

# *SOUL FOOD*



*It shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him that He may save us: THIS IS JEHOVAH we have waited for Him, we will rejoice and be glad in His salvation (Isa. 25:9).*

## **Christmas Gifts**

**Excerpt from a sermon by Rev L Soneson.(Read AC 9938:2)**

*The Word of the Lord, though, is a perfect image of the true Human, the Divine man. and so it is ours to behold in full clarity!*

*So let us look within this gift from heaven. The account of the Lord's Birth is only an attractive wrapping. It appeals to our first affections, our childish loves. The sense of the letter, the stories in Scripture, is only a covering for the treasures that are within.*

*The truths within the letter give a full and glorious picture of the Giver.*

*Indeed the spiritual sense as truth is also but a covering of a more precious concealed offering—the Divine Love now in Human form—now perceptible to all of us!*

*During this the climax of the year, we may be dazzled by packages we receive---their trimmings or their material value. To see only the object as to price and size is to see nothing. It is when we go beyond, to feel the love such gifts represent, that we know what is really offered. If a present shows intelligence in furthering our uses, we perceive more clearly the love from which it was given.*

*And the same is true when reflecting on the perfect gift offered to us by our Saviour. He has shown us the truth that guides us to eternal happiness. That truth lies within the letter of His Word.*

*Even that truth is nothing unless applied—used—put into practice. Then only is the end—the reason for the Word Offered—finally received.*

***Divine Love seeking a resting place for conjunction Is placed in our hearts for us to behold, feel , enjoy and to keep as if our own!***

*That is the promise of Christmas! When the overwhelming gift of Divine Love is allowed to take form in our lives, then the Lord is born again and again and again---just as He took on a human form on the first Christmas many centuries ago. His love spreads into our will and understanding, taking on flesh in the form of uses we perform for others. That is how heaven expands. And that is how the perfect gift is finally received.*

**Christmas Daily Readings** (prepared by the Glenview New Church Pastoral Staff Peter Buss, Mark Pendleton, et al).

*The New Church is happy to this year again offer a daily reading program for Christmas. As a subscriber to previous Holiday Readings, you are automatically subscribed to the Christmas readings. If you prefer not to receive them, you may unsubscribe using the link at the bottom of this email. If you would like to receive the new Christmas readings, you don't have to do a thing. You'll begin receiving them starting December 1, 2010.*

*This year's Christmas readings are gathered around a theme of **"Walking with the Lord"**. This theme is expressed in the book of Micah, where we read: **"He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?"** (Micah 6:8); also in the book of Isaiah: **"Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths."** (Isaiah 2:3)*

*One of the things we see throughout the Christmas story is movement and forward progression--either figuratively or in actual fact. Zacharias and Elizabeth walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless; Mary went to see Elizabeth; Joseph and Mary went to be registered; the shepherds travelled to Bethlehem; and the wise men followed a star to worship the Saviour.*

*All of these movements in the Christmas story (and more besides) picture our own walk with the Lord, as He gently leads us from one state of mind to the next, and from one stage in life to the next. Walking symbolically means living, and in this context it means "living from the Lord" (Apocalypse Explained 768); or more specifically, it means "acknowledging, obeying, acting, and living from Him and with Him" (Apocalypse Explained 864:1). In other words, the Lord sets out a "path of truth" before us, and He invites us to walk that path (Arcana Coelestia 519:2). In one sense, we could say that the very reason He came on earth was to show us this pathway and to invite us--and help us--to walk it with Him.*

*Where have you come from spiritually on this walk? In what way(s) has the Lord been present with you along the way? What states of heart and mind, and what stages of life has He led you through, to get you where you are today? And where does the Lord want to lead you from here? These are questions that are invited by the different movements in the Christmas story.*

