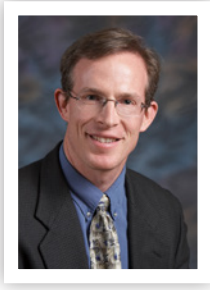
She was quite certain, "We are going to adopt him and his name is going to be Malik." This went on during the whole weekend.

By Tuesday afternoon I had grown impatient, so I called the adoption agency. They said, "Oh good, I am glad you called. There is a fax coming in from the agency in Tupelo." She started to read off the medical history of the parents and more about the child. And then said, "Oh, what's this? It looks like a name. Yes. The birth mother named him. His name is Malik."

It is one of those moments when you say, "Surely the Lord is in this place. . . . How awesome is this place!" We were given a beautiful sign. And we did adopt him.

So I invite you to buckle up and enjoy your trip. Amazing things await you – and you may want to pay attention to some of those instructions that you are given along the way. You may want to build a relationship with the Lord – the most important relationship of your life.

As it says in *Isaiah*: “Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint!”



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BRYN ATHYN COLLEGE

CHARTER DAY BANQUET PROGRAM:

Innovation in Learning About Democracy at the College Level and the Importance of New Church Content

Note: This is a summary of a joint talk moderated by Rev. Dr. Thane Glenn and presented by Dr. D. Gregory Rose and Dr. Wendy Closterman, all faculty members of Bryn Athyn College. This talk was the featured part of the Charter Day Banquet Program, October 10, 2015.

Thanks to generous support from the Cole Foundation, Bryn Athyn College has been conducting an innovative course on democracy.

This course has students playing roles, which is not that unusual since simulations and mock trials have been used in classrooms for decades. What is unusual is that in this class the role-playing goes on for the whole term. Students participate in elaborate, complex role-immersion games based on hundreds of pages of manuals, role descriptions and readings. Students run most of the class sessions. In fact, if you look into the classroom you would see either Dr. Wendy Closterman or Dr. Greg Rose sitting in the back watching.

The course is part of the “Reacting to the Past” movement that has been developing over the past 20 years. In a Reacting course, students are given individual roles and placed in a crisis moment in history in which some kind of group decision must be made. This term we have been running two games: Athens in 403 BC and the United States Constitutional Convention of 1787.

The movement’s manifesto was published last year: *Minds on Fire* by Mark Carnes of Barnard College. If you



Rev. Thane Glenn



Dr. Greg Rose

have any interest in higher education, it's a great read.

Why are these kinds of approaches so memorable? Carnes argues that when students take on a role in a simulation, a mock trial, or especially a full role-immersion game, one or more of three elements capture them: imagination, competition and absurdity.

Imagination: Just like taking on a character in a theatrical production, immersing themselves into other people's worlds allows students to think differently.

Competition: These games involve winners and losers.

It is most often the competitive element that encourages students to pay more attention and exert more effort than they might otherwise.

Absurdity: Students often dress the part; strange things happen in the games; and they have fun.

Do students learn anything?

Yes! Not only are these games devised to engage students, but they are carefully designed to engage them with core liberal arts skills and activities, including:

- Engagement with foundational texts (in our case, the *Federalist Papers* and Plato's *Republic*)
- Research, writing and public speaking
- Critical thinking and debate
- Consideration of multiple points of view
- Team work

The evidence so far in the class has been positive:

- Our students have been very engaged – some intensely engaged – but we have also seen students willing to think about and discuss course-related issues in a much more sustained way in the classroom.
- Some students have reported that the debates frequently continue outside of the classroom.
- Another student told us that he was reading his primary sources more closely, because he had to really understand the arguments and think of the counter arguments.
- A group of students even took trips to Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell and City Tavern in nearby Philadelphia on their own initiative to gain extra points in the game.

We have completed more than half the course and are eager to see the results and hear the students' assessment at the end.

The Importance of New Church Content

This history course contributes to Bryn Athyn College's Human Society major, where one major theme is human choice, rooted in the first law of Divine providence: to act in freedom according to reason.

Human beings are free to make choices about what to believe, how to act, and how to respond to their circumstances.

Reacting games call attention to this point because they highlight that history did not have to unfold as it did. The events of the past were not pre-determined, but were shaped by the choices that people made within the circumstances and conditions in which they lived. While the students need to play their roles in historically appropriate ways, within these roles they wrestle with decisions and make choices about what to do. They can – and sometimes do – create different outcomes than what happened historically because of how they understand, present and weigh the multiple considerations at play.

For the course we have been conducting this term, two things have stood out for us: the civil and moral levels of life.

Several places in the Writings suggest that our rational ability – the key human capacity to distinguish between good and evil – begins to be opened by means of civic truths, consideration of justice, governmental affairs, and what is fair and equitable.

Our course on democracy obviously deals with these issues directly, but every Reacting game is set in an historic moment of crisis in which a decision must be made by a group, so no game can avoid having students wrestle with issues of justice and equity.

Our rational ability is opened at the next level by moral truths – matters of personal life in social contexts and issues of virtue, like honesty. It is interesting that there is a whole chapter in *Minds on Fire* on “Inculcating Morality and Empathy.” The author makes the point that taking on a role forces students to consider the perspective of other human beings and encourages them to reflect on moral matters.

Finally, our rational ability is not formed and opened simply by knowing civic and moral truths, but by living them. We do not suggest that taking a Reacting course is the same as living civic and moral truths, but it can draw us a lot closer to living them than just reading about them.



Dr. Wendy Closterman

As in Heaven, So Upon the Earth: Reflections on the Lord's Prayer

The Rev. Dr. Ray Silverman

People sometimes wonder why the Lord's Prayer is said differently in the General Church than in others faith, especially the phrase, "as in heaven, so upon the earth." They are so accustomed to saying "on earth as it is in heaven," that the General Church wording sounds strange.

This is especially the case at weddings and resurrection services when many people attend a General Church service for the first time. When invited to say the Lord's Prayer, they often join in, appreciating the sense of unity that is evoked by congregational prayer. Because the opening verses are so familiar, almost everybody participates – until they get to that unfamiliar phrase: "As in heaven, so upon the earth."

Not wanting to get it wrong, spoil it for others, or seem impolite, some may choose to stop praying. Feeling confused and awkward, they may simply wait for it to be over, or pray silently to themselves.

In order to make our guests feel more comfortable, it would be a courtesy to explain the reasons why we have chosen what seems to be a somewhat unusual wording for the Lord's Prayer. Of course, that means that we understand these reasons ourselves.

Differences in Religious Culture

In the New Testament, there are two references to the giving of the Lord's Prayer: *Matthew* 6:9-13 and *Luke* 11:2-4. In both places, the wording of the prayer is very similar – but the words are not identical. For example, *Matthew* speaks about forgiving "trespasses" while *Luke* speaks about forgiving "debts." Also, the famous ending of the prayer, "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever," which is included in *Matthew*, is omitted in *Luke*.

So, depending on the way people have been brought up, they may have

been raised to say, “forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us” (*Matthew* version), or “forgive us our debts as we also forgive our debtors.” (*Luke* version) If they were raised in the Catholic tradition, they may have been taught to end the prayer with the words, “Deliver us from evil.” (*Luke* version) But if they were raised in the Protestant tradition, they may have been taught to end with, “For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.” (*Matthew* version)

As a young boy, attending Sackett Street Elementary School in the 1950s (a public school), I was first introduced to the Lord’s Prayer, which we said every morning just before we saluted the flag. I remember being both confused and interested when we came to the part about, “For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.” The Protestant kids (about half the class) continued to recite the ending, while the Catholic kids all stopped after, “Deliver us from evil.” Because I was neither Protestant nor Catholic, I got to choose – and I usually went along with the Protestants, just because that ending sounded so good!

The Original Text

Disputes about the proper wording of any biblical text are usually settled by attempts to go back to the source, or to the original documents. Of course, a problem arises when there are different “original” documents. That’s when new disputes erupt over which one is truly “the” original.

There are also many differences in translation. Take, for example the fifth line of the Lord’s Prayer, which is the focus here:

ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς.

Literally, these words mean “as in heaven” [ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ], “so upon earth” [καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς]. Even so, they are often translated the other way around: “on earth as it is in heaven.” In fact, most English translations of the Bible have chosen “on earth as it is in heaven” as the preferred translation.

Early General Church scholars, after carefully examining the original documents, came to the conclusion that our current version of the Lord’s Prayer is probably the closest to the original Greek. See for yourself. Here is the original wording, both in the Greek and in the Latin liturgical version. In both cases, I have highlighted the significant phrase which is translated “as in heaven, so upon the earth”:

Original text in Greek

(Matthew 6: 9-13)

Πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς·
 ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου·
 ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου·
 γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου,
 ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς·
 τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον ὀδὸς ἡμῶν σήμερον·
 καὶ ἄφεσις ἡμῶν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν,
 ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφήκαμεν τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν·
 καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν,
 ἀλλὰ ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ.

Latin liturgical version

(Matthew 6: 9-13)

Pater noster, qui es in caelis:
 sanctificetur Nomen Tuum;
 adveniat Regnum Tuum;
 fiat voluntas Tua,
 sicut in caelo, et in terra.
 Panem nostrum cotidianum da nobis hodie;
 et dimitte nobis debita nostra,
 sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris;
 et ne nos inducas in tentationem;
 sed libera nos a Malo.

In the next two sections, I have selected several English translations of the phrase “as in heaven so upon the earth.” The selections are from *www.biblehub.com*. The more literal translations – the ones that seem closest to the original, and most similar to the one we use in the General Church – are selected. (Note: Translators and publishers vary in their policy about capitalizing Divine pronouns. General Church policy is to capitalize such pronouns, so that is done throughout these translations.)

Translations of ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς (from Matthew 6:10)

- **New International Version** : Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
- **New Living Translation**: May your Kingdom come soon. May Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.
- **English Standard Version**: Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
- **Berean Literal Bible**
- Let Your kingdom come. Let Your will be done as in heaven, so also upon earth.
- **New American Standard Bible**: Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
- **King James Bible**: Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
- **International Standard Version**: May your kingdom come. May Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
- **NET Bible**: May Your kingdom come, may Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
- **Aramaic Bible in Plain English**: Let your Kingdom come, let Your will be done also in the earth, just as it is in Heaven.

- **GOD'S WORD® Translation:** Let your kingdom come. Let Your will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.
- **Jubilee Bible 2000:** Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
- **King James 2000 Bible:** Your kingdom come. Your will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
- **American King James Version:** Your kingdom come, Your will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
- **American Standard Version:** Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth.
- **Douay-Rheims Bible:** Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
- **Darby Bible Translation:** Let Thy kingdom come, let Thy will be done as in heaven so upon the earth.
- **English Revised Version:** Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth.
- **Webster's Bible Translation:** Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
- **Weymouth New Testament:** Let Thy kingdom come; let Thy will be done, as in heaven so on earth.
- **World English Bible:** Let Your Kingdom come. Let Your will be done, as in heaven, so on earth.
- **World English Bible:** Let Your Kingdom come. Let Your will be done, as in heaven, so on earth.

Translations of ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς (from Luke 11:2)

(Note: some translations omit the entire phrase)

- **New International Version:** He said to them, "When you pray, say: 'Father, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come.'"
- **New Living Translation:** Jesus said, "This is how you should pray: 'Father, may Your name be kept holy. May Your Kingdom come soon.'"
- **English Standard Version:** And He said to them, "When you pray, say: 'Father, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come.'"
- **Berean Literal Bible:** And He said to them, "When you pray say, 'Father, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom let come.'"
- **New American Standard Bible:** He said to them, "When you pray, say: 'Father, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come.'"

- **King James Bible:** And He said unto them, “When ye pray, say, ‘Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.’”
- **International Standard Version:** So He told them, “Whenever you pray you are to say, ‘Father, may Your name be kept holy. May Your kingdom come.’”
- **GOD’S WORD® Translation:** Jesus told them, “When you pray, say this: Father, let Your name be kept holy. Let Your kingdom come.”
- **Jubilee Bible 2000:** And He said unto them, “When ye pray, say, ‘Our Father who art in the heavens, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so also in the earth.’”
- **King James 2000 Bible:** And He said unto them, “When you pray, say, ‘Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, as in heaven, so on earth.’”
- **American King James Version:** And He said to them, “When you pray, say, ‘Our Father which are in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, as in heaven. So in earth.’”
- **American Standard Version:** And He said unto them, “When ye pray, say, Father, ‘Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come.’”
- **Douay-Rheims Bible:** And He said to them, “When you pray, say: ‘Father, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come.’”
- **Darby Bible Translation:** And He said to them, “When ye pray, say, ‘Father, Thy name be hallowed; Thy kingdom come.’”
- **English Revised Version:** And He said unto them, “When ye pray, say, ‘Father, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come.’”
- **Webster’s Bible Translation:** And He said to them, “When ye pray, say, ‘Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth.’”
- **Weymouth New Testament:** He said, “When you pray, say, ‘Father may Thy name be kept holy; let Thy Kingdom come.’”
- **World English Bible:** He said to them, “When you pray, say, ‘Our Father in heaven, may Your name be kept holy. May Your Kingdom come. May Your will be done on Earth, as it is in heaven.’”
- **Young’s Literal Translation:** And He said to them, “When ye may pray, say ye: ‘Our Father who art in the heavens; hallowed be Thy name: Thy reign come; Thy will come to pass, as in heaven also on earth.’”

Heaven first

So what are we to do? It makes sense, of course, to put heaven ahead of earth, just as a simple priority issue. After all, the Word does begin with the statement,

“God created the heavens and the earth.” (Genesis 1:1) And Jesus said that we should “Seek first the kingdom of God.” (Matthew 6:33) Also, as we come to the penultimate chapter of the Word, John says, “I saw a new heaven and a new earth.” (Revelation 21:1) The order is always the same: heaven first, and then earth; first comes the internal, then comes the external. The Writings put it like this:

It is in accordance with Divine order that a new heaven should be formed before a new church is established on earth, for the church is both internal and external, and the internal church makes one with the church in heaven, thus with heaven itself; and what is internal must be formed before its external, what is external being formed afterwards by means of its internal. (True Christian Religion 784; emphasis added)

The Lord's teachings must first be received in our minds and hearts (as in heaven) before they can put into our lives and lived (so upon the earth).

It seems clear, then, that the literal wording is very significant. The internal (heaven) must always precede and infill the external (earth). When loving, wise and useful intentions (the heaven in our minds) precede, the external actions which follow (the earth of our words and deeds) will be truly loving, truly wise and truly useful.

When this is understood, arguments about whether we should say “on earth as it is in heaven” or “as in heaven so upon the earth,” fade away – as the darkness fades away before the dawn. Whatever our cultural background might be, and however we recited the Lord's Prayer as a child, we come to see that the literal words “as in heaven, so upon the earth” (or) “on earth as it is in heaven,” can open our minds to a deeper spiritual principle.

We come to see that these words are a divinely given prayer, instructing us to pray that the Lord's kingdom come, and that the Lord's will be done – right here on earth – in the same way that it is done in heaven. This is the truth that transcends wording; it is the truth that can open heaven; it is the truth that can bring heaven to earth.

As the perennial philosophy puts it, “As above, so below.”

If we understand this well, and put it into our lives, we can share it with others in ways that can bring heaven to earth.



The Rev. Dr. Ray Silverman is Assistant Professor of Religion, English and Moral Philosophy at Bryn Athyn College. He was ordained in 1984 and into the second degree in 1985, and has served congregations in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Atlanta, Georgia. He and his wife, Star (Bruner), live in Meadowbrook, Pennsylvania. Contact: Ray.Silverman@brynathyn.edu

The Rev. Solomon J. Keal



A Calling Amid the Music

Is it possible for a confessed introvert to become a minister popular for his extemporaneous style and a genuine ability to connect with his listeners? Yes. Solomon Keal has done just that.

He says he first thought about becoming a minister in college. He loved New Church doctrine – especially the science of correspondences. He loved the idea of helping people in their spiritual growth – helping them see the connection between the doctrines and their lives. But, he says, “I saw myself as too introverted for the job. I knew I would be good at the research and writing, but wasn’t sure I would be any good at the people skills needed for the job.”

He realized later that it was really important “for my spiritual path that I pursue some other things for about 10 years, and then come back to the idea of becoming a minister with some life-experience under my belt.”

When the time came he was certain of the calling.

He has traveled around a bit – on his natural and spiritual journeys – but has lived all of his life in Pennsylvania. He was born in Bryn Athyn to Ian (a native of Australia) and Wellesley Rose Keal. They moved to Pittsburgh when he was still quite young. After kindergarten in a public school and first and second grades in the Pittsburgh New Church School, the family moved to Kempton, where he completed his elementary school education in the Kempton New Church School.

He was then part of the first class of ASPIRE (Alternative Schooling

Program Inspiring Real Education) – a home-schooling program organized by some Kempton parents and teachers – and received his Pennsylvania High School Homeschooling Diploma through the ASPIRE program in 1995.

Then he came to Bryn Athyn for college, receiving his AA degree in math/science and a BA degree in history/religion (*cum laude*) in 1999. During his college years Solomon began to record and release albums of his own peaceful solo piano compositions, which have since become well known, and not just within the Church.

