

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 September 2007

“What is a catalyst?”

by Rev George McCurdy

My asking you this question about the definition of a catalyst might require you to dust off some memory cells and think back to school days when you had a biology/chemistry course. Can you recall the definition of a catalyst? If you feel cautiously hesitant or uncertain about offering a comprehensive definition let's check out what Google can provide for us.

The word catalyst comes from a Greek word meaning to “untie” or “to pick up”. For a lab technician a catalyst is something that:

1. “...increases the rate of a chemical reaction
2. A catalyst does its job and yet is not “changed, consumed or diluted by the overall chemical reactions.”
3. A catalyst provides alternative pathways for reactions to occur.”

Summarizing the above statements in laymen terms - a catalyst is a wonderful and necessary process to untie and open up situations getting positive results. A catalyst stirs things up and yet remains undiluted and unchanged in the process. A catalyst avoids being consumed by the ministrations of its immediate job.

Is there a magnificent gem of a truth unfolding itself in the world of science giving us a glimpse of a “Job Description” of the Infinite and Eternal work the Lord does each and every moment and every least of moment?

The Lord is the creator, essence and only source of all truth. He is the greatest of all “Catalysts”. His Providence endeavours in multitudinous ways to untie and open us to see Divine possibilities we and angels can never exhaust. He wants to untie – free our souls so they can soar and visit the world of celestial, spiritual and natural truths and insights. He wants to teach us lasting truth. In the Word, He announced that we would come to know His truth and that His truth would set us free. So our Divine Catalyst stirs and increases the rate of our spiritual reactions. He wants to vastate (empty out) any resistive proprial roots of self-love. Care, patience, thorough ends will work a miracle of Divine rescue leading us safely along the way by His great design and plan of active salvation.

The Lord does His job but He is not changed, consumed or diluted with the work of salvation. In other words He doesn't play favourites. He is not one thing to one person and something else to others. The Lord is not capricious. The Lord is not a vacillator. He is the same today, tomorrow and forever. What He is - is resourceful. He will work with what we are. He brings about results beyond our expectations. How so? Let's look at the next sentence.

When we try to perceive and follow His ways we will falter, hesitate and face what “seem” to be dead ends. What does our great Catalyst do then? He provides alternative pathways so our regeneration can continue in an orderly process. When one door of opportunity closes He opens another one. In the book of Revelation, chapter three verse eight, we have the words: “**Behold, I have set before you an open door, and no man can shut it.**” The Lord

which Norm did one of his trademark entertainment acts to great amusement of everyone there including the restaurant staff.

Some of you will be aware that **Margaret Arnold** was rushed to hospital recently just before she and **Rev Ian Arnold** were due to leave for the United Kingdom. Margaret has undergone major surgery for cancer and tests have confirmed that she will have to undergo extensive chemotherapy treatment. Our thoughts are with Margaret and Ian at this difficult time.

Tom and Shirley Taylor each have been struggling with poor health. Tom has had a difficult time with digestion problems for a few weeks in Beechwood Nursing Home 14 Albert Street Revesby where he is now located. And Shirley is having continuing problems with her back. The way Tom and Shirley keep a positive outlook on things despite difficulties is an inspiration to us all. Family and friends continue to support them both.

Meanwhile **Graeme McLeay** has returned home to Moss Vale after receiving several weeks of chemotherapy following the removal of a cancerous tumour in his neck. Graeme is happy to be home and looks forward to seeing us all soon.

It was good to see **Gail and George Marcou** at church recently.

Looking forward there are no confirmed plans for a visiting minister until early next year when **Bishop Alfred Acton** and his wife **Henrietta** are scheduled to visit.

We know **Rev Alain Nicolier** and his wife **Jeanne** would like to return in the November to January period but this cannot be confirmed until negotiations with the central office in Bryn Athyn can be sorted out. At this stage this remains only a possibility.