*Each daily email in this program features a part of the Christmas story, followed by readings from the Writings given for the New Church. Each doctrinal piece from these Writings touches on some aspect of our walk with the Lord. At the end of each reading a reflection is offered, along with a few questions or a simple task. There are 25 readings--one for each day of December up through Christmas day--plus one additional reading for the 26th, as a way of looking forward into the new year.*

*We hope you will enjoy these Christmas readings. May they support you on your walk with the Lord, and may you gain from them a sense of comfort, strength, and hope this Christmas season.*

*Again this year, the readings have been If you'd like to share these readings with your friends, they can also subscribe by going to [www.newchurch.org/materials/programs/holiday-readings](http://www.newchurch.org/materials/programs/holiday-readings)*

*Happy Thanksgiving, and Merry Christmas!*

## NEWS

### **Appointment of a Minister in Australia**

*"Dear Members and Friends in Hurstville,*

*I am happy to announce that after taking counsel with your committee, I am appointing Candidate Todd Beiswenger as your next pastor. Todd and his wife Jenn are excited about this and are looking forward to joining you. Todd is currently completing his theological education, and will be moving there as soon as possible after July 1, 2011. (Graduation and ordination are anticipated on the weekend of May 22. All pastoral moves are set for July 1, although sometimes there are delays due to visa and other issues, such as the General Assembly at the end of June.) He has already started working on obtaining the appropriate visa.*

*We have tremendous confidence in Todd, who had a career in business marketing before turning towards the ministry. He has shown himself to be a bright student of the doctrines and a very personable young man. And we are certain you will enjoy Jenn and their pre-schooler Zach.*

*We congratulate you and the Beiswengers on this most significant step. May the Lord add His blessing to this, for the sake of the future of the New Church in Australia.*

*Sincerely,*

*Bishop Brian W. Keith"*

### **Local NEWS**

*Congratulations to **Lisa and Shaun'** on their engagement ! We welcome you Shaun and wish you both the very best ☺*

***Richard** spent the weekend in Hurstville and has brought back a book written by Norman Heldon.*

***John Dwyer** is back from South Africa where he spent 3 weeks with his parents. His mother is very ill and we send our sympathy to the family.*

***Danielle** was dux of her school! Our congratulations to her and her family. We enjoyed seeing **Tracy** who will be returning to live*

*in Perth in January and has signed up for a graphics art course already.*

**Erin** *has completed her schooling and achieving four 'A's and a 'B'. She will be studying Biology next year at a University .but will be going to Vietnam for Christmas.*

**John** *flies out to join Moira in South Africa on the 11<sup>th</sup> December. We know that you will enjoy catching up with all your family and friends and fishing for trout.*

## **December Calendar 2010**

<i>Sun 5th De</i>	<b>Worship</b> 5pm <i>followed by a shared meal</i>	<i>10 Broome Street South Perth (off Douglas St</i>
<i>Sun 12th</i>	<b>Worship</b> 10.30am <i>Practice for Tableaux followed by a shared meal</i>	<i>10 Broome Street South Perth (off Douglas St.)</i>
<i>Sun 19th<sup>st</sup></i>	<b>Worship</b> 3pm <b>TABLEAUX</b> <i>followed by a shared meal</i>	<i>10 Broome street South Perth (off Douglas St.)</i>
<i>Friday 24th Dec. at at.</i>	<i>. Please bring a chair your voices and your guitars.</i>	<i>7.30pm Carol sing at Val's Tea and coffee afterwards</i>
<i>Sun 26th</i>	<b>Worship</b> 3pm <i>followed by a shared meal</i>	<i>Smuts or Phans home</i>
<i>All Sundays in January</i>	<b>Worship</b> 3pm <i>followed by a shared meal</i>	<i>Smuts or Phans home</i>

*Worship Services are held weekly at  
10 Broome Street, South Perth (off Douglas Street)  
the first Sunday's services at 5pm  
the rest at 10.30am*



***General Church of the New Jerusalem in Perth***

*10 Broome St. South Perth (off Douglas St)*

[www.newchurch.org](http://www.newchurch.org)

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