He met Tirah Echols in his junior year of college – her freshman year – and they started dating the next year. They got engaged in 2000 and married in 2001, living in Kempton for most of the first decade of their marriage. During this time they became interested in leading marriage support groups.

Solomon worked in carpentry and construction for about five years before being laid off due to the downturn in the economy. He also taught seventh-grade math part time in the Kempton New Church School for about a year. Solomon and Tirah had two children when he lost his job, and he started his own music business – Peace of Heaven Music. Tirah worked at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary as the bookstore manager, and Solomon became a stay-at-home dad. In this time he produced and released albums of music – six to date. In 2009 he applied to the Theological School and was accepted. They moved to Bryn Athyn, now with four children.

Solomon credits his good friend Calvin Odhner as a big influence in choosing to become a minister. Calvin was in Theological School “when he put the ‘bug in my ear,’ and I realized that I needed to re-evaluate my 10-year-old decision *not* to become a minister. In re-evaluating, I realized that ministry was a job I still felt a certain calling to.”

He also realized that some of the people he looked up to the most in his life were ministers and that much of his desire for creativity could find an outlet in the work of ministry. “I felt there was a continuing need to convey to people the connection between our modern lives and these teachings from hundreds of years ago. There’s a kind of ‘translation’ work involved in the ministry, in terms of conveying spiritual ideas in a way that can be heard by a variety of listeners. I felt called to that work of application and accommodation. I love sharing spiritual insights with people, and seeing the positive benefits that true ideas can have in their lives.”

It was then – “after a lot of prayer and serious conversation with my wife” – that he made the decision and applied to Theological School. That experience “helped me learn some of the people skills that I knew I needed to improve on in order to be an effective minister. Mary Heinrichs Williams’ speech classes were extremely useful, and taught me the importance of ‘talking out’ my sermons, and not just writing them out.”

After he was ordained in 2012, Solomon was posted in the Bryn Athyn

Church as an assistant to the pastor. He became the pastor for the Bryn Athyn Informal Service in 2013, serving as the primary preacher, scheduling guest preachers, and providing pastoral leadership for the community associated with that service. He was ordained into the second (pastoral) degree in 2014 and in that year also became the pastor for Laurel Camp.

“I’ve really enjoyed my work as a minister so far,” he says. “I love teaching fourth-grade religion in the Bryn Athyn Church School and giving chapels for the school. I’ve really appreciated getting to work with – and learn from – such a fine team of clergy and lay people in the Pastor’s Office. Informal church services are my favorite style of worship, and so I feel very lucky to get to spend so much of my time serving in that way in the informal service and at Laurel Camp.”

He concedes, “It is definitely challenging to be in a minority among the clergy when it comes to my perspective on women in the priesthood, but I’m glad I had the opportunity to voice my understanding of the doctrines on this issue in the paper that I presented to the clergy in 2014 (*A Doctrinal Foundation for a Gender Inclusive Clergy in the General Church*).”

Now in his fourth year as a minister, he says, “I feel like I’m starting to get the hang of this job, but I hope to continue to learn how to be a better minister every year.”

As for personal interests, Solomon notes that as a minister and a father of five young children, there are a lot of personal interests and hobbies he loves but has to work hard to find the time for. He still spends some time managing his Peace of Heaven Music business and the six albums he has produced. You can find out more about his music at www.solomonkeal.com and hear his peaceful solo piano music on Pandora radio. His latest musical project is to continue creating sheet music for his compositions. He still loves composing and recording when he can find the time.

He also loves building models out of Lego bricks. In 2012 he completed a two-foot tall model of the Bryn Athyn Cathedral built out of Lego. This year he began plans for building a Lego model of Glencairn Museum.

“I also love sailing, and even though it’s been over a decade, I hope to get back on my sunfish sometime soon.” He also likes juggling, and had fun this past summer teaching some of the children at Laurel how to juggle.

He loves the literary and cinematic genres of science fiction and fantasy, including the original “Star Wars” movie trilogy, which came out the year he was born. He is looking forward to taking his children to see “Episode VII” this Christmas. He’s also enjoying the recent shared fictional Marvel Cinematic Universe.

He loves the works of C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, J.K. Rowling and Ursula K. Le Guin, among many others. “I’m hoping someday to write my own works of fiction, and I have plans for both a time-travel novel, as well as a novel of

fiction in the fantasy genre, taking place in what Swedenborg describes as the Ancient Church time period.”

Solomon confesses, “I’m still an introvert, and proud of it. I’m a composer, but not very good at sight-reading music.” Other instruments he plays include the guitar, harmonica and melodica.

Among his favorite passages of the Writings are:

- Those who have charity hardly notice the evil in another person, but instead notice all the goods and truths that are theirs; and on their evils and falsities they place a good interpretation. Of such a nature are all angels, it being something they have from the Lord, who bends everything evil into good. (*Secrets of Heaven* 1079.2)
- Peace has in it confidence in the Lord, that He directs all things, and provides all things, and that He leads to a good end. (*Secrets of Heaven* 8455)
- It is in love that the Lord is present, and to the extent that a person has love the Lord is present. (*Secrets of Heaven* 904)
- In the spiritual world where we all arrive after death, no one asks what our faith has been or what our beliefs have been, only what our life has been. (*Divine Providence* 101.3)
- Feeling the joy of someone else as joy within ourselves – that is loving. (*Divine Love and Wisdom* 47)
- If we believed that – as is truly the case – everything good and true comes from the Lord and everything evil and false comes from hell, then we would not claim the goodness as our own and make it self-serving or claim the evil as our own and make ourselves guilty of it. (*Divine Providence* 320)
- The Divine end, which has good in view, governs everything. Nothing is therefore allowed to happen except to the end that something good may come out of it. (*Secrets of Heaven* 6489).



Solomon and Tirah live in Bryn Athyn with their five children: Thea (12), Cirdan (11), Jaden (8), Zoe (6) and Bram (4). Contact solomon.keal@gmail.com or solomon.keal@bacs-gc.org.

The Magi

The Rev. Solomon J. Keal

"We have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him." (Matthew 2:2)

This year the General Church Journey Program was called Living Gratefully. It explored the five "laws" or "gifts" of Divine Providence, and the ways that we can express and feel gratitude for these gifts of providence from the Lord. After having explored the grateful ways that we receive gifts from the Lord, now at Christmas time we turn our minds and hearts to the ways that we can give gifts. What are the gifts that we can bring to the Lord? The story of the "magi" describes this part of our spiritual journey.

The magi in this story were a group of people who possessed some remnant knowledge of correspondences and symbols from the Ancient Church. (See *Doctrine of Sacred Scripture* 102; *Secrets of Heaven* 9293.3) These magi also represent the part of us that can possess spiritual knowledge. (See *Secrets of Heaven* 1171, 3762:3, 5223)

Wisdom resides in our intellect or understanding. And just as these magi would look into the starry heavens for inspiration, our intellect can look into the spiritual heavens and be enlightened. In fact the Latin word which is often used in the Writings to describe the magi ("sapientes" or "wise people") is the same word used in the Latin term for the human race: "homo sapiens." (See *Apocalypse Explained* 324.10)

These magi were from the East, which represents a place of charity and love: "The good of faith which is signified by the 'land of the east,' is no other than that which in the Word is called charity toward the neighbor." (*Secrets of Heaven* 3249) But these magi were at a great distance from the Lord at first, and so it represents the times when we have good intentions, but we are not yet truly living the life of love.

We might want to make some changes in our lives. Maybe we intend to make some New Year's resolutions. Maybe we have some bad habits we want to get rid of, but we haven't done so yet. We might find ourselves stuck in negativity, criticism or resentment, but wanting to move closer to the light and warmth of love, compassion and forgiveness. This is like the magi wanting to come to see the Lord, but with a great journey still ahead of them.

So how do we get there? Where do we look for guidance on this journey? We look to the idea of love. We aren't living the life of love yet, but we are inspired by the idea of love. This is represented by the Star which guided the magi. Stars represent knowledges of goodness and truth. (See *Apocalypse Revealed* 420; *True Christian Religion* 205)

Think about what a star is: it's a sun seen from a great distance. That's what spiritual knowledge is as well: love seen from a distance. "The reason 'stars' in the Word means those cognitions is that they are tiny sources of light shining in the night, which send out flickers of light at that time into our sky, even as cognitions transmit glimmers of goodness and truth." (*Secrets of Heaven* 4697)

It's just a glimmer of love; just the idea of love. "I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; a Star shall come out of Jacob; a Scepter shall rise out of Israel." (*Numbers* 24:17) So the magi began to follow the Star; just as we begin to follow the idea of love. (See *Secrets of Heaven* 3762:3) And this idea of love can eventually lead us to the Lord.

Our intellect is designed for this spiritual journey. We are capable of looking at the idea of love, and then making plans for how to get there, just as the magi made plans for their journey.

Both the magi's journey and our spiritual journeys require commitment, thinking ahead and patience. The magi had to bring provisions and maps for their journey, as well as having thought ahead about the gifts they would offer the Lord. We too need to think ahead about the ways that we will actually practice loving the neighbor. This usually requires careful study of ourselves and others.

It requires thinking ahead about the gifts we can offer to other people. It requires commitment when the going gets tough. It requires patience with ourselves and others. These are the capabilities and qualities of the magi wisdom of our intellect.

Very often our spiritual journey will bring us face to face with our selfish ego, just as the magi's journey brought them face to face with Herod. And this can be troubling. (See *Matthew* 2:3) Our ego and intellect might even seem to be in alliance as we search for ways to love our neighbor, just as Herod appeared to be in alliance with the magi as they searched for the Lord. For example, we might practice treating other people kindly, and yet have selfish motives for doing so. But that's just part of the story; part of our story. And even though our ego (Herod) has selfish motives, the magi still find their way to the Lord.

When the magi find the Lord there is a kind of transformation: "And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshipped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him; gold, frankincense and myrrh." (*Matthew* 2:11)

Falling down and worshipping represents humility. (See *Apocalypse Revealed* 370) Offering gifts represents the goodness of love. (See *Arcana Coelestia* 9293.4) When we finally come face to face with Love in our lives, it transforms us into more humble, generous and useful people, which is what the life of love is all about. When our intellect follows the idea of love all the way into our will and behavior, then we see the Lord's presence in our life.

Our intellect is then changed. The magi were warned in a dream to return a different way. (See *Matthew* 2:12) They were no longer guided by just a star, but by a divine dream. The mere knowledge or idea of love has turned into a heavenly perception. (See *Arcana Coelestia* 3463.3, 5937.3)

I like to think that rather than being guided by a faceless pinpoint of light, the magi were now guided by the vision or voice of an angelic person. Love is personal, and when we come face to face with that reality in our lives, our understanding of the truth becomes more personal as well. The cold, distant, glimmer of the knowledge of goodness and truth becomes the warm, personal perception of goodness and truth.

And then the magi do not return to Herod. When our intellect has been changed by the presence of Love, we have a tendency to move away from our selfish ego. We depart for our own country another way – traveling East, in the direction of love and charity.

So what are the gifts that we can offer the Lord in our lives?

- “And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him; gold, frankincense and myrrh.” (*Matthew* 2:11)
- “Gold, frankincense, and myrrh meant the forms of good that should be offered to God.” (*Secrets of Heaven* 9293.3)
- “Gold meant the heavenly goodness; frankincense, the spiritual goodness; and myrrh, the earthly goodness that together form the source of all worship.” (*True Christianity* 205)

When our intellect is guided by the truth – the idea of love – and we come into the presence of the Lord, our intellect can then open up the treasures of goodness inside our lives. This goodness can take many different forms, for example:

Thinking about what talents and skills we have, and then using those to help people

- Doing our jobs honestly, justly and faithfully
- Forgiving those who trespass against us
- Showing compassion for people going through hard times
- Listening
- Thoughtfully offering a smile, a kind word, or a hug, because we can

- Holding the door for someone
- Thinking about what other people would like and then getting it or doing it for them
- Offering encouragement
- Doing our best to be just, merciful, and humble with the people around us (See *Micah* 6:8)
- Expressing gratitude to the Lord and the people around us

These are some of the Christmas presents that we can plan to give to the Lord every year. And just as the magi were wealthy enough to afford those precious gifts, our intellect is also rich enough to plan for and acquire these precious gifts – gifts which we ultimately receive from the Lord and gratefully return to Him in the form of love for others.

So this Christmas and New Year, as we think about ways to become more loving people, remember to follow the Star – that “idea of love” which can lead us to the Lord.

“You cannot be spiritually reborn without some knowledge of the new or spiritual life.” (*New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine* 177)

Our intellect is designed to be able to use this knowledge to navigate the journey of our spiritual growth. So if we want to become more loving, we need to make a plan and map out how we will get there, just as the magi had to map out their journey to the Lord. And when we come face to face with opportunities to love, remember that there are always some gifts of goodness that we can offer to the Lord and others. We can use our intellect to “open our treasures” and give of ourselves to others. This is the story of finding the Lord in our lives.

“The star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was.” (Matthew 2:9)

Amen.

Reflections on Life at the Theological School

Rev. Dr. Andrew M. T. Dibb
Dean of the Bryn Athyn College Theological School

As I write this, we are drawing to the end of the fall term of the 2015-16 school year, and it seems a good time to reflect on where the Theological School is these days. Reflection on the present, however, is always more meaningful when we put it into context with the past. So I've also been thinking of where we have come from, of who passed through these doors to serve the Church in many different ways.

The first graduates of the Theological School, in 1880, were Edward C. Bostock and John Whitehead. Bishop Bostock's episcopal portrait hangs in the school lounge. His robes are essentially the same as robes today, except for a white bowtie around his neck. His picture hangs alongside others of that vintage: Bishops Benade and N.D. Pendleton, who graduated in 1889. Portraits of Bishops George de Charms and Willard Pendleton are a further reminder of our roots and traditions.

There are many well-known names on the list of graduates from the early days to the present, many still well represented by families in the Church today. But there are some mysterious names that would require detective work to find out who they were. William H. Schliffer (1883) and Richard H. Keep (1895), for instance, have disappeared into the mists of history.

Looking down that list of names is a trip down memory lane. There are the names of friends, mentors, men who, with their wives and families, gave their lives to the Church.

Like Bishop Bostock's robes, there is much about the Theological School that would be familiar to these alumni. The subject matter hasn't changed much as the Heavenly Doctrines are still regarded as the Divine source and inspiration of all we do. Course work in doctrinal study makes up the backbone of the program, as ministers need to know and understand the doctrines to be effective ministers. But like the bishop's bowtie, some aspects of the education in the Theological School have changed in an attempt to enable graduates to

work effectively, without compromising the doctrines, in a church and a world that are quite different from what they were even 30 years ago.

Students graduating today are facing changes in society unheard of in the past. As morality shifts to reflect a subjective standard, so our students need to learn to relate the firm teachings of the doctrines to modern life, a process that frequently involves different ideas and conflicts about the way forward.

So while a minister's motivation is the salvation of souls, students today also need to reflect, in the light of the doctrines, on the pressing issues in the world and in the General Church today: the role of women, the elements of the Holy Supper, same-sex marriage, disappearing youth, and so on.

Learning the doctrinal teachings on these subjects is part of the equation; learning how to communicate them is another. Dealing with the conflicts that come when different ideas collide is yet another. So aside from learning doctrine and how to write sermons that speak to modern congregations, students also still learn the traditional uses of the ministry: teaching religion to children in schools, how to administer a society and give leadership to their congregation. But they also learn to listen to people, how to use conflict resolution skills, and how to reach out to people, by respecting their positions, but at the same time maintaining the integrity of the Heavenly Doctrines.

While doctrinal study forms the bulk of the education offered in the Theological School, it is bolstered with courses and experiences designed to provide graduates with a head start in their new careers. Counselling training is an essential component, as are business management, communication skills and education training. This year we are excited to be entering into a new partnership with an organization called Good Shepherd Mediation Program to teach conflict resolution skills.

The goal of the Theological School, since it opened its doors in 1877, has been to educate ministers to serve the New Church by teaching the truth and leading by means of it to the good of life. This has not changed, much like Bishop Bostock's robe. But like the disappearing bowtie, ways of fulfilling the minister's commission have changed.

Current developments in the program are designed to help ministers better serve the modern world by leading people to a greater understanding of the Lord and His Word, inspiring a commitment to incorporate this into their daily lives, and supporting people in their spiritual journey in our ever-changing world.

There are two students in the Theological School this year: Elmo Acton in his second year, and Jeffrey Smith in his first. Like their predecessors they are swamped with work piled on by an extensive faculty, and Elmo has an additional assignment of teaching the high school sophomore boys religion class.

The teaching staff reflects a broad range of people, all very well versed in their fields: the Revs. Grant Odhner, Prescott Rogers, Kurt Hy. Asplundh, Bishop Peter Buss Jr. and myself. Biblical studies bring us into contact with the Rev. Scott Frazier at the undergraduate level. Non-doctrinal courses are led by Kay Alden (education), Mary Williams (speech) and Dr. Erica Hyatt (service learning). Balancing this array of teachers and students is an art that has been mastered by the school Administrative Assistant, Becky Henderson, who keeps us all in order.

My thanks to all those in the past who built a foundation for today's Theological School education, and to all those in the present who help us maintain it.

