

Religion is of life, and the life of religion is to do what is good

(Doctrine of Life 8)

The New Church is an international organization of people striving to improve their conscious relationship with the Lord, Jesus Christ, the one God who rules heaven and earth.

We extend a warm welcome to everyone, and invite you to take what you like and return it freely. We use the Bible and the Heavenly Doctrine revealed by the Lord and published by Emanuel Swedenborg to guide us in our lives, especially in our relationships. We freely share our love and understanding with each other, and try to give one another support in our spiritual journeys.

Temporarily the Hurstville Society is without a **Pastor**. During this period the Society will be served by lay leaders and visiting preachers.

Worship Services are held each Sunday at 10:00 AM. **Sunday School** is held concurrently with the worship service.

Young People's Group is held once a month in conjunction with the Young People's Group at the New Church at 2 Shirley St, Roseville.

A tea and social in conjunction with **discussion** meets on the 1st Friday of each month (January excepted) beginning at 7 00 pm. This will be conducted by visiting ministers when available or lay led as appropriate.

Bible Study and **Discussion Classes** previously held midweek have been suspended until further notice.

The Swedenborg Bookroom, at 22 Dudley Street, Penshurst, contains books by and about Emanuel Swedenborg for sale or loan. It is open by appointment.

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Call or come at anytime.



The New Church Newsletter

Hurstville Society December 2007

The Christmas Star

"A Star shall come out of Jacob; A Sceptre shall rise out of Israel....
(Numbers 24:17)

A "star" symbolizes knowledges of good and truth, and in the highest sense the knowledge respecting the Lord. (*Apocalypse Explained* 422:20)

The beautiful words from the book of Numbers were a prophecy of the birth of the Lord God Jesus Christ into the world. These were the words that told the wise men of the East to watch for a wonderful new star that would be a sign of the Saviour's birth. They would follow the star until it led them to where the Lord was, where they could fall down and worship Him. And then they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

As we celebrate the Christmas season, we too can follow the Lord's star and

come to worship Him. Our guiding star is the Lord's holy Word. The heavenly truths in the Word can help us come to acknowledge the Lord as the one God of heaven and earth. When we look to the Lord alone and live a life of good, then we are truly worshiping Him. And we can bring Him the precious gifts symbolized by gold, frankincense, and myrrh - love, charity, and obedience.

The Lord's Birth

by Rev. David Lindrooth

“I see Him but not now; I behold Him, but not near; a star shall come out of Jacob; a sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and batter the brow of Moab, and destroy the sons of tumult” (Numbers 24:17).

We are not always aware of the Lord working in our lives. “We see Him, but not now.” We want Him involved in our lives, but we feel as if He is “not near.”

The Lord's infinite presence is a little like the air we breathe. It is something that is such an integral part of our lives that we aren't normally aware of it. We breathe constantly without thinking of the life-giving chemical reactions that are continually happening in our bodies. We rarely reflect that without the atmosphere all forms of life would cease to exist.

The Lord is as present and essential in our lives as air is to our bodies. His life flowing into the world is the cause of all life. His interaction with us gives us the abilities to think, to love, and to respond as human beings. His life provides the backdrop to our consciousness. Yet, we are as unconscious of the miracles the Lord is continually creating in our lives as we are unconscious of the life-supporting qualities of the atmosphere.

The Lord was born on earth so that we could become aware of His presence in our lives. By knowing who the Lord is we can begin to be aware of the ways He continually works in our lives, giving us His gifts, leading us forward, creating our circle of life and sustaining us. This awareness takes a

News Items

We have had overseas visitors from the USA during November. **Brian and Claudia Horner** from Bryn Athyn have been spending two weeks here catching up with family and friends. Also **Paul and Kathy Rogers** from Detroit are visiting. They are staying in the manse with their son and his friend both of whom participated in the recent Solar Challenge race from Darwin to Adelaide.

