

CALENDARS

JUNE

Sun 1st

1st SUNDAY FAMILY SERVICE at 10.30 a.m.
Children's Classes and a light lunch together afterwards.
5th in series, Seven Practices of Peace

Sun 8th

2nd Sunday Worship Circle, 10.30 a. m.

Fri 13th

Mt Tamborine Discussion meeting, 2.30 p m at
Brian & Gaye's home, Sanctuary Cove.

Sun 15th

“Day out in the Park”, at Daisy Hill
Conservation Park, 10 a.m. to 3 p m
No Service at Rosalie

Sun 22nd

No Service

Sun 29th

**Graduation & Ordination Service and farewell
to Glenn & Mary. 10.30 a.m. start.** Lunch, etc

JULY

Sun 6th

No Service

Fri 11th

Sun 13th

Start of Australian New Church College Seminar
Adult Service/closure of ANCC Seminar, 10.30
a.m

Thurs 17th

Mt Tamborine Discussion meeting at John &
Lenore's, 2.30 p m

Sun 20th

No Service

Wed 23rd

Australian New Church College tutorial

Sun 27th

No Service

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Breaking Bread

Newsletter – The New Jerusalem Church
Brisbane and south-east Queensland

June and July 2014

Editorial

An end and a new beginning

This is exactly what is taking place for our Church over the period this Newsletter covers – *an end and a new beginning*.

Glenn having first given a sermon here in December 2011 and he and Mary returning to settle with us for a time in April 2012, they leave for home and family and to retirement living in rural Washington State, near the Canadian border, on July 15th. We are sad to contemplate the end of their stay here, but happy for them and hugely grateful for what they have done and the influence they have been. We have admired their love of life, their honesty about themselves, their innovativeness, their adventurous spirit and their enthusiasm and gusto entering into – and taking up – new experiences.

But now for a new beginning.

On Sunday, June 29th Darren Brunne is to be ordained by Rev Julian Duckworth, President of The New Church in Australia, in what is sure to be a highlight Service in our Church. And, just two days later, Darren officially becomes the new Pastor here. Darren, already an experienced leader in another Church, found the Writings some six years ago and with Renee they have grown in their understanding, acceptance and love of them. For upwards of four years now Darren has been studying with The Australian New Church College, his

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Studies now at the point of completion. And David Millar, Director of Studies for the ANCC will be here on June 29th officiating at a brief ceremony to mark Darren's graduation.

Though a digression, we do well, to pause for a moment over this word “**ordination**” and what it means. When you hear it what comes to mind? To do with religion and spirituality? Yes, for sure. A person set apart? Again, Yes, but be a little bit careful about what you mean by being ‘set apart’. A sacred office? Yes, but keep your focus on the word ‘office’, not on the person.

The word ‘ordination’ comes of a Latin word meaning “a putting (of things) into order”. We might think of ordination then as an ordering of things within a Church community and the acceptance of the leadership of a person having an acknowledged authority when it comes to spiritual matters.

But what of it in relation to the actual person?

Well, and as the result of studies and preparation, it marks the bringing of things into order *within the person* such as enables the Lord, through His activity as the Holy Spirit, to enlighten, inspire, and to guide that person in the carrying out of ministerial – or priestly – duties and responsibilities. The Writings specifically teach that the laying on of hands, at the moment of ordination, is a representation of the transfer – and hence of the activity – of the Holy Spirit to the person and for these specific purposes. (See the little book, ‘Canons of the New Church, under ‘Holy Spirit’ and note, “*but it is received according to the faith of the recipient*”).).

An end and a new beginning! It's exciting and of course it means change, just as in our personal experience of ends and new beginnings. Life is like that, collectively and individually. It has been said that the one constant in life is change. Life unfolds for us all with new challenges and experiences. Some we welcome, some we resist and lament. Some we can, I believe, say the Lord leads and guides us into and some He reluctantly and with sadness permits, staying with us all the while to support us and see us through.

