

Directory

Society Minister	Rev. Julian Duckworth
Officers	
Secretary	Mr. Graham Hall
Treasurer	Mr. Graham St. Quintin
Church Officer	Mrs. Ruth Duckworth

Sunday School classes are held at the same time as the 10 am service each Sunday. Children are in church to begin with.

After every service we have tea and coffee in the hall and the opportunity to meet socially, sometimes more formally.

A monthly Young Peoples' evening is held on the 2nd Friday for discussion and social activities. Dates may vary at times.

The Friendship Group meets on the first Wednesday of February, April, June, August, October and December. The Secretary is Mrs. Glen Hart.

The weekly Angel Service is held at 5 p.m. each Saturday and is an unstructured service of readings, discussion, meditation, music and healing.

Different classes on New Church teachings are held midweek. These are generally fortnightly but vary. Consult the green accompanying calendar inside the Newsletter.

The Church Reception Room and Office is situated at the front of the manse and has a considerable range of books, cassettes and literature about the New Church and its teachings. Anybody is welcome to come in and look around.

The Swedenborg Lending Library and Enquiry Centre is located at 1 Avon Road, North Ryde, NSW 2113 Phone (02)9888 1066 (fax 1166)

The Sydney Society has an extensive Library and Book Distribution centre operating under the above name. The Director is Mr. Michael Chester.

The Swedenborg Centre opening hours are:
Tuesday to Thursday 9.30 am to 4.30 pm

The Swedenborg Centre is contactable on the above phone and fax numbers or by e-mail: info@swedenborg.com.au

Internet address: www.swedenborg.com.au

Sydney Society Newsletter

Issued by the Sydney Society of the New Church
Established in 1875

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Facebook: Sydney Society of the New Church - Roseville

June 2014

The Faith of the New Church is summarized as follows:

There is one God in whom is the Divine Trinity. He is the Lord God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Saving faith is to believe in Him. Evil actions are not to be done because they are from hell and of hell. Good actions are to be done because they are from God and of God. These are to be done by a person as though they are done by himself, yet believing that they are from the Lord working in him and through him.



“The words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one will open.”

Revelation 3.7

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Sunday June 29th: Darren Brunne’s ordination in Brisbane
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The Minister of the Sydney Society is Rev. Julian Duckworth and he can be contacted at any time either by telephone (02) 9416 7026/7032 or by a personal visit to 4 Shirley Road, Roseville, for any pastoral help or guidance. Let the Minister know in good time about pastoral concerns with people - including yourself too - so that he can give help where and when it is needed.

FROM THE MINISTER

THERE IS A HAPPY LAND.....

I came across a list of the happiest countries in the world. This is done every year by asking 1,000 people in every single country various questions about their life and lifestyle, their optimism, their security and their sense of being happy. Australia came 18th, Syria, not surprisingly, came last, but who came first? It was Paraguay! Where's Paraguay? In South America. But isn't South America a risky kind of place? Well, I don't know, but 9 of the top 10 countries were also in South America! Paraguay's been top for the last three years!

Before you file your emigration papers, I'll tell you that Paraguay is not a rich affluent westernised country but a fairly poor one with basic farming and few conveniences if any. That started me thinking. There's a strange equation at work here, perhaps. Basic living = greater contentment. And let's do the opposite of this: Affluent living = less contentment.

I wouldn't wish poverty or a hard life on anyone, but I can see that if you have the simple basics of life, reasonable food and shelter, family around you, life's simple pleasures, you could in fact be extremely happy. And if you have so much that you feel you can't live without something else too, yes, you could be pretty miserable.

By now you may well be remembering Jesus' words that 'it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.' We sometimes explain the 'rich person' as

someone who is rich in their own self-estimation or pride, but maybe it's valid to see it in worldly things and the way they can distract us from dealing with our own spiritual needs and feelings as a human being.

Happiness. Maybe it isn't the right word for the best feelings in a human being. It sounds a bit frothy and still looking for it. I'd suggest wellbeing as a much better word, but I'd be very tempted to just use 'real'. There is something in 'real' which reminds of Paraguay where, I believe, you farm your acre, love your family, and breathe in the mountain air.

