

2004

Journal  
of the  
Swedenborgian  
Church

No. 182

# **The Swedenborgian Church United States and Canada**

Incorporated 1861

The General Convention of the New Jerusalem  
in the United States of America

## **Annual Session**

### **“A Voice in the Wilderness”**

July 9-14, 2004

at

St. Jerome's University  
Waterloo, Canada

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#### **Recording Secretary**

Gloria Toot

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## THE FAITH AND AIMS OF OUR CHURCH

The Swedenborgian Church believes that a new epoch is opening in the spiritual life of mankind. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, as he promised to do, has come again, not indeed in a physical re-appearance, but in spirit and truth; not in a single event only, but in a progressive manifestation of his presence among people.

Our Church regards as tokens of his coming the burst of scientific development, the rise of the spirit of inquiry, the progress toward political and intellectual freedoms, and the deepening sense of a national and international responsibility which have characterized the last century and a half. These are more remote signs, however, of epochal religious change. More directly denoting a movement of the spirit of God on the human spirit are the stirrings in world faiths, the revisions of thought and outlook in them, the searching after standards and spiritual power adequate to the needs and problems of the times, and this notably in the Christian faith. The Lord is everywhere at work, moving to the reestablishment of his kingdom, and specifically to the renewing of Christianity with the power and understanding to serve and speed his kingdom.

In any coming of the Lord, he brings about many things which people are slow to see. Our unseen, spiritual environment is made over as well as our visible world. A greater awareness of the good than there has been, a fuller justice and truer peace offer themselves for us to realize. Today, in a world that has contracted into a neighborhood, the responsibility to the neighbor makes its demands on all people of good will. Evils that have been long established begin to look as though they could be conquered. We believe that the Lord in his second coming has "reordered the heavens and subjugated the hells" as he did at his first coming.

This coming of the Son of man, "as the lightning comes out of the east, and shines even unto the west," making the salvation of all people possible, is the direct and sole work of the Lord - a redemption of the world by the Redeemer of persons.

Our Church is also convinced that the Lord has given his followers word

of all this, and done so by means of a servant from among them. We believe that Emanuel Swedenborg thus served the Lord. A person's destiny beyond the earthly life needed to be placed in fuller light; the Scriptures needed to be reestablished as the Word of God; and the Christian message was in need of renewed and contemporary expression. To supply these needs Swedenborg devoted half a lifetime, and an insight born of a regenerating experience. He was enabled "by the Lord's mercy" to inform the Christian hope of immortality with knowledge of the world of the spirit; in Old and New Testament he set forth a meaning which speaks timelessly of the spiritual life and can nourish it now; and he freed Christian teaching from many crippling errors and formulated it anew from the Word of God.

In the theological works of Swedenborg the message of Christianity is restated to inspire the spiritual life of all anew. Its truths present themselves as truths of life here and hereafter. They invite inquiry and ask understanding. They open the door to spiritual renewal and urge upon everyone the personal responsibility to participate in this renewal. The Lord has taken initiative in his coming. We have our response to make. In that response three essentials are urged: that we acknowledge God in the Lord, and that he alone can bring about our redemption and regeneration; that we acknowledge the holiness of the Word and the inspiration which the Word gives us to seek and promote his kingdom; and that we live the life of charity, the exercising in all our relationships, large and small, the neighborliness enjoined by his commandments.

The Swedenborgian Church believes, then, that under Providence the world has received, through the instrumentality of a man, a revelation which confronts it with the universally valid truth of the spiritual life of all human beings. It believes that the Lord Jesus Christ, availing himself of human agency to give us this explicit guidance, has done a sweeping if hidden work of redemption, and created a new heaven and a new earth about us. He is ushering in the epoch, if we will, which he foresaw and which he promised at his first coming. In John's vision on Patmos, the Risen Christ once more promised the dawn of this epoch in the descent of the Holy City, New Jerusalem, to earth. To signalize our conviction that the Lord is fulfilling his promise, we originally organized under the name the Church of the New Jerusalem. The spirit and the humanity which longs to be united to the Lord alike cry, "Come." We lift our voice and pray, "Come. Even so, come Lord Jesus."

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## THE OFFICERS OF THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH

### THE CENTRAL OFFICE

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### OFFICERS

*President:*

**Christine M. Laitner**

*Vice President:*

**James Erickson**

*Recording Secretary:*

**Gloria Toot**

*Treasurer:*

**Lawrence Conant**

### GENERAL COUNCIL

*Term Expires 2005*

Deane Currie (\*)

Pamela Selensky (1)

Rev. Ken Turley (2)

*Term Expires 2006*

Sandy Degi (1)

Bette McDonnell (\*)

Rev. Lee Woofenden(2)

*Term Expires 2007*

Barbara Cullen (1)

Rev. Renee Machiniak (1)

Sharon Williams (1)

Numbers in parentheses are the terms currently being served for the positions so indicated, persons are limited to two consecutive three-year terms.

\*Elected in 2004 to complete an unexpired term.

**THE CABINET**

*The Cabinet, composed of the chairs of Support Units, the chair of the Council of Ministers, and a General Council representative, is chaired by the President and entrusted with the task of integrating the efforts of all Support Units and the Council of Ministers so that the mission, priorities, goals, and objectives set by the General Council can be pursued and attained in a cost-effective manner.*

**SUPPORT UNITS**

*(The President of the Swedenborgian Church serves ex-officio without vote on all Support Units)*

**COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT UNIT (COMSU)**

*Chair:* Carol Lawson 2005 (1)  
Nancy Apple 2006 (1)  
Carla Friedrich 2007 (1)

*Editor, The Messenger:* Patricia W. LeVan

**EDUCATION SUPPORT UNIT (EDSU)**

*Chair:* Missy Sommer 2005 (1)  
Katie Shelley 2006 (1)  
Nancy Freestone 2007 (1)

*Ex-officio (with vote):* Representative of SSR, appointed by the SHS Board of Trustees

*Ex-officio (without vote):* ANCSSA President

**INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SUPPORT UNIT (IMSU)**

*Chair:* Rev. Lee Woofenden 2006 (1)  
Philip Bae 2005 (2)  
Bob Hinrichs 2007 (2)



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**SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH YOUTH LEAGUE (SCYL)**

Youth Leader:	Kurt Fekete
President:	Benjamin Currie
East Coast and Activities Officer:	Miles Stroh
Central States and Public Relations Officer:	Erica Penabaker
West Coast and Service Officer:	Karen Degi
Canada & Fundraising/Finance Officer:	Brittany Fleming
Editor, Clear Blue Sky:	Gabrielle Lipski
League Chaplain:	Rev. Junchol Lee

**FINANCIAL & PHYSICAL RESOURCES SUPPORT UNIT (FPRSU)**

*Chair:* Lawrence Conant, Treasurer (Bylaws)  
Betsy Lau 2005 (1)  
Leo Serrano 2006 (1)  
Jennifer Lindsay 2007 (2)

**AUGMENTATION FUND COMMITTEE**

*The Augmentation Fund was established by vote of the Swedenborgian Church in 1912. It has as its purpose, “the support and extension of the New Church ministry and missionary field.” 1976 Journal, Minute 49 (a).*

*Chair:* Susan Wood  
Rev. Susannah Currie  
Betsy Lau  
Jennifer Lindsay  
Leo Serrano

*Ex-officio:* President of the Swedenborgian Church  
Treasurer of the Swedenborgian Church

**MINISTRIES SUPPORT UNIT (MINSU)**

*Chair:* Karen Conger 2007 (2)  
Barbara Halle 2005 (2)  
Rev. John Maine 2005 (1)  
Mark Allen 2006 (2)  
Rev. Richard Tafel 2006 (1)  
Carl Blenkin 2007 (2)

## BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

### COMMITTEE ON LIBRARY AND DOCUMENTS

*“Resolved, That a Committee of three on Library and Documents, one of which shall be the President of the Theological School, shall be appointed by the President of the Convention to see to the collecting, depositing and cataloging of books, manuscripts and other documents which may have been donated to or otherwise procured by the Convention; the Chairman of this Committee shall report to the Convention annually.” (1911 Journal, Minute 90)*

The archives of the Swedenborgian Church are held in two places: histories of societies and committees at the Central Office in Newton, MA (contact: Martha Bauer), and sermons/personal papers and SHS related documents at the library of the Swedenborg House of Studies, Berkeley, California (contact: Rev. Dr. James Lawrence).

*Chair:* Lawrence Conant  
Martha Bauer  
Linda Tafel

*SHS Representative:* Lissa Dirrim

### COMMITTEE ON INQUIRY

*Chair:* Duane Beougher  
Barbara Cullen  
Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mitchell  
Rev. Jane Siebert  
Rev. Richard Tafel

### BOARD OF MEDIATION

*Chair:* Vice President, Swedenborgian Church  
Rev. Paul Martin  
Rev. Kathy Speas  
Kurt Fekete  
Margaret Dwyer

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE NATIONAL CHURCH WASHINGTON D.C.

(1889 Journal, Minute 48; 1895 Journal, Minute 92; See Convention Bylaws, Art. XIX.)

James Erickson, MN, *Chair*  
Susan Baumgarten, MD  
Lawrence Conant, MA  
Deane Currie, PA  
Sandy Degi, CO  
Christine Laitner, MI  
Rev. Renee Machiniak, MI

Pamela Selensky, NY  
Gloria Toot, OH  
Rev. Richard Tafel, DC  
Rev. Kenneth Turley, ME  
Rev. Lee Woofenden, MA

**BOARD OF MANAGERS OF THE WAYFARERS CHAPEL**

*(In 1983 the General Council set the number of elected members of the Board at six (6). Three (3) must be from the Pacific Coast Association.)*

- Chair:* Jeanette Hille 2007 (1)  
*Secretary:* Rev. Jane Siebert  
*Treasurer:* Jennifer Lindsay  
*Exec. Comm. Member:* Rev. Erni Martin 2007 (2)  
*Members at Large:* Carla Abler-Erickson 2005 (1)  
Merle Lundberg 2005 (\*)  
Nancy Doyle 2006 (1)  
*Ex-Officio Members:* President of the Pacific Coast Association  
(PCA Rep. Jennifer Lindsay)  
President, Swedenborgian Church  
Chapel Ministers (*w/o vote*)  
Chapel Administrator (*w/o vote*)  
*Emeritus Members:* Phyllis Bosley  
Rev. David Johnson  
Betsy Young

**STRUCTURE REVIEW COMMITTEE**

- Chair:* Marjory Leas  
Barbara Halle

**COMMITTEE ON AMENDMENTS**

- Chair:* Rev. Dr. George F. Dole  
Mary Crenshaw

**INVESTMENT COMMITTEE**

- Chair:* John Perry  
Rev. Robert Bossdorf  
Lawrence Conant  
Dan Dyer  
Leo Serrano  
Jane Siebert  
Peter Toot  
*Emeritus:* Adolph T. Liebert  
*Ex-officio:* President, Swedenborgian Church

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

*Convention By-laws, Article XVI. According to Minute 91 of the 1928 Convention, the Nominating Committee is to publish its report in the New Church Messenger at least three weeks before Convention.*

*Chair:* Steve Thomas, Canada 2005  
 Mary Crenshaw, MI 2006  
 Laurie Turley, ME 2007  
 Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mitchell, PCA 2008  
 Michelle Huffman, GA 2009

**RETIREMENT COMMITTEE**

*Established as a standing committee of the General Council in January 1981 (min. 18g), then named "Pension Plan Committee" and re-named in June 1982 (min. 5D). In addition to administering and serving as trustees of the Retirement Plans adopted in June 1982, its duties are to administer the proceeds of Convention's Permanent Pension Fund (1975 Journal, Fund 37) in accordance with the stated purpose of the Fund.*

*Chair:* Rev. Susannah Currie 2005  
 Gretchen Henn 2006  
 Ian McIntosh 2007

**AMERICAN NEW CHURCH SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION**

*President:* James Erickson  
*Vice-President:* Everett Scholfield  
*Secretary:* Betty Yenetchi  
*Treasurer:* Deane Currie  
*Publications Chair:* Rev. Ken Turley  
*Teaching Aids Chair:* Eric Hoffman  
*Outreach Chair:* Rachel Lyn Rumson  
*Nominating Committee:* Karen Conger

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**CENTRAL OFFICE REVIEW COMMITTEE**

*Chair:* Jim Erickson  
Chris Laitner  
Lawrence Conant  
Gloria Toot

**NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF NEW CHURCH WOMEN**

*President:* Miriam Allen  
*First Vice President:* Amy Little  
*Second Vice President:* Katie Shelley  
*Secretary:* Katie Shelley  
*Treasurer:* Margaret Kraus  
*Mite Box Chair:* Missy Sommer  
*Religious Chair:* Rev. Sarah Buteux  
*Publications Chair:* Nan Paget  
*Round Robin Chair:* Merilee Phinney  
*Nominating Committee:* Rosemary Brown-Moore 2005  
Juliet Cunningham 2006  
Gloria Costello 2007  
Betsy Coffman 2008

**REPRESENTATIVES TO THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF  
CHURCHES**

*The President of the Swedenborgian Church, with the counsel and advice of the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers, shall make the various appointments of the delegation to the National Council of Churches, and then they shall be confirmed by the General Council.*

*Faith and Order Commission:* Rev. Marlene Laughlin  
*Representative:* MaryAnn Fischer

**TRUSTEES OF THE BUILDING FUND**

*The “Trustees of the Building Fund of the New Church of America” were appointed by action of the General Convention in 1875, “for the purpose of aiding societies in erecting New Church places of worship in America; provided the assistance given shall be in the form of loans secured by mortgage on real estate, at such rate of interest and such time and mode of payment as the Trustees may in their discretion from time to time deem best.”*

*(1875 Journal, Minute 107 and 1910 Journal, Minute 55)*

*The purposes of this Fund were broadened in 1946 “to aid New Church societies in purchasing, remodeling, or erecting places of worship, Sunday School Quarters and Parish Halls in America.”*

*(1946 Journal, Minute 42 and 1947 Journal, Minute 38)*

*At the 1956 Convention, Article XVIII. of the Bylaws was amended to provide for a Board of Trustees appointed by the General Council.*

*(1956 Journal, Minute 9)*

*In 1983, Standing Resolution # 10 was adopted, enabling the Fund to “make low-interest loans to any minister on the Active Roll of the Council of Ministers, for a down payment on a residence, provided there is demonstration of practicality and need...”*

*(1983 Journal, Minute 12)*

*Chair:* Sue Burns  
John C. Perry  
Betsy Lau

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## COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

*All ministers of the Swedenborgian Church, twelve constituting a quorum*

<i>Chair:</i>	Rev. Eric Allison 2007
<i>Secretary:</i>	Rev. Skuli Thorhallsson
<i>Executive Committee:</i>	The Chair The Secretary Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake 2005 Rev. Junchol Lee 2006 Rev. Jonathan Mitchell 2007
<i>Ex-officio without vote:</i>	President, Swedenborgian Church

## MINISTERIAL PLACEMENT COMMITTEE

*This is the sole proper channel of communication for churches or groups seeking to employ a minister, and for ministers seeking employment.*

<i>Chair:</i>	Christine M. Laitner
<i>Other Members:</i>	Rev. Eric Allison Rev. Jim Lawrence

## COMMITTEE ON ADMISSION INTO THE MINISTRY

<i>Chair:</i>	Chair, Council of Ministers
<i>Other Members:</i>	Rachel Lyn Rumson (2005) Rev. Kit Billings (2006) Rev. Susan Turley (2007) President, Swedenborgian Church

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE

	Rev. Susan Turley (2005)
	Rev. John Maine (2006)
	Rev. Kim Hinrichs (2007)

## COMMITTEE ON WORSHIP

<i>Chair:</i>	Rev. Susannah Currie Rev. Eric Allison Rev. Sarah Buteux Rev. Ken Turley Joe Machiniak
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## ETHICS COMMITTEE

<i>Chair:</i>	Rev. Dr. Dorothea Harvey Rev. Robert McCluskey
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**HARVARD-RADCLIFFE CHAPLAINCY**

Rev. Sarah Buteux

**OUR DAILY BREAD**

Editor: Rev. Lee Woofenden

**COMMITTEE ON TRANSLATION**

Chair: Rev. Dr. George F. Dole

**MINISTERS' TRAVEL FUND**Rev. Eric Allison (*Chair*), Rev. Skuli Thorhallsson**COMMITTEE ON PROGRAM**

*The Chair and Secretary of the Council of Ministers and the pastor of the church where the Council is to meet.*

**CHAPLAIN ON YOUTH AND THE MILITARY**

Rev. Andrew Stinson

**SUB-COMMITTEE ON SUBSTANCE ABUSE**Patte LeVan (*Chair*), Betsy Coffman, Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake**COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF THE ROLL**

*Chair:* Rev. Eric Allison  
Gloria Toot  
Rev. Skuli Thorhallsson

**MISCONDUCT DETERMINATION BOARD**

Rev. Dr. George Dole  
Rev. Erni Martin  
Rev. Andy Stinson  
Rev. Susan Turley  
Rev. Deborah Winter

**COMPENSATION AND CAREER CONCERNS  
FOR CHURCH AND CLERGY (5C'S)**

Rev. Eric Allison  
Lawrence Conant  
Christine M. Laitner  
Rev. Skuli Thorhallsson



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**SWEDENBORGIAN HOUSE OF STUDIES**

(Incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
on May 17, 1881, as the New Church Theological School)

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

<i>Chair:</i>	Dr. Robert Reber
<i>Vice Chair:</i>	John Titus
<i>Clerk:</i>	Rev. Robert Leas
<i>Assistant Clerk:</i>	Rev. Dr. Rachel Rivers
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Garfield Byrd
<i>Dean SHS:</i>	Rev. Dr. James Lawrence
<i>Library &amp; Archives Committee Chair:</i>	Alan Thomsen
<i>Faculty Development Committee Chair:</i>	Dr. Robert Reber
<i>Executive Committee:</i>	The Chair
	The Vice Chair
	Clerk
	Treasurer
	The Dean of Swedenborgian House of Studies, ex-officio with vote
	The President of the Swedenborgian Church, ex-officio with vote

**ELECTED MEMBERS**

*Term Expires 2005:* Rev. Dr. Rachel Rivers\*\*  
Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mitchell\*  
Alan Thomsen\*\*  
John Titus\*

*Term Expires 2006:* William Coffman\*\*  
Rev. Robert Leas\*  
MaryAnn Thorhallsson\*\*  
Herb Ziegler\*

*Term Expires 2007:* Garfield Byrd\*\*  
Rev. Young Min Kim\*  
Dr. Robert Reber\*\*  
Rev. Andrew Stinson\*

**EX-OFFICIO**

*President, Swedenborgian Church:* Christine M. Laitner (with vote)  
*Dean, Swedenborgian House of Studies:* Rev. Dr. James Lawrence (with vote)  
\*Trustees elected by Representative Class      \*\*Trustees elected by At-Large Class

## **ROLL OF MINISTERS**

*Active (ordained by and serving within the context of the Swedenborgian Church)*

### **ACTIVE-HOME FIELD**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presently Serving</b>	<b>Ordination</b>
Allison, Eric J. N.	Puget Sound Church (Puget Sound, WA)	July 3, 1977
Baxter, Kevin K.	Urbana University Center for Applied Ethics	July 12, 2004
Billings, John K.	Kemper Road Church (Cincinnati, OH)	June 25, 1972
Billings, Kit B.	Church of The Open Word (St. Louis, MO)	July 9, 1995
Bossdorf, Robert E.	Pastoral Counselor	June 1964; Inducted
Brugler, Ronald Paul		July 2, 1978

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presently Serving</b>	<b>Ordination</b>
Buteux, Sarah Lynn		June 29, 2001
Capon, Edwin Gould		Oct. 9, 1949
Cotton, Nadine	The New Church of Southwest Florida (Ft. Myers Beach, FL)	July 13, 1997
Currie, Susannah L.	Swedenborgian Church at Temenos Conference & Retreat Center	June 26, 1999
Dennis, Judith		July 3, 1988
Dole, George Frederick		June 16, 1960

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presently Serving</b>	<b>Ordination</b>
Foster, Theodore		June 21, 1964
Glowe, Matthew Samuel		July 22, 1973
Harvey, Dorothea Ward	General Pastor of The MA Association	June 29, 1975
Hinrichs, Kimberly M.	Swedenborgian House of Studies	July 8, 2003
Hoffman, Eric	Virginia Street Swedenborgian Church (St. Paul, MN)	June 28, 1992

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presently Serving</b>	<b>Ordination</b>
Keane, Donna Dee	Pastoral Psychotherapist	July 4, 1986
Kim, Solomon Young-Min	The Church of the Little Grain (Brooklyn, NY)	July 1, 2000
Korsten, C. Henry		July 4, 1986
Laakko, Randall Edward	Church of the Holy City (Wilmington, DE)	June 27, 1965
Lane, Alison		July 12, 2004

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presently Serving</b>	<b>Ordination</b>
Laughlin, Marlene K.	Wayfarers Chapel (Palos Verdes, CA)	July 4, 1986
Lawrence, James Franklin	Swedenborgian House of Studies	July 1, 1984
Lee, Jaikoo E.		June 30, 1968
Lee, Jun-chol	Swedenborg Chapel (Cleveland, OH)	July 1, 2000
LeVan, Theodore J.		July 3, 1983

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presently Serving</b>	<b>Ordination</b>
Machiniak, Renée	Royal Oak Church (Royal Oak, MI)	July 9, 1995
Maine, John Edward	Church of the Holy City (Edmonton, Alberta)	June 29, 2001
Martin, Paul	Mosswood Hollow	July 2, 1982
McCluskey, Robert E.		July 1, 1984
Mitchell, Jonathan	Chapel Minister Wayfarers Chapel (Palos Verdes, CA)	July 13, 1997
Perry, F. Gardiner		July 1, 1979

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presently Serving</b>	<b>Ordination</b>
Poole, Jerome Alden		June 27, 1965
Pults, Stephen J.		July 5, 1987
Rienstra, David Lee		July 2, 1978
Rivers, Rachel	Swedenborgian Church (San Francisco, CA)	July 3, 1983
Seward, Doyle Adam, Jr.		June 26, 1998
Siebert, Jane	New Jerusalem Church (Pretty Prairie, KS)	July 12, 2004



<b>Name</b>	<b>Presently Serving</b>	<b>Ordination</b>
Sloan, Donna		July 5, 1987
Sonmor, David		July 4, 1986
Speas, Katherine		July 12, 2004
Stinson, Andrew D.	Elmwood Church (on military leave)	June 26, 1999
Tafel, F. Robert		June 21, 1964
Tafel, Harvey Alan	Administrator Wayfarers Chapel (Palos Verdes, CA)	June 25, 1967

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presently Serving</b>	<b>Ordination</b>
Tafel, Jr., Richard Hugo	New Church of SW FL (Ft. Myers Beach)	July 15, 1962
Tafel, Richard L.		Jan. 22, 1988; Inducted
Thorhallsson, Skuli	Chrysalis Fellowship (DeLand, FL)	July 3, 1988
Turley, Kenneth Owen	Fryeburg New Church (Fryeburg, ME)	June 29, 1985
Turley, Susan	Department of Veterans Affairs, Palo Alto Health Care System	June 29, 1980
Wake, Wilma	Swedenborgian Church (Portland, MA)	July 1, 1990

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presently Serving</b>	<b>Ordination</b>
Wheaton, Gladys	Church of the Open Word (Newtonville, MA)	June 29, 1980
Winter, Deborah	House Next Door Children and Family Ministry	July 3, 1988
Woofenden, Lee	New Jerusalem Church (Bridgewater, MA)	June 30, 1996
Woofenden, William		June 28, 1953
Yenetchi, Carl	LaPorte New Church (LaPorte, IN)	June 29, 1980
Zacharias, Eric John		June 24, 1951

## **RETIRED**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presently Serving</b>	<b>Ordination</b>
Johnson, David Powell		June 27, 1943
Lee, Chungsun		July 15, 1962
Martin, Ernest Oliver		June 28, 1953
Reddekopp, Erwin Diedrich		June 28, 1953
Tremblay, Paul		July 22, 1973

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presently Serving</b>	<b>Ordination</b>
Turley, Owen Thiel		June 22, 1947
Zacharias, Paul Bernard		Sept. 23, 1956

**FOREIGN FIELD**  
*\*\*ordaining pastor*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presently Serving</b>	<b>Ordination</b>
Aquino, Tomas		Aug. 5, 1956
Bruley, Claude	LaPresle Centre	June 30, 1982
Cheon, Min-Heui	Korea	July 1, 1997
Duvivier, Patrick	France	July 2, 1982
Easton-Gilhooly, Kathleen		July 2, 1989
Franklin, Ivan D.		June 27, 1971

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presently Serving</b>	<b>Ordination</b>
Heger, Pavel	Czech Missionary	July 9, 1994
Kuniyeda, Kin'ichi	Tokyo New Church	July 9, 1995
Mania, Christian		July 2, 1982
Noack, Thomas	Neue Kirche de deutschen Schweiz	Oct. 30, 1994 <i>added to the Roll of Ministers June 26, 2001</i>
Rizq, Raghil Khalil		July 15, 1962
Torita, Kei	Tokyo Church	July 3, 1983

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presently Serving</b>	<b>Ordination</b>
Vidil, Jean	Lausanne, Switzerland	Oct. 25, 1987

**ROLL OF LAY LEADERS**  
**ACTIVE**

(consecrated by and serving within the context of the Swedenborgian Church)

<b>Name</b>	<b>Presently Serving</b>	<b>Consecration</b>
Coffman, Betsy	Urbana Church	1998
Smith, Eldon	San Diego Church	1990
Thomas, Steve	Kitchener Church	1994



## AUXILIARY AND ASSOCIATED BODIES

*The following organizations are legally independent bodies in which the Swedenborgian Church has an interest.*

### MASSACHUSETTS NEW CHURCH UNION

50 Quincy Street, Cambridge, MA 02138-3013 (617) 864-4552

*President:* Herb Ziegler

### IUNGERICH PUBLICATION FUND

The Fund to be used for supplying gratuitously the theological works of Emanuel Swedenborg to the Protestant clergy of the United States and Canada, including theological students and instructors in theology (see *Journal* 1882, pp. 89-97).

*Treasurer:* Lawrence Conant

*Trustees:* Members of General Council

### TRUSTEES OF THE RICE LEGACY

**Rice Fund - Legacy of Dr. Chas. D. Rice**, of Maine, received in 1858; bequeathed to “*the leader of the Boston Society, Sampson Reed (pres.) or to his successor in office;*” “*income to be expended in publishing and gratuitously distributing the writings of Swedenborg, New Church tracts, or such other New Church uses as the General Convention of the New Jerusalem may determine upon...at those regular meetings of the same..held in Boston.*” (For full wording of the clause under which this trust is operated, see 1936 *Journal*, Minute 63).

By Resolution adopted by Convention in Wellesley in 1980, the income, until otherwise ordered, is to be applied to fitting up, replenishing, caring for, and maintenance of the library of the New Church Theological School. (See 1980 *Journal*, Minute 36).

*Secretary / Treasurer:* Walter C. Chapin

### TRUSTEES OF THE ROTCH LEGACY

**Rotch Fund-Legacy of Lydia S. Rotch**, received September 24, 1863, \$14,250. Held by a self-perpetuating board of Trustees. To be used and applied at their joint discretion for the benefit of the Swedenborgian Church. (See 1866 *Journal*, pp. 119, 120; also, 1888, pgs. 42, 43).

*Trustees:* Walter C. Chapin, Dr. Alice B. Skinner, Rev. Dr. F. Gardiner Perry

### TRUSTEES OF THE GRAY LEGACY

**Wesley N. Gray Fund** - Legacy held by three Trustees appointed by the Probate Court of Middlesex County, MA, on joint recommendation of the executive committee of the Boston Society, the Mass. New Church Union, and the General Convention. The Trustees are instructed to expend the net income for "*such church and missionary uses, preferably in Massachusetts first, then in the United States of America, and then in the whole world, as shall seem to them most deserving and most useful towards the growth of the New Jerusalem Church;*" and to render "*a report of said fund and of the proceedings under it...each year to the said General Convention*" for printing its *Journal*.

*Secretary / Treasurer:* Rafael M. J. Guiu  
*Trustees:* George R. Chapin  
Bobby Buchanan

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**THE GENERAL CONVENTION OF  
THE NEW JERUSALEM IN THE U.S.A., INC.  
DBA / THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH**

**MINUTES  
FROM THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTIETH SESSION  
SAINT JEROME COLLEGE  
WATERLOO, ONTARIO**

**Saturday, July 10, 2004**

Business Session I

The General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America, Inc., (dba/ The Swedenborgian Church) came together on Saturday, July 10, 2004 at St. Jerome College, in Waterloo, Ontario. This was the one hundred eightieth Convention.

- 1. Opening Celebration:** A welcoming celebration, including entertainment by local church members, took place. Welcoming addresses were given by Bruce Hemmerich, the President of the Church of the Good Shepherd, and Steve Thomas, the Vice President of the Canada Association. There was a surprise guest appearance by “Emanuel Swedenborg” portrayed by the Rev. Paul Zacharias.
- 2. President’s Address:** The Rev. Ron Brugler gave his sixth and final address as President of the denomination. He thanked various individuals and groups for their support and highlighted some of the accomplishments of the past six years. He spoke about the new opportunities for learning from brothers and sisters in the New Church around the world and how we are taking advantage of that. And he shared an experience while at the British Conference that reminded him that our spiritual journey is not always smooth nor is the life of the church. He emphasized that God is there to help us and through communicating, sharing and listening, we can make it work.

Meeting was recessed.

**Sunday, July 11, 2004**Business Session II

- 3. Call to Order:** The Rev. Ron Brugler, President of the Swedenborgian Church, declared the 2004 Convention session open at 2:00 P.M. Sunday, July 11, 2004.
- 4. Singing of the Articles:** Article IV, Section I of the Constitution and Article II, Section 2 of the By-laws, which are required to be read at the opening of the Convention session, were first read by the secretary and then sung by the choir, which has become a tradition.
- 5. Credentials Committee:** Herb Ziegler (Massachusetts Association) Chair, Stella Podmore (Western Canada Conference), and the Rev. Harvey Tafel (Pacific Coast Association) were appointed to the Credentials Committee. Association secretaries and presidents were directed to give their delegate lists to the committee so the delegate book could be signed.
- 6. Parliamentarian:** The Rev. Dick Tafel was appointed Parliamentarian.
- 7. General Council Report:** Gloria Toot, Recording Secretary, made the following report: General Council met July 10, from 9 am till 4:30 pm. They heard the President's report, during which they discussed the vulnerability of small churches to embezzlement and other crimes, and how to best protect ourselves. He urged General Council to study this issue. They also heard the Vice President's report, the Secretary's report, the Treasurer's report and the Council of Minister's report. They approved the expenditures charged against the various funds after receiving a chart outlining what these funds were, and acted on various budget concerns. The Rev. Steve Shannon, Interim Minister of the New York Church, spoke to them about his ministry at that church and about interim ministry in general. They were also addressed by Bob Keller of Urbana University who spoke to us about their "Will to Excel" Campaign. The fall General Council meeting will take place the first weekend of November at Wayfarer's Chapel.
- 8. Treasurer's Report:** Larry Conant, Treasurer, referred to the Treasurer's report printed in the Advance Reports. He spoke about the unrestricted

deficit, which this past year was a little over \$285,000. If this continues, he stated, we will go through our money very quickly. General Council is acutely aware of this and has taken steps to lower the deficit in this year's budget, but due to some legal situations we will be running a large deficit this year as well. Our job is to grow the assets, not to deplete them.

**9. Vice-President's report:** Chris Laitner, Vice-President, gave her report as printed in the advanced reports. She then explained that the denomination, the Massachusetts Association and a named member of the Boston Church are plaintiffs in a lawsuit against the Boston Society of the New Jerusalem, Bostonview Corporation, Edward McKenzie and Thomas Kennedy. The suit will come to trial in September. Boston Church had included in its Constitution a dissolution clause stating that if the society should dissolve, its assets would come to Convention to be held in escrow to be used establish a new Boston area society which would take the place of the one that dissolved. Chris explained how the lawsuit revolving around how the dissolution of the Boston society came about, beginning with concerns brought to the denomination by some members of the Boston society. Following questions and answers, the delegates joined in prayer.

**10. Nominating Committee Report:** It was noted that John Smailer resigned from General Council at the pre-convention meeting, due to health reasons. He had 1 year left in his term. Linda Kraus, Chair of the Nominating Committee gave the following report of the Nominating Committee:

*Vice-President:*

*1 year term*

*Jim Erickson (Illinois)*

*Recording Secretary:*

*1 year term*

*Gloria Toot (Ohio)*

*Treasurer:*

*1 year term*

*Lawrence Conant (Massachusetts)*

***General Council- Lay Person:******3 year term******Barb Cullen (Canada)******Sharon Williams (Western Canada)******General Council – Minister:******3 year term******Rev. Renee Machiniak (Michigan)******General Council – Layperson:******1 year unexpired term******Deane Curry (Mid Atlantic)******Communication Support Unit:******3 year term******Carla Friedrich (Pacific Coast Association)******Education Support Unit:******3 year term******Nancy Freestone (Pacific Coast Association)******Financial and Physical Resource Support Unit:******3 year term******Jennifer Lindsay (Pacific Coast Association)******Information Support Unit:******3 year term******Bob Hinrichs (Pacific Coast Association)******Ministerial Support Unit:******3 year term******(Two to be elected)******Karen Conger (Pacific Coast Association)******Carl Blenkin (Pacific Coast Association)******Nominating Committee:******(Two to be nominated, one to be elected)******5 year term******Michelle Huffman******Chuck Winter (Ohio)***

*Committee on Admission to the Ministry:  
3 year term  
Rev. Sue Turley (Pacific Coast Association)*

*Board of Trustees, SHS:  
Rev. Andy Stinson (Massachusetts)  
Rev. Young Min Kim (New York)*

It was moved, seconded and voted to receive the report of the Nominating Committee.

**11. Council of Ministers' Report:** The Rev. Skuli Thorhallsson, Secretary of the Council of Ministers reported. They received the reports of their officers and voted on their new officers. The newly elected chair is the Rev. Eric Allison, the Rev. Skuli Thorhallsson is Secretary, Executive Committee member is the Rev. Jonathan Mitchell, the Nominating Committee member is the Rev. Kim Hinrichs, and Convention Preacher for 2006 is the Rev. Sue Turley. They deliberated on the Same Sex Marriage Statement, made various recommendations which will follow and also voted to recommend that a minister be appointed to the Augmentation Fund Committee.

**12: Ordination Recommendations:** The Council of Ministers presented the following motions to Convention:

At her own request, supported by the approval of her Plan of Ministry by the Council of Ministers, and on the recommendation of the Committee on Admission into the Ministry, the Council of Ministers recommended that **Alison Lane** who has completed a course of study at Pacific School of Religion and the Swedenborg House of Studies, be ordained into our ministry, after ordination, to be placed on our Roll of Ministers. This motion was seconded by the Rev. Eric Zacharias. Motion was carried by unanimous vote

At his own request, supported by the approval of his Plan of Ministry by the Council of Ministers, and on the recommendation of the Committee on Admission into the Ministry, the Council of Ministers recommended that **Kevin Baxter** who has completed a course of study at Pacific School of Religion and the Swedenborg House of Studies, be ordained into our ministry, after ordination, to be placed on our Roll of Ministers. This motion was seconded by Chuck Winter. Motion was carried by unanimous vote.

At her own request, supported by the approval of her Plan of Ministry by the Council of Ministers, and on the recommendation of the Committee on Admission into the Ministry, the Council of Ministers recommended that **Jane Siebert** who has completed a course of study at Friends University and the Swedenborg House of Studies, be ordained into our ministry, after ordination, to be placed on our Roll of Ministers. This motion was seconded by Vernon Kraus. Motion was carried by unanimous vote.

At his request and upon certification for induction by the Committee on Admission to the Ministry, the Council of Ministers recommended to the General Convention that **Rich Tafel** having been ordained in the American Baptist Church and after preparation recognized as adequate, accepting the doctrines of the New Church and expressing allegiance to the Constitution of the General Convention, be inducted into our ministry and that this service of induction be held at this session of the General Convention, his name after induction to be placed on our Roll of Ministers. This motion was seconded by Andy Stinson. Motion was carried by unanimous vote.

It was moved that Doug Moss be an authorized candidate for ministry. This motion was seconded by Eli Dale. Motion was carried by unanimous vote.

**13. Denomination Statement on Same Sex Marriage:** A Denomination Statement on Same Sex Marriage that had been recommended for adoption by the Council of Ministers was read and discussed.

It was moved and seconded to amend the wording of the last sentence to delete “gay and lesbian people” to read “all people”. After discussion and with the agreement of the person who seconded the motion, the wording was finally changed to “people irrespective of sexual orientation”. Motion carried

It was moved to also change the phrase in the middle paragraph to read “couples irrespective of sexual orientation” to agree with the phrase in the last sentence. Motion carried.



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*A Denomination Statement on Same Sex Marriage*

*With humility and prayerful willingness to be led by the Lord and in love toward the neighbor, The Swedenborgian Church of North America, a Christ-centered church that affirms religious pluralism recognizes the goodness of love in many forms. Wherever love is, God is there too... for “for God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.” (1 John 4:16) We also affirm our fundamental human right of freedom of choice; we affirm the right of each individual to choose his or her life partner and do so within a committed relationship based in love and faith toward the Lord, and in love and fidelity toward one another. We affirm that in a democratic and free society adult persons should be free to enjoy the same basic legal rights within a committed and faithful relationship, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race religion or social status. We affirm that the presence of hatred discrimination, homophobia and selfishness are against God’s will, as we perceive the Divine with and amongst us.*

*Therefore, we do so declare and affirm that couples, irrespective of sexual orientation, deserve the right to legally join themselves together in a union of love called marriage.*

*We do this with the conviction that marriage entails life-long mutual trust and strict fidelity to one partner for better or for worse, and the church will offer its ongoing support to the couples it has united. We acknowledge that there are differences of opinion within our church regarding usage of the term “marriage” for same-gendered couples, and we affirm the goodness of a diversity of opinion. As members of the Lord’s New Church on earth (specifically within General Convention), whose hearts enjoy deep affections for the truth of God found in the Holy Bible as illuminated by the beautiful doctrines of Emanuel Swedenborg, we affirm the importance of continued good scholarship and deep, careful, spiritually sensitive, compassionate thinking and dialogue. No individual or congregation will be required to bless same-sex marriages in the Swedenborgian Church. The Church respects the judgment of those who decide to bless these relationships by providing such rites for use within the Church. The Swedenborgian Church, therefore, lends its support to ministers and congregations who, as a result of their own discernment processes,*

*decide to offer their services and sanctuaries to people irrespective of sexual orientation who wish to join themselves together in holy marriages.*

Following lengthy discussion and statements by several members of the study task force, it was moved and seconded to adopt the amended statement as a Denominational Statement. Motion carried: 75 in favor, 13 against.

- 14. Roll of Ministers:** There was a moment of silence for the Rev. Robert Kirven who entered the spiritual world this past year. The Council of Ministers voted to remove Bob Kirven from the roll of ministers and added his name to the roll of former ministers deceased. They voted, (by unanimous vote) to remove, at his own request, Steve Ellis from the Roll of Ministers and added his name to the Roll of Former Ministers (severed). On the floor of Convention, it was moved, seconded and voted to remove Steve Ellis from the roll of ministers (severed). The moment of silence acted as the vote to place Robert Kirven on the roll of former ministers, deceased.
- 15. Nominations from the Floor:** All offices were opened, in turn, for nominations from the floor. Hearing none, the President declared the offices closed, in turn.
- 16. Additional Nominating Committee Report:** According to the By-laws, because Jim Erickson is running unopposed for the Vice-presidency, his resignation from General Council is automatic. Therefore, the nominating committee has nominated the following:

*General Council – Layperson:  
2 year unexpired term  
Bette MacDonnell (Pacific Coast Association)*

- 17. Nominations from the Floor:** The floor was opened for nomination for the two year unexpired term to General Council. Hearing none, the nomination was closed.

**Monday, July 12, 2004**

Business Session III

- 18. Head Teller Appointed:** Linda Tafel was appointed Head Teller
- 19. Mini Course Announcement:** Susan Hemmerich, Chair of the Education Support Unit made announcements regarding the mini courses scheduled for later this day.
- 20. Credentials Committee Report:** Herb Ziegler, Chair reported.

<i>Association/Group</i>	<i>Entitled</i>		<i>Present</i>	
	<i>Ministers</i>	<i>Delegates</i>	<i>Ministers</i>	<i>Del-</i>
<i>egates</i>				
Canada	1	11	1	11
Illinois	3	13	2	4
Kansas	1	10	1	6
Maine	4	16	2	2
Massachusetts	8	14	4	5
Members-at-Large	0	0	0	0
Michigan	1	8	1	8
Middle Atlantic	3	12	1	6
New York	3	6	1	4
Ohio	3	9	1	9
Pacific Coast	16	36	7	13
Southeast	4	7	4	3
Western Canada	5	22	1	4
Youth League	0	2	0	2
Bayside, NY	0	0	0	0
Ministers unaffiliated	0	0	0	0
with Associations				
Officers & General Council	<u>4</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>8</u>
	56	175	30	85

It was moved, seconded and voted to accept the Credential Committee Report.