With respect to our regeneration we need, *and benefit from*, change, new experiences and different challenges arising. Jeremiah the prophet once bemoaned people who had come to be “settled on their lees”, carrying a suggestion of staleness. (Chapter 48:11). New experiences and new situations call on us to exercise our freewill anew. And it is in the exercise of our freewill – hopefully for good and for the ways of the Lord – that we grow and become spiritually robust.

“Every least moment of our lives”, we read, “triggers a chain of consequences extending to eternity.” (“Heavenly Secrets”, 3854) That's amazing. Ends and new beginnings are not only constant but are happening every moment.

We are about to celebrate a big one in the life of our Church here in Brisbane and south-east Queensland. May all that follows be receptive of life and blessing from the Lord flowing into it.

The Lord bless and keep you, always,

Jan

SUNDAY, 29 JUNE 2014

**Darren Brunne's Graduation, Ordination and Welcome to the
Brisbane Society of the New Church.**

New Church Day Celebration

**Thanks and Farewell to Rev Glenn and Mary Alden
over lunch**

Service to start at 10.30 a.m.

Farewell Messages from Glenn and Mary

Dear Friends,

Thank you all for inviting me to be with you and to spend the last two plus years serving you as your Associate pastor. We are excited to be going back home to our family and our own lives and to discovering what the Lord has in store for us, but leaving is much harder than I had imagined. I tell myself, and you, that we will come back, perhaps to a church camp, perhaps to fill in or give a break in this or other NCIA congregations, perhaps just for a visit and holiday. If the Lord is willing, perhaps that will happen. And perhaps some of you will come and visit us. You are always welcome. We have room for visitors. Our e-mail address will remain the same: glenn@sunrisechapel.org

You have been so generous, providing for the many expenses involved with our being here and staying here. But much more than that you have opened your homes and your hearts and lives to us in so many ways. It has been an honor to walk along side you as you went through the loss of Margaret Arnold, and more recently Les Sheppard. I have learned from you as we have worked through the Spiritual Growth programs of Path of Integrity, and more recently the Seven Practices of Peace. I have felt blessed in getting to know you as individuals, feeling a part of your families, enjoying your children and grandchildren. I am thankful for worshiping together, and learning a whole new set of sacred music, while sharing a common love and study of the Writings of Swedenborg. Thank you for making it possible for us to explore Australia.

Love, Glenn Alden



and from Mary...

It was customary in the high school I attended to leave a record of your likes and dislikes listed under your picture in your senior yearbook. My seventeen year old self listed horses, Cole kids, and Australia as my first three likes. No surprise about horses although it was not until my 40th year that I got a chance to own my first horse. The Cole kids were nine siblings of my dear childhood friend Jessie who had died suddenly a year earlier. I spent a summer at their country home as a mother's helper just prior to my senior year. Living with and loving her large, noisy, unique family of younger brothers and sisters (and all their horses) was a way for me of keeping her memory alive. Jessie was my first serious loss in life. Looking back I am curious about what prompted me to add Australia to the list, right under those first two. The Lord must have had a hand in it somewhere. But although it took until my 40th year that I really got to experience horses, I had to wait until my 63rd year to finally experience Australia. And by then it was quite a surprise to me that I got here at all, 46 years after the longing was first recorded.

I like to say that The Lord works in mysterious ways. It has been quite an unexpected gift to live here for most of the past three years, over two of them here in Brisbane. It has been a gift to be part of the New Church in Australia and of the Brisbane Society. I have appreciated living here, getting to know you and your children and grandchildren, and being a part of your lives. I also love the birds, the animals, the trees and flowers, the beaches, the hinterlands, the romance of outback with its sheep and cattle stations, the Brisbane River and its bike paths, and being part of the Brisbane Chorale. My seventeen year old self had none of these details in mind, but mostly just knew about the romance of the outback with its sheep stations and was drawn here. Perhaps it was this romance that is at the heart of my love for wool and yarn and knitting that I have newly discovered. I will take with me so many wonderful things that will live with me forever.