Birthdays

Happy Birthday to: **Owen Heldon** (6th), **Carolyn Heldon** (8th), **Klaire Horner** (9th), **Sylvia Hicks** (13th), **Karen Lockhart** (13th), **Jeffrey Heldon** (15th), **Phillipa Horner** (15th), **Emily Hicks** (26th) and **Phillip Walsh** (29th)

News Notes

In less than a week our interns from Bryn Athyn, **Carling Wyncoll** and **Sarah Elder** will be arriving at Sydney airport on Saturday September 1st at 6.15 am! We will **welcome** them at refreshments after church on Sunday September 2nd.

At the time this newsletter goes to press we can report that **Rev George** and **Lois McCurdy** along with their good friend **Quentin Hyatt** (visiting from Bryn Athyn) have just returned from a short visit to Canberra where they were hosted by **Philip** and **Eleanor Richards**. During the visit George gave a class to a group of church people.



A big event during August was the family celebration of **Norman Heldon's 90th birthday** which took place at the Falls Retreat at Wentworth Falls in the Blue Mountains. Twenty-nine family members covering four generations (ages 1 to 90!) travelled from Sydney and Canberra.

It had been Norm's aim for some years to emulate the feat of his mother who walked the Federal Pass when she was 90 and the weekend was arranged with this purpose in mind. Beginning at Leura, Norm, surrounded by his family, descended via Fairy Bower into the Jamison Valley to the start of the Federal Pass. After hiking the trail he eschewed the easy option of a trip up the Scenic Railway at Katoomba and climbed the Furber Steps to the top instead, the equivalent of climbing the Giant Stairway! Maybe when he's 100 the operators will give him a free ride. In the evening a special dinner was celebrated at the Conservation Hut restaurant during

has an open door policy. We have unlimited access to Him and His Catalyst functions. No one is beyond finding the open door. Our objections and finite thinking doesn't have the knowledge or power to shut His door. Putting this in another form of statement: The Lord **IS** and all else **is not**. That which IS provides open doorways that, what is not, can never close.

Well I have just one more question about catalysts. Can we use the catalysis example of the Lord and emulate Him? With our family, friends and fellow workers can we think about ways to increase the rate of productive reactions with them? Is there a way that we can infuse spiritual things and yet not become changed, consumed and diluted by finite values? When controversy and stubbornness seem to block our way can we pause and look for spiritual ways that can provide alternatives for positive resolution?

In *Arcana Coelestia* 10648 we are taught that "Evil has an appetite for falsity, and eagerly seizes upon it as if it were truth." If such a propensity rears its head in our lives we will need the benefit of a spiritual catalyst to enter into the fray and change our lives for the good. What we don't need is compromise, dilution, and burn-out. We can face falsity and find avenues out of its confusing maze and finite words of obfuscation. The Lord speaks clearly and has the way wherein we are to walk.

Happy catalyst days are ahead friends and co-workers! What a refreshing restorative adventure the Lord has waiting for us! Let's walk with our King today. He will untie and pick things up for us as we go along our path of life.

Everyone Is An Important Stone In The Wall

I think I have the details of this story correct- there is a legend about the King of Sparta. He had a visitor come to the Spartan kingdom to see him and his great city. As they travelled about the city the visitor noted there were no walls surrounding the city. This puzzled him greatly so he asked the king "Where are your walls? What defends you from all of your enemies?" The king signalled his military captains to muster the troops so that they

might stand in an official review. When his army was all there the king pointed to them and said to his visitor “Here are our walls. **Every one** of them **is an important stone** in the wall of our defence.”



Lois and I have been with you for almost three months. We have enjoyed every minute of being with you. You have made us feel wanted, appreciated and your support has been outstanding. We have worshipped and studied together. You have been important “children” in the church service so that the object lessons could come to life.

We have had moments of laughter and good natured teasing. And because of these enjoyable times together we will carry with us great memories of you in our hearts and mind. But it is time to return to Bryn Athyn. We will keep in touch with you from time to time via the email system. When others come to serve you and return we will enthusiastically seek them out so we can ask them: “What news do you bring us from Sydney.” How you do as a society is news that will be worth hearing.