**CERTIFIED DELEGATES AND MINISTERS****BAYSIDE, NY****Ministers - 0****Delegates - 0****CANADA ASSOCIATION****Ministers - 1**

Paul Zacharias

**Delegates - 11**

Barbara Cullen, Lorraine Cuthbertson, Joyce Heck, Bruce Hemmerich,  
Peggy Heuss, Cathy Lauber, Joan McGavin, Fran McIntosh, Jean Russell,  
Steve Thomas, Pat Zacharias

**WESTERN CANADA CONFERENCE****Ministers - 1**

John Maine

**Delegates - 4**

Hilda Epp, Gloria Lipski, Stella Podmore, Sharon Williams

**ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION****Ministers - 2**

Kit Billings, Eric Hoffman

**Delegates - 4**

Barbara Halle, Gordon Meyer, Pat Tukos, Ann Weldy

**KANSAS ASSOCIATION****Ministers - 1**

Eric Zacharias

**Delegates - 6**

Vivian Bright, Linda Kraus, Margaret Kraus, Vernon Kraus, Jr., Alison Lane,  
Veneta Lane

**MAINE ASSOCIATION****Ministers - 2**

George Dole, Wilma Wake

**Delegates - 2**

Eli Dale, Laurie Turley

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**MASSACHUSETTS ASSOCIATION**

**Ministers - 4**

Sarah Buteux, Dorothea Harvey, Andrew Stinson, F. Robert Tafel

**Delegates - 5**

Denyse Daurat, Andrew Dole, Gretchen Frauenberger, Leah Goodwin,  
Herbert Ziegler

**MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION**

**Ministers - 1**

Renée Machiniak

**Delegates - 8**

Barbara Boxwell, Mary Crenshaw, Margaret Dwyer, Matthew Fleming, Alan  
Goldstein, Marjory Leas, Joseph Machiniak, Barbara Tourangeau

**MIDDLE ATLANTIC ASSOCIATION**

**Ministers - 1**

Susannah Currie

**Delegates - 6**

Susan Baumgarten, Polly Baxter, Deane Currie, Carol Lawson, Everett  
Scholfield, Rich Tafel

**NEW YORK ASSOCIATION**

**Ministers - 1**

Solomon Young Min Kim

**Delegates - 4**

Soon Nam Park-Hermann, Wan Soo Kim, Betty Lowe, Hwa Soon Yi

**OHIO ASSOCIATION**

**Ministers - 1**

John Billings

**Delegates - 9**

Kevin Baxter, Betsy Coffman, Bill Coffman, Dick Sommer, Melissa Sommer,  
Pat Sommer, Edmund Swiger, June Swiger, Peter Toot

**PACIFIC COAST ASSOCIATION**

**Ministers - 7**

Eric Allison, David Johnson, James Lawrence,  
Paul Martin, Jonathan Mitchell, Rachel Rivers, Sue Turley

**Delegates - 13**

Nancy Apple, Dave Brown, Lissa Dirrim, Elizabeth Gutfeldt, Patte LeVan, Merle Lundberg, Patricia Lundberg, Bette McDonnell, Doug Moss, Nan Paget, Lana Sandahl, Lorraine Sando, Alan Thomsen

**SOUTHEAST ASSOCIATION****Ministers - 4**

Nadine Cotton, Richard Tafel, Skuli Thorhallsson, Deborah Winter,

**Delegates - 3**

Joyce Fekete, Carla Friedrich, Linda Tafel

**SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH YOUTH LEAGUE****Delegates - 2**

Kurt Fekete, Betsy Lau

**GENERAL COUNCIL****Ministers - 4**

Ronald Brugler, Harvey Tafel, Ken Turley, Lee Woofenden

**Councilors - 8**

Duane Beougher, Lawrence Conant, Sandy Degi, James Erickson, Christine Laitner, Pamela Selensky, Gloria Toot, Charles Winter

- 21. Voting:** Linda Tafel, Head Teller, explained the ballots and the voting procedure. The first ballot for the nominating committee was distributed. It was then noticed that the first ballot for nominating committee contained an error. It should have said vote for one instead of vote for two. Since it needed to be a contested ballot, the chair ruled that any delegates having already spoiled the ballot could exchange it for a fresh one.

The Credentials Committee was discharged with thanks.

The second ballot, for the remaining offices, was distributed.

- 22. Presentation by Dr. Robert Head:** Dr. Robert Head, President of Urbana University spoke to the delegates. Last May they gave degrees to 274 graduates 150 years after the University's 1<sup>st</sup> commencement ceremony. This year President elect and honorary doctorate Christine Laitner gave the address. They have a record enrollment and are among the fastest growing universities in the state of Ohio. He spoke about the University's growth and the challenges that it faces, and also about the Center for Applied Ethics program. He spoke about the Capital

Campaign and its center piece, a 3.2 million Student Center. They are gratified to have reached the 2.2 million mark just one year into the five year campaign.

**23. Presentation by Chaplain (Capt.) Andy Stinson:** Chaplain Andy Stinson made a media presentation and talked about his position and experiences as Chaplain in the U.S. Army. He answered questions after the election results and received a standing applause.

**24. Election Report and Declaration:**

		<u>Ballots</u> <u>Cast</u>	<u>Votes</u> <u>Needed</u>	<u>Votes</u> <u>Received</u>
<b>Vice President</b> (1 year term)	Jim Erickson*	98	50	97
	Ken Turley	98	50	1
<b>Recording Secretary</b> (1 year term)	Gloria Toot*	98	50	98
<b>Treasurer</b> (1 year term)	Lawrence Conant*	100	51	98
	Barbara Boxwell	100	51	2
<b>General Council (Laypersons)</b> 3 year term (two to be elected)	Barbara Cullen*	99	50	94
	Sharon Williams*	99	50	92
2 year unexpired term (one to be elected)	Bette McDonnell*	98	50	98
1 year unexpired term (one to be elected)	Deane Currie*	98	50	98
<b>General Council (Minister)</b> 3 year term (one to be elected)	Rev. Renée Machiniak* <sup>97</sup>		49	95
	Rev. Dick Tafel	97	49	1
	Rev. Rich Tafel	97	49	1
<b>Communications Support Unit</b> 3 year term (one to be elected)	Carla Friedrich*	99	50	99
<b>Education Support Unit</b> 3 year term (one to be elected)	Nancy Freestone*	95	48	94
	Michelle Huffman	95	48	1
<b>Financial and Physical Resources Support Unit</b> 3 year term (one to be elected)	Jennifer Lindsay*	98	50	98

\*Declared elected

**Information Management Support Unit**

3 year term (one to be elected)	Robert Hinrichs*	98	50	98
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**Ministries Support Unit**

3 year term (two to be elected)	Karen Conger*	98	50	97
	Carl Blenkin*	98	50	94

**Nominating Committee**

5 year term (one to be elected)	Michelle Huffman*	101	51	59
	Chuck Winter	101	51	41
	Doug Moss	101	51	1

**Committee on Admission into the Ministry (Minister)**

1 year term (one to be elected)	Rev. Susan Turley*	100	51	100
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**Swedenborgian House of Studies Board (Nominees)**

3 year term (two to be elected)	Rev. Andy Stinson*	99	50	97
	Rev. Young Min Kim*	99	50	9

It was moved and seconded, following confirmation of the numbers of the ballot count, that the ballots be destroyed. Motion carried.

**25. Ordination Recommendation:** At her own request, supported by the approval of her Plan of Ministry by the Council of Ministers, and on the recommendation of the Committee on Admission into the Ministry, the Council of Ministers recommended that **Kathy Speas** who has completed a course of study at Pacific School of Religion and the Swedenborg House of Studies, be ordained into our ministry, after ordination, to be placed on our Roll of Ministers. This motion was seconded by Lorraine Sando. Motion was carried by unanimous vote.

**26. Report of the “Gathering of Leaves Conference”:** Jane Seibert and the other women present who were participants in the Conference of New Church Women last May, 2004, assembled in the front of the auditorium. Jane explained that women from Convention, the General Church, The Lord’s New Church and the British Conference gathered to share their connections. Laurie Turley and the Rev. Renée Machiniak spoke about their impressions of the conference. They are looking for a steering committee for next gathering in 2006.

**27. Communication Support Unit Report:** Carol Lawson, Chair and the other members of the support unit displayed the “Messenger” and current pamphlets and leaflets. She reported on the status of the current work of the support unit and on its future plans and possible



projects. They want to make sure the leaflets get into the pews, and would like to possibly get out a welcome card. They are asking for church histories including archival information. Publications are available through the Central Office.

- 28. Education Support Unit Report:** Susan Hemmerich reported the support unit is celebrating the fact that the seed money for Gathering Leaves came from Convention. They are celebrating the fact that the Youth Director, Kurt Fekete, is doing such a fantastic job. (Youth Director is under the auspices of EDSU) She noted that there are many graduates of the Swedenborgian Church Youth League (SCYL) who need a program for the 18 to 23 year old age group.

Katie Shelley made a report for the Transitions group stating that they continue to take a look at their mission statement and they hope to continue the goal to make a place for youth league graduates in the 18 to 23 year old age group. She reported on the two Transitions Retreats during the past year that were very successful.

- 29. Ministerial Support Unit:** Barb Halle gave the report in place of Karen Conger, Chair. The support unit continues to fulfill its mission. The Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake continues to serve in the position of Spiritual Ministries Consultant though the position is unfunded. They have not met face to face due to the budget restraints, but have had two conference calls so far in 2004. They will meet in Ft. Myers Beach in August. A main focus of the August meeting will be to find ways for churches to become self-sustaining.

- 30. Information Support Unit:** The Rev. Lee Woofenden, Chair, reported. Their main focus has been the development of the website, [www.swedenborg.org](http://www.swedenborg.org). Also an on-line Swedenborgian library is in the works. They are increasing the website's visibility in the search engines. They found we were getting over 20,000 hits a month and were astounded at the usage. The support unit has accomplished everything that was planned.

- 31. President Elect's Speech:** Chris Laitner, President Elect spoke about the president of Convention being a connecting piece in all of the activities of the denomination. The positive side is that there is a connecting voice and presence; the negative side is that any president is human and prone to human interpretation. The trick, she thinks, is in

continually working at maintaining perspective which she will attempt to do. She spoke about realizing the awesome responsibility of the president of Convention. She listed some goals such as establishing the Center for Applied Ethics at Urbana University and finding better ways of addressing the needs of isolated members. She wants to establish one shared outreach program that each of our churches, centers, and even individual members could support in some way for a year and she suggested, in this international year of the child, that we choose to focus on helping the children of the world. Each of our churches and centers, the denomination, and even individuals would identify one way, no matter how small, to assist the needs of children who are in difficult situations. It might be to join a community effort; it might be contribution of money or some kind of participation in a larger organization that helps children; it might be giving some time to assist as a volunteer in a school; it might be a mentoring position. There are a myriad of ways and each group or individual will choose a way that works best for them. At next summer's Convention, we'll share what we've done, and then identify another overarching, shared outreach use for the next year. It would be just a little thing, but it would be a point of connection for all of us – and it would certainly benefit children in need.

President Laitner then stated her mission statement to motivate our members to the broad spectrum of vital ministries in our Church and the mission of the Swedenborgian Church to support the work of its members in local and denominational venues. She asked for the support of everyone.

### **Tuesday, July 13, 2004**

#### Business Session IV

- 32. Association Discussion Groups:** The delegates broke into discussion groups according to Associations to discuss the several questions concerning ministry, financial priorities, etc. The results will be given to Cabinet and General Council for use in priority setting.
- 33. Personal Thank You:** The Rev. Eric Zacharias spoke to delegates about relationships among each of us. He thanked everyone for the warm welcome he has felt after a long absence. He suggested the daisy as the official Convention flower, explaining the symbolism in it.

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- 34. Personal Financial Challenge:** Lorraine Sando spoke to the delegates about her love for the church and then challenged them to make a donation for unrestricted funds to Convention reflecting their love for the church. She then passed her hat. The final tally for this impromptu collection was \$2800.00.
- 35. Rev. Ken Turley Report:** The Rev. Turley reported that there is a book available now entitled *Religion in Ohio* published for Ohio's 150th anniversary celebration. He also reported that due to the generous donations of a lot of people, he and his family will be attending the British Conference at the end of July. He thanked everyone sincerely for their help in making this possible. They will be performing there for the whole group at the Conference and a couple of mini courses.
- 36. Our Daily Bread:** The Rev. Lee Woofenden, Editor, reported that "Our Daily Bread" has received a face lift, including original art work on the covers. He asked for more sermons to be sent to him for publication.
- 37. Appreciations:** Chris Laitner presented Certificates of Appreciation to Linda Kraus for her work on the Nominating Committee, Susan Poole (who was absent) for her work on the Communication Support Unit, and Susan Hemmerich for her work on the Education Support Unit. The Rev. Ron Bugler presented Certificates of Appreciation to Peter Toot for his work on the Wayfarers' Chapel Board, the Rev. Harvey Tafel for his work on General Council, John Smailer (who was absent) for his work on General Council, Charles Winter for his work on General Council, Duane Beougher for his work on General Council and Chris Laitner for her work as Vice President.

Chris Laitner then presented the Rev. Brugler with a lovely plaque commemorating his years of service as Convention President, expressing deep appreciation on behalf of the denomination.

Gloria Toot then presented him with a Ronald P. "Bruiser" Brugler action figure, accompanied by much gaiety, as a token of love and appreciation from General Council.

- 38. Ordination Candidacy:** Doug Moss, Ordination Candidate, has only one more course until his course work is complete. He can then be ordained at the next Convention. In the meantime he will be working in the pastoral ministry to gain experience. Since there is no set rite for

this candidacy, the President called for anyone who desired to, to gather around him for prayer.

- 39. Recess for General Council Vote:** General Council convened eleven members and voted unanimously to elect the Rev. Andy Stinson and the Rev. Young Min Kim to the Board of Trustees of the Swedenborg House of Studies. It was noted that according to SHS by-laws, they did not have to convene a corporation meeting. Convention was declared back in session.

### Wednesday, July 14, 2004

#### Business Session V

- 40. Appreciation for Choir and Music Director:** Choir members and then the audience expressed their appreciation for the hard work Laurie Turley has done, as well as the work of Ken Turley, with a standing ovation.
- 41. Swedenborgian Church Youth League Report:** Kurt Fekete, Youth Director, reported that this year there were 23 teens attending Convention. And he is continually impressed with their talent and care of one another. Thanks to the generosity of the Church goes, there were more programs and retreats, reaching more youth this year as well as a Youth Worker Conference. He thanked EDSU and all of the various retreat leaders and ministers involved. The report was received with standing ovation. The Rev. Jun Chol Lee is the Youth Minister, President is Ben Currie, East Coast Officer is Miles Stroh (General Church), Central States officer is Erika Penabaker, West Coast Officer is Karen Degi, Canada Officer is Brittany Fleming and Clear Blue Sky Editor is Gabe Lipski.

Benjamin Sanford Curry, President of the SCYL presented a report for the teens. He thanked everyone for their support and reported on their five retreats and other activities.

- 42. Association Youth Challenge:** Since youth is the stated denominational priority in most polls, The Rev. Lee Woofenden presented a challenge to the Associations asking them to contribute \$5,000.00 to make up the increased youth work budget line.

If the amount were divided based on the per capita figures of each Association, the following figures would apply: Canada: \$315, Illinois: \$420, Kansas: \$308, Maine: \$501, Massachusetts: \$427, Michigan: \$238, Middle Atlantic: \$368, New York: \$172, Ohio: \$252, Pacific Coast: \$1,176, Southeast: \$189, and Western Canada Conference: \$718. In addition, the Massachusetts Association has already doubled their pledge and they hope to triple their share. They would like to challenge other Associations to do the same with their apportionments.

- 43. Mite Box:** The Women's Alliance has designated the Mite Box to go to the Bob Kirven Memorial Fund at the Swedenborg House of Studies.
- 44. Convention 2005:** Herb Zeigler, Trustee of SHS, extended an invitation to all to attend Convention 2005 to be held July 5-13 at Berkeley, CA. hosted by SHS and the churches in the Pacific Coast Association. It will be held at the Foothill College and Conference Center at University of California, Berkeley. Closest airports would be the Oakland or San Francisco.
- 45. Convention 2006:** Chuck Winter announced that the 2006 Convention will be at Urbana University, and issued an invitation for all to attend.
- 46. Johnny Appleseed Heritage Center:** Margery Leas reported on the outdoor drama and the Johnny Appleseed Heritage Center.
- 47. New Business:** There was no new business brought forth. It was stated that at any time during year a person has an idea or concern they want General Council to look at, they should contact the President or the appropriate support unit.
- 48. Adjournment:** Meeting was declared adjourned at the closing of the Bible at end of worship service following this session.

**CONVENTION PREACHERS SINCE 1959**

1959	Earnest O. Martin	Asilomar Conference Grounds, CA
1960	Owen Turley	Lake Forest, IL
1961	Calvin Turley	Washington, DC
1962	Richard Tafel	Pawnee Rock, KS
1963	Paul Zacharias	Miami Beach, FL
1964	Rollo Billings	Philadelphia, PA
1965	Brian Kingslake	Brocton-Bridgewater-Elmwood, MA
1966	Galen Unruh	Urbana, OH
1967	Eric Zacharias	Waterloo-Kitchener, Ontario, Canada
1968	George F. Dole	Windsor, Ontario, Canada
1969	Randall Laakko	Claremont, CA
1971	Erwin Reddekopp	Urbana, OH
1972	Ernest L. Frederick	Boston, MA
1973	Robert H. Kirven	Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
1974	Andre Diaconoff	Urbana, OH
1975	George McCurdy	Urbana, OH
1976	Richard H. Tafel, Jr.	Philadelphia, PA
1977	Dorothea Harvey	San Francisco, CA
1978	Ernest O. Martin	Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario, Canada
1979	Friedemann Horn	Urbana, OH
1980	Edwin G. Capon	Wellesely, MA
1981	Eric Allison	Urbana, OH
1982	Andre Diaconoff	Irvine, CA
1983	F. Robert Tafel	Wilmington, OH
1984	Ronald P. Brugler	Center Harbor, NH
1985	F. Gardiner Perry III	Windsor, Ontario, Canada
1986	Gladys Wheaton	Boone, NC
1987	Jaikoo E. Lee	Tacoma, WA
1988	David L. Rienstra	Newton, MA
1989	David P. Johnson	Urbana, OH
1990	Jerome A. Poole	Olds, Alberta, Canada
1991	Robert E. McCluskey	Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario, Canada
1992	Stephen J. Pulst	St. Louis, MO
1993	Richard M. Baxter	Wenham, MA
1994	George F. Dole	Arlington, VA
1995	Carl Yenetchi	San Francisco, CA
1996	Horand K. Gutfeldt	Urbana, OH
1997	Robert H. Kirven	Hutchinson, KS
1998	James F. Lawrence	Leesburg, FL
1999	J. Theodore Klein	Malibu, CA

2000	Paul Martin	Urbana, OH
2001	Renée Billings Machiniak	St. Paul, MN
2002	Paul Zacharias	Gorham, ME
2003	Ken Turley	Geneva, NY
2004	Wilma Wake	Kennebunk, ME

## MEMORIAL

### **Rev. Dr. Robert Hoover Kirven December 29, 1926 – January 9, 2004**

Robert Hoover Kirven came from St. Louis to Cambridge, Massachusetts in his late thirties after receiving a B.A from the University of Chicago and after years of professional involvement with printing, publishing and public relations. He earned a Ph.D. in History of Religion at Brandeis University and a B.D from the New Church Theological School and Andover Newton Theological School. He joined the NCTS faculty his senior year, was ordained in 1962 at the convention in Pawnee Rock Kansas and spent the rest of his career as a faculty member at the theological school, retiring in 1992 to move to Phoenix, Arizona with his wife of 48 years, Marian, to live near their two daughters, Diane and Margaret. During his long career he also served as president of the Swedenborg School of Religion from 1979 to 1985, as secretary of the Council of Ministers, the Committee on Worship, the Board of Missions and Department of Publication, the Sunday School Association Executive Committee, General Council, editor of the Messenger from 1965 to 1975 and as a long-term representative to the Faith and Order Commission of the National Council of Churches, among others.

### *Reminiscence*

“The neighbor is the good in others,” (*Heavenly Secrets* 2417:6), and Bob was one who constantly looked for the best in others. In those decades when Convention’s “doctrinalists” and “personalists” were openly at odds with each other, he served as interpreter of each to the other, disappointing those on both sides who wanted him to share in their disapproval. He was simply unwilling to retreat from his fair-mindedness into the weakness of partisanship. This same fair-mindedness informed his scholarship as well. The philosopher C.S. Pierce drew a sharp distinction between real reasoning, in which our reasoning leads to our conclusions, and “sham reasoning,” in which our conclusions control our reasoning. The severe discipline of doctoral research and writing fit Bob’s love of real reasoning like a glove, much to the benefit of SSR and the church. Day after day and year after year he kept discovering new things; and it was a blessing to have an office across the hall from his and to be the first to hear of so many of the. Like all of his other colleagues and his students, I could probably say that some of my best ideas were Bob’s.



Then there was the person known to his family and friends –sometimes struggling, sometimes lonely, always sensitive, never giving up, and winning through eventually to that gentleness and fundamental integrity for which he will long be remembered. Those who let him into their hearts have absorbed some measure of those qualities; and this is perhaps the subtlest and most abiding of his many legacies.

*Rev. Dr. George F. Dole*  
*Bath, Maine*

**REPORTS OF  
OFFICERS, BOARDS, COMMITTEES,  
SUPPORT UNITS AND ASSOCIATED BODIES**

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Dear Chris,

In less than two months time I'll be handing over the reins of the presidency to you. I am sure that you can understand that I do so with mixed emotions. On one hand, I will greatly miss this job. I've worked hard, have enjoyed traveling to our churches and meeting so many Swedenborgians, and I truly feel that in several areas I've been able to make some positive contributions to this denomination. But on the other hand, I am tired, on the verge of burning out, and I fear that many of my efforts have been in vain. And although I am the first to acknowledge that I spend way too much time at self-criticism, I am finding it more and more difficult to appreciate what good things God has helped me to do. I guess that this means that it is time for this transition to take place. I wish you well.

My mind keeps going back to a visit that I made to one of our churches that was facing a difficult challenge. One of the members emailed me before the meeting expressing her appreciation for the fact that I am an excellent cheerleader. She added that I have a talent for motivating groups to pull together and work as a team. But then she added, "But when you meet with us, I'd really prefer that you be honest."

I thought about this statement and quickly realized that this was not a criticism, but a plea for help. That congregation needed to take a hard look at some serious problems. I took this suggestion to heart, and believe that it really helped make that visit a positive one. I was honest with them, Chris. But I was still a "cheerleader" for them. I guess that I share this with you only to underscore the fact that it will serve you well to be both of these as you step into this job. The president must be honest and frank, and sometimes, a bit of bluntness is also beneficial at times. But cheerleading is also an integral part of the job. So one suggestion that I have for you is this. Never leave your pom-poms at home.

In light of this suggestion, I want to share with you that I believe that I am leaving you a denomination that is both stronger and weaker. My inner fear,

however, is that the times of weakness seem to be becoming all the more frequent. That might not be such a bad thing, though. Our teachings are pretty clear about the fact that one cannot address areas of concern until one sees them. So, if this is the truth (and I believe that it is) you are going to be very busy!

How are we stronger? And how can you be the “cheerleader” that we need you to be? Allow me to list three ways.

The first involves the headway that we’ve made in terms of youth ministry. Before my presidency, having a denominational Youth Director was but a dream. It is now a reality. But it is still in its formative stage, Chris. I urge that you continue to help it grow and prosper.

The second area of strength involves the results of the work that was done to transform the Swedenborg School of Religion into the Swedenborgian House of Studies. And although this was not an easy thing to do, it will serve us well for years to come. I hope that you will become an important member of the SHS board, and help this institution be all that it can be.

And third, during these past six years, you and I have worked together to re-establish our connection with the other branches of the Swedenborgian Church. We have been very successful with the British Conference! Please continue these efforts as president. We need to learn from them. They need to learn from us. So, go to England, Chris, and meet with our brothers and sisters in the faith!

And for the sake of “being honest” I also want to list three areas where our weaknesses are showing and changes need to be made.

First, please do what you can to move this denomination away from yearly funding of churches and projects and toward adherence to three-five year plans! This practice is hurting us in many ways. The Spiritual Ministries position was terminated in its first year! Ministers are reluctant to attempt new ministries because of the instability in their lives that is brought about by yearly grants. And for our church boards, the uncertainty of funding is the cause of many ulcers. We don’t need to treat our ministers and churches this way, and I hope that you will help to bring about change.

Second, we are heading toward catastrophe as local congregations and ministers turn too quickly to the Board of Mediation and the Board of Inquiry without sincere attempts to work their problems among themselves. This “lawsuit” mentality has got to stop. It is also wasting precious dollars, time and energy. This is an area in which I urge that you be honest, frank, and yes, blunt.

And third, we both know that our denomination is in a precarious financial state. But in our attempts to address this situation, I am convinced that we have gutted our Support Units’ and Council of Ministers’ ability to fulfill their functions. We’ve reduced our ability to produce new outreach programs and materials, while at the same time, increasing the percentage of our budget that is spent on administration and meetings. I share this knowing that this is debatable, and that some positive outcomes will result from the 48% budget cuts. But I also come from a farming background, and I know that a farmer cannot stop planting seeds and expect a greater harvest. You’ll need to help us deal with this situation. We need any guidance that you can offer.

And Chris, I want to add one final point here. I completely trust your ability to lead this denomination. This trust has only deepened as we have worked together these past six years. I know that you have many talents and abilities to draw upon in this job, and what is more important, I know that you will draw upon them! I also know that you can be honest, frank, and even blunt, when necessary. But, I don’t recall ever hearing you cheer. But please do not take that as a criticism. It’s an invitation to come to Kitchener next winter and attend a Ranger’s hockey game with me. And as I said earlier, bring your pom-poms.

Presidential trips and meetings attended this past year

July 19-27: Almont Summer School

August 4-20: Holidays

August 21-24: Wayfarers Chapel Board of Managers

September 4-7: MINSU, Portland

September 17: Convention Planning Meeting, Kitchener

September 19-21: Urbana, for B&B Dedication, Sunday Worship and Meetings

September 25-28: Cabinet Meetings, Cincinnati

October 6-11: British Conference International Ministers Seminar

October 15: Convention Planning Meeting, Kitchener  
October 17-20: New York Church  
October 23-26: General Council  
October 30-November 2: SHS Board, Columbus and Urbana  
November 12: Convention Planning Meeting, Kitchener  
November 14-20: EDSU and CAM, at SHS  
November 22-23: Cleveland Church  
December 5-7: LaPorte New Church  
December 10: Convention Planning Meeting, Kitchener  
December 19-21: Pawnee Rock Church

I could not attend the Wayfarers Chapel Board meeting or make a requested trip to visit Andy Stinson in Virginia due to a delay in having my Landed Immigrant Card issues by the Canadian government.

January 14: Convention Planning Meeting, Kitchener  
January 23-25: FPRSU Meeting, Newton  
February 19-22: Urbana University Trustees, preached at the Urbana Church  
March 12-13: Conducted a funeral in Pittsburgh  
March 13-18: CAM meetings  
March 18-20: SHS Board of Trustees  
March 24: Convention Planning Meeting, Kitchener  
April 21: Convention Planning Meeting, Kitchener  
April 24: General Council Conference Call  
May 18: Wayfarers Chapel Board of Managers Conference Call  
May 19: Convention Planning Meeting, Kitchener  
May 21-24: Visit New York Church and meet with Little Grain members  
June 4-6: Visit Church of the Holy City, Edmonton  
June 23: Convention Planning Committee, Kitchener

*With love, respect and blessings,*  
*Ron Brugler, President*

### **VICE-PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

This sixth year of serving as Vice President during Rev. Ron Brugler's presidency has been one of many new experiences. It has also been one of blurred boundaries where the Vice President's duties have rubbed against and sometimes overlapped the things that I have been involved in as the President-elect. It certainly has been a full and very interesting year.

General Council conference calls. I have participated in the work of the executives, and have acted in the constituted role of chair of the Central Office review committee. I have also fulfilled the responsibilities of the Vice President as chairman of the Board of Mediation. I was invited to a board meeting at the LaPorte New Church where this very enthusiastic and caring group received the information gathered by their representatives to the evangelization conference in Colorado and, under the very capable guidance of their president, began the process of identifying the best implementation of ideas for their work as a church family and as a church in the community. I have been in regular email and phone contact with Support Unit members and the Central Office.

In my position as president-elect, President Brugler has invited me to attend several board and committee meetings, including the Ministries Support Unit, the Swedenborgian House of Studies Board of Trustees, and the Wayfarers Chapel Board of Managers. On occasions when Ron was unavailable, I joined a MINSU conference call in his place and I also attended one Wayfarers Chapel Board meeting as Ron's representative. I have also done some research and writing as part of the committee that's preparing the application to add the Wayfarers Chapel to the National Register of Historic Places. I attended the September Cabinet meeting in Cincinnati. I have also begun conversations with Jim Lawrence, Kim Hinrichs, Martha Bauer, and Harvey Tafel, all of whom are preparing the way for the SHS-hosted Convention 2005, in Berkeley, California.

Over the long weekend of May 6 – 9, 2004, I had the exciting and uplifting experience of representing the General Convention as a member of the Plenary Panel for the convocation of Swedenborgian Women from four branches of the Church at Temenos. The weekend, called "Gathering Leaves," was a marvelous opportunity for over eighty women, members of the General Convention, the Lord's New Church, the General Church, and the British Conference, to come together to celebrate their connections. I was particularly honored to be the spokesperson for our "branch" of the tree. Many long-lasting and important connections were created over this three-day time period.

Finally, I have continued to serve as the secretary of the Michigan Association with the requisite responsibilities. On Saturday, May 1, I was honored to be the Commencement speaker for graduation of nearly 280 Bachelor Degree, Masters Degree, and Associate Degree recipients at Urbana

University. On that same day, I was surprised to receive an honorary doctorate from the University.

It has been a most rewarding year – in all of its guises!

***It's been a most rewarding year!***

***Chris Laitner, Vice-President and President-elect***

## TREASURER'S REPORT 2003

### GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE NEW JERUSALEM STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION December 31, 2003

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Temporarily Restricted</u>	<u>Permanently Restricted</u>
<b>Assets</b>				
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 213,808	\$ 207,306	\$ 6,502	\$ -
Accounts receivable	6,559	4,159	2,400	-
Investments	15,490,738	2,438,762	5,759,274	7,292,702
Annuities	32,979	-	32,979	-
Prepaid expenses	27,933	27,933	-	-
Inventory	17,939	2,985	14,954	-
Notes receivable	2,380,110	2,016,694	363,416	-
Less: reserve	(1,424,000)	(1,424,000)	-	-
Land and buildings	1,285,813	1,285,813	-	-
Other property and equipment, net	<u>6,324</u>	<u>6,324</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b><u>\$ 18,038,203</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 4,565,976</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 6,179,525</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 7,292,702</u></b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>				
Liabilities:				
Accounts payable	\$ 63,189	\$ 62,389	\$ 800	\$ -
Obligation on annuities	<u>15,241</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>15,241</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<u>78,430</u>	<u>62,389</u>	<u>16,041</u>	<u>-</u>
Net assets:				
Unrestricted -				
Unrestricted general	3,217,774	3,217,774	-	-
Unrestricted land and buildings	1,285,813	1,285,813	-	-
Temporarily restricted	6,163,484	-	6,163,484	-
Permanently restricted	<u>7,292,702</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,292,702</u>
<b>Total net assets</b>	<u>17,959,773</u>	<u>4,503,587</u>	<u>6,163,484</u>	<u>7,292,702</u>
<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>	<b><u>\$ 18,038,203</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 4,565,976</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 6,179,525</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 7,292,702</u></b>



**GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE NEW JERUSALEM  
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS  
For the Year Ended December 31, 2003**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Temporarily Restricted</u>	<u>Permanently Restricted</u>
Revenue and other support:				
Investment income	\$ 425,779	\$ 130,253	\$ 295,526	\$ -
Endowment investment income	379,983	-	379,983	-
Gift and grants	844	300	544	-
Appeal income	20,530	13,938	6,592	-
Central office income	18,288	18,288	-	-
Program income	11,608	930	10,678	-
Building fund loan income	21,883	-	21,883	-
Other loan income	22,139	20,896	1,243	-
Net miscellaneous income	50,280	48,479	1,801	-
Net assets released from restrictions	<u>-</u>	<u>699,473</u>	<u>(699,473)</u>	<u>-</u>
 Total revenue and other support	 <u>951,334</u>	 <u>932,557</u>	 <u>18,777</u>	 <u>-</u>
Expenses:				
Officers and general administrative	114,011	114,011	-	-
Central office	153,853	153,853	-	-
General council	20,601	20,601	-	-
Cabinet	6,086	6,086	-	-
Council of ministers	119,591	119,591	-	-
Financial and physical resources support unit	3,036	3,036	-	-
Educational support unit	66,174	66,174	-	-
Communications support unit	130,720	130,720	-	-
Ministry support unit	127,458	127,458	-	-
Information management support unit	7,325	7,325	-	-
Augmentation fund	260,904	260,904	-	-
National church trustees	20,778	20,778	-	-
Other convention expenses	87,645	87,645	-	-
Other restricted expenses	<u>100,264</u>	<u>100,264</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
 Total expenses	 <u>1,218,446</u>	 <u>1,218,446</u>	 <u>-</u>	 <u>-</u>
 Increase (decrease) in net assets from operating activities	 (267,112)	 (285,889)	 18,777	 -
 Fund additions	 106,082	 -	 104,429	 1,653
 Unrealized gain on investments	 <u>1,525,010</u>	 <u>239,445</u>	 <u>569,809</u>	 <u>715,756</u>
 Gain/Decrease in net assets	 1,363,980	 (46,444)	 693,015	 717,409
 Net assets at beginning of year	 <u>16,595,793</u>	 <u>4,550,031</u>	 <u>5,470,469</u>	 <u>6,575,293</u>
 Net assets at end of year	 <u>\$ 17,959,773</u>	 <u>\$ 4,503,587</u>	 <u>\$ 6,163,484</u>	 <u>\$ 7,292,702</u>

**TREASURER'S REPORT 2003**

**GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE NEW JERUSALEM  
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS  
For the Years Ended December 31, 2003 and 2002**

	2003	2002
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Change in net assets	\$ 1,363,980	\$ (2,510,493)
Non-cash items included in change in net assets-		
Depreciation	8,974	10,046
Unrealized loss on investments	(1,525,010)	2,313,502
Gain on sale of investments	-	-
Write-off of uncollectible loans	-	42,820
 (Increase) decrease in operating assets:		
Accounts receivable	(1,485)	3,475
Inventory	21,735	8,359
Annuities	(1,718)	9,173
Prepaid expenses	(21,873)	1,195
 Increase (decrease) in operating liabilities:		
Accounts payable	757	2,382
Annuities	<u>4,566</u>	<u>(6,577)</u>
 Net cash used by operating activities	<u>(150,074)</u>	<u>(126,118)</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Purchase of property and equipment	(1,795)	(42,606)
Repayment of notes receivable	233,719	283,741
Purchase of investments	(103,599)	(120,000)
Increase in notes receivable	<u>(46,700)</u>	<u>(3,500)</u>
 Net cash provided (used) by investing activities	<u>81,625</u>	<u>117,635</u>
 Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	(68,449)	(8,483)
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS - Beginning of year</b>	<u>282,257</u>	<u>290,740</u>
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS - End of year</b>	\$ <u>213,808</u>	\$ <u>282,257</u>

**Augmentation Fund 2003**

<b>Fund</b>	<b>Current Fund</b>	<b>Endowment</b>
Beginning investments as of 12/31/2002	2,362,083	2,131,128
<b>Revenue</b>		
Common Fund: Current	136,504	
Common Fund: Endowment	123,157	
loan income	1,243	
Total Income	<b>260,904</b>	260,904
<b>Augmentation Expenses</b>		
<b>Salary grants</b>	36,881	36,881
<b>Church grants</b>		
Bridgewater, MA	6,000	
Cambridge, MA	15,000	
Cleveland, OH	20,000	
Edmonton, AB	25,000	
Kemper Road, OH	7,000	
LaPorte, IN	15,500	
Portland, ME	17,145	
Puget Sound, WA	40,500	
Royal Oak, MI	4,000	
St. Louis, MO	18,000	
St. Paul, MN	11,000	
		179,145
<b>Administrative costs</b>		
<b>&amp; meeting costs</b>	7,926	
<b>Council of Ministers</b>		
<b>Continuing Education</b>	8,407	
<b>Swedenborg School of</b>		
<b>Religion Student Grant</b>	19,000	
<b>Student Loans Forgiven</b>	9,545	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>260,904</b>	0.00
Unrealized gain on Investment: 12/31/2003	257,125	231,985
Investments as of 12/31/2003	2,619,208	2,363,113

### Report of the Building Fund Trustees

<b>Balance as of 12/31/2002</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>585,178</b>
<b>Revenue</b>		
Common Fund	13,559	
Interest on loans	21,883	
unrealized gain on investments	30,554	
		65,996
<b>Expenses</b>		
Administrative	3,361	
Insurance	1,298	
		4,659
<b>Balance as of 12/31/2003</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>646,515</b>
Current Loan Details: Balance as of 12/31/2003		
Churches and Societies:		
Deland, FL Society	3,119	
Fryeburg, ME Society	16,478	
Fryeburg, ME, New Church Assembly	63,442	
Kemper Rd. Swedenborgian Church	18,075	
St. Louis Society	2,363	
Urbana, OH, Society	5,064	
Wayfarers Chapel	39,678	
	<b>148,219</b>	
Ministers		
J. Billings	6,566	
K. Billings	9,296	
R. Billings	28,565	
S. Currie	5,817	
E. Hoffman	4,254	
D. Keane	6,920	
M. Laughlin	17,941	
S. Pults	15,100	
K. Turley	19,576	
C. Yenetchi	22,556	
W. Wake	37,617	
L. Woofenden	25,461	
Total	<b>199,669</b>	
Total loans to churches and ministers:		<b>347,888</b>
Common Fund Investment (available for new loans)		<b>298,627</b>
<b>Total in Building Fund as of 12/31/2003</b>		<b>646,515</b>

## GENERAL COUNCIL

Since the last Convention meetings in July, 2003, General Council has met face to face at their annual fall meeting held this year in Kansas on October 23-26, 2003. The meeting was hosted by the Kansas Association. The fall General Council Meeting took place at Camp Menoscah, Kansas on October 23-26, 2003. At this meeting it was decided not to pursue changes to the number of people elected to EDSU. There was considerable time spent discussing future employment of ministers coming out of SHS. The President will appoint a committee, in line with Cabinet's recommendation, to study these issues and will make a preliminary report at the pre-convention meeting. And lastly, the painful process of arriving at a budget took up the greatest portion of time and energy. A preliminary budget was arrived at. After working via e-mail a conference call was conducted on December 20, with members of Cabinet and General Council, to finalize the budget. General Council met again via Conference Call on April 24 to deal with, among other things, various budget items and with recommendations arising from the FPRSU meeting held earlier in the year.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Gloria Toot, Secretary*

## CENTRAL OFFICE

Greetings from the Central Office staff: Martha Bauer, Manager; Kim Fenol, Assistant; and Gina Peracchi, Bookkeeper!

Central Office, located in the parish house of the Newtonville, Massachusetts Swedenborgian Church of the Open Word, has a staff of three: two full-time and one part-time, to conduct much of the business of the denomination. Besides the financial responsibilities and budget oversight, we offer support to the officers, boards and committees of the church, maintain the central membership file with the Messenger list, prepare the annual Journal and answer questions about the denomination which come by phone and email. We host meetings here about five times a year. Central Office is a very busy place!

We now maintain the part of the archive which did not go to California with the seminary when it moved. The old documents are boxed and in storage but we are able to access them for research using a searchable database.

As technology improves, we find that we do more and more of our work by email and on the web. Although we are a small denomination with a very small staff, we can have a large presence on the Internet and reach new seekers around the world. The improved website prepared and maintained by IMSU has increased the number of inquiries we receive.

We look forward to another year of serving the church in whatever way we are able.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Martha Bauer, Central Office Manager*

### **COUNCIL OF MINISTERS**

The Council of Ministers met from Wednesday, July 7 thru Friday, July 9. There were 27 ministers and 16 guests present.

Paul Martin gave his last address as Chair.

Ron Brugler gave his last address as President.

Susannah Currie gave the Retirement Committee report. Ministers are able to control their investments online. A socially responsible fund is available. Once a minister is 59 ½ years old he or she can roll the investment over into a self-directed IRA.

Lee Woofenden gave the *Our Daily Bread* Report. There is a new look for the cover to make it more attractive to visitors. There is an online edition, which had over 12,000 hits in April. You can send him sermons in any form.

Susannah Currie and Jane Siebert gave a report on the Gathering Leaves women's retreat. Seventy-eight women attended from different Swedenborgian denominations. The theme stayed away from theological differences. The emphasis was more on what they have in common.

Jim Lawrence gave the Swedenborgian House of Studies report and Paul Martin introduced the students.

Ordinations were approved for Alison Lane, Kevin Baxter, Jane Siebert, and Kathy Speas. Induction into our ministry was approved for Rich Tafel.

The Report of Same-Sex Marriage was presented by Paul Zacharias, Jonathan Mitchell, Kit Billings and Sage Currie (who represented Kim Hinrichs).

The Statement of Same-Sex Marriage was recommended for adoption to Convention: The Council of Ministers supports and recommends to convention the adoption of the following resolution:

*A Denomination Statement on Same Sex Marriage*

*With humility and prayerful willingness to be led by the Lord and in love toward the neighbor, The Swedenborgian Church of North America, a Christ-centered church that affirms religious pluralism recognizes the goodness of love in many forms. Wherever love is, God is there too... for “for God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.” (1 John 4:16) We also affirm our fundamental human right of freedom of choice; we affirm the right of each individual to choose his or her life partner and do so within a committed relationship based in love and faith toward the Lord, and in love and fidelity toward one another. We affirm that in a democratic and free society adult persons should be free to enjoy the same basic legal rights within a committed and faithful relationship, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race religion or social status. We affirm that the presence of hatred discrimination, homophobia and selfishness are against God’s will, as we perceive the Divine with and amongst us.*

*Therefore, we do so declare and affirm that couples, irrespective of sexual orientation, deserve the right to legally join themselves together in a union of love called marriage.*

*We do this with the conviction that marriage entails life-long mutual trust and strict fidelity to one partner for better or for worse, and the church will offer its ongoing support to the couples it has united. We acknowledge that there are differences of opinion within our church regarding usage of the term “marriage” for same-gendered couples, and we affirm the goodness of a diversity of opinion. As members of the Lord’s New Church on earth (specifically within General Convention), whose hearts enjoy deep affections for the truth of God found in the Holy Bible as illuminated by the beautiful doctrines of Emanuel Swedenborg, we affirm the importance of continued good scholarship and deep, careful,*

*spiritually sensitive, compassionate thinking and dialogue. No individual or congregation will be required to bless same-sex marriages in the Swedenborgian Church. The Church respects the judgment of those who decide to bless these relationships by providing such rites for use within the Church. The Swedenborgian Church, therefore, lends its support to ministers and congregations who, as a result of their own discernment processes, decide to offer their services and sanctuaries to people irrespective of sexual orientation who wish to join themselves together in holy marriages.*

The Council of Ministers granted the request of the LaPorte Society to hire Rev. Freeman Schrock as its minister for the coming year.

