

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 November 2005

The Lord as a Child

by Rt Rev Peter Buss

The Gospels do not tell us a great deal about the childhood of Jesus Christ. We know that "The Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him." (Luke 2:40). There is the story of His visit to Jerusalem at the age of 12, and afterwards it is said that "He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them" - that is, to Joseph and Mary (Luke 2:51).

One of the wonders of the Writings is that they tell us of His spiritual development in His great working of redeeming humankind and making His Human divine. Here are a very few of the early steps in the process of the Lord's glorification.

When He was a Baby the Lord became aware that He loved the whole human race. This is explained in the story of Abram going to the land of Canaan. In the spiritual sense it tells that the Lord “attained to” the celestial things of love (AC 1414-1438). What the nature of this awareness is we don’t know, but clearly His love for all people was of a character far beyond our conception. We all love some people more than others. The Lord as an infant loved all people. But at first His love was not formed by knowledges.

Then he began to learn. He loved to learn only from the Word. In fact, we are told He was so delighted with the truths - from the Word in heaven and on earth - that He was tempted to think that true goodness lay in that learning. But He perceived that learning is a means to the end of goodness.

Later in His early childhood the Lord became aware of the evils in the human race. This is told in the story of the angels who came to Abram, and of his looking out over Sodom and Gomorrah and learning of their wickedness. Even as a little child “the Lord's love towards the whole human race was so great that He wished to save all for evermore;” Therefore He was affected with horror when He came to realize the extent of the evil that existed in the world. He even wished - was tempted - to withdraw from that realization (AC 2222). But of course He did not. Instead He made inquiry as to what kinds of people could be saved, and perceived that many different states were capable of salvation. This is represented in Abraham’s pleading with Jehovah for Sodom and Gomorrah, asking if 50, or 45, or 40, 30, 20 and 10 people were enough for the cities to be saved. Each number represents a quality in human beings that the Lord in His Human perceived could indeed be turned to good.

The Lord willed to grow as others grow. He learned far more quickly than we do, and His love was beyond any quality of love we could experience. But He took truth into His mind, and learned from without, as we do. In doing so He allowed all truths to become part of His Human, and then He revealed the infinite power within them by using them to overcome the hells whenever they tempted Him. That infinite power He now bestows

There are so many wonderful people in the New Church all around Australia. It has been great to see Rev Julian Duckworth here in Sydney, and we look forward to seeing him with Ruth later in our stay. We feel so fortunate to be serving the Hurstville Society during this time and hope that they can get fine service while they are without a resident pastor.

News Notes

We are glad to welcome back **Sam** and **Kristen Johnson** from their extensive world trip to about a dozen countries. There were so many highlights of their trip they found it hard to nominate the best one but close to the top of the list was meeting up with friends including **Karen Lockhart** in London, **Carolyn Heldon** in Scotland, brother **Jeffrey** in school in Bryn Athyn and a host of other people who have visited Hurstville in the last few years.

Also visiting **Jeffrey Heldon** at this time is his mother **Lori** who went to Bryn Athyn for her class reunion on Charter Day.

We are glad to report that **Dot Heldon’s** health has improved sufficiently to come home from hospital. She was even able to make it to church recently. Well done Dot!

Farewell to Bishop Peter and Lisa Buss

Sadly we will have to say goodbye to our good friends Peter and Lisa on Monday 21st November. We certainly appreciate their visit and hope it won’t be their last. Join us for a Pot Luck lunch on Sunday 20th November after church to farewell them. *Bring something to share for lunch.*

November Birthdays

Happy Birthday to **Cliff Adamou** (2nd), **Jesse Horner** (3rd), **Brian Heldon** (8th), **Cathy Kermond** (11th), **Lori Heldon** (30th)

Brisbane and the Gold Coast

On October 9th we travelled to Brisbane from Sydney and were picked up by Gaye Heldon and driven to her and Brian's home on the Gold Coast. That evening we met with Matthew and Marna Heldon and their daughter Ainsley, Angus and Kaylene Glenn and their sons Jacob and Callum, and Shane and Lina Heldon with their baby boy Saxon. What a crowd of little ones for this active group. It was a lovely evening.

The next day we had lunch with the Brian Heldons, John and Lenore Sandow, Ian and Margaret Arnold (Margaret on crutches with a broken foot, poor dear), and Gustav and Birgitta Fornander, good friends from Sweden, and also the proud other grandparents of Saxon. We also had the pleasure of having drinks with David and Joanne Newgrosh that evening. There's a crowd brewing on the Gold Coast, being so well served by Rev Ian Arnold.