(To contact Dean Andy Dibb: andrew.dibb@brynathyn.edu)

OUR NEW CHURCH VOCABULARY

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

DOMESTIC GOOD

By this is meant the good which man derives hereditarily from his parents, and into which he is therefore born, but which is not saving since interiorly it is evil. It is also called "natural good"; and to make a distinction between it and the spiritual good received from the Lord by regeneration, that good is called the "good of the natural."

Domestic good is also called connate good. The mistaking of natural good for the good of the natural has undoubtedly been a major factor in the development of the fallacy that man is born good. (See *Arcana Coelestia* 3518)

Church News

Compiled by Bruce Henderson

GENERAL CHURCH BOARD

At the General Church Board of Director meetings September 25-26 in Bryn Athyn an update was presented on the Strategic Plan, broken out into five major goals:

1. Educate and equip children and young people for regeneration and an eternal life of usefulness
2. Reach out with the truths of the New Church and welcome new receivers into the New Church
3. Strengthen engagement within the Church, providing avenues for greater participation in the life of the Church (i.e., young adults, women)
4. Develop an overall interactive communication plan to promote the uses of the Church
5. Develop, engage and retain highly qualified people who best align with our strategic goals and have the capacity to advance the Church's mission

Given the broad number of objectives (26) supporting these goals, the board encouraged more focus on a smaller list of objectives, with necessary resources. A committee will work with board member **Jake Brown** to bring a more finalized version to the Board before Christmas.

Vice President

The Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss Jr., Vice President of the Board, reported that Charity Works Initiative is seeking to market its program by hiring part-time staff. He is continuing to work with African congregations on prioritizing projects and sustainability. General Church Education met with the Academy Girls School Conjugal Love Committee for an update on its work.

Academy

- Possible topics for a proposed meeting of the board's Joint Executive Committee with the Academy of the New Church Board of Trustees include:
- General Church and Academy strategic plans
- General Church Education Teacher Training Program and Bryn Athyn College teaching degree
- General Church office space, if displaced from Cairncrest
- Update on recent Academy activities, including deficit planning; enrollments and expectations; and risk management issues
- Sharing resources on joint communication
- Risks of secularization
- The General Church Board's affirmation of exploring a non-ordination track in the Master of Divinity program

Cairncrest

Study is ongoing into potential alternative uses for Cairncrest, including conversion to an "elegant inn" concept. A survey of board members showed 16 votes in favor of some sort of inn operation, three votes to sell the building, and six votes to do nothing at all.

Finance

A major estate gift, plus lower administrative costs, were offset by two non-recurring expenses to end the fiscal year with a deficit of approximately \$32,000, with \$4.5 million of revenue. Total giving to the General Church was about \$941,000 for the fiscal year. The annual fund brought in \$580,000 – 86% of the goal. The Office of Advancement for the General Church is undergoing restructuring and rebuilding.

Progress Report

The Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith

In the May-June issue of *New Church Life* I reported on motions that came out of the March General Church Board meeting. As we are addressing them, this seems like an appropriate time for an update. The three motions were:

1. Recommendation to establish a joint board-clergy communication committee
2. Request for greater clarity about decision-making streams within the Church
3. Request that I consider opening the M.Div. program to non-ordination students

In September a Communication Committee was formed of six members of the board and six clergy. They have met once and plan to meet three to four times a year. The purpose of the committee is to foster greater communication between the board and the clergy, and a greater understanding of issues and each other's perspectives.

The first meeting included some internal organizational issues as the group determined how it would function. We also initiated a discussion of decision-making in the Church, in response to the board's second motion. The discussion was wide-ranging, exploring the many areas where decisions are made, and the types of decisions made. The committee also began exploring the various factors that come into play in any decision. It was agreed that we should spend more time on this topic and do additional research, which we are doing.

Regarding the third motion, a great deal of exploration has been done. The purpose, as previously reported, was to provide an opportunity for laity, particularly women, to enter related helping profession fields other than the priesthood.

After taking extensive counsel and weighing many factors I believe it would be detrimental to change the admission policy to the existing M.Div. (Master of Divinity) program. However, Bryn Athyn College is willing to explore creating other programs, such as a non-ordination track M.Div., which could lead to occupations in the helping professions. The General Church Board, at its February meeting, affirmed their support for the Bryn Athyn College to explore such degrees.

There were two primary reasons for not changing the admission policy to the existing M.Div. program. The first is that the entire degree is oriented toward producing pastors for the General Church. Its criteria for admission, methodology of instruction, evaluation of student work, and continued admission to graduation are geared toward that goal. Introducing students with other educational or professional objectives would detract from this purpose.

The second reason is that substantial funds were given to the Theological School specifically to train men for the priesthood. To use those funds for any other purpose would not be honoring the donors' wishes and risk the withdrawal of funds. So developing a separate program designed to meet different objectives will best serve potential students both of the existing M.Div. program and any other program which may be developed.

Regarding additional degree programs, the College is looking to expand its uses and student body. It is thinking about expanding its majors and several masters' level programs, such as in education and counseling. Something like a non-ordination track M.Div. program could fit in with the initial thinking.

As with any new use, the College administration will have to examine if it is viable – finances, staffing, potential student interest, accrediting issues, and a number of other elements – before they could commit to anything. They are looking at this affirmatively, but needless to say any new program would have to be financially self-sustaining to move ahead. Let us hope that this new use can be served.

CHARTER DAY 2015

The 138th anniversary of the granting of the Academy Charter was celebrated in Bryn Athyn October 9-12 with a joyful spirit and sunny skies. Among the activities were: class reunions and a special showing by reunion artists; the Charter Day dance; a full slate of sporting events for men and women; open houses at Bryn Athyn College and the Secondary Schools; the annual Bob Eide 5K run/walk; a Chili Cook-off and Carnival; College sponsored kite flying for kids; a Mix-and-Mingle event at Cairnwood; and the 21st annual Student Scholarship Golf Outing. (See photos on pages 624 and 625.)

Class Reunions

Class reunions have long been a Charter Day feature and this year included happy celebrations for the classes of 1955, 1965, 1975, 1985, 1995 and 2005. A group from the 65th reunion class was also recognized at the banquet.

Class gifts to the Academy – and class representatives – included:

- 2005, **Dylan Odhner**: Speakers Development Fund
- 1995, **Daryl Baker**: Student Scholarship Fund
- 1985, **Bruce Cronlund**: Scholarships in the names of deceased classmates **Kirstin Burnham** and **Sten Alfelt**
- 1975, **Roxanne McQueen Junge**: Funds toward renovation of fourth floor science labs in Benade Hall
- 1965, **Larry Cranch**: Unrestricted gift to the Academy
- 1955, **Brent Pendleton**: Gifts to the College and Secondary Schools in the spirit of the motto on their class banner, “We shall not want.”



Left to right: Brent Pendleton, Larry Cranch, Roxanne Jungé, Bruce Cronlund, and Daryl Baker

The featured reunion artists were **Gillian Bedford, Gael Coffin, Vaughnlea Gerhard, Todd Klippenstein, Fay Lindrooth, Stephen Nelson, Deena Odhner, Lamar Odhner, Christina Orthwein, Lisa Paraska and Barrett Smith.**

Cathedral Service

The academic procession to the Cathedral was swelled by the growing number of students in the College. The address, “Take Flight,” was presented by the **Rev. David Roth**, pastor of the Boulder New Church in Colorado. (See page xxx.) The singing of traditional Academy songs on the east lawn after the service, led by brightly uniformed Secondary Schools students, was more spirited than ever.

Academy Corporation

At the annual meeting of the Academy Corporation before the Cathedral service, the following were newly elected:

- Angela Nash Bau-Madsen
- David Fuller
- Emily Glunz Hasen
- Joseph Henry
- Nicholas Johnson
- Brian Klippenstein

Those re-elected, whose terms were expiring:

- Gregg Asplundh
- Stephen David
- Gail Childs Glunz
- John King
- William Kunkle
- Joan Pendleton Lynch
- Keith Parker
- Rick (Harold) Pitcairn
- Jennifer Bochniak Pronesti

Theta Alpha

The annual Theta Alpha luncheon featured a highly acclaimed talk by **Sarah Bruell Odhner**: *Establish the Work of Our Hands – General Church Religion Lessons 1940-1990*. (We understand this will be published in the *Theta Alpha Journal*.) Special tribute was paid, including the awarding of a gold pin, to **Dr. Kristin King** for her leadership as President of Bryn Athyn College. Entertainment was provided by dance students of **Sarah Gladish** of the Academy Girls School.

Distinguished Alumni and Volunteers

Every year the Academy Secondary Schools honor alumni “whose personal and professional achievements model New Church values” and whose lives continue to impact the Academy and their communities. This year’s Distinguished Alumni are:

- **Ric Asplundh**, Boys School 1975. Ric also earned his AA from Bryn Athyn College before earning a bachelor of science degree from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University. He flew planes for Asplundh Tree Expert Co. for seven years and since has been a pilot for US Airways (now American Airlines). He and his wife, **Kelly (Doering)**, have three sons who have graduated from the Boys School, and a daughter who is a senior in the Girls School.
- **Dr. Charles Lindsay**, Boys School 1975. Chuck began working at Bryn Athyn College in 1981, ascending from Director of Career Development to Dean of Students and Dean of the College. He is now Associate Dean of Faculty at Elmira College in New York, where he lives with his wife **Janna (Gunther)**. They have three grown daughters. He serves on the Academy Board of Trustees and is chair of the Finance Committee.
- **Lori Soneson Odhner**, Girls School 1975. Lori, with her husband the **Rev. John Odhner**, has been composing music based on the Word for 40 years and hosting an annual Marriage Conference in Bryn Athyn. She produces “Marriage Moats” every day for some 700 e-mail subscribers. They have nine children, four of them still at home.

The Secondary Schools Outstanding Volunteer for 2015 is **Dawn R. Wadsworth**, Girls School 1985. Dawn earned a law degree at the University of Florida. She serves on the Academy Corporation and General Church Board. She has long been active in volunteering for the Academy, including establishing ANC Parent Directory, Teacher Appreciation Week and the ANC Lions Parent Pride Association. She is part of the Connector Families Program and is devoted to the lives of dormitory students. She and her husband, **Wayne**, live in Marietta, Georgia. They have three children – one a student at Bryn Athyn College and two in the Academy Secondary Schools.

Bryn Athyn College also honors alumni “who have achieved personal and professional success by practicing the values of a New Church liberal arts education” and by contributing to their communities.

This year’s honoree was **Dr. Matthew Mayer**, who received both his AA and BA from the College and also was awarded the Larry Spaulding Memorial Trophy for athletic leadership. He earned his medical degree from the University of Cincinnati, with a double-board residency in Pediatrics and Physical Medicine Rehabilitation at Cincinnati’s Children’s Hospital.

He is assistant professor of Pediatrics at Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City, serves on the hospital's Ethics Committee and works with two Paralympic programs for disabled athletes. He and his wife, **Katie**, have two children.

The College honored **Hyland R. Johns** as the Outstanding Volunteer for 2015. Hyland graduated from the Academy Boys School in 1946, where he was a



Hyland Johns

volunteer fireman, and has been doing volunteer work in many settings ever since. He earned a bachelor's degree from Purdue University and a master's from Michigan State, and worked as an executive for the Asplundh Tree Expert Co. for 40 years. Among his many activities are chairing a General Church Assembly, serving as Mayor of Bryn Athyn for many years, chair of the Holy Redeemer Hospital Board, president of the International Society of Arboriculture, co-founder of the TREE Fund, and member of the Pennypack Board. He was honored by the Red Cross for a lifetime of blood donation. He and his wife, **Beth (Synnestvedt)**, live in Bryn Athyn.

Bryn Athyn College Alumni Open House

At an open house for Bryn Athyn College alumni on Friday evening, President **David Cooper** offered the assurance: "I want you to know that the Alumni Association is given extraordinary insight into the administration and goals of the College. We participate as your representatives in strategic planning, career programs, scholarships and recruiting; and we have ready access to the President's office. This is no fluke; it's by design. I can assure you from this perspective that the mission of the College is safe. It is safe with our administration; it is safe with our faculty; and it is safe with our students. The growth and development of the College is in accordance with a strategy, and the strategy is consistent with the mission. I have no doubt whatsoever about this fact."

He noted that the Alumni Association is supporting its bond with the College in many ways, including:

- Increased levels of communication to keep alumni informed and engaged
- Networking among alumni
- Career development to assist alumni
- Support programs for students and faculty

For more information about the Alumni Association see www.brynathyn.edu/alumni.

New College President **Brian Blair** welcomed alumni and noted several new programs, including:

- A new publication, aimed at filling the void in communication since *The Lion's Pride* was discontinued five years ago. *The Bryn Athyn College Magazine and Alumni News* will be published and distributed to alumni three times a year, after each semester.
- A new alumni database and tracking tool to help facilitate information and communication among the College's 2,500 alumni and friends.
- Broadcasting events, including authors, speakers, researchers and thought leaders, plus town hall meetings and webinars at the College Keep up with news about the College at www.brynathyn.edu.

Charter Day Banquet

See a summary of the banquet program, *"Innovation in Learning About Democracy at the College Level and the Importance of New Church Content,"* on page 585. This highly engaging presentation was led by banquet emcee the **Rev. Dr. Thane Glenn**, Chaplain and professor of Religion and English at the College, assisted by history professors **Dr. Wendy Closterman** and **Dr. D. Gregory Rose**.

Chili Cook-off and Carnival

A very popular Chili Cook-off and Carnival was conducted on the terrace of the Secondary Schools Dining Hall and back campus before the football game on Saturday. The event included numerous raffle prizes, games for children, and opportunities to sample – and vote for – the chili creations of 15 entrants. The winner was **Glen Henderson** (Boys School 1993).

Golfing for 'The Kids'

The 21st annual Student Scholarship Golf Outing at Philmont Country Club attracted 116 golfers this year and brought in about \$40,000 for the Secondary Schools and Bryn Athyn College Scholarship Funds. This brings the total raised through 21 years to approximately \$400,000. The event is supported by numerous generous sponsors, as well as the golfers.

The golf committee members who put on the event were: **Jim Adams**, chair, **Andy Adams**, **Tina Bartels**, **Ali Childs**, **Llyn Dube**, **Chris Dunn**, **Bruce Henderson**, **Duane Hyatt**, **Abraham Joseph**, **Susan McGrath**, **Shawn Synnestvedt** and the **Bryn Athyn College Golf Team**. (Philmont is the home course for the new College team.)

Volunteers helping throughout the day were: **Jennifer Allen**, **Nora Cooper**, **Ruth Cooper**, **Dale Doering**, **Carol Henderson**, **Jahna Henderson**, **Judy Lopacki**, **Diana Mergen** and **Aileen Synnestvedt**.

GROWING GAINS

The College also has announced plans to build two new freshman dormitories, to be ready for the 2016-17 school year to meet the growing demand for student housing.

The new dorms, with capacity for 82 students, will be placed next to King, Gladish and Brock Halls. As was the case with these dormitories, the new ones will be constructed offsite. The building modules will be moved to the campus next summer for final construction and installation.

President **Brian Blair** says the College “has been blessed to receive donations that will cover the complete cost of construction, thanks to very generous donors who believe in the mission of the College. This financial support will allow Bryn Athyn College to meet its growth and development goals while also improving operating margins for running the College.”

The Academy Board of Trustees unanimously approved the plan in September. Architectural drawings of the new dormitories can be seen at www.brynathyn.edu.



CHRISTMAS AT GLENCAIRN

For those living in the Bryn Athyn vicinity, and anyone visiting the area during the Christmas season, Glencairn Museum offers a number of special programs, including:

- **World Nativities** features dozens of nativity scenes from around the world – many owned by Glencairn and others borrowed from other organizations. The collection is so large that the exhibit rotates nativities so that each year’s scenes are different. The exhibit is open November 28 to January 10; closed December 14,15 and 24,25. (See the cover of this issue and page 622 for photos of the nativities.)
- **Christmas Traditions in Many Lands** illustrates different celebrations all over the world in the 19th and 20th centuries. (Same dates)
- **Christmas in the Castle Tour.** (Same dates)
- **Glencairn Sing:** This popular event takes place December 15.

There is a charge for these events and reservations are strongly recommended: telephone 267-502-2990 or e-mail tours@glencairnmuseum.org. For further information: www.glencairnmuseum.org.

THE TREASURE OF LAST WORDS

Bruce Henderson

Many people have had the experience of hearing a loved one's last words before dying – words sometimes precious and meaningful, sometime confusing and nonsensical. Is there a way to find common threads that lend overall meaning to the last words we hear – and perhaps a link to the spiritual world?

That was the theme of a program jointly sponsored by the Swedenborg Foundation and Bryn Athyn College on September 19: *The Unintelligible Afterlife – What Deathbed Confessions Tell Us About a World Beyond*. It was attended by more than 400 people in a packed Mitchell Performing Arts Center – many of them from outside the community. The event was also live-streamed to hundreds of viewers and still can be viewed on an archived video.

The program introduced a formal study – *Research into the Communications of the Dying* – to be conducted by three of the panelists: **Dr. Erica Goldblatt Hyatt**, chair of Psychology at the College; **Lisa Smart**, a poet and linguist who launched *The Final Words Project* last year; and **Dr. Raymond A. Moody**, famous for coining the term “near-death experience” in his 1975 best seller, *Life After Life*.

