

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 (prior notice required).

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 March 2006

Women's Use

by Miss M. M. White

That women have uses to perform, none will deny; but what those uses should be, and their value compared with the uses of men, has been a subject of much contention in the past, and at present it is a matter much discussed in the press, and is actually, in fact, being fought out in the world around us in a veritable war of woman versus man.

Women have risen in revolt during the last half century, and are now endeavouring to demonstrate by actual facts that they, as human beings, are intellectually and practically the equal of men. Will Durant, in an article entitled "The Modern Woman," says: "The outstanding feature of the first quarter of the twentieth century is the change in the status of women. History has rarely seen so startling a transformation in so short a time."

The reason for this is not hard to see, for it has been many years since women were really free, -free to live the life of their choice. Since the fall of the Egyptian civilization, or the end of the Ancient Church, until the reception of the New Church doctrines, woman was regarded no otherwise than as the weaker vessel, the property of her male relations. Many cases of happy family connections and true marriages existed as isolated cases, without a doubt, but the general opinion in the world was that the man was lord and master.

During the Greek civilization, Plato pleaded for the equal opportunity of both sexes. But Aristotle classed woman as an arrested development, and explained her as being "nature's failure to make a man." She belonged with the slaves, as naturally subordinate.

In the Hebrew Church, the women were classed with the children - there was no way of entrance for them into the Church. It was not until the Christian Church was established by the Lord that women were accorded equality of membership. By the institution of the Sacrament of baptism, and its application to both sexes, a door of entrance was made for women, as well as men, into the Church. The status of women generally was thereby considerably raised as the Church grew, and Christian civilization is noted for the comparatively high regard and respect shown by the men towards the women. Still, women were not free; and it is not surprising that, at the end of the Church, when Christian truths were neither seen nor lived, women revolted and insisted on freedom. 'Twas economic freedom they craved. The opportunity came with the coming of machinery. Women could manipulate machines, but they were not willing to do so unless what they earned was legally theirs. Factory owners in England had an Act of Parliament passed, allowing the women to own the money they earned. Thus they obtained the necessary labour required.

This was the great opening for woman's economic freedom; and, for better or worse, woman grasped the opportunity. Avenue after avenue of various uses have opened to her since that time, and she has proved a successful competitor with men in an ever-widening field of uses.

device which cost half the price of the original photocopier will photocopy, scan, send and receive faxes and can print from a computer. Printing can also be double sided as well. A good indication of the advances in technology in the past ten years.

News Notes

Sadly the personal news this month has been dominated by the continuing decline in health of **Dot Heldon** who is currently in Calvary Hospital. Family and friends have been visiting her constantly to give her support at this time.

We have better news to report with **Shirley Taylor** who had suffered a set back (infection in the wound) in her rehabilitation following her knee reconstruction. Shirley is now back on track and we send our good wishes for a full recovery in the near future.

We have had recent contact from **Vera Buck** who is well and happy in Warabrook near Newcastle. She sends her best wishes to everyone in the Hurstville Society.

Ted Simmons has had a spell in hospital with pneumonia but is now home and working on regaining his strength.

Carolyn Heldon returned to Scotland on February 25th for a further six month's work at the Pitlochry Youth Hostel. It has been wonderful to have Carolyn's musical abilities to add to our church services during her visit home.

March Birthdays

Happy Birthday to **Tracy Hinds** (4th), **Mikayla Hinds** (4th), **Debbie Walsh** (7th), **Don Macfarlane** (7th), **Graham Horner** (12th), **Edward Horner**(18th), **Bill Hall** (26th) and **Trevor Favell** (27th)

Welcome to Roslyn Taylor, Miriam (Mim) Taylor, Bri Kern and Jon Taylor

Please join us for a **Pot Luck lunch** on **Sunday 5th March** after church to welcome our four visitors above. *Bring something to share for lunch.*

Miriam and **Bri** will be arriving on February 27th from New Zealand followed by **Roslyn** and **Jon** on February 28th direct from Bryn Athyn. They will have just over a week with us before travelling to Cairns for a brief holiday (where Bri will leave them) and then to Adelaide and Melbourne to visit relatives returning on March 22nd. During his stay here Jon, who is 16, will be doing home schooling. He is happy that he will also be able to continue playing ice hockey with the Canterbury Club.