It was voted to remove Bob Kirven from the Roll of Ministers and add his name to the Roll of Former Ministers (deceased).

It was voted (by unanimous vote) to remove, at his request, Steve Ellis from the Roll of Ministers and add his name to the Roll of Former Ministers (severed).

Susannah Currie, Eric Allison, Sarah Buteux, and Ken Turley presented the Committee of Worship report. COW is offering to work with congregations and ministers, creating and exploring new forms of worship. You can give and receive resources for worship on the internet: [www.swedenborgianresources.org](http://www.swedenborgianresources.org). George Dole presented “Nobody’s Keeping Score Up There” music CD and songbook.

It was voted to change “Swedenborg School of Religion” to “Swedenborgian House of Studies” in the Council bylaws.

Elections results:

Executive Committee – Jonathan Mitchell

Nominating Committee – Kim Hinrichs

Chair of the Council of Ministers – Eric Allison

Convention Preacher 2006 – Sue Turley

It was voted (unanimous) to approve the Budget of the Council of Ministers.



It was voted to recommend to Convention that Doug Moss be an authorized candidate for ministry.

It was voted to recommend to Convention that one minister be appointed to the Augmentation Fund Committee (AFC).

*Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Skuli Thorhallsson  
Secretary, COM*

### **COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT UNIT (COMSU)**

The Communications Support Unit (COMSU) directs Convention's internal and public information programs. We publish *The Messenger*, a monthly magazine intended mainly for the members of our churches. We publish and distribute Swedenborgian literature for the public through the denomination's press, J. Appleseed & Co.

COMSU held a three-day workshop preceding Convention 2003 at which we agreed upon three groups of goals:

#### (1) Overall COMSU goal

- To publish material for the Swedenborgian denomination that encourages people to become part of the Swedenborgian community; as participants they may be active in supporting: one of our churches; one of our reading and discussion groups; one of our bookrooms; one of our writing or arts groups; or one of our conference centers
- To continue our program to stimulate good writing in the church

#### (2) Under imprint of *The Messenger*

- To publish and distribute ten monthly issues, implementing the above overall goal
- To publish at least part of each issue online by Convention 2004
- To encourage more paid contributions

(3) Under imprint of J. Appleseed & Co.

- To publish two new books (and possibly one new edition of an out-of-print book) by Convention 2004
- To publish six new pamphlets (and possibly two new editions of two out-of-print pamphlets) by Convention 2004
- To make consistent title pages and versos of J. A. & Co. books
- To make consistent inside front covers and back covers of J. Appleseed & Co. pamphlets
- To charge a fair market price for J. A. & Co. new books
- To continue distributing J. Appleseed & Co. old books to churches on an as-needed basis in return for shipping costs
- To begin pro-active marketing of J. Appleseed & Co. titles

In September 2003 these goals were presented to the Cabinet along with the titles of J. A. & Co. publications in production; but as a result of budget cutbacks, we ended up with a shorter list—all short publications—no books to be published by Convention 2004.

J. APPLESEED & CO. TITLES IN PRODUCTION

- The Story of Swedenborg and the Swedenborgian Church.* Editor, Alicia Dole (36 pages & cover) 8th Ed.  
*Celebrate Life.* Editor, Alicia Dole. 3d edition  
*Swedenborgianism: A Spiritual Journey.* Steve Koke, Editor (48 pages, self cover)  
*Spiritual Sparks.* Steve Koke, Editor. (Leaflet) 2d edition.  
*Communion.* Steve Koke, Editor. (Leaflet)  
*Confirmation.* Patte LeVan, Editor. (Leaflet)  
*Marriage.* Margaret Culver, Editor. (Leaflet)  
*Memorial Service.* Steve Koke, Editor (Leaflet)  
*Parting Constructively.* Nancy Apple, Editor (Leaflet for Ministers)

J. APPLESEED & CO. TITLES IN DISTRIBUTION

- Baptism.* (Hinrichs)  
*A Concise Overview of Swedentor's Theology.* (Kirven)  
*God in the Midst of the City.* (Fish & Connor)

Through 2003, we continued to distribute our backlist to churches in the U.S. and Canada on an as needed basis in return for their shipping cost. Starting in May, Central Office will be managing J.A. & Co.'s inventory and distribution.

### CONCLUSIONS

At COMSU's meeting in July 2004, we plan to establish a network of COMSU local representatives to help our churches ensure that the new series of sacramental leaflets are in the backs of pews when baptisms, confirmations, and communion, marriage, and memorial services are held. If this program is successful we plan to expand it into a volunteer denominational public relations program.

We thank Margaret Culver (San Francisco Society) for her work as COMSU's business manager from July 2002 through March 2004.

We appreciate the many ways that Susan Poole contributed her talents to COMSU during these past six years.

*The Messenger* Editor's report is attached.

***Respectfully submitted,***  
***Carol S. Lawson, Chair, COMSU***

### THE MESSENGER

The 2003-2004 *Messenger* year began in September 2003 with the Convention theme of "Faith of Our Mothers," honoring the centennial anniversary of the National Women's Alliance and the contributions of dedicated Swedenborgian women over the past 100 years. Articles evolving from the theme continued through the November issue, with the Revs. Kim Hinrichs, Renee Billings Machiniak, Sarah Buteux, Susannah Currie, Gladys Wheaton, SHS student Jenn Tafel, and Cambridge church member Denyse Daurat contributing.

Events reportage highlights included updates on happenings at the Swedenborgian House of Studies; Urbana University and the completion of Barclay-Bailey Halls; the completion of the Online Swedenborgian Library

project; Camp 2003; a group journey to Swedenborg's Sweden; successful new church programs and those just starting up; the win-win financial agreement between the Cambridge church and the Mass. New Church Union; youth programs, retreats and camps; remembrance of the late beloved Rev. Dr. Robert Kirven; an especially significant NCC report; and General Convention and General Church women at the Gathering Leaves Women's Retreat at Temenos.

Lead articles such as Kathy Speas' "Swedenborgianism and Social Justice," Wilson Van Dusen's "Preparation for the Spiritual World," Rich Tafel's "If the Swedenborgian Church Had a Coach," and Bernard Lewis' *The Crisis of Islam*, a book reviewed by Steve Koke, elicited several thoughtful letters to the editor. Some other important features included Jackie Lageson's articles on Restorative Justice and Social Action Ministry.

Book reviews included *The Crisis of Islam*, Ann Graber's *Victor Frankl's Logotherapy: Method of Choice in Ecumenical Pastoral Psychology*, reviewed by Jim Lawrence, and the current Chrysalis Reader, *Eternal Wellness: The Importance of Healing, Connecting, Community and the Inner Journey*, reviewed by Rebecca Eliot.

Three films of spiritual significance were reviewed by Steve Koke: *Second-hand Lions*; *Lord of the Rings: Return of the King*, and *The Passion of the Christ*.

Unfortunately budget cuts this year curtailed some programs such as the proprioceptive writing scholarships and the Spiritual Ministries Consultant's book discussion questions that were being published in *The Messenger*. (The SMC position wasn't funded this year.)

The online *Messenger* project has been long in preparation, answering procedural and policy questions and going through the learning curve imposed by the Adobe PDF software. The end is near, however, if not already present when you read this. Indexing and links to the various contents for each issue also may appear, but the first complete issues will appear first, with these refinements added later. We plan to stay about a month behind actual publication of the printed issue. The first issue to be completely presented on the website ([www.swedenborg.org](http://www.swedenborg.org)) will be the February 2004 *Messenger*.

*The Messenger* contributions and subscriptions this year totaled **\$1858.23**, with **\$582.96** going to the Messenger Endowment Fund. Once again, the

Communications Support Unit and the editor of *The Messenger* wish to thank all who have supported and contributed to *The Messenger* with their time, talent, and money.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Patte LeVan, Editor*

### **EDUCATION SUPPORT UNIT (EDSU)**

During the past year, the Education Support Unit has consisted of: Missy Sommer, Katie Shelley, Carla Friedrich (SHS representative) and myself, Susan Hemmerich. We did not have a representative from the Sunday School Association during 2003, but hope that this will occur in future. President Ron Brugler attended our meetings when he was available. Kurt Fekete, our Youth Director, makes himself available when we request his participation and always reports extensively on youth activities. (His report will follow.)

The work of the Education Support Unit consists of three main areas which include:

1. The supervision and support of The Youth Director and his work with our denomination's growing youth component.
2. Developing and implementing educational opportunities for convention and pre-convention.
3. Supporting the child care program during convention.
4. Supporting other educational initiatives such as Transitions, Social Concerns Education Committee, and the Women's Conference which took place in May 2004.

We appreciate the fact that SHS has provided us with a representative, in the person of Sage Currie and presently Carla Freidrich. These women are both seminary students. This provides us with an important liaison with the Swedenborg House of Studies. We will continue to seek representation from the Sunday School Association, although because this position is a non-voting one, funding is unavailable for direct meetings. Hopefully this will be resolved in future years as, in my opinion, their presence within convention would be mutually supportive.

Current budget restrictions are providing challenges for a group with so many responsibilities. To date, we have modified the pre-convention

program, and hope to restrict our meetings to one just before convention. We have always relied upon electronic correspondence, but having just one yearly opportunity to set aside time and meet face-to-face will be very challenging.

This convention will bring to an end my own work with this support unit, and I would like to express my thanks to everyone who made the task easier. This includes: EDSU's secretary Michelle Huffman, the volunteers who have made up the support unit during the past three years, Martha Bauer at Central Office, Kurt Fekete, and the many mini-course presenters who provide such unique educational experiences at convention, and do so on a volunteer basis. It has been a very "educational" experience indeed!!

*Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Hemmerich, Chair, EDSU*

## TRANSITIONS

The Transitions mission of exploring and learning about our theology and individual spiritual paths, fostering the development of leaguers as they move into adulthood, and supporting people of all ages in times of change and life transitions is still going strong. This was especially evident at our most recent retreats, held last fall and this spring.

At the end of October 2003, at the Temenos Retreat Center in West Chester, PA, we greeted old friends and welcomed some new ones as well. Fourteen adults, including six who were attending their first Transitions retreat, came from Ontario, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky, California, Maryland, and New York! Our theme, presented by Rev. Susannah Currie, was "Growing to Love: Faith Development in Our Response to Fear". The sharing of our fears seemed especially appropriate for Halloween weekend, and we even learned about the spiritual significance of bats from Rev. Sarah Buteux. Everyone helped with the communally prepared meals in the cozy Farmhouse kitchen, which helped us to get to know one another better, and many donned creative costumes on Saturday evening for Halloween. The process of making sure everyone was comfortable in the external space we occupied for the weekend (having a comfortable place to sleep, good food to eat, etc.) reflected how we continually work toward building a spiritual space where all feel nurtured to grow in faith.

Twenty adults (and 4 toddlers!) gathered at the March 2004 Transitions retreat at Almont Retreat Center to join facilitator Rev. Renée Billings-Machiniak in a lively discussion of the spiritual significance of the Ten Commandments. After introductions and a brief overview of the topic, Rev. Renée and the group chose a few commandments to look at in depth. We examined “Honor your father and your mother”, “You shall have no other gods before me” and “You shall not covet your neighbor’s...” in the most detail; however, we reviewed the inner sense all of the commandments and how they relate to our spiritual development (regeneration). Of particular resonance was a written activity where we listed a positive quality about our father and a positive quality about our mother and then tried to join them together to create a positive characteristic we see in ourselves. This exercise generated much emotional discussion about parental love and how it resembles and differs from the Lord’s love for us. Four older teenagers just exiting the SCYL joined with retreaters in their twenties through fifties to create a wonderfully diverse mix of participants (including a visiting president-elect Chris Laitner!). What a blessing to have mothers, fathers, children, sisters, spouses and friends join together in spirit to learn how to better live and love according to the commandments of our Lord.

Though a large part of our mission continues to be offering quality spiritual retreats (and we are most grateful to all of those who have helped to make them possible...and affordable!), Transitions is, in itself, always “in transition”, ever changing and opening to new people and opportunities. Part of this evolution may include you. While many of our members already serve Convention and local congregations in a variety of ways, including serving on Support Units, helping to make SCYL events safe and successful, working at Swedenborgian summer camps, and even entering the ministry, we are also called toward service as a group, when possible. If you have an idea or a service project that could use the support of Transitions; if you are a minister and wish to facilitate a Transitions retreat; if you want to know how you can get involved; or if you are simply interested in finding out more, please reach out to a local “Transitioner” whom you know or contact Katie Shelley.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Katie Shelley*

Thank You to Kurt Fekete, who contributed the summary of the March Transitions retreat.

## **YOUTH DIRECTOR REPORT**

What an amazing year to be a youth in our church! What an amazing year to be a youth leader in our church! What an amazing year of generosity flowing to our youth programs! What an amazing and blessed year I experienced as your Youth Director!

This was an amazing year to be a youth in our church. I set out last autumn down the ambitious path of offering a youth program in each month of the year all around North America. One of my visions is that the youth in our church have multiple opportunities each year to experience the wonderful spiritual insights that our religion offers in safe, open environments with other young, accepting, and talented Swedenborgian friends. I want this for each and every youth in our church. I'm happy to report that this year that goal was nearly achieved. The teens had opportunities to attend six different retreats; more regional retreats in one year than offered in recent history. We had Michigan teens traveling to Ontario; Ohio and Maine teens trekking to Massachusetts; Pennsylvania teens motoring up to Maine; and Alberta teens journeying to Michigan. Engaging retreats with catchy, interesting themes were popping up all over the place. Youth came, experienced, and left better prepared to handle the difficult task of surviving and thriving as a teenager in today's chaotic and oft troubled world.

This was an amazing year to be a youth leader in our church. The dedicated people who lead youth need materials, resources and support. To address this I initiated a monthly youth leader mailing with topic, activity, spiritual insights and commentary. A local youth leader who was looking for some new ideas for her youth meetings identified this need. I've made myself available to youth workers to answer questions, provide ideas, offer direction and staff local church events. In April 2004, a Youth Worker Conference was presented. Energetic youth workers, ministers and SHS students gathered together at Temenos for sessions and workshops on youth worship, crafts, games, safe practices, retreat organization, staffing and leadership. What a tremendous opportunity for people who work with teens to learn the latest methods and procedures while sharing experiences with others who have similar interests.

This was an amazing year of generosity flowing to our youth programs. I requested financial assistance for the youth and SCYL last year; but never in my wildest dreams did I expect the munificence that came pouring in.



Association gifts (from Michigan, Illinois and Massachusetts), Woman's Alliance Mite Box, a large individual anonymous donation and a host of other financial contributions have kept the youth program on track and picking up steam. It is so wonderful to receive this critical funding that allows our youth activities and events to remain strong, vibrant, professional and top-notch. Equally important and necessary are the unselfish gifts of time and leadership given by the members of our church family. Youth workers such as Missy Sommer, Jane Fullerton, Katie Shelley, Bill Baxter, Deb Wilson, Carrie Carson, Betsy Lau and ministers Junchol Lee and Lee Woofenden consistently and generously offer their talents and services at youth retreats, overnights and outings. I cannot adequately express my gratitude for the assistance that these and other individuals give to me. The warmth and wisdom they impart to the youth of our church is true charity at work. Gifts, both financial and of time, must continue if we want our church youth programs to continue to grow and succeed. Money is still tight in many areas. We still need more youth leaders and I am still asking YOU to get involved. There is plenty of room for you in our youth program. Finding and retaining active youth workers remains a primary need. Come join in on the fun!

I experienced an amazing and blessed year as your Youth Director! With all the exciting youth activities happening how could I not be exalted and filled with spirit? I am so very grateful to continue to have the opportunity to serve the youth of this church in my role as Youth Director. I hope that you find my work to be beneficial and worthwhile. I hope that if you do not find my work to be satisfactory, you will freely tell me what I can do better. I came into this position with vigor and vision of a youth ministry built with a foundation of togetherness and community. I believe that together in this community, today, we have laid a strong foundation and are making this vision become reality. I close with a list of my accomplishments over the past year.

***Accomplishments (7/2003 – 6/2004):***

- Offered two 2003 Convention mini-courses, *Safe Youth Worker Practices* and *Youth Retreat Organization and Planning*
- Organized and led 2003 Convention youth programming including general supervision, staffing, outings, recreation and SCYL Worship Service

- Served as teaching staff and youth consultant at Almont summer camp
- Led effort to transform the Almont Survivor Youth Group Initiation Day into a safer, lower risk activity
- Visited and discussed teen activities with youth at Fryeburg summer camp
- Helped plan and staff Camp 2003 International Young Adult Gathering which included theme selection, facilitator and staff selection, schedule, outings, structure, promotion and discussion/activities leadership
- Organized and staffed Midwest October Retreat at Almont including theme selection, session preparation, promotion, logistics, meals, schedule, outings, supervision and facilitation of sessions
- Helped to plan and staff Kitchener Church October Youth Retreat including promotion, session and Worship Service assistance, schedule, supervision and games
- Organized and staffed Cambridge Church November Youth Retreat including promotion, logistics, Worship Service planning sessions, schedule, supervision, games and outings
- Organized and staffed annual SCYLANCA Winter and FNCA Memorial Day Retreats including theme selection, session preparation, promotion, logistics, meals, schedule, outings, supervision and facilitation of sessions
- Helped plan Cleveland Church February Youth Retreat including theme selection assistance, session and games preparation, promotion, logistics and schedule
- Organized and co-facilitated Youth Worker Conference including session preparation, promotion, logistics, meals, schedule and facilitation of sessions and workshops
- Assisted in the organization of and facilitated four youth worship services
- Served as youth leader at Fryeburg Church involving monthly meeting during school year, outings, special programs and activities (Halloween Autumn Café and games night, overnight retreat, sessions, games, outings and fundraising)
- Continued educational program to obtain Princeton Certificate in Youth and Theology by attending January 2004 intensive 4-day Princeton youth forum

- Initiated monthly (school year) youth group mailings to youth leaders and ministers which provided topic, activity, spiritual insights and commentary for local church teen groups
- Maintained active communication with and helped with the direction and leadership of the Transitions group
- Continued development of youth related electronic media and communication services
- Maintained sight of and continued to implement actions set in 3-year vision established September 2002 (Please contact me if you'd like a copy or see the 2003 Journal Youth Director Report)

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Kurt Fekete, Youth Director*

### **SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH YOUTH LEAGUE**

We say goodbye to 2003 president Craig Carson and thank him for his guidance and active participation in many league activities. The SCYL is now under the very capable leadership of Ben Currie. Ben has been attending retreats for several years and is also a member of the Temenos youth group. He was previously the editor of *Clear Blue Sky*, the youth newsletter. Gabe Lipski, previous West Coast Officer has taken over Ben's duties on *Clear Blue Sky*. We say hello to new SCYL Officers Karen Degi, Brittany Fleming and Miles Stroh as they begin their year of service in our youth league. They take over for exiting SCYL Officers Jessie Brugler, Craig Carson and Farren Maille. Please join me in saying farewell to the 2003 Officers no longer serving in the SCYL. We welcome and congratulate all of our 2004 Officers. I hope that you get the chance to meet one or more of them. They are a great bunch of teens and I certainly look forward to listening and working with them this year.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Kurt Fekete, Youth Director*

### **MINISTRIES SUPPORT UNIT (MINSU)**

The Ministries Support Unit (MINSU) of the Swedenborgian Church greets our fellow Sisters and Brothers in the Lord! MINSU members have joined with their colleagues all over the denomination in struggling with the new challenges with which the church's serious financial situation have presented us. In an attempt to keep funding for programs in the church largely intact, MINSU voted to take by far the highest percentage of its mandated budget cuts from administrative areas. We will therefore meet officially as a Unit only once in 2004 (Ft. Myers Beach, FL; August); that one meeting will be even more important than usual, as we process, weigh, and prayerfully consider the requests for funding which MINSU receives from ministries all over North America. In addition to one of our two yearly meetings being cut, we also elected to do without a secretary for 2004. Several of our members will be taking over the not so insignificant numbers of hours necessary to complete this essential part of the nuts and bolts of our ministry.

Sadly, only one year into the planned three year start-up period for the Spiritual Ministries Consultant (SMC) program, funding was dropped for 2004 due to the budget restrictions mentioned above. The Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake remains an essential member of MINSU, however, and it is hoped that a way can be found to once again fund this valuable program.

MINSU met in executive session in Portland, ME in August of 2003, at the hospitable home of Mark and Mimo Allen. Along with our regulars, we were pleased to have in attendance Martha Bauer, the Office Manager of the Central Office; and president-in-waiting Christine Laitner. The input of both was greatly appreciated. Along with the essential business of considering funding requests and passing along our recommendations to the Augmentation Fund Committee, we spent some time discussing the necessity of developing ways in which we can more effectively empower our ministries to become self sufficient. It was determined that a revisioning of MINSU's mission was in order, as well. We hope to accomplish the latter by conference call and e-mail before Convention meets in general session in July of 2004. The former will require ongoing discussion and research. In addition to two meetings in 2003, the Support Unit met by conference call in November in order to handle our budget cutting decisions.

As of the spring of 2004 MINSU consists of Mark Allen (Portland, ME); Carl Blenkin (Wayfarers Chapel); Barbara Halle (LaPorte, IN); Rev. John Maine (Edmonton, Canada); Rev. Richard Tafel (Church of SW Florida); Chair, Karen Nielsen Conger (Pacific Coast Association); and ex-officio President Rev. Ronald Brugler; and Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake, SMC.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Barbara Halle*

### **INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SUPPORT UNIT (IMSU)**

This year IMSU has continued to develop and enhance Convention's website, [www.swedenborg.org](http://www.swedenborg.org). We are also beginning a new initiative, taking advantage of recent developments in publishing technology.

One of the major enhancements to our website was adding search capabilities to the Online Edition of *Our Daily Bread*. The sermons in the Online Edition can now be searched by author, title, keyword, and Scripture reference. This will make our growing body of online sermons more accessible and useful both to ministers and to laypeople.

The other major enhancement is less visible, but will potentially have far greater impact on our church. This year the members of IMSU (Lee Woofenden, Chair; Philip Bae, and Bob Hinrichs), reviewed the Convention website with a specific focus on changes that would raise our ranking in search engines such as Google.com. Based on this review, we made system-wide improvements to the website so that, for example, the web browser title now contains more descriptive keywords appropriate to each page or document on the site, and images that appear on various pages have "alt text" keywords that can be indexed by Google's image search function.

Since we did not have site statistics available before these changes, we don't know how great an increase in site usage these changes brought about. However, the site statistics that we set up in mid-March show that the Convention website is getting far heavier usage than any of us had imagined. Here are some average monthly statistics for the months of April through June, 2004:

- Visitors to the site: 19,094
- Sermons viewed: 8,684
- Online books viewed: 5,364

In the Online Swedenborgian Library, here are the top three titles for the month of April, and the number of times they were viewed:

1. *The Tree of Life*, Vol. 1, by Louis G. Hoeck: 1,066
2. *Animals of the Bible*, by John Worcester: 1,047
3. *Celebrate Life*, by Paul Zacharias: 830
4. *Plants of the Bible*, by John Worcester: 542
5. *Stories and Verses for Children*, anonymous: 393

Of course, we cannot tell from these statistics how many people actually *read* all these sermons and documents rather than simply glancing at them and moving on. However, the sheer numbers indicate that the material on our website is getting heavy usage, and is spreading Swedenborgian ideas to the wider world.

This year we have been steadily adding online editions of out-of-copyright Swedenborgian books to the Online Swedenborgian Library. The process of converting these books involves scanning the original book, using an Optical Character Recognition (OCR) program to produce text from the scans, then editing, typesetting, and proofreading the text, and finally posting the books online in Adobe Acrobat format. We now have nearly twenty titles available in Acrobat format, most of them early Swedenborgian non-fiction and fiction classics. This project is now moving forward even more strongly due to a grant of \$4,500 from the Iungerich Fund.

Yet even with the Internet becoming a primary resource for research and reading, many, if not most people still prefer to read book-length works as printed books rather than online. With this in mind, IMSU is beginning a new initiative this year to bring back into print selected Swedenborgian classics via Print On Demand (POD) technology.

Unlike traditional publishing, in which several hundred to hundreds of thousands of copies of a book are printed and warehoused until sold, in POD publishing, the book remains as a computer file until someone orders a copy. The book's computer file is then fed to a machine that prints and binds one copy, which is shipped to the purchaser. This saves a great deal of money on books that are not likely to reach best-seller status.

Through a new division of labor between COMSU and IMSU, COMSU will continue to produce new books and pamphlets for the Swedenborgian Church, while IMSU will take responsibility for reprints of titles over twenty-five years old, with newer titles occasionally being reprinted by arrangement with COMSU. IMSU currently plans to reprint titles in three general areas:

- Swedenborgian Theology
- Bible Interpretation
- Classic New Church Fiction

For these three categories, our first reprints will be:

- *Outlines of the Religion and Philosophy of Emanuel Swedenborg*, by Theophilus Parsons (first published in 1876)
- *The Sower*, 6 volume set, by William L. Worcester, et. al. (second edition, published 1940–1951)
- *The Evening and the Morning*, by James Spilling (first published in 1878)

As we re-publish these and other titles over the coming years, they will become available for purchase at online booksellers such as Amazon.com, and possibly by special order through bookstores. And the beauty of it is that once we make the titles available, our work is done. All order fulfillment is handled by the POD publisher. Further, we will receive 10% to 30% royalties for all copies sold, thus helping to recoup some of our costs.

Of course, we still need to provide publicity for these titles. Though we are in no position to engage in a full-scale advertising and publicity campaign, IMSU does have a plan to make titles in the “New-Church Classics Library,” along with other selected Swedenborgian books, easily available. Over the next year we plan to design and launch a new section of the Convention website, parallel to the Online Swedenborgian Library, where people can search for Swedenborgian books, and get links to places on the web such as Amazon.com where they can purchase a copy. Once launched, we will have a “virtual bookstore” at our website without actually having to stock and ship any books! And through arrangements with Amazon and some other sites, we can receive a commission on many of the books sold through our site.

IMSU has continued to work hard this year to get big results from a very small budget. We hope that you find Convention’s website useful, and that you visit it often. If you have ideas for further improving the site, please let us know! Most of all, we hope that [www.swedenborg.org](http://www.swedenborg.org) will increasingly be a place where the wider world can find our church, so that people’s lives can be transformed by the wonderful insights, teachings, and spiritual community of the Swedenborgian Church.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Lee Woofenden, Chair, IMSU*

## **NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF NEW CHURCH WOMEN**

As I reflect on this past year of my life as President of the Women's Alliance, the theme of service is still dominant in my affairs; I continue to provide bereavement and grief counseling by telephone to individuals who've lost a loved one recently, as an active volunteer for the Hospice of Maine. As a member of the Portland Church, I am active on the Community Caring Committee which offers various kinds of assistance to those who've suffered through an illness or surgery. I also serve as the Purchasing Steward, buying various supplies for the church.

Congruent with offering service is the need to set boundaries, to be able to say, "No, I'm not available this year to serve as Local Representative; I'm not willing to teach meditation classes; my home is no longer available to host the classes." It is important to renew, nourish, and restore ourselves, our bodies, and our souls (spirits); this is one form of service to us. Perhaps it is the most important service we can offer.

In Portland this year, I initiated a fundraiser for our Church –selling canvas tote bags embroidered with the Swedenborgian emblem. So far, we have sold eight bags; I will be taking orders this summer at Convention, and I'll be carrying my own bag, one with red trim. Please bring your checkbooks: the price is \$26.00 per bag, and shipping and handling is just \$5.00. Yes, this cost includes insurance. I've also helped each month at our Vegetarian Bean Supper, held on the second Friday of the month, another fund raising effort of our community.

In addition, I pass The Mite Box once monthly in Portland. I send a quarterly check to our treasurer. No matter how small the church or the contribution, it is imperative to continue to serve, to support with our treasure, our Churches and our Convention.

In closing, I offer a short healing prayer called The Nayaz, by Hazrat Inayat Khan:

Beloved Lord, Almighty God!  
Through the rays of the sun, through the waves of the air,  
Through the All-pervading Life in space,  
Purify and revivify me, and, I pray,  
Heal my body, heart, and soul.  
Amen.

***Respectfully submitted,  
Miriam Allen, President***



## **REPORT TO GENERAL CONVENTION ON THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN THE U.S.A**

The National Council General Assembly took place in Jackson, Mississippi, November 4-6, 2003. This meeting culminated a four-year period of extraordinary transition and renewal organizationally, financially and in commitment to Vision. The power of the mission, to be a united voice of moderation and spiritual energy supported by fifty-four Christian Churches throughout the world, is now being felt through the dedicated and capable work of the politically active General Secretary, Robert Edgar, who was the youngest member of the United States Senate. Secretary Edgar was not only a U. S. senator but was president of the Claremont Theological School in Claremont, CA.

In addition to his continued leadership, the Assembly elected and installed our first African-American president, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Hoyt. Respected across the country for his work as an American Baptist Bishop for many years in the Chicago area and the Deep South, his installation was attended by hundreds of Christian leaders from across the country. In addition extraordinary talent in the areas of both domestic and international administration, awareness, and action supports these.

The new quadrennium vision is, "The Church is in a unique position to proclaim God's blessing and justice for children... the Church is called to be the voice of the voiceless as it calls a people and a nation of faith to support for children with the church and beyond." This is an active step in fulfilling the Policy Statement: The Church and Children: Vision and Goals for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

*The Living Pulpit*, October-December issue, found through [www.pulpit.org](http://www.pulpit.org) provides a small portion of excellent material for both Sunday School and Sunday Worship on the topic of children's aid, understanding and support. Both the NCCCUSA and World Service web-site will be excellent sources for materials on this subject. Any financial support that a church using this material would like to provide would be a donation for the cognate fund of that specialty. These cognate funds are always in short supply and the materials could be of great use to us so any donations in appreciation for materials you have used could be sent to our Central Office.

In effort to fulfill this vision of aid to children, the standing committees and commissions choose a portion of this vision and other projects as their mission as it relates to their specific directives and expertise. During the Assembly, Officers and members for the above activities were voted into service and, thanks given to those members and churches whose service supported the success of the last quadrennium.

As chair of our delegation, I am considered our Ecumenical Officer, and represented us at the meeting of the Executive Board that took place in New York City in January 2003. There is not space here to cover the work of this group of dedicated people. I was invited but could not attend the first dedication of a new church in Cuba since Castro took office. Representatives from Northern, Central and South American Churches celebrated with the Greek Orthodox Church on this momentous occasion.

We are members of the NCCCUSA as exceptions to the membership rules because our membership is so small. As Jim Lawrence experienced regarding our standing in theological education dialogue, and as I have experienced here at Wayfarers Chapel and as a member of various Ecumenical and Interfaith Councils, our membership in such a highly respected organization is a strong testament to the NCCCUSA members respect for our theological position, and provides a solid statement of this to clerics and members of other denominations. I am grateful for the opportunity to represent you and as a newly elected member of the Faith and Order Commission I pray that I can be worthy of this trust.

***Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Marlene Laughlin, Chair***

### OUR DAILY BREAD

This has been a tough year for *Our Daily Bread*. With major changes and disruptions in the Massachusetts Association consuming a great deal of my time, I have been unable to keep up with the publication schedule. As a result, the circulation levels have declined. Distribution at Wayfarers Chapel has also been temporarily suspended until the publication schedule gets back on track. This in itself has reduced recent print runs by 350 copies. The chart tells the story:

	March 2003	March 2004	# change	% change
U.S.	558	479	-79	-14%
Canada	49	49	0	0%
Foreign	78	85	+7	+9%
Bulk	438	72	-366	-84%
Total	1,123	685	-438	-39%

The situation in the Massachusetts Association is more stable than it was a year ago. I have also stepped down from several leadership roles both at the state level and at the local level. Barring further crises, this should make it possible for me to catch up on the publication schedule and begin building subscription levels back up again during the coming year.

Despite substantially lower print circulation, there has also been positive news for *Our Daily Bread* this year. In cooperation with IMSU, the planned upgrades to the Online Edition of *Our Daily Bread* (<http://www.swedenborg.org/odb/>) were completed. These include the ability to search for sermons by author, title, and keyword, making the content much more accessible. This, combined with overall improvements to the Convention website aimed at increasing its visibility in search engines, has resulted in solid usage for the Online Edition of *Our Daily Bread*. The website statistics for April, 2004 show that sermons were viewed over 12,000 times total in that month alone, making *Our Daily Bread* the most heavily used section of our website. This has also resulted in more requests for free six month trial subscriptions to the print edition.

*Our Daily Bread* is moving forward toward another long-term goal: making each number serve double duty both as one issue in a periodical and as stand-alone topical literature. A redesign of the cover is now underway. The new cover will shift the emphasis from the magazine's name and date to the topic of the individual issue. It will also introduce thematic cover artwork for each issue. This will give *Our Daily Bread* a longer and more useful "shelf life" in the literature distribution racks of our churches and centers, while still serving its subscribers.

Though this year has been difficult both for the magazine and for its editor, I believe that *Our Daily Bread* will continue to grow in outreach and usefulness over the coming years.

*Respectfully Submitted,*  
*Rev. Lee Woofenden, Editor*

SWEDENBORGIAN HOUSE OF STUDIES  
AT PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

Berkeley, California

STUDENT AFFAIRS

**Current Student Body:** At this May's PSR commencement exercises, we will be graduating our first class of ordinands: **Kathy Speas, Kevin Baxter, Alison Lane Baxter,** and **Doug Moss** will be graduating this May from PSR with the M.Div. degree having also completed the academic portion of the Certificate in Swedenborgian Studies. **Dave Brown** will be graduating from the M.Div. program at PSR, but has more coursework to do for the Certificate in Swedenborgian Studies. **Jane Siebert**, a distance student at Friends College in Kansas, is expected to have completed her work for the Certificate in Swedenborgian Studies this May. **Jenn Tafel, Carla Friedrich, Sage Currie,** and **Lana Sandahl** are expected to be continuing as M.Div. students at SHS/PSR next year, and **Eli Dale** (who takes accredited PSR coursework while attending Andover-Newton) and **Janet Hendrickson** (who takes accredited PSR coursework while attending the divinity school at the Univ. of Seattle) are continuing distance students pursuing the Certificate in Swedenborgian Studies. General Church-connected M.A. student at PSR, **Joel Brown**, is another Swedenborgian on campus who is not taking Swedenborgian classes. **Rich Tafel**, an induction candidate from the American Baptist church, has completed the Certificate in Swedenborgian Studies.

**Recruiting:** It appears likely we will have two Swedenborgians joining us next year, both in the M.A. program. We continue to hear reports that women in the General Church may be interested in pursuing advanced degrees at PSR/GTU due to the presence of SHS for integrating Swedenborgian studies into accredited degree programs at a prestigious institution of theological education.

**Scholarship Planning:** Student cost/debt is a serious factor inhibiting prospective students from entering M.Div. and M.A. programs in Swedenborgian Studies. After looking at building scholarship fund support for the better part of two years, we are finally putting into place a scholarship subsidy program that will alleviate the costs somewhat. We hope to grow this fund considerably, and we have designated this goal to be a high priority.

### **FACULTY AND CURRICULUM**

**SHS/PSR Curricular Offerings:** These have been planned reaching into the '06-'07 academic year. This semester I am teaching "Swedenborgian Church History, Policy, and Practice" with nine residential students (including one doctoral student at Cal-Berkeley), one auditor, and four distance students online. Greg Johnson is teaching "Love, Sex, and Marriage" (a study of Swedenborg's *Conjugal Love* in a broad context of culture and history) with six students, including two non-Swedenborgians. Every year Greg teaches one course for the general (non-Swedenborgian) curriculum. This semester he is teaching "Flannery O'Connor's Christianity," with fifteen students. Next year he will augment interfaith studies at the GTU with "Introduction to Hindu Philosophy." George Dole taught a basic Swedenborgian Bible course online for several students. Wilma Wake gave a very well received Intersession course in "parish renewal through spirituality programming" that had fifteen students. Rev. Eric Allison and Rev. Dr. Rachel Rivers have both been used as guest lecturers. I am now specializing in the historical side of Christian Spirituality in my doctoral studies, and I will be team-teaching with Professor Randi Walker next fall in "History of Christian Life and Thought," in which Swedenborg is included.

**Contexting Seminar:** We continue to hold a weekly all-community forum called Swedenborg Contexting Seminar. This is one of the most useful and important activities we do as a "House" on campus supporting denominational connections. Rev. Erni Martin, David Garrett, Rev. Andy Stinson, Rev. Jonathan Mitchell, and Rev. Kit Billings have all had a session with students this year.

**SWEDENBORGIAN SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE**

Greg Johnson, Kim Hinrichs, and I comprise the Swedenborgian Scholarship Committee, which meets monthly to plan upcoming *Studia Swedenborgiana* issues, plan the curriculum, and discuss and support one another's scholarly projects and ambitions. The feedback on the new and redesigned *Studia Swedenborgiana* was initially very good, and after the special series on feminist theology and Swedenborgian theology, we gained significant feedback, especially from the General Church and General Conference.

Greg Johnson recently has had two edited volumes published by two prestigious academic publishers: *Are We In Time?: And Other Essays on Time and Temporality* by Charles Sherover and edited by Gregory R. Johnson (Northwestern University Press, 2003); and *From Kant and Royce to Heidegger: Essays in Modern Philosophy* (Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy Series, vol. 38), by Charles M. Sherover and edited by Gregory R. Johnson and Brenda L. Moore (Catholic University of America Press, 2003).

**CONVENTION 2005: AT UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA CAMPUS, BERKELEY**

SHS will host the denominational annual summer convention in 2005 at the Foothill Campus at the University of California. This will give a chance for a much larger number of Swedenborgians from around the U.S. and Canada to see the setting of their seminary. The full convention will run from July 6-13, 2005. Randy Sweringen of the PSR alumni office will be joining our merry band of about eight SHS-anchored Swedenborgians at our convention this summer.

***Respectfully Submitted,  
Rev. Jim Lawrence, D. Min., Dean***

**THE CORPORATION OF  
THE NEW CHURCH THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL  
d/b/a SWEDENBORGIAN HOUSE OF STUDIES**

**Statement of Financial Position  
Year Ended June 30, 2003 and 2002**

<b>ASSETS</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2002</b>
Current Assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 218,699	\$ 307,201
Investments	3,054,332	4,159,707
Accounts receivable, net of allowance of \$2,201	19,586	22,415
Grants receivable	112,000	7,000
Notes receivable	2,000,000	2,000,000
Interest receivable	25,000	0
Prepaid expenses and other assets	<u>3941</u>	<u>5,416</u>
Total Current Assets	5,433,558	6,501,739
Investments	2,515,682	2,515,682
Annuities	147,328	155,210
Grants receivable	0	112,000
Collections	<u>1,019,200</u>	<u>1,019,200</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b><u>\$ 9,115,768</u></b>	<b><u>\$10,303,831</u></b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Current Liabilities:		
Accounts payable	\$ 37,739	\$ 37,999
Accrued vacation	12,786	8,011
Annuities payable	<u>82,818</u>	<u>90,701</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>133,343</u>	<u>136,711</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<u>133,343</u>	<u>136,711</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Unrestricted	6,076,507	6,997,262
Temporarily restricted	379,736	643,676
Permanently restricted	<u>2,526,182</u>	<u>2,526,182</u>
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<u>8,982,425</u>	<u>10,167,120</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b><u>\$ 9,115,768</u></b>	<b><u>\$10,303,831</u></b>

**THE CORPORATION OF  
THE NEW CHURCH THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL  
d/b/a SWEDENBORGIAN HOUSE OF STUDIES**

**Statement of Activities  
Year Ended June 30, 2003**

	<u>Unrestricted</u>	Temporarily <u>Restricted</u>	Permanently <u>Restricted</u>	<u>Total</u>
<b>SUPPORT AND REVENUE</b>				
Grants and contributions	\$ 40,493	\$ 32,612	\$ 0	\$ 73,105
Tuition and fees	1,500	0	0	1,500
Investment income	260,525	0	0	260,525
Unrealized loss on investments	(1,047,810)	(57,672)	0	(1,105,482)
Interest	102,207	0	0	102,207
Other income	3,708	0	0	3,708
Net assets released from restrictions:				
Purpose accomplished	<u>238,880</u>	<u>(238,880)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE</b>	<b><u>(400,497)</u></b>	<b><u>(263,940)</u></b>	<b><u>0</u></b>	<b><u>(664,437)</u></b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
Program services				
Instruction and student services	137,323	0	0	137,323
Library	169,040	0	0	169,040
Supporting services:				
Administration	209,681	0	0	209,681
Fundraising	<u>4,214</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4,214</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b><u>520,258</u></b>	<b><u>0</u></b>	<b><u>0</u></b>	<b><u>520,258</u></b>
Change in net assets	(920,755)	(263,940)	0	(1,184,695)
Net assets at the beginning of year - restated	<u>6,997,262</u>	<u>643,676</u>	<u>2,526,182</u>	<u>10,167,120</u>
<b>Net assets at the end of year</b>	<b><u>\$ 6,076,507</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 379,736</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 2,526,182</u></b>	<b><u>\$8,982,425</u></b>



Associations	Churches		Ordained Ministers		Authorized Lay Leaders		Members		Number of Delegates	
	Active/Inactive	Active/Inactive/Retired	Active/Inactive/Retired	Active/Inactive/Retired	Active/Inactive/Total	Active/Inactive/Total	Active/Inactive/Total			
Canada	1	0	1	0	1	1	90	30	120	11
Illinois	6	0	2	1	0	0	120	26	146	14
Kansas	2	0	0	0	1	0	88	0	88	10
Maine	2	1	3	2	0	0	143	12	155	16
Massachusetts	5	0	6	2	1	0	122	41	163	14
Michigan	1	0	1	0	0	0	68	22	90	8
Middle Atlantic	3	0	3	0	0	0	105	26	131	12
New York	2	0	2	1	0	0	49	27	76	6
Ohio	3	2	2	1	0	1	72	16	88	9
Pacific Coast	4	0	8	2	7	1	336	20	356	35
Southeast	2	0	3	0	0	0	54	5	59	7
Western	5	1	2	2	1	1	205	0	205	22
Canada Conference										
SCYL										2

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**SOCIETIES**

\*Bayside  
\*did not report for  
2002, 2003, 2004

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## REPORTS OF ASSOCIATIONS AND CHURCHES

### CANADA ASSOCIATION

*President: Rev. Paul Zacharias*  
*Vice-President: Steve Thomas*  
*Secretary: Florence Rosenberger*  
*Treasurer: Grace Sudden*

### CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

**Kitchener, Ontario**

*President: Jim Reid*  
*Vice-President: Cathy Lauber*  
*Secretary: Barb Cullen*  
*Treasurer: Tracey Sanders*

The first year of my two year term is now over, and as I look back over the past year I realize that although we have accomplished much, there are always more areas where we can improve in “Helping to do God’s Work” here at the Church of the Good Shepherd.