Dr. Moody, who has written 12 books, including his latest – *The Unintelligible Afterlife* – said that “life after death is the biggest question of human existence.” In his studies of near-death experiences he has heard a lot of “nonsense” – and a lot of clarity – from his subjects. What sounds like nonsense, he said, is understandable because it is outside of space and time. And this is why we need this groundbreaking study – to try to make sense of all the nonsense.

Dr. Moody has devoted a lot of time lately to studying nonsensical speech – from the famous “Jabberwocky” of “T’was brillig, and the slithy toves did gyre and gimble in the wabe” to the charming inventions of Dr. Seuss. He spoke about this for quite a while to illustrate why we need a template for understanding what may sound like nonsense.

Lisa Smart, for instance, said her interest in last words was stimulated by her dying father, who came out with such things as, “I’ve never done this before,” and “my modality is broken,” to “you were right about the angels!”

Her *Final Words Project* is aimed at analyzing communications during the last six weeks of life, and hopefully making the whole process of dying less mysterious and frightening.

Dr. Hyatt is a natural partner. She is excited because no one has done such a study before. She described the scholarly framework of how it will work, and the critical aspect of linking it with the nearby Holy Redeemer Health System Institutional Review Board.

Dr. Dan Synnestvedt, Associate Professor of Philosophy at the College, lent a brief philosophical perspective to the subject. And the **Rev. Dr. Jonathan Rose** spoke much too briefly about what the Word and the Writings have to say about the transition to the spiritual world – including the last words of what the dying are seeing, perhaps with spiritual eyes. It was too brief because this is what the College and the New Church have most to offer in making “The Unintelligible Afterlife” intelligible.

You can get a lot more information on Lisa Smart’s website, www.finalwordsproject.org, and follow along on the joint project with Dr. Hyatt and Dr. Moody at www.brynathyn.edu/academics/research/RICD.

NOBODY DIES

Donnette R. Alfelt, who has devoted much of her life as a widow to helping other widows and widowers with comfort from the Lord, has written a beautiful 24-page booklet: *Nobody Dies – Reflections on Living*.

Donnette has been a widow since her husband **Lennart** passed on to the spiritual world in 1981. She looks forward to the day when she will be reunited with him, and with their son, **Sten**. Meanwhile she has led a group for widows and widowers in Bryn Athyn for many years. She has also written two books, *Comfort and Hope for Widows and Widowers* and *Journal for Grief and Healing*, both of which are available on Amazon.com.

She wrote the booklet primarily for people new to the Church and Swedenborg, and says: “It came from conversations I’ve had with many people outside the Church. I’ve found that these truths we know so well are new and comforting to others.” She was pleased when she picked up the booklets from the printer, who said he hoped she didn’t mind that he kept one to give to an uncle whose wife had just died.

In the Introduction she writes: “For many years I had led a widows/widowers group based on the teachings of the New Church (Swedenborgian). In this group we share the difficulties of adjusting to the physical death of our spouses from the perspective of life eternal. I have found over the years that hearing other people’s stories made it easier to understand my own.

“Being part of this group has greatly enhanced my perspective and perhaps this booklet will speak to others who have faced loss. I have expanded my focus beyond the loss of a spouse, recognizing that all kinds of loving relationships live after what is called death.

“In these pages I include direct quotes from Swedenborg’s books and have also added views from other writers who are in harmony with the belief that we are spiritual beings living only for a time in material bodies.”

Among the wealth of loving, caring insights is this: “My parents, my

husband, my son, my granddaughter, and other friends and relatives who have left this natural world are still a part of who I am. This is not a true separation because memories and relationships continue. If I had never known or loved these people I would not be the person I am today. Loving them and being loved by them has shaped me. Bodies die but love does not.”

Donnette’s daughter **Lisa** did the layout and cover for the booklet. Donnette had the first batch printed at her own expense to be given free to people as a pay-it-forward gesture. It is now available at Amazon.com and from the Bryn Athyn Cathedral Book Room – www.newchurchbooks.com.

THE REV. ROBERT H. P. COLE

The Rev. Bob Cole passed on to the spiritual world on October 9 at age 81. He was born December 10, 1933, the fourth child of Robert McFarland Cole and Wertha Pendleton Cole. He had two older brothers, William and Dandridge, and a sister, Aubrey.

He was educated from kindergarten in the Bryn Athyn Church School through four years in the Academy Boys School and one year in the Academy College, before completing his undergraduate degree at Penn State. It was there that he met his future wife, **Janet Boone** – a student at Temple University – on a blind date. They were married in 1959 and had three children – **Sherry, Charlie** and **Meredith**.

After Penn State Bob attended law school at Temple University but soon turned to his driving passion – the ministry. He attended Theological School from 1960 to 1963 with classmates **Kurt Nemitz** and **Larry Soneson**.

Once ordained he became the resident pastor of the Denver Circle in Colorado and a visiting minister through the American Southwest. He also served in Glenview, Illinois, and the Sharon Church in Chicago.

In his memorial address the **Rev. Eric Carswell** noted: “What Bob really loved were opportunities to share his love of the truths of the New Church. He did get a chance to officiate a baptism or a wedding every so often. He was willing to travel to serve small congregations whenever his services were needed.” Indeed, he was a “visiting minister” to patients and shut-ins right up to the end of his life.

“Those of us who have known Bob,” Eric reflected, “recognize how deeply he cared about the New Church, its doctrine and its history. He was ever ready to share some fact or event in the wealth of his knowledge on these subjects and at times perhaps share more than some of his listeners expected. Given how much delight Bob took in the celebration of Charter Day, it is perhaps fitting that it was on the eve of this event that his natural life came to a close.”

NEW GIRLS SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

James M. Adams
 Managing Director of ANC Secondary Schools



Kira Schadegg

I am pleased to announce **Mrs. Kira R. Schadegg** as the next Girls School Principal, to assume office July 1, 2016. I am making this appointment with the unanimous consensus of the search committee.

Kira's dedication to the New Church, New Church education, and the mission of the Girls School is remarkable. She also has an impressive resume of positions successfully held in the Girls School and within our community. These range from her superb teaching in the classroom to working with students in a variety of forums and her leadership within the faculty.

Her love for the students is evident, as is her desire to support and lead the faculty. I believe she will be a fine leader for the school and look forward to working with her. In addition, she is an exemplary organizer with boundless energy and a commitment to getting the job done right.

We had several very viable candidates with solid resumes who interviewed well. All the candidates expressed love for the Girls School, the students, faculty, staff and parents. We are thankful that they were willing to have their names considered. While I had to select one, it is good to know that we have other capable people associated with the school.

The committee went through an extensive process to arrive at this place. We solicited counsel from a variety of sources - faculties and staffs of the Girls and Boys Schools, Board and Corporation, parents and alumni. We heard wonderful expressions of appreciation for what the Girls School has done and is doing, along with counsel that helped inform the decision. The committee also interviewed previous principals of both schools, administrative leaders, and several others with whom the principal would work closely.

Of special import, we queried the Girls School faculty and staff about the most important traits the new principal should have, and these, along with the rest of the counsel, became a yardstick for considering the candidates.

I want to thank and acknowledge the search committee for the many hours they diligently put into this process.

I would like to express thanks to **Sue Odhner** for her dedicated years of service to the Girls School. She has given so much to the school and I know she will be working with Kira in the transition period to better prepare her to take over the reins next year.

Addendum: Kira graduated from the Girls School in 1975. She has a

bachelor of science degree from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and a master's in Education from Arcadia University. She has been a very popular teacher of Introductory Physical Science and Human Anatomy and Physiology for the past 26 years in the Girls School. Among her many other responsibilities she has been Senior Class Adviser and a leader in the collaboration with the Gurian Institute on gender learning differences.

Kira is married to **Robert Schadegg** and they have two grown children, **Kellan** and **Brenna** - both graduates of the Secondary Schools.

The members of the search committee were: Chancellor **Brian W. Keith** and **James M. Adams**, co-chairs; Trustees **Lee A. Allen** and **Eileen R. Glenn**; Corporation member **Jill Brickman**; and Girls School faculty members **Megan S. Allen**, **Gail R. Cooper** and **Elizabeth Fuller**. Non-voting members of the committee were Boys School Principal **Jeremy T. Irwin** and Chaplain **Barry C. Halterman**.

GATHERING LEAVES 2015

The Rev. Julie Conaron

Gathering Leaves, a Swedenborgian women's retreat, was held June 4-7 at the Transfiguration Spirituality Center in Cincinnati, Ohio. It was hosted by the New Church of Montgomery, Cincinnati. The theme of this year's Gathering was *From Root to Fruit*, based on this passage:

"A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from her roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on her – the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord – and she will delight in the awe of the Lord." (*Isaiah 11:1-3*)

What a wonderful event! As a very small part of the team getting the event started "from root to fruit" I was inspired by the love and dedication given to this event by the women who were the backbone of it. For example, those women from the New Church of Montgomery, especially **Gloria Toot**, the primary organizer there, and her wonderful spouse **Pete**, who willingly picked some of us up from the airport. I can't name all the wonderful people who put lots of love and hard work into making this a success, but I so appreciate them for it.

The center we stayed in was indeed a spiritual one. No matter how rushed and hurried we might have been to get there on time, the sphere and beauty of the center enabled us to breathe deeply and leave our worldly cares behind.

To appreciate the amazing way the event flows, and why it is so heart-centered here's the mission statement of Gathering Leaves:

We are gathering again to promote harmony among women who are associated with the various Swedenborgian organizations around the world. We acknowledge our common beliefs, explore our differences, develop respect for one another's contributions, create a healing atmosphere, and celebrate our spiritual sisterhood. We promote charity and goodwill so we might say, "No matter what form her doctrine and external form of worship take, this is my sister; I observe that she worships the Lord and is a good woman."

This mission statement surely reflects the heart of all New Church organizations, or could do so. Surely the Writings over and over again speak of the necessity for goodwill to be at the heart of all religions and this is what unites people. When faith is at the heart then people are divided and at odds.

The schedule consisted of three workshop slots over the course of the weekend, with several to choose from each time. The first evening focused on the foremothers of the organizations with their varied accomplishments, with the speakers actually dressing up as the person they were telling us about: very impressive! It really gave us a feel for these women and the struggles they must have encountered as well as the joy.

Friday morning consisted of brief reports from women who are fruitful in their branch of the Swedenborgian churches. In the evening we had a guest speaker, who told us about the early church in Cincinnati, which started in 1811. Friday's workshops covered quests for a fulfilling spiritual life, music for the soul, Logopraxis, the apostle Paul and freeing the captive spirits (those who are victims of abuse).

Saturday's workshops covered future growth and uses with a new understanding of gender, the second half of Logopraxis and some ideas for evangelization. In the afternoon we had a visit to the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center for those who wished to go. This writer had a tough time with it: the pain of seeing the huge number of enslaved people represented, who were ripped away from their homes and cultures to become slaves for the greedy plantation owners. Many slaves of course died on the way here. And slavery is not just a thing of the past: it is also here today, for those who have been made sex slaves, etc., and forced into living a nightmare.

I was able to take some comfort in knowing God and the angels were working hard to help them, even as I shuddered to imagine what they all go through when they realize what is happening. It was a vivid reminder of people's inhumanity to others.

Sunday took us to the beautiful Glendale church, with an inspiring service led by seminarian **Shada Sullivan**. **The Rev. Clark Echols** welcomed us and we enjoyed lunch there afterwards.

What I cannot share with you all through the written word is the amazing sphere and friendship that develops over the course of the long weekend. No

matter what denomination or belief system each person has we come together in the spirit of friendship and shared love of connection, which is both comforting and uplifting. It feels as though we are able to share a little taste of heaven with each other.

Even in such a short time we make friends very quickly, and reconnect with those we've known before. For those women who have not experienced this connectedness please come and sample it for yourself.

HIGH-TECH OUTREACH AT THE SWEDENBORG FOUNDATION

The Swedenborg Foundation reports that in June its *offThe Left Eye* YouTube channel passed a huge milestone with 1 million minutes watched in a single month. "The rest of the summer showed that this was not a fluke."

In July the number of minutes watched and the number of times people watched the videos jumped 20 percent to more than 1,287,000 minutes watched and 177,000 views. There were also a record number of comments.

"This trend," the Foundation states, "is a result of the phenomenal growth of *Swedenborg and Life*, our weekly webcast series. In each episode host **Curtis Childs** explores some aspect of Swedenborg's thought. For example, the most-watched new episode in June, called *8 Strange Places in the Afterlife*, illustrates principles of the spiritual world by describing some of the unusual sights Swedenborg saw there.

"We know from YouTube statistics that the show's audience consists of people of all ages – distributed pretty evenly from age 18 to 64 – and is also almost evenly divided between men and women. Geographically, the channel is most popular in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, the Philippines, India and South Africa, so we are drawing viewers from all over the globe."

You can tune in Mondays at 8 p.m. Eastern time – www.youtube.com/offTheLeftEye -- for the current offering or watch previous episodes. (Curtis Childs will be one of the presenters at the Boynton Beach Retreat in January.)

Among some of the comments received about these videos:

- What you are accomplishing here through devotion to the dissemination of knowledge about Emanuel Swedenborg is inspiring and expansive for the soul. Am now a true fan. Thank you.
- Thanks for another great show. I really look forward to them each week. I am new to Swedenborg and these shows are so helpful and illuminating.
- Without Curtis's explanations I would have given up on Swedenborg long ago.

The Foundation also happily reports that its Heaven and Hell Facebook page has passed 300,000 “likes,” and that every week about 500,000 people see a quote from Swedenborg in their Facebook feed. (Go to www.facebook.com/HeavenandHellSwedenborg and for news www.facebook.com/SwedenborgFoundation.)

The Foundation’s website – www.swedenborg.com – also has been designed to make it easier for visitors to find the information they want.

THE NEW CHRISTIAN BIBLE STUDY PROJECT

The latest news from the New Christian Bible Study project notes:

“This project is global. It’s growing fast. It’s taking advantage of two key things:

- Hundreds of millions of people read the Word and are trying to understand its meaning
- The Writings explain the meaning

“If we make a top-notch Bible study site, and we present the Writings clearly, they’re going to resonate with a lot of people. That’s the idea. Is it working? Yes.”

Rapid growth in web traffic includes almost 40,000 visitors a month, more than doubling last year. The site includes 82 Bible translations. The Writings are in English and Latin, with some works in Spanish, French, Portuguese, Korean, Swedish and Norwegian, with more to come. The site also includes 450 pieces of art and photographs, and more than 200 Bible story explanations. It is partnered with Bryn Athyn College, the General Church Office of Education, The Kempton Project, the Swedenborg Foundation and the Swedenborg Society.

Steve David says: “We’re helping Swedenborgian churches and publishers spread the gospel. We’re empowering the clergy. We’re empowering translators. We’re empowering everyone who wants to read the Word and understand its deeper meaning.”

For information contact Steve: sdavid@skymark.com

Check the website at www.newchristianbiblestudy.org

Correction: In the listing of the Academy Board of Trustees in the September-October issue, **Brian G. Blair**, President of Bryn Athyn College, was included as a member of the board. He is an *ex officio* member.



Christmas has been celebrated at Glencairn since Raymond and Mildred Pitcairn moved into their home in 1939. Glencairn Museum continues the tradition with special exhibits and activities for friends and visitors.

Père Noël is the French equivalent of Santa Claus. This turn-of-the-century papier-mâché figure – a candy container – is part of the Christmas Traditions of Many Lands exhibit.



This Nativity, made in Austria in the late 19th century, was built into a wooden drawer with a glass cover. Such scenes often included a backdrop reminiscent of the town where the artist lived.



Each year Glencairn borrows crèches from other collections. This 2013 Nativity, made in a French monastery by the Sisters of Bethlehem, was loaned by the Mepkin Abbey in South Carolina.



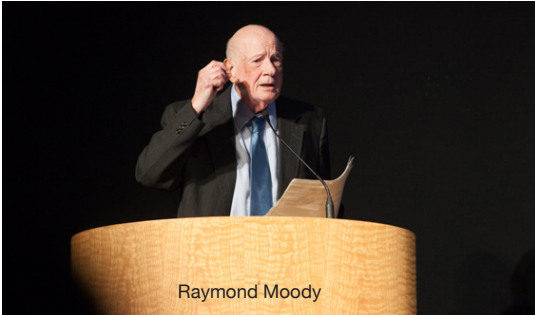
Under the Tree Nativity.



In the 1920s a three-part Nativity scene was made by artist Winfred S. Hyatt for Cairnwood, the Pitcairns' first home in Bryn Athyn. It was always considered the most important part of the family's elaborate decorations and now is part of the World Nativities exhibition.