Series on Lord's Prayer

During her stay with us Roslyn Taylor will be giving a series of classes/discussion groups about the Lord's Prayer, "based on a little book that has revolutionized the prayer for me" as Ros describes it. *This will begin on Friday 3rd March at our regular dinner and class timeslot.*

Internship – Bri Kern

Although she will only be with us for just over a week Bri Kern will be serving a brief internship which means in effect that she will spend her week in Hurstville busily doing things for the church under Roslyn Taylor's supervision. Bri apparently is keen to help out and will also get some credit for it for college. We hope she enjoys her stay in Hurstville and wish it were possible she could have stayed longer.

New Printer for the Church

For some months now the church has been without a photocopier. This has caused some difficulties and therefore the Business Committee has recently authorised the purchase of a Lexmark X422 multifunction printer. This

What of the New Church during this time? It has not escaped the controversy, for we find varying views held by its members regarding women's uses and the quality of their intellectual attainments. Some resentment, maybe, has resulted from the repetition of such statements as "women belong to the home," "a woman, cannot understand in the same way as a man," and so forth. I venture to suggest that the resentment does not lie so much in the statements themselves, but in the old idea lying behind, - that women and their uses are secondary, and that they should rely on the guidance of the men.

New Church women can afford to smile, however, at any recurrence of such ideas, and let a little patience take the place of resentment, realizing that in the New Church they are to reap the heritage that was truly woman's from the beginning of time.

In the Writings of our Church, the relation of men and women has been clearly explained, and great stress has been laid on the freedom which each must have as a necessity to true existence. There are New Church men and women who have seen the truth on this subject, and are endeavouring to build up a new civilization by its means. They see that the proper recognition of the uses of the wife and husband in the home are vital to the order and happiness therein. The home is the basis of society, and the principles there displayed we find in all the various ramifications of the life of a nation.

We are taught in the Writings that every single person has been born to perform a use which is peculiarly his, and which no other person could so well perform. How precious is each individual soul in the eyes of the Lord! And how precious should our use be in our eyes! How diligently should each seek the special use they are born to perform, and strive to become better and better in its performance.

Women have uses to perform which cannot be done by men, and likewise men have uses which cannot rightly be done by women. The reason is that men and women are complementary to each other; separate, they are not complete. An angel is a married pair in heaven. It follows that the uses of

men and women are complementary also. In fact, for a use to be a use, it must have something from both man and woman in it. There is not a single use in the world but needs for its successful accomplishment the efforts of men and women. There are many uses that appear to be done as well by women as men, but where do we find these things isolated? It is the common working together that causes the success. In other uses, common sense shows that men cannot do those things that always have been peculiar to women, and likewise there are things done by men that women, even in their advanced state, would shrink from attempting.

The questions that seem uppermost in New Church people's minds are: Can women think like men? Can they understand and enjoy intellectual accomplishments in any degree, as men can?

To the first I would answer, "No." To the latter, in the affirmative. This would appear to be a paradox; but the great difference, as I see it, is in the way in which men and women think. Men have immediate influx into their understandings from the Lord. This women have not. They are dependent on the men, as mediate vessels, for their powers to think and understand. The reception by the men of this influx from the Lord creates a sphere which is diffused from their minds, and by means of this sphere women can understand truths and rise to heights of intellectuality equal to men. In women, however, thought is feminine-not masculine. Does this, then, make the man superior? Is there no compensating balance? Yes. The Lord uses women also as a medium of influx. To her is entrusted the most universal of all spheres, something which is more universal than heat and light. If men did not come under the influence of this sphere, through women, the powers of their intellects would be impotent for the performance of any use. This sphere, in its highest sense, is the sphere of the preservation of the created universe, and is called the conjugal sphere. All love of use is in it. Without this sphere from women, men would love the things of their understandings in themselves; that is, they would seek truths, knowledges and facts, without any idea of love of use, but merely for the sake of knowing them. The same would apply on the lower plane of life-the getting of money and property from the love of ownership, not for the sake of extending uses to the neighbour.

