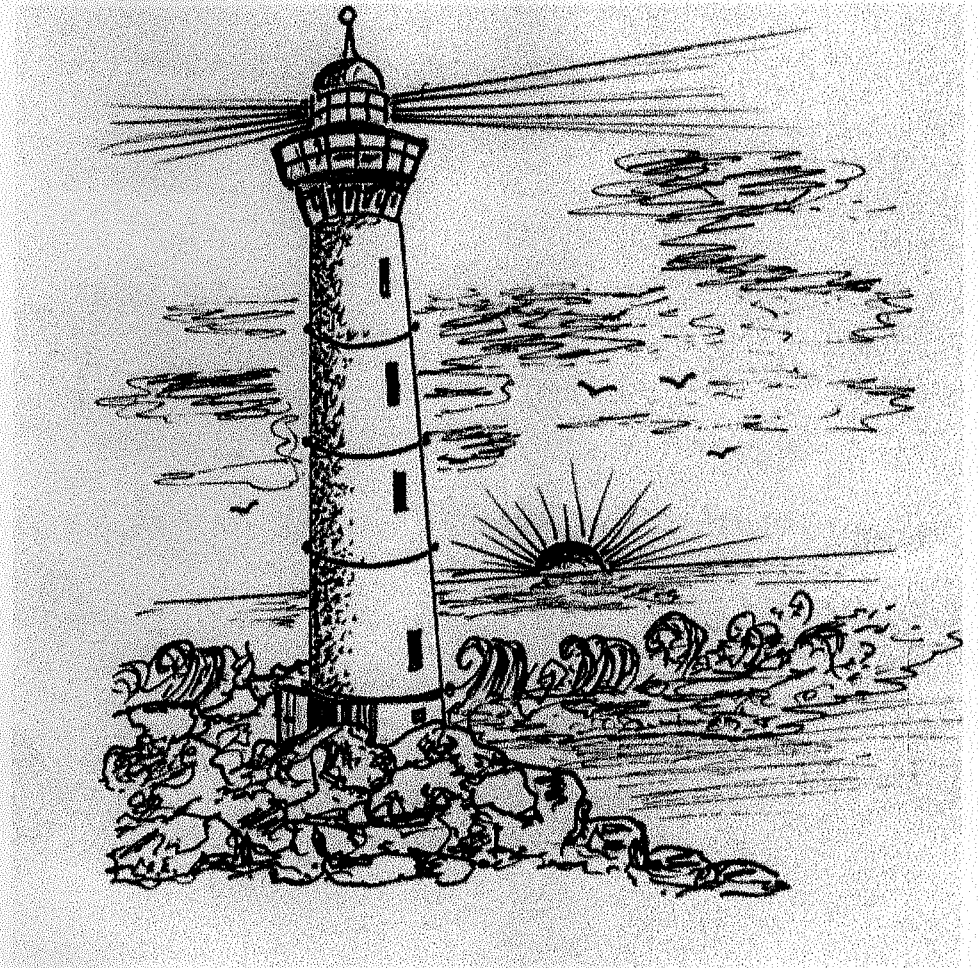


# *The Lighthouse*



*February/March 2015*

## DIRECTORY

**Minister:** Rev. Chris Skinner      9432.0322  
0412 942 599

**Secretary:** Mr. Kim Bentley      9885 6932

**Treasurer:** Mr. Karl Robinson      9725.1891

**Ballarat Leaders:** Len and Judy Robinson      5331.5638

Swedenborg Lending Library has books available  
for borrowing and is open by appointment.  
Please contact the Minister or Judy Robinson  
for enquiries.

## THE NEW CHURCH IN VICTORIA

426-434 High Street Road, Mount Waverley, Victoria 3149



### Newsletter

*February/March 2015*

The New Church is a Christian-based approach to spiritual growth, personal responsibility and choice, focusing on the Lord Jesus Christ as God, on the spiritual understanding of the Bible, on human immortality and free will, and on the life of true religion being one of mutual love and useful living.



