

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 October 2009

The Holy Spirit

by Rev. Ayi, Segno-Kodjo

The prevailing idea about the Trinity across the Christian world is quite different from the New Church teachings. The faith of the 'Old' Church is that, God is in three persons – God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. This belief is what the Writings of the New Church describe as *falsity*. The Writings say that when a person has false ideas about the Lord, he can easily fall into evils of many kinds. So one of the consequent evils that befalls the modern Christian Church is that, many of the leaders are proclaiming to the masses that they have the power to give out the Holy Spirit, that they control it, and that they can use It to transform people's life.

For example; I tuned to one of our local radio stations and a preacherman sent out the following announcement: "*Jesus Christ had revealed a special*

message to me to give to everyone who wants to see the miraculous power of the Holy Ghost... Come to Calvary Prayer Camp this Tuesday... I will let the Holy Ghost solve all your problems, and at the end of the day you would NOT be the same again.” On that Tuesday the camp was filled with people of all walks from my tiny country. They had come with hope to receive the preacherman’s ‘promised’ Holy Ghost to solve their problems. The problems that bring people to such camps, mostly, are physical and materialistic based; physical ailment, promotion at work, success in business, child bearing etc... Like this preacherman, there are many leaders of the church who profess the power of the Holy Spirit by claiming they have the power to give it to anyone who wishes to receive It.

The question is, who or what is the Holy Spirit? Can it be controlled by a person? Who can receive the Holy Spirit? To answer these questions, let us explore what the New Church teaches about the Holy Spirit.

In the New Church we acknowledge that there is One God, the Saviour Jesus Christ in whom there is a Divine trinity – the originating Divinity, which is called the Father, the Divine Human, which is called the Son, the Divine Proceeding, which is called the Holy Spirit. In order words, Father, Son and Holy Spirit are three essentials of a single God (Lord 46). To put this in simple terms, the Father is the soul in the Son (Jesus Christ), *“The Father is in Me, and I in the Father”* (John 10:38); and the Holy Spirit is the energy and operation of the two essentials together; Jesus breathed on the disciples and said *“Receive ye the Holy Spirit”* (John 20:22).

The three essentials can also be illustrated by the three qualities, good, truth and the resulting uses, that are found in every regenerated person. If a person lives with good intentions, and he or she acts in truth this person is said to be created in the image and likeness of God, so, as a result, the uses that he or she performs have good influence on society. The good influence or the uses is the work of the Holy Spirit in that person’s life.

The oneness of God is a core doctrine of the New Church that every member believes in. Since doctrine is to be drawn from the letter of Word and confirmed thereby, let us see how the Old and New Testaments testify

tribute to how much Kerry was respected and loved at her workplace. We don’t have space to detail all Kerry’s achievements in her field but significantly the hospital has now established the **Kerry Lockhart Perinatal & Infant Mental Health Scholarship** to begin in 2010 and to be awarded every two years. Kerry had been instrumental in the establishment of the St Benedict Mother-Baby unit at the hospital.

Murray and Lori Heldon enjoyed a holiday in Singapore and Malaysia for a week during September.

Good news to hear that **John Hall** who we reported in the August issue was on crutches following a fall is now making good progress. He hopes to be back to normal in the next few weeks.

Don't forget to note **Daylight Saving** starts on the first weekend in October. Move clocks forward one hour on the night of the 3rd.

Visit of Rev Ayi Segno-Kodjo

There is a saying that no news is good news. Well in this case no news is definitely NOT good news. For a month now the process of applying for a visa for Rev Ayi Segno-Kodjo has been dragging on with the Department of Immigration moving at snail’s pace in processing the application. Sadly we still don’t know when Ayi will arrive or even if his application will be approved. When we do have news we will need to advise people separately from the newsletter. Accordingly dates for classes in October are up in the air and will be advised by phone/email later.

Birthdays

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

Pamphlets are available at the Hurstville New Church and can be mailed on request. Pamphlets and further information can also be obtained through **Carolyn Heldon** whose contact details are:

Email: alskastjarna@yahoo.com.au

Mobile: 0434 581 994

Subsidies can be arranged on application to Murray Heldon (02) 9579 5248 or via email murrayheldon@optusnet.com.au.

News Notes

The following news about **Phillip Walsh's** Oxfam trailwalk just missed the cut off for last month's news. Phillip and three others completed the event in 24 hours 51 minutes on 28th/29th August. The Oxfam Trailwalker is an endurance event where 600 teams of four complete a 100km bush trail through some of the most rugged terrain in NSW, from the Hawkesbury (Brooklyn) to the Harbour (Mosman). They raised over \$5,000 to fight poverty. He arrived home with one and a half hours to spare before going to Homebush to see his 8 yr old son, **Cameron** win a silver medal at a state gymnastics championship. Congratulations to you both.