I can’t leave without passing on a word of encouragement – a thought that, I hope, will inspire all of you, as laymen, to use as you labour to keep the church program going until Alfred and Henrietta Acton arrive. For almost four months lay services will be your weekly job. Someone will be asked to find and read a sermon, arrange flowers, play music and other important jobs to keep your worship services going. Will it be easy? Will your enthusiasm always be up? What might inspire all of you to carry on the important and essential New Church message of hope and consolation?

May I share with you a passage from the Writings that might keep your spirit of affirmativeness going? Reflect with me on this passage from True

September Calendar Notes



An Evening With Helen Keller Theta Alpha Guild is pleased to host a dinner followed by the viewing of the new DVD *Shining Soul, Helen Keller’s Spiritual Life and Legacy* on Friday September 7th starting at **7 pm**. This truly inspirational 57 minute movie was produced by the Swedenborg Foundation and won several awards in 2006. Everyone is welcome. If you would like to attend the cost of the meal is \$5 and could you please **RSVP** by Sunday September 2nd to Margaret Heldon (9545 3823 or 0422 204 263).

The **Young People’s Group** will meet at Roseville at 6 pm on Friday September 14th.

The **Property Trust AGM** will be held after church on September 16th.

Sermon topics for September are as follows:

2nd	The Easy Path to Heaven	Rev Frederick Chapin
9th	Fear and Courage	Rev Michael Gladish
16th	Affecting Others	Rt Rev Brian Keith
23rd	Making Choices	Rev Kurt Asplundh
30th	Earthly Opportunities & Eternal Rewards	Rev Geoffrey Howard

Annual Dues and Donations to Theta Alpha Guild

Members and friends are invited to contribute to Theta Alpha Guild at this time of the year.

Please send your donations to:
Patricia Walsh (Treasurer)
157 Faraday Road
PADSTOW NSW 2211

New Church Family Camp 2008

In recent issues of the newsletter we gave details of the next Summer Family Camp to be held at Mangrove Mountain Retreat about 1½ hours drive north of Sydney. The camp begins on Monday 31st December 2007 and runs to Sunday 6th January 2008 – a little earlier than usual.

It is important that we get a good indication of numbers by 1st September so that firm arrangements can be made with the Conference Centre organisers. If you haven't booked **DO IT NOW**.

The booking officer for this camp is **Carolyn Heldon** and a deposit of \$50 for individuals or \$100 for a couple or family should be forwarded to Carolyn by that date. Please make cheques payable to Sydney Society of the New Church and mail to:

Carolyn Heldon
15 Browallia Cr,
Loftus NSW 2232

Additional general information can be obtained from Rev Julian Duckworth on (02) 9416 7032 and enquiries about subsidies should be made to Murray Heldon on (02) 9579 5248 or email murrayheldon@optushome.com.au.

Proposed Second Hand Goods Sale

At the recent **Theta Alpha Guild** meeting, a proposal to hold a **Second Hand Goods Sale** was suggested. It was thought that goods could start to be collected and stored at the Manse until the appropriate time to have the Sale. Many of you will remember the successful Sale we held in the Morse Room a number of years ago, when the interns Caitlin Ferguson and Michelle Frazer put so much time and effort into helping us. Opening the church property to the general public for a fund raising event is a great opportunity to make ourselves more known to the people in the area. Please keep this future project in mind when sorting “stuff” which may be valuable to someone else.

Christian Religion 243:

*“It will be necessary to prove then that it is not merely the Word, but the right understanding thereof which constitutes the Church, and **that the quality of the Church is determinable by the understanding of the Word among its members.**”*

Please pay attention to the last few words of that TCR quote. It is important that the understanding of the Word have quality among its members. How will the quality be kept high? Your attitude and affection for the Lord and His church must take priority in the weekly service. Hell will seek to infiltrate the city and divide the “troops”. Odious comparisons will try to frustrate and dampen your enthusiasm. Looking back at the good old days when you had this or did that will try to drain your optimism. From the beginning of worshipping the Lord, the people of the Church have been surreptitiously lured away from essential life giving doctrines. In each case Hell used specious reasoning to appeal to our natural (proprial) tendencies. “Every person for themselves” causes a breach in the unity of your important and unique purpose in the communities of Hurstville, Penshurst and Sydney.

