

***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.



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## **The New Church Newsletter**

**Hurstville Society February 2010**

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### **Seeing New Beginnings in Life's Long Journey**

by Rev. Donald Rose

The first word in the Bible is “b'reshith,” which means “in the beginning.” Its application extends to all the instances of beginnings in human life. In the last chapter of the Bible Jesus says, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.” And He there calls Himself “the Bright and Morning Star.”

A friend of mine recently dedicated a new church building. Those who laboured to build the church sought to find a name that would be acceptable to them all. When someone suggested calling it “The Morning Star Chapel,” there was instant approval. The imagery had just the right inspirational quality. A star in a dark sky is inspiring, but this is true in a special way of a star in a sky that is gradually becoming brighter! The

bright and morning star may be a symbol for each of us as we look to the possibilities of a new year.

Another friend is fond of invoking a Latin phrase: “carpe diem.” Dictionaries associate this phrase with the idea of holding one's focus on the present moment. We grasp this day of our lives, heeding the words of the psalm: “This is the day which the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.” Grasp the day; seize the moment.

I personally have often turned at the time of a new beginning to a saying in a theological book of Emanuel Swedenborg. Here is what it says: “Every smallest moment of man's life involves a series of consequences extending into eternity, each moment being as a new beginning to those which follow, and so with all and each of the moments of his life, both of his understanding and of his will.” This is paragraph 3854 of “Heavenly Secrets.” That is the version with which I have been familiar for many years. A new translation from the Latin does not speak of a “man” but of “a person.” The original Latin has no gender implication. So here is a new version to which I am to become accustomed. “Every smallest fraction of a moment of a person's life entails a chain of consequences extending into eternity. Indeed, every one is like a new beginning to those that follow, and so every single moment of the life of both his understanding and of his will is a new beginning.”

I invite you to consider how precious are the moments and the days that lie immediately before you. The moments have consequences, not just for you but for the people whose lives you touch. Even if you have had regrettable moments in the past, the moment at hand is there as an opportunity. Seize those moments, not just as your own, but as moments made by God.

The Psalm says to rejoice in the day. Does this mean merely to eat drink and be merry? Merriment has its place, but think of another kind of rejoicing in the day or the moment made for us by the Lord. Reach out in that moment in the name of God and feel the joy that He intends for you, making a difference for good in this world.

meaningful contact” with over a million people over 30 years. This means developing ways of reaching out to people that are different to our traditional church services. Some discussion points might be:

- Could we use this DVD in Hurstville?
- Would this production appeal to Australian audiences?
- What do you like/ don't like about it?
- Do we have suggestions for the New Church Live team?

### **A Series of Services on The Lord's Prayer**

To begin the New Year there will be a series of Sunday Services on the Lord's Prayer by Rev Michael Gladish, a former pastor in Hurstville (1974-1981). The dates and topics are:

Jan 31	Our Father Who Art in the Heavens
Feb 14	Hallowed Be Thy Name
Feb 21	Thy Kingdom Come
Feb 28	Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread
Mar 14	Forgive Us Our Debts
Mar 21	Lead Us Not Into Temptation
Mar 28	Thine Is The Kingdom

Anyone missing a Sunday and wanting to catch up can be provided with a copy.

### **News Notes**

**Owen** and **Margaret Heldon** have both been involved in accidents in January. First Owen suffered a degloving injury (flesh ripped from the bone) on his ring finger requiring major surgery. Recovery will take months. Then Margaret's car rolled and is a write off. Fortunately neither she or her brother **Ralph Horner** received more than a few bruises. Margaret and her mother Grace have relocated to Sydney at this time.

### **Birthdays**

Happy Birthdays to **John Hicks** (9<sup>th</sup>), **Mike Lockhart** (11<sup>th</sup>), **Anne Lawrence** (21<sup>st</sup>), **Kathryn (Kennedy) Rolles** (24<sup>th</sup>)

effort, a special presentation was made to **Carolyn Heldon** who stepped in to take much of the huge load of running the camp.

Finally special mention should be made of the brainstorming session, chaired by **Rev Brian O'Neill** who co-ordinated the smorgasbord of ideas on how to improve the various ways the church can serve existing members and friends as well as those new to the church. (Perhaps we can throw another idea into the mix – see “Secret Shopper” article below.)

### **Secret Shopper**

From Oak Arbor in Michigan USA we learn of an interesting exercise in involving a “secret shopper”. Apparently one of the members of the congregation, without the knowledge of other members, contracted a professional secret shopper to visit one of the church services and report on her experiences, right from driving up to the church located in a quiet neighbourhood off “the main drag” (is that good or bad?), approaching the front door, using the coat room, entering the lobby, finally getting a direct welcome rather than just a friendly smile and a friendly nod etc. Then what did she make of the service itself – the singing, the music, leaving the service in dribs and drabs afterwards and the social contact after the service where the opportunity arose to ask people “What does your church believe?” (Some suggested it would be better to read the church website!)