I used to ask Glenn, "Where do you think we will end up?" I think I know now that you never "end up". The story is never over and The Lord always has something more in mind. As Glenn wrote, it is very hard to say good bye. I am grateful to all of you and to Australia.

JANUARY 2015 CAMP

Monday December 29th to Sunday January 4th

This is going to be at Philip Island Adventure Resort in Victoria where we have had several Camps before. The poster is on display in the Hall and the leaflets with booking forms have now arrived.

Two things: the costs have been worked out and are less than the last camp. They are set out on the back of the leaflet and subsidies can be applied for.

Secondly, and importantly – while bookings can still be made up to say November 30th organisers need firm commitment by July 15th 2014 to enable them to assess numbers likely to attend to avoid significant financial risk.

So, please book as early as you can.

<p>Our thoughts and prayers are with Mrs Lyn Williams recovering from major surgery carried out on Monday, May 26th, with family supporting her.</p>

Rev Les Sheppard

14 November 1941 to 6 May 2014

Recollections of Les
Delivered at his Memorial Service
Sunday, May 18th
By Ken Barns

For a long time Les was the New Church for me, and the New Church was Les. I am sure that is true for many of us. He was the face of the flyers that I stuffed into the Westside News and delivered; he was the warm handshake at Church for a tentative new seeker; he was the one to go to to encourage me to study for the Ministry and to consider more closely how the Lord was calling me through my ruling loves, and how I should respond to that.

So when I was asked by Bev to share with you some of my recollections of Les I thought I would share some of those ‘oh-so-Les’ messages from the pulpit which we all experienced and enjoyed.

As I mentioned, for many of us Les was our first introduction to the New Church. Since then we’ve grown in the church, spoken to others, learned from other ministers and supported each other. So our understanding of the New Church and what it means to us has grown since those first moments, those first meetings we had with the ebullient bearded man. And yet when I think back there are still some features of Les’s approach to religion that are quite unique to him rather than to the New Church more generally.

So I would like to raise up once more, and to reflect on, some of those pearls, those pillars of Les-ology. I would say “Stop me if you’ve heard them before”, but I know you’ve heard them before, numerous times from this very pulpit, and I know you would not mind hearing them again.

Firstly, “*The Lord didn’t make the diamonds for the bad guys*”.

Les embraced being a salesman, and loved motivational writers. I tell friends “he sells religion like he’s selling a used car” in the nicest possible way. But like any salesman, Les had an unbounded energy, and he would see the good in any situation. And he knew the world was full of diamonds and we should embrace and enjoy them for what they are and not feel guilty for it. How could a loving God order things otherwise?

Secondly, how many times did we hear Les say, “*The New Church made me a better Lutheran.*”?

He reassured Julie’s mother, when Julie started coming to Church with me that, “Don’t worry, Julie will be a better Catholic for coming back to Church.” The passing years have shown that Julie still enjoys a good Catholic Mass, but has a tendency to get to the end of the Priest’s message and say, “Ooh, you’re almost there, just one more point, one more point!”

Thirdly, the image that Les loved to portray of the origin of the New Church, was of the Lord summoning His twelve disciples and sending them out into the spiritual world to preach the Gospel anew. Les was always explicit in saying that it was the twelve disciples *who were with the Lord in the world*, which means that Jesus was there.

There are parts of us that let us down, that we are hurt by, that we are disgusted by, and that we are ashamed of. But Les wanted to reassure us that even our Judas, the part of us that is fallible and weak, is part of what the Lord loves, is part of us that He works with and is part of us that can be redeemed and serve its role in the Lord’s plan for our life.

I’ve given only three examples, and I am sure you heard them just now with nods and smiles of recognition; but to me they sum up my earliest experiences of the New Church, my earliest experiences of Les.

He gave us all a vision of this material world, not as the Devil’s playground, or as the valley of the shadow of death, but instead this world as a wonderful

diamond mine; it’s a place where we can experience wonderful things and we should do just that! Not all the time, and in moderation, but when the opportunity comes along we should embrace all the beauty and joy this world has to offer, and enjoy it for what it is and understand that the Lord put it here for our benefit. We should enjoy the diamonds the Lord puts in front of us.