From there it was "up to Brisbane," to stay with Les and Bev Sheppard. Earlier that week a little boy who had been ill for a long time had slipped into the spiritual world, and Les was a tower of strength to the family. He took a service for the family the day after we arrived, and another one on Saturday. He is doing well, as is Bev, and it was so great to see them again, and once again to see their lovely daughter Jane. I met with Ian Arnold and talked over lots of things. We met when he was 19 and I was 20, in Durban, South Africa, and have enjoyed many meetings ever since. We share many interests.

on those same truths in us, that hell may not conquer in us. Or to put it differently, having conquered hell in His Human, He now conquers its power over any individual who learns His truth and tries to follow Him.

Much of this He did as a little Child. Even then He fought the hells, and revealed the strength of His Human that He had taken on. "He grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him."

Hurstville Society Altar Copy of the Word

While researching for the "More History" section for our recent Newsletters, quite by accident verification was made that the altar copy of the Word which was restored for our 100th Anniversary Celebrations in July is indeed the one used since the beginnings of the Hurstville Society. Here is the excerpt from *New Church Life* September 1923:

. . . our attention has been called to an item of historical interest which appeared in THE NEW AGE for March, 1890, over thirty-three years ago. It reads:

"Four copies of 'The Word of the Lord,' the American New-Church Bible, containing only those books which have the internal sense, are now in Victoria. One of them is the property of the Governor of the colony." (p. 9.)

Referring to this statement, the Rev. Richard Morse, of Sydney, writes us: "I believe that one of these copies, which I had rebound, is the same that has been used on the altar in our society since its inception."

This bible, simply called 'The Word' was printed in Boston in 1869. Bishop Tom Kline rededicated the newly restored book in the Sunday service culminating the Hurstville Society's anniversary celebrations on 17th July this year.

More History

We continue our history of the Hurstville Society, using excerpts from *New Church Life* [NCL]. We read in our last issue of the planning and erection of the church building at Hurstville in 1921 and the commencement of that being the centre now for the group to worship and socialise. Initially the coming to Hurstville was prompted by the fact that two New Church families lived there – the Hellbergs and the Morgans. With sadness we see that the fathers of both these families have now passed away. Fredrik Heldon (name now changed from Hellberg) died July 2nd 1918 (aged 48) from influenza and Charles H Morgan on September 4th 1921 of sudden heart failure. However, the widows and their children were supported by the group which grew substantially during the next decade, mainly it seems through the Sunday School.

Apart from the pastor, Rev Richard Morse, two other people must be mentioned in the success of the Sunday School. Miss Annie Taylor and Miss Mora White. Annie and her sister Beatrice had been in the group from the beginning, Beatrice having married Mr. Alfred Kirschstein on November 6th 1920 [parents of Theo Kirsten –name changed]. Mora came to Sydney in 1915 from her New Church family in the Adelaide Hills to be a milliner with Annie Taylor. Many of the excerpts from NCL are written by Mora (Martha Mornington White – M.M.W.).

There was a willingness to share the wonderful teachings of the New Church and advertising was started in the local paper and then a Book Room, but the main source of interesting people was through the Sunday School. Many families in the area sent their children and the numbers on the roll reached into the sixties. New Church Day (June 19th) became an important celebration where all the parents of the children were invited with the purpose of giving ‘instruction’ about the church in the form of papers, tableaux and games. Foundation Day (July 11th) was always celebrated mostly with a fancy dress social. There were Sunday School picnics each year at different venues – Brighton le Sands, Carr’s Bush, Como, the Royal National Park. The children put on concerts to raise money to buy a piano. There were Christmas Tableaux portrayed by the Sunday School.

Rest of news item relating to Perth visit removed due to privacy concerns

Important Notice – Society Meeting on November 6th

Please make an effort to attend the Society meeting on November 6th after church. Bishop Buss will discuss with us different options for the immediate and longer term functioning of the Society.

Other items usually discussed in a Society meeting at this time of the year include arrangements for Christmas as well as consideration of the budget for the next 12 months.

Our Visits around Australia and New Zealand

Peter and Lisa Buss

Auckland, New Zealand

In late September we started our travels, going first to New Zealand for two days. The Denis Keals kindly put on a dinner for the whole Keal Family on a Monday night. It was great to see Hugh and Doreen there, a little older but as mentally energetic as always, Hugh with his great humour, Doreen with her insights into life, and both with their kindness shining out of their eyes. We had a lovely visit with them the next day as well. Jenny and Lis (Bartle) Keal, the two sisters, were worried about their Mum, Marie, and she has since entered the spiritual world. They both said that there was a lovely service for her, at which Marie's granddaughter Sarah sang a song.

We visited some long lost relatives of our own - a half aunt and a cousin from the Buss side of the family. As of 2004 I had not seen them for over thirty years. We also had a lovely dinner with Dick and Gill Keyworth, who are busy working on additions and improvements to Hope House. What an inspiration their work is.