Left to right: Lisa Smartt, Dan Synnstedt, Raymond Moody, Jonathan Rose, Erica Goldblatt Hyatt, and Curtis Childs



Raymond Moody



Dan Synnstedt



Erica Goldblatt Hyatt



Lisa Smartt



Jonathan Rose



Cameron Tealer makes an excellent catch during the Charter Day Football Game



Tara Duggan and Zachary Brock



Chili Cook Off winner
Glen Henderson with his children
Cade and Chyler



Left to right: Shannah Conroy, Sonja Kistner, Cadin McQueen, Marie Daum,
Julia Cooper, and Rosemary Fuller before the procession



Left to right: Maya Synnestevedt, Helena Lippay,
and Amissah Synnestevedt



Principals Jeremy Irwin and Sue Odhner



President Brian Blair
speaks at the BAC
Alumni Open House



The start of the Bob Eidge 5K Fun Run



Ashley Henderson during BAC Kite Day



Jeremiah Cooper and Jared Jungé at the golf outing



Left to right: Lian Lenihan, Langston Chambers, Nikita Purushwakam and Malcolm Riepert



Ben Conroy



Mike Czaplicki, Jim Adams, Adam Sutton, and Bruce Henderson during the golf outing



Chelsea Duggan during the under the lights field hockey game



Left to right: BAC alumni Kaitlyn Brock, Blake McCurdy, Amy Dwyer and Benjamin Glenn enjoying the football game



Left to Right: Ben Petro-Rogers, Tyra Walker, and Celeste Lockard help during the Charter Day Banquet

Life Lines

FESTIVALS

Religious festivals bring a spiritual dimension into the march of time and the turning of the seasons and remind us of the Lord's perpetual presence. They are like tent pegs that keep the Tabernacle of heaven firmly connected to the earth.

Thanksgiving comes in the autumn of the year, in celebration of the harvest. The timing of this festival is natural, but it is spiritually opportune also, in that it leads into the celebration of the Lord's birth. Being thankful for blessings already received turns our minds to the Divine Source of all goodness and thus prepares us for the reception of new blessings yet to come.

Christmas is a bright and happy moment in the dark of winter when we celebrate the great miracle of the Lord's birth in Bethlehem, with its promise of "Peace on earth, good will toward men!" It came at a dark and cruel time in human history, and yet into that world the Prince of Peace was born. There is still much darkness and cruelty in the world today, and yet in the quiet, humble, secluded little Bethlehem of hearts that cherish innocence and long for salvation, the Lord is born anew. We are reminded of that every year at Christmastime and our hope for the future is renewed.

(WEO)

LINCOLN AND THE SPIRIT OF THANKSGIVING

In his 1863 Thanksgiving Proclamation Abraham Lincoln set the tone not only for this annual observance in the United States but for the spirit of gratitude that should be in all of our hearts, every day. It is an enduring blessing in itself:

"It is the duty of nations as well as men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God; to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures, and proved by all history, that those nations are blessed whose God is the Lord.

"We know that by His divine law, nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world. May we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war which now desolates the land may be a punishment

inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole people?

“We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown.

“But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God who made us.

“It has seemed to me fit and proper that God should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged, as with one heart and one voice, by the whole American people. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens . . . to set apart and observe the last Thursday in November as a day of Thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens.”

These words still resonate in a land where God often does seem to have been forgotten – where turkey dinners and football games have crowded out what used to be traditional church services in most communities. These words should resonate as well with grateful hearts throughout the world – with people who go beyond one day of Thanksgiving to being grateful every day for our blessings. We should be thankful as well that we still have such vision to inspire us, and wish for such firm and forthright faith among our leaders today.

(BMH)

‘FORGET NOT ALL HIS BENEFITS’

With a happy convergence this year’s Journey program – *Living Gratefully* – was launched in Bryn Athyn and much of North America during the Thanksgiving season. As President Lincoln said in his initial proclamation, we should all recognize and be grateful first to God and “go beyond one day of Thanksgiving to being grateful every day for our blessings.”

That is what this seven-week Journey program is all about – developing an awareness of all that the Lord does for us every day and reflecting our gratitude in the way we live our lives.

The focus of the series is on the five “laws” of Divine providence, which lead to our happiness – if we let them. It may seem counterintuitive that our happiness is tied to laws, but heaven is where we find happiness and the first law of heaven is order.

Laws and order protect our freedom and our opportunity for happiness,

and the first of the five laws of providence is that we must always be free to act from reason. One familiar example of how this works in our lives is the “rules of the road.” When we obey them, we move about freely. If people just did what they wanted, acted “freely,” stopped driving in proper lanes and obeying traffic signals, we would have chaos, frustration, danger – hell.

As the booklet for *Living Gratefully* notes, when we are in the flow of the Lord’s providence – when we put our trust in Him, devote ourselves to serving Him and our neighbor, and feel His constant presence in our lives – that is when we feel happiness and should most feel gratitude.

This Journey is all about cultivating that awareness of the Lord’s daily presence and leading with us, and developing an attitude of gratitude.

A favorite number of many a New Church man and woman is *Arcana Coelestia* 8455: “Peace has within it confidence in the Lord, that He directs all things, and provides all things, and that He leads to an end that is good.”

That is happiness. It is not something we achieve as a goal but feel as a byproduct of being with the Lord in a life of service. And that is “living gratefully,” realizing that everything that is good in our lives – everything – is from the Lord’s love and care for us.

Living gratefully says: “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.” (*Psalms* 103:1,2)

(BMH)

REJOINING WHAT MAN HAD PUT ASUNDER

In His first advent, by means of continual temptations and continual victories, culminating in His death on the cross and His resurrection from the tomb, the Lord joined together the Divine and the Human in Himself. In Him, they were united in a Divine and eternal marriage, and all were invited to “the marriage supper of the Lamb.” (*Revelation* 19:9)

What this means and how it was accomplished is fully explained (as fully as it can be to our natural minds) in the Writings of the New Church. The simple truth of it, though, is contained in His prophetic statement, “I and My Father are One.” (*John* 10:30)

But what God joined together, man put asunder. Not actually, of course, but in the erroneous doctrine of the Trinity, which divided God and Jesus, along with the Holy Spirit, into three separate Divine Persons who somehow make one God.

This confusing paradox obscured the idea of God in the minds of Christians and left them with a “mystery” which they were told we’re not meant to understand, only believe. There will always be an element of mystery

in religious faith, but the light of understanding is also needed.

Now, in His second advent, the Lord has rejoined what human error put asunder – namely, the Divine and the Human. He has done this in the new revelation of His Word, which clearly demonstrates that the Lord Jesus Christ is the *One* God of heaven and earth.

In the New Church founded upon that revelation the Lord's two advents make one, the second confirming and completing the work begun in the first. His birth in Bethlehem takes on new depths of meaning in the New Church, which adds greatly to the joy of its celebration.

(WEO)

‘TODAY’S JOB IS . . . ’

This tagline has become familiar from the brief texts and photos our son sends to keep the family up to date on his current projects. But that phrase, “today’s job is,” could also serve as a reminder of the *spiritual* project we are all working on throughout our lives: namely, our regeneration.

The world’s troubles are always with us. “In the world you will have tribulation,” the Lord said. But whatever difficult circumstances or disturbing news each day brings, our *spiritual* task for that day is to turn away from evil and toward good.

Except for our own actions, we have little or no control over the things that happen in the world; our main work in that regard is how we respond to them, beginning with how we deal with them in our own mind.

This inner work of learning to respond with humility, patience, charity and trust in the Lord’s providence is more important than what happens in the world around us.

Today’s job is to become a little better at doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with our God.

(WEO)

FINDING FREEDOM IN GOD’S LAWS

We reprint an editorial on page 556 that I wrote for a daily newspaper in Pennsylvania 36 years ago when Pope John Paul II visited Philadelphia. This reprint is prompted by a return visit by Pope Francis in September this year, and the similar themes in their visits. Throughout some 30 years of writing editorials and columns I was always conscious of the special opportunity I had to bring a New Church perspective to issues without being obvious or overbearing about it.

I was also pleased how often this perspective was appreciated and reflected in the response of readers – a humbling reminder that everything good and

true in our lives comes from the Lord and equally to all who are willing to receive.

One example is the following letter to the editor following that visit by Pope John Paul II in 1979. I came to respect this reader, without ever knowing the denomination of his faith, for the thoughtful religious context with which he viewed the world. Here is that letter, which also has haunting relevance today:

“One of the most salient observations arising out of the pope’s recent visit seems to be the desire of Catholics to relax the moral standards and doctrines of the Catholic Church. This is not limited just to the Catholic Church but also to mainline Protestant denominations, Judaism and even Fundamentalists.

“It has always been man’s nature to run from God and His laws ever since Adam hid from God in the garden. This spiritual battle between right and wrong was waged even in the hearts and souls of the Apostles and all the Old Testament patriarchs and heroes. The difference is that instead of trying to conform God’s laws to their wicked lifestyle, they confessed their sin to God, asked for mercy and forgiveness, and repented.

“Instead of looking to God’s Word for guidance we have been brainwashed by Hollywood and the liberal media into thinking God is some sort of impersonal life-force to be put on display for our amusement. People want a God who will provide all the emotional comfort of believing in God but none of the less-pleasant consequences.

“When life is going our way we do not want to think of the universe as some mechanical dance of atoms. It is nice to think of this great big Santa Claus in the sky or some mysterious force rolling on through the centuries and carrying us on its crest. But when we want to disobey God’s laws or church doctrine, suddenly this force – a blind force with no mind or morals – this New Age God, can be switched on and off according to the lifestyle we want to live.

“As C. S. Lewis observed in his essay, ‘God in the Dock’: ‘Ancient man approaches God as the accused man approaches his judge. For modern man the roles are reversed. Man is the judge, God is in the dock. He is a kindly judge: if God should have a reasonable defense for being the God who permits war, poverty and disease, he is ready to listen to it. The trial may even end in God’s acquittal. But the important thing is that man is on the bench and God is in the dock.’

“People look at morality as something that interferes or stops them from having a good time. Every moral rule is there to prevent a breakdown in the human machine and society in general.

“One needs only to look around and see the violence, corruption in government and business, breakdown of the family, money-grubbing

electronic preachers and pedophile priests to realize that this is the fruit of his own self-centered lusts instead of the rules and laws found in God's Word which are there to protect us."

(BMH)

A CURSE, A BLESSING, AND A CHALLENGE

One of the unique things about Pope Francis is that this 78-year-old pontiff has embraced technology and especially social media to connect with people throughout the world.

He "tweets" every day and calls the Internet "a gift from God" – a high-tech upgrade of the Gutenberg press that had made possible the distribution of the Bible to the masses.

But he sees the curse as well as the blessing. All of this technology – from the Internet to Facebook and Twitter – makes the church more accessible and approachable, especially in reconnecting disaffected young people. But he realizes also that technology often drives disconnectedness and isolation, and that it cannot replace the power of actual human encounter.

Meanwhile, the pope is opening up brave new worlds – and we might learn something from him. Every day he sends simple messages of love and mercy to some seven million Twitter followers in his English account, and another 16 million in other languages. He has help with the technology but seems to have a gift for packaging a powerful message within the Twitter limit of 140 characters.

The General Church does not yet have such a commanding presence in the Twitter universe, but Outreach deals with Internet inquiries every day from all around the world. The Swedenborg Foundation is enjoying success with creative YouTube videos that attracted 177,000 views – more than a million minutes – in July alone.

The challenge – and it is the same one facing the Catholic Church and the pope – is to maintain the quality, integrity and timelessness of our beliefs in a technological world where everything is instant but nothing is lasting.

This "gift of God" has to be better than quick bursts of information, like a flashy display of fireworks bursting and fading in a dark sky, but instead opening up the wonder of an endless starry universe, just begging to be explored.

(BMH)

'INCLINE OUR HEARTS UNTO WISDOM'

The Information Age celebrates our thirst for knowledge and the fountain that is the Internet. Need an answer about virtually anything? Google it. Never has

so much knowledge been so instantly available.

We spend our lives in pursuit of knowledge, which helps us to be successful in life. We store up trivia and love to beat a *Jeopardy!* contestant with an answer. It is good and valued to be smart.

But all of the things we learn – and all of the things we forget – do not pass on with us into the spiritual world. There knowledge gives way to wisdom. We are told that angels love to study the Word to eternity, forever increasing in understanding. But we can be sure they are not reading the literal facts of kings and prophets, the Children of Israel and the disciples. They are focusing on the internal sense – on the wisdom of the Word and of heaven.

Facts and knowledge are essential in this life, but it is worth pausing amid the crush of information swirling around us to reflect that there is a higher calling for our minds. And in this season of New Year's resolutions – so often focused on exercise and health – let us resolve to care for our spirit as well:

“So teach us to number our days, that we may incline our hearts unto wisdom.” (Psalm 90:12)

(BMH)

AIM AT HEAVEN

C. S. Lewis was one of the great champions of Christianity – all the more so because he had turned to atheism amid the horrors of World War One, unable to see a loving God within the carnage. But then he rediscovered his faith by studying the Bible with an open mind.

In one of his many essays on what religious faith can do for us, he wrote: “If you read history you will find that the Christians who did the most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next. The Apostles themselves, who set on foot the conversion of the Roman Empire, the great men who built up the Middle Ages, the English evangelicals who abolished the slave trade, all left their mark on earth precisely because their minds were occupied with heaven.

“It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this one. Aim at heaven and you will get earth thrown in. Aim at earth and you will get neither.”

(BMH)

WHERE THE MAGIC IS

Here is another letter to the editor that I have saved and treasured, written by someone out there in the “Old Church” who seems very much a part of the New Church:

“Christmas is about the birth of Jesus. As long as our culture keeps killing

this message with the alternative story of an over-eating, old bearded man in red pajamas coming to our homes via flying reindeer and squeezing down chimneys laden with gifts only for good children, we have only ourselves to blame when the magic of Christmas dies with childhood itself.

“Is it not magical enough that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son to come to earth, humbly born in the poverty of a Bethlehem stable, while wise men followed a star signifying the birth of a Messiah? Is it not magical enough that an angel announced to Mary that her virgin birth would present the world with a son who would set the souls free of all those who loved and believed in Him? Is it not magical enough that Christ would fulfill the ancient prophecies to be crucified by man, only to be resurrected by God?

“Tell children the real story of Christmas so that when they reach the age of reason they will believe in the truth of that baby who saved the world, and won’t be disappointed in a lie about a fat man who comes down the chimney.”
(BMH)

CHARITY BEGINS WITH REPENTANCE

“Be the change that you wish to see in the world.” You sometimes see this saying from Gandhi on bumper stickers. In other words, if we want a wiser and more loving world, the first thing we need to do is to become wiser and more loving ourselves. But how? What *is* the first thing we need to do? In a word: repent.

Repentance isn’t just a one-time exercise, but must be done again and again at the beginning of each new stage of our spiritual development. Charity isn’t something you do just once, and neither is the repentance that precedes it. Continual improvement implies continual repentance.

Attending to the defects in our own character is our primary responsibility. As the ancient proverb quoted by the Lord says: “Physician, heal yourself!” (*Luke 4:23*) Then we will be in a position to help others be healed of the evils and falsities afflicting them – and thus do our part in the healing of the world.

In the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord said: “Remove the beam from your own eye first, then you will be able to see to remove the splinter from your neighbor’s eye.” (*Matthew 7:5*)

Notice *why* we are to remove the beam from our own eye first; it is in order that we might be better able to help others. This is why on airplanes they tell you to put your own oxygen mask on first if there’s an emergency, and then help any children or others who need help putting on theirs.

Repentance is the first of charity because without it we cannot truly *be* charitable. Before we can do good to others, wisely and from pure motives, we

must first receive good in ourselves, which begins with removing the obstacles to it in our own character. Among the good we can do then is to set a good example for others.

Repentance, therefore, is not a gloomy, negative *alternative* to helping others, but the key to becoming able to love others as the Lord has loved us. This is why He calls upon us to “bear fruits worthy of repentance.” (*Matthew* 3:8)

(WEO)

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

We should love everyone, even those who do not love us or agree with us. “If you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others?” (*Matthew* 5:47) This gem of Christian truth is well known and loved. The Lord said it, and it touches a chord deep within us. We sense that it expresses a profound and revolutionary truth of human life. But as a practical matter, what does it mean and how can we do it?

“Love your enemies” means that we should love them as fellow human beings who were created by the same God who created us, and for the same purpose: eternal life in heaven. We were all created in the image and likeness of God, and even if that image is distorted, there is some good in everyone. It is that good which we are to love, even in people who are promoting ideas and ways of acting which we perceive to be harmful to the innocence we wish to see preserved in children, in ourselves, in society generally, and in our enemies themselves in whatever degree they are willing to receive it.

We are to love our enemies as flawed human beings like ourselves, who are making their way through the same difficult obstacle course we’re all on as we strive for happiness. In fact, one reason for loving them is that an attitude of enmity, anger and hatred toward them would be an obstacle for us on our own path of spiritual progress. The evil of hatred, like all evil, redounds upon those who disseminate it, and thus has its own punishment built into it.

Loving our enemies, however, does not mean loving the evils they may have adopted. On the contrary, we will want to help them resist the evil that seeks to destroy the good in everyone, including them. To encourage or confirm evil in others is to provide aid to *their* spiritual enemies, the influences from hell which are seeking to harm them. If we love them, we will want to help them escape from their spiritual enemies.

(WEO)

FEAR NOT

The one emotion least associated with Christmas is fear, but throughout the Christmas story we hear the words, “Fear not.”

When the angel first appeared to Zacharias, “he was troubled and fear fell upon him.” But the angel said to him, “Fear not.” His prayers had been answered and his aged wife Elizabeth was to bear him a son, whose name was to be John. And the angel assured him, “thou shalt have joy and gladness.”