We have had many successes, thanks to you, the congregation, our staff and fellow board members. Notable achievements this year that I would like to give special recognition in review are as follows:

- The Wedding Celebration in February was the dream of the Men’s group and captured the imagination of many as we saw our beautifully decorated church, both inside and out, the recommitting of our wedding vows of over 30 couples. We had tremendous exposure for our church and our wedding ministry both on TV, radio and newspaper.
- This year saw the launch of <http://www.churchofthegoodshepherd.ca> and what a great site it is. Special recognition to Val Brugler, David Ingard, John Cullen and Cathy Lauber for all their great work in making this happen.

- You will note in the Treasurer's Report that we were able to have a surplus as planned in givings and earnings over our expenses, and for this we are extremely grateful. A big part of this has been the rental income from both parking and building rental. As indicated in our previous communications we need at least a 10% increase in givings to meet our financial goals for 2004.
- Your board this year took on a vision of moving from "A Floors and Doors Board" to a "Heart and Soul Board." What we meant by this was that we wanted to pay special attention to our spiritual well-being and growth as opposed to just worrying about needed repairs to the building and where the next dollar was coming from. Lori Edwards, Ian McIntosh, and David Ingard deserve special recognition for their hard work, great ideas and continued leadership.
- As a result of our new Bylaws and Constitution, we now have a committee specifically set up to work with the Ministerial team for both communications and concerns from the congregation and to the congregation with the Ministerial team. This past year we have been very busy planning services, inviting visiting ministers and providing support to our Lay Leader, Steve Thomas.
- Special mention for all the enjoyable "Peeks into Past" provided by the Archives Committee. Whenever your board on your behalf wanted information on traditions, or past experiences, it was as simple as a phone call, and almost everything you wanted or needed to know was available to you. Again, a big thank you for the tireless efforts in preserving our history and good luck on your updating our church history. The archive committee with the encouragement of your board and General Convention will be producing a booklet of our church history. This has not been updated since 1983.
- We now have a very capable permanent committee made up of Don Lasso, Carl Heck and Darryl Sanders along with the Buildings and Property Board Member. This committee works very hard to ensure that we continue to enjoy our beautiful church building and surroundings. It is with assurance of this committee that I feel very comfortable about the future well-being of our facilities. Gentlemen, thank you.

Gary Heuvel will be leaving this position that he has handled so well over the past 3 years, a special thank you Gary.

- A special thank you to Jeannie, the Choir and the Music Committee for providing music for all of our services. As we look back over the year, I am sure we all can remember some special moments, we thank you all.
- What a great year for lay services, the Church Women, the Men's Group, the children's Christmas Pageant and the Board Service for Stewardship Sunday. We are extremely blessed, again thank you.
- Debbie Wilson has done a great job again this year with the teen members of the church. Retreats, sleepovers, and good fun, thank you Debbie. What a glorious occasion to have 10 of our teens join us as associate members this year.
- Our Sunday School teachers deserve a big thank you as well. An awesome responsibility of providing training, education, excitement, inspiration, and more. Thank you.
- A special thank you to Steve Thomas who we have all watched grow over the past couple of years while he has attended to our ministerial needs. Thank you Steve.

No report would be complete without the mention of the "retirement" of Rev. Paul Zacharias. What a moving moment as he finally called it quits after 40 years of trusted service. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts trusted servant.

And now the future, we look forward to the return of our full time minister effective July 15th, 2004. We expect to see Rev. Brugler in the pulpit, as a visiting minister in April, May and June. Although, we have done very well as a church under the direction of Steve Thomas, we do need full time spiritual guidance and we welcome Rev. Brugler back home after a very successful term as our Denomination President. We also look forward to hosting the Convention in early July; I know that many of you have been working very hard to ensure the success of this important opportunity. And finally thank you for allowing me to be your board President.

***Respectfully submitted,  
Jim Reid, President***

**ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION**

*President: Rev. Kit Billings*

*Vice-President: Dr. Robert Philips*

*Secretary: Judy Freeman*

*Treasurer: Jeannette Hille*

The Illinois Association represents the following Societies:

- The Chicago Society of the New Jerusalem, Chicago, Illinois
- Church of the Open Word, St. Louis, Missouri
- LaPorte New Church, LaPorte, Indiana
- Lennox Township Church of the New Jerusalem, Norway, Iowa
- The Good Shepherd Church, Des Plaines, Illinois
- Virginia Street Swedenborgian Church, St. Paul, Minnesota

The Executive Committee met via one teleconference this year, which was in September. Reports were given by officers. Carl Yenetchi reported the LaPorte New Church's Manna House is 90% complete. They received two boxes of books from the Newbury Street Bookstore through Lee Woofenden. The Opening is being planned for the end of January, around Swedenborg's birthday.

The society is working on a pastoral inducement fund. This would help students repay their school loans if they were a minister in an Illinois Association Church.

Nominations were discussed for President and Treasurer, as Kit and Jeannette both have served their maximum terms.

Plans were finalized for the November biennial meeting.

The executive board met on November 21, 2003 prior to the Associations Biennial to confirm the agenda for the following day.

The Biennial meeting of the Illinois Association took place on November 22, 2003 at the Swedenborg Library in Chicano, IL. Fifteen members were present representing St. Louis, Minneapolis, LaPorte, Chicago, and Des Plaines Societies.

The business meeting took place on Saturday. The meeting was followed by a tour which emphasized architecture influenced by Swedenborgians.

There have been funds donated to the National Youth Program. College grants were given to students. The board has voted to replace the Tot Lot at Almont.

Progress was made on the Pastoral Inducement fund. A subcommittee was formed to put together the first draft.

The site of the biennial meeting was discussed.

New officers were voted on. The new president is Eric Hoffman. The new treasurer is Mindy Jester. They were consecrated at the service held Sunday morning, November 23, 2003.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Judy Freeman, Secretary*

**CHICAGO SOCIETY OF THE NEW JERUSALEM:  
THE SWEDENBORG SPIRITUAL GROWTH CENTER**

**Chicago, IL**

*President: Catherine Laakko*

*Vice-President: James Hauck*

*Secretary: Kay Hauck*

*Treasurer: Karen Feil*

The Chicago Society of the New Jerusalem Board voted to continue efforts to build an audience for Swedenborg's works in Chicago. To this end we funded operation of the Swedenborg Library, formerly known as the Western New Church Union. Swedenborg Library carries on the WNCU's historic mission of providing public access to Emanuel Swedenborg's theology.

For a second year, we contracted with Rev. Rebecca Armstrong's consultation firm, Arts For Education, to develop library programs. She presented us with "The Soul in the City" as our 2003 theme. Based on the ideal of the Heavenly City, each of our monthly programs was designed to open Swedenborg's works to the contemporary mind by showing its ongoing relevance to urban issues and living.

Rev. Armstrong also arranged co-sponsorship of our programs with several groups in Chicago whose missions are compatible with the Swedenborg Library. We have established cordial and productive relationships with the Chicago Chapter of the Institute of Noetic Sciences, the Joseph Campbell Foundation Mythological Roundtable, the Parliament of World Religions, and the American Indian Center.

In the field of the arts, we hung two art exhibits; “Chicago: the Green City,” a mixed-media park design by Trish Van der Beke, and “City of Light,” watercolors of Chicago by Lily Gaines. Rev. John Moulder gave us a delightful jazz guitar performance, “Music is the Soul.” Cathy Laakko led a spring series of classes on Julia Cameron’s “The Artist’s Way.” Jim and Kay Hauck hosted an evening presentation and discussion of “Splendors of the Spirit,” the Swedenborg Foundation’s award-winning video, which had recently been aired on Chicago Public TV station WYCC.

Several small groups use our facility, and report good ongoing attendance. These include a weekly Lamas Qi Gong class led by master teacher Jim Kobus, a monthly Spiritual Healing Circle led by Paula Battaglio, a Men’s Group led by Mark Neal, the Friends of Compassion, and a quarterly Joseph Campbell Foundation Mythological Roundtable led by Rev. Rebecca Armstrong.

Our open hours are Tuesdays and Fridays from 11 AM – 2 PM, when our charming hostess Lily Gaines greets interested visitors. Several have returned for more visits and attended programs. We publicized each event with a combination of advertising and invitations, and through our web site, [www.swedenborglib.org](http://www.swedenborglib.org). At the end of the year, we had 375 names on our mailing list, most of whom attended programs.

We had hoped program attendees would join us for services of worship held during the year, but that didn’t happen. Our small group greatly enjoyed the services of Reverends Rebecca Armstrong, Wilma Wake and Kit Billings, who inspired us to cherish our spiritual treasures.

In November, the Chicago Society hosted the bi-annual meeting of the Illinois Association of the Swedenborgian Church. Among the events of a productive, delightful and busy weekend, one strikes this reporter as especially significant. Gathered at the huge round “Pope’s Table” at Bucca del Beppo restaurant, we all spontaneously joined the piped-in singer in a spirited rendition of “Que Sera, Sera.” It’s true, “whatever will be, will be,

the future's not ours to see," but after another year's work of building an audience for Swedenborg's works, we feel sure the Lord is providing us both inspiration and the energy to go forward.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Kay Hauck, Secretary*

## LAPORTE NEW CHURCH

LaPorte, IN

*President: Lori Steinhiser*  
*Vice-President: Judy Freeman*  
*Secretary: Heidi Potucek*  
*Treasurer: Duane Harley*

On January 11, 2004 the LaPorte New Church held their Annual Meeting. Eighteen people were in attendance for the meeting.

Treasurer Duane Harley supplied a 2003 Budget Actuals and 2004 Forecast handout, which spelled out our actual income and expenses for 2003. Total income for the LaPorte New Church in 2003 was \$76,085.89. This number would not have been possible without the extremely generous plate offerings in the amount of \$31,826.15. This number is amazing given our size. The trustees of the LaPorte New Church continued to oversee the church's maintenance, investments and insurance. With the assistance of church members and friends minor repairs were done to preserve our historical church. We had a very bountiful net increase in our investments in 2003 and we were attentive to the insurance coverage on the church.

Our President, Lori Steinhiser shared that there were two baptisms in 2003.

Some of the major projects tackled by the LaPorte New Church in 2003 were the success of a Book Club, a Goal Planning Meeting in August, huge success from participating in the Sunflower Feast in September and participation in a Board Leadership Seminar and Evangelization Seminar. Following the termination of Reverend Yenetchi in October, a Who We Are and



and Where Are We Going visioning meeting was held with guest General Convention Vice President, Chris Laitner. Also there was a visit from General Convention President Ronald Brugler and an Interim Ministry Workshop with David McBride who graciously offered their assistance and skills to assist us with determining how we should fill our vacant ministerial position. In preparation for the opening of our Manna House Book Room, we purchased, installed and stained 6 pine doors, parking bumpers were donated and installed and there was delivery of books and bookshelves. The Sunday School of the LaPorte New Church performed an Easter and Christmas pageant in 2003.

The ladies of Women's Alliance met almost every month to determine what useful ways they could not only help serve the church family's needs but others in the physical church. The WA received \$1931.37 in income, \$1406.00 of which came from Rummage sale proceeds. WA reports that \$4068.00 of the saving account balance has been earmarked for the Pew Restoration Fund. What a blessing.

Patricia Tukos continues to serve as Wedding Coordinator and Gail Holmes and Sue Harley continue to serve as Wedding Hostesses. There were nine weddings performed in 2003. This provided us with \$2180.00 in revenue. Rev. Victor Frohne officiated at most of the weddings after Rev. Yenetchi was terminated in October.

Despite our Outreach/Missions respite at the beginning of 2003, many programs continued and were beneficial to our church and community. Loaves and Fishes soup kitchen, Wednesday Evening Meditation services, Thursdays with Manna, CoDA and First Place Health Management program were terminated in 2003. I have much pleasure in announcing that we have implemented more Outreach/Missions programs in 2003 than were canceled. Current programs and/or activities are Children's Sunday School, Manna House Book Room, New Church Samaritans, participation in the Church Women United, weekly coffee hour, monthly newsletter, Benevolence Fund and camping weekend at Indiana Dunes State Park. New programs and activities for 2003 were the placement of pew pamphlets, evening hours at the church during the Iraq war, the Book Club, Car Club, weekly worship bulletins, goal meeting in August, Evangelization seminar and special plate collections. The Congregation Pastor Relations Committee (CPR) was dissolved this year. At present, the Board of Directors handles these issues in an anonymous way in hopes of maintaining open communication between the Board and congregation and between the congregation and

and minister (once one is hired). Our index of Hymnals was remodeled. Our Benevolence Fund was able to provide service to three individuals in the year 2003. Other programs such as Chancel and New Church Samaritans are working and continue to serve our church and community well.

Most of this was accomplished without a minister. What a wonderful thing to be so involved in God's work. We are looking to implement new projects in our Outreach/Missions in 2004. Barb Halle shared in her 2003 Outreach/Missions Report at the annual meeting and spelled out some things the Outreach/Missions would like to do in the near future: design welcome packets for visitors and develop a "Welcome" program; install a pamphlet rack outside in the vestibule for church pamphlets and wedding pamphlets; restore our pews; start a youth group; review and re-develop a 5-year plan with reachable goals; improve/expand and diversify our Sunday music; increase the wedding ministry; hire a minister; and become self-sufficient and expand our outreach in a useful and needed manner into our community. Blessings to all of you in 2004.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Heidi Potucek, Secretary*

## **VIRGINIA STREET SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH**

**St. Paul, MN**

*President: Sylvia Lange*  
*Vice-President: Erik Lange*  
*Secretary: Ann Weldy*  
*Treasurer: Jeannette Hille*

There were 52 Sunday Worship Services with an average attendance of 34. We held five (5) special services: Maundy Thursday Communion and the Tenebrae Service, Good Friday Service, Children's Sabbath Sunday and the Christmas Eve Pageant of the Nativity. We also held an Installation Service for Rev. Eric Hoffman on Palm Sunday with Rev Ron Bugler officiating.

No members added or removed.

Five (5) Baptisms celebrated.

We welcomed a new minister and his family to Virginia Street Swedenborgian Church in 2003. Rev. Eric Hoffman, his wife, Norma and daughter, Eiryn arrived April 1st and they have all been a blessing for our church. Rev. Hoffman brings many talents to his ministry here and we are grateful for his leadership.

The Sunday School, under the able leadership of Jeannette Hille, meets each Sunday except for the first Sunday of the month when the children remain a part of the worship service. Sunday School has grown and we now have two regular classes and sometimes a youth class.

Twenty-nine weddings were held in our sanctuary. We are hoping that our new website, developed by Heather Driver, will bring in more weddings in 2004.

Several of our members worked with Habitat for Humanity for a week in June and we served, when needed, as volunteers for the overnight homeless project. Several church people have been working in the concession stands at Xcel Energy to earn money for the purchase of air-conditioning and a new furnace in 2004.

We have many activities throughout the year including Swedenborg's Birthday Dinner, Friday Night Funfests, the Church Picnic, Rally Sunday, Johnny Appleseed Day, the Men's Group Pancake Breakfast, the Christmas Brunch and the 3rd Annual Christmas Eve Dinner.

Special Events included:

Men's Group Retreat in October,

Participation in a Historical Church Tour and an Organ Tour

“Souper” Sunday on November 30th, ending our month long drive for food for the food shelf.

Participation in Cropwalk

Several learning opportunities were offered including:

Sunday morning Adult Sunday School

Arcana Study Group on Wednesday evenings

Thursday Evening Spiritual Forum

Two groups, Women's Alliance and the Men's Group continue to serve our church. Women's Alliance hosts the Coffee Hour on Sundays after church and provide food for our special celebrations. They also support a

food shelf. The Men's Group made a big contribution in doing maintenance for the church, mowing the lawn and keeping sidewalks clean. And, we all look forward to their annual Pancake Breakfast!

Sylvia Lange, Organist, and Erik Lange, Violinist, continue to bless us with their wonderful music each Sunday. In addition we have had a choir, occasionally, and special music by persons in our congregation.

Our church building is used regularly by one outside group and the Board makes decisions for usage as people or organizations make requests.

A word of special thanks goes to all the people who serve on our committees:

By-Laws	Finance	Pastoral Relations
Wedding	Music	Pulpit
Worship	Newsletter	Youth
SGO	House & Grounds	Historical Preservation

We thank and praise God for all the blessings He has given our church.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Ann Weldy, Secretary*

## CHURCH OF THE OPEN WORD

**St. Louis, Missouri**

*President: Sue Burns*

*Vice-President: Marion McCarthy*

*Secretary: David Currall*

*Treasurer: Duane Beougher*

We held Sunday worship services all 52 weekends of the year, and provided high quality weekly worship, including very good music and worship songs thanks to our wonderful musicians, Paul Deming, Zach Guenzel, and Jenny Bower, who deserve enormous thanks. Our church choir performed twice, singing many songs both for our Easter Sunday service and Christmas Eve-Eve.

Our special worship services for 2003 were Youth Sunday, Palm Sunday, Maundy-Thursdays Tenebrae and Communion, Easter, New Church Sunday, September 11 Memorial, Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve-Eve. We continued our Sunday morning adult discussion group, using the fantastic book by Paul Vickers, *Person to Person: The Gospel of Mark*, led by our minister, the Rev. Kit Billings. In January 2003, we began our "Scripture Recitation Program" in our worship services; this is intended to help our parishioners memorize the Lord's truth and apply it to our lives. We practice reading aloud from our bulletin and at the final Sunday service of each month we recite the Lord's Word from memory. As Swedenborg learned, the Word is what connects us with heaven and the angels.

*The Kingdom Within: Embracing Soulfulness and Strength:* our minister led this spiritual growth program on three consecutive Thursday evenings in March and April. Its purpose was to help people embrace and understand their innate goodness and soulfulness, where God resides constantly within. Two Meditation Workshops, led by John MacEnulty, were held in early 2003. He also held a special flute concert in January and February. We had a three month long meditation program, which met on Monday nights in April, May and June.

In consultation with our youth and their parents, our minister began a monthly Youth League where teens are given an opportunity to learn and discuss useful theological and doctrinal topics. We also had special outings, one to Six Flags and the other Christmas caroling at a local nursing home. Our pastor and Paul Deming attended the Evangelization Conference hosted by the General Church at Boulder, Colorado in October and gave a report to our congregation on their experience.

Thanks to the good work of our president, Sue Burns, we secured a special agreement with Xerox to enjoy a two year, affordable contract to use their top of the line multi-color, wax-based Phaser 8200 printer, which has allowed us to produce top quality weekly bulletins, flyers, and newsletters. We have produced an attractive and interesting bimonthly newsletter that attempts to give our members, friends, visitors and potential wedding clients a flavor of the New Church. We have a new website at [www.360StLouis.com](http://www.360StLouis.com).

We have 20 active members and 8 inactive members. We held four "work Sundays" where our congregation worked very hard on maintaining and beautifying our church gardens and refurbished

our garden gazebo, which are a spiritual sanctuary to the thousands of people who come through our doors each year.

We employ Marty Mason as a part-time Wedding Ministry Coordinator, whose dedication to the life of the congregation and our Wedding Ministry is purely angelic.

We hosted 46 weddings and are proud of the high quality service and ministry we provide to the St. Louis community. When needed, our pastor provides pre-marriage counseling.

The Women's Alliance provides a coffee hour each Sunday, and serves pot-luck luncheons throughout the year. Always a success is their annual rummage sale.

Our pastor has thoroughly enjoyed our ministry this year, and is deeply thankful to the Lord and our congregation for our working together for the Lord and our church in helping to enrich our spiritual lives, furthering the outreach of the New Church. This congregation deserves many thanks for its wonderful volunteerism and faithful service of the Lord. Pastor Billings has worked as Wedding Ministry Director and attended monthly community meetings to discuss social needs for local youth.

Our pastor maintained high involvement with our denomination, serving both regionally and nationally. Rev. Kit Billings volunteered as president of our Illinois Association (his final of 6 years). He chaired our biennial meeting of the Association in Chicago, helped plan its spiritual enrichment program, and led worship and preached the sermon that Sunday. He continued as a member of the Committee on Admission to the Ministry (CAM) involving two trips to our seminary in Berkeley; he led a Sunday worship service in Kitchener, Ontario in mid-winter; attended Convention 2003 in Geneva, New York; lectured in July at the Almont New Church Assembly; served on a study committee for the Council of Ministers on the same-sex marriage issue facing North America.

Kit's highest joy of all this past year, however, was being blessed to meet his future wife, Ms. Penny Larson, from Shenandoah, Iowa. They look forward to sharing marriage vows in the summer of 2004.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*David Currall, Secretary*

**KANSAS ASSOCIATION**

*President: Carl Helm*

*Vice-President: Doris Friesen*

*Secretary: Veneta Z. Lane*

*Treasurer: Linda Kraus*

The Annual Meeting of the Kansas Association was held in Pawnee Rock, Kansas, on April 25, 2004. The morning worship service, with the message "Upon This Rock," was given by Rev. Eric Zacharias. Afterwards, a large dinner was served.

President of the Kansas Association, Carl Helm, opened the meeting at 1:30 p.m., with reading the 23rd Psalm. This was followed by everyone joining together in the Lord's Prayer. Minutes of the 2003 annual meeting were read and approved. The treasurer's report was accepted as read.

At this time, Keith Mull introduced Robert Head, President of Urbana University, and Bob Keller, also from the University. A report was given by them – along with a slide presentation – to show that it is the college's intention that its various educational programs continue to develop with distinction. Carl thanked them for the excellent account.

Reports were given by both the Pawnee Rock and Pretty Prairie Societies. Many of the activities for both churches during the past year have been the same as in the preceding year. Vivian Bright, President of the Pawnee Rock Society, appreciated all of the lay people who take their turn with services. They are delighted to see an increase in their attendance. During the year they had two funerals and one wedding. Their Ladies Service Alliance gathered for nine meetings during the year. They had their annual garage sale, Christmas luncheon, and are now looking forward to the new altar cloths that one member has volunteered to make. Vernon Kraus, President of the Pretty Prairie Society, also was grateful for lay people taking their turns with services. The church joined in with the other community churches with the annual Pancake Supper and Maundy Thursday service. Several of our church women have joined with other community church women in a Bible study class. The Pretty Prairie Service Guild met nine times during the year. They also had a garage sale, served coffee and cookies at a Memorial Day program at the cemetery and donated money to

an after-ball games program for the community kids.

In new business, it was voted that once again traveling expense money would be made available to members attending convention this summer. It was passed that Our Daily Bread would once again be sent to 28 libraries and correctional institutes

Pawnee Rock and Pretty Prairie will meet the third Sunday in September outside Stafford, KS for a church service and picnic lunch. Camp Mennoscah will be held the first weekend in November.

Two trustees were elected for 3-year terms. The present slate of officers was re-elected for another year. As there was no further business to discuss, Carl thanked everyone for attending the meeting and making the past year a good one. He appreciated all of the help and cooperation. The meeting was adjourned.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Veneta Z. Lane, Secretary*

## CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM

**Pawnee Rock, KS**

*President: Vivian Bright*

*Vice-President: Connie Helm*

*Secretary: Anita Wilson*

*Treasurer: Howard Bowman*

We are now beginning our 116th year as a New Church organization in America. After researching the past years' activities I read the Constitution of our Church organization.

Here are the first 3 articles:

*“Article I—Name—This Society shall be called the First Church of the New Jerusalem, Pawnee Rock, Kansas. (This was amended and changed to The New Jerusalem Church of Pawnee Rock within the last two years.)*



*Article II—Uses—*The uses of this Society shall be to propagate the Heavenly Doctrines of the New Jerusalem; to provide for and promote divine worship, religious instruction, church fellowship and the cultivation of the social life which is a life in accord with the Divine Commandments.

*Article III—Membership—*Members shall be designated as infant members and as adult members. Infant members are all persons under fifteen years of age, who have been introduced into the church by baptism. These become adult members upon their arrival at the age of about fifteen years.”

Adult members are all members of fifteen years of age and over.

Persons of fifteen years of age and over may become members by expressing their desire of becoming such to the pastor, president or secretary of the Society, if such person or persons have received Christian baptism by confirmation, and if not baptized they may become members by receiving New Church baptism.

All adult members are entitled to vote and may hold office.

Any member may withdraw from the Society by presenting a written notice to that effect to the president or secretary of the Society.”

It then goes on to list the officers and their duties.

In looking back over the years’ activities, it is apparent that we have grown and tried to reach out to the community. This can only be accomplished if we are all willing to be active and caring members. The willingness and cooperative spirit of the congregation is shown by the acts accomplished during the year. Each and every one of us is important in a unique way.

The attendance of our outlying members in Montezuma and Oklahoma are an inspiration to all of us. Also we have noticed an increase in Church attendance each Sunday morning which is an added inspiration to each of us.

The President of Convention, Ron Brugler, officiated at our Easter and Christmas services. Attending the State Association at Pretty Prairie and Camp Mennoscah offered us the opportunity to hear two promising student ministers to be ordained this year at Convention in Canada—Kathy Speas and Allison Lane.

On the community level, we've hosted the monthly coffees, published the Pawnee Rock News, participated in the Good Friday Service, Ladies Salad Supper, helped with Vacation Bible School, Gospel Song Fest in the Park, Thanksgiving Service, and hosted the Christmas Vespers at our Church.

The Christmas Vespers service was made special by four of the young high school students who performed as a French Horn quartet. These four young students gave up their noon hour 2-3 times during the preceding week of the Vesper service to practice. Two of those students are church members—Jenny Wilson and Kaitlin Walker—who also performed Christmas Eve at our service.

Another important service to the community is the support of the Food Banks in Great Bend and Larned. These donations are very much appreciated as there is a real need to help families who can't supply all their needs. Making the first Sunday of the month as the donation Sunday should remain a priority with each and every one of us.

As dedicated members of our church we have published a monthly newsletter, (Marian, Anita, & VB) maintained the appearance of our church yard (Jerald, Howard, Anita, Marian, & Toni) decorated the church for special occasions, (Carole, Connie H. & Karen) been weekly coffee hosts during the fellowship hour after the services, cleaned our church, opened the Church each Sunday morning for services, (Howard) kept the Sunday School going, had monthly board meetings, served as lay leaders in the worship services, (Jerald, Connie & Megan, Howard, Lynn, Keith & Marian, Jenny & Aletha, Tricia & Toni, & VB) (special music (Karen & Aletha) each Sunday, and attended and participated in the worship services each Sunday.

In the statistics department we had the Greg Alexander-Megan Helm wedding. Also one of our members, Steve Unruh passed to the higher life. In the past month, one of our friends, Wayne Lee, had his memorial service in our Church.

The mention of the duties performed by each and every one of us is important because we never know the influence we may have on people. This was brought home to me when the family of Wayne Lee told me how they had driven by our Church when riding around Pawnee Rock one day and Wayne remarked "That's where I'm going to attend Church."

I apologize for not mentioning each and everyone by name and the duties performed but we are all serving the Lord in our unique way. We ended the year on a positive note with the Christmas Eve Service at our Church with a Church full of people who celebrated the birth of our Lord as has been done for over 2000 years.

May we continue in being a part of the Lord's kingdom on earth in our daily lives by worshipping the Lord, on our national level, state level and community level locally this next year so the Word of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be spread throughout the world.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Anita Wilson, Secretary*

#### **MAINE ASSOCIATION**

*President: Rev. Wilma Wake  
Vice-President: Nanci Adair  
Secretary: Mark Allen*

#### **THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH**

**Portland, ME**

*President: Mark Allen  
Secretary: Norris Dale  
Treasurer: Andrew Kriger*

The Portland church, with Rev. Wake's leadership, has embarked on a plan to regenerate itself into a provider of services to the community. It has become clear that the church has not been making the fullest use of its building and other resources. It is also becoming clear that the Portland church should not continue as a Sunday-only operation. The first step of the regeneration was to institute a monthly Vegetarian Bean Supper, to which the surrounding community has been invited. The energy invested in this program has brought our neighbors together and helped to re-establish the church in its neighborhood. The next steps will include an

after-school arts program for local children and programming for children with attention-deficit disorder. Applying for several grants this spring has been the beginning of the transformation, which will start in physical terms with the installation of a handicapped-accessible bathroom on the main floor of the church building.

The Portland church has been discovering and coming to terms with its identity and history. This year-long voyage of research and reconciliation has involved the church council, the minister, and the congregation. *Walk a New Path* is the lesson the church has taken from this study, which formed the basis of an early spring worship service. Along the way we have studied church records, personality types, and non-violent communication methods. The Portland church anticipates that this work will provide a strong, unified base from which to grow.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Norris Dale, Secretary*

## MASSACHUSETTS ASSOCIATION

*President: Eugene Taylor*  
*Vice-President: Rev. Lee Woofenden*  
*Secretary: William Lee*

The Massachusetts Association has been undergoing a year of transition and rebuilding during 2003.

First was the withdrawal of the Boston Society from both the Association and General Convention. While this has been traumatic to the Association in general and our members in particular, this has only served to strengthen the ties between the members from our remaining societies. The Association has been working to support the members from the Boston Society who were ejected from the society or who are dissatisfied with the turn of events. The Cambridge Society has welcomed Boston members to worship. The Association also stands ready to form an organized mission, should these disaffected members wish.

The second major change for the Massachusetts Association was the closure and sale of our bookroom at Newbury Street, in Boston, and the purchase of the Swedenborg Chapel in Cambridge from the Swedenborg House of Studies. The Massachusetts New Church Union decided to close the bookroom on Newbury Street and move it to the Cambridge Chapel. Although the closure was primarily due to financial reasons, the Union

membership also felt that the area around Harvard University has more people interested in exploring Swedenborg than Newbury Street, which is in the heart of Boston's high-end shopping district.

The third major change for the Massachusetts Association was the closure of our Blairhaven Interfaith Retreat Center. Due to deterioration of the property over the years, and the failure of the septic system, the retreat center has been closed since April 2003. It is due to reopen in March 2004 with a new septic system and total renovation of the Guiu (Director's) House. The Blairhaven Committee has been re-formed and is looking to make Blairhaven the center of our efforts to strengthen and grow the Association and its members.

This year the Massachusetts Association has strived to bring the remaining societies closer together. Our fall annual meeting was themed: "What Is a Swedenborgian? Rebirth of the New Church in Massachusetts." This provided a forum for Association members to share feelings about Swedenborgianism. More spiritual programs are planned. The Association is planning to hold more social Association-wide events to strengthen our community.

The Massachusetts Association looks forward to further rebuilding, strengthening and growth in the coming year.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*William Lee, Secretary*

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**NEW JERUSALEM CHURCH****Bridgewater, MA***Moderator: Kelly Milne**Secretary: Sharon Swan**Treasurer: Peter Bernier*

The Bridgewater New Church has had another good year. Three new members were confirmed into our church and an additional three transferred their membership to our society. Our Sunday School continues to thrive under the leadership of Religious Education Director Marie Morey, with fifteen active children attending regularly. The children participate in the opening of our worship service (leaving with their teachers after a children's talk) and often add unexpected new dimensions to the worship experience.

Our church family joined Elmwood for a Southern Area worship/picnic at Swan Lake (a beautiful retreat in Elmwood owned by the Swan family) in June ending our regular worship services before summer. Informal summer services were held in our Sunday School room during July and August. Events of the year included weekly Bible Study with our pastor in the church vestry Wednesday evenings, a Halloween Pizza Party, Annual Church Fair, Invite-A-Friend Sunday, and a Christmas Eve Candlelight Service. Wednesday Evening Bible Study was transformed this spring into a ten week Heaven and Hell discussion group, with 8-12 people attending each week. Our church choir, under the direction of Kelly Milne, practice each Sunday after our coffee hour and offer music for special services.

Lee has been very active in the Massachusetts Association of the New Jerusalem Church, has devoted enormous energy into the sorting and storing of books from the Book Room, and has served as well in the Bridgewater Council of Churches. Our Pastor and several members participated in the Good Friday Walk for Hunger raising nearly \$1000 for that cause.

In the fall a Bimonthly Book Club was formed under the leadership of Gloria Costello and Bill Lee and meets in members' homes for discussion and enlightenment. A Long Range Task Force was also created in the fall. The members of that committee worked diligently and presented a detailed

report at our annual meeting, defining goals for our church, and mapping out some initial steps and projects to get us there.

We continue to be a strong church family. On the few Sundays when a coffee hour is not offered, members stay and talk and talk and talk anyway, always feeling the love and support our members share with each other. It is the strong feeling of extended family that encourages us and motivates us toward improvements and growth.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Merrilee Phinney*

## CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM

Cambridge, MA

*President: Lars-Erik Wiberg*  
*Vice-President: Dr. Eugene Taylor*  
*Secretary: Denyse Daurat*  
*Treasurer: Herb Ziegler*

Alleluia! We are extremely grateful to the Massachusetts Association, which voted to provide the funds to purchase the Chapel from the Swedenborg House of Studies. Plans are proceeding apace. The purchase and sale agreement was signed in April and we hope to close without undue delay.

Apart from that momentous piece of news, the Society has continued to function and even flourish vibrantly under the energetic leadership of its pastor, Rev. Sarah Buteux. Since last April we have formally received one new person into full membership, and after some minor revisions to our by-laws that will bring them into line with Convention's requirements are completed, we anticipate that several of our regular attendees will accept an invitation to join the church.

The Chapel continues to host a multitude of religious and community groups including the Anglican Church of the Incarnation, a Russian Pentecostal congregation known as the New Generation, the Tibetan

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Association, the Orianna Consort, two chapters of A.A., one chapter of O.E.A, the Spiritual Experience discussion group, and our Thursday night community dinner and Swedenborgian reading group. The reading group has become a very popular offering with over a dozen people participating each week. We are just wrapping up the Rev. Dr. Bob Kirven's "Concise Overview of Swedenborgian Concepts" and it has been a wonderful challenge. The Chapel is also used as a venue for any number of artistic endeavors, be it musical, dramatic, or, as is the case with the quarterly offerings of our own Carl Schroeder, the unique Spiritual Art shows.

Rev. Sarah Buteux plays a very active part in the United Ministries at Harvard where she has been serving on the executive committee as the Director of Programs. Over 15 students, staff, and faculty from seven different area colleges and universities have actively participated in our church programs.

Eugene Taylor gave the Wilfred Gould Rice lecture in June. He has also served this past year as President of the Massachusetts Association. A select portion of the Massachusetts New Church Union's bookroom has been moved to our reading room. The rest has been carefully placed into secure storage at Iron Mountain in Massachusetts.

Althea Pechenik and Elizabeth Wisdom continue the work of delivering clothing, books and food to various charities. Jackie Lageson has implemented a new program called "Men-in-Transition," which provides training and support for men as they reintegrate into society following time in prison. They meet weekly on Tuesday evenings as a spiritually based support group. Most recently they completed a 12-week course on emotional literacy. She adds:

"As a part of the Men-In-Transition outreach, I continue to be involved with the Community Dinner and Circle group in Boston. This group provides a community forum for men and women transitioning into our communities to come for dinner and stay for a spiritual talking circle to express his or her current concerns, and to be listened to patiently and without judgment. This is a simple yet profoundly affirming process in which members hear the truth in one another's statements and lend support as needed. My volunteer work provides a bridge between the two groups."



Jackie has also helped to identify untapped internal resources and talents within our church and Association by offering one-on-one Spiritual Gifts Inventories to interested individuals. In an effort to extend social action programming area-wide, Jackie has collaborated with members of the Bridgewater, Elmwood, and Newtonville societies as a member of the Blairhaven Committee. Through this work they are building dialogue between the societies of the Massachusetts Association and planning future programming for social action events. She is also currently the chair of a committee that oversees our new Social Action Fund. The Social Action Fund, which is currently being implemented, will be providing zero interest loans to unemployed or underemployed individuals, who have a viable business plan but do not have access to conventional loan options for seed money to begin their ventures.

There were 45 weddings performed at the Chapel in the past year. This ministry is strong and continues to grow. We anticipate that, as word spreads about the chapel's being secure, more couples will feel comfortable booking weddings in advance.

Improvements have been made in the meeting room downstairs. The fellowship room was repainted, a raised platform was built at one end, and new chairs were bought, contributing to a very welcoming effect. We already host our Thursday night dinners downstairs, but look forward to holding more community events such as talent shows and coffee houses.

Our music program has expanded considerably. Emily Romney continues as our soloist, but also conducts the efforts of our pick-up choir once a month. Leah Goodwin, Rev. Sarah Buteux, Rebecca Kline and Rebekah Simons have also come together to form an *a capella* group called "Missing Rachel." They provide music for our worship services and other events and hope to record some of their music this year.

Leah Goodwin, our ministerial intern from Harvard Divinity School, continues to share her immense energy and talent with the chapel community. She participates in the wedding ministry, our Sunday morning worship, and faithfully whips up extravagant desserts for our Thursday night group. The Flower Festival was restarted under her leadership and it was very successful and enjoyable in spite of rain. We plan to have one again this year in May.

The Cambridge Society remains immensely grateful to its sister churches in Massachusetts and to the multitude of people who have supported our efforts to preserve a Swedenborgian presence in Cambridge. This has been a busy year, but with the help, generosity, and patience of many we have persevered and hope to remain a useful and vital presence within Convention.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Lars-Erik Wiberg, President*

*Jackie Lageson, Vice-President*

*Denyse Deurat, Secretary of the Cambridge Society*

*Rev. Sarah Buteux, Minister of the Cambridge Society*

#### MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION

*President: Barb Boxwell*

*Vice-President: Betsy Lau*

*Secretary: Chris Laitner*

*Treasurer: Barb Tourangeau*

The Michigan Association held its annual meeting on Saturday, October 4, 2004, in the chapel on the grounds of the Almont New Church Assembly. Rev. Renee Machiniak opened the meeting with prayer, and President Boxwell presented an overview of the Association, discussing the emergence of a new church group in Lansing, Michigan; the publication of two issues of "The Michigan Connection" newsletter; and the initial prospects of holding a regional gathering with neighboring associations.

The annual report of the secretary and the annual statement of condition presented by the treasurer were accepted.

Rev. Renee gave a thorough report on the state and life of the Royal Oak Church of the Holy City. Rev. Renee and another church member will be attending the evangelization conference in Boulder, Colorado, later this month. The Church of the Holy City board of trustees will be involved in a training program in strategic planning. The wedding ministry in the tri-

county area continues to flourish. Members of the Church of the Holy City are active in community events, and, within the congregation family continue the Circle of Friends program that focuses on “a shift to abundance.” Dr. Margaret Dwyer oversees this program. Rev. Renee shared a letter from Mary Crenshaw bringing hopes and dreams for the Royal Oak church and wishes for continued good work by the Association.

Reports from the Almont New Church Assembly and Retreat Center, Betsy Lau, president, and from the Almont Summer School, Barb Tourangeau, business manager, both highlighted an excellent year. The retreat center continues to be busy on weekends, hosting a variety of groups, including the annual spring gathering of the Transitions, and a regional gathering of young adults under the direction of Kurt Fekete; and the annual church camp once again saw above one hundred in attendance each day. Several SHS students presented lectures during the 2003 Session.

The Association reviewed the areas of denominational work that it chooses to support financially, and directed the treasurer to send the appropriate contributions.

The Michigan and Ohio Associations will meet concurrently at Almont over the first weekend in October, 2004, for their annual meetings. The business sessions will run separately, but the programs, meals, and worship will see all attendees joined in community. The concept of regional gatherings will be discussed during this weekend.

The Michigan Association will begin to find, retrieve, and gather as many of the old, boxed, elusive documents pertaining to the Church of the Holy City and the Association that it can during the spring of 2004. The hope is to create a viable archive.

At the close of business, elections for the four officers and the trustee whose term ends in 2006 were held. The officers are listed at the top of this report. The trustees are: BJ Neuenfeldt (2004), Matthew Fleming (2005), and Margaret Dwyer (2006).

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Christine Laitner, Secretary*

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**ALMONT NEW CHURCH ASSEMBLY AND RETREAT CENTER****Allenton, MI*****President: Betsy Lau******Vice-President: Joy Fleming Zimmer******Secretary: Michelle Huffman******Treasurer: BJ Neuenfeldt***

2003 was a good year for the Almont New Church Assembly and Retreat Center. We continued to be busy on the weekends in addition to a few weeklong camps. We had many Swedenborgian rentals including Transitions, Survivors, Edsu, and others. We look forward to seeing even more Swedenborgian rentals in the future. Dave and Lola Vollink continue to see that everything runs smoothly year round.