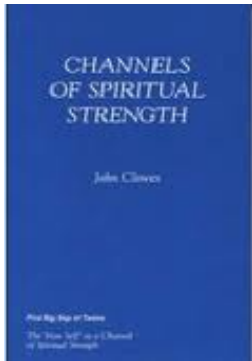
I keep a fairly close watch on people, and I am convinced that the spiritual things in life are on the upsurge because without them we just ache. I've recently come to appreciate that all the different arts – there are just so many – are important in reducing the ache. Through art you express yourself, you get in touch with depth and meaning, and you catch the spirit of life. It's not supermarket or corporation, it's personal, and a lot of artists live on the poorer edge of life but they don't feel poor but rich. And ... happy! In a Paraguayan way.

If you have a mind to, it is quite a good thing to read one particular chapter of Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell, on 'The Rich and Poor in Heaven' (paras 357-365). It covers a lot of possible questions and uncertainties, but basically both rich people and poor people can be in heaven but not because of their wealth or poverty but because of their faith and their life. Someone who is in heaven is spiritually rich by knowing that heaven means to live in God and in service to others, and at the same time is spiritually poor because they know how fully they need and depend on the Lord to help them. And both of those bring them joy and make them truly happy.

I think a genuine happiness is there when you ask someone if they are happy and they say, "I suppose I am, yes." That's evidence that they aren't seeking happiness but finding it, finding that it comes when they've carried things out well, been useful in some way, and minimised their grumbles. It's obviously the way to be.

Julian

REV LESLIE SHEPPARD



(I don't have Les' picture, but this is one book of several that he re-published at his own expense for the church.)

Les passed on, on May 6th, after a long struggle with Parkinson's disease. The Brisbane New Church had a celebration of Les on May 18th and Les wanted there to be chips and lollies and fun. As President, I sent the following message on behalf of the national church which was read out by Christine Kendrick, one of the NCIA Board –

You are celebrating Les today with a service and a party. That sounds wonderful and I know it was what Les specially wanted, for the children but for everyone. I wish I could have been with you but I can't so I'm sending some words to be said. Les was the President of the national church from 1995 to 2001 and I followed him in that role and he ordained me as President. I am writing on behalf of the New Church in Australia, many people who were helped by Les, inspired by him, who enjoyed him at quite a few church camps and who saw him as a minister and a personal friend.

There is one very important thing I must mention about Les. At a conference in 1997, he was President and put forward a proposal that the church allocate \$150,000 for the work of the College. The Conference heard him and voted in favour and as a result of that the College quickly grew and led on to the training and ordination of several of our ministers. So thank you Les.

The church sends its love, joy, appreciation, thanks, admiration and consolation to Les and Bev and all their family. We all know full well that Les will be doing great things in heaven now he has got his energy back and may he always serve his Lord with all his heart. Les and Bev, may the Lord bless you and be with you and keep you together in his heart.

SYNCHRONICITY SPOT



How often do you hear about the Primitive Methodists? I went to the Sydney Opera House on May 16th to hear a great performance of Mendelssohn's 'Elijah'. On the train I read the early part of 'Adam Bede' by George Eliot, in which several villagers are active Primitive Methodists. I carried on reading in the foyer as I was early. A lady sat down next to me, said hello, noticed my English accent, and commented that while she was Australian her great-grandfather had emigrated from England, "and it was a big family and they were all very strong Primitive Methodists, but I don't know anything about all that."

FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Our next meeting is on Wednesday 4th June. We begin with coffee and cake at 10.45 a.m. followed by a talk from Julian on "Lots of things about Faces" and then we will enjoy a shared lunch together. Do hope you can come.

Our thoughts and prayers are very much with Judy and Dave Probert at the moment.

Glen Hart

STEWARDS AND FLOWERS FOR JUNE		
Sunday	Steward(s)	Flowers
1 st (Sac. Rev Todd)	Michael Chester	Lydia Chua
8 th	Dave and Judy Probert	Judy Probert
	(we will be making alternative arrangements)	
15 th	David Curry	Christine Gospodarczyk
22 nd (New Church Day)	Wayne Kasmar	Jan Primrose
29 th	Lee Glendenning	Rita Johnston

“ STAYING SPIRITUAL IN A CRAZY WORLD! ”

This is to be a one-day workshop held at the Dougherty Centre in Chatswood on Saturday August 30th. That’s way ahead at the moment, but Todd Beiswenger and I are very busy making all the arrangements for it. We are advertising with half-page full colour ads in three widely-read spiritual and alternative magazines ‘Nova’, ‘Living Now’ and ‘New Dawn’ – the first two having the ads in each month for three months. If you can, try to get a copy. They’re around in many places.