When the angel appeared to Mary, she was understandably troubled. But the angel also said to her: “Fear not, Mary, for you have found favor with God.”

When John was born and Zacharias’ tongue was loosed to name him, “fear came upon all around them” who wondered “what manner of child shall this be?” But Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit and said: “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people.” He assured them that they were being delivered by God out of the hand of their enemies and “might serve Him without fear.”

When the angel of the Lord appeared to the shepherds “as the glory of the Lord (shining) round about them, they were sore afraid.” But the angel also calmed them: “Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.”

Mary, Joseph and Jesus – and also the Wise Men – had to flee in fear of Herod, but were all delivered into peace.

So fear is a part of the Christmas story. We are fearful in the face of the Lord if we do not feel worthy – as did Zacharias, and Mary, and the shepherds. And Herod is always lurking. But when Mary was asked to accept a fearful role, she did not shrink from it, but said: “Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to Your Word.”

What we are asked to do may not be as daunting but is no less a calling – to allow the Lord to be born in us and to accept Him into our lives. And we are also told, “fear not,” for we have the same assurance of the true Christmas gift: “good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people.”

(BMH)

Annual Report of the Secretary of the General Church of the New Jerusalem

Anita F. Halterman

Between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015, 56 new members were received into the General Church, and 19 members resigned. During the year the Secretary's office received notice of the deaths of 55 members.

Memberships July 1, 2014	5429
New Members	56
Resignations	19
Deceased Members	55
Membership June 30, 2015	5411

GENERAL CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM NEW MEMBERS

CANADA

Whisen, Graham Joseph

CUBA

Toledo-Gainza, Sheila

DENMARK

Bruell, Kirsten Emily

GHANA

Addai, Martha

Oduro, Simon

Ekkyere, Enoch

IVORY COAST

Adja, Adjo José

Allah, Anne Marie Josianne

Dayoro, Okpo Aime

Kre, Sephora Yasmine

Mahoro, Aurelie Florence

Toto, Hortense

Yeo, Nerigadeiny

Youzan Bi, Zou Pacôme

JAPAN

Hagino, Akira

MALAYSIA

Odhner, Kim Anders

NETHERLANDS

Bot, Frederik Nicolaas

NIGERIA

Aduba, Marine

Akari, Sampson Imaitor

Ayankpele, Asiagbe

Biko, Thankgod

Efebo, Ipah Sunday

Egba Walter, Rosettee

Egbhuan, Joy

Fikiye, Abigail

Fikiye, Christian

George, Somfien

Okosun, Innocent

Peace, Tamaranmiemene

Sankey, Naomi

Suteigha, Woyengipriye

Tulagha, Ivy

Wilcox, Justina

Zedikiah, Theraza

SOUTH AFRICA

Ngcobo, Bongani

Ngcobo, Petunia Musa

Ningiza, Sinazo

Mthembu, Ngikhulile

Pitso, Tankane

Sibeko, Mabandla Cassius

SOUTH KOREA

Choo, Hyewon

Gil, Soo-Woon

Shin, Jae-Jik

Woo, Gyang-Chull

Yang, Hyan Jin

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Arizona

Keane, Judith Frances

California

Alden, Andrew John

Hawaii

Maekawa, Chieko Joyce

Massachusetts

Gyllenhaal, Leonard Deane

New Jersey

Maiorano, Frank Paul

Pennsylvania

Abele, Mary Bronwin

Brown, Bracken

Heiter, Michael Russell

Leicht, Debra Marie

Odhner, Chad Erik

Qiu-Ference, Helen

DEATHS

Alden, Jane Rott, 95, February 24, 2015, of Kempton, Pennsylvania

Allen, Edward Franklin, 81, October 6, 2014, of Anchorage, Alaska

Anochi, Rev. Nicholas Wiredu, 74, January 23, 2015, of Taifa, Ghana

Asplundh, Robert Hugh, 85, September 11, 2014, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Benjko, Alexander, 59, February 2, 2015, of Victoria Park, Australia

Betz, Gladys Helen Brown, 97, January 11, 2015, of Santee, California

- Birchman, Jane Forfar, 84, July 2, 2014, of Chestertown, Maryland*
- Boley, Rolf Walter A., 77, May 26, 2015, of Bromma, Sweden*
- Bond, Angela Ciuccio, 53, November 16, 2014, of Bowie, Maryland*
- Bostock, Claire Elizabeth Campbell, 81, June 27, 2015, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania*
- Bostock, Kareth Rosamond Ridgway, 83, December 21, 2014, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania*
- Campbell, Kathleen Denise Hannon, 60, June 27, 2015, of Rogue River, Oregon*
- Childs, Walter Cameron IV, 37, March 27, 2015, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania*
- Cockerell, Malcolm Gordon, 77, August 13, 2014, of Westville, South Africa*
- Cole, Garrett Snowden, 47, January 13, 2015, of Berwyn, Illinois*
- Cronlund, Lawson Kendig, 73, November 15, 2014, of Scottsdale, Arizona*
- de Charms, Jane Bostock, 93, March 1, 2015, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania*
- de Chazal, Isabel Edith Mowbray, 80, October 26, 2014, of Westville, South Africa*
- Donnelly, Marie Ann Komansky, 67, December 3, 2014, of Meadowbrook, Pennsylvania*
- Genzlinger, Jean Stewart, 86, April 23, 2015, of Bloomfield Hills, Michigan*
- Gephart, Clyde Eugene, 58, October 7, 2014, of Hatboro, Pennsylvania*
- Glenn, Claire Louise Damm, 90, January 1, 2015, of Jacksonville, Florida*
- Graham, George Edward, 81, May 24, 2015, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania*
- Greer, Homer Lewis, 92, August 6, 2014, of Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania*
- Hendricks, Brian Harold, 57, August 10, 2014, of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada*
- Jungé, Annabel Louise Teets, 94, May 26, 2015, of Glenview, Illinois*
- Kauk, Patricia Joan Peer, 80, February 25, 2015, of Kitchener, Ontario, Canada*
- Kunkle, Harold Wallau, 85, October 31, 2014, of Redmond, Washington*
- Lindrooth, Ann Marie, 75, November 8, 2014, of Robesonia, Pennsylvania*
- Martin, Jack Robert, 83, November 29, 2014, of Warminster, Pennsylvania*
- Mbatha, Rev. Bhekuyise Alfred Mthunzi, 77, August 27, 2014, of Eshowe, South Africa*
- Mergen, Mark Frederick, 78, March 19, 2015, of Mount Kisco, New York*
- Morley, H. Keith, 94, February 5, 2015, of Etobicoke, Ontario, Canada*
- Mullan, Doris Bellinger, 90, August 7, 2014, of Ligonier, Pennsylvania*
- Niall, Gilbert James, 86, January 27, 2015, of Kitchener, Ontario, Canada*
- Noakes, Loraine Winifred Lemky, 82, February 12, 2015, of Orofino, Idaho*
- Odhner, Oliver Randolph, 89, December 21, 2014, of Kempton, Pennsylvania*
- Peppelman, Chris Patrick, 48, March 31, 2015, of Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania*
- Peppelman, Nicole Rhoads, 43, March 31, 2015, of Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania*
- Pitcairn, Geneva Crockett, 93, January 3, 2015, of Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania*

Roberts, William Harry, 84, November 28, 2014, of Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania

Roscoe, David James, 76, March 8, 2015, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Schnarr, Maurice George, 82, March 11, 2015, of Goderich, Ontario, Canada

Schroeder, Jane Arrington Umberger, 91, November 28, 2014, of Mariposa, California

Smith, Col. B. Dean, 85, January 29, 2015, of Mitchellville, Maryland

Smith, Frances Cook, 89, August 15, 2014, of Charlotte, North Carolina

Smith, Elaine Bellinger, 94, June 14, 2015, of Etobicoke, Ontario, Canada

Smith, Sally Jean, 83, April 4, 2015, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Starrett, Emily Austin, 78, August 26, 2014, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Stein, Sharron Mae Stoots, 65, June 17, 2015, of Charlotte, North Carolina

Stevenson, Jean Eleanor Fuller, 88, March 14, 2015, of Fox Lake, Illinois

Taylor, Christine Margaret Brock, 86, March 22, 2015, of Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

Weise-Fransson, Lillemor Ingrid Edda, 84, March 3, 2015, of Viksjofors, Sweden

White, Megan Kaplan, 50, November 18, 2014, of Levittown, Pennsylvania

Williams, Gwynn, 83, October 24, 2014, of Hertfordshire, United Kingdom

RESIGNATIONS

*Abelkis, Linda Fussell
Boone, Geraldine
Boyce, Pauline Rhodes
Childs, Jonathan
Childs, Karin Alfelt
Esterson, Rebecca Kline
Genzlinger, Elise Simons
Knauer, Rex
Lester, Michael
Nehlig, Madeleine Cole
Pitcairn, Martha Nash
Rhodes, Gwen de Maine
Righetti, William
Rogers, Valerie Latta
Roth, Susan Buss
Schnarr, Heidi
van Genne, Marian
Verschoor, Edward
Walter, Malcolm*

Directory

GENERAL CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM 2015-2016 OFFICIALS

Bishop: Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith
Assistant to the Bishop: Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss Jr.
Secretary: Mrs. Anita F. Halterman

GENERAL CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM (A Corporation of Pennsylvania)

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Vice President: Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss, Jr.
Secretary: Mr. Daniel P. Martz
Treasurer/CAO: Mr. David O. Frazier

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Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith
Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss Jr.
Mr. David O. Frazier

BISHOPS

Keith, Brian Walter. Ordained June 6, 1976; 2nd degree, June 4, 1978; 3rd degree, October 17, 2004. Serves as Executive Bishop of the General Church, General Pastor of the General Church, Chancellor of the Academy of the New Church, President of the General Church in Canada, President of the General Church in South Africa, and President of the General Church International, Incorporated. Address: PO Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Buss, Peter Martin Jr. Ordained June 6, 1993; 2nd degree, June 18, 1995; 3rd degree, June 9, 2013. Serves as Assistant to the Bishop of the General Church, Vice President of the General Church International, Incorporated, and Head of the General Church Education Department. Address: PO Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

PASTORS

Abuga, Samson Mogusu. Ordained May 25, 2003; 2nd degree, September 20, 2009. Serves as Pastor of the New Church Etorá, Director of the Keugata (Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania) Theological School, Principal of the Good News Preparatory School in Etorá, Kisii, Kenya, and Regional Pastor for East Africa. Address: The New Church Etorá, PO Box 13, Kisii, 502, Kenya

Adognon, Alex Koami. Ordained September 1, 2013; 2nd degree, April 19, 2015. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor in Lomé, Togo. Address: BP 61202, Lomé, Togo

Aggro, Hennock. Ordained July 13, 2008; 2nd degree, July 4, 2010. Serves as Pastor of the Wusuta Group in Wusuta, Ghana. Address: PO Box 306, Ofankor-Accra, Ghana

Agnes, Sylvain Apoh. Ordained May 23, 2004; 2nd degree, June 25, 2006. Serves as National Pastor of the General Church in the Ivory Coast, President of and Instructor in Theology in the New Jerusalem Theological Institute in Abidjan. Address: 01 BP 12161 Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire

Aka, Honoré Amahin. Ordained July 11, 2010; 2nd degree August 12, 2012. Serves as Pastor of the Bouake Group in the Ivory Coast. Address: 01 BP 1453, Bouake 01, Côte d'Ivoire

Akotey, Edward. Ordained July 4, 2010; 2nd degree October 21, 2012. Serves as Pastor of the Nteso Group of the New Church in Nteso, Ghana. Address: PO, Box 4, Nteso-Kwahu, E/R Ghana

Alden, Kenneth James. Ordained June 7, 1980; 2nd degree, May 16, 1982. Serves as Pastor of the Boynton Beach Society in Boynton Beach, Florida, and Visiting Pastor of Bonita Springs, Florida. Address: 7354 Shell Ridge Terrace, Lake Worth, FL 33467-7703

Allais, Mark Barry. Ordained May 24, 2009; 2nd degree November 21, 2010. Serves as Pastor of The New Church Buccleuch in Buccleuch, Johannesburg, South Africa, and as Executive Vice President of the South African Corporation of the General Church. Address: PO Box 816, Kelvin 2054, South Africa

Amoako, Kwadwo Adu. Ordained July 13, 2008; 2nd degree July 4, 2010. Serves as Pastor of the Pankrono-Kumasi New Church in Kumasi, Ghana. Address: PO Box RY 143, Railways, Kumasi-Ashanti, Ghana

Amouzouvi, Ablam Komlan. Ordained July 11, 2010; 2nd degree October 21, 2012. Serves as Pastor of the New Church in Lomé, Togo. Address: La Nouvelle Eglise du Togo, BP 61202, Lomé, Togo

Ampem-Darko, Israel Gyan. Ordained July 13, 2008; 2nd degree July 4, 2010. Serves as Assistant Pastor of the Taifa Group in Ghana. Address: The New Church, PO Box KK 113, Kukurantumi-Akim, E/R, Ghana

Anato, Guillaume Joseph Kuassivi. Ordained May 30, 2010; 2nd degree October 28, 2012. Serves as Pastor in Aidjedo, Cotonou and Theology Teacher in Cotonou, Benin. Address: 03 BP 3850, Cotonou, Benin

Appelgren, Göran Reinhold. Ordained June 7, 1992; 2nd degree, July 3, 1994. Serves as Pastor of the Stockholm Society and as Visiting Pastor of Oslo, Norway and Copenhagen, Denmark; Regional Pastor for Europe and India. Address: Aladdinsvägen 27, S-167 61 Bromma, Sweden

Atta, Jean Aime. Ordained May 27, 2012; 2nd degree, September 21, 2014. Serves as Pastor of La Crescenta Circle. Address: 5022 Carolyn Way Road, La Crescenta, California 91214

Ayi, Segno-Kodjo. Ordained May 27, 2001; 2nd degree July 20, 2008. National Pastor of the Church in Togo. Address: La Nouvelle Eglise du Togo, B.P. 61202, Lomé, Togo

Bab, Moise. Ordained August 25, 2013; 2nd degree, August 9, 2015. Pastor of the Divo Group. Address: 01 BP 12161, Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire

Barber, Christopher Augustus. Ordained May 26, 2013; 2nd degree, October 17, 2014. Serves as an Instructor of Religion in the Academy of the New Church Secondary Schools in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania. Address: PO Box 295, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Barry, James Headsten. Ordained May 24, 2009; 2nd degree June 6, 2010. Serves as Pastor of the Glenview New Church in Glenview, Illinois, President of the Midwestern Academy, School Pastor of the Glenview New Church Schools and Pastor for the Midwestern Academy. Address: 73 Park Drive, Glenview, IL 60025

Beirith, Eduardo. Ordained August 16, 2012; 2nd degree, October 16, 2015. Serves as Pastor of the New Church Group in Curitiba, Parana, Brazil. Address: Nestor de Castro 223, Loja 2 Centro, Curitiba, PR 80.020-120, Brazil

Beiswenger, Todd Jeffrey. Ordained May 22, 2011; 2nd degree, January 19, 2014. Serves as Pastor of the Hurstville New Church in Hurstville, Australia, and the Brisbane New Church of Australia (New Church in Australia). Address: 26 Dudley Street, Penshurst, New South Wales 2222, Australia

Blair, Charles Edmund. Ordained May 28, 2006; 2nd degree, April 27, 2007. Serves as Pastor of NewChurch LIVE and Chaplain at Cairnwood Estate in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania. Address: PO Box 716, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Borketey-Kwaku, Jacob Borteye. Ordained, May 18, 2003; 2nd degree, July 13, 2008. Serves as Pastor of the Teshie Circle, Ghana. Address: PO Box TNE 1278, Teshie-Nungua Estates, Accra, Ghana

Buss, Erik James. Ordained June 10, 1990; 2nd degree, September 13, 1992. Serves as Assistant Pastor of Bryn Athyn Church in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania; Regional Pastor for Glenview. Address: PO Box 277, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Carswell, Eric Hugh. Ordained June 10, 1979; 2nd degree, February 22, 1981. Serves as Pastor of the Bryn Athyn Society in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania. Address: PO Box 277, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Choe, Mahn Hoe. Ordained April 29, 2012; 2nd degree, April 26, 2014. Serves as Pastor of Ahnseong Uri New Church in Ahnseong, South Korea. Address: Woorim Apt 105-806 Jinsa-Ri, Kongdo-Eup, Kyeong-ki, Ahnseong-Si 456-713, Republic of Korea

Cole, Nathan Field. Ordained January 11, 2009; 2nd degree, August 22, 2010. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor of the Carmel New Church in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada. Address: 35 Chapel Hill Drive, Kitchener, Ontario N2R 1N1, Canada

Cole, Stephen Dandridge*. Ordained June 19, 1977; 2nd degree, October 15, 1978. Serves as Assistant Professor of Religion and Philosophy in Bryn Athyn College of the New Church and of Theology in Bryn Athyn College of the New Church Theological School. Address: PO Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Cowley, Alan Michael. Ordained May 26, 2013; 2nd degree, July 13, 2014. Serves as Pastor of Michael Church in London, England. Address: 21A Hayne Road, Beckenham, Kent BR3 4JA, England