In the spring a big ice storm hit Almont and killed 10 large trees and a couple of small ones. Unfortunately the clean up of trees was not covered by insurance and therefore we had a rather large bill to take care of all the damage. We were lucky that none of the buildings were damaged in the storm and we now have enough woodchips to mulch our flowerbeds for years to come! Luckily that was really our only major repair issue in 2003. Thanks to Almont's local Woman's Alliance group, we were able to buy 6 new beds for the teen girls' dorm. We also want to give a big thanks to Ohio Association for their generosity. They donated money for new beds as well and we were able to buy 10 new beds which finished replacing the rest of the bad beds in upstairs of Heritage Hall. We should not get any more complaints about uncomfortable beds from retreats for a very long time!

The theme for the 2003 Almont Summer School session was "Biblical Cities." Our lectures and classes introduced us to some of the most interesting places in the Bible and highlighted the spiritual significance of each city in relationship to our own life journey. The session was very well attended and we were delighted to see the addition of many new babies to our camp family. We were also happy to once again have a large group from Florida join us.

This year's theme is "Talking with God — Prayer in Our Lives" and each morning's lesson and lecture will uplift and challenge us to think about the different ways that God reaches out to us. They will help us explore the stories in the Bible, Swedenborg's vision of the spiritual sense of the living Word, and reflect on our personal prayer "successes" and "failures." We are also excited to be welcoming "Friends of the Groom," a Christian theater group who proclaim the Christian message with a unique blend of humor, storytelling, and thought-provoking drama. They will be performing for us Tuesday evening, July 27, and then will be leading a discussion Wednesday morning. The date for this year's camp session is July 24-Aug 1. Hope to see you there!

Make sure to check us out on the web at [www.ancarc.com](http://www.ancarc.com)

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Betsy Lau*

## **CHURCH OF THE HOLY CITY**

**Royal Oak, MI**

*President: Barbara Barber*

*Vice-President: Dr. Margaret Dwyer*

*Secretary: Sandy Greiner*

*Treasurer: Barbara Tourangeau*

The Royal Oak church has experienced significant changes over the past year, some losses as well as exciting new endeavors. Average attendance at our Sunday services and Sunday school is down, core members have moved away and we face the challenge of financial losses in our budget - and yet - our volunteerism and spirit is growing! We continue to try to balance our budget and we have several new approaches to do so. This is breathing new life into the church.

To begin with, our Wedding Ministry with increased advertising is taking root and showing possibilities for the future. We offer weddings at our Almont, Michigan chapel, as well as ceremonies for couples within the

the Metro-Detroit area. A Golden Circle of contributing members has been formed locally and we continue to make progress in its formation and education. Our board of trustees will upgrade its leadership through training from the Ann Arbor, Michigan, area and volunteerism among friends and members strengthen our team ministries in our healing and educational programming.

We offer a Reading Group before worship on Sunday mornings, hold weekly prayer-healing meetings, bi-monthly Drumming circles and monthly Women's Alliance gatherings to reach a variety of people and needs. We participate in our city's ecumenical and interfaith services, contribute to our local homeless and battered women's shelters, and provide monthly church and 4-1-1 outings for our children and families. Services with special themes draw upon the gifts and talents of our congregation, such as Holy Hilarity Sunday, Blue Sunday, Celtic Celebration Sunday, Youth Celebration Sunday, Earth Day Sunday, etc.

There is a growing tie between our Michigan Association membership and the Royal Oak church body. It is a blessing to have the resource and meeting place for our people at the Almont New Church Assembly! A growing number of members and friends in Royal Oak enjoy attending the Almont Summer School and yearly Michigan Association events at Almont such as Christmas Fest and Flower Fest. Retreats offered at Almont outreach not only to people in Royal Oak, but also connect our isolated and At-Large members throughout Michigan. The newly forming Lansing church is a sign of new life and hope for all of us in Michigan. We look forward to the future of our Michigan ministries and, although we have some significant challenges ahead of us, our faith and outlook strengthen our path.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Sandra Greiner, Secretary*

**MID-ATLANTIC ASSOCIATION***President: Rev. Randall Laakko**Secretary: Elfa Halloway**Treasurer: Nancy Piorkowski**Nominating Chair: Rev. Susannah Currie***THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH AT TEMENOS****West Chester, PA***President: Pete Brakman**Vice-President: Karin Dunlevy**Secretary: Nina Tafel**Treasurer: Robin Tafel*

For the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos, 2003 was a year in which we took renewed stock of our roots, looked closely at our present state, and began mapping a planned future for the church and our ministerial outreach, the Temenos Retreat Center. The intensive long range planning process that we embarked upon is intended to take us 10 years into our future. As part of that effort, we documented our history back to our Philadelphia beginnings, and inventoried and assessed the current status of the affairs, properties and possibilities of our church and the Retreat Center.

Our purpose in doing this is to create a realistic picture of our future as a vital, viable and expanding Swedenborgian Church dedicated to helping people “be open to the Lord’s presence and leading” and as a church that “encourages us to live lives of Love, Wisdom, and Uses as revealed in the Bible, and as illuminated by the life and teachings of the Lord’s servant, Emanuel Swedenborg.”

A church member who has volunteered her services as a professional organizational planner is leading the effort, which, when completed, will stand for congregational approval. As of this writing, that on-going process will likely continue into the coming months.

In addition, our church moved ahead in other ways. Our membership continued to grow, while more and more new guests dropped in to sample

our Sunday service and join us afterward for fellowship and refreshments. For those who wished to pursue the minister's message in greater depth, a response and reflection hour followed the after-service fellowship. On most Sundays, our chapel was at or near capacity, which is one of the more pressing reasons for launching the long range planning process.

Our congregation continued last year to enthusiastically respond to the energetic, wise and ecumenical ministry of Rev. Susannah Currie. All of our church stewardship posts were filled. When a vacancy opened, a volunteer was not far behind. Volunteers ensured the continued publication of our quarterly newsletter and provided steady and imaginative leadership for our children's Sunday school program. Members of the SWAT (Swedenborgian Women at Temenos) team and the Moms and Preschoolers Group pursued their interests and agendas through regularly scheduled meetings and periodic retreats.

The SMAC (Swedenborgian Men at Chores) team gathered the first Saturday of most months for heavy lifting, trail clearing, brush burning, painting and other unskilled labor necessary to keep the grounds and buildings ship shape, followed by fellowship. A recently formed Teen Group served to meet the interests of teens, an age group that is relatively new to us.

Our Temenos outreach continued to fulfill its mission as a place "to share opportunities with all who seek personal and spiritual growth in an environment that fosters the wise manifestation of love in useful ways." In addition to the regular schedule of programs and retreats designed to "facilitate the spiritual well-being of people," Temenos served as the site for periodic interfaith services that have attracted followers of many faith traditions. Also last year, a new series of evening musical presentations was introduced to full house and overflow crowds. The series also served to introduce the beauty of the Temenos setting amid the rural hills of Chester County, PA, to new audiences.



All in all, 2003 was a good year, bringing blessings, challenges to be met and the prospects of a bright and hopeful future.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Peter Brakman, President*

## **CHURCH OF THE HOLY CITY — THE NATIONAL CHURCH**

**Washington, DC**

*President: Richard L. Tafel  
Vice-President: Susan Baumgarten  
Secretary: Dr. Malcolm C. Peck  
Treasurer: Helen Sioris  
Assistant Treasurer: Elfa Halloway*

The following is a brief narrative report of the activities of the Church of the Holy City over the past year:

The past year has been a busy and productive one for the Church of the Holy City. In the absence of a regular minister, various members have preached and presided over services. On numerous occasions in the past several months it has been our good fortune to have Rev. Andy Stinson, currently serving as a military chaplain at Fort Eustis, Virginia, in the pulpit. It was especially gratifying that Rev. Stinson was able to lead an inspiring and well-attended service on Palm Sunday.

We have been encouraged recently by a modest but significant increase in attendance at Sunday services and in membership. This past week, five new members were formally entered on the church rolls.

Improvements to the buildings have continued apace, the most recent being the reconfiguration and refurbishment of the downstairs kitchen and social hall. Two large congregations, one Ethiopian and the other comprising Latino Seventh Day Adventists, together with several other groups, share our space.

Several members of our church plan to attend the convention in July.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Malcolm C. Peck, Secretary*

**NEW YORK ASSOCIATION**

*President: Rev. Young Min Kim*  
*Vice-President: John Samuelson*  
*Secretary: Pamela Selensky*  
*Treasurer: Young Chun Min*

**THE NEW YORK SOCIETY OF THE NEW CHURCH**

**New York, NY**

*Acting President: William Linden*  
*Secretary: Al Geddes*  
*Treasurer: John Samuelson*

During the past year there were no statistical changes in the church (births, deaths, marriages, confirmation). One wedding had been held as the first step in a proposed wedding ministry. Another is scheduled for August.

The renovation project, Project Rose, was brought to completion. The church is now listed on the National Register of Historic places as well as on the list of Historic places in the City of New York. A gathering of City, State and Local Government officials and dignitaries was held at the church in September to recognize the listings. All expressed appreciation for the history and beauty of the renovated sanctuary. A significant relationship continues to develop with the Murray Hill Association in the historic Murray Hill District, of which the church is a part.

In September, Rev. Robert McCluskey, pastor of the church for the past fifteen years departed after resigning at the previous annual meeting.

Particular tribute is owed to him for the leadership and effort he put into the ongoing work of the renovation project. A flowering of this project is the increasing interest of the public in the church space for a variety of uses.

In October, Rev. Steve Shannon was asked by the Board to be the Interim Minister. Rev. Ron Brugler, President of the Convention, participated in a service of welcome on October 25 and commended the church on their decision to take such a path. The church is currently working, intentionally, with the issues of a transition time.

Worship services were held each week during the regular church year and bi-weekly during the summer. Bible Study and Discussion on Sunday mornings, Wednesday evening discussion, and monthly newsletters continue on a regular basis. A Seder-Communion service was held on Maundy Thursday and was well attended. The New York Church and the Church of the Little Grain celebrated Easter Liturgy in a combined bilingual service. A few people from the New York Church participated at the invitation of the Church of the Little Grain, in their annual pastoral outreach to the hospitalized elderly during Holy Week.

Other special occasions were the Christmas party in December and the Swedenborg Birthday party on March 7. This latter occasion was marked by a visit and lecture by Dr. Sonia Werner, open to the public, whose focus was William James and the links with the AA movement. On March 14, the annual meeting of the New York Association was held after a combined service of the New York Church and the Church of the Little Grain.

A special word of thanks to Carol Lindquist who brought energy and drive to the first six months of the interim time, as President. Carol has thought it best to resign as President, and from the Board. In May, she leaves to enjoy her yearly extended visit to her summer home in Maine. As a church community, we appreciate Carol's love of the church and her desire to see it prosper. The church is grateful to Carol for helping to bring about a transition in these beginning months.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Steve Shannon*

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**CHURCH OF THE LITTLE GRAIN****Brooklyn, NY***President: Han Sik Kim**Treasurer: Young Chon Min*

In addition to having regular worship services and Bible study every week, we had a spiritual service with Rev. Chungsun Lee, who retired as a Swedenborgian minister in January. We joined the Korean-American Entertainers Association's fundraising "Night Ball" event for children with leukemia. We opened an ESL class led by Mr. Edward Hermann since February. It was with great joy we began the Saturday youth program in the church building. We invited a teacher for Korean culture and traditional music for the children. With generous donations, we have been doing fine. Those children will visit the Brookdale Hospital Nursing Home and give a performance there.

We visited a nursing home every 3 months with the Korean Entertainers Association. On Thanksgiving Day, we visited the Mexican Community Center in Staten Island and donated gloves, hats, and socks, as well as an unforgettable Thanksgiving Day feast.

We also made quarterly contributions to an orphanage in Korea. We had a joint Easter service with the Utrecht Reformed Church. We also participated in the "Flag Pole Ceremony," (a local community event) and the Memorial Wreath Dedication on Memorial Day. Nine church members joined this year's Convention. Keyman Kim was accepted into Harvard University and John Kwon was accepted into both Brooklyn Technical High School and the Bronx Science High School. We enjoyed outdoor service in the park, as well as the retreat on Catskills Mountain. We made another contribution to "The Balm in Gilead" Fund for the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Africa. It was a very blessed year.

*Respectfully submitted,**Rev. Young Min Kim, Pastor*

## OHIO ASSOCIATION

*President: Charles Winter*

*Vice-President: Leo Serrano*

*Secretary: Edmund Swiger*

*Treasurer: Frank Doyle*

The 150<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Ohio Association was held October 3, 4 & 5, 2003 at Urbana, Ohio. We met at the Country Hearth Inn Friday evening for an informal get-together and for our Executive Committee meeting.

We met Saturday in the large second floor classroom in the newly renovated Barclay Hall at Urbana University. We began on Saturday morning with welcoming and opening remarks followed by the Annual Meeting. The highlights of the meeting were a report on the Alicia Titus Memorial Peace Fund and on the Helen Keller Endowment. The Peace Fund at the time of this meeting was up to \$17,500, but more recently is now at over \$21,000. There have now been two scholarships from the Helen Keller Endowment.

An update on the Johnny Appleseed Heritage Center & Outdoor Historical Drama was obtained by visiting the below listed web site. It will be open and in full operation starting June 26, 2004 and will close September 5, 2004. An e-mail was sent to Bill Jones, who replied back to verify. Jeremy Harrison, marketing manager can be reached at 1-800-642-0388 or [marketing@jafci.org](mailto:marketing@jafci.org) to obtain tickets and obtain tour packages. Their web site is [www.jahci.org](http://www.jahci.org).

In the afternoon, the Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake led us in a group experience on the history and heritage of the Swedenborgian movement in Ohio following a time line from 1797 to the present. She described our early beginnings from Swedenborg reading groups to formation of congregations and the formation of the Ohio Association. She described many of the issues and struggles of the early groups and how they related to the development of the national denomination. She set up a time line chart, around the room, showing us our history graphically. It was interesting having this discussion in the very first building erected on Urbana University campus.

Saturday evening we were treated to a wonderful dinner in Barclay Hall catered by the Urbana University food service. After dinner we were entertained by folk music duo Ann & Phil Case. For those who wished, Urbana University invited all to a concert, "Keyboard Conversations," by Jeffery Siegel at 8:00PM.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Edmund G. Swiger, Secretary*

### **KEMPER ROAD SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH**

**Cincinnati, OH**

*President: Pete Toot*  
*Secretary: Gloria Toot*  
*Treasurer: Maryann Fischer*

It's been a good year, but also difficult in some ways. Our community building program went about half the year and has served us very well for the six years that it has run. People really get to know each other at a deeper level which, in my sense of things, stops a lot of the negative relating that can sometimes go on between people who relate only superficially. We now have none of that in our church! It was a very spiritual program, actually it was a form of spiritual practice in order to relate so deeply. My sense now is that we have a very stable, committed group, although it is not as big as I would like it to be — about 20 people. They come to church now for the right reasons...to be spiritually fed and to love one another with joy and a wonderful spirit. People are very real, sometimes even weeping and their tears deeply received by others. Part of our current cohesiveness is also due to the financial crisis that the lack of augmentation funds has created. But I feel the people pulling together more than ever more. I love them all dearly.

Also, the Pathwork group continued for a few months and then discontinued. In addition the twice monthly Swedenborg discussion group has gone continuously along with a new women's sacred circle group that

began in April. In addition, the AA Monday night group, the Tuesday Course In Miracles group, the customary seasonal programs, and the wedding ministry are all active and doing well. The wedding ministry maintains its high standards for those who wish to be married in our church. We also had a very meaningful seminar on finding your “original medicine,” that is, on the meaning and nature of true vocation. We also had a successful fund raiser...a Christmas tribute to Elvis and a very beautiful belly dancer. Both are members of the church and were very good.

Sadly, we’ve lost four members who, in my opinion, gained a great deal from their membership with us for several years. However, they did not fully embrace the Swedenborgian perspective and it is my experience that only true Swedenborgians stay the course. Like the rest of us, I am still trying to figure out how to generate true Swedenborgians in the church. I attended the evangelization seminar in Colorado and found they have a similar problem! If I ever get the definitive answer to this ongoing issue, I’ll be sure to let everyone know!

Our interfaith month in August also went well for the most part. One person didn’t follow through, but the rest did a good job overall. Our people enjoyed the stimulation and education a great deal. We now have our personal web site up and running which is especially helpful to the wedding ministry.

The other good news is that our roof was not nearly as bad off as many of the contractors said with their \$35,000 bids! It was fully repaired (dry rot) and completely re-roofed all the way down to the bare wood for about \$10,000 by a very competent, conscientious roofing contractor. In addition, we had some much needed help from the same roofer who sandblasted, primed, and painted the spire which supports the church’s cross. We will need a new stainless steel cross which the roofer will install, but that will be done in the next few weeks or so.

Many other physical problems have also been addressed all year long, so we are getting in good shape physically. With Missy Sommer’s help, we installed a new retaining wall near the outdoor chapel. It was sliding south on us, so we had to act! We are now in the process of painting the exterior of the church. It sure has been a lot of work — but a labor of love!

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What an honor to make the Lord's house more beautiful!

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Rev. John Billings, Pastor*

**SWEDENBORG CHAPEL**

**Cleveland, OH**

*President: Charles Winter*  
*Vice-President: Leo Serrano*  
*Secretary: Lois Krebs*  
*Treasurer: Steve Dzeba*

Our annual meeting on Sunday, February 1, 2004 was called to order by President Chuck Winter with a quorum of 10 and began with a prayer by Reverend Junchol Lee.

Some of the highlights of our 2003 activities include:

- Hired our first wedding coordinator in February, who resigned late in the year.
- Formed Bylaws & Constitution Committee, an Archives Committee, and an Aesthetics Committee.
- Welcomed the congregation of a Russian Pentecostal church to our building, to be used by them after our regular Sunday services.
- Donated the Chapel's organ to Emanuel Lutheran Church. Created a survey to send to couples wed at the chapel inquiring about their satisfaction with our services.
- Enjoyed a picnic lunch at the park.
- Installed an air conditioning unit.
- Traveled to Urbana, OH, for the annual meeting of the Ohio Association.
- Hosted our annual Halloween party at the Chapel.
- Presented Bibles to the young people of the Chapel as well as to new members.



- Began updating the outdoor sign more regularly.
- Held a Christmas morning service at the Chapel.
- Renewed Rev. Lee's contract with us for another 3 years.
- Baptized 4 children.
- Welcomed three new members.
- Officiated 41 weddings.
- Held two meditation instruction sessions for 8 weeks each.
- Enjoyed 6-11 children attending Sunday School regularly.
- Cleared space in the back of the church for teens to socialize.
- Decided to celebrate Holy Communion four times a year.
- Re-elected the following officers: Chuck Winter – President; Leo Serrano -Vice President; Steve Dzeba – Treasurer; Lois Krebs - Secretary

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Lois Krebs, Secretary*

## **URBANA SOCIETY OF THE NEW CHURCH**

**Urbana, OH**

*President: Al Cowen*  
*Secretary: Sherry Rutledge*  
*Treasurer: Bill Coffman*

During the past year, the Urbana Swedenborgian Church has maintained many of its traditional and well-loved special services and programs, while participating in a few that were new. During two services, we participated with other Champaign County churches in a “bicentennial sing”. In honor of our state’s bicentennial, the local historical association asked churches to come up with their favorite hymns, sing them in church, and then report back. This was a “fun” event; the service included the singing of many hymns. One of our Worship Leaders also led a special service last spring, shortly after the war in Iraq had begun, with a focus on world peace.

Two wonderful musicians led us in singing many songs of peace, making it a very moving experience. Visiting ministers over the year included Rev. Ron Brugler, Rev. Dorothea Harvey and a local minister, Rev. Larry Smith. As usual, our most memorable and well-attended services were the Christmas Eve Community Candlelight service and our Easter Service, led by Rev. Dorothea Harvey. Dorothea also led a Seder dinner on Good Friday for members of the church. Betsy Coffman, Lay Leader and Sherry Rutledge, Worship Leader, take primary responsibility to lead services throughout the year. During the summer months Sherry taught a class on spiritual healing, which combined Swedenborg's views with other perspectives.

Our Children's program continues to thrive with a typical attendance of 10 to 12 children. The children performed the Christmas Story as one of our special Advent services. Additionally, the children continue to be the focus of our "All Saints, All Souls" special "Halloween" service every year, in which they come dressed in costumes and learn the history, customs and spiritual significance of that time of year.

This year our long-time wedding coordinator, Susan Zion, resigned her position due to health problems. Our congregation was grateful for the many years of service she performed for our church. Sherry Rutledge, worship leader, has taken over this position and we expect this ministry to grow and thrive as it has in the past. We feel this is an important outreach to our community and serves a real need.

The church continues ongoing involvement with the local historic preservation effort, called "Main Street Urbana." Our participation has included opening our church for tours, working on funding for restoration of our historic tracker organs and receiving aid in cleaning up our church grounds from Urbana University "service learning" students who are recruited by the group for various volunteer activities. To our great surprise and delight, our church was awarded the Historical Society's "Preservation Merit Award" in July of 2003, for our efforts at maintaining our beautiful church.

During the past several months, renewed efforts at fund-raising for the purpose of restoration and repair of our two tracker organs have begun to take on new life. An expert in historic organ restoration, Dana Hull, was engaged to work on the Roberts organ, which was donated by the

Pittsburgh church when their building was sold. The repairs greatly improved the organ's functioning and it is now in stable condition. Additionally, preliminary work was done toward restoration of the Hamill organ, by removing and storing the internal pipes. The next stage will be repair of the wind chests, at a cost of approximately \$10,000. The Urbana Foundation made a grant to the Historic Organ Restoration fund, and other fundraising plans and efforts are underway. Dr. Janet Ebert and Bill Coffman are co-chairs of the restoration committee.

Our church continues to host two AA meetings weekly and has two Urbana University concerts held in the church as well. The University also utilized our building for its first "Hall of Fame" lifetime professional achievement ceremony in October of 2003, and will likely continue this as a tradition on an annual basis.

Perhaps the most exciting event of our church year was the hosting of the 150<sup>th</sup> Ohio Association Meeting, held on the campus of Urbana University at the newly renovated Barclay-Bailey Halls. The Sunday service was held in our sanctuary and was a truly inspiring worship experience as we sang one of the hymns sung at the original dedication service of the church in 1883.

In the coming year, we hope for continued spiritual guidance in the development and growth of our church family, both spiritually and in an outward sense. We continue to have a very small core of dedicated members, as do many other Swedenborgian churches and we hope that our sense of "spiritual community" attracts others to share in the very special connection we feel with one another.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Betsy Coffman, Lay Leader*

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**PACIFIC COAST ASSOCIATION**

***President: Rev. Harvey Tafel***

***Vice-President: John Calhoun***

***Secretary: Patte LeVan***

***Treasurer: Merle Lundberg***

The PCA is comprised of the following churches, centers, and affiliated centers, plus members at large:

- The Swedenborgian Church of Puget Sound, Kirkland, Washington
- Stonehouse (moved and reorganized, new address: 10600 NE 68<sup>th</sup> St., Kirkland, WA 98033)
- Mosswood Hollow Retreat Center, Duvall, Washington
- San Francisco Swedenborgian Church, San Francisco, California
- El Cerrito Church, a.k.a. Hillside Church, El Cerrito, California
- The Swedenborgian House of Studies, Berkeley, California
- Wayfarers Chapel, Rancho Palos Verdes, California
- San Diego Church, San Diego, California

NOTE: The Los Angeles Society was officially dissolved in 2003; their remaining funds were donated to the Wayfarers Chapel, the remaining L.A. members became PCA members-at-large.

The PCA Board met February 11, 2003 at the El Cerrito Church and again on Sept. 26, 2003, at the San Diego Church.

The 92<sup>nd</sup> Annual Business Meeting of the Pacific Coast Association was held September 27, 2003, in San Diego, California. The San Diego Church hosted, and was also celebrating its 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary. SHS students attending were Carla Friedrich and Doug Moss.

Minutes were read and approved. Reports were received from officers, committees, and churches. Treasurer's report was presented and accepted.

The PCA website, [www.swedenborgpca.org](http://www.swedenborgpca.org), is up and running, and is designed to replace the PCA Journal as a method of distribution.

PCA continues to respond to approved requests for seed money for innovative church programs, and plans to be as supportive as possible to SHS's hosting of the 2005 Convention. However, due to budget cutbacks, seed money granted for retreats needs to be paid back to the PCA revolving retreat fund, and there is no funding in 2004 for delegates to convention.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Patte LeVan, Secretary*

## **SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH OF SAN DIEGO**

**San Diego, CA**

*President/Authorized Lay Leader: Eldon Smith*

*Vice-President: William F. Garber*

*Secretary/Treasurer: Annella Smith*

During this past year, we have had worship services every Sunday with the exception of the month of August, which was designated as "vacation month" which means we do not have Sunday Services. However, all the groups who use our facilities continue to meet. During August some much needed refurbishing was completed and judging from the ohs and ahs when people returned in September the improvements were well received.

On the last weekend in September we hosted the Pacific Coast Association for their annual meeting and to celebrate the 126th Anniversary of the final signing of the Corporation papers for the San Diego Society. Letters from out-of-towners who had grown up in San Diego and memories from locals were shared to commemorate this special occasion.

We had our usual special services for all the Christian Holidays with members of the congregation taking part. For Palm Sunday the chancel is decorated with palm fronds, and fronds were given to members of the congregation to "wave" during the singing of the hymn, "The Palms." The fronds are from the church garden. On Easter Sunday, we "Blossom the Cross" with garden flowers brought by those who attend the service. The Chancel is also decorated with Easter lilies in memory of loved ones. During

the Advent Season, one candle is lit each Sunday on the Advent Wreath with a member of the congregation offering a prayer. Our Carol Service is on the Sunday before Christmas at the regular morning worship hour. This year we added a Sing-A-Long on Christmas Evening. Although we had a small attendance, we will do it again as those present seemed to thoroughly enjoy it.

We have Bible Study and Doctrinal Classes before worship services on the second, third and fourth Sundays of each month. Our monthly potluck luncheons are held on the first Sunday of the month, and we have a social time and refreshments other Sundays following the morning worship. The Women's Alliance meets one Saturday a month for business and study sessions.

Our Assembly Hall is used by community groups such as the AA's, acting classes, workshops and performances by improv and iheatrical groups. Mondays thru Fridays are booked every week, and other activities are on Saturdays as needed.

Our doors are open daily for anyone who wishes to come in the Sanctuary for personal meditation or prayer, talk to us in the office, or sit in the library and read. We have a lending library and also books to be purchased.

We have had a busy year, and are looking forward to continuing to serve our community.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Annella Smith, Secretary*

**CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM****San Francisco, CA*****President: Robert Carr******Vice-President: Bob Harren******Secretary: Janet Council******Treasurer: Michael Santimauro***

2003 was a year of change and growth for our church. It gave us cause to reflect on our past, our present, and where we want to focus as a spiritual community. We looked at the steps we could take to best guide that process. We owe our heartfelt thanks to those parishioners that have assumed added responsibilities to assist Reverend Rachel Rivers as our full time pastor. We continued our spiritual growth with classes in Swedenborgian theology and “deepening our connection to the Divine” led by Reverend Rachel. The later culminated in a meaningful retreat that, as always, deepened our connection with one another as well. There was also the annual church retreat in the redwoods that was attended by 69 parishioners. These gatherings underscore the talents and diversity of our church, as well as reminding us how our church keeps us nourished spiritually, intellectually, socially and emotionally...not forgetting how much FUN we have. Our architectural jewel of a church continues to move toward National Historic Landmarking, and we continue to attend to aesthetic and structural improvements within the context of the Arts and Crafts movement. Our average Sunday attendance was 70, and we have 47 Sunday School students. We confirmed 8 teenagers and 2 adults in April, and welcomed 7 new members bringing our total membership to 201. We had 3 seminarians from the Swedenborgian House of Studies interning with us - Kathy Speas and Alison Baxter in the 2002/03 school year, and Carla Friedrich in the 2003/04 school year. Our wedding ministry continued to decline in what is a citywide trend. Linda Baker still offers her Hour of Peace one night a month with piano music and meditation in the candle lit sanctuary. Our talented parishioner, Steven Bailey, put on an amazing piano concert of classical works in the sanctuary. As always our Holy Week services and Christmas concerts and services are powerful, and made more

so by our incredible choir, led by Charles Calhoun. We continue to participate with other San Francisco churches feeding the homeless two or three nights a year, and knitting them hats. We look forward with the deep faith that our surroundings and leadership inspire.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Janet Council, Secretary*

## **SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH OF PUGET SOUND**

**Kirkland, WA**

*President: Jenna Blue  
Vice-President: Lisa Cole  
Secretary: Marilyn Foos  
Treasurer: Gary Kersten*

2003 was very challenging and yet very fulfilling. We have grown in number, accepting nine new members and two transfers. We have also grown in spirit. The group feels very solid and we all are somehow confident that greater growth is just around the corner. We all feel that our community has become more supportive and centered because our faith has matured as a group. Four new people were elected onto our board and this brought a surge of energy to move forward in new ways.

The Stonehouse building was sold and the big dream was reduced. The new owners invited us to leave. We thought of this as a gentle kick by the Lord to move on. Our ensuing journey in the wilderness was brief and stimulating. During the warmer months we had services at: the beach in Tofino B.C., the waterfront pavilion in Kirkland, the Wellness Center in Issaquah, the Shinto Shrine in Granite Falls, The Sacred Cedars in Carnation, a Washington state ferry, Lake Alice in Fall City, Mosswood Hollow in Duvall, The Point in Anacortes, and at the New Stonehouse Bookstore. In September, we settled into our regular Sunday service location at the lovely Holy Spirit Lutheran Church in Kirkland, changing our service times to 5:00 pm. We suspect that this is not our promised land but an oasis in the



wilderness. We feel at home there for now. Our attendance average on Sundays for the year was 40.25. Our biggest month was November averaging 61. Our biggest service was 138. Following the example of LaPorte we had our first Christmas Eve service on Dec 23. Ninety people attended this candle light event. Eric has his office in the new store and regularly interacts with the public inquiries about Swedenborg. Our sales through the store in Swedenborgian material exceeded three hundred dollars. We gave away four hundred pamphlets about the teachings. Our thanks to The Swedenborg Foundation and J. Appleseed.

- We had two lectures on Life after Death: one at the store (attendance 18) and one in Portland, Oregon (attendance 32).
- Men's group has been met twice monthly studying how the new physics describes that God is present in the universe.
- The women's group has met monthly covering a variety of topics and fund raising.
- Made Blessings Bags as a fund raiser.
- A pancake breakfast.
- Our dinner for eight groups continue to meet monthly. Now they are looking at Correspondences.
- The Circle of Light meets on Wednesday evening offering many programs to balance body, mind, and spirit.
- We have been on a weekly radio show for twelve weeks.
- Swedenborg classes were held sixteen times during the year.
- Used free air time on cable TV on eleven occasions broadcasting our worship services. We also managed to have the films *The Man who Had to Know*, *Splendors of the Spirit*, and *Johnny Appleseed: Pioneer Within* broadcast on Cable TV. Each was shown five times.
- Produced a weekly email newsletter going out to as many as four hundred people each week.
- Kathy Speas was here for a two week SCE (June) and Doug Moss had a one month SCE in (January 2004).
- Rev. Eric preached three times at Holy Spirit Lutheran Church and once at the Interfaith Center.
- We had two weddings, no baptisms and no funerals.
- As part of our outreach we have cleaned our section of I 90 as part of our Highway to heaven program.

Started the process of creating a new program called Heart/Vision for children and teens. Instead of teaching children about God in the Bible, are facilitating their direct mystical experience of God.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Eric Allison, Pastor*

### **SOUTHEAST ASSOCIATION**

*President: Rev. Skuli Thorhallsson  
Vice President: Rev. Richard H. Tafel, Jr.  
Secretary: Dorothy Burnside  
Treasurer: Susan Wood*

### **THE NEW CHURCH OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA**

**Ft. Myers Beach, FL**

*President: Joyce Fekete  
Secretary/Treasurer: Terri March*

The New Church of Southwest Florida is in the transition of new leadership with the retirement of Rev. Dick Tafel and the call of Rev. Nadine Cotton-Durgin. “We Walk Amongst the People” is our motto, as we put into action our Lord’s injunction: feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and comfort the afflicted. Feeding the hungry is part of our commitment to the Beach community. We provide daily free bread to the homeless, the poor and needy, and those living on the cusp. Our emergency food pantry, located in our thrift store in Seagrape Plaza, is very busy these days, as more people are laid off from their jobs and need help with their food budgets. The Thrift Store provides us the opportunity to help people in the community with clothing and many useful and needed items that are sold nominally or donated to them. The store is a great place to meet the public and also serves the purpose of housing the church office.

The New Church of Southwest Florida presently operates out of three locations on Fort Myers Beach: The thrift store and church office in a shopping plaza, the Beach Elementary School, and church services are held at the Southwest Florida Marine Institute. While we feel fortunate that we can use these three different locations for our overall work in the community, obtaining our own facilities is a priority. Our hope is that we can find a commercial building which can house all our ministries under one roof. We need more space for the church office, for the thrift store to provide more space for fruits and vegetables to be added to the daily bread, for our own worship space for church and weddings, baptisms and memorials, meeting space for ourselves, as well as community groups, and rental space to provide a flow of income to help us increase our ministries of helping people.

We have been asked by the community to provide a place for middle-school age children to “hang-out” and a place for seniors to congregate. We are hoping to be able to provide for both of these needs when we raise the funds for our new facility. Volunteers have already started coming forward to help provide programs for the middle schoolers.

Church Services are going well with many new people dropping in to check us out. Our focus on service to the community is greatly appreciated. Our services are being held at the Southwest Florida Marine Institute, which is a school for teens in trouble with the law. In exchange for this meeting space, I am providing a Bible based values class to the teens that want to attend. This is going so well that the Institute had to break the teens into 2 groups to keep the classes to a manageable size of 8-10 students.

I am so very grateful to be here in sunny Florida and to do the Lord’s work with the many people that need our help. Thank You and God Bless You to all the many supporters of this ministry throughout the denomination.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Rev. Nadine Cotton, Pastor*

The Kid's VIP program of the New Church of Southwest Florida has had another successful year. It began five years ago under the leadership of Rev. Dick Tafel. It continues today under the management of Rev. Nadine Cotton-Durgin. It is not easy to care for 20 lively youngsters (ages 5-10) for four hours every day after school. Rev. Nadine brings both compassion and discipline to the task. She has been a true guiding spirit to us this year.

For the second year, the Beach Elementary School has provided space in their building for us. We also have access to a large community playground where the children can "run off" that excess energy that all the young seem to have. We provide a snack each day. There are art materials, games, puzzles and holiday projects available for them. We also help with homework and tutor when needed. The children say grace before eating. Although we don't provide specific religious instruction, we do teach values based on the golden rule. We celebrate the Christian holidays. And most of all we try to make each child feel "special" and give as much care and love as we can.

Thanks to grants from the community and government; and to some dedicated volunteers, the program continues—an important, successful outreach from our church to the community's children and their appreciative parents.

We thank the members of convention and all the local Swedenborgian Churches who have given us such loyal and loving support. We thank the National Women's Alliance for the mite box funds they have so generously given us. We couldn't do it without all of your support!

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Joyce Fekete, President*

**WESTERN CANADA CONFERENCE**

*President: Colleen Wiens*

*Vice President: Hart Lipski*

*Secretary: Lorrie Lipski*

*Treasurer: Lillian Epp*

Conference was held in Calgary, Alberta July 13 and 14 2003. As always this is a wonderful opportunity for our membership to not only discuss the business of the group, but also socialize.

The main focus of Conference 2003 was to clarify the terms of membership and have the changes added to our Letters of Patent. This was accomplished with the support of the Executive and group members.

Western Canada Conference continues to support our youth by making funds available for travel to youth events. Paulhaven Children's Camp continues to provide a week of fellowship for young Swedenborgians and their friends.

Rev. John Maine and Rev. Michael Gladish conducted Sunday Service at this year's Conference. All enjoyed the Service.

Western Canada Conference continues to have groups in Kelowna, Edmonton, Calgary, Rosthern, Saskatoon and Winnipeg and we were pleased to have representation from all areas at the meeting.

Conference 2004 will be held in Saskatoon.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Colleen Wiens, President*

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**NEW CHURCH SOCIETY****Calgary, AB*****President: Hartmut Lipski******Vice-President: Brent Clements******Secretary: Sharon Williams******Treasurer: Garry Loewen***

The Calgary New Church Society is well into its second year of joint services with the General Church. We call our cooperative ministry “The Calgary New Church Project”. The Rev. Mike Gladish, of the General Church, is our pastor. We still have services the second and fourth Sundays of each month, with Sunday School on the first Sunday. Currently we have about five Sunday School students, however, we are discontinuing Sunday School until we find a place to meet for worship where classes can run concurrently with church.

Our format for the service can vary from service to service. One thing we have changed completely is the way we take the offering. We use the General Church style of having a basket set up before people come in to sit down. This makes it much more of a free will offering than “passing the plate”. Of course the offerings made are blessed during the service.

Our tradition of a Christmas service followed by a pot-luck dinner remains. It is a very popular part of the Calgary New Church Society. We often have overhead visuals or handouts to aid in the sermon delivery. Following the sermon we have a time for discussion or questions.

Our music is provided by Lorrie Lipski, most often accompanied by guitar. We also make good use of the sound system in our hall, using CD's. Many times this music is the work of Ken and Laurie Turley. Amy Mitchell sometimes lends her talents to our service by playing the keyboard.

We now have this cooperative ministry established, and so we held a visioning Sunday on March 14<sup>th</sup>. We took on the challenge of formulating a clear statement of our mission as a church and our vision of who and what we want to be, with a focus on “learning, living and sharing”. The meeting was scheduled in response to presentations and discussion at a special session held January 18<sup>th</sup>, where we reviewed some of the things learned by

our participants at an evangelization seminar held in Boulder, Colorado last October.

We identified 5 crucial issues to our mission in the next 6 months:

1. Commit, if possible, to summer service.
2. Commit to a new location, including facilities for a nursery and Sunday School, by September.
3. Renew/revise our commitment to Sunday School for the children.
4. Organize and commit to specific programs for young adults.
5. Organize and commit to home study groups to focus on the “learning” part of our mission.

On March 26, Rev. Mike presented a seminar at the University of Calgary on “Human Consciousness and The Life After Death.” The seminar was well attended, and most of our literature taken.

The Calgary New Church Society will be holding its Annual General Meeting on April 25<sup>th</sup>, so new officers will not be included in this report.

***Respectfully submitted,  
Sharon Williams***

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**CHURCH OF THE HOLY CITY**

**Edmonton, AB**

***President: Randy Runka***

***Vice-President: Barry Reed***

***Secretary: Irene Dzeryk***

***Treasurers: Astrid Watson, Maria Korsten***

This past year has been a very busy and rewarding one for our church. We are beginning to grow, not only in numbers, but in vision and hope and reaching out into the community.

Starting with worship, we continue to have weekly Sunday services through the year (bi-weekly in July and August). Reverend John also led services in Calgary, Kelowna, and Kitchener and in addition began offering regular spring and fall services to the cabin-owner community at our camp at Paulhaven. He also gave services at Western Canada Conference and as chaplain of our summer camp for youth. Special services such as Christmas Eve and Easter continued to be well-attended and four new members were confirmed at Pentecost.

We have also made some changes to enrich our worship life. These include a greater role for the children (we now have a children's song in our worship, a "show & tell" time for sharing their Sunday School learning, and more participation in the service itself); the introduction of a prayer request book; and the contributions of more guest soloists and musicians.

Another essential of worship life is Sunday School which, we are happy to report, is definitely growing! We have even had to dig out from storage our old wooden gate to keep the toddlers in the Fellowship Hall during the service! There is now a regular year-round curriculum based on the Dole and Sower Notes and we have acquired additional resources such as craft books and posters. Plans are afoot for our first-ever Vacation Bible School, to be held next summer.

In the area of outreach and church growth we have tried a number of strategies to get the word out about ourselves. These have included: a new brochure emphasizing our programs and services; five different sets of special message cards for handing out to the public; a weekly literature



table in a local mall; and various other brochures and flyers. Our pastor also arranged for us to receive financial support from the Gray Fund to set up a book room and archive here at the church. We are now in a position to become a resource centre for all things related to Swedenborg and the story of our denomination in western Canada.

Nevertheless, all this distribution of information is only one way to take our message to the world. Much more important than everything we say is what we actually do! First off, last spring, we held our “Mega Rummage Sale”! It was by far the biggest sale we’d ever done and the first ever held outside, on the front lawn of the church, so everyone could see and come by. Everybody got involved, we made the most money ever, and became better known in the community as a result. We also held our first-ever “family dances” which targeted the families of the children attending our after-school care program, the After-School Club. These events (the Super Summer Family Dance and the Harry Potter Halloween Dance) were both huge successes, with many adults and children attending. This, combined with the strong growth in the After-School Club itself, has led to an exciting development: starting last summer, five new families have begun coming to the church and two of these have had their children baptized with us.

To support this outreach into the community, we have also begun hosting more outside groups in the church. We now have Girl Guides meeting in the church (after an absence of many years) and we began exploring the possibility of inviting other community groups. Our partnerships have continued with the neighborhood school and with other agencies such as those that serve the homeless, the poor, and battered women and their families. We also began upgrading our work with youth, especially at Paulhaven Camp. Reverend John wrote a new edition of the camp service book and as camp chaplain developed new Bible study materials and other resources and activities.

Overall, it has been another busy and exciting year for us and we have been blessed in many ways. We are trying to restore Holy City to what it originally was, an inclusive and family-focused community church, and we pray that the Lord will continue to bless and guide our efforts in the year ahead.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Rev. John Maine, Pastor*

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**BRITISH COLUMBIA NEW CHURCH SOCIETY**

**Kelowna, BC**

*President: Nancy Evans*

*Vice President: Lisa Reddekopp*

*Secretary: Colleen Wiens*

*Treasurer: David Wiens*

During the last year, the B.C. New Church Society held monthly services at the IOOF Hall in Kelowna, B.C. Visiting Ministers include the Rev. Michael Gladish, Rev. Erni Martin and Rev. John Maine. Average attendance is about 20, and the Sunday School is offered most Sundays, with about five children in attendance.