Todd has created a website, which is now active, giving details - <http://livingspirituallyinacrazyworld.com.au/>

It describes the point of the day’s workshop and the kind of sessions we will be offering.



The ad website re-directs. Registration and payments can both be done online. The ad is designed to get people to search the website for all the real information.

We’re sure this will be a popular activity which helps people and it’s an exciting project to work on and bring about.

SNIPPETS FROM THE SCRAPBOOK

All Quotes from Alfred, Lord Tennyson

I am a part of all that I have met;
 Yet all experience is an arch wherethro’
 Gleams that untravelled world, whose margin fades
 For ever and for ever when I move.
 How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
 To rust unburnished, not to shine in use. - from Ulysses

The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
 And murmuring of innumerable bees. - from The Princess

Remembering our dear Lord who died for all,
 And musing on the little lives of men,
 And how they mar this little by their feuds. - from Sea Dreams

‘Tis better to have loved and lost
 Than never to have loved at all. - from In Memoriam

Ring out a slowly dying cause
 And ancient forms of party strife,
 Ring in the nobler modes of life
 With sweeter manners, purer laws. - from In Memoriam

Sunset and evening star
 And one clear call for me!
 And may there be no moaning of the bar
 When I put out to sea. - from Crossing the Bar

Stella Green

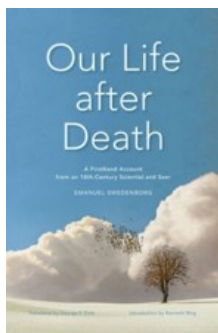
NEW CHURCH DAY SERVICE SUNDAY JUNE 22nd

We will celebrate New Church Day with this question –
 “What can I do to help the Lord bring more good into this world?”
 and aim to come up with some satisfactory do-able answers.

We will have a special Morning Tea after the service.

SWEDENBORG CENTRE NEWS

New Book: *Our Life after Death*. 135 pages, paperback



Swedenborg describes in detail the process of passing from our physical plane to the spiritual world. He vividly recounts the moments during and immediately after death, and the stages we pass through to find our final home in a vast spiritual realm. He reveals the process by which we confront who we were on earth, discover our true selves, and through that knowledge find our eternal homes. An introduction by near-death-experience researcher

Kenneth Ring describes how Swedenborg's accounts match the testimony of modern near-death-experiencers – and then go far beyond.

Please note that this book is a collection of passages from Swedenborg's *Heaven and Hell* that focuses on the soul's journey from the moment of death through the stages of self-discovery in the world of spirits. It's a brief and thought-provoking introduction to Swedenborg's vision of the afterlife for those who want to delve deeper into this fascinating subject and don't have the time to read the more comprehensive coverage in *Heaven and Hell*.

If you wish to purchase this book please call the Swedenborg Centre on (02) 9888 1066. Price is \$15 for '*Our Life after Death*' with FREE postage.

Michael Chester



Our Prayer Circle list goes out fortnightly to a good number of people, with only names given and some general areas to be prayer mindful about. It usually goes out 1st and 15th of each month and you are very welcome to pass names to me for inclusion (including yourself). No details are included.

SOCIETY NEWS

Everyone really enjoyed Lillian's piano recital on Sunday May 18th which included Mozart, Schubert, Bela Bartok and John Ireland pieces.

Our mid-week Bible Study has moved on into looking at getting the most out of any Bible verse or passage. We'll be doing this over four sessions, one already done.

Our love, prayers and very good wishes are given to Judy and Dave Probert at this time while Judy is in hospital and undergoing surgery. They both really appreciate knowing how much you all care and at the moment it is best if you ask me for any news.

Our Mothers Day service was lightly attended this year – it's a day which can go either way with numbers – and we enjoyed a special morning tea after. Thank you for bringing goodies.

Thanks to Rev Todd Beiswenger with whom I am "pulpit swapping" on Sunday June 1st and to Michael Chester who is taking the service on Sunday June 29th when I am in Brisbane (see next paragraph).

I will be away on June 29th as President conducting the ordination for Darren Brunne at the Brisbane church. I am looking forward to this immensely and I know Darren personal commitment and skills. Ruth and I will fly on the Saturday and come home on Monday.