I like that story of the King of Sparta. It has a powerful and relevant theme. The Lord loves each one of us. We are in His army. He uses our individual uniqueness for wonderful purposes. It is important to take up our uses, feeling that we are part of the Holy City New Jerusalem. Never become “wishy-washy” in this belief. Let's take it to heart and perfect it. Those who love Him and serve Him enthusiastically are like **a stone** that fortifies and protects the integrity of His Holy Word. A church is determinable by its understanding of the Word among its members.

Every one is an important stone in the wall of defence. No one is superfluous. No one is more important than another. Hand in hand we form a bond of unity to make that which is invisible become visible. The Lord draws each of us to Him and He moulds us into a formidable army to resist and overcome the disorders of Hell. Fight well and keep the Lord's sanctuary free and welcoming to all who come to it for reflection and sustenance.

Farewell for a time our friends. We are with you in spirit and love.

(Rev) George and Lois (McCurdy)

Thank you George and Lois.

The Hurstville Society has thoroughly enjoyed the visit of **Rev George** and **Lois McCurdy** who have been with us for over 2 months. Especially have we enjoyed the little gems that George (with practical help from Lois) have come up with each week. We do understand that to make things simple and easy to understand actually takes a lot of thought and effort and we do appreciate it. The time has passed so quickly and while it is sad that you are leaving us for a brief visit to New Zealand en route back to the USA we understand that family and work commitments beckon.

Pastoral visit to Perth, August 2 – 6, 2007

Lois and I had the privilege of flying out to Perth to meet and worship with our New Church friends. I say friends with a genuine sense of warmth. When we went there we knew no one. From the time we were picked up at the airport we were whisked from place to place for lunch, sight-seeing, a picnic, doctrinal classes, meeting with the young people, going to church where Trevor Moffat preached and then our own service Sunday evening. We also went to a place called the “Secret Garden” to meet with those who were reading a book addressing issues facing the 21st Century. It was an open –free for all- discussion addressing science and religion issues. Not many pauses or dead time in that meeting. The point here is that we just kept meeting new people all along the way.

Our Sunday evening service was warm and happy with wonderful singing that built a beautiful sphere of worship. We celebrated the Holy Supper and there were about thirty people present (in addition to about 6 young people). This service was followed by a dinner - and would you believe it – they had a birthday cake for me with candles, singing and a card signed by all who were present. I was touched and flattered by their remembrance of my seventy third birthday anniversary.

Val and Richard Hart were our gracious hosts. We were chauffeured royally and shown the best of Perth. John and Moira Frost were with us on many of these excursions and tea times. Mary and Ray Smuts saw to it that we met with the young people at their home so that they could share in a part our pastoral visit. The topic for that evening was entitled: “Passing on the Mantle.” As a result of that gathering the young people agreed to meet again the first Sunday of September for a barbecued dinner to work on a project of service as well as having a time to enjoy their fellowship with one another.

Our visit was quite memorable with a keen sense of being of use to our new friends and I want to thank all who helped make this trip possible.

George

From the Bishop’s Office

I am happy to announce the appointment of Alaine York as the new Secretary for the General Church. Alaine will retain her role as Executive Secretary for both Bishop Keith and myself. She will be handling some components of the previous job description, such as signing documents and overseeing the keeping of church records, and other components will be delegated elsewhere. I have utmost confidence in Alaine’s ability to serve in this role, and feel it is appropriate and useful to have the role of Executive Secretary and General Church Secretary combined in this way.

In the past, the office of Secretary was an appointment by the Executive Bishop, with an affirmation at a General Church Assembly. Our records show that, as voted upon at the General Assembly in 2000, the affirmation at the Assembly is no longer needed, leaving this as an appointment by the Bishop.

Sincerely,

Thomas L. Kline

Executive Bishop