December Calendar Items

Welcome to Rev Alain and Jeanne Nicolier from France: The church service on **2nd December** will be conducted by Rev Alain Nicolier who with his wife Jeanne will be spending almost three months with us as a visiting pastor. *Please bring something to share for a Pot Luck lunch* to welcome them back.

Friday 7th December: 7 00 pm Dinner and class.

Friday 14th December : 6 00 p.m. Young People at Roseville

Sunday 16th December: Church will be in the morning as usual but in the evening you are invited to join with the Roseville New Church for Carols by Candlelight at 7.30 p.m. The address is 4 Shirley Rd Roseville.

Sunday 23rd December: This will be an *evening* service at 7.30 p.m.

Tuesday 25th December: Christmas Day service at 10 am.

Sunday 30th December: Holy Supper Service

Monday 31st December to Sunday 6th January: Summer Camp at Mangrove Mountain (see separate item)

Birthdays

Happy Birthday to **Sam Johnson** (1st), **Gai Kennedy** (2nd), **Beryl Laidley** (14th), **Tom Taylor** (15th), **Ken Horner** (16th), **Patricia Walsh** (19th) and **Kristen Johnson** (29th).

To recap. This course focuses on teachings from the ancient book of Exodus in the Old Testament, presented with new insights that are easy to grasp and apply to everyday life. The Exodus story is about your own escape from negativity and pain, and your personal journey to a new way of living—a life of true freedom, happiness, and peace.

Overview of the Program

8 weeks

Individual study

Group discussion

Life-oriented sermons

Explore teachings of the New Church

Resources and tools for personal growth

The Exodus story – Your story.

Mangrove Mountain Family Camp

Monday 31st December to Sunday 6th January

This is the final chance for any last minute people to sign up. Please contact:

Carolyn Heldon

15 Browallia Cres

LOFTUS NSW 2232

Phone: (02) 9545 3823

Email: alskastjarna@yahoo.com.au

The theme for the camp is - GOD. The week will culminate with a special Drama presentation on Sunday 6th January embodying some of the many aspects of this all encompassing topic. If there are people who are unable to attend camp but who would like to come to the Sunday event (or any individual day), again, please contact Carolyn (details above).

For those participating in the camp, a booklet with all the details you need to know will be sent out in early December

lifetime. It can be compared to becoming aware of each breath we take and beginning to sense the life-giving response our bodies have to the air. Gradually we can become aware of how desolate our lives are without the Lord—as desolate as this planet would be without our atmosphere. A life based on this understanding opens us up to receive the Lord’s eternal gifts of life, love, and wisdom.

(The above material was sourced from The General Church website under the section “*The Vineyard*”.)

<http://www.newchurch.org/resources/vineyard/2006dec>

Ngalangangpum Aboriginal School Visit

“Bush to Big Smoke” Trip Sydney 2007

As we go to print our friends from far northeast Western Australia will have completed their two week visit and be on the long journey home. It has been a pleasure for the Hurstville Society to provide accommodation for the boys, while the girls stayed at Mahys a few doors down the street. We would like to acknowledge all the hard work by teachers Leanne Mahy and David Turfery along with their assistants Rosemary Daylight, Rosemary Malgil and John Echo in successfully supervising all the many trips and activities during the visit. Also Leanne’s parents Trevor and Maureen deserve medals for keeping people feed, housed and everything running smoothly.

Our multi purpose building, Baringa, came into its own with twelve boys in residence – Lachlan Bray, Cedric Cann, Dominic Churchill, Douglas Junior Cooper, Jaimal Mung, Imran Paddy, Rochelle Peris, Thomas Pinday, Graeme Thomas, Dale Thomas, Kieren Turner, Codie Yalunga – sleeping on mattresses in the Richard Morse Room. Together with their leaders they had the house to themselves with the freedom to come and go which helped them to feel at home. They were close by to the six girls at the Mahys – Claire Drill, Saverio Jessell, Miranda Mosquito, April Nulgit, Shailyn Peris and Tatum Rivers. Our large spacious property with lawns, gardens and a tennis court provided plenty of open areas for relaxing or running off steam as the case may be!