Please make a note that if you are thinking of going to the Phillip Island Camp in late December/January, you do need to book or give a firm commitment to book by July 15th. Leaflets with booking forms in (very bright orange) are in the church vestibule bookstand.

If you don't already know, both Ruth and I have recently changed our email addresses, so don't use the old one as they will be dead fairly soon. It is now julian@duckworth.me and ruth@duckworth.me



Swedenborg Association of Australia Inc.

North Ryde Group - Telephone: (02) 9888 1066

website: www.swedenborg.com.au



An Exploration of the Meaning of the Oceans

Presented by Robert Bryce

FRIDAY 27TH JUNE 2014 at 7.45pm

Swedenborg Centre,

1 Avon Road, North Ryde

Cost: \$7; concession \$5 (including refreshments)

The oceans covers approximately 70% of the world's surface and makes our planet, the blue planet.

Within this vast mass of water, life exists in many forms from the exuberant gardens of life we know as the coral reefs to the strange life forms around the mid ocean vents in the depths of the oceans. This talk will look at the structure of the oceans, the forms of life and consider the correspondences of these items and what they can tell us about ourselves and the spiritual world.

Robert Bryce is a shipwright and Chartered Engineer. He lived and worked overseas for 10 years during which time he took the opportunity to travel to many sacred sites around the world.

He has been reading and studying Swedenborg since the mid 1980's.

THE PILLARS OF NEW CHURCH BELIEFS



Continuing a series presenting our beliefs in plain English. This time we'll look at the teaching about **children** and also **children in heaven**.

Children, up to some stage in their teenage years, are not spiritually equipped enough to start regenerating, or working on their own spiritual life and choices. That's an 'adult' skill, and it needs rationality, experience and a sense of life values.

But of course children can say and draw and come up with some amazingly spiritual ideas and pictures. Just ask a child to draw God and you'll be astounded how they catch something we adults have lost or never see. Yes, we can lose things by becoming adults!

Children have innate wonder, imagination, and feelings about life, and some see angels too. Even more, hold a baby and you feel the presence of heaven in them. But they also need to be guided in a lot of things for their first years – things they simply know, and need to obey. These 'go in' and get stored so that when they become an adult, they can work with choices and decisions about what's good and what isn't.

All this takes around let's say 18 years to take shape, while for some wild animals, it needs to be 18 minutes!

Because of all this preliminary innocence and lack of maturity, when a child dies (and globally about a third of people die in childhood!) – ALL children go straight to heaven where they will mature a bit differently because they will never be at risk of turning towards their lower nature and choose it for keeps, because they simply CAN'T. Oh yes, like everyone, they have a lower nature but the sphere and help of pure heaven with angel expertise will always be protecting them directly.

This is a Divine provision but do understand that it is not what the Lord WANTS. He wants people to be children, be adults, and choose heaven.

ACH (like in 'loch') **BROTHER**

Sometimes in the Bible, a certain word is repeated many times in a passage for the sake of emphasis and to make a point. It's like this with the word 'ach' or brother (but really meaning a fellow person and not a gender idea).

In the story of Cain and Abel, where Cain kills Abel through jealousy about God's preference for Abel's gift, the word 'ach' is repeated seven times, and the middle time is when God asks Cain, "Where is your brother?" And Cain answered, "Am I my brother's keeper!"

Adam pictures the first man and all human beings. Cain was the first Biblical person to ever have a brother. So Cain and Abel picture us in our brotherhood together with each other.

So a strong take-home message is the implied answer to Cain's question – Yes, we are all our brother's keeper. Modern culture tends to push forward individuality and independence. Only when we remember that other people are our brothers and sisters, and that we are to love them as we love ourselves, will we live as God wants us to live.

FINAL FABLE

A caravan of men crossing the desert came to a hole in the ground. They needed water and they lowered a bucket but no water came up. Men went down and simply disappeared. Finally a simple man volunteered to go down.

When he reached the bottom he found himself facing a terrible monster, who said, "I will only let you go if you answer my question... Where is the best place to be?" The man thought, 'I don't want to hurt his feelings by saying a beautiful city, and he may think it's a hole in the ground.' So he answered, 'Wherever you feel at home, even if it's a hole in the ground.' At this the monster said, "For that truth, I will release all the other men, and release all the water in this well."