Perth

From there we travelled to Perth, arriving on Thursday evening. Mary Smuts organized the program, and a full and lovely one it was for our five days there. We had three confirmations and two adult baptisms.

All this increase in activity led to the idea of starting a New Church Day School. It was decided that Mora White would go to Bryn Athyn to train as a teacher. She and Rev Richard Morse left in June 1928, first travelling to London to the 13th General Church Assembly, then on to Bryn Athyn. You will read in our final excerpt from NCL for this month the words of Richard Morse spoken to the clergy at this Assembly. He summarises the events of the Hurstville Society leading up to the establishment of a Day School. You will find out more about this Day School next month . . .

There was definitely a close link with Bryn Athyn at this time through the publication *New Church Life* as our first quote shows.

NCL 1924 – November

It may be hard for those who live in the larger centers of the Church to realize how much the Life is appreciated by us in our far-away corner of the world. It is the principal means of communicating the thought and activity of the Church to us. As it is now four-and-a-half years since we had a visitor from any of the other societies, we keenly realize our isolation, and appreciate the usefulness of the Life all the more.

NCL 1926 – December

Inspired by the account of the General Assembly [in Kitchener, Canada this year] in the July and August issues of New Church Life, we are planning to establish a Book Room, and to advertize the Writings and collateral literature of the Church. It seems extremely difficult to interest people in spiritual things. Here in Australia we have every facility for gratifying the pleasures of the natural man, and spiritual things are crowded out. Yet in all this desolation there must be some who long for the Water of Life. To reach these few is our aim in starting a Book Room.

NCL 1927 – September

Here is an interesting snippet from the June Nineteenth (New Church Day) celebration. *A one-time honored custom was revived this year when a bowl containing slips of paper, on each of which was written a short quotation from the Writings, was passed around, each guest taking one. The passages were afterwards read aloud, and the effect was remarkable, some saying*

that in this manner they received just the truth that they were needing.

NCL 1928 - October

From the Thirteenth General Assembly in London we read:

Right Rev. George de Charms, Presiding: The program this evening is really a continuation of our program of last evening, when Church Extension was the subject. The purpose in providing these two evenings was to give all at this Assembly the opportunity to hear of the vital pastoral work that is being done in the Church, and to become acquainted with the work that is being carried forward by our ministers in various parts of the world.

...

Rev. Richard Morse: It gives me very great pleasure indeed to meet you all here tonight. . . .

When our small society limped out of the old New Church, as I would call it, . . . we had to meet in the home of a Miss Taylor. She is an eminent member of the society, who is now spending her time and money in furthering the work of the Church. And so, for a long time, we had services in this home, where we placed an altar to the Lord. The children of the members, however, could not come, because the distance from their homes was about nine miles. And so we felt that we ought to go out there in the afternoon, after having the usual morning service at Miss Taylor's house. The name of the place is Hurstville, and finally we formed a Sunday School there, in the Workman's Institute. A lot of children came to us. In spite of the fact that we were teaching the Doctrines of the New Church, and that the service included the Creed of the New Church, the people continued to send their children, until finally we had to build a church. . . . And now this is becoming almost too small for our uses. We have on our Sunday School roll sixty-two children. It is remarkable the way the children are continually being sent to us, although we come out clearly as to the teaching of the Doctrines. We have great difficulty in securing enough teachers. At present, we have six teachers. We do not feel that any teacher should have more than about eight children to teach, and so we are not as yet fully equipped to give the children the proper teaching. . . .

And then we began to consider the question of a New Church Day School, and this led Miss Taylor to offer the necessary money for such a school. Consequently, we now have one of our best teachers visiting Bryn Athyn for the purpose of being better prepared to undertake this school. And we hope to have a New Church Day School in the course of a year, and I think it will be the nucleus of an institute which will grow in years to a very large one. For we are trying to lay the foundation securely upon the Revelation of the New Church, and I believe that, if we are faithful to our purpose, - and as long as I live we shall be, - that the Lord will bless our work, and that in that blessing we shall, in the years to come, have a place almost second to Bryn Athyn. I am hoping that we shall have a very large institution and college, and that teachers will come there from Bryn Athyn. I have great hopes for the future in Hurstville. Australia is slightly larger than the United States of America. You have a population of about one hundred and twenty million in America; we have only six million. Sydney, with which Hurstville is in contact, is in New South Wales, and that city has a million inhabitants. It is a very large and beautiful city. Every person who comes from Sydney crows about the harbor, and they do so with great delight. It is a very pretty sight, and anyone going there will be promptly welcomed. I hope the Bishop will come back with Miss White, when she returns from the other center of the universe.



Sunday School 1930