Services are followed by luncheon and a Special Christmas Service was well attended. A Youth Group program has been initiated, with the visiting Minister hosting an informal discussion, question and fellowship gathering on the weekend of the monthly service.

The B.C. Society supports Swedenborgian activities and programs including *Messenger Magazine*, *Conference Magazine*, Paulhaven Children's Camp Week, and the Calgary New Church Project.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Colleen Wiens, Secretary*

## SUMMER CAMPS

*For further information contact the named individual at the camp you are interested in.*

*Financial assistance is available at most camps if needed by deserving youngsters.*

**Almont New Church Assembly and Retreat Center**  
**1513 Cameron Road, Allenton, MI 48002-2201**  
**(810) 798-8487**  
**[www.ancarc.com](http://www.ancarc.com)**

**President: Betsy Lau**  
**Vice President: Joy Zimmer**  
**Treasurer: BJ Neuenfeldt**

A family camp. Modern facilities and a pond for swimming and fishing make this camp outstanding, but the keynote of Almont is CAMP SPIRIT! From the flag raising ceremony and the singing of “Fling to the Breeze Our Glorious Banner!” to the evening vesper service, Almont campers of all ages are alive with projects, classes, games and skits – helping one another, working and playing together as a big family.

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**Fryeburg New Church Assembly**  
**84 Main Street, Rt. 302**  
**Fryeburg, Maine 04037-1147**  
**(207) 935-2338 (*summers only*)**  
**[www.fryeburg.org](http://www.fryeburg.org)**

**President: John Perry**

### **About the Fryeburg New Church Assembly-**

The FNCA is a family camp for people of all ages. The purpose of the Assembly is the study and instruction in the doctrines of the Christian Religion as revealed in the Lord's Word and explained in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg.

The FNCA is located in an especially beautiful setting along the bank of the Saco River. The large extended front porch of the main building offers space for conversation and enjoyment of the mountain views. There is ample room adjacent to the main building for volleyball, horseshoes and other outdoor activities. Majestic white pines cover the property. The water of the Saco River is clear, clean and perfect for swimming and canoeing. The nearby mountains in Maine and New Hampshire offer plenty of prime hiking trails.

### **Program-**

The morning schedule includes chapel, two lectures and classes for children and teens. On-site childcare is provided during lectures. Afternoons are free of formal schedules. Swimming and canoeing are available in the Saco River. In addition, there are planned activities for children and teens as well as special programs for adults.

### **Accommodations-**

Meals are served in the dining hall of the main building. There is a full size kitchen run by professional cooks. Teenagers serve on the dining room staff and dishwashing crews in return for a tuition reduction. Overnight accommodations include rooms on the second floor of the Main Building with public bathrooms and wheelchair accessible rooms with private bathrooms on the first floor. In addition, there are 13 cabins with river views. Teen boys have a bunkhouse and dressing room with shower. Teen girls have a dorm and dressing room with shower in the main building. There are also Tent and Camper sites with electric and water hookups and access to a nearby bathhouse and shower.

**Information-**

Questions about the FNCA:

John Perry

Add your name to the FNCA mailing list:

Jesse White

Questions about the FNCA website:

Bob Perry

Fee inquiries and registration:

Nancy Little

**Paulhaven****Church of the Holy City (Swedenborgian)**

**9119-128A Avenue, Edmonton, AB Canada T5E 0J6**

**(403) 475-1620**

Paulhaven children's camp is held at a wooded site on a lovely lake. Accommodations are primitive. The children are housed in cabins, but there is no running water, so this is a true camping experience. Adults do the cooking, but the children share in the chores of housekeeping. The religious program is staffed by members of the Western Canada Conference, which sponsors the camp. Swimming, boating, crafts, sports, hiking and group activities are enjoyed by campers and staff together. Campers come from widely scattered places, and camp is a high point in the lives of youngsters who often get only this opportunity to be with other New Church children.

**For Further Information:**

Church of the Holy City (Swedenborgian)

9119-128A Avenue

Edmonton, AB Canada T5E 0J6

## COPY OF THE ACT OF INCORPORATION

*An act to incorporate the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America*

*Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois represented in the General Assembly*

**Section 1.** – That Rev. Thomas Worcester, D.D. of Boston, Mass.; Rev. J.R. Hibbard of Chicago, Ill.; Rev. T.B. Hayward of Brookline, Mass.; Robert L. Smith, Esq. of Jamaica, L.I., N.Y.; J. Young Scammon, Esq. of Chicago and I.S. Britton, Esq. of Springfield, Ill.; Hon. Jno. B. Niles of LaPorte, Ind.; Dr. Charles Shepherd of Grand Rapids, Mich.; Rev. Chauncey Giles of Cincinnati, Ohio; David Snyder, Esq. of Philadelphia, Penn.; N.F. Cabell, Esq. of Warminster, Va.; Hon. Jno. H. Wilkins and Sampson Reed of Boston, Mass.; Oliver Gerish of Portland and Henry B. Hoskins of Gardiner, Maine; their associates and successors, be, and they are hereby constituted a body Corporate under the name of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America; under which name they shall have perpetual succession, with power to receive, take by gift, purchase, devise or otherwise, property and real estate, real, personal or mixed, for educational or religious purposes, and to hold, lease, and sell or convey the same at pleasure.

**Section 2.** – The business Affairs of said Convention shall be managed and controlled by its Executive Committee, (or General Council) subject to the direction of the Convention, when in session. Said Committee (or Council) shall be chosen or appointed from time to time, in such manner as the Constitution of said Convention may direct, and act in conformity to its votes. Said Committee (or Council) may create such offices, and appoint such Officers as they may see fit, and remove the same at pleasure;—and may change its business affairs in such a manner as a majority of said Committee (or Council) may determine, subject to the control of the Convention.

**Section 3.** – Said Convention may sue and be sued, plead and be impleaded, prosecute and defend, in all courts and places, in its corporate name, by Attorney or otherwise. All deeds, conveyances, or leases of the property held by said Convention, for the purpose of leasing or conveying such property, shall be made under the hands of the President and Recording Secretary, and under such seal as said Executive Committee (or General Council) may adopt; but all such deeds must be approved by a majority of said Committee (or Council).

**Section 4(a).** – The purposes for which this Convention exists are: religious, charitable and educational as follows:

1. The specific and primary religious purpose is to aid the teachings of Christianity as taught by Emanuel Swedenborg.
2. The specific and primary charitable purpose is to aid the poor and unfortunate by collection and disbursement of funds, food, clothing and shelter.
3. The specific and primary educational purposes are to distribute funds for scholarships, to help organizations present education programs of general public interest and to disseminate educational material in the public interest.
4. The general purposes and powers are to have and exercise all of the rights and powers conferred on Convention under special charters under the laws of Illinois. However, this Convention shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the primary purposes of this Convention.
5. No substantial part of the activities of this Convention shall consist of the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise at tempting to influence legislation, nor shall this Convention participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements), any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office or perform any act that will disqualify the Convention for tax exempt status conferred by any local, state or federal government which has jurisdiction over the Convention.
6. This Convention is incorporated and exists not for pecuniary profit and no part of any net earnings shall inure to the benefit of any person, private shareholder or individual.

**Section 4(b).** – The property of this Convention is irrevocably dedicated to religious, charitable and educational purposes and no part of the net income or assets of the organization shall ever inure to the benefit of any director, officer or member thereof or to the benefit of any private persons. On the dissolution or winding up of the Convention, its assets remaining after payment of, or provision for payment of, all debts and liabilities of this Convention, shall be distributed to a nonprofit fund, foundation, or corporation which is organized and operated exclusively for religious or charitable or educational purposes and which has established its tax exempt status under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code and/or any future provisions amending, succeeding, supplementing or replacing this section. If this Convention holds any assets in trust, or the Convention is formed for charitable purposes, such assets shall be disposed in such a manner as may be directed by decree of a court with jurisdiction over such trust, its assets or the Convention, on petition therefrom by the Attorney General or by any person concerned in the liquidation, in a proceeding to which such Attorney General is a party.

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**Section 4(c).** – All the property of the Convention held or located in the State of California is irrevocably dedicated to religious or charitable or educational purposes meeting the requirements for exemption provided by Section 214 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, and/or any future provisions that amend, supplement, succeed or replace such section, and upon dissolution or winding up of the Convention such property shall be distributed to a nonprofit fund, foundation, or corporation with religious or charitable or educational purposes meeting the requirements for exemption provided by Section 214 of the Revenue and Taxation Code. In all other respects, property in the State of California shall be subject to Section 4(b) above.

**Section 5.** - Nothing in this Act contained, shall be so constructed as to interfere with the right of said Convention to alter, amend or abolish its Constitution, or to form a new one whenever it shall see fit to do so.

***Approved January 29, 1861***

The original Act of Incorporation is on file in the Office of the Secretary of the State, Springfield, Illinois; and it has also been recorded on page 1 of Record 48 in that Office.

By vote of a number of members of the New Church from various parts of the United States, assembled in Philadelphia on January 1st, 1817, a call was issued for a convention of the receivers of the doctorines of the New Jerusalem Church to be held in Philadelphia on May 15th of that year, “for the purpose of consulting upon the general concerns of the Church.”

The first meeting of the General Convention occurred as planned on May 15-17, 1817.

The General Convention was incorporated, under the laws of Illinois, on January 29, 1861. Its legal office is at the rooms of the Chicago Society of the New Jerusalem, 77 W. Washington Street, Suite 1700, Chicago, IL 60602-2901.





## Constitution

Of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem  
in the United States of America, Inc.

### Article I.

#### Name, Purpose, and Membership

**Section 1.** – This body shall be called the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America, Inc., commonly known as the Swedenborgian Church.

**Section 2.** – The Swedenborgian Church exists to help people be open to the Lord’s presence and leading, especially by fostering personal and ordained ministries which facilitate the spiritual well-being of people, and which have in common a working for the Lord in bringing in the New Age, the descent of the Holy City, New Jerusalem.

The light in which we seek to walk shines from the Lord Jesus Christ in His second coming, available to us through the divine presence in our hearts and minds, and through revelation in the Holy Scripture and in the life and teaching of the Lord’s servant, Emanuel Swedenborg.

This section shall hereinafter be referred to as the PURPOSE of the Swedenborgian Church.

**Section 3.** – Constituent bodies of the Swedenborgian Church shall be those collective bodies which subscribe to this PURPOSE and which unite with the Swedenborgian Church in performing the distinctive uses of a church. All bodies entitled to voting delegates at the time of adoption of this article shall be considered to be constituent bodies. Additional bodies may be admitted to membership on recommendation of General Council and vote of the Swedenborgian Church.

The members of the Swedenborgian Church shall be those persons who are adult active members of a constituent body or who have been accepted as members at large through Rite of Confirmation and by vote of the Swedenborgian Church.

For membership in the Swedenborgian Church, an adult active member is one who is at least eighteen years of age and who has been accepted by a constituent body through confirmation or by transfer, and who within the calendar year immediately preceding a session of the Swedenborgian Church has shown an active interest in his or her membership by joining in programs of worship and work or by contributing physically or financially.

## **Article II.**

### **Officers, Councils and Administrative Functions**

**Section 1.** – The officers of the Swedenborgian Church shall be a President, Vice President, a Recording Secretary and a Treasurer, all elected by ballot. The President shall be elected for a three year term, the Vice President, Recording Secretary and Treasurer shall each be elected for one year terms. The President shall assume the duties of the office at the close of the next annual meetings after his or her election and the other officers shall assume the duties of their offices at the close of the annual meetings at which they are elected.

The election for President shall be held at the annual meetings of the Swedenborgian Church in the year previous to the beginning of each such term. In the absence of such session the term of office of the President shall be extended for one year following the succeeding session in order that the succeeding President may be elected one year previous to taking office. In the event of the death, resignation or incapacity of the incumbent President, the successor shall be installed for a full term immediately after the successor's election. A President who served for two successive terms shall not be eligible for election to the next succeeding term. The other officers shall be eligible for re-election without limitation.

**Section 2.** – There shall be a General Council consisting of the President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer ex-officiis, together with three ministers and six laypersons to be elected by ballot by the Swedenborgian Church, one minister and two laypersons to be elected annually for terms of three years. Members who have served for two consecutive three-year terms shall not be eligible for immediate re-election.

**Section 3.** – There shall be a Council of Ministers consisting of all the ministers of the Swedenborgian Church, of whom twelve shall constitute a quorum. This Council shall elect a chair who shall be a member of the Cabinet.

**Section 4.** – There shall be Support Units as specified in the Bylaws. Support units shall consist of three members, one to be elected annually for a three year term, or of six members, two to be elected annually for three year terms, together with such ex-officio members as the Bylaws shall require. Members who have served two consecutive three year terms shall not be eligible for immediate re-election. Each Support Unit shall have specific focus as defined in the Bylaws and unless otherwise provided in the Bylaws shall elect a chair who shall be a member of the Cabinet.

**Section 5.** – There shall be a Cabinet composed of the Chairs of all Support Units, the Chair of the Council of Ministers, a representative from General Council, and the President of the Swedenborgian Church who shall serve as Chair.

**Section 6.** – All elected persons shall hold office for the respective terms for which they are elected, or until their respective successors shall have been elected or qualified, provided, however, that the terms of all such elected persons shall be automatically extended for one year for each year in which

because of national emergency or other compelling reason no annual meetings of the Swedenborgian Church are held.

**Section 7.** – The term ‘year’ or ‘years’ as used in the Article shall mean, unless otherwise specified, the periods between elections at succeeding annual sessions of the Swedenborgian Church.

### **Article III.**

#### **Duties and Powers**

**Section 1.** – The President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer shall perform the duties implied by the names of their several offices, the duties listed in the Bylaws and such other duties as the Swedenborgian Church may require of them.

**Section 2.** – The General Council shall serve as the Executive Committee of the Swedenborgian Church, shall have superintendence of the business of the Swedenborgian Church, and shall exercise the powers of the Swedenborgian Church in the interim of its sessions. It shall be responsible for all corporate, legal and financial functions of the Swedenborgian Church and shall act as a Court of Appeals as defined in the Bylaws. The President, the Vice President and the Recording Secretary of the Swedenborgian Church shall be ex-officio Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary, respectively, of the General Council. The General Council may fill any vacancy in the General Council or in any office or position regularly elected by the delegates; provided, however, that any such appointment to fill a vacancy shall last only until the next session of the Swedenborgian Church.

The General Council shall annually review reports from all Support Units, and shall recommend to the church any necessary revisions or clarifications of fundamental principle or priority. It shall receive the budget recommendations of the Cabinet, revise them as its wisdom shall indicate, and adopt a budget.

**Section 3.** – The Council of Ministers shall have as its central focus the facilitating of ordained ministries serving the Swedenborgian Church’s PURPOSE. It shall have primary responsibility in matters pertaining to doctrine and worship of the church and shall have charge of the ministry. This council shall oversee the pastoral, teaching, liturgical and administrative dimensions of the ordained ministry; it shall practice and support disciplined and creative theological research and reflection, and it shall oversee the provision of ordained ministry of the Swedenborgian Church and its collective bodies. It also bears responsibility for the pastoral support of all ministries and for providing them with clear ethical standards. It shall exercise such disciplinary functions over the ordained clergy as it may in its collective wisdom adopt, subject to the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws.

**Section 4.** – The Cabinet shall coordinate the Support Units’ activities, set priorities there of and ensure that the criteria adopted by the Swedenborgian Church and used for evaluation are applied as uniformly and equitably as possible. The Cabinet shall be directly accountable to and report to the General Council. The Cabinet shall receive the preliminary budget from the Financial and

Physical Resources Support Unit and shall negotiate and make such adjustments as it deems necessary. The budget shall be submitted to General Council for its review and approval by a date which Council shall determine. The Cabinet shall also serve as an Advisory Board to the President of the Swedenborgian Church.

**Section 5.** – The primary duties of a Support Unit shall be to facilitate, initiate and evaluate activities relevant to its focus. Its primary means shall be the provision of supportive supervision for the planning, realization and evaluation of such activities, such supervision to function under criteria approved by the Swedenborgian Church. It shall be responsible for annual review of its efforts with explicit reference to the Swedenborgian Church’s PURPOSE, Objectives and Strategies as listed in the Standing Resolutions.

Persons or groups desiring denomination support for new or existing activities shall communicate their desire to the President, who shall refer the request to an appropriate Support Unit. This Unit shall then appoint a supervisor acceptable to the requesting persons or groups to assist in the planning and the evaluation of the activity.

Within the limits of its budget, a Support Unit shall enlist the services of resource persons as supervisors, make decisions concerning the funding of activities in its care and receive and evaluate reports therefrom, submitting to the Cabinet and to the General Council at least annually a report of its decisions and the activities in its care.

The Chair by virtue of his or her Cabinet position shall bear primary responsibility for coordinating these activities with those of other Support Units.

#### **Article IV.**

##### **Representation and Voting**

**Section 1.** – All members of the Swedenborgian Church shall have the right to be present at its meetings and to take part in its deliberations. They may be eligible for election or appointment to any office or position in the Swedenborgian Church as the Constitution and Bylaws shall provide. But the right to vote shall be limited to the members of the Council of Ministers, to the lay officers of the Swedenborgian Church, to members of the General Council during their terms of office and to the delegates of constituent bodies entitled to representation at the annual meetings. No member shall be entitled to more than one vote.

**Section 2.** – Every constituent body of the Swedenborgian Church shall be entitled to two delegates and an additional delegate for every ten members, such delegates to be members of the body which they represent.

Membership is to be determined as of the 31<sup>st</sup> day of December of the calendar year immediately preceding the date of the Swedenborgian Church annual meetings. For this purpose, only adult active members as defined in Article I, Section 3 shall be counted. It shall be the joint responsibility of the members and the bodies involved to ensure that no member is counted by more than one body for delegate strength.

**Section 3.** –In determining delegate strength and in selecting delegates, only those bodies shall be included which are in good standing with the Swedenborgian Church.

Good standing of constituent bodies shall be forfeited if such body, without express consent of the Council of Ministers, employs a minister on an annual basis who is not on the Roll of Ministers as defined in Article XII, Section 1 of the Bylaws.

### **Article V. The Ministry**

**Section 1.** – The Swedenborgian Church shall at its discretion, on recommendation of the Council of Ministers, and subject to the provisions in Article XII of the Bylaws, authorize the ordination and induction of qualified individuals to serve as its ministers. Such ordination and induction shall confer the privileges and responsibilities of leading in worship, administering the rites and sacraments, teaching, and pastoral care, together with those of full membership in the Council of Ministers.

**Section 2.** – The Swedenborgian Church’s interest in education for its ministers shall be exercised through the General Council in its role as the representative class of members of the Corporation of the New Church Theological School. It is the denomination’s interest that such education focus on the spiritual growth of its participants by development in understanding of our theology, sensitivity in human relations, appreciation of other traditions and the technical skills required for effective ministry.

### **Article VI. Meetings of the Swedenborgian Church**

**Section 1.** – Sessions of the Swedenborgian Church shall be held at least triennially, at such times and places as it may determine.

**Section 2.** – A quorum shall consist of thirty-five percent of the numbers of persons qualified to vote as defined in Article IV, Representation and Voting.

### **Article VII. Amendments**

This Constitution may be amended at any session of the Swedenborgian Church by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting, provided that the proposed amendment shall first have been referred to the General Council, and public notice of the substance thereof shall have been given at least three months before the time of such meeting. Such notice may be dispensed with for any special occasion by a three-fourths vote of those present and voting.

Revised June 28, 1996

**Adopted as amended June 28, 1996**

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## **BYLAWS OF THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH**

### **Article I.**

#### **Religious Observances of the Annual Meeting**

**Section 1.** – The annual business meeting of the Swedenborgian Church shall include each day a reading from the Word and prayer.

**Section 2.** – The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper shall be administered at an appropriate time during the annual meetings of the Swedenborgian Church.

### **Article II.**

#### **Enrollment of the Swedenborgian Church**

**Section 1.** – A Committee on Credentials, to consist of three persons, shall be appointed prior to the opening of each session of the Swedenborgian Church, to examine the credentials of the delegates, and to make up the Roll of the Swedenborgian Church; said Committee to sit during the whole of that session and to add to and correct the Roll, as may be proper.

**Section 2.** – Friends of the Swedenborgian Church, who are in attendance at any session of the Swedenborgian Church, are invited to inscribe their names and residences in a register to be kept for that purpose and to take seats in the meetings. Such registry shall entitle them, without vote, to participate in its deliberations by addressing the Chair for permission to speak from the floor.

Article IV, Section 1 of the Constitution and Article II, Section 2 of the Bylaws shall be read by the Recording Secretary immediately after the opening of the session of the Swedenborgian Church.

### **Article III.**

#### **Order of Business**

Reports and Communications shall be presented in the following order:

1. Reports of the Officers of the Swedenborgian Church
2. Report of the General Council
3. Report of the Council of Ministers
4. Reports of the Support Units
5. Reports of the Committees
6. Reports of the Associations
7. Reports of Churches not affiliated with Associations
8. Reports of Trustees
9. Reports of Auxiliary Bodies
10. Special Reports

11. Unfinished Business
12. New Business

When any report called for is not ready, its presentation shall be postponed until all other reports have been presented in their order. This rule shall not apply to the reports of the Council of Ministers or of the General Council, which may be presented as soon as prepared.

No debate shall be allowed on any of the above reports until all of them have been presented; but a motion to refer, or to adopt a recommendation without debate, shall be in order.

The above Order of Business may be suspended at any time by a two-thirds vote.

#### **Article IV. Annual Meeting Planning and Operation**

**Section 1.—Planning for Sessions of the Swedenborgian Church.** The President shall appoint a committee representing the Swedenborgian Church body for each year's session for the purpose of planning the overall program, including selection of theme, specific programs, allocation of times for these programs and development of the published program.

**Section 2.—Local Arrangements.** The President may appoint a committee representing the local church or association where the sessions are to be convened for the purpose of planning and coordinating with the Central Office and the host institution such matters as transportation, housing, meals, meeting room requirements, audio-visual equipment, special event requirements, and any other arrangements appropriate for the planned program.

**Section 3. — The Swedenborgian Church Business.** The Executive Committee of the General Council shall serve as the Committee on Business for each year's session. It shall be the duty of this committee to assign the order under which different subjects shall be presented and the time allotted to each subject, and to prepare and print the program for that session; but such program may be changed at any time by majority vote of the delegates. Any item of new business wished to be placed on the floor for the session must be submitted in writing to the Recording Secretary of the Swedenborgian Church. To ensure an agenda position in the Order of Business, the items must be submitted in advance of the business session.

**Article V.  
Parliamentary Procedures**

**Section 1.** – The provisions of Robert’s Rules of Order, so far as they are consistent with the Bylaws, shall govern the proceedings of the sessions. The President shall at the beginning of each session appoint an advisor on parliamentary matters.

**Section 2.** – The yeas and nays shall be taken whenever they are called for by one-fifth of the persons voting.

**Section 3.** – No member shall speak more than five minutes at one time, nor more than twice upon any subject, without affirmative vote of the delegates present.

**Article VI.  
Duties of the President**

**Section 1.** – The President shall perform the duties required by the Act of Incorporation, the Constitution and these Bylaws. The President shall preside over sessions of the Swedenborgian Church, shall address the Swedenborgian Church setting forth the state of the Church and shall ensure that the activities of the Cabinet are reported to the Swedenborgian Church. In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall fulfill these duties.

**Section 2.** – All Committees shall be appointed by the President of the Swedenborgian Church, unless otherwise ordered by the Swedenborgian Church, or provided in the Constitution or Bylaws; and vacancies in Committees so appointed shall be filled by the President.

**Section 3.**– The President shall have the privilege of participating, ex-officio without vote, in the meetings of all Support Units.

**Article VII.  
Duties of the Recording Secretary**

**Section 1.** – The Recording Secretary shall perform the duties required by the Act of Incorporation, including the execution of deeds, conveyances or leases, provided by the Act of Incorporation; and any duties that may be prescribed by the Constitution, the Bylaws, the Swedenborgian Church or by the General Council.

**Section 2.** – The Recording Secretary shall be responsible for securing reports from the bodies below named, to be received at least four weeks prior to each annual session of the Swedenborgian Church, or if any such session is not held in any one year, not later than June 30<sup>th</sup> of such year. The Recording Secretary shall see that copies of such reports, so prepared, are mailed to each



minister and association of the Swedenborgian Church, and to such officers or interested persons as may be deemed desirable at least ten days prior to each session, and distribute them to members at the annual session. Reports received after the deadline may be presented to the Swedenborgian Church orally or in print, in full or in summary.

Such reports are to be requested from –

Officers, General Council, Council of Ministers, Support Units,  
Committees, Associations, Trustees, Auxiliary Bodies and Churches  
not affiliated with Associations.

**Section 3.** – The Recording Secretary shall be responsible for providing the Committee on Credentials with a list of the number of delegates to which each constituent body is entitled, as defined in Article IV, Section 2 of the Constitution. The necessary information shall be solicited from the constituent bodies in the January preceding the session. Any constituent body failing to comply with this requirement by April 1 shall forfeit the right of its additional delegates (as defined in Article IV, Section 2 of the Constitution) to vote at that session. Should such body submit the necessary information after the deadline, this forfeiture may be waived by a three-fifths vote of the Swedenborgian Church. A numerical table of the maximum delegation shall be published in *The Messenger* not less than one month before each annual session.

**Section 4.** – The Recording Secretary, with such persons as may be appointed by the General Council, shall constitute a Committee on the *Journal*, to procure each year the publication of the *Journal of the Swedenborgian Church*. Said *Journal* shall include the Act of Incorporation, the Constitution and Bylaws, the minutes of the session of the Swedenborgian Church held during the current year; the names of the officers, General Council members, administrative bodies and members of committees of the Swedenborgian Church, current membership statistics, and any other matter that is required by the Constitution or Bylaws to be included; together with any reports presented to the Swedenborgian Church as provided by these Bylaws in such forms as such committee shall deem proper, together with any additional information which the Committee shall deem appropriate. Such Committee shall cause to be printed such number of copies of the *Journal* as it may deem necessary, and arrange for the distribution thereof.

**Section 5.** – The Committee on the *Journal* shall publish in a supplemental or special *Journal* every five years such matters of information of a permanent nature, not required to be published in each *Journal*, as it may deem suitable; and shall distribute such supplemental or special *Journals* in the same manner as the *Journals*.

**Article VIII.**  
**The General Council**

**Section 1.** – The General Council shall meet without notice within forty-eight hours after the final adjournment of the Business Session of the Swedenborgian Church. The Council shall also hold two other regular meetings, an interim meeting and a meeting just before the convening of a session of the Swedenborgian Church. Twenty days' notice of these meetings and of any special meetings called by the Chair or by any five members of the Council, shall be given by letter to all members of the Council at their last known address, the time to be computed from the mailing of the letter. The notices of special meetings shall contain brief statements of the purpose of the meetings. At all meetings of the Council seven shall constitute a quorum.

**Section 2.** – There shall be an Executive Committee of the General Council consisting of the President, Vice President and the Secretary of the General Council, and the Treasurer of the Swedenborgian Church, which shall deal with any matters referred to it by the General Council. In routine matters not involving policy decisions, the Executive Committee may act for the General Council between General Council sessions, all such actions to be reported to the next meeting of the General Council.

**Section 3.** – Any action required or permitted to be taken at a regular meeting of the Council may be taken without a meeting if two-thirds of the members of the Council consent to the action in writing and the written consents are filed with the records of the General Council's meetings; provided further that if any member entitled to vote on such action shall so request, the Secretary shall notify all members of the General Council in writing of any objections to the action and allow two weeks from the date of such notice before the count of the vote is finally made.

**Section 4.** – The General Council may, in its discretion, appoint such officers or employees not otherwise provided for, as it may deem necessary or desirable; and it shall define the duties of such officers and employees, and such officers and employees shall hold office at the pleasure of the General Council.

**Section 5.** – The General Council shall serve ex officio as the representative class of members of the Corporation of the New Church Theological School, and in accord with the provisions of the Bylaws of said Corporation shall represent the denomination's interest.

**Article IX.**  
**The Cabinet**

The Cabinet shall meet at least once yearly and at the call of the President as

required and shall have the duties and powers set forth in Article III, Section 4, of the Constitution.

### **Article X.**

#### **The Support Units**

(Provided by Article II, Section 4 of the Constitution)

**Section 1. – Financial and Physical Resources Support Unit.** There shall be a Support Unit for Financial and Physical Resources, whose central focus shall be on the wise use and development of such resources as are directly under the Swedenborgian Church's control, and the provision of advice and counsel in such matters to the Swedenborgian Church's collective bodies. This Unit shall oversee the management of the Swedenborgian Church's properties and investments, shall seek new sources of material support and shall provide consultants for the Swedenborgian Church's collective bodies toward the best coordinated and wisest use and development of their financial and physical resources. This Support Unit shall work in close cooperation with the Common Fund Investment Committee. This Support unit shall consist of three members plus the Treasurer of the Swedenborgian Church, *ex officio*, who shall serve as its chair.

Based on its assessment of the overall needs of the denomination, this Support Unit shall make recommendations to General Council as to how best to manage its funds and properties.

This Unit shall appoint annually a committee to administer the Augmentation Fund, to include the President and Treasurer of the Swedenborgian Church *ex officio*.

This Unit shall receive preliminary budget requests from the General Council, the Council of Ministers, the Cabinet and all Support Units and shall prepare therefrom a preliminary budget for submission to the Cabinet, including clear indications of any necessity it may see for adjustment.

The President and the Recording Secretary as specified in Section 3 of the Articles of Incorporation are authorized and empowered, on approval of the General Council, to execute and deliver, and whenever necessary attach the seal of the Swedenborgian Church thereto, all deeds, bonds and mortgages, contracts and obligations of the Swedenborgian Church; all assignments, power of attorney and instruments for the transfer of stocks, bonds and other securities owned by the Swedenborgian Church; and any other instruments in the conduct of the Swedenborgian Church business.

**Section 2. – Education Support Unit.** There shall be a Support Unit for Education, whose central focus shall be on facilitating activities that enhance the understanding and the skills needed for the realization of the Swedenborgian Church's PURPOSE. This Unit will be concerned with resources, personnel and

programming, and will strive to foster excellence in both content taught and in technique of teaching. This Support Unit shall consist of three members plus a representative appointed by the Swedenborg School of Religion's Board of Trustees.

**Section 3. – Communication Support Unit.** There shall be a Support Unit for Communication consisting of three members, whose central focus shall be on coordinating, initiating and promoting communication both within and across the boundaries of the denomination in all variety of media. It will seek to foster coordination among the Swedenborgian Church's publishing activities. This Unit will be alert to the climate of opinion both within and beyond the boundaries of the Swedenborgian Church, and will also be alert to developments in communication technology. The official organ of the denomination, *The Messenger*, shall be under the supervision of this Support Unit.

**Section 4. – Support Unit for Ministries.** There shall be a Support Unit for Ministries, whose central focus shall be on facilitating ministries within the Swedenborgian Church and facilitating activities that increase the number of individuals and groups consciously committed to the realization of the Swedenborgian Church's PURPOSE. This Unit shall be concerned with resources, personnel, programming, and the provision of administrative and spiritual support to our ministries, and will foster supportive communication among like ministries so that pastoral care will be available as needed. It shall be particularly alert to congenial trends in thought and activity outside the Swedenborgian Church, and shall conscientiously monitor the effects of its efforts on both the size and the usefulness of the Swedenborgian Church.

This Unit shall consist of six members, including at least one minister with five or more years of pastoral experience, and at least one lay person.

This amendment shall take effect at the close of the session at which it was adopted. The initial members of this Support Unit shall be the duly elected members of the former Pastoral Ministries Support Unit and Growth and Outreach Support Unit, who shall complete their terms as members of this Support Unit.

**Section 5. – Information Management Support Unit.** There shall be a Support Unit for Information Management whose central focus shall be on gathering, storing and distributing data pertinent to the fulfillment of the Swedenborgian Church's PURPOSE. This unit will, within the limits of its budget, oversee the purchasing and maintenance of necessary equipment and the hiring of appropriate staff, and in cooperation with the denomination's collective bodies, will devise efficient, equitable, and acceptable principles and means of access and distribution of information, primarily within the boundaries of the Swedenborgian Church.

## **Article XI.** **The Council of Ministers**

**Section 1.** - Application for ordination or other matters relating to the office of the ministry shall first be received and considered by the Council of Ministers. Its report on such matters as require immediate action shall be privileged at any session of the Swedenborgian Church.

**Section 2.** – The Council of Ministers shall revise the denomination’s Roll of Ministers annually, and shall report such revision to the Swedenborgian Church for its actions.

**Section 3.** – Every minister ordained or inducted by authority of the Swedenborgian Church, and not serving any church, ministry, or other collective body acting under the rules of the Swedenborgian Church, shall report his or her official acts to the Council of Ministers. If the minister shall have performed no official acts, he or she shall report that fact, and shall signify whether he or she desires to be retained on the denomination’s Roll of Ministers.

## **Article XII** **The Ordained Ministry**

**Preamble:** Jesus said unto his disciples, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.” (John 15:16)

The ordained ministry exists to facilitate the spiritual well-being of people, helping them to be open to the Lord’s leading and enabling them to live useful lives. Resources for the ordained ministry in serving the church include the Holy Word, the doctrines of the church, the rites and sacraments, experiences of worship, and growth-oriented skills insofar as they promote the process of regeneration.

**Section 1.** – A member of the Swedenborgian Church shall be ordained into or inducted into its ministry by recommendation of the Council of Ministers and by affirmative vote of the Swedenborgian Church. The Council of Ministers shall have first received a written vision of ministry from the applicant, and determined that one of the following requirements has been met;

1. He or she shall have satisfactorily completed the full course of study at the Swedenborg School of Religion and shall have been authorized as a candidate for ordination.
2. After preparation recognized by the Council of Ministers as adequate; and he or she shall have served as an Authorized Candidate for the Ministry for one year.

3. After preparation recognized by the Council of Ministers as adequate, a minister, ordained in another communion, who accepts the doctrines of the Swedenborgian Church and expresses allegiance to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Swedenborgian Church.

Those persons applying for ordination or induction shall also have a request for employment from a church or other employing body of the Swedenborgian Church, or shall have a proposal for ministry approved by the Council of Ministers. Upon recommendation by the Council of Ministers, and affirmative vote of the Swedenborgian Church, upon ordination or induction his or her name shall be added to the Roll of Ordained Ministers.

**Section 2. – The Ordaining Minister.**

(a) A Minister who is elected President of the Swedenborgian Church shall be invested with the office of Ordaining Minister during his or her term as President. The Ordaining Minister shall be empowered to ordain duly qualified candidates for the ministry (cf. Section 1), to authorize for one year Candidates for the Ministry (cf. Section 3), to confer upon suitable persons, at the request of the church to be served and in accordance with the provisions of Article XIII (below), the title Lay Leader, and to consecrate as Worship Leaders persons selected by their congregation or group to provide leadership for public worship (cf. Article XIII, Section 2).

(b) In the event that a lay person is elected as President of the Swedenborgian Church, then the Chair of the Council of Ministers shall be invested with the office of Ordaining Minister, during his or her term as chair.

(c) When the President is the Swedenborgian Church's Ordaining Minister and is adjudged by the General Council to be incapacitated, the Chair of the Council of Ministers shall be invested with the office of Ordaining Minister until such time as the President is recovered. In the event of resignation of the President, the investiture of the Chair of the Council of Ministers shall be for the duration of his or her term of office, until such times as the Swedenborgian Church shall again have a minister as its President.

(d) In the event that subsequent to the invoking of the provisions of section 2(c), or when the President of the Swedenborgian Church is a lay person, the Chair of the Council of Ministers should resign, or become incapacitated or die, the Secretary of the Council of Ministers shall be invested with the office of Ordaining Minister, such investiture to terminate upon the recovery of the chair, or in the case of the chair's death or resignation, upon the election of a new chair of the Council of Ministers, or on the election of a minister as President of the Swedenborgian Church.

(e) In the event that it is not possible for the Ordaining Minister to travel to a suitable place for the ordination of candidates for the ministry, he or she may appoint an ordained minister to act as the Ordaining Minister pro tem for a specific ordination.

**Section 3.–The Authorized Candidate for the Ministry.**

(a) A member of the Swedenborgian Church, after preparation recognized by the Council of Ministers as adequate, may upon recommendation of the Council of Ministers, and after affirmative vote of the Swedenborgian Church, be authorized by the Ordaining Minister as an authorized candidate for the ministry and for one (1) year. He or she may lead in worship, teach the doctrine of the Church and officiate at resurrection services. Such persons shall be known as Authorized Candidates for the Ministry. Where authorization does not lead to ordination at the end of one year, the candidacy may be reviewed by the Council of Ministers.

(b) The Ordaining Minister of the Swedenborgian Church may empower an Authorized Candidate for the Ministry or a Swedenborg School of Religion student intern to perform a marriage where the laws of the state or province permit and in specific instances may empower him or her to administer the Sacrament of Baptism and/or the Holy Supper.

**Section 4. – Special Circumstances.** The Swedenborgian Church by a three-quarters vote may, in individual case, dispense with limiting requirements, outlines in Article XII, upon the recommendation of the Council of Ministers showing the need or desirability thereof, such recommendation to be made only on the agreement of at least three fourths of the members of the Council of Ministers present and voting at the Council Session.

**Section 5. –** The Swedenborgian Church’s Roll of Ordained Ministers is the record of all those who have been ordained or inducted into the ministry of the Swedenborgian Church.

**Article XIII.****The Ministry of Lay Persons**

**Preamble.** Every Christian is called to minister. Jesus said that inasmuch as we minister to one another, we minister unto Him. “I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.” (Matthew 25:35-36)

The Apostle Paul declared that “there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. To teach is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.” (I Corinthians 12:4-7)

The church encourages all members to exercise their unique talents and gifts in assimilating the spiritual and well-being of people. Some are called to ordained ministry within the framework of the Swedenborgian Church. Others are called to specific, part-time service in the church and are recognized and consecrated

as Lay Leaders and Worship Leaders. Other men and women are called to minister to the world and around them, in their homes, and in their chosen vocations. In addition, some wish to offer their gifts through programs and services in the church. The Swedenborgian Church encourages these ministries and recognizes them as manifestations of the Spirit of God.

**Section 1. – Lay Leader.**

(a) The Swedenborgian Church commends the efforts of lay people throughout our church who have served in many ways and ministered to the needs of local churches.

Out of this experience, the Swedenborgian Church sees the potential for even greater service to the church by trained qualified lay persons to augment the work of its ordained ministry.

(b) In order to meet ongoing needs of local churches, suitable persons may be consecrated as Lay Leaders to serve particular congregations or to serve within clearly defined geographical areas. For such consecration, the following requirements must be met.

(1) The candidate must apply to the Swedenborg School of Religion for enrollment in its Lay Leadership Education program. This application must be supported by the endorsement of the individual's congregation or appropriate supervisory body, granted on the basis of leadership ability, knowledge of the Church's teachings, character, and devotion to the Church. Neither acceptance into the program nor completion of the program guarantees approval by the Council of Ministers.

(2) On satisfactory completion of the first year of this program, duly certified by the School, the individual must request of the Ordaining Minister and be granted status as a Probationary Lay Leader, this request to be supported by the recommendation of the Council of Ministers. With this status, the candidate is authorized to lead in worship, teach the doctrines of the Church, and officiate at resurrection services. The expected duration of this status shall be two years. The Committee on Admission Into the Ministry or other committee recommended by the Council of Ministers will be responsible for monitoring the progress of Probationary Lay Leaders. The Ordaining Minister may rescind the status of Probationary Lay Leader if the candidate fails to keep pace with the educational requirements, if the congregation or appropriate supervisory body requests such rescission, or for other due and weighty cause. If for good and sufficient reasons the person is unable to complete the prescribed training within the normal period, the Ordaining Minister may extend the authorization for one year. Extensions of more than one year will require review by the Council of Ministers.

(3) Consecration as a Lay Leader, administered by the Ordaining Minister, shall take place when the following conditions have been met.



- a) The Swedenborg School of Religion shall certify to the Council of Ministers that the educational program has been satisfactorily completed.
- b) The congregation of the candidate shall reaffirm to the Council of Ministers its desire for such consecration.
- c) The Council of Ministers shall recommend the consecration to the Swedenborgian Church.
- d) Said Church shall authorize the consecration.

The consecration itself shall take place in a public service held in the congregation or area to be served.

(c) Henceforth, the title “Lay Leader” shall be reserved for individuals so consecrated.

(d) Following consecration, the Lay Leader may administer all the rites and sacraments to the congregation or in the area served. This authorization shall include the right to perform marriages where the laws of the state or province permit. Lay leaders are expected to comply with the guidelines for ministerial conduct.

(e) Lay leaders shall be accountable to the Ordaining Minister of the Swedenborgian Church, who shall be responsible for providing appropriate supervision. If the Lay Leader serves a congregation which employs an ordained minister, said minister shall act as the immediate supervisor and the Lay Leader shall not offer pastoral or liturgical services without the knowledge and consent of this minister. The local congregation or other supervisory body shall have the right to terminate the services of the lay leader. A lay leader may not serve in another congregation or geographical area without a request from the new congregation or other supervisory body, and the approval of the Council of Ministers.

(f) Administrative details of the above procedure shall be available in writing from the Swedenborg School of Religion and the Council of Ministers.

**Section 2. – Worship Leader.** Nothing in this Article shall in any way be interpreted to place restrictions on those lay persons selected by their congregation or group to provide leadership for public worship. Indeed, an appropriate service of consecration for such persons functioning as worship leaders is recommended. Following consecration, such persons shall be known as Worship Leaders.

**Section 3. – Special Circumstances.** The Swedenborgian Church by three-quarters vote may, in individual cases, dispense with limiting requirements, outlined in Article XIII upon the recommendation of the Council of Ministers showing the need or desirability thereof, such recommendation to be made only on the agreement of at least three-fourths of the members of the Council of Ministers present and voting at the Council session.