The **Welcome Ceremony** on Sunday 11th November, due to a misunderstanding, turned out to be a Water Blessing not a Smoking Ceremony as previously reported. Around 6pm church people and friends along with the Ngalangangpum School group, the Mahys and their friends began to gather awaiting the arrival of the local welcoming contingent from the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry at Penrith (website: www.acmcssr.org.au). As they had come from a distance and were unfamiliar with the area it wasn't surprising some of them became a little lost along the way. However, it was a lovely evening, the church grounds were looking particularly beautiful and this provided a pleasant atmosphere for this special occasion. The artificial grass tennis court was chosen as an excellent flat space to perform the ceremony. People wandered in and sat or stood as they wished. One of six ladies who carried bowls of water and leafy twigs introduced the ceremony by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land. Then, dipping the leaves in the water, the ladies walked among the audience gently sprinkling water droplets over everyone. This was such a simple gesture but a very powerful one. The representation of water is as ancient as the land and links us with our Creator. It gave a sense of belonging, of welcoming – no matter what our skin colour!

The final part of the ceremony was a dance and song performed by our friendly six ladies. The song was called "One People One Land" written by the renowned Australian Christian composer Monica Brown. The movements of the dance, the music and the words conveyed a very spiritual connection throughout. A big thank you to the following people with their support team from the Penrith Aboriginal Catholic Ministry for a wonderful moving experience – Jenny Ebsworth, Sharon Mumbler, Allison Nicholls, Judy Curry, Daisy Barker, Margaret Farrell, Janice Brown, Janice Kennedy, Father Phil Medlin, Sister Naomi Smith, Sister Rosemary. Also to the young ones who came with the group – Scarlett Kirby, Jamellah Mumbler, Henry Ebsworth, Kale Law, Brendan Morrison, John Murphy. We have been told that there has been an exchange of phone numbers and addresses among these kids with some of those from Ngalangangpum School; new friendships linking the city and the bush.

A touching finish to the evening was the presentation to our church by the

I am extremely grateful that Loving Arms is willing to take this vital function on. They are well equipped to attend to the needs of this wonderful group of children. In the past General Church Outreach has hosted a grass roots fundraising movement for this important need. The transition will ensure that there is an organization in North America that is looking after the orphanage in a more systematic way and which can better provide for the children's needs.

During the transition period, General Church Outreach will forward your contributions to the Kenyan Orphanage to Loving Arms to ensure that the orphanage continues to be adequately supported. Your continued support of the orphanage is needed during this transition and in the future. If you wish you can send your tax deductible contribution to "Loving Arms Mission" Box 213, Bryn Athyn PA, 19009.

Rev. David Lindrooth
Director General Church Outreach

The Journey Programme

We're doing it!

On 2nd November after our regular monthly Friday dinner we met to discuss the possibility of joining the worldwide programme called *The Journey*. At least 18 societies around the world are undertaking this programme. Most of them, having started on 23rd September, would have finished the course on 11th November. However three societies are beginning the program in late January including two in South Africa as well as the Perth Circle and we are planning to join them.

What will this involve? First of all we will discuss the programme with Rev Alain Nicolier after he arrives on 28th November and then we will be in a position to provide more details. However the course typically runs weekly for eight weeks and the preference expressed was for Monday nights.

Gathering Leaves



Friday 11th July – Monday 14th July
2008

Purley Chase England

Travelling overseas next July?

The theme of the weekend is the Tree of Life, inspired by the new stained glass window in the chapel. This depicts the tree of life in the middle of the Garden of Eden in Genesis and in the middle of the Holy City in Revelation.

This is a women's retreat being held at the newly refurbished British Conference spiritual retreat centre. (www.purleychasecentre.org.uk) Also included is a day trip to Shakespeare's Stratford-upon-Avon.