Also to be congratulated is **James Kermond** who competed at the Combined Independent Schools Athletics championships on 22nd September. He came 3rd in his 200 metre race and has been selected to join the CIS squad which will compete in the NSW All Schools Track & Field Championships in November.

Those attending church on Sunday 20th September were amazed at the magnificent flower arrangements. We know the ladies do put a lot of effort into making the church look nice but these arrangements far exceeded anything we had ever seen before. It turns out they were just some of the flowers that had been placed into the home of **Kerry** and **Mike Lockhart** following Kerry's retirement from her work at St John Of God hospital. This was something special her workmates wanted to do for Kerry and is a

this truth. When the Saviour, Redeemer, or the Messiah was promised to come into the world after the fall of the human race, many passages in the Old Testament referred to Him as God or Jehovah or Father who is to come. We read from Isaiah:

"It shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him that He may deliver us; this is Jehovah; we have waited for Him; let us exult and be glad in His salvation" (25:9).

"The voice of one crying in the desert, Prepare ye the way of Jehovah; make level in the wilderness a highway for our God. For the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together. Behold, the Lord Jehovah cometh in strength, He shall feed His Flock like a shepherd" (40:3, 5, 10, 11).

We read in the Gospel of John:

Philip said to Jesus, Show us the Father, Jesus said to him, have I been with you so long and yet you have not known Me? He who has seen Me has seen the Father. The word that I speak is from the Father who dwells in Me. (14:8-11).

We can deduce from these two passages and many others that Jesus Christ is the same Jehovah that was spoken of. We read: *"these are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me"* (Luke 24: 44).

The Lord alone is holy, and all things that come from Him are holy (Rev 15: 4), and the holy things that proceed from Him are good and truth (Arcana Coelestia 9680). It should be well noted that the Holy Spirit is also known to be the power that emanates from God and influences the life of every person born on this earth; evil person as well as good person (Invitation 23). An evil person, because his state of life is contrary to good and truth, the Lord's power causes in that person displeasure, misery, torment and conflict both internal and external. But, if a person chooses to live a life of charity; if he or she loves the Lord in soul, mind and heart and the neighbour, that person makes himself a living stream into which the Lord flows and confers spiritual benefits; that means He reforms him, regenerates him, renews,

quickens, justifies and cleanses him from evils, and eventually saves him (see John 7: 38-39; True Christian Religion 150).

So let us pose the question again, who/what is the Holy Spirit? From what is said above, we conclude that the Holy Spirit is:

a) the third essential that emanates from the One God

“The Holy Spirit is the Divine Truth and also the Divine Energy and Operation proceeding from the one God in whom there is the Divine Trinity, that is, from the Lord God the Saviour” (True Christian Religion 139).

b) the Lord Himself

“All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth; go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo I am with you all the days even to the consummation of the age” (Matt. 28: 18 – 20).

c) the Divine power operating in a person’s regeneration

“The Divine Energy and Operation, which are meant by the Holy Spirit, are, in general, reformation and regeneration; and in accordance with these, renovation, vivification, sanctification and justification; and in accordance with these latter, purification from evils, forgiveness of sins, and finally salvation. These in their order are the energies made operative by the Lord in those who believe in Him, and adjust and dispose themselves for His reception and indwelling; and this is done by means of Divine truth – faith from charity.” (TCR 142)

d) It is our very life

“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostril the breath of life; and man became a living being” (Genesis 2: 7).

he was chosen by the Lord to be a spiritual fisherman, similar to the fisherman chosen by the Lord to be His apostles when He was on earth. The apostles were told that they would be fishers of people for Christ. Fish correspond to natural knowledges, wrote Swedenborg.

Swedenborg’s role was to go one step further – write down the inner significance of the Bible. He said that from his early years he had been a spiritual fisherman – one who investigates and teaches natural and spiritual truths in a rational way.

I may not have proved to your satisfaction, G.O. that Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) was a prophet, but I suggest you read some books by him the same way you would read the Bible. Study them and see if Swedenborg’s Writings speak to you. See for yourself if the things taught by Swedenborg are true – Divine truth – and thus that he was the prophet that gave them to you.

2010 Summer Camp at Elanora Heights



Although the minimum number of bookings has been secured to allow the camp to go ahead please note that there is still room to accept more bookings. But please don’t delay too long.

Next summer’s Annual Camp will be held at Elanora Heights, the location of two previous camps in 1990 and 2000. Elanora is situated near Narrabeen, one of Sydney’s northern beaches and the Conference Centre provides excellent accommodation in a beautiful bushland setting. Although close to suburban dwellings, it seems miles from hectic city life, just the place to explore the theme of **Relationships** which has been chosen as the focus for this camp.

The camp will be held from Monday 4th January to Sunday 10th January.

Her book *There Is An Answer* is in Baringa where we enjoy morning tea on Sunday after the service. Sample it and I'm sure you will agree that it is a fine addition to New Church literature. The book is a gift from Rev Doug and Christine Taylor on their recent visit.