His vision was one that all our experiences that go before us; all our years in the Lutheran Church, or the Catholic Church, or whatever else we may have done, are things that live in us today. Our past, our mistakes, our learning experiences, aren’t things to be shunned and regretted; they aren’t things that we should shrug at and go, “I wouldn’t do it again but I’ve learned from it, I’ve become stronger from it.” Instead, they are things that, as we grow in the Lord, become more refined and more perfect. All those youthful dreams and goals and motivations don’t get cast away. They change, they grow, and they become more powerful. Les became a better Lutheran than he could ever have imagined. My own dreams of wanting to reach out and through politics or religion change the world for the better have not disappeared. But as I have grown in the New Church I’ve been able to reach out and help the patients sitting in front of me one at a time. For that, I have Les to thank.

And lastly, Les-ology tells us that even the weakest, the lowest, the most treacherous parts of us are parts that we have to recognise, to forgive, to reconcile with, and to heal.

The Lord didn’t make the diamonds for the bad guys. The New Church has made us not new but better people; better versions of the people we already were. And I am so incredibly, incredibly, reassured that even the most treacherous, Judas-like, parts of me, are part of the Lord’s plan and will be rehabilitated and made perfect with the Lord in heaven.

When I started I said I wanted to share a few recollections of Les in

the pulpit and the messages he was so keen to share with us all. And yes, that certainly was my earliest memories of Les. But I'd like to close sharing one particular experience I had that made me realise that Les was more than just catchy words and passion; he was also a man with deep wisdom and deep compassion.

One night, before we had kids, Julie and I were having Les and Bev around for dinner and as Julie was preparing dinner she got a phone call from her Mum, who was quite distraught. Julie's father had packed up and left home, leaving a note saying, "I don't know when I'll be back, and if I'll be back; I just can't do this anymore." Julie and her sisters were ropeable, angry. "How dare he do this! How dare he betray us! How dare he betray his wife and our mother!"

And so, when Les and Bev arrived, they copped the full story and Julie's anger that this had happened. And all this poured out of Julie until she was exhausted, Les and Bev just sitting there in our lounge chairs. A minute passed. Then Les said, "I wonder where he is now? He must feel awful." And in that moment all the anger at a person who had wronged others was transformed into a sensitivity towards a person who was lost and hurting, as we ourselves can also be lost and hurting. To this day, I cannot experience anger and frustration towards someone else without hearing Les tell me, "I wonder where this person is now; I wonder how they are feeling."

The Lord gave Les the power of transformation, the ability to transform a guilty pleasure into a diamond, to transfer the Christmas story into a tragedy and Good Friday into a celebration, to transform an enemy into a neighbour, and to transform the lowest, meanest part of us into something sublime.

And so we gather today to remember you, Les, and to pray that when next we meet you yourself will also be transformed, as you yourself transformed me: into the fullness of your vigour and youth and usefulness, and more keenly alive than I have yet known you. Until that day, dear friend, I will miss you.

Ken Barns



Les & Bev

Birthdays

To all our friends celebrating birthdays in the next two months we wish you birthday greetings and blessings.



In June

Glenn Alden and Shane Heldon (16th); Ainsley Heldon (20th); Tori Barns (23rd); Georgie Duff (24th); Benedict Barns (28th).

In July

Mrs Margaret Chambers (2nd); Jaydon Heldon (4th); Angus Glenn (19th); Amy MacFarlane (20th); Saxon Heldon (25th); Greg Lee (30th).

CHURCH CONTACT DETAILS

The Church is at 21 Agars Street, Rosalie, just up from Baroona Road. Services on Sunday at 10.30 a.m., but please check Calendar (p.12)

For activities on the Gold Coast and for details of Mt. Tamborine meetings contact Mrs Gaye Heldon, Secretary, on 5577 8772.

Associate Pastor: Rev. Glenn Alden, phone 3369 0054 or 0468 756 006. Mary's mobile number is 0478 894 678