are amazingly complex. As the Psalmist says, "I praise You, O Lord, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Marvellous are Your works, and that my soul knows right well." (Psalm 139)

The uses of this heavenly body, or Grand Man, are performed more and more perfectly as new angels arrive, which happens daily. Also we are told, as heaven grows so does His church on earth. This brings to mind the teaching that it is not the Lord's will that evil things happen here on earth, wars, rapid spread of diseases such as AIDS, but He works to cause some good to eventuate. Think of the millions of African children dying of AIDS now. Will they, as angels, cause a wonderful sphere of innocence to influence events here on earth?

Finally, to stir feelings of humility in ourselves we can read a passage in the Spiritual Diary headed, "What it is to be Nothing." Realising that we have nothing of what is good and true in ourselves but all is from the Lord we can ponder on this, "in respect to the Grand Man everyone is merely a most diminutive particle . . . as a particle of air in comparison with the whole atmosphere or as a particle of water in respect to the ocean." Yet despite that we know that the Lord loves each one of us and wants all to seek eternal happiness in His Heaven, or Grand Man.

A Thank You from Erik and Lynn-Del Sandstrom

It is with a little more sadness that we leave Hurstville Society this time, after our stay of 10 weeks. Being here for Christmas was a delight for us. We have so enjoyed seeing you all again, and I really looked forward to the services and classes I had time to deliver. We reflect on the generations of people in the Society, and know you will have a future for sure. I want to thank all of you for your dedicated support of the Society's functions. And our grateful thanks for your welcome and warm farewell. We know we have a home in your midst, and hope to see many of you as you travel round the world. Be sure to call on us!

Affectionately, Erik and Lynn-Del

At the conclusion of the ceremony, nine persons sat around a tastefully decorated table and partook of the delicacies provided. The only toast was proposed by the Pastor, who wished for the pair increasing unity, with endless growth in wisdom throughout eternity. Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher then took the train for the mountains.

No replacement teacher was found and the Day School whose future had seemed so promising was forced to close. The bright side of this story is that Mr Fletcher's 'little' daughter Ruth grew up and married Norman Heldon whose children and grandchildren as well as Norm himself (88 years old) are regular attendees of the Hurstville Society to this day.

“I Remember When I was Young”

by Norman Heldon

Yes, I know that is the title of a song, but I've been thinking about that time of my life. When about seven or eight years old, I listened at times to adults of our church talking, and sometimes heard the words "The Grand Man." I'd no idea what the words meant, but they seemed important to my young mind.

Growing up I learned that angels lived in beautiful homes, with lovely gardens. They had work to do, but also enjoyed recreations, and they worshiped the Lord. Eventually I came to understand what is meant by The Grand Man, and discovered what a wonderful concept was involved. The Grand Man is Heaven, formed by the Lord so that in His sight it is like one man. Actually there are three Heavens, Celestial, the highest, Spiritual, and Natural, but still in His sight as one man (see Rev 5). There are very many communities or societies in these heavens, and we learn that each society plays its part of ensuring the healthy life of this heavenly Grand Man. Also we know that there are angels from the other earths that are inhabited, and we are told what uses are served by those angels (see Arcana Coelestia 6807).

We don't reflect much upon it, but we know that the human body and mind

This gives us the keynote to women's use. Good women love all those things that preserve natural and spiritual life, and, because of this love, they have a perception of how this is to be done. They also love the means that will enable those uses to become realities. Truth is the universal means of love ultimating itself; and, as man is the medium of the influx of truth from the Lord, good women love truth in men. And when women love truth in men, good men are inspired to seek and obtain it for the sake of the uses loved by the women. What a heritage has woman! What a noble use! She is the guardian of the sacred flame of love - a love that comes to her from the Lord, and which reaches out into every field of usefulness. The home will ever be woman's peculiar shrine. The care and education of little children, none can accomplish as she can. But if these uses be denied her, and she finds it necessary to earn a living to gain independence, she surely may accomplish it in very many ways. In doing so, she may bring into her usefulness her womanly love of uses, which perhaps was not there in very full measure before.

