

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.

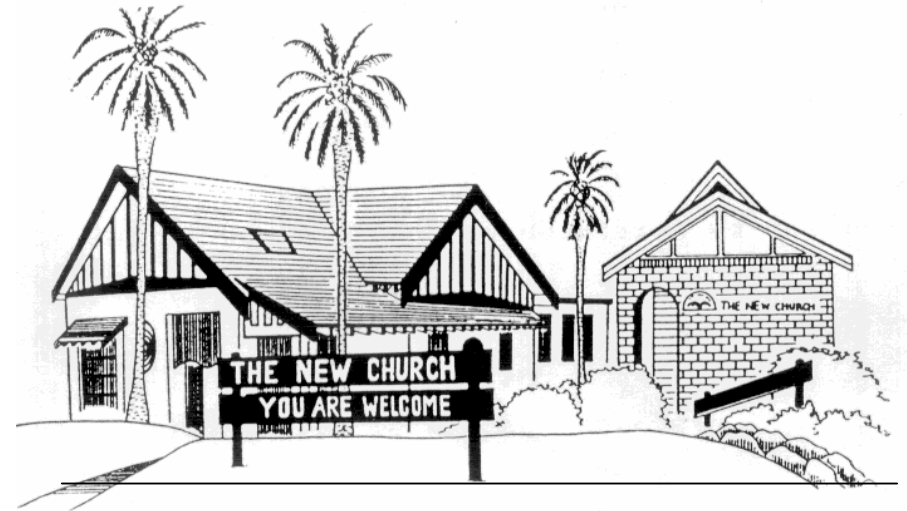
A tea and social in conjunction with **discussion** meets on the 1st Friday of each month (January excepted) beginning at 7 00 pm. This will be conducted by visiting ministers when available or lay led as appropriate.

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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The New Church Newsletter

Hurstville Society October 2006

EDITORIAL

It is great to be back in the Hurstville Society once more, to see the familiar faces and hear the familiar voices. From our point of view, it is also good to know that we can be with you for *six* months - half a year.

Yet, while the present arrangement means that you have the opportunity to become acquainted with more of the General Church Clergy than is usually the case, no doubt most members must surely be looking forward to the time when they will have a long term pastor among them. That would make it easier to plan for the future, especially to find ways and means of getting to know those people in our area who have been prepared by the Lord to receive

the New Revelation gladly and with gratitude - people who have been hungering and thirsting after teachings that would provide them not only with a firmer and more understandable belief system but also a richer spiritual life.

Such people are not likely to be the majority of the population in the Christian world. In fact, the Writings say that "there will be few in the [Christian] Church" (AC 3898:3). That is why we should not expect the New Church to have *mass* appeal in Europe, America, or Australia. But it does have *individual* appeal, as we know from the stories of people who have accepted the Writings in adult life. They love to tell about the process of coming to realize that they have found what they had been longing for. For some, usually those who *knew* they were "looking for something," the realization came with a tremendous impact, with joy and excitement. With others, those who had thought that they were satisfied with what they had been taught about religion, it came more gradually - because they had much to unlearn. With those who were raised in the New Church, the process and the impact are usually more gradual, but none the less life changing.

In whatever way people learn about the New Church and come to it, they can all look back and see the hand of the Lord's Divine providence in their journey.

The role of the Church is to co-operate with the Lord in His providence in making it possible (indeed easy) for people to find the New Church. After all, the Church as an organization does not exist for itself alone. True, its first obligation is to feed those who are committed members or are on the way to becoming such. But our use and obligation does not end there.

The Writings do teach that a person should be

News Notes

A card from **Owen and Margaret Heldon** tells us that they had a wonderful time with the Colchester Society in England, and at the time of writing they were on their way to Edinburgh, Scotland. We all wish they may continue to enjoy their travels.

On Sunday September 17th.we welcomed several out-of-town members of the Heldon family - Brian and Gaye, Ken and Jan, Kaye Macfarlane, and several of Dot Heldon's grandchildren and great-grandchildren. They came for the interment of the ashes of Syd. Heldon and Dot Heldon. The ceremony was held in the garden at the back of Baringa.

Sermon topics for October

- 1st The Universal Law
- 8th Armageddon
- 15th How to Love Your Neighbour, Even When You Do Not Like Him
- 22nd The Re-birth Of The Mind
- 29th The Lord's Part In Our Regeneration

October Birthdays

Happy Birthday to **Vera Buck** (8th), **Stuart Heldon** (10th), **Laurel Walsh** (10th), **Audrey Favell** (12th), **Murray Heldon** (13th), **Alyssa Wende** (14th), **Darren Kermond** (20th), **Cameron Walsh** (20th), **Sonia Hicks** (22nd), **Shirley Taylor** (27th), **Douglas Taylor** (27th).