**I will lift up my eyes to the hills - from whence comes my help? My  
help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth  
Psalm 121 vs 1 & 2**

If you are in need of pastoral assistance or hear of  
anyone who is, then please contact the Minister  
9888.2850 or 9432.0322 or 0412 942599

Email: [cskinner9@optusnet.com.au](mailto:cskinner9@optusnet.com.au)

Website: [www.melbournenewchurch.com](http://www.melbournenewchurch.com) or [www.newchurch.net.au](http://www.newchurch.net.au)

## Minister's Page

As it is now nearing the end of January, I pray that everyone has enjoyed a period of re-creation and relaxation. As we have enjoyed the break, I have been thinking of the large number of emergency service workers who have been fighting the large bush fires in South Australia. Most of these people are volunteers, giving up their own holidays and take many risks and possess great courage to help protect homes and lives.

I was also thinking about the Australia Day awards, many of which are given in recognition of the community service the recipients have performed in many instances over a long period of time. It is very appropriate that Rose Batty became Australian of the year. Out of the tragedy of losing her son, she is rising from this to become a beacon for the cause of Family and Child Abuse. She is motivated by a desire to bring positive outcomes from her experiences. These selfless acts for the benefit of others, I have no doubt, bring deep satisfaction but there has to be an urging and a prompting for them to answer the call and undertake such work.

Many rest following a job well done. During your holiday and relaxation, have you ever found yourself in a situation where you lack motivation and energy to do things and this is often accompanied by the comment "sometimes the less we do, the less we want to do", I am sure we have all felt like that at times.

The Two Great Commandments quoted at the beginning of the newsletter, focus on love of God and love of the neighbour and is intended to draw attention to the fact that in all sorts of ways we can be of use to the neighbour, even if physical limitations or frailty may determine how we go about it. Recent studies have shown that some activity of mind and body will do much to prevent or delay the onset of dementia.

The Heavenly Doctrines for the New Church place great emphasis on the "uses" that we perform both in this world and in heaven and say that "heaven is a Kingdom of Uses". Would you like to be in a state of suspended animation? or look to what you can do for others and the joy that this can bring in heaven. A wonderful truth also given is that the Lord creates each person for a unique and eternal use.

The parable of the Good Samaritan embodies many of these principles and as we begin to focus on our activities for the year, may we all try to ensure that our periods of rest are actually for re-creation which will give us more energy and strength to look beyond our own needs to the needs of others, and pray to the Lord that our love for Him will enable Him to open up opportunities for us to be of use and support to others.

We can each gain strength as we worship and share together. Many cannot get to church each week, so why not make the first Sunday in the month an opportunity to be together. The feeling of fellowship is enhanced and gives impetus for our work and for us to be of use in all sorts of ways to people around us.

Think about how you can contribute to the life of our church so that it can be a vehicle for use in our area.

Chris

### REFLECTIONS ON THE WORD

**"Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert" Isaiah 43:19**

A way in the wilderness gives access, and rivers allow gardens to replace the desert. Together, they make a great and notable change.

There comes a time for many of us when we begin to realise that our minds are not unlike a wilderness, and that our hearts are desert-like. What can we do about it? Well, the Lord has said, "I am the way". If we follow Him, He will make a way through: and where our hearts are parched, rivers of truth will turn them into gardens of the Lord.

**Prayer:** *Let Your mercies come also to me, O Lord, even Your salvation, according to Your Word*

## News of People

We are pleased to say that both Eva Teed and Margaret Parker are making progress in relation to their health issues and it has been good to see them at church recently.

Congratulations to Gary Sharp who retired from work at Christmas. We wish Gary a happy retirement and hope he can pursue interests that were not possible when working full time.

We were pleased to learn that Dennis & Reyshelle Borg are expecting their first baby in a few months time. We wish Reyshelle a smooth pregnancy.

Our best wishes go to Michael & Linda Francis together with Harry who have recently moved to Beaumaris from Prahran and will be closer to Neville & Alexis. We hope they will soon settle into their new surroundings.

*"He who sows courtesy reaps friendship, and he who plants kindness gathers love"*

### The Newsletter by Email

A further reminder that over coming months we will progressively try to send the newsletter out by email. We have quite a number of email addresses but if you are happy receiving it by email and have not given us your details please send them to the Secretary so that a list can be compiled. This will speed up delivery and reduce cost.

\*\*\*\*\*

### The New Age ( Periodical of The New Church in Australasia )

Copies of the most recent edition published just before Christmas is available in the foyer. It contains interesting and informative articles and information so please feel free to ask for a copy. If you have the internet then you can have a look at a much more interactive version by going to:-  
[www.thenewage.net.au](http://www.thenewage.net.au)

## Christmas Services

It was good to enjoy the Gift and Toy Service with the more modern Christmas carols and music. Thanks to the donations of toys etc. We were able to deliver them to the Salvation Army for distribution.