**Section 4. – The Roll of Lay Leaders.** Any person consecrated as a Lay leader shall have his or her name listed on the Roll of Lay Leaders with indication of the church or area which each serves. The names shall appear on the Roll so long as the persons continue actively to serve the church or area for which they were consecrated.

#### **Article XIV. Theological School**

**Section 1.** – The Swedenborgian Church shall by majority vote nominate annually the number of nominees for election by the Board of Trustees of the New Church Theological School, commonly known as the Swedenborg School of Religion, as provided for, or allowed, by the Bylaws of the Corporation of the New Church Theological School, and shall forward these nominations to the General Council, in its role as the representative class of the Corporation of the New Church Theological School, for consideration for election to the Board of Trustees.

#### **Article XV. Board of Mediation**

There shall be a Board of Mediation consisting of five members. Two such members shall be lay persons appointed by the President, and two shall be ministers appointed by the Chair of the Council of Ministers, and their terms of office shall be the same as that of the President of the Swedenborgian Church. The fifth member shall be the Vice President of Convention who shall serve as Chair.

Whenever any dispute or irregularity shall arise which affects the fulfillment of the purpose of the Swedenborgian Church or any of its constituent or subsidiary bodies, if the efforts of the ministers or officers immediately concerned have not proved effective, the President or the General Council shall refer the situation to the Board of Mediation; or any member, collective body, or subsidiary body may apply to said Board for relief or determination. The Board shall then use its best endeavors to resolve the matter through the voluntary agreement of those concerned, or failing to effect such resolution shall render a judgment as to the disposition thereof, after hearing the complaints and considering the facts.

Should the Board be unable to effect a resolution or settlement, it shall render its report or judgment to the General Council, together with such recommendations as it may deem appropriate. The General Council as the Executive

Committee of the Swedenborgian Church shall then take such actions and issue such directions as it shall deem suitable. Anyone aggrieved by said report or judgment shall have the right of appeal to the General Council, as a final resort to seek reconsideration by the delegates at the annual session of the Swedenborgian Church.

Any member of the Board of Mediation may decline to participate in the consideration of a specified situation due to conflict of interest. In this case, the President of the General Convention or the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, as may be appropriate, shall appoint a substitute, who shall serve as a full member of the Board during its consideration of that issue only.

### **Article XVI. Nominating Committee**

**Section 1.** – There shall be a Nominating Committee of five members to serve for five years each; one member to be elected each year, but not from any Association from which his or her predecessor or any other member of the Committee shall be a member. The unexpired term of any member may be filled from the same Association. A member moving to another Association shall continue to serve, and shall be regarded as coming from his or her former Association; but no retiring member shall be eligible for immediate re-election. Whenever possible, the Nominating Committee shall propose slates representative of the Swedenborgian Church’s overall constituency.

It shall be the duty of this Committee to present, at each session of the Swedenborgian Church, nominees for the Swedenborgian Church officers (where applicable), vacancies in the elective members of the General Council and all other Boards, Support Units and Committees. Each year the member whose term is next to expire shall act as Chair of the Committee.

**Section 2.** – No person shall be nominated to serve on more than one Support Unit at any one time. This order shall be observed by the Nominating Committee, and shall be kept by the chair when accepting nominations from the floor. It is further recommended that no individual serve on more than two administrative bodies or more than two committees of the Swedenborgian Church, the Nominating Committee and the Chair being similarly instructed. This does not apply to persons serving ex-officio as provided by the Constitution and Bylaws.

### **Article XVII. Common Fund Investment Committee**

The General Council, at its first meeting following each annual session of the Swedenborgian Church, shall appoint an Investment Committee of not less

than three members, one of whom may be the Treasurer of the Convention, which shall be charged with the general oversight and care of the investments and securities of the Swedenborgian Church Common Fund, with full power to purchase and sell and to invest and reinvest as in their judgment and discretion may seem advisable. Any members constituting a majority of said Committee may exercise all of the authority and powers hereby granted to or conferred upon said Committee. This Committee is authorized to make investments and reinvestments in such bonds, notes, debentures, corporate stocks and other securities and such real estate, real estate mortgages, interests in real estate mortgages, and other property as the Committee, in the exercise of reasonable intelligence and caution, shall deem best. This Committee shall work in close cooperation with the Financial and Physical Resources Support Unit.

No provision of this Article shall violate the Act of Incorporation.

No one who is or has been at any time in the past either a beneficiary of or a donor to the Swedenborgian Church Pooled Income Fund shall be eligible to serve as a member of the Investment Committee.

#### **Article XVIII. Board of Trustees of the Building Fund**

The Board of Trustees of the Building Fund shall consist of three trustees who shall be appointed by the General Council, to serve initially for one, two, and three years, respectively from July 1, 1956; their successors to serve each for three years. They shall make loans from time to time from the Building Fund as heretofore provided, or as hereafter provided from time to time by the Swedenborgian Church. In case of a vacancy on the Board, the General Council may fill the vacancy for the unexpired term.

#### **Article XIX.**

The Board of Trustees of the National Church, now holding the title to and having control of the Church property in Washington, D.C., shall consist of 15 members. The thirteen members of the General Council shall be members by virtue of that office. The Washington Society shall elect the two remaining members annually. The position on the Board of any member of General Council who is not a citizen of the United States shall be filled by a vote of General Council. Ten members shall constitute a quorum. The Chair in the event of unforeseen circumstances may call an extraordinary meeting, with appropriate notice. There shall be an Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees, consisting of the officers of the Board plus two additional Board members, elected by the Board. One of the two shall be from the Washington Society.

**Article XX.****Application for Admission as a Constituent Body**

The application of an Association, Church or other body of the Church to be received by this body and represented in the Swedenborgian Church, may be made through the General Council, and upon their recommendation shall come before the annual session. When the session has voted to receive such Association or other body, the President shall announce the names of its delegates, and invite them to come forward. The President shall then inform them of the vote, and all rising, shall give the new delegates the right hand of fellowship, and welcome them to all the privileges enjoyed by other delegates.

**Article XXI.****Indemnification**

To the extent now or hereafter permitted by the laws of the State of Illinois, the corporation shall indemnify its officers and directors against all costs and expenses reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with or arising out of any claim, action, suit or proceeding of whatever nature in which he or she may be involved as a party or otherwise or with which he or she may be threatened by reason of his or her having served as an officer or director of the corporation or by reason of any action alleged to have been taken or omitted by him or her as such officer or director, whether or not he or she be such officer or director at the time of incurring such cost or expense, including amounts paid or incurred in connection with reasonable settlements (other than amounts paid to the corporation itself) made with the approval of the General Council and with a view to curtailment of costs of litigation.

**Article XXII.****Amendments**

These Bylaws may be amended at any session of the Swedenborgian Church by a three-fifths vote of those present and voting, provided that the proposed amendment shall have been first referred to the General Council, and public notice of the substance thereof shall have been given at least three months before the time of such meeting. Such notice may be dispensed with for any special occasion by a three-fourths vote of those present and voting.

Dated May 3, 1985

Typed July 2, 1985

Revised July 10, 1985

Delegate Version

Revised October 31, 1985

Revised December 7, 1985

Revised General Council, February 1, 1986

Revised May 27, 1986

Revised June 26, 1992

Revised July 8, 1994

Revised July 7, 1995

Revised June 28, 1996

Revised June 26, 1998

**Adopted as amended June 27, 1999**

## STANDING RESOLUTIONS

### 1.

**(Adopted by the General Convention July 3, 1986)**

### THE PURPOSE OF CONVENTION

The General Convention exists to help people be open to the Lord's presence and leading especially by fostering personal and ordained ministries which facilitate the spiritual well-being of people, and which have in common a working for the Lord in bringing in the New Age – the descent of the Holy City, New Jerusalem.

The light in which we seek to walk shines from the Lord Jesus Christ in His second coming, available to us through the divine presence in our hearts and minds, and through revelation in the Holy Scriptures and in the work of the Lord's servant Emanuel Swedenborg.

With the purpose of creation being a heaven from the human race, we see the central purpose of the church as the promotion of the process of regeneration. External forms such as buildings, liturgies and organizational structures are valid only insofar as they are useful to this end. It is especially vital for an "organized religion" that its life of piety be constantly grounded in a life of charity. In the case of our Convention, constant accountability to the standards of Scripture and doctrine is the primary warrant for our existence as an organization. In particular, we are offered a vision of a New Age, a New Church radically different from the old, by which we can evaluate our present practices and directions.

### OBJECTIVES

1. Facilitate the formation and growth of groups of people who support each other in understanding, loving and living "the life that leads to heaven." We will work to bring together such individuals and groups in a network which amplifies the creative spiritual energy that emerges when we work together.
2. Bring doctrine and life together constructively. We will support this being done in a way that allows them to challenge and enrich each other and that encourages the diverse activities of Convention to express Convention's Purpose consistently.
3. Provide for the discovery, development and evaluation of excellence.
4. Commit ourselves to growth in the number of active members.
5. Continue our commitment to the cause of religious unity.
6. Clarify and intensify our participation in and contribution to the Lord's New Age.

7. In accordance with our Doctrine of Use and in cooperation with Convention's constituent bodies, improve the management and use of the physical/financial resources available for the fulfillment of our Purpose.
8. Design and implement effective means of communication: means which will ensure an open and timely flow of information and will promote Convention's Purpose.
9. Design, adopt and maintain an organizational structure that is directly responsive to Convention's Purpose and needs, and that includes provisions for its own self-evaluation and growth.

### **Objective 1**

*The Formation and Growth of Groups – Facilitate the formation and growth of groups of people who support each other in understanding, loving and living “the life that leads to heaven.” We will work to bring together such individuals and groups in a network which amplifies creative spiritual energy that emerges when we work together.*

Regeneration, or the life of charity, takes place in connection with other human beings, and is impossible in isolation. The spiritual model we are offered, one of individuals gathered into societies which in turn are gathered into provinces, is inseparable from that individual's relationship with others in his or her immediate society; and the spiritual well-being of the society is inseparable from its relationship with the larger church, and with the world in which it is living.

Healthy relationships are characterized by both love and wisdom, which means that neither uncritical acceptance nor unsympathetic criticism is truly constructive. As even love of self is necessary and good in its proper place, so particular interests, talents and skills contribute to the health of the whole as they are appropriately and appreciatively related to each other.

#### *Strategies*

- A. Provide administrative, material and advisory support for the formation and growth of such groups.
- B. Provide training and resources for effective acts of worship, both individual and collective.
- C. Provide for the training of appropriately skilled leaders.
- D. Clarify criteria for membership in Convention in accord with Convention's Purpose and suggest ways for people to become members.
- E. Foster an understanding of networking, particularly as it applies to Convention.
- F. Establish and maintain communication among individuals and groups who share particular interests in common, or who face the same circumstances.



- G.** Establish and maintain inventories of the available talents, skills and resources that are necessary for the formation and growth of groups, and provide for the best possible ways of meeting these groups' needs.
- H.** Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies as they contribute to the formation and growth of groups within the church.

## **Objective 2**

*Doctrine and Life - Bring doctrine and life together constructively. We will support this being done in a way that allows them to challenge and enrich each other and that encourages the diverse activities of Convention to express Convention's Purpose consistently.*

This objective rests in the principle that doctrine alone, like external worship alone, does not make the church, but a life according to it. It looks toward a rejoicing in the fact that there are some of us who start from the books and some of us who start from involvement with people. For doctrine and life to come together, these need to be experienced as complementary rather than competitive approaches, each acknowledging its own incompleteness and therefore its needs for the other. Like the first objective, it assumes that the church cannot find an inner or spiritual well-being without trying to contribute to the spiritual well-being of the world in which it is living, and it further assumes that this contribution will not be made by conforming to that world but by seeking to understand and live our own distinctiveness.

### *Strategies*

- A.** Bring people of different perspectives together for specific purposes such as: worship, team ministries, workshops, camp programs, committees, music and writing projects.
- B.** Support thinking that encourages differences of opinion, that acknowledges both the value of a variety of different approaches and the need to continue an on-going process, and that recognizes the beauty of finding inward coherence in a diversity of outward forms.
- C.** Develop the ability to use everyday language to express theological ideas.
- D.** Develop supportive procedures and resources for program planning and evaluation. These procedures and resources must insist that theological presuppositions be made clear, that results be honestly evaluated, and that our primary concern be the relation between our central Purpose and the actual results of the program.
- E.** Accept and fulfill our responsibility to express a spiritual perspective on

contemporary issues in local, national and global affairs.

- F. Provide for the discovery, nurture and integration of diversity in all levels of structure.
- G. Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies.

### Objective 3

*Excellence – Provide for the discovery, development and evaluation of excellence.*

The Lord has created each one of us with quite extraordinary potentialities, and the church evades its responsibility if it falls into that common pitfall of volunteer organizations, becoming a haven for mediocrity. For example, we somehow expect people to become effective church treasurers by virtue of election, providing neither resources nor training, and then lament the sad state of local accounting procedures. It is the committee's sense that we are, as a church, already doing many of the "right things," and that we could do them more effectively if we worked toward providing appropriate training for available talent.

#### *Strategies*

- A. Develop and maintain an accessible inventory of available talents and skills.
- B. Develop and maintain an accessible inventory of needed talents and skills.
- C. Develop and maintain an accessible inventory of training possibilities.
- D. Facilitate the acquisition of needed talents and training in skills.
- E. Develop means for identifying and improving criteria of excellence.
- F. Update Convention's understanding and appreciation of excellence.
- G. Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies.

### Objective 4

*Numerical Growth – Commit ourselves to growth in the number of active members.*

This is the "let's finally face facts" objective. It is not an end in itself, and must not be achieved to the detriment of other directives, any more than an individual should focus on physical health to the neglect of regeneration. But it also follows that just as physical health for the sake of use cannot be neglected, and must be given specific attention, so we need to give specific attention to numerical growth for the sake of use. Given the intense need for the new church

in the world around us, we cannot avoid our responsibility to find means of outreach that really work, and the clear, objective criterion lies immediately to hand.

### *Strategies*

- A. In cooperative effort with associations, societies and other constituent bodies, develop programs intended to achieve growth.
- B. Develop centralized efforts that both encourage a desire for growth among Convention's constituents and strengthen our self-image.
- C. Develop centralized efforts that create interest among non-Swedenborgians and thus stimulate growth.
- D. Create programs that offer assistance and incentive to ministers and constituent bodies so that they develop the skills and programs necessary to increase growth.
- E. Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies.

## **Objective 5**

*Religious Cooperation* – Continue our commitment to the cause of religious unity.

With the Lord working through all religions to provide the means for the life that leads to heaven, we are again called to a relationship of critical supportiveness. The committee is not recommending any notable increase in our national involvement, but the strategies are intended to relate that involvement more clearly to our purpose and to our other objectives.

### *Strategies*

- A. Continue our involvement in the National Council of Churches and make significant contributions to the policies and programs of the Council.
- B. Improve upon the reporting of our Council representatives to Convention and make resources and services of the Council available to our churches.
- C. Support our ministers' and laity's regional and local involvement in councils of churches and in interfaith activities.
- D. Foster among our church membership, an attitude of appreciation and open-mindedness toward the religions of the world.
- E. Provide for the ongoing evaluation of our participation in ecumenical activities, with a view toward focusing that participation in areas most closely related to our central purpose.
- F. Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies.

**Objective 6**

*The New Age – Clarify and intensify our participation in and contribution to the Lord’s New Age.*

There are strong indications in the world around us that the whole climate of thought is beginning to change. Specifically, the materialistic, mechanistic, “either-or” mentality so hostile to our message is under attack from within the scientific community itself, and there is a widespread resurgence of interest in spirituality. Again, the committee recommends a policy of critical supportiveness, with a strong sense that there are major opportunities in this area for both internal and external growth. The phrase “critical awareness” is intended to convey our belief that not everything new is necessarily in accord with our purpose, and that we have a great deal to learn about how the Lord is working for the new church in the world around us.

**Strategies**

- A. Foster an awareness of the freshness of our theology and its implications for our activities.
- B. Foster critical awareness of the congenial trends that occur in thought and activity outside Convention.
- C. Make ourselves and our theology known and available to persons involved in such thought and activity.
- D. Encourage and support involvement in New Age activities.
- E. Encourage the participation of “New Age” persons in Convention events and programming.
- F. Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies.

**Objective 7**

*Use Our Resources – In accordance with our Doctrine of Use and in cooperation with Convention’s constituent bodies, improve the management and use of the physical-financial resources available for the fulfillment of our Purpose.*

We are per capita a startlingly wealthy church, and yet we seem to have trouble finding the money to do what needs to be done. Given growth in the clarity of our sense of purpose, we need to be candid with ourselves about our

use of resources, and foster a motion from less effective to more effective uses. The committee recognizes and values the distribution of responsibility inherent in our present situation of local autonomy, and insists that this motion cannot be healthy unless it is voluntary; but is also insists that the principle of local autonomy must not be used to evade accountability to the principle of use.

### *Strategies*

- A. In cooperation with Convention's constituent bodies, create and maintain and inventory of these physical and financial resources.
- B. Create and implement a system to improve the management of Convention's resources. This system should include provisions for: resources evaluation, cost/benefit financial planning, accounting and other necessary items.
- C. Create and implement a system to aid Convention's constituent bodies in the management of their resources, and provide guidelines, standards, education and other assistance.
- D. Create and implement a system to aid Convention's financial resources. This program will take advantage of the breadth of our current support base and will seek new sources of income.
- E. Keep Convention's constituent bodies aware of the programs and persons involved in the efforts to accomplish this objective.
- F. Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies.

## **Objective 8**

*Communication – Design and implement effective means of communication: means which will ensure an open and timely flow of information and will promote Convention's Purpose.*

The technology is available for the body of Convention to have a "central nervous system" that will overcome many of the liabilities of our wide geographical distribution, and both within and outside the church there is the expertise to design a system that will suit our particular needs. This objective relates closely to the "networking" strategy under Objective 1, as providing the means by which information resources may be made available when and where they are needed, and kindred individuals and groups kept in touch with each other.

### *Strategies*

- A. Provide means for the on-going evaluation of Convention's communication activities. Make sure that they are consistent with Convention's central Purpose.

- B.** Establish and maintain a central information exchange to collect, store, correlate and disseminate information both within and beyond Convention. This central exchange will:
- Incorporate a relational structure rather than a hierarchical one.
  - Take advantage of advancing technology. For example, computers, video, communications satellites, etc.
  - Be the hub of a “distributed information system” (see Strategy C)
- C.** Administer this “distributed information system.”
- C.** Design and implement a “distributed information system.” This system will provide for the open, direct and timely flow of information among the various constituent groups and individuals of Convention.
- D.** Design and implement means to coordinate Convention’s various publications and productions. This way we will strive for greater effectiveness and economy.
- E.** Establish and maintain means to ensure that our communications to the world at large are coordinated and considered, and foster an appreciation of Convention’s purpose and objective.
- F.** Recognize and promote clear and precise communication.
- G.** Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies.

## Objective 9

***Organized Structure** – Design, adopt and maintain an organizational structure that is directly responsive to Convention’s Purpose and needs, and that includes provisions for its own self-evaluation and growth.*

### *Toward a Theology of Polity*

The writings of our Church do not describe for us a particular form of church organization. Swedenborg insists that there must be order in the church; but since the possibility of a separate “Swedenborgian” ecclesiastical organization was not significant enough to mention, he was content to leave us with a few observations about church government based on eighteenth century European models.

Heavenly government is also a less useful model than we might expect. Since heaven is characterized by essential unanimity, its “political system” can be described as democracy, aristocracy, oligarchy, anarchy, dictatorship, communism, socialism or what you will.

Our own polity has evolved pragmatically. It began from the desire of separate societies to get together on some regular basis, and has grown and changed in response to changing circumstances. It is largely a traditional pattern: though if one sees democracy as a result of the Second Coming, this would then be a major “New Age” feature.

Essentially though, our own polity rests on Newtonian, Euclidian mechanical models. That is, it seeks to promote order and effectiveness by such devices as marking off areas of responsibility – drawing a single territorial map, as it were - and by a system of checks and balances.

This leads to such anomalies as having the Board of Education responsible for Leaguers’ travel to convention, the Board of Missions’ virtual exclusion from the field of missionary publication, and cumbersome procedures for the guidance and support of any venture that does not fit some existing category. It also means that it is quite possible for an individual to have been a lifelong member of one of our societies without being able to identify one thing that Convention has done for the welfare of that society.

In order to distribute responsibility as widely as possible under this system, we need our policy that a single individual not serve on more than two Convention boards or committees at once. This means, however, that it is rare for members of one board to have an appreciation of the problems and labors of another; and General Council depends for its information largely on minutes which are not designed for such communication.

Essentially, the Ad Hoc Committee sees a pressing need that we reconceptualize our organizational presuppositions on a more profound and more realistic model, looking at patterns of relationship that are actually productive. We see three basic essentials in this – clear and direct lines of mutual communication and accountability, the ready gathering of compatible interests, skills and resources for particular tasks, and a constructive accountability to our common theological convictions.

The model that we have in mind may be unfamiliar in terms of physical models, but it is immediately recognizable in terms of personal experience. It involves seeing the identity of an individual or group as essentially determined not by fixed boundaries or “externals,” but by a particular center; and by the relationships of that center to other centers. Boundaries or circumferences may then expand or contract as we generalize or specialize; and the overlaps, rather than being problems to be eliminated, are the utterly necessary fields of mutual support, enlightenment and cooperation.

In this model, the primary function of the centralized administration would be to administer decentralization. This central body should be granted such power, and only such power, as it needs to accomplish this task, and should be held accountable by Convention to policies and priorities determined by Convention.

### Strategies

- A.** Design an organizational structure that is directly responsive to Convention's Purpose and needs, and includes provision for its own self evaluation.
- B.** Create an ongoing process which ensures that the organization exercises self evaluation, is open to change, and encourages growth.
1. Generate criteria for self evaluation and prepare a plan for adapting to change and growth.
  2. Generate feedback and data annually and encourage continual feedback.
  3. Assess and review the organization annually.
  4. Revise and adapt the plan each year and revise the structure as necessary.

### STANDING RESOLUTIONS (CONT.)

#### 2.

(Adopted by the General Council, July 18, 1949)

**Resolved:** With regard to properties of local societies in which Convention has a contingent interest through conveyances providing that, in certain circumstances, the title would come to Convention, it is the policy of Convention not to make contributions toward the cost of maintenance of such properties, such maintenance being the sole responsibility of the Society in whose hands the title to the property is vested.

#### 3.

(Adopted by General Convention, June 1960, Min. #58)  
 (Amended by General Convention, July 1, 1989, Min. #61)

### A Standing Resolution to Swedenborgians Everywhere:

**Resolved:** The General Convention/Swedenborgian Church assembled at Urbana University, Urbana, Ohio for Convention June 28, 1989 reaffirms its belief that the Church Universal includes those of diverse origins.

In its ever-growing desire to serve all of God's children, the General Convention (aka The Swedenborgian Church), urges Swedenborgians everywhere to acknowledge that the Church Universal is inclusive and to act in this spirit. Let no Society of the Church exclude any from membership on such considerations as ethnic origin, race, color, sexual orientation, condition of health, handicap or economic status; but seeking those who accept our Lord



and Savior Jesus Christ as Redeemer of the world and who accept the essentials of faith of the Church, welcome all with joy and affection into the full and free community of the Church.

4.

(Adopted by General Convention, August 3, 1969)

**Resolved:** That the Secretary of Convention maintain a register of young men and women within the fellowship of the Swedenborgian Church who are recognized by the Selective Service System as conscientious objectors to war, and that the President of Convention appoint a minister to serve as spiritual counselor and advisor to these young men and women and to others who may apply to the Selective Service System for recognition as Conscientious Objectors; the purpose being that the Church might in this way show its sympathy with those whose conscience dictates such a step and may be of some assistance to them as they struggle with all of the implications and legal problems which such classification brings.

5.

(Adopted by General Convention, August 3, 1969)

**Resolved:** That the General Convention support the legalization of abortion in cases where it is responsibly applied for the physical and emotional welfare of those involved. Be it also resolved that such therapeutic abortion shall be considered primarily a matter of concern between the patient, attending physician and personal counselor.

6.

(Adopted by General Convention, July 2, 1976)

**Resolved:** That General Council be given a standing order to recommend to the Convention the names of such persons who in its opinion should qualify for emeritus status, for a vote by Convention.

7.

(Adopted by General Council, January 22, 1977)

**Resolved:** It is recognized that the establishment of the requirements for membership is the responsibility of the individual society or other body, and that various types of membership are utilized by different bodies. However, for the purpose of determining delegate strength for the voting at Convention sessions

only adult active members defined as follows shall be counted: An adult active member of a society is one who is eighteen years of age or older and who has been accepted by the Society through Confirmation or other appropriate service of introduction, or by transfer from another Society, and who within the year has shown active interest in his/her membership. This is demonstrated by joining in the programs of worship and work or by contributing toward its needs physically and financially. It shall be the joint responsibility of members and Societies involved to insure that the member is not counted in more than one Society's count for delegate strength.

### 8.

(Adopted by General Convention on recommendation of its  
Council of Ministers, July 1, 1978)

#### **SWEDENBORG'S REVELATION** **Perspectives of the General Convention**

The Lord's Second Coming promised in the Gospels is described in *True Christian Religion* 779 as a process of spiritual reawakening, beginning with a cosmic event in which Swedenborg was called to play a key role. Through spiritual experiences while reading the Holy Word, he received truth from the Lord into his understanding. From this enlightenment he worked out and published teachings for a new church to serve the new age of the Lord's Second Coming. The truth of these teachings revealed by the Lord to Swedenborg is presented to us with the authority of the Holy Word from which they are drawn, and by which they are confirmed. This new revelation teaches us three essential things to believe and do. The first of these is to worship our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as the one God in whom is the divine Trinity. The second is to hold to the conviction that the Word of God is holy, not only in its plain sense, but also because of the deeper meanings lying within it. The third is to commit ourselves to a life embodying love to the Lord and the neighbor. In living these three essentials, each of us must search with discernment for critical meaning in Swedenborg's theological writings. Any written form of revelation can be misunderstood if it is insisted that a single interpretation is final and prescriptive. However, we are convinced that if love to the Lord and the neighbor permeate our perceptions, our church will be unified despite any number of particular differences of opinion as to interpretation and application of doctrine. In former times, when Christian doctrine was hammered out by theologians or determined by church councils, unity depended on obedience to creed, with reason subservient to faith. But in this new age, the spiritual freedom of the individual has been restored. Now it is permitted to enter with understanding into the mysteries of faith.

**9.**

(Adopted by General Convention, July 2, 1982)

**Resolved:** It is recognized that it is the responsibility of the church to voice its conviction on ethical and moral issues that arise from time to time in our nation and in our world. Where the issue is one of long-term relevance, and where opportunity has been afforded to societies and associations for prior discussion, a member of Convention may submit to the President, in time for announcement on the first day of a Convention session, a written proposal for a Standing Resolution. The President shall at that time accept motions to refer or to place on the agenda with time for discussion.

Should the issue be one of immediate urgency only a member of Convention may submit to the President, in time for announcement on the first full day of a Convention session, a written proposal that a particular resolution be adopted as “the sense of this meeting.” The President shall at that time accept motions to refer or to place on the agenda with time for discussion. Should such resolution come to a vote, the vote shall be counted and the tally included with any use of the resolution.

**10.**

(Adopted by General Convention, June 30, 1983)

“The Building Fund may make low-interest loans to any minister on the Active Roll of the Council of Ministers, for a down payment on a residence, provided there is demonstration of practicality and need under criteria adopted by General Council. Should such minister cease to be on such Roll, the balance of the loans shall be due and payable within ninety days.”

**11.**

(Adopted by the General Council, June 29, 1983)

**Resolved:** That it is the responsibility of the Vice President, together with a committee he may appoint, to conduct an annual review of the Central Office, covering staff, employees, organization, etc.

**12.**

(Adopted by General Council, January 30, 1983)

**Resolved:** “Whereas: The American New Church Tract and Publication Society has indicated its desire to turn over its assets to the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the U.S.A. to continue the purposes for which the Tract

Society was established, and

Whereas: these purposes are included within the broad purposes of General Convention; now therefore, be it

**Resolved:** that General Convention agrees to accept the funds of the Tract Society, and if when offered, to be held for the purposes given and specifically that the income of those funds be used first: for the publication and distribution of *Our Daily Bread* and second: for other publications efforts; and further be it

**Resolved:** that the Treasurer of General Convention be directed to assist the Tract Society in the orderly transfer of these funds.”

***Addendum, May 12, 1988***

Selection and appointment of the Editor of *Our Daily Bread*, its format, contents and distribution shall be in the hands of the Council of Ministers. The publication of *Our Daily Bread* shall not be terminated without a vote of the full Council of Ministers.

**13.**

(Adopted by General Convention, June 28, 1989)

That the AIDS Ministry Committee appointed by the Cabinet continue to carry out its task which shall include support of Swedenborgian Ministries to HIV persons, their families and friends; facilitation of ecumenical involvement in these ministries; and the provision of educational materials.

## STANDING RECOMMENDATIONS

### **To Associations, etc.**

Each Association, or other collective body of the Church, is requested to report annually a list of its ministers.

Associations are recommended to make such specific rules, under the general rules for the regulation of the ministry, as they may consider necessary or desirable.

Associations are requested to furnish the Secretaries with copies of all their printed *Journals* of past years, and also copies of their future proceedings, from time to time, as they may be published. (*Journal* of 1900, Minute 163.)

In the apportionment of delegates to the Convention, the Association shall try to secure a proportionate representation of the societies constituting them, and to that end shall consult the wishes of the various societies. (*Journal*, 1937, Minute 50.)

### **To Isolated Societies**

To establish Sabbath school and to give it watchful care in which the truths of the Church shall be distinctly taught.

To adopt as rules of discipline, or laws of charity, what is taught by the Lord in Matt. v.23, 24, and xviii. 15-17.

To establish free libraries of the theological works of Swedenborg for loan to all who are interested.

### **To Ministers**

To keep a record of names, ages, residences, etc. of all persons baptized by them.

### **To the Standing Committee of the American New Church Sunday School Association**

To report annually to the Convention such statistics and such action by the Association as may be of general interest.

**As to Collections of Convention**

Collections at the Sunday morning service of the Convention to be for the general use of Convention. (*Journal of 1913, Minute 6.*)

**Procedures of Appointments to the National Council of Churches**

The President of Convention, with the counsel and advice of the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers, shall make the various appointments to the National Council of Churches, and that these then be confirmed by the General Council.

**The Nominating Committee**

It is recommended to the Nominating Committee, that when preparing a slate of nominees to fill the elective offices of The General Convention, the slate be of such order that if elected, a nominee shall not serve on more than two Boards or Committees or a Board and a Committee simultaneously. "No individual who has accepted nomination for an office shall accept nomination for another office if election to one would invalidate election to the other." It is further recommended that this order be kept by the Chair when accepting nominations from the floor of Convention.

**To the Convention**

To submit (to the President or Treasurer), in advance of the business session of Convention, any request for appropriation of funds.

## BYLAWS OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

### PREAMBLE

The Council of Ministers is established by Article II of the Constitution of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America which reads in part as follows: “The officers of the Convention shall be...a Council of Ministers, consisting of all ministers belonging to the Convention, of whom twelve shall constitute a quorum...”

In order that it may in more orderly fashion exercise the powers and perform the duties committed to it by Article III, Section 3, and Article V, Section 1, of the said Constitution, and Article XI of the By-laws of the said General Convention, the Council of Minister, establishes these Bylaws as a guide to its procedure.

### Article I. Sessions and Meetings

**Section 1.** – Sessions of the Council of Ministers shall be held in connection with every session of the General Convention, at such times as may be assigned to it by the Business Committee of the Convention.

**Section 2.** – Special meetings of the Council may be held at any time at the call of the Executive Committee or by letter vote initiated by petition of at least seven members. Public notice shall be given of the time and place of the proposed meeting.

**Section 3.** – “Meetings of the Council of Ministers shall be of three types: public meetings, open to anyone who may be interested; business meetings, at which the business of the Council shall be transacted, attendance at business meetings being limited to members of the Council, the President of Convention if said person is not ordained, the Dean and full-time faculty of the Swedenborgian House of Studies, if said persons are not ordained authorized candidates, theological students, and others who may be admitted by vote of the Council; and executive session, for which all persons who are not members of the Council shall withdraw at the request of the Chair. Any guest may be invited to remain for executive sessions at the request of a Council member, together with a three-quarters vote of the Council.” *Amended July 9, 2004, Waterloo, Ontario.*

## **Article II. Officers**

**Section 1.** – The officers of the Council of Ministers shall be a Chair, a Secretary and an Executive Committee.

**Section 2.** – At its 1993 sessions, the Council of Ministers shall elect a chair for a two-year term, and a secretary for a three-year term. In subsequent years, when the offices become vacant, the chair and secretary shall each be elected for a three-year term. Officers who have served two consecutive full terms shall not be eligible for immediate re-election. (*Amended June 27, 1992*)

**Section 3.** – The Chair of the Council shall preside at all meetings, and shall, unless in any case it be otherwise ordered by the Council, appoint all members of committees, except the Executive Committee and the Program Committee. The Chair shall designate the chairmen of such committees as he may appoint.

The Secretary of the Council shall perform the usual duties of a secretary, and in addition shall present to the Convention a report of all meetings of the Council, including the titles of all papers presented, a summary of the important business transacted, and a statement of all matters referred by the Council of Ministers to the Convention and of all recommendations made to the said Convention.

The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, the Secretary, and three members to be elected initially by the Council for terms of one, two, and three years, and thereafter one member to be elected annually by the Council for a term of three years. Executive Committee members who have served two consecutive full terms shall not be eligible for immediate re-election. It shall be the duty of the Committee to fill vacancies and to consider and act on matters connected with the business of the Council in the interim of its sessions. It shall have no power, however, to make decisions in the name of the Council with reference to any matter within the province of the Council's Standing Committees.

**Section 4.** – In the interim between the sessions of the Council of Ministers matters requiring the immediate decision by the Council may be acted upon by vote recorded by the Secretary through a letter, e-mail, or conference call, to be determined by the Executive committee. For such votes to be valid, at least twenty ministers must cast ballots. If by letter, ballots must be received within 30 days from the date of issuance. If by e-mail, ballots must be received within 7 days from date of issuance. If by conference call, the ballots shall be recorded orally at the time of the call. Every reasonable effort will be made to contact every active member of the Council. *Amended July 9, 2004, Waterloo, Ontario.*



### **Article III. Committees**

**Section 1.** – There shall be a Nominating Committee of three persons which shall present to the Council at each annual meeting a full slate of nominees. At the meeting at which this By law is adopted, one member shall be elected for a three-year term, one for a two-year term, and one for a one-year term, with the member whose term is next to expire to serve as chair.

**Section 2.** – The Standing Committees of the Council shall be the Committee on Worship, the Committee on Program, the Committee on Admission into the Ministry, and the Committee on Revision of the Roll.

In addition, the Chair of the Council upon the decease of any member thereof shall appoint a committee to prepare a memorial to be offered for presentation before the Convention. The Council may from time to time order the appointment of such special committees as it may deem necessary.

**Section 3.** – Members of Standing Committees shall serve until their successors are appointed.

**Section 4.** – The Committee on Worship shall consider and report on all matters connected with the worship of the Church, as well as proposed changes in or additions to its liturgical books.

**Section 5.** – The Committee on Program shall consist of the Chairman and the Secretary of the Council and the Pastor of the Society where the Council is to meet. Its duties shall be to prepare the program for each session of the Council.

**Section 6.** – The Committee on Ministerial Ethics shall consist of the council appointed by the Chair for their depth of pastoral experience and background in the study of ethics. This committee shall:

1. periodically present issues for reflection and discussion for meetings of the Council shall consist of three members of the council.
2. be available for consultation and advice in cases of need, and
3. propose such revisions in the Guidelines for Ministerial work in the General Convention of Swedenborgian churches as it may deem useful

**Section 7.** – The Committee on Admission into the Ministry shall consist of the Chair of the Council of Ministers, who will be Chair of this committee, two ministers with at least five years ministerial service within the denomination, one to be elected by the Council of Ministers and one to be elected by Convention, one lay person to be elected by Convention, and the President of Convention. The three elected members are to be elected for three year terms, one to be elected each year. Members who have served two consecutive full terms shall not be eligible for immediate re-election. Members of the faculty of the theological school shall not be eligible for election, and

should either the President of Convention or Chair of the Council of Ministers be a member of that faculty, said officer shall designate a member of the Council of Ministers as replacement, subject to the approval of the Council.

The primary duty of this committee shall be to oversee the maintenance of high standards for Convention's ministry. To this end, it shall interview all candidates for ordination or introduction into our ministry, and make its recommendations to the Council of Ministers. It shall also annually grant or deny the status of candidate for ordination to all Swedenborgian affiliated theological school students or applicants who request it, confer regularly with such students, and report its decisions to each student concerned, to the faculty of the School and to the Augmentation Fund Committee. It shall also confer with the candidate before ordination, to the end that the candidate may be mindful to the task ahead, and approach the Rite of Ordination truly prepared for consecration to the Lord's service.

***Amended July 9, 2004, Waterloo, Ontario.***

**Section 8.** – The Committee on Revision of the Roll shall consist of three members; to it shall be referred without further action by the Council all matters of record involving changes in the Roll of Ministers of the General Convention, for report and recommendation to the Council.

It shall also be the duty of this Committee to keep a Roll of Former Ministers of Convention, to which the names of those who have ceased to be minister thereof, through death, resignation, or removal, shall be transferred in accordance with the rules of Convention.

## **Article IV. Business**

**Section 1.** – The business of the Council shall be considered in the executive meetings in the following order:

1. Call to order
2. Address of the Chairman
3. Adoption of report of the Program Committee
4. Appointment of special committees for the session
5. Communications
6. Report of the Executive Committee
7. Reports of Standing Committees
8. Reports of Special Committees
9. Old Business
10. New Business
11. Election
12. Adjournment

The Standing Committees shall report in the order in which they are named in Article III, Section 1. If a report is not ready, it shall be passed over until all other committees have had an opportunity to report, unless the Council set a specific time for hearing of a report. No debate shall be allowed on any of the above reports until all of them have been presented, but a motion to refer or adopt a recommendation where there is no desire to debate shall be in order.

**Section 2.** – The parliamentary procedure of the Council of Ministers shall be governed, in all cases not specifically covered by the Constitution and Bylaws of Convention or by these Bylaws, by Roberts Rules of Order. The Secretary of the Council shall keep a copy of these Rules available for ready reference.

**Section 3.** – All requests for appropriations in connection with the work of any of the committees of the Council, as being beyond the power and authority of the Council of Ministers, shall, if the Council of Ministers approves, be presented to the General Convention.

## **Article V. Amendments**

These Bylaws may be amended or suspended by a three-fourths vote of those present at any regular meeting. They may be suspended at special meetings by a three-fourths vote of those present at such meetings.

## COUNCIL OF MINISTERS STANDING RESOLUTIONS

That the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers shall present in nomination to the Council of Ministers each year at its Convention sessions one name for Convention Preacher.

Whereas ministry as a professional endeavor requires continuous development and personal growth, and, whereas education is a lifelong process not ending with ordination; therefore, be it resolved that the Council of Ministers of the General Convention of Swedenborgian Churches affirms that planned continuing education is not an elective but is a necessary process to build professional competence.

### **Preamble, adopted at General Convention, June 28, 1988**

Periodically during its history, Convention has faced issues of suitability for ministry. It has dealt with questions of social class, race, divorce, and gender, as it currently faces the issues of sexual orientation and may in future years face questions presently unseen. Its decisions have in each case affirmed a consistent principle, which the Council of Ministers expresses as follows:

### **Adopted at General Convention, July 3, 1986**

“In light of the inclusiveness of the vision of the Holy City, New Jerusalem, from which our theological perspective is drawn, the Council of Ministers believes that the central consideration in evaluating requests for ordination is the quality of the ministry that it believes the individual is capable of providing.

“It is the responsibility of the Council of Ministers, using the good office of its Committee on Admission to the Ministry, to evaluate the readiness and suitability of individual candidates in accord with the general principles outlined in Article V, Section 2 of the Constitution, and in the Preamble to Article XII of the Bylaws of the General Convention.

“Article V, Section 2 reads: “Through its Board of Managers of the New Church Theological School, commonly known as the Swedenborg School of Religion, the General Convention shall within the limits of available resources, provide for the thorough professional training of individuals seeking ordination, such training to focus on the spiritual growth of its participants by development in understanding of our theology, sensitivity in human relations, appreciation of other traditions, and in the technical skills required for effective ministry.’

“The Preamble of Article XII reads: ‘Jesus said to his disciples, you have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.’ (John 15:16)

“The ordained ministry exists to facilitate the spiritual well-being of people, helping them to be open to the Lord’s leading and enabling them to lead useful lives. Resources for the ordained ministry in serving the church include the Holy Word, the doctrines of the church, the rites and sacraments, experiences of worship, and growth-oriented skills insofar as they promote the process of regeneration.”

## GUIDELINES FOR MINISTERIAL WORK IN THE GENERAL CONVENTION OF SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCHES

The Constitution of the General Convention (Article III, Section 3) assigns to the Council of Ministers “responsibility for the pastoral support of all ministries and for providing them with clear ethical standards.” It adds, “It shall exercise such disciplinary functions over the ordained clergy as it may in its collective wisdom adopt, subject to the provision of the Constitution and Bylaws.”

Given the importance of our purpose-to facilitate the spiritual well-being of people-and the variety of ministries devoted to this end, the task is both urgent and difficult. Our theology points to clear principles of spiritual well-being which do not change. It recognizes also that there are outward behavioral expectations which we ignore at our peril, but which do change with the passage of time, and which vary from region to region.

Accordingly, we have tried in the following revision to distinguish these two aspects of ministerial ethics, in an effort to be uncompromising in devotion to the Lord’s service and responsibly flexible in the means used for that service.