The statement of the angel regarding himself and his wife, given to us in the Writings, "She is my heart, and I am her lungs," applies to men and women generally. In the church or community, women represent the heart, and men the lungs. And, as the uses of the heart and lungs react to every part of the body, so the uses of men and women reign universally and reciprocally throughout the church and community, when it is in a healthy state.



(Note from Editors. We have reprinted this article for a couple of reasons. Firstly as Mora White features prominently in our "More History" segment it is good to have something from her pen. Secondly the topic is still very current today and it seemed appropriate to have the views of one of the most prominent women lay persons from another era. The article was first published in The New Age (Australia), December, 1930 and then again in New Church Life April 1931.)

More History

After diverging in our last issue to review Beryl Laidley's study of Rev Richard Morse's family, we now return to 1932 and **The Day School** at the Hurstville Society.

To refresh your memory, the Day School opened on October 7th 1930 with five pupils, their teacher being Miss Mora White. Mora was a dedicated teacher who worked tirelessly to make the school a success over the next four years. Here is a summary of those years using excerpts from "Church News" in New Church Life all of which were written by Richard Morse.

September NCL 1932: *During the week preceding the 19th [June], the children of the day school were kept in the sphere of the great event by their teacher, Miss White. Place-cards for the Church's celebration, representing a Grecian temple on which were the words, Nunc Licet, were painted by them. Also in December NCL 1932: Our children's annual dress-up social was held on the first of September. Children of the day school contributed songs and dances.*

At the end of 1932 Nellie and Tom Taylor graduated. Part of the description of this in **December NCL 1933** says: *One of the features at the school closing consisted of a cake surmounted by a flag, on which were the words: "N. C. Day School"; and a sand-tray in which were a paper model of the school and diminutive models of teacher and children, with Nellie and Tommy shown departing holding an Au revoir flag.*

During 1933 an event occurred that would have a huge impact on both the day school and the society. **March NCL 1934:** *On August 13th we had the pleasure of welcoming Mr. Frederick William Fletcher into our Society; and on the 25th of that month, his little daughter Ruth, eight years, was baptised in the Pastor's home. . . . Mr. Fletcher attends our services and other functions, and desires to make himself generally useful. The paper on "The Five Senses" which he read at our fortnightly meeting, October 15th was much appreciated. Mr Fletcher was a widower who lived around the corner from the church, in Denison Street.*

May NCL 1934 reads: *The Day School has commenced the New Year with fifteen pupils; eight being new ones in the kindergarten. However in July NCL 1934 this sentence jumps out at us: The burning question with us at present is: "Who will take Miss Mora White's place as teacher in our Day School?"*

We find the reason for this question in **November NCL 1934:** *Since my last report, wet weather and a wedding are the only news to be recorded. The former was so intermittent that coats and umbrellas became necessary accompaniments when going forth, even though the morning be cloudless; and it is mentioned here because of its close association with the wedding and the social immediately preceding.*

The social was more than ordinarily enthusiastic, and dancing was maintained until a late hour for us. The principal item, however, was the presentation of a handsome English china tea service to the guest of the evening, Miss White.

The day following, August 24th, at two o'clock, Martha Mornington White and Frederick William Fletcher were united in holy wedlock. The ceremony was held in "Baringa," the Pastor's residence, the sitting-dining room being prepared for the occasion. The ladies will doubtless be interested in the description of the bride's gown, which is a pale gold-coloured parchment cloth, with gold shoes and posy of violets and lilies of the valley and gold-coloured and white streamers, ending with a posy of the same flowers and maidenhair fern. She wore, also, a diamante band on her hair. The whole effect was most pleasing.