Our Service of Lessons and Carols was well attended and it was lovely to have a ladies choir made up of Philippine ladies and it was great that a number of our Philippine families could be with us.

A shared lunch followed the service which enabled us to enjoy fellowship together.

The Christmas Day Service was well attended and is always a fitting celebration of the Lord's Birth and then fellowship with families.



**The New Church in Australia Family Camp  
Phillip Island Adventure Resort  
29th December 2014 - 4th January 2015**



As we commence the New Year many will be reflecting back on a very successful camp. The weather had its highs and lows but generally was very good and enabled people to get out and about on Phillip Island in the afternoons if they wished.

A big thank you goes to Rev Martin Pennington and his team of support people namely Len & Judy Robinson, Marian Mansaray and Peter Stanton who ensured that the camp ran smoothly. The feedback from many who attended was it was very enjoyable and organised in an excellent manner.

It was great also that Melinda Robinson, Stan & Elizabeth Deutscher Shinae Pennington, John Cook, Susan Heldon and Justin Keane were able to be present from Victoria. The presence of 21 people from Queensland including 4 young families and 15 from Perth with two young families which added to the atmosphere and it was also good to have people from Canberra, Sydney, Alice Springs and United Kingdom. The accommodation configuration at the venue enables couples and families to have their own rooms and these are closely located to the dining room and main hall for activities.

In addition to the organised leisure activities in the afternoon such as Flying Fox, Giant Swing, Water Slide, canoeing and time spent in the pool etc. There were two outside trips arranged. One was on the free day which was a two hour cruise to see the seals just off the Nobbies and the other an evening visit to the penguins. Many from Perth and Brisbane visiting Phillip Island for the first time were keen to enjoy this experience. Others on the free day either spent it around the pool, going to the beach or visiting some of the tourist attractions on the Island.

The morning learning and sharing sessions are always enjoyed and provide inspiration and spiritual nourishment which is one of the main focuses of any Camp. There were 5 ministers present being Revs, Julian Duckworth, Todd Beiswenger, Trevor and David Moffat together with Martin Pennington. They led sessions for the whole camp, children, teenagers and adults. Some of the adults shared duties in looking after the 'littlies' whilst leaving parents free to attend the adult sessions.

A very varied program of subjects were provided and these included for the Family sessions "Ladders to Climb", "Survival Guide to Heaven" and "Does God Think", For the children "Books of the Bible". "Found it" (Lost Sheep & Coin) and "Our Faces". The teenagers "Why me It's not fair is providence real", "Our Spirit" and "Islam". The two adult sessions each day had plenty to choose from and these included "Paul & Swedenborg" and "Paul re-examined", "Spiritual Themes to Star Wars", "Happiness or Contentment" and "Being a Man, Being a Woman" and "Doing Your Part". If you would like to see the full program, a copy is available. If any reader would like more information on any of them please feel free to ask..



A feature of the afternoon, which was very much appreciated was the willingness of Jason Barritt, (A Doctor of Chiropractic) assisted by his wife Judy, to provide help to attendees at the camp. A film was also brought by Sylvia Hicks called "Heaven is for Real" which was shown and very inspirational as was Michael Chester's film "The Four Chambers".

During the evenings, a number of varied activities were arranged including, introductions on the first night, Trivia and Board Games and a very entertaining game of English Rounders on New

Year's Eve, followed by a camp fire, as this was

the first time for a number of years that the camp included New Years Day. Congratulations to Peter Stanton (Victoria) this year's table tennis champion who played a thrilling three game match against Jason Barritt, this led into the talent night which was enjoyed by all. The camp concluded with items from the choir which had been formed and practiced all week and led by Rev. Julian Duckworth, followed by a closing service with the theme, "Journeys including Beginnings and Endings".

Altogether a wonderful six days, enjoyed by all. So that you can think about making plans to be there, the camp will be held at **Vision Valley** (A Uniting Church Centre) near Dural New South Wales from **4th - 10th January 2016**.