Reviewed by Norman Heldon

As an example of an *answer* the following is reprinted from page 83.

Dear Candace,

I have heard that Emanuel Swedenborg is a prophet. Now where do we find him in scripture. Can you show or prove me from the Bible.

G.O
Kisii, Kenya

Dear G.O.
Your question has been asked by many. I checked with a Swedenborgian friend of mine, in Tucson, Arizona. Rev Frank Rose wrote:

Dear Candace,

The question about where in the Bible does it prophecy a new prophet is a difficult one. For the most part, the Bible does not talk about prophets who will come in the future, with the exception of sending Elijah (Malachi 3:1, 4:5).

We sometimes refer to John 16:12, 13. "I still have many things to say to you but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth." That is referring to the Lord, not Swedenborg. We see Swedenborg as a means whereby the Lord communicated His message.

In Revelation 21:5 we have the words: "Behold I make all things new." We see that as a kind of prophecy.

Swedenborg was asked this question when he was alive. He answered that

Conclusion

The Lord Jesus Christ is the one God of heaven and earth, He is Jehovah, the Lord from eternity, the Creator from eternity, and Redeemer in time. Thus He is at the same time the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit. So when we say 'God with us' it is the same thing as saying the Holy Spirit is working in our life. Jehovah God is Life itself and this is manifested in His creation: vegetation, animals, good as well as evil persons.

The Holy Spirit is not something a person should claim to possess or control. Hence, it is wrong for a person to say he can give the Holy Spirit to someone. When a person's actions, thoughts and intentions are influenced by the truths of the Word, that person receives 'more' of the Holy Spirit. In other words, a person who HEARS the Word of God and DOES it, makes him or herself a perfect being to receive the Holy Spirit in abundance. Such a person

- loves the Lord and the neighbour with all his heart, mind and soul,
- enjoys heavenly life on earth,
- can be in love truly conjugal,
- has opened the door for the Lord to come in and sup with him.

The Lord God Jesus Christ guide our ways as we choose to walk in His ways.

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This article for the Australian Newsletter is a part of a paper I presented to the African Regional Clergy meeting three years ago. As I wait for my visa, I pray for the Lord's goodwill in the life of each one of us. Looking forward to enjoying the warm hospitality that all my predecessors talk about.

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Mountains

by Norman Heldon

Memories flood into my mind of holidays in my young days, of setting out on a before breakfast run with my brothers in the Blue Mountains, of admiring the first sunlight on the cliffs, brightening them with red and gold.

Shakespeare as usual said it well.

“Full many a glorious morning have I seen,
Flatter the mountain tops with sovereign eye.”

All of the beautiful things of nature speak to us of heavenly goods and truths, that is they correspond to them.

In Psalm 121 we read:

“I lift up my eyes to the mountains,
From whence comes my help,
My help is from the Lord
Who made heaven and earth.”

Correspondence again. The eyes correspond to the understanding, so that is what we lift up to perceive that we need the Lord’s help to get us to heaven.

Quite a few correspondences have come down to us in common speech, which is why people say when they understand something, “Yes, I see.”

On a mountain walk we might go down into a valley and stop to admire a great waterfall plunging down from the ridge above. The word waterfall does not appear in the Concordance but the descending water would make us think of the Divine truth coming down to us from heaven.

There would be great rocks there and we could think of the passage in the Word where we are told that Peter represented the Divine truth from the Lord in the church and therefore he was called Peter and it is said “Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church.” (Matt 16:18) In *Secrets of*

Heaven we read that the rock from which the church would be built is the faith of charity. Elsewhere we are taught that the first thing of charity is to shun evils as sins against the Lord.

Well, we continue on our path and yes we know that we must follow that path for sometimes walkers leave the path and get lost. In Isaiah 2:3 we read “He will teach us of His ways and we will go in His paths.” Ways = truths and paths = the precepts of life.

So we could go on and on – like that lovely sight of the white mist rising from the valley on some mornings to sweep gracefully away over the ridges. And there are ferns, mosses, palms, flowers and birds, all with their special correspondence.

We can never cease to wonder at the marvellous order in creation, shown especially in the correspondence of natural things, animal, vegetable and mineral, to spiritual qualities of good and truth, in their uses and even in the way they are formed and that of course includes the human body and mind.

There is An Answer

(Book Review)

Candace Frazee is a lady who grew up in a New Church family in Canada. She attended the school at Bryn Athyn and now lives in Los Angeles. Since 1988 she has published a magazine called SILA (Swedenborg Information Los Angeles).

During the last twenty years or so she has received and replied to nearly four hundred letters. Her replies are clear, informative and much appreciated. Sometimes, to make sure her reply is accurate she seeks the help of a New Church minister, Rev Frank Rose for instance. Mostly though she seems quite confident to write answers that are quite in accord with the New Church teachings.