Cowley, Michael Keith. Ordained June 13, 1982; 2nd degree, May 13, 1984. Serves as Pastor of the Olivet Church in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Address: 2 Lorraine Gardens, Etobicoke, Ontario M9B 4Z4, Canada

Dakouri, Evariste Daligou. Ordained July 11, 2010; 2nd degree August 12, 2012. Serves as Pastor of the Gesco General Church Group in Abidjan, Ivory Coast. Address: 21 BP 4352, Abidjan 21, Côte d'Ivoire

Dayoro, Aime Okpo. Ordained August 25, 2013; 2nd degree, August 9, 2015. Serves as Pastor of Sinai Chapel Bobby in Abidjan, Ivory Coast. Address: 01 BP 12161, Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire

Dibb, Andrew Malcolm Thomas. Ordained June 6, 1984; 2nd degree, May 18, 1986. Serves as Dean of the Bryn Athyn College of the New Church Theological School. Address: PO Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Doukourou, Moise Gogable. Ordained July 11, 2010; 2nd degree August 12, 2012. Serves as Pastor of Abobo Ndotre General Church Group in Ivory Coast. Address: 01 BP 12161, Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire

Dube, Jerome Bhekuyise. Ordained June 5, 2005; 2nd degree November 11, 2007. Serves as Pastor of the Clermont Society in South Africa. Address: Private Box 1164, New Germany 3620, South Africa

Dziekpor, George Genya. Ordained July 13, 2008; 2nd degree July 4, 2010. Serves as Pastor of the Abelenkpe Group in Accra, Ghana. Address: PO Box CS 9277, C7, Tema, Ghana

Elphick, Derek Peter. Ordained June 6, 1993; 2nd degree, May 22, 1994. Serves as Pastor of the Oak Arbor Society in Rochester, Michigan. Address: 395 Olivewood Court, Rochester, MI 48306

Eshun, Ekow Essiedu. Ordained May 27, 2007; 2nd degree July 13, 2008. Serves as Pastor of the Tema and Madina Circles and in Ghana, West Africa, and Principal of the Tema New Church School; National Pastor of Ghana. Address: PO Box CS 9299, Community 7, Tema, Ghana

Ferrell, Michael Eugene. Ordained June 5, 2005; 2nd degree, June 3, 2007. Serves as Assistant Pastor of the Washington New Church Society in Mitchellville, Maryland, and a Visiting Pastor to congregations throughout the United States. Address: 4210 Canyonview Drive, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

Frazier, Glenn McKinley. Ordained May 28, 2006; 2nd degree June 22, 2008. Serves as Pastor of the New Way New Church in Austin, Texas. Address: 5822 Trailridge Drive, Austin, TX 78731

Frazier, Pearse McCollum. Ordained May 22, 2011; 2nd degree September 30, 2012. Serves as Pastor of The Pittsburgh New Church and Principal of the Pittsburgh New Church School in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Address: 299 Le Roi Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15208

Frazier, Scott Innes. Ordained May 28, 2006; 2nd degree, May 11, 2008. Serves as Assistant Professor of Religion and Latin and Chair of the Religion Department in Bryn Athyn College of the New Church. Address: PO Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Genzlinger, Matthew Laird. Ordained May 27, 2001; 2nd degree, August 10, 2003. Serves as Pastor of the New Church of Concord in Concord, Massachusetts. Address: 62 Church Street, Concord, MA 01742

Gladish, Michael David*. Ordained June 10, 1973; 2nd degree, June 30, 1974. Serves as Pastor of the Washington New Church Society and Regional Pastor for the Southeastern U.S. Address: 11910 Chantilly Lane, Mitchellville, MD 20721

Gladish, Nathan Donald. Ordained June 13, 1982; 2nd degree, November 6, 1983. Serves as Pastor of the Sunrise Chapel in Tucson, Arizona. Address: 11240 E. Miles St., Tucson, AZ 85748

Glenn, Coleman Starkey. Ordained May 24, 2009; 2nd degree October 3, 2010. Serves as Associate Pastor of New Church Westville and Visiting Pastor of Cape Town. Address: 30 Perth Road, Westville 3629, South Africa

Glenn, Thane Powell. Ordained May 24, 2009; 2nd degree June 6, 2010. Serves as Assistant Professor of Religion and English and Chaplain in Bryn Athyn College of the New Church. Address: PO Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Gnagne, Gedeon G. Ordained August 25, 2013; 2nd degree, August 9, 2015. Serves as Director of and Instructor of Theology in the New Jerusalem Theological Institute/ Abidjan and Associate Pastor of Sinai Chapel Bobby in Abidjan, Ivory Coast. Address: 01 BP 12-161, Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire

Gyamfi, Martin Kofi. Ordained June 9, 1991; 2nd degree, August 28, 1994. Serves as Pastor of the New Church in Asakraka-Kwahu, Visiting Pastor for the Oframase Group in Ghana, West Africa, and Regional Pastor for West Africa. Address: The New Church, PO Box AS 10, Asakraka-Kwahu, E/R, Ghana

Halterman, Barry Childs. Ordained June 5, 1994; 2nd degree, September 8, 1996. Teaches and serves as Head of the Religion Department in the Academy Secondary Schools and as Chaplain for the Secondary Schools. Assists at NewChurch LIVE. Address: PO Box 707, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Heilman, Andrew James*. Ordained June 18, 1978; 2nd degree, March 8, 1981. Serves as Regional Pastor of Brazil, Pastor of the Fatima Society in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and Assistant Pastor of the Kempton New Church in Kempton, Pennsylvania. Address: 1050 Mountain Road, Kempton, PA 19529

Heinrichs, Bradley Daniel. Ordained May 23, 1999; 2nd degree, November 19, 2000. Serves as Pastor of the Carmel New Church in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, Principal of the Carmel New Church School, Executive Vice President of the General Church in Canada, Chairman of Information Swedenborg, Incorporated, and Regional Pastor for Canada. Address: 58 Chapel Hill Drive, Kitchener, Ontario N2R 1N2, Canada

Jin, Yong Jin. Ordained June 5, 1994; 2nd degree, June 16, 1996. Serves as Pastor of the Philadelphia Korean New Church, and responsible for outreach to the Korean-speaking community in the United States; Regional Pastor for Asia; Dean of the Korean New Church Theological School. Address: 537 Anne Street, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006

Jung, Young Ho. Ordained April 29, 2012; 2nd degree, April 26, 2014. Serves as Pastor of the EunHea New Church in Seoul, South Korea. Address: Do-Bong, Chang, Dong, 380 Jukong Apt, Seoul 403-810, Republic of Korea

Keal, Solomon John. Ordained May 27, 2012; 2nd degree, February 2, 2014. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor of the Bryn Athyn Church in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania. Address: PO Box 277, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Kim, Seoung Gil. Ordained April 29, 2012; 2nd degree, April 26, 2014. Serves as Pastor of Kangbuk New Church in Seoul, South Korea. Address: In Su Dong 391-15, Suyu 5-dong, Kangbuk-Gu, Seoul, Republic of Korea 142-884

Koudou, Roger. Ordained July 13, 2008; 2nd degree July 11, 2010. Serves as Pastor of the Assvon New Church Group in Abidjan. Address: Nouvelle Eglise Chrétienne de Côte d'Ivoire, 01 BP 4853 Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire

Kouhoui, Henry Joel Kouassi. Ordained July 11, 2010; 2nd degree August 12, 2012. Serves as Pastor of the New Church in Mauritius. Address: 01 BP 12161, Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire

Lee, Jong-Ui. Ordained May 31, 1998; 2nd degree, June 17, 2001. Serves as Pastor of the New Church at the City of Light in Gwangju, Korea. Address: 204-605 Kumho Ssangyong APT, Chipyeong-dong, Seo-gu, Gwangju 502-754, Republic of Korea

Lee, Soon Cheol. Ordained April 29, 2012; 2nd degree, April 26, 2014. Serves as Pastor of Chungju New Church in Chungju, South Korea and Translator of the Writings into Korean. Address: 101-301 Samik Ceramic Apt. 374-1, Mochung-dong, Hungduk-ku Chungju-si, Chungchungbuk-Do, Republic of Korea 361-140

Lindrooth, David Hutchinson. Ordained June 10, 1990; 2nd degree, April 19, 1992. Serves as Director of the Office of Outreach. Address: PO Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Lompo, Samuel Oumpougouila. Ordained August 25, 2013; 2nd degree, August 16, 2015. Serves as Minister to the New Church Group in Burkina Faso. Address: 11 BP 412 Ouagadougou CMS 11, Burkina Faso

Lumsden, Derrick Alan Mark. Ordained May 25, 2008; 2nd degree May 16, 2010. Serves as Pastor of the Sower's Chapel in Freeport, Pennsylvania. Address: 980 Sarver Road, Sarver, PA 16055

Mangoua, Cyprien Kouamé. Ordained July 11, 2010; 2nd degree August 12, 2012. Serves as Pastor of the Cité Verte General Church Group in Abidjan, Ivory Coast. Address: 01 BP 12161, Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire

Matsumoto, Shiro. Ordained April 30, 2012; 2nd degree April 27, 2014. Serves as a New Church Pastor in Japan. Address: 1-206, Inagedai-House, 7-8, Inagedai-cho, Inage-ward, Chiba-shi, 263-0032 Japan

McCardell, Ethan Derek. Ordained May 25, 2003; 2nd degree March 21, 2004. Serves as Pastor of the Light for Life New Church in Seattle, Washington. Address: 6319 28th Avenue S, Seattle, WA 98108

Mkhize, Sibusiso Protus. Ordained May 25, 2003; 2nd degree November 11, 2007. Serves as Pastor of the Kwa Mashu Society in South Africa; Visiting Pastor to Empangeni. Address: Box 16932, Eshowe, KwaZulu-Natal, 3815, South Africa or General Church of the New Jerusalem, H-602 Umgankla Road, KwaMashi 4360, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

Nicolier, Alain. Ordained May 31, 1979; 2nd degree, September 16, 1984. Serves as Pastor of groups in Bourguignon and Ariège, France, and Evangelist for French-speaking West Africa. Address: Conte' 09420, Rimont, France

Odhner, Calvin Acton. Ordained May 22, 2011; 2nd degree February 17, 2013. Serves as Pastor of the Atlanta Society in Alpharetta, Georgia, and Visiting Pastor throughout Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Florida and Louisiana. Address: 220 Sable Creek Drive, Alpharetta, GA 30004

Odhner, Grant Hugo*. Ordained June 7, 1981; 2nd degree, May 9, 1982. Teaches Theology in the Bryn Athyn College of the New Church Theological School. Visiting Pastor of the New York City Circle. Chairs the General Church Publication Committee and is Secretary of the Council of the Clergy. Address: PO Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Odhner, John Llewellyn*. Ordained June 7, 1980; 2nd degree, November 22, 1981. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor of Bryn Athyn Church in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, and works on the Office of Outreach Internet Project. Address: PO Box 277, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Pendleton, Mark Dandridge. Ordained June 9, 1991; 2nd degree, May 29, 1994. Serves as Associate Pastor of the Immanuel Church in Glenview, Illinois. Address: 1028 Gladish Lane, Glenview, IL 60025

Perry, Charles Mark. Ordained June 9, 1991; 2nd degree, June 19, 1993. Serves as Pastor of the San Diego Society in San Diego, California; visits Palo Alto, California. Address: 7911 Canary Way, San Diego, CA 92123

Rose, Jonathan Searle*. Ordained May 31, 1987; 2nd degree, February 23, 1997. Serves as translator for the Swedenborg Foundation. Address: PO Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Roth, David Christopher. Ordained June 9, 1991; 2nd degree, October 17, 1993. Serves as Pastor of the New Church of Boulder Valley in Boulder, Colorado, and Regional Pastor for the Western United States. Address: 3421 Blue Stem Avenue, Longmont, CO 80503

Sandstrom, Ryan Matthew. Ordained May 22, 2011; 2nd degree January 13, 2013. Serves as Pastor of Ivyland New Church in Ivyland, Pennsylvania. Address: 851 W. Bristol Road, Ivyland, PA 18974

Schnarr, Grant Ronald. Ordained June 12, 1983; 2nd degree, October 7, 1984. Serves as an Instructor of Theology in Bryn Athyn College of the New Church. Address: PO Box 475, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Schnarr, Philip Bradley. Ordained June 5, 1996; 2nd degree, May 31, 1998. Serves as School Pastor of Bryn Athyn Church School. Address: PO Box 277, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Schnarr, Ronald Doering. Ordained May 30, 2010; 2nd degree April 7, 2013. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor of Carmel New Church in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada. Address: 55 Chapel Drive, Kitchener, Ontario N2R 1N2, Canada

Segbenu, John Kwaku. Ordained July 13, 2008; 2nd degree July 4, 2010. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor in Tema, and teaches in the Tema School. Address: PO Box 325, Madina-Accra, Ghana

Simons, Jeremy Frederick*. Ordained June 13, 1982; 2nd degree, July 31, 1983. Serves as Bryn Athyn Cathedral Chaplain and as a Visiting Pastor to Central Pennsylvania. Address: PO Box 277C, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Smith, Brian Donald. Ordained May 30, 2010; 2nd degree October 30, 2011. Serves as Assistant Pastor of the Washington New Church and Principal of the Washington New Church School. Address: 11503 Chantilly Lane, Bowie, MD 20721

Smith, Lawson Merrell*. Ordained June 10, 1979; 2nd degree, February 1, 1981. Serves as Pastor of the Kempton Society in Kempton, Pennsylvania, and Principal of the Kempton New Church School. Regional Pastor for the Northeastern United States. Address: 171 Kunkels Dahl Road, Kempton, PA 19529

Smith, Malcolm Glenn. Ordained May 30, 2010; 2nd degree February 26, 2012. Serves as Pastor of the New Church Westville and Chaplain of Kainon School in Westville, South Africa. Address: 13 Glencairn Close, Westville 3629, South Africa.

Souka, Eric Messan. Ordained July 20, 2008; 2nd degree July 11, 2010. Serves as Pastor of the New Church Group in Vogan, Togo. Address: Nouvelle Eglise du Togo, BP 61202, Lomé, Togo

Thompson, Howard Arthur. Ordained May 22, 2011; 2nd degree June 23, 2013. Serves as Pastor of the Colchester New Church, Colchester, Essex, England. Address: 8 Stoneleigh Park, Lexden, Colchester, Essex CO3 9FA, England

Villanueva, Johnny Antônio Zavalaga. Ordained October 28th, 2008; 2nd degree August 19, 2012. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor in Rio de Janeiro. Address: Rua G, 123, Bairro de Cedae, Campo Grande, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil

Walsh, Garry Brian. Ordained May 27, 2001; 2nd degree, September 8, 2002. Serves as Pastor of the Phoenix New Church Society in Phoenix, Arizona, and Visiting Pastor to Palo Alto, California, and Portland, Oregon. Manager of the e-mail lists for General Church clergy and clergy wives, Webmaster of portions of the General Church clergy website and associated wives' website. Address: 4036 E. Coolbrook Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85032

Xaba, Langalibalele Abraham. Ordained August 27, 2006; 2nd degree August 9, 2009. Serves as Pastor of the Impaphala Society in South Africa. Address: 2375 Sono Road Zone 2, Diepkloof 1862, South Africa

Yang, Gyu Dae. Ordained October 21, 2007. Serves as Pastor of the Seoul New Church in South Korea. Address: 75-1 Nokbun-dong Eunpyung-gu, Seoul, South Korea

Zathey-Agboga, Godwin. Ordained May 27, 2007; 2nd degree July 13, 2008. Serves as Pastor in the Volta Region in Ghana. Address: PO Box HP 396, Ho, Volta-Region, Ghana

**Due to changes in the benefits package, these men have found it financially advantageous to retire officially. However, they continue serving faithfully in their current uses between two-thirds and full time.*

MINISTERS

Ang'asa, Fred Onsiro. Ordained July 6, 2014. Serves as teacher in the Good News Preparatory School in Etorá. Address: New Church Etorá, PO Box 13, Kisii 502, Kenya

Buick, Brett D. Ordained May 31, 2015. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor in Kempton, Pennsylvania. Address: 8560 Kistler Valley Road, New Tripoli, PA 18066

Buss, Jared James. Ordained May 31, 2015. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor in Toronto, Canada. Address: 134 Smithwood Drive, Etobicoke, Ontario M9B4S4, Canada

Devassy, Peter Naduvilaveettil. Ordained October 23, 2011. Serves as Pastor of the New Church in India. Address: The New Church, Ompathungal Canal Road, Mattathur, PO, Trissur, Kerala, India

Floyd, Thomas X. Ordained May 31, 2015. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor in Stockholm and is Visiting Pastor in Scandinavia. Address: PO Box 2029 Gullhaug, Holmestrand 3087, Norway

Glenn, Joel Christian. Ordained May 31, 2015. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor in Oak Arbor, Michigan. Address: 670 N. Main Street, Rochester, MI 48307

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Magero, George Omosu. Ordained July 6, 2014. Serves as teacher in the Good News Preparatory School and is Pastor of Kiagware Group. Address: New Church Etorá, PO Box 13, Kisii 502, Kenya