*I like this advice from the Burmese pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi - "if you're feeling helpless," she wrote, "help someone"*

*A nice reminder that while we might occasionally be unable to alter our own circumstances, we can usually improve someone else's. And in making other people's lives better, we almost inevitably help improve our own.*

*From The Friendship Book*



## QUOTABLE QUOTES FROM STELLA GREEN

Tis strange but true, but truth is always stranger than fiction  
- Lord Byron

Here, at whatever hour you come, you will find light and help and human kindness

- Inscription on lamp outside Albert Schweitzer's African hospital

Music has charms to soothe a savage breast.  
- William Congreve

Procrastination is the thief of time. - Edward Young

The colour of the skin is in no way connected with the strength of the mind or intellectual powers - Benjamin Banneker, mathematician, son and grandson of slaves

Our life is frittered away by detail ..... simplify, simplify  
- Henry David Thoreau

More details will be provided in the next newsletter.

## Birthdays and Anniversaries

### February

6th Graeme Scoble  
10th Robin Wren  
12th Gemma Pilven  
15th Sarah Teed  
18th Dennis Borg  
18th Dolly Santos  
23rd Julie Ryan  
24th Melinda Robinson  
28th Joy Wilkins

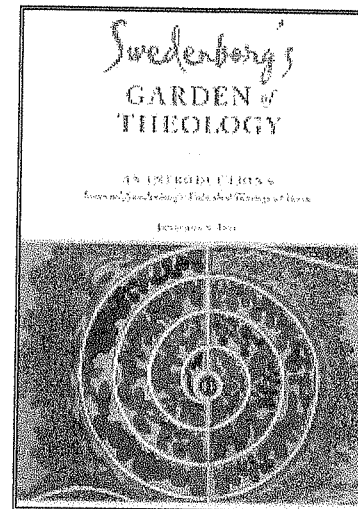


### March

5th Kevin Ryan  
6th Rose Robinson  
12th Edna Sharp  
15th Reyselle Borg  
15th Edgardo Santos  
17th Ryan Cottren (8)  
20th Ian Stell  
31st Tracey Skinner

Congratulations and very best wishes to Graeme and Isobel Scoble on their **Golden Wedding Anniversary** (50th) on 27th March. May you have memorable celebration with your family.

## Featured Book Suggestion



When he entered the visionary phase of his life, Emanuel Swedenborg set out on a journey to document all that he had seen, heard and learned while in contact with the spirits of heaven and hell. Before his death, he wrote eighteen different works published in twenty-five volumes, totaling about three and a half million words.

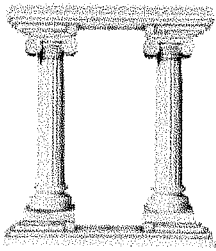
Navigating that rich garden of thought has been a challenge even for scholars of Swedenborg, let alone those new to his work. In this compact guide, Jonathan S. Rose introduces readers to the basic concepts of Swedenborg's writings, including

Swedenborg's view of God and the afterlife and his description of humanity's spiritual history. Rose also examines how Swedenborg's theology relates to other Christian dominations, both in his time and ours, and takes a side trip into some of Swedenborg's more unusual ideas.

## Swedenborg's Garden of Theology Author Rev Dr Jonathan Rose

In addition to this featured book we also have access to the following books at much reduced prices. If any of them interest you then please speak to the Minister

**Swedenborg & Mesmer & the Mind/Body Connection** (The Roots of Complimentary Medicine ~ John Haller  
**Heaven & Hell** ~ New Century Edition  
**Swedenborg Buddha of the North** ~ DT Suzuki  
**In the Presence of Angels** ~ Andrea Garrison  
**Spirituality that make Sense** ~ Douglas Taylor  
**Beauty, Wonder & the Mystical Mind** ~ Wilson Van Dusen  
**Natural Depth of Man** ~ Wilson Van Dusen  
**Observing Spirit** ( Swedenborg & Gurdjieff ) ~ Peter Rhode



## THE PILLARS OF NEW CHURCH BELIEFS

Continuing a series presenting our beliefs in plain English.

This time we will look at the idea that **God is present with us.**

I read about a lady whose husband had died and how she said that now he isn't in the next room or in the city, but was present with her all the time. "I talk to him of course".

That's a helpful bridge for the truth that God is present with us all the time. He isn't only present with certain people (whatever they might think about that!) and he isn't only present when we are being good. He's never not there ... and that's true for every single person.