THE PURPOSE OF KNOWING

“Until now spiritual influx has been deduced from the soul into the body, but not from God into the soul and thus into the body. This has been done, because no one knew anything about the spiritual world, and about the sun there, from which all spiritual things flow as from their fountain, and thus nothing about the influx of spiritual things into natural things.

Now, because it has been granted me [Swedenborg] to be in the spiritual world and the natural world at the same time, and thus to see each world and each sun, *I am obliged by my conscience* to manifest these things; for what is the use of knowing, unless what is known to one be also known to others?

Without this, what is knowing but collecting and storing up riches in a casket, and only looking at them occasionally and counting them over, without any thought of *use* from them?”[*emphasis added*]

Influx 18

Now, therefore, from what I have seen and heard I am permitted to describe these things, in the hope that thus, ignorance may be enlightened and unbelief dispelled. Such immediate revelation is now made because that is what is meant by the coming of the Lord.

Heaven and Hell 1.

neighbour to himself or herself first of all; but that is for the sake of being neighbour to others. That is the great end in view. If a person is not neighbour to himself, he becomes an *object* of charity, not a *doer* of charity

This applies equally to the Church as an organization. It is a greater Man, just as Heaven is the Greatest Man (HH 78-86). It is to be neighbour to itself in order to be neighbour to others outside its own ranks

This is not a call to embrace the Social Gospel and feed and clothe people in a physical sense. There are many organizations doing that, and we should support them as much as possible. But the New Church has been given something special that no other organization has to offer; that is, the Heavenly Doctrine. This is for the healing of the nations (AR 936). We cannot keep it to us and for us.

The great task is to learn the ways and means of finding those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness and giving them those healing teachings right fresh from heaven.

(In the Doctrinal Class on October 6, we will have a report about interviews with people who have joined the Church in adult life, showing what the New Church did for them)

RISE ABOVE IT

Ray and Star Silverman

If you want to enter into life - a joyful, peaceful, vibrant, and deeply spiritual life - the path is simple. Believe in God and keep the commandments. Sometimes however, this is easier said than done.

This book delves into each of the Ten Commandments and shows how we can keep them in our daily lives. Drawing from different sacred texts, including the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, this book shows how by living a life according to the commandments we can be happier here on earth and continuing into the next life.

Filled with candid and inspiring journal entries from seminar participants, and enriched by the teachings of the great religions, this book invites you to enter into a life of ever increasing love, wisdom, and service.

HOLY SUPPER ADDRESS

THE GIFTS OF MELCHIZEDEK, KING AND PRIEST

by the Rev. Douglas Taylor

“Then Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine; and he was priest to God Most High” (Genesis 14:18).

The gift of bread and wine and the blessing of Melchizedek, bestowed on Abram the Hebrew, represent in the spiritual sense all the good gifts of love and wisdom, all the good delights and true thoughts that sustain us, as spiritual food and drink for our minds or spirits, all the spiritual and eternal blessings that flow in from the Divine love wisdom - especially after victory in temptation. After we have examined ourselves candidly, and have seen our evils and shunned them as *sins*, then Melchizedek brings forth the bread of heaven, which is the goodness of love, and the heavenly wine of spiritual truth. Melchizedek,

knowledge, and continue learning forever. Animals live in this world only.

For some time, in the United States especially, there is strong disagreement between Evolutionists and those who argue that the very complexity of things on earth, including life itself, demands a belief in what they call Intelligent Design, and that this should be taught in schools as an alternative to the Theory of Evolution. Probably, because of separation of Church and State, they do not mention God. Also, they might fear being accused of believing in Creationism, - that the world was created in six days, a belief not in accord with scientific fact.

A couple of students in our NSW High Schools said that their Science Teacher told them that the Theory of Evolution is not necessarily the complete answer in the matter of the development of life on earth, and that they should keep open minds on the subject.

A similar stance is taken by a New Church lady who teaches at a High School in Florida, USA. She thinks that it is proper that a view embracing the affirmative principle should be taught in New Church schools, that is, the attitude that affirms what is taught in the Word about the Divine. She is also drawn to what is called “guided evolution.” But in her Science class she feels that she must teach Science, tell the students the facts as they are currently known, but also that the students should ask their parents for any philosophical or religious clarification.

Finally, it is good that discussion is going on. It would not be right for devotees of the Theory of Evolution to have it all their own way. Perhaps it would be wise, too, for those in the New Church well qualified to do so to get the New Church views more widely known.

spawns is spurious. Humans are thought to have developed in a steady progression from lower forms of life. Religion is considered by many scientists to be a collection of myths. The possibility of a Divine Creator is unacceptable because of a lack of scientific proof. Some people, and no doubt a few scientists among them, do claim to see the guiding hand of the Creator behind evolution.