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Sakae, Seiich. Ordained April 26, 2014. Serves as Minister to Tokyo, Japan. Tokyo Group co-Pastor and Visiting Minister in Japan. Address: 2-26-21 KitakaSai Edoga Wa, Tokyo, Japan

Timothy. Ordained May 1, 2013. Serves as a New Church Pastor for China. (Last name withheld for security reasons)

Zoho, Alphonse Téhé. Ordained August 25, 2013. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor of Cite Verte General Church Group in Abidjan, Ivory Coast. Address: 01 BP12161, Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire

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**NON-GENERAL CHURCH
MINISTERS SERVING
GENERAL CHURCH GROUPS**

Keyworth, Richard John. Serves as
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RETIRED

Acton, Alfred II. Ordained June 19,
1964; 2nd degree, October 30, 1966; 3rd
degree, May 16, 1999. Serves as co-Pastor
of the Charleston Group in Charleston,
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Buss, Peter Martin Sr. Ordained June
19, 1964; 2nd degree, May 16, 1965; 3rd
degree, June 1, 1986. Bishop Emeritus
of the General Church. Address: 950
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Kline, Thomas Leroy. Ordained June
10, 1973; 2nd degree, June 15, 1975;
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Alden, Glenn Graham. Ordained June 19,
1974; 2nd degree, June 6, 1976. Address:
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Ankra-Badu, William Ofei. Ordained
June 15, 1986; 2nd degree, March 1, 1992.
Address: PO Box 11305, Accra-North,
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Asplundh, Kurt Horigan. Ordained
June 19, 1960; 2nd degree, June 19, 1962.
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Asplundh, Kurt Hyland. Ordained June 6,
1993; 2nd degree, April 30, 1995. Teaches
Theology part time at Bryn Athyn College
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1976; 2nd degree, June 11, 1978. Serves as
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June 13, 1982; 2nd degree, March 4,
1984. Address: 31 Dalegrove Crescent,
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Darkwah, Simpson Kwabeng. Ordained
June 7, 1992; 2nd degree, August 28,
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Echols, John Clark Jr. Ordained August 26, 1978; 2nd degree, March 30, 1980. Serves as Pastor of the Cincinnati Society in Cincinnati, Ohio, and Visiting Pastor in Indianapolis, Indiana. Address: 9331 Westchester Park Court, West Chester, OH 45069

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Heinrichs, Daniel Winthrop. Ordained June 19, 1957; 2nd degree, April 6, 1958. Address: 9115 Chrysanthemum Drive, Boynton Beach, FL 33437-1236

Heinrichs, Willard Lewis Davenport. Ordained June 19, 1965; 2nd degree, January 26, 1969. Serves as Visiting Pastor in the central United States. Address: 7358 Mt. Sherman Road, Longmont, CO 80503

Howard, Geoffrey Horace. Ordained June 19, 1961; 2nd degree, June 2, 1963. Serves as co-Pastor of the Charleston Group in Charleston, South Carolina. Address: 128 Boyle Way, Summerville, SC 29485

Jungé, Robert Schill. Ordained June 19, 1955; 2nd degree, August 11, 1957. Address: 9212 Quaker City Road, Kempton, PA 19529

Kwak, Dzin Pyung. Ordained June 12, 1988; 2nd degree, November 11, 1990. Address: Prayer House of the New Church, 131 Kyohang-ri, Socho-myon, Wonjoo-si, Kangwon-do, Republic of Korea 220-831

Larsen, Ottar Trosvik. Ordained June 19, 1974; 2nd degree, February 16, 1977. Address: 2145 Country Club Drive, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006

Lewin, Alan. Recognized as Priest in the General Church in November 19, 2006. Ordained 2nd degree December 2, 2007. Address: 72 Nipper Lane, Whitefield, Manchester M45 7RF, England

Maseko, Jacob Mokaka. Ordained November 29, 1992; 2nd degree, September 18, 1994. Address: PO Box 261, Pimville, 1808, South Africa

McCurdy, George Daniel. Ordained June 25, 1967; Recognized as a Priest of the New Church in the second degree July 5, 1979; received into the priesthood of the General Church June 9, 1980. Serves as Visiting Pastor of the Harleysville Circle in Harleysville, Pennsylvania. Acts as the General Church's Ecclesiastical Endorsing Agent for Military Chaplains and Chairman of the Military Service Committee. Address: PO Box 707, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Nemitz, Kurt Paul. Ordained June 16, 1963; 2nd degree, March 27, 1966. Serves as a translator for the General Church. Address: 7127 Willard Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15208

Nicholson, Allison La Marr. Ordained September 9, 1979; 2nd degree, February 15, 1981. Address: 63 Sam Houston Drive, N Ft Myers, FL 33917

Nobre, Cristóvão Rabelo. Ordained June 6, 1984; 2nd degree August 25, 1985. Serves as a translator for the General Church. Address: Rua Fernando Cunha, 114, Barra, 45990-000 Alcobaca, Brazil

Nzimande, Bongani Edward. Ordained November 14, 1999; 2nd degree May 25, 2003. Serves as Visiting Pastor of the Enkumba Society in South Africa. Address: PO Box 848, Pinetown, 3600, South Africa

Orthwein, Walter Edward III. Ordained July 22, 1973; Recognized as a priest of the General Church in November, 1976 and ordained into the 2nd degree, June 12, 1977. Serves as Spiritual Editor of New Church Life. Address: 2934 Orchard Lane, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006

Pendleton, Dandridge. Ordained June 19, 1952; 2nd degree, June 19, 1954. Address: PO Box 550, Bryn Athyn, PA 190-09

Riley, Norman Edward. Ordained June 14, 1950; 2nd degree, June 20, 1951. Recognized as a Priest of the General Church January, 1978. Address: 2360 Byberry Road, Hatboro, PA 19040

Rogers, Norbert Bruce. Ordained January 12, 1969. Address: 449 Woodward Drive, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006

Rogers, Prescott Andrew. Ordained January 26, 1986; 2nd degree, April 24, 1988. Serves as Pastor of the Charlotte Circle in North Carolina. Address: 6211 Lowergate Drive, Waxhaw, NC 28173

Rose, Frank Shirley. Ordained June 19, 1952; 2nd degree, August 2, 1953. Address: 9233 E. Helen Street, Tucson, AZ 85715

Rose, Patrick Alan. Ordained June 19, 1975; 2nd degree, September 25, 1977. Address: 502 Knollwood Place, Woodstock, GA 30188-4588

Rose, Thomas Hartley. Ordained June 12, 1988; 2nd degree, May 21, 1989. Address: 3245 Masons Mill Road, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006

Sandstrom, Erik Emanuel. Ordained May 23, 1971; 2nd degree, May 21, 1972. Serves as Acting Curator of Swedenborgiana. Address: PO Box 740, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Silverman, Ray. Ordained June 6, 1984; 2nd degree, June 19, 1985. Serves as Associate Professor of Religion, English and Moral Philosophy in Bryn Athyn College. Address: PO. Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Smith, Christopher Ronald Jack. Ordained June 19, 1969; 2nd degree, May 9, 1971. Serves as Religion teacher for grade 11 students in the Kempton Church ASPIRE program. Address: 741 Old Philly Pike, Kempton, PA 19529

Synnestvedt, Louis Daniel. Ordained June 7, 1980; 2nd degree, November 8, 1981. Serves as Assistant to the Pastor of Kempton. Address: 3657A Route 737, Kempton, PA 19529

Taylor, Douglas McLeod. Ordained June 19, 1960; 2nd degree, June 19, 1962. Address: PO Box 550, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Tshabalala, Njanyana Reuben. Ordained November 29, 1992; 2nd degree, September 18, 1994. Serves as Pastor of the Balfour Society in Mpumalanga, South Africa. Address: PO Box 851, Kwa Xuma, 1868, South Africa

Waters, Gerald Gilbert. Ordained March 17, 2002; 2nd degree October 17, 2004. Serves as Chaplain of Providence Home, Westville, and as Visiting Pastor of the Zululand Group in Kwa-Zulu Natal; Executive Vice President of the Corporation of the General Church in South Africa. Address: 39 Sandown Village, 27 Harvey Road, Pinetown 3610, South Africa

Yang, Gyu Dae. Ordained into 2nd degree October 21, 2007. Address: Kyomoon Apt. 104-1403, Kyomoon-dong, Kuri-si, Republic of Korea 471-020

In addition to the specific assignments listed for some of the retired clergy above, several retired priests travel regularly to serve as visiting pastors/preachers where needed.

UNASSIGNED MINISTERS

Alden, Mark Edward. Ordained June 10, 1979; 2nd degree, May 17, 1981. Address: PO Box 204, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Barnett, Wendel Ryan. Ordained June 7, 1981; 2nd degree, June 20, 1982. Address: 19 Milton Drive, Yardley, PA 19067

Bell, Reuben Paul. Ordained May 25, 1997; 2nd degree April 11, 1999. Address: 121 North Street, Saco, ME 04072

Chapin, Frederick Merle. Ordained June 15, 1986; 2nd degree, October 23, 1988. Address: 101 Windmill Road, Butler, PA 16002

Childs, Robin Waelchli. Ordained June 6, 1984; 2nd degree, June 8, 1986. Address: 723 Sampson Avenue, Willow Grove, PA 19090

Clifford, William Harrison. Ordained June 6, 1976; 2nd degree, October 8, 1978. Address: 1544 Giddings Avenue SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49507-2223

Fitzpatrick, Daniel. Ordained June 6, 1984. Address: 2 Raquel Court, Marietta, GA 30064

Glenn, Robert Amos. Ordained May 28, 2000; 2nd degree, June 2, 2002. Address: 700 Lenox Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15221

Hauptmann, Olaf. Ordained May 23, 2004; 2nd degree July 30, 2006

Johnson, Martie. Ordained May 27, 2001; 2nd degree, June 16, 2002. Address: 7708 171st Street SW, Edmonds, WA 98026-5013

Paek, Sung-Won. Ordained May 27, 2001. Address: Administration, Moss Rehab/ Einstein, 60 E. Township Line Road, Elkins Park, PA 19027

Schorran, Paul Edward. Ordained June 12, 1983. Address: 631 Old Philly Pike, Kempton, PA 19529

SOCIETIES AND CIRCLES

Pastor or Minister

SOCIETIES

Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire
Rev. Gedeon G. Gnagne, Pastor

Accra, Ghana
Rev. George G. Dziekpor, Pastor

**Alexandra, Johannesburg
South Africa**
Rev. Mark Allais providing oversight

Asakraka, Ghana
Rev. Martin K. Gyamfi, Pastor

Atlanta, Georgia
Rev. Calvin A. Odhner, Pastor

Boulder, Colorado
(New Church of Boulder Valley)
 Rev. David C. Roth, Pastor

Boston, Massachusetts
 Rev. Matthew L. Genzlinger, Pastor

Boynton Beach, Florida
 Rev. Kenneth J. Alden, Pastor

Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania
 Rev. Eric H. Carswell, Pastor
 Rev. Erik J. Buss, Assistant Pastor
 Rev. Philip B. Schnarr, School Pastor
 Rev. Jeremy F. Simons, Cathedral
 Chaplain
 Rev. John L. Odhner, Assistant to the
 Pastor
 Rev. Solomon J. Keal, Assistant to the
 Pastor

Buccleuch, Johannesburg
South Africa
 Rev. Mark B. Allais, Pastor

Cincinnati, Ohio
 Rev. J. Clark Echols, Pastor

Clermont, Durban
South Africa
 Rev. Jerome Bhekiyuse Dube, Pastor

Colchester, England
 Rev. Howard A. Thompson, Pastor

Dawson Creek, B.C., Canada

Detroit, Michigan
(Oak Arbor Church)
 Rev. Derek P. Elphick, Pastor
 Joel C. Glenn, Assistant to the Pastor

Diepkloof, Soweto
South Africa
 Rev. Mark B. Allais providing oversight

Etorá, Kisii, Kenya
 Rev. Samson M. Abuga, Pastor

Freeport, Pennsylvania
(Sower's Chapel)
 Rev. Derek Lumsden, Pastor

Glenview, Illinois
 Rev. James H. Barry
 Rev. Mark D. Pendleton, Associate Pastor

Gwangju, Korea
 Rev. Jong-Ui Lee, Pastor

Hurstville, Australia
 Rev. Todd J. Beiswenger, Pastor

Impaphala, South Africa
 Rev. Langelibalele A. (Phila) Xaba, Pastor

Ivyland, Pennsylvania
 Rev. Ryan M. Sandström, Pastor

Kempton, Pennsylvania
 Rev. Lawson M. Smith, Pastor
 Rev. Brett D. Buick, Assistant to the Pastor
 Rev. Louis D. Synnestvedt,
 Assistant to the Pastor
 Rev. Andrew J. Heilman, Assistant Pastor
 Rev. Arne Bau-Madsen, Associate Pastor

Kitchener, Ontario, Canada
(Carmel New Church)
 Rev. Bradley D. Heinrichs, Pastor
 Rev. Nathan F. Cole, Assistant to the Pastor
 Rev. Ronald D. Schnarr, Assistant to the Pastor

Kwa Mashu, Durban
South Africa
 Rev. S. Protus Mkhize, Pastor

Lomé, Togo
 Rev. Ablam K. Amouzouvi, Pastor

London, England
(Michael Church)
 Rev. Alan M. Cowley, Pastor

NewChurch LIVE
 Rev. Charles E. Blair, Pastor

Pankrono-Kumasi, Ghana

Rev. Adu Amoako, Pastor

Phoenix, Arizona

Rev. Garry B. Walsh, Pastor

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Rev. Pearse M. Frazier, Pastor

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

(Campo Grande)

(Fatima)

Rev. Andrew J. Heilman, Visiting Pastor

Rev. Johnny A. Z. Villanueva, Assistant to the Pastor

San Diego, California

Rev. C. Mark Perry, Pastor

Seoul, Korea

Rev. Gyu Dae Yan, Pastor

Stockholm, Sweden

Rev. Göran R. Appelgren, Pastor

Tema, Ghana

Rev. Ekow E. Eshun, Pastor

Rev. John K. Segbenu, Assistant Pastor

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

(Olivet Church)

Rev. Michael K. Cowley, Pastor

Rev. Jared J. Buss, Assistant to the Pastor

Tucson, Arizona

Rev. Nathan D. Gladish, Pastor

Vogan, Togo

Rev. Eric M. Souka, Pastor

Washington, D. C.

Rev. Michael D. Gladish, Pastor

Rev. Michael E. Ferrell, Assistant Pastor

Rev. Brian D. Smith, Assistant Pastor

Westville (Durban)

South Africa

Rev. Malcolm G. Smith, Pastor

Rev. Coleman S. Glenn, Associate Pastor

CIRCLE

Visiting and/or Resident Pastor or Minister

Albuquerque, New Mexico

Auckland, New Zealand

Rev. Richard J. Keyworth, Pastor

Austin, Texas

Rev. Glenn (Mac) Frazier, Pastor

Cape Town, South Africa

Rev. Coleman S. Glenn, Visiting Pastor

Central Pennsylvania

Rev. Jeremy F. Simons, Visiting Pastor

Charlotte, North Carolina

Rev. Prescott A. Rogers, Pastor

Chicago, Illinois

Rev. Michael E. Ferrell, Visiting Pastor

Cité Verte, Abidjan

Rev. Cyprien K. Mangoua, Pastor

Côte d'Ivoire

Rev. Sylvain Agnes, Pastor

Cochin, Kerala, India

Rev. Peter N. Devassy, Pastor

Connecticut

Rev. Dr. Andrew M. T. Dibb, Visiting Pastor

Copenhagen, Denmark

Rev. Thomas X. Floyd, Visiting Pastor

Cotonou, Benin

Rev. Guillaume J. K. Anato, Pastor

Curitiba, Parana, Brazil

Rev. Eduardo Beirith, Minister

Dome, Ghana

Rev. Israel Ampem-Darko, Pastor

Enkumba, KwaZulu Natal

South Africa

Rev. B. Edward Nzimande, Visiting Pastor

Gesco, Abidjan

Rev. Evariste D. Dakouri, Pastor

The Hague, Netherlands

Rev. Alan M. Cowley, Visiting Pastor

Hambrook, South Africa

Rev. B. Edward Nzimande, Visiting Pastor

Harleysville, Pennsylvania

Rev. George D. McCurdy, Visiting Pastor

La Crescenta, California

Rev. Jean Aime Atta, Pastor

Lake Helen, Florida

Rev. Calvin A. Odhner, Visiting Pastor

Madina, Ghana

New York City/ Northern New Jersey

Rev. Grant H. Odhner, Visiting Pastor

North Ohio

Rev. Michael E. Ferrell, Visiting Pastor

Palo Alto, California

Rev. C. Mark Perry, Visiting Pastor

Perth, Australia

Rev. Todd J. Beiswenger, Visiting Minister

**Philadelphia New Church
(Korean)**

Rev. Yong J. Jin, Pastor

**Seattle, Washington
(Light for Life New Church)**

Rev. Ethan D. McCardell, Pastor

Tokyo, Japan

Yopougon, Côte d'Ivoire

Rev. Roger Koudou, Pastor

*Note: In addition to Societies and Circles,
there are Groups of General Church
members in various geographical areas that
receive occasional visits from a priest.*

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