### **Theological Basis**

For the Swedenborgian, spiritual well-being is a state of oneness of heart, mind, and life. The most adequate ministry will therefore lead by affection, precept, and example. Our theology also insists that human life is a process, that we do not achieve perfection, but can move toward it to eternity. As ministers, we need both self-forgiveness and forgiveness of others. Since charity is “acting with prudence to the end that good may result” (*The New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine* 100), we are called in all circumstances, without exception, to consider not just what has happened, but what we can do for actual betterment. When we fail to hear or to heed this call, as we all do at times, then the call simply comes again, asking us to recognize our failure, and not to dwell on it but to consider what we can do about it.

In this effort, we cannot stand alone. Our very being is constituted in part by the affection and understanding we receive from each other, and our common involvement in ordained ministry gives special weight to our treatment of each other. Genuine affection, clear understanding, and unfailing fidelity within this fellowship work strongly for our purpose, and their lack brings a profound distress.

Under the Lord’s providence, something could emerge from this distress which would recommend itself to everyone. There are times, however, when we fail to discover that ideal solution, and must resort to the discipline authorized by the Constitution. This may be freely accepted by all parties; but even when

but even when it is not, the imposition of discipline may be the best course of action available. We must then accept our imperfections and focus our efforts on minimizing the harm. It is at such times that the distinction between fundamental principle and local, human tradition is most critical, and when the spirit of the discipline is as important as the discipline itself.

As concerns ministry in particular, doctrine, history, and experience point up the perils of reliance on the authority of the clergy. It is particularly tempting to try to solve difficult problems by clerical pronouncement, ignoring the fact that to the extent that any course of action is taken under compulsion, it is not conducive to spiritual growth. At the heart of the following guidelines is the conviction that our choices as ministers need to be informed by the central purpose of our church, to facilitate the spiritual well-being of those who rely on us.

### **I. Personal and Interpersonal Conduct**

We are unanimous in our acceptance of the law of love, but not necessarily in our understanding of it. Our understanding of the word “love” is demonstrated primarily by our behavior, which is at least as instructive as our words. We communicate by the way we act that the good life is difficult or easy, joyous or bitter, flexible or rigid; and no amount of talking effaces these messages. It is vital that we recognize that we ourselves are in process, being open about our failings and about our ideals alike.

1. Persons live only as they receive life itself from God. We have made public acknowledgment of that life by seeking and accepting the laying on of hands of ordination. We have a special responsibility to open ourselves to our own emotional, intellectual, and spiritual depths, to the wisdom and power of the Bible, to the theology of our church, and to the Lord in meditation and prayer. To work toward our goals, we need also to keep abreast of current developments in the religious and secular worlds around us, with a special responsibility for attention to currents of thought and feeling within Convention.

2. However differently understood and accepted, the Divine is equally present in all People, regardless of such outward attributes as race, class, sexual orientation, creed, gender, or age. Prejudice or discrimination of any kind is a denial of this central tenet of our theology.

3. Human sexuality is a gift from the Lord, providing an avenue to the deepest and most abiding of human relationships. It is also an avenue to our deepest vulnerabilities, and its misuse can have tragic personal consequences, quite apart from severe legal consequences. We are called to fidelity in all our relationships, and particularly to the utmost respect for the sexual integrity of all persons.

4. The community in which we live is our neighbor, and our constructive participation in its affairs is an essential element in religious life. As ministers urging others to live by the Lord’s commandments, we make a special commit

ment to live consistently ourselves. It is important that we be unquestionably fair in our financial dealings and reliable in keeping commitments made. This includes such matters as preparation for and attendance at meetings, clear and adequate reports, and prompt attention to correspondence. We should neither ask nor expect special favors or immunities because of our ministerial status. Where discounts, privileges, or special fees are offered, they may be accepted with appreciation, and with the acknowledgment that we are to give as freely as we receive, though not necessarily in kind.

5. In keeping with our sense of the holiness of all life, we are aware that excessive drinking and other forms of substance abuse, obscene stories and expressions, and raucous behavior diminish our effectiveness, as do the other extremes of prudery and self-righteousness. Both extremes betray a narrow egocentricity that renders us insensitive to the feelings and needs of those around us.

6. Personal appearance is one of the ways in which we communicate with each other, and excessive concern with and willful disregard for appearance are equally damaging. Our dress and grooming should reflect our interest in and concern for the human situations in which we engage and should be in general accord with local traditions.

7. There are no quantitative measurements of spiritual well-being, and therefore no simple standards of evaluation of ministerial effectiveness. It is necessary that we be fully honest with ourselves and our employers, neither inventing unnecessary tasks nor avoiding necessary ones, fulfilling the terms of our employment in the spirit as well as in the letter. It is permissible to take other remunerative work with the knowledge and consent of the employer; but again, there is need of honest evaluation of the effect this has on our ministry.

8. The personal nature of ministry can allow it to intrude on the minister's personal and family life. It is vital that the family not feel engulfed by the church and that the minister have time that is genuinely free for family involvement. Regular days off and complete vacations are necessities, and should be openly negotiated with the employing body.

## **II. The Relationship to the Group Served**

The relationship of employee to employer can be ambivalent in the ministry. We are enjoined to lead our "employers" by truth to the good of life, a good which is genuine only if it is freely chosen. There are times when it seems that the welfare of the institution is at odds with the welfare of one or another of its members, or of its minister, and the available alternatives seem equally painful. Devotion to our central purpose is essential at all times, and never more than in times of difficulty.

1. Professionals in all the helping professions receive confidences, and are both legally and ethically bound to respect them. Ministers especially

tend to be trusted, and a constant sensitivity to that trust is vital. Confidences, whether explicitly labeled or not, are not to be shared, even with colleagues and spouses. However, if individuals give us reason to believe that they are intending harm to themselves or others, we are obliged to weigh carefully the resources we have to prevent such harm, and to act according to our most prudent and compassionate judgment. We are responsible as well to know and to abide by the laws that apply in the particular regions of our ministries. We are to be guided at all times by a pastoral concern for those who trust us.

2. We recognize the trust placed in the therapeutic relationship, its unique power, and the inherent danger of exploitation in any dual role relationship. It is unethical to enter a counseling relationship with anyone with whom we have sexual, family, business, or friendship relationships.

3. Different ministers respond to different aspects of our theology. We should not make our own special interests into idols, but should try to present the full depth and breadth of our teachings and to foster an appreciation of colleagues whose special interests differ from our own.

4. We do not exist in a vacuum, but are sustained in our mental and emotional growth by our communications with each other. Our open acknowledgment of our dependence on each other is of critical importance to the health of our church.

5. Our belief in the Divine of the Lord entails rather than precludes the presence of that same Divine in all religions of the world. We are true to this principle only as we seek the best in and for all faiths; and we are false to it whenever we try to exalt our own religion by demeaning others. Our task is not to try somehow to make our own understanding universal, but to discover the universality to which it points.

6. Ministers are responsible to whole congregations or groups, and have a responsibility to nurture a healthy fabric of relationships. This fabric is damaged by any form of favoritism toward individuals or subgroups, and by involvement in political games. Such issues require particular attention when critical decisions must be made, as when a group is relocating, or a minister is leaving.

7. The health of a society depends not only on its internal relationships, but on its relationships with the community and world in which it finds itself. Every effort should be made to nurture the conviction that the church is not a self-righteous enclave in a world of sin, but a participant in the process of community, nation, and world, called by virtue of its gifts to special service.

8. The minister's relationship to an employing body has personal, professional, and moral dimensions. A formal contract can be helpful in making unspoken assumptions explicit. No agreement, however informal, is to be terminated without adequate notice, except by mutual consent. We should be



freely accessible to the employing body for discussion of continuation or termination of service, and should, unless explicitly invited to remain, absent ourselves from further discussion and from the actual voting procedure.

9. The minister's self-evaluation is essential to growth in service. An annual report to the employing body, with an open review of it by that body, is an excellent means of improving the effectiveness of the minister and the group, and of discovering hidden expectations.

10. A group grows far more by making decisions than by having decisions made for it. Ministerial leadership encourages general involvement in the understanding and formulation of policy and in the choice of particular courses of action.

11. Our spouses, while under no professional obligations, may come into positions of significant influence. It is incumbent upon us to do our best to communicate to them both the substance and the importance of these guidelines, and to nurture an appropriate sense of accountability to them.

### **III. Relationship to Other Ministers**

Ministry as a profession is sufficiently different from most others in that we look particularly to each other for understanding and support. We are not only professionals, but professionals dedicated to a common service to God in a calling that points beyond our human strength. For this we need relationships with our fellow ministers of comradeship, frankness, mutual respect, cooperation, mutual help, and recognition of a spiritual imperative over and above any professional standards. We need to hold ourselves ready to offer affection, understanding, and assistance, defending our colleagues against misunderstanding or injustice, and being with them in loving concern in times of need or distress.

When support and understanding are forthcoming, this is especially meaningful, and when they fail, the sense of lack is especially severe. Our geographic isolation intensifies the significance of every communication, both for better and for worse.

1. Our ministries are tending increasingly to take different forms, and there is a risk that this may provide occasions for dispute. Given the principle that a form is the more perfect as its constituents are distinctly different, and yet united (*Divine Providence* 4), we are called to see these differences as complementary rather than competitive, and to enrich our own limited understandings by insights that come from endeavors outwardly unlike our own.

2. As professionals, we are responsible for normal professional standards. This means a respect for the integrity of the professional work of fellow ministers, doing nothing directly or indirectly to interfere with that work (e.g. performing ministerial services in another parish without its minister's permission). This is in no way to be construed as a license for possessiveness or

defensiveness, and calls us to support any efforts that further our central purpose (e.g., welcoming the participation of another minister in any such service, or the performance of tasks complementary to our own). Because we identify so closely with each other, we may well overreact when opinions or policies diverge. In cases of serious professional or personal misconduct, we should in virtually all instances refer the concern to the responsible officials. In most instances of disagreement, however, the most sympathetic interpretation is also the most constructive. Unsympathetic criticism of another minister, particularly one's predecessor or successor, is contrary to the central principles of a life of charity.

3. The relationship between a minister and an employing body is a sensitive one. It is unethical to make overtures to a church or employing body whose minister has not expressed the intent to resign or retire; and if overtures are received from such a body, the well-being of the incumbent minister should be of primary concern.

4. A pastorate, particularly a long one, builds strong bonds of affection which can place an incoming minister at a serious disadvantage. Resignation or retirement should be handled with special sensitivity in this regard. Every effort should be made to enable the church to make its own free choice, to create a favorable climate for the successor, and to leave the field free by avoiding anything that might be interpreted as interference with the successor's work. It should be made clear to the church before departure that, however painful it may be, a decisive break in the relationship is necessary. If an invitation is received to perform ministerial services for a former parish, the present minister's permission must be sought and the participation of that minister encouraged.

5. An affirmative attitude needs to be expressed in visible forms. A departing minister should demonstrate his or her acceptance of the successor by some form of public welcome and by cordial introductions to as many of the members as possible. Personal notes and any materials of a confidential nature should be destroyed; but the successor should have free and immediate access to all official records; including membership and address lists, minutes, financial records, and legal and constitutional materials. Every effort should be made not to perpetuate divisions by prejudicing the successor against any individual or group within the church.

6. The best use of our limited ministerial resources requires constant attention. A minister contemplating a change should seek the best information possible concerning current areas of need, using the Ministerial Placement Committee as the most appropriate resource.

7. If a minister should feel aggrieved, or should feel that the well-being of another is put at risk, by the conduct of another minister, the first step is to raise the issue privately with the individual concerned. If this effort fails, the good offices of the ordaining minister of Convention should be sought. Should this not provide a resolution, the Council of Ministers may be asked to render

assistance.

#### **IV. Relationship to Convention and Association**

The essence of the church is the Divine presence with us as individuals and collectively. This essence is therefore the Infinite; but it works through forms of human design, for which we must take responsibility. Our highest loyalty in regard to Convention and the Associations is to their essential purpose, and this, to be effective, must be expressed in the most critical and caring participation in the organizations themselves.

1. The larger collective bodies of the church have provided the foundation on which current ministries rely, with significant contributions to the local churches, to theological education, and to resources for ministry. Ordination therefore involves pledges to uphold the Constitution of Convention and be mindful of its welfare; and these pledges should be remembered and fulfilled at all times. We should stand ready to serve Convention, the Council of Ministers, and our Associations gladly as our particular abilities are needed, with the knowledge that their health contributes to the health of our own local efforts.

2. The wisdom and effectiveness of the collective bodies can be no fuller than we make them. Regular attendance at meetings of Convention and the Council of Ministers, responsive participation in them, and regular and accurate reporting of activities, developments, and statistics are the necessary foundations of a supportive larger church.

3. For the sake of the unity of the larger church, it is vital that its individual members share in its essential values. It is the responsibility of the minister on the local level to admit into membership to all who do so share, and not to admit those who, so far as can be ascertained, do not. The irreducible essentials of our faith—the Divine of the Lord, the holiness of the Word, and the life of charity—should be clearly presented, and a genuine commitment to them expressed.

4. Many of us work in relative isolation from each other, and the Supportive Peer Supervision program has been instituted to compensate in some measure for that isolation. It is left to individual ministers to stress the supervisory or the supportive aspects of the program; and this freedom entails a responsibility to exercise it well. Whether through the program or in some other way, it is our duty to periodically review our fitness for Convention's ministry. Should such a review raise serious doubts, the course of greatest wisdom is to seek the help and counsel of laypersons or clergy with whom there are bonds of affection and respect.

5. Convention and its collective bodies are human institutions, and true loyalty to them includes the duty of thoughtful and constructive criticism. Experience indicates that if such criticism is addressed to the body's will to improve, without a prejudgment as to the best response, the result will be

affirmative. The ideal is an unswerving devotion to fundamental principles, with a willing openness to the process of change.

### **Epilogue**

For our own sakes, the Lord expects and wants our very best. The preceding guidelines are an effort to define that “best” in the context of our own times and culture, and they are offered in the knowledge that there will be failures and shortcomings. As we try to live up to them, there will be needs for clarification and change, and it is the responsibility of the Council of Ministers to keep us working on the subject of ethics for our ministry. Only to the extent that we are in agreement in principle will the guidelines be felt as supportive of our best rather than as threatening, and it is therefore crucial that any disagreement with them be openly expressed. They are not valid for all time, and will be effective only as they are truly an ongoing part of our collegial process. ❀

**BYLAWS**  
**OF THE CORPORATION OF THE**  
**NEW CHURCH THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL**

**SWEDENBORGIAN HOUSE OF STUDIES**

**Article I.**

**Name, Purpose and Location**

**Section 1.** – The Corporation of the New Church Theological School operates the Swedenborgian House of Studies, an institution serving the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America and Canada (hereafter referred to as General Convention). The Corporation was incorporated in 1881 as the Corporation of the New Church Theological School under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and is a non-profit, tax exempt institution operating for religious and educational purposes.

**Section 2.** – The address of the principal of the Corporation shall be as follows: Swedenborgian House of Studies, 11 Highland Ave., Newtonville, MA 02460.

**Article II.**

**Members of the Corporation**

**Section 1.** – The membership of the Corporation shall consist of two classes:

**A. At-large members:** Any person who (i) has been accepted as a member at large of the Swedenborgian Church pursuant to the Constitution of the General Convention or (ii) is a member of any Association or Society constituent of the General Convention, who is 18 years of age or older, may become an at-large member of this Corporation by signing these Bylaws and he or she shall cease to be an at-large member hereof upon ceasing to have the qualifications above named, or upon filing with the Clerk a written withdrawal of membership.

**B. Representative members:** Each member of the General Council of the Convention shall be a representative member of the Corporation upon election to the General Council and each shall cease to be a representative member of the Corporation upon expiration of his or her term of office on the General Council or upon his or her resignation therefrom.

**Section 2.** – An adequate and current alphabetical file of the active membership of the Corporation shall be established and maintained in the offices of the Corporation by the Clerk, and shall be available for inspection at all reasonable times to the Trustees and members of the Corporation.

**Article III.**  
**Meetings of the Members**

**Section 1. – Place for Meetings.** All meetings of the at-large and representative members shall be held at the principal office of the Corporation in Massachusetts unless the Articles of Organization permit the holding of meetings of members outside of Massachusetts and unless a different place is fixed by the Trustees or the Dean and stated in the notice of the meeting.

**Section 2. – Annual Meeting.** The annual meeting of the members shall be held during the annual convention of the Swedenborgian Church. If no annual meeting is held in accordance with the foregoing provisions, a special meeting may be held in lieu thereof, and any action taken at such meeting shall have the same effect as if taken at the annual meeting.

**Section 3. – Special Meetings.** Special meetings of the members may be requested by the Chair or by the Trustees, and shall be called by the Clerk, or in the case of death, absence, incapacity or refusal of the Clerk, by any other Officer, upon written application of three or more members entitled to vote thereat.

**Section 4. – Notice of Meetings.** A notice of every meeting of the members, stating the place, day and hour thereof and the purpose for which the meeting is called, shall be published by the Clerk in accordance with the provisions of Article V, Section 4 of these Bylaws.

**Section 5. – Quorum of Members.** Ten at-large members and a majority of the representative members as shown on the records of the General Convention shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the members of the Corporation.

**Section 6. – Adjournments.** Any meeting of the members may be adjourned to any other time and to any other place permitted by these Bylaws by the members present at the meeting, although less than a quorum; or by any Officer entitled to preside or to act as Clerk of such meeting if no member is present. It shall not be necessary to notify any member of any adjournment. Any business which could have been transacted at any meeting of the members as originally called may be transacted at any adjournment thereof.

**Section 7. – Voting.** Each member of each class of the Corporation shall be entitled to one vote on all matters before the members, and at-large and representative members shall each vote as a separate class. When a quorum is present, a majority vote shall decide any matter except where a larger vote is required by the law, the Articles of Organization, or these Bylaws.

Any election of Trustees by the members of a class shall be determined by a plurality of the votes cast by members of that class present and entitled to vote at the election.

**Article IV.**  
**Board of Trustees**

**Section 1.** – The business and affairs, including all academic affairs, of the Corporation shall be managed by the Board of Trustees, who shall have and may exercise all the powers of the Corporation except such as required by law or the Corporation’s Articles of Organization or Bylaws to be otherwise exercised. Except as so limited, the powers and duties of the Board of Trustees shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. to determine and review periodically the purposes and the mission of the institution.
2. to select the Dean of the institution, and to support the Dean in the exercise of his or her responsibilities.
3. to recommend, review, and approve changes in the educational programs of the institution, consistent with its mission.
4. to establish policies and procedures regarding salary schedules, appointment, and dismissal of each class of employees.
5. to oversee and approve the budget of the institution, and establish policy guidelines for the endowment and for all investments and major fund raising efforts.
6. to authorize the purchase, management and sale of all land, buildings or major equipment for use by the institution.
7. to authorize the construction of new buildings and major renovations of existing buildings.
8. to authorize the incurring of debts by the institution and securing thereof by mortgage and pledge of real and personal property tangible and intangible.
9. to authorize any changes in tuition and fees within the institution.
10. to authorize officers or agents of the institution to accept gifts or bequests on behalf of the institution.
11. to ensure that adequate due process policies and procedures exist.

**Section 2. – Election and Tenure.** A Board of Trustees consisting of an even number of Trustees, not less than eight nor more than twenty four, as set by the Corporation, shall be elected by the members at the annual meeting of the Corporation. At-large members and representative members shall each, voting as a separate class, be entitled to elect 50% of the members of the Board of Trustees; provided, that at least sixty-six percent (66%) of the members of the Board of Trustees elected by the at-large members of the Corporation and at least eighty-three percent (83%) of the members of the Board of Trustees elected by the representative members be members of the Corporation. Other than as hereinafter provided for the initial Board of Trustees, Trustees shall be elected

for a term of three years. The number of Trustees shall initially be set at sixteen.

Notwithstanding anything in the foregoing to the contrary, any Trustee who fails to attend at least one meeting of the Board of Trustees during the calendar year (provided that more than one meeting was held in such year) shall be deemed to have submitted his or her resignation as a Trustee, with no further act on his or her part, to the Board of Trustees as of December 31 of such year; provided, that the Chair, in the exercise of his or her reasonable discretion, may waive such resignation requirement (either before or after said December 31 but prior to the filling of the resulting vacancy) upon the receipt of a written notice from such absentee trustee providing good and sufficient reasons for his or her absences. In the event that a Trustee shall be deemed to have submitted his or her resignation in accordance with the preceding sentence, the vacancy thereby created shall be filled in accordance with Section 3 of this Article IV below.

Upon these Bylaws becoming effective the twelve incumbent members of the present Board of Managers and Directors together with two newly elected Trustees from each class, elected for terms of three years, will form the Board of Trustees. The terms of the incumbent members will expire as originally scheduled.

As the terms of these Trustees expire, their successors shall be elected by at-large and representative members of the Corporation.

The President of the General Convention of the Swedenborgian Church and the Dean of the Swedenborgian House of Studies shall be ex officio members of the Board of Trustees with a vote. If the Clerk and Treasurer elected by the Board are not members of the Board, they shall become ex officio members of the Board without vote. One representative from Pacific School of Religion shall sit on the Swedenborgian House of Studies Board of Trustees without vote.

**Section 3. – Vacancies.** Any vacancy in the Board of Trustees, however occurring, may be filled by appointment by the Board of Trustees until the next annual meeting provided, however, that a vacancy resulting from the enlargement of the board shall only be filled by election by the members of the Corporation. In the case of a vacancy occurring other than by enlargement of the Board of Trustees such vacancy shall be filled at the next annual or special meeting only by the Class of Members who had elected the prior Trustee.

**Section 4. – Enlargement of the Board of Trustees.** The number of the Board of Trustees may be increased or decreased at any annual or special meeting of the members provided however that the number of members of the Board of Trustees shall always be set at an even number.

**Section 5. – Trustees' Meetings.** The Board of Trustees shall meet at least three times each year. One of these meetings shall be held without notice as soon as practicable after the adjournment of the annual meeting of members.



**Section 6. – Notice of Trustees’ Meetings.** Meetings of the Trustees may be called by the Dean, the Chair or any three or more Trustees by a request in writing addressed to the Clerk. Notice of the time and place of all regular meetings of the Trustee shall be given by the Clerk and of any special meeting of the Clerk or the Officer calling the meeting. Notice may be given orally, by telephone, telegraph or in writing; and such notice given in time to enable the Trustees to attend, or in any case, notice sent by mail or telegraph to a Trustee’s usual or last known place of business or residence, at least ten days before the meeting, shall be sufficient. Any meeting of the Trustees shall be a legal meeting without notice if each Trustee, by a writing filed with the records of the meeting, waives such notice.

Every Trustee who attends a meeting without protesting prior thereto or at its commencement the lack of notice to him or her, and every absent Trustee who shall before or after meeting waive notice thereof by a writing filed with the records of the meeting or who shall sign such records, shall be deemed to have been fully notified of the meeting.

**Section 7. – Quorum of Trustees.** At any meeting of the Trustees, a majority of the trustees then in office shall constitute a quorum. Unless otherwise provided by law, the Articles of Organization or these Bylaws, a vote of a majority of those present at any meeting at which there is a quorum shall be sufficient to transact business or to take any action by the Trustees.

**Section 8. – Action Without a Meeting.** The Board of Trustees may conduct business and take action via conference call and email, provided at least 72 hours’ notice of the action is given to all members, and that minutes of the action are recorded by the Clerk. Minutes and records of email votes will be printed and kept on file at the Office of the Corporation.

## **Article V.**

### **Officers of the Board of Trustees**

**Section 1. –** The Officers of the Board of Trustees shall be the Officers of the Corporation and shall consist of a Chair, a Vice Chair, a Clerk, a Treasurer, and other such officers, including one or more Assistant Treasurers and Assistant Clerks, as the Trustees may determine. These Officers shall be elected annually at the meeting of the Trustees following the annual meeting of the members by the Board of Trustees and shall serve until their successors are elected and assume the duties of their respective offices. The Chair and Vice Chair must be Board members but the Clerk, Treasurer, Assistant Clerks and Assistant Treasurers, need not be. Officers are eligible for re-election.

All Officers of the Board of Trustees shall serve at the discretion of the Board of Trustees and shall be subject to removal by the affirmative vote of two-thirds

of the Trustees present at a meeting of the Board of Trustees.

A vacancy in any of the offices of the Board of Trustees may be filled at any meeting of the Board of Trustees.

**Section 2. – Chair.** The Chair of the Board of Trustees shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Trustees and at the annual Corporation meeting, serve as Chair of the Executive Committee, and appoint all committees and their Chairs in consultation with the Dean of the Swedenborgian House of Studies.

The Chair shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by law or by the action of the Board.

**Section 3. – Vice Chair.** The Vice Chair of the Board of the Trustees shall perform such duties as shall be assigned by the Board. In case of death, absence, or inability of the Chair of the Board of Trustees to act, the Vice Chair shall discharge the duties of the Chair until such time as a new Chair is elected by the Board.

**Section 4. – Clerk.** The Clerk shall serve as the Clerk of the Corporation and shall keep the records of the Corporation and the Board of Trustees, and shall give notice of all meetings of the Board of Trustees and of the members.

The Clerk shall be responsible for the maintenance of the file of the membership of the Corporation. He or she shall provide the notice of the Annual Meeting of the Corporation to be published in *The Messenger* at least 60 days prior to the date of the meeting. If *The Messenger* is not published at a convenient time, notices of the Annual Meeting shall be sent by first class to each member at least ten days before such Annual Meeting. Notice of special meetings of the Corporation shall be issued in the same manner. It shall be sufficient notice if mailed to the last and usual place of residence of each member in accordance with the records in the membership list. The Assistant Clerks shall have such powers and duties including any and all of the powers and duties of the Clerk as the Board of Trustees may prescribe.

**Section 5. –** The Treasurer shall be responsible for carrying out the mandates of the Board of Trustees in overseeing the financial resources of the Corporation, including cash securities, stocks, bonds and all other property, personal or real, owned by the Corporation. The Treasurer shall assure that all books and accounts are accurately kept, and furthermore, shall present a full and detailed statement properly audited by an independent certified public accountant to the Corporation at its annual meeting and, if requested, at any other meeting of the Board of Trustees or any meeting of its committees. The Assistant Treasurer shall have such powers and duties including any and all of the powers and duties of the Treasurer as the Board of Trustees may prescribe.

## **Article VI** **Committees of the Board**

**Section 1. – Executive Committee.** There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of the Officers of the Board of Trustees. The Dean shall be an ex officio member of the Executive Committee with a vote. The President of the General Convention shall be an ex officio member of the Executive Committee with a vote. The Executive Committee shall have authority to act on behalf of the Board of Trustees on all matters except for the following which shall be reserved for the Board as specified elsewhere in these Bylaws: Dean Selection; Trustee and Board Officer Selection; Charter and Bylaws Amendment; Review of Institutional Mission and Purposes; Incurring Corporate Indebtedness; Expenditure of Funds Not Provided for in the Budget; Approval of the Annual Budget; the Conferral of Degrees; and the Purchase and Sale of Real Estate.

**Section 2. – Nominating Committee – At-Large Class.** On or before March 1 every year the Chair shall appoint a Nominating Committee to select at-large nominees for the Board of Trustees. The Nominating Committee shall be composed of three at-large members of the Corporation at least one of whom shall not be a member of the Board of Trustees. The Nominating Committee shall make its report to the Annual Meeting of the Corporation.

**Section 3. – Nominating Committee – Representative Class.** General Convention shall present nominees to the representative class at the Annual Meeting of the Corporation.

**Other Committees** – At the discretion of the Board of Trustees, other committees may be formed and discharged as needed.

## **Article VII.** **Officers of the Institution**

**Section 1.** – The Dean shall be the chief educational and administrative officer of the institution. He or she shall exercise general responsibility for the overall affairs of the institution and shall bring those matters to the attention of the Board of Trustees that are appropriate and necessary to keep it fully informed and to enable it to meet its policy-making responsibilities. The Dean shall be an ex officio member of the Board of Trustees and of all committees thereof.

The Dean shall appoint all other administrators, staff members, and temporary faculty members. Regular faculty appointments shall be presented to the Board for prior approval.

**Article VIII.**  
**Indemnification**

**Section 1.** – Each person now or hereafter a Trustee or Officer of the Corporation (and his or her heirs, executors and administrators) shall be entitled, without prejudice to any other rights he or she may have, to be reimbursed by the Corporation for, and indemnified by the Corporation against, all costs and expenses reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with or arising out of any claim, action, suit or proceeding of whatever nature in which he or she may be involved as a party or otherwise or with which he or she may be threatened by reason of his or her having served as a Trustee or Officer of the Corporation, or by reason of any action alleged to have been omitted by him or her as such Trustee or Officer, whether or not he or she be such Trustee or Officer at the time of incurring such cost or expenses, including amounts paid or incurred in connection with reasonable settlements (other than amounts paid to the Corporation itself) made with the approval of the Board of Trustees of the Corporation and with a view to the curtailment of costs of litigation.

No such reimbursement of indemnity shall be paid or made for any expenses incurred or settlement made by such Trustee or Officer in connection with any matter as to which he or she shall be finally adjudicated in any such action, suit, or proceeding not to have acted in good faith and in the reasonable belief that his or her action was in the best interest of the Corporation, nor shall the amount of any such reimbursement or indemnity paid or made to any Trustee or Officer in respect of any matter on which settlement or compromise is effected, including the amount paid by such a Trustee or Officer in such settlement, exceed the expense which might reasonably have been paid or incurred by such Trustee or Officer in conducting such actual or threatened litigation to a final conclusion.

Payment by the Corporation of expenses incurred by such Trustee or Officer in defending any claim, action, suit or proceeding in advance of its final disposition may be made upon receipt of an undertaking by the person indemnified to repay such payment if he or she shall be adjudicated to be not entitled to indemnification under the laws of Massachusetts. The Corporation and its Trustees and Officers shall not be liable to anyone for making any determination as to the existence or absence of liability, or for making or refusing to make any payment hereunder the basis of such determination, or for taking or omitting to take any other action hereunder, in reliance upon the advice of counsel.

**Article IX.**  
**Amendments**

**Section 1.** – The Bylaws of the Corporation may be made, amended or repealed at any Annual or Special Meeting of the Members at which a quorum is present by an affirmative two-thirds vote of those at-large and representative

class members present and voting, each class voting as a separate class, provided that notice of the substance of the proposed amendment is stated in the notice of such meeting.

### **Article X. Miscellaneous Provisions**

**Section 1. – Parliamentary Authority.** The parliamentary procedure shall be governed, in all cases not specifically covered by these Bylaws, by Robert's Rules of Order.

**Section 2. - Fiscal year.** Except as from time to time otherwise determined by the Trustees, the fiscal year of the Corporation shall end on June 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Section 3. – Seal.** The seal of the Corporation shall, subject to alteration by the Trustees, bear its name and the year of its incorporation.

**Section 4. – Execution of Instruments.** All check, deeds, leases, transfers, contracts, bonds, notes and other obligations authorized to be executed by and officer of the Corporation in its behalf shall be signed by the Chair or the Treasurer except as the Trustees may generally or in particular cases otherwise determine.

**Section 5. – Evidence of Authority.** A certificate by the Clerk or a temporary Clerk as to any action taken by the Trustees or any officer or representative of the Corporation shall as to all persons who rely thereon in good faith be conclusive evidence of such action.

**Section 6. – Articles of Organization.** All references in these Bylaws to the Articles of Organization shall be deemed to refer to the Articles of Organization of the Corporation, as amended and in effect from time to time.

### **Article XI. Former Bylaws**

**Section 1. –** All former Bylaws will be revoked and repealed immediately prior to the Annual Meeting following the adoption of these Bylaws, provided that General Convention, by appropriate votes, supports the provisions therein.

Amendments approved July 1, 2002.

**TRUSTEES OF URBANA UNIVERSITY**

Urbana University, Urbana, Ohio 43078

Chartered by the Legislature of Ohio, March 7, 1850, and opened the following September. "Under management and direction of persons known and recognized as belonging to the New Church, or attached to the principles thereof." Governed by a board of twelve trustees, two of whom retire annually, all vacancies being filled by the remaining members of the board. Can confer all the usual and honorary degrees that are granted by colleges and universities.

At the Board of Trustees meeting in June, 2002, the board was reorganized to constitute 35 members of whom seven are "Church Class" seven are alumni, and twenty one serve at large.

**Board of Trustees**

*Chair:* William G. Edwards (2006)  
*Vice Chair:* Frank G. Doyle, III (2007)

*Treasurer:* Herbert C. Greer (2008)  
*Secretary:* Betty A. Murray (2009)

Robert W. Bean\*\*  
Bobby L. Buchanan\*  
Elizabeth Coffman\*/\*\*  
Michael Conrad\*\*\*  
Frank G. Doyle, III\*  
William G. Edwards\*\*\*  
Fred Farinacci\*\*\*  
William L. Fraim\*\*\*  
Herbert C. Greer\*\*  
Deborah Hill Grimes\*\*\*  
Robert G. Harrison \*\*  
Linda Hilliker\*\*\*  
Dr. Karen LaRoe\*\*  
Dr. Gary Lau\*\*\*  
Diane E. McConnell\*\*\*  
Michael Major\*\*\*

John Mascellino\*\*\*  
Allen R. Maurice\*\*\*  
Michael G. Minnich\*\*\*  
Gregory L. Moore\*\*\*  
Betty A. Murray\*\*  
Dr. Steven J. Polsley\*\*\*  
Kay Rich-Slesinger\*\*\*  
Thomas Rue\*\*  
Carol Scott\*\*\*  
H. Daniel Smith\*\*\*  
Warren Stevens\*\*\*\*  
Charles Sweeting\*\*\*\*  
John L. Titus\*  
Dr. J. Gilbert Ware\*\*\*  
William N. White\*\*\*  
Chuck E. Winter\*\*\*

**\*Church class members****\*\*Alumni members****\*\*\*At large members****\*\*\*\*Trustee Fellows**

Currently there are five vacancies. Two vacancies in the church class, one vacancy in the alumni members, and two vacancies in the at large members.

## STATEMENT OF THE CHURCH'S EXPECTATIONS FROM URBANA UNIVERSITY

*The following statement was adopted by the General Council in 1987 of the Swedenborgian Church (the Church) to clarify its expectations of the relationship between Urbana University (the University) and the Church. It must be appreciated that the Church is congregational in structure so that this statement represents only the position of a majority of the governing board and is not binding on any individual in his / her relationship with the University. Individuals may differ vigorously with the position set forth in this statement.*

The Church does not desire to have imposed any mandatory course requirements respecting Swedenborgian theology, nor does it think such mandatory requirement is wise. The Church does ask that Swedenborgian theology be available as an elective course or part of an elective course.

The Church is pleased that the University has emphasized education of disadvantaged people struggling to help themselves. As an expression of its Doctrine of Use, the Church wants to help the University accomplish its goals in this area.

In financial matters, the Church expects to be treated equally with other creditors. Until such time as the debt owed the Church by the University is substantially reduced, the Church will use its influence toward maintaining the Church Class in the majority of the Trustees of the University. After the loans are repaid, the Church will reevaluate its position on the matter of the Trustee classes.

The Church affirms that it does not consider the University a "Church Related College" in the sense of Ohio statutes. It does not assent to the establishment of such a relationship between the University and the Church. At the same time, in consideration of the origin and history of the University, such a relationship with another church denomination does not seem appropriate.

The Church hopes to continue an informal connection with the University.

The Church believes that the philosophy underlying the Swedenborgian theology provides an excellent resource for defining and refining the educational philosophy of the University. Especially important are the statements on the worth of an individual, freedom of individual choice and individual responsibility. The Church expects that the faculty and administration

will continue to use it as one of their resources.

**Dorothy deB. Young**  
*Recording Secretary (1987)*

## SWEDENBORGIAN BODIES

*The following Swedenborgian organizations are independent of our organization but wish to maintain a close relationship with us. We welcome them in our fellowship.*

### United States - The General Church of the New Jerusalem

*Headquarters:* Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009  
Tel.: (215) 914-4900 Bookstore: (215) 914-4920  
*Exec. Bishop:* Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss, Box 711, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009  
*Asst. to the Bishop:* Rt. Rev. Alfred Acton, Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009  
*Treasurer:* Daniel T. Allen, Box 711, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

### Great Britain – The General Conference of the New Church of Great Britain

*First Conference 1789; General Conference Deeds enrolled 1822.  
Incorporated, 1872*

*Headquarters:* 20 Bloomsbury Way, London, WC1A 2TH  
*Senior Minister:* Rev. Ian Russell, 5 Quayside Close,  
Worsley, Manchester M28 1YB  
*Chief Exec.:* Mr. Michael Hindley, 59 Campernell Close,  
Brightlingsea, Colchester, Essex CO7 0TB  
*Treasurer:* Mr. Nigel K. Sutton, 42 Hillside,  
Findern, Derby DE65 6AZ  
*Web Site:* [www.newchurch.newearth.org/gcnegb.php](http://www.newchurch.newearth.org/gcnegb.php)

### The General Conference of Great Britain

*Consists of 29 societies, having approximately 1,130 members.  
The Societies are located at:*

Accrington	Bristol	London (3)
Auckland, N.Z.	Burnley	Paisley
Bath	Chester	Preston
Besses-o-th'Barn	Clayton-Le-Moors	Radcliffe
Birmingham	Dalton, Huddersfield	Rhodes & Middleton
Blackpool	Derby	Seaburn Dene, Sunderland
Bournemouth	Heywood	Southend-on-Sea
Bradford	Kearsley	Stockport
Brightlingsea	Keighley	Wallasey



**THE CONTINENTAL (EUROPEAN) ASSOCIATION  
OF THE NEW CHURCH**

*(Organized in 1965 by the French Federation, the Swiss Bund, the New Church in Germany, the New Church in Vienna, and the New Church in Italy.)*

*Secretary:* Jean Vidil, Case postale 310, CH-1000 Lausanne 4,  
Switzerland – Tel: (0) 21 23 7877

*Treasurer:* Wilhelm Schläppi, Ueberlandstr. 477/111, CH-8051,  
Zürich, Switzerland

**AUSTRIA - The New Church Society of Vienna**

*President:* Mr. Werner Prochaska, Soesergasse 4, A-1010 Vienna

*Secretary:* Mrs. Gerda Scholz, Untere Augartenstrasse 1/3

*Treasurer:* A-1025 Vienna

*Services:* Intermittently at the home of Mr. W. Prochaska

**DENMARK – Den Nye Kirkes Menighed**

*Board of Directors-*

*Vice Pres:* Mr. Oliver Boolsen, Nansensgade 7 1 tv., 1366  
Copenhagen V. – Tel: 31 13 52 39

*Secretary:* Miss Inger Ullrich, Osterpark 1, 2630 Tastrup  
Tel: 43-99 25 59

*Treasurer:* Mr. Manfred Ullrich, Valbyholm 33, 2, 292 Skellet,  
2500 Valby – Tel: 36-45 00 30

*Board Member:* Mrs. Laura Boolsen, Osterbrogade 228, 1.th. 2100  
Copenhagen O Denmark, Tel: 369-27 04 15

*Services:* Valby Langgade 39, 1.th., 2500 Valby – Tel: 36-169466

*Pastor:* Rev. Gudmund Boolsen

**FRANCE – Association Cultuzelle La Presle**

*Board of Directors-*

*President:* Rev. Claude Bruley, 75 Route d'Annoux,  
9310 Chatel-Gérard; Tel: 03-86-82-64-25

*Secretary:* Colette Gagnon, Gvaude Rue, 71520 Tramayes

*Treasurer:* Ginette Bezujard, Chemin des monts, 42110 Feurs

**Chrysalis Centre (Workshops and Seminars)**

*Leader:* Rev. Patrick Duvivier, Ipailla 06540 Saorge, France

(Please write for more information and a current schedule)

**GERMANY – Neue Kirche in Deutschland***Board of Directors-*

*President:* Mrs. Barbara Schmidt, Rosbaumweg 21 D-78  
Freiburg i Br.

**Berlin**

*President:* Mr. Peter Keune, Schmarjestr. 2, D – Berlin – 37  
*Secretary:* Mr. Werner Podlich, Falkenseer Chausse 207, D-1 Berlin  
 20  
*Treasurer:* Mrs. Gertrude Engling  
*Services:* Fontane Str. 17 A, Berlin 33, Grunewald

**Berlin-Grunewald**

*Lay Leader:* Mr. Peter Keune

**Nordrhein Westfalen, Heuverstrasse 16, D-463 Bochum**

*President:* Mr. Horst Moelleken, Im neuen Weg 34, D-5480 Remagen  
*Secretary:* Rekha Moelleken, Im neuen Weg 34, D-5480 Ramagen  
*Treasurer:* Bernhard Willimzig, Detmold

**South West Germany**

*President:* Frau B. Schmidt, Rosbaumweg 20,  
79110 Freiburg, Germany  
*Secretary:* Mr. Friedmann Schmidt, Keferstrasse 3, Villigen D-7730  
*Lay Leader:* Mr. Friedemann Schmidt

**ITALY – Italian Society of the New Church***Board of Directors-*

*Secretary:* Signor Fabio Barzelatto, Casella Postale 34,  
30035 Mirano (VE), Italy

**SWEDEN – Nya Kyrkans Svenska Forsamling***Board of Directors-*

*President:* Mr. Milan Pokorny, Tallvagen 11, 12163 Johanneshov  
*Secretary:* Mr. Nils-Sture Jansson, Distingsgrand, 37, Hagersten,  
Stockholm C  
*Treasurer:* Mr. Erick Lindberg, Eknesvag 3, 112-64 Stockholm  
*Vice-Tres:* Mr. Werner Jansson, Krovvag 63, 122-32 Enskede,  
Stockholm  
*Services:* Tegnerluden 7, Stockholm (*Occasionally at Gothenburg*)  
*Pastor:* Rev. Daniel Fitzpatrick  
*Lay Leader:* Mr. Nils-Sture Jansson

**SWITZERLAND – Neue Kirche Der Deutschen Schweiz***Board of Directors-*

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Heinz Grob, Freie Str. 22., CH-8280 Krenzlingen
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