Perhaps we might ask ourselves how we might go in the eyes of a complete newcomer. Even without actually engaging a secret shopper we could start asking ourselves these questions.

### **Dinner & Discussion Group – Friday 12<sup>th</sup>**

On Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February after the dinner it is planned to show the DVD produced by the *New Church Live* project on the story of Noah’s Ark. This was sent to us by Angela Allen Cooper, one of our former interns who now works on the project. Bishop Tom Kline has set a goal of “making

### **Epitaph**

Rev Donald Rose (7 January 1931 – 20 December 2009) was ordained in 1957 after graduating from Bryn Athyn Theological School and served his first assignment in the Hurstville Society, 1957 to 1963. Don is fondly remembered as a gentle, caring pastor with a great sense of humour. Some of us today were in Sunday School at that time and particularly remember



him teaching us correspondences by showing us a picture and getting us to say the correspondence e.g. a bird – thoughts about heaven, a horse – understanding of the Word. Don was also an active tennis player and Sunday afternoon tennis was keenly anticipated by many in the society. While serving in Hurstville Don met and married a local girl, Noelene, and their first child Greg was born here.

Most of all though Don will be remembered for his special talent to give a different but very insightful slant on the teachings of the church. He also managed to get many articles in newspapers in the Philadelphia USA area on some aspect of life always managing to work the name Swedenborg into them. Therefore the best epitaph we can provide for him is to republish one of these gems (see above) with an appropriate subject for the New Year.

### **1000 Cranes**

“**Thousand Origami Cranes** (Senbazuru or Zenbazuru) is a group of one thousand origami paper cranes held together by strings. An ancient Japanese legend promises that anyone who folds a thousand origami cranes will be granted a wish by a crane, such as long life or recovery from illness or injury. The crane in Japan is one of the mystical or holy creatures (others include the dragon and the tortoise), and is said to live for a thousand years. In Asia, it is commonly said that folding 1000 paper origami cranes makes a person's wish come true.”

from Wikipedia: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thousand\\_origami\\_cranes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thousand_origami_cranes)

**Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes** is a non-fiction children's book written by American author Eleanor Coerr and published in 1977. The story is of a girl, Sadako Sasaki, who lived in Hiroshima at the time of the atomic bombing. She developed leukemia from the radiation and spent her time in a nursing home folding paper cranes in hope of making a thousand, which supposedly would have allowed her to make one wish, which was to live. However, she only managed to fold 644 cranes before she became too weak to fold one more, and died shortly after. People made the rest after she died and made a statue for her. The book has been translated to many languages and published in many places, to be used for peace education programs in primary schools.

from Wikipedia:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sadako\\_and\\_the\\_Thousand\\_Paper\\_Cranes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sadako_and_the_Thousand_Paper_Cranes)

**Michelle Heldon** drew on these stories to come up with an idea of a project that everyone could share in at the Elanora Heights Summer New Church Camp January 2010. She knew from the church's teachings that birds corresponded to thoughts. As the theme of the camp was Relationships she decided that if everyone wrote a meaningful loving thought on the back of at least one origami square when they were folded into cranes and strung together it would represent a unique kind of relationship with each other.



The challenge of actually folding 1000 cranes was taken up willingly and brought many people together in an unforeseen companionable relationship. At the end of camp Service a short verse was offered which highlighted another aspect of seeing meaning in the project from the doctrines of the New Church – **Cranes** by Margaret Heldon.

Cranes;  
Paper cranes.  
Many coloured paper cranes  
Folded by willing, helpful hands.  
One thousand paper cranes,  
Thoughts within.

One thousand;  
Ten times One hundred.  
Ten -  
All the good things stored by the Lord  
In each one of us from birth ever onwards,  
Remaining in our memory,  
Forever with us to be used,  
As needed.

## Summer Camp at Elanora Heights

This year's Family Summer Camp was held from 4<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> January in a beautiful, elevated bushland setting just a few minutes drive down the hill to Narrabeen Beach and Lagoon. It proved to be a wonderful, relaxed week with good weather, good company and an inspiring program with the theme of "Relationships" – our relationships with God and with other people. There was a good rollup with people from most states including the Northern Territory plus three overseas campers, **Alex Sandstrom** from USA, **Sarah Keal** from New Zealand and the evergreen **John Cunningham** from England.

The camp was memorable for many things and we mention just a few to give some idea of the tone of the camp. There was an impressive range of ages from the youngest toddlers (**Dylan Johnson** and **Elijah Brunne**) to the oldest (**Grace Horner** and **Norman Heldon**) and every decade in between. This made me recall what **Rev Ayi** had told us during his recent visit about African societies where all ages live together (no old peoples' homes in Togo). There were plenty of different relationships to observe.

Also of note was the project to create 1,000 cranes (see separate article), the choir led by **Rev Julian Duckworth**, even though just practising they entertained us every night after dinner. Then there were the many extra presentations by campers drawing on their own special talents or experiences to share with others. A cooler day was even arranged for the hike from The Spit to Manly! Talking of organisation, whilst it was a team