It appears that there is no generally accepted definition of life among those working in the various scientific fields. In one Encyclopaedia, we read that scientists have given up trying to define life and are concerned only with its manifestations. An Australian Scientist, Professor Paul Davies, once said that he could imagine life beginning from nothing. Shakespeare knew that was nonsense. He made King Lear say to his daughter, Ophelia; "Nothing? Nothing comes from nothing."

Only in the New Church is it known that life is Love - Divine love flowing in from the Lord

Further, what can secular Scientists say about the purpose of life? Perhaps they would say that it is not their field of enquiry; their concern is only with scientific facts. Also it is assumed that humans are direct descendants of the animal world; that man is in fact, an animal, a highly developed one, certainly, but just an animal.

Scientists do not seem to have noted that humans are different from all animals in a fundamental way. Animals are born into all the knowledge they will need on earth; such as what their proper food is, how to build homes, what their enemies are, and so on. Human beings are born into no knowledge, but that imperfection is really their perfection, for God has given them the ability to amass

as a priest and king combined, represents the Divine love and wisdom united. This blesses Abram the Hebrew, that is, the people of the church who have something of a spiritual conscience and at least intend doing what is good.

Abram is called a Hebrew only in this series of verses, the reason being that here he represents specifically the rational level of a regenerating person's mind, where a spiritual conscience begins to operate.

This rational level (with its conscience) is what serves the higher or *internal mind*, and because it *serves*, it is compared to the Hebrews, who were servants. The fact that Abram the Hebrew is told of Lot's capture represents the enlightenment of the conscience, which makes it aware of the true state of the lower mind, namely, that it has been captivated by feelings of self-complacency and comfortable pride in what is its own.

This enlightenment is the result of self-examination: then follows the battle to restore order. If in this battle we look to the Lord, we will certainly be successful; we will win back even the sensory level of our mind - Lot - so that it, too, is brought back to the service of the Lord and is subject to the rational level with its spiritual quality. We will then see the difference between trusting in ourselves and our own righteousness, and trusting in the Lord.

Only after our mind has in this way been restored to order, does Melchizedek appear. In addition to being the King of Salem, Melchizedek is at the same time "Priest to God Most High." Kings represent the Divine truth or wisdom; priests the Divine goodness or love. So Melchizedek stands for the Lord, with His Divine love and wisdom combined. He flows in through heaven, bringing as much of His love and wisdom as we can receive. This

pacifies, gladdens, and blesses our whole mind.

The heavenly state of peace and relief following victory in temptation brings unity of mind, for this is the meaning of peace - co-operation rather than strife between our inner and outer mind. This peace or unity is meant by Melchizedek's being King of Salem, *Salem* being the Hebrew word for "peace" - Salem, from which Jeru-salem is named. That is why we "pray for the peace of Jerusalem" (Psalm 122:6).

As each one of us ponders these things and considers their implications and applications for himself or herself, we may well give thanks for the great use performed by the Sacrament of the Lord's Holy Supper, in which after the appropriate preparation, we partake worthily of the bread and wine. In providing this Sacrament, and a Church and priesthood to administer it, the Lord has provided a very powerful means of bringing us at regular intervals into the order of heaven, and consequently into the blessing and peace of heaven. We cannot have the blessing and peace unless we first have the *order* of heaven. The Lord therefore reminds us that "what is Divine goes forth (by means of the Holy Supper) according to the repentance before it" (Canons, Holy Spirit IV 9). Repentance, then, is the appropriate preparation for the Holy Supper, by which we approach it worthily. And what is repentance without self-examination?

In TCR 530 the question then is asked: "How ought man to repent? The answer is, in deed; that is, by examining himself, recognizing and acknowledging his sins, praying to the Lord, and starting a new life....Repentance is impossible without self-examination. But of what use is self-examination except that he may

recognize his sins? And why should he recognize his sins, except to acknowledge that they are in him? And of what use are these three actions, except that man may confess his sins before the Lord, pray for His help, and then start a new life, which is the end in view? This is real repentance."

In the regular administration of the Holy Supper we are provided with a most valuable opportunity to take stock of our lives and our loves. In realizing that we have been carried away captive, and in struggling against those evils as sins against the Lord, we are brought back into order, and feel the presence of the Lord, as He brings forth the bread of heaven, which is from the Body of His Divine goodness, and the spiritual wine, which is the ever flowing Blood of His Divine truth. In receiving these gifts in humility of heart, we receive all blessing and peace. "And Melchizedek, King of Salem, brought forth bread and wine; and he was priest to God Most High." *Amen.*

Lessons: Genesis 14: 14-20 John 14:25-27.

THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION

by Norman Heldon

If the Theory of Evolution is taught in schools as being a true account of the development of life in earth, a great disservice is done to students. It seems generally accepted that there was evolution in the development of natural things; and the scientific knowledge that has been amassed can be relied upon as accurate. Scientists take great pride in their methods of research and conclude that scientific facts have been tried, tested, and proved.

However, the philosophy of life that the Theory