The real starter is that for us to be alive, God **must** be present, keeping us alive by giving us our life all the time. I often think that's the main thing God does - he just keeps flowing in. It's not done with clockwork; we are not "set going".

But that is only part of it. God is present with us, and knows our deepest wish, every motive and unknown (to us) fear. He always knew them. We can't keep anything from God. God isn't judging anything about us; he is only concerned with how he can help us find our way and feel right, or whatever it is we need.

But God, being on the inside of us, won't suddenly press buttons to make things happen. I would almost say that he "tweaks" or adjusts things. If he is present and isn't doing anything, that seems absurd. It is not all up to us and yet God wants us to feel that it is, and yet God "tweaks" slight impulses which we pick up on.

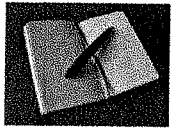
The aim - as far as God is concerned - is for us to respond to him (or at least to what is better than before). If we get to that, then God isn't just present (like he always is), now we're joined to him and he can be more joined to us. It's a working relationship. Like that lady who lost her husband said, "I talk to him of course as he's always with me now".

## Diary of Events for the Months of February/March 2015

*(All services will commence at 10.30am unless advised)*

### February

- 1st **Musical Service of Worship** led by the Minister
- 8th **Service of Worship** led by Mr Karl Robinson
- 12th **Coffee, Chat and Craft Group** at 10am at Church Hall
- 15th **Service of Worship** led by Rev. Martin Pennington
- 22nd **Service of Worship** led by Mr Neville Jarvis
- 26th **Coffee, Chat and Craft Group** at 10am at Church Hall
- 27th **Swedenborg Association Group** at 8pm  
Speaker and Topic: To be announced



### March

- 1st **Musical Service of Worship** led by the Minister
- 8th **Service of Worship** led by Mr Karl Robinson
- 12th **Coffee, Chat and Craft Group** at 10am at Church Hall
- 15th **Service of Worship** led by Rev. Martin Pennington
- 22nd **Service of Worship** led by Mr Neville Jarvis  
**Proposed Congregational/Annual General Meeting**
- 26th **Coffee, Chat and Craft Group** at 10am at Church Hall
- 27th **Swedenborg Association Group** at 8pm  
Speaker and Topic: To be Announced
- 29th **Palm Sunday Service of Worship** led by Karl Robinson

**Advanced Dates:** 3rd April **Good Friday Service** 9.30am  
5th April **Easter Day Service** 10.30am

### Health of the Minister

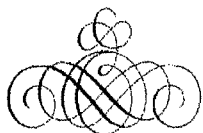
Unfortunately the news following recent scans showed that the cancer had spread into other parts of his body and the Oncologist advised that chemotherapy options available did not have a high success rate. Other complimentary therapies have been explored and appear to have some promises without any toxicity.

We pray that this treatment will assist and all your prayers will be very much appreciated. Given the need to focus on his health, conducting services over the next few weeks and months will be shared, as will be seen from the Calendar

## Ballarat and District Circle

Service/Discussion Group is held each Sunday at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Len Robinson, 318 Fussell Street, Ballarat  
(Tel: 0353.315638)

Services are now held on the last Sunday in the month at the above address at 3.30pm



### Duty Roster

#### Flowers

#### Greeters

#### February

1st	Mr & Mrs N Jarvis	Mr & Mrs N Jarvis
8th	Mr G Scoble	Mr G Fox
15th	Mr & Mrs JK Robinson	Mr & Mrs JK Robinson
22nd	Mrs M Sivak	Mrs M Sivak

#### March

1st	Mr & Mrs K Drevermann	Mr & Mrs K Drevermann
8th	Mrs J Wilkins	Mr K Bentley
15th	Mr & Mrs N Jarvis	Mr & Mrs N Jarvis
22nd	Mr G Scoble	Mr G Fox
29th	Mr & Mrs JK Robinson	Mr & Mrs JK Robinson

#### April

5th	Mrs M Sivak	Mrs M Sivak
12th	Mr & Mrs K Drevermann	Mr & Mrs K Drevermann
19th	Mrs J Wilkins	Mr K Bentley
26th	Mr & Mrs N Jarvis	Mr & Mrs N Jarvis

**Please Note:** Whoever is on duty, please bring milk