One of the organisers is well known to many of you – Roslyn Taylor. For more information and a flyer about the conference please contact Owen or Margaret Heldon (02) 9545 3823.

Kenyan New Church Orphanage is adopted by Loving Arms Mission

I am thrilled to announce that the **Kenyan Orphanage** run by Khalid Obiri is going to be administered as a branch of **the Loving Arms Mission**. The Kenyan orphanage, located in Ogembo Kissii now cares for 20 children varying in age who are able to attend both the church and the school as a vital part of their upbringing. Loving Arms Mission is a not-for-profit that specializes in Children's homes that are based on the principles of the New Church. They currently have two in Katmandu with the Kenyan orphanage constituting their first branch in Africa.

Ngalangangpum School as a thank you for offering the use of our building and property. It was an original ochre painting by famous Warmun Community spiritual leader and artist **Patrick Mung Mung**. He is the grandfather of visiting student **Imran Paddy**, who handed over the painting. The subject matter of the painting is the Bungle Bungles which is Patrick Mung Mung's home country of the Kija language group.

It was thought to be appropriate to hang the painting in the church along with the 100th Anniversary painting of the "Voice of Many Waters" and the "Garden in Heaven". This was done in time for Leanne Mahy and some of the children to see on their last day. To draw out the many layers of significance of the painting an Australian Aboriginal Proverb was inscribed on a piece of timber and placed next to it. It reads:

We are all visitors to this time, this place.

We are just passing through.

Our purpose here is to observe, to learn, to grow, to love

. . . and then to return home.



Margaret Heldon and Imran Paddy with the painting by Patrick Mung Mung

From Our Interns – A Goodbye Message

Dearest Hurstville Society,

We would like to thank everyone for welcoming us into your congregation. The friendliness of the society here has made us feel a home away from home.

On our trip we got to experience the city, appreciate nature while hiking the Blue Mountains and be of use to the church. Some of these uses included weeding the garden, organizing and teaching a Sunday School lesson, making up the order of services for church, choosing sermons to be read, refinishing garden furniture, delivering books of the Writings to bookshops, cataloguing books in the Bookroom, Library and Archives, putting on a games night and pancake breakfast, and our favourite, singing for church.

Thank you all for the joy you have added to our lives. The experiences we have had here and the relationships we've built are things we will take with us for the rest of our lives. We feel apart of the community now and will sincerely miss everyone.

With immense love, your interns,

Carling Wyncoll and Sarah Elder

Bon Voyage Sarah and Carling

It was sad on the one hand to farewell our interns both at the formal society Farewell Luncheon on Sunday 11th November and at the airport on Thursday 15th but on the other hand it was joyful to know that they would be returning home to family, friends and further study at the Bryn Athyn College USA. A happy outcome for us is that we now all have some new friends!

It was a pleasure to supervise these lovely girls who right from the beginning were determined to do their very best. They went out of their

way to find extra tasks that they thought would be of use to the society.

Our sincere thanks were expressed at our Farewell Luncheon where Sarah and Carling were presented with gifts as a token of our gratitude. Along with some Australian song books and CDs both girls received a sterling silver charm bracelet – Sarah's charm was a kookaburra and Carling's was a kangaroo. As someone pointed out these were very appropriate because Sarah loves birds and laughs a lot and Carling is a bouncy joyful person. We wish them all the best for the future. Adieu until we meet again sometime, some place!

Margaret Heldon

To Carling Wyncoll and Sarah Elder

In the annals of Hurstville
Let tribute be paid
To Carling and Sarah
What a difference they've made.

The weeds really hate them,
The old gardener knows,
But the flowers adore them,
Pansies, bluebells and rose.

What a wonderful Spring
With flowers everywhere!
And the two charming girls
Who are equally fair.

Yes, Carling's a darling,
And Sarah's a gem,
How hard to say
"Goodbye" to them.

by Norman Heldon