

*SOUL FOOD*  
*July-August 2017*



*"Our Father in Heaven Hallowed be Thy name."*

*Matthew 6 :9*

## *Talking to the Lord (Brian Kingslake)*

*"If a person prays from love and faith, and for only heavenly and spiritual things, there then comes forth in the prayer something like a revelation (which is manifested in the affection of the person that prays) as to hope, consolation, or a certain inward joy." (Arcana Coelestia 2535) The need for prayer is explained as follows:... "It is a general thing in all Divine worship that a man should first will, desire and pray, and that the Lord should then answer, inform and do; otherwise the man does not receive anything Divine." (Arcana Coelestia 2535) In other words: "Ask, and it shall be given you; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; seek, and you will find." (Matthew 7:7) "If you shall ask anything in my name" (said Jesus) "I will do it." (John 14:14)*

### ***The Purpose of Prayer***

*The purpose of prayer, however, is not primarily to obtain gifts from our heavenly Father; rather, it is to bring us into personal contact with him. Think for a moment of our earthly parents, with whom Jesus compares God. (Matthew 7:9-11) Does a child never speak with his parents unless he wants something? Just imagine what it would be like in a home if the children went about with downcast eyes, never greeting their father, never saying a word to him, until suddenly one of them, or several together, came formally before him, and read a petition, asking for something to eat! Yet many people go for months or years without communicating with God in prayer, and then only address him because they want something or are in trouble.*

*Most parents have experienced the joy of having a child come into the room where they are sitting or working, not for any particular purpose, but just to be with them. So it must surely be with the Lord.*

## ***Learning to Pray***

*Prayer, especially verbal prayer (voicing the words), may seem difficult at first and even embarrassing, like talking in an empty room. But, once you make the effort, you find the room is not empty; it is filled with a living presence who will respond to your slightest thought or feeling. And the more you talk with God in prayer, the more "real" he becomes, and the clearer sounds his answering voice. Speaking with the Lord always succeeds in bringing us consciously into his loving presence; so, if we are talking with him all the time, at our work, in our play, in our church life, even while we are joking with our friends—then we are with him all the time. And our consciousness of his nearness makes a great deal of difference to us. We develop a sense of what is right and pure and loving. Contact with our heavenly Father in prayer helps us to grow in relationship with the Divine.*

***The Growth of Prayer*** *As we become more aware of our Lord's presence with us or, rather, our presence with him, our prayers tend to change in character.*

*(1) The simplest prayer at first would be, "Hello, Lord!" We greet him and talk with him about everything that concerns us, our friends, our job, today's appointments and duties, the book we are reading, everything! This is as it should be. Anything we could tell our earthly father, we can tell the Lord.*

*(2) As we begin to develop spiritually, however, the affairs of this world cease to seem so important, and spiritual concerns come to the forefront of our minds. We pray less and less about the things around us, and more about our spiritual needs. **Our "higher self" begins to take over.***

*(3) Knowing, now, that the Lord has complete power over our souls, wanting only what is good for us, we tend to say simply, "Thy will be **done**." Instead of telling him what we want, **we ask him what he wants**. We do less talking and more listening. Such prayer may lead to the failure of our own ambitions and the upsetting of our own little plans, but we no longer mind this if it brings us closer to him. The basic word is now "Amen!"—"So be it!"*

*(4) As a result of all this, the Lord's own life grows in us. He himself tells us what to say; **he teaches us to pray**. Eventually he infills us completely. Thus we are remade or "regenerated" by prayer, built up into the Lord's image and likeness. Prayer is one of the most powerful and effective instruments of salvation. Without prayer, our spiritual natures wilt away and die.*

**The Language of Prayer** *At first our prayer-language naturally tends to be familiar and colloquial, even slangy if that is our normal manner of speaking. Better this than the artificial, stilted language that seems to be generally regarded as appropriate. But, as we develop, our prayer-language does inevitably become more and more God's own language, the language of his holy Word given expressly as a means of communication between us and him. The Lord's prayer ("Our Father . . .") provides this fully. He gave it to us; it is his voice speaking in us. So with other passages from the scriptures. The more mature we become in our prayer life, the more our thoughts fall into the language of God's Word, though not necessarily the Authorized Version!*

*The chief thing we need is **sincerity**. It is useless to say things that are outside our experience; how can they come from our heart? It is best also to use our own vocabulary*

**Non-Verbal Prayer** *The most advanced form of prayer is above the words of any earthly language and uses only the spiritual language of ideas. Not many of us have developed as far as that in our prayer life, though it is possible to do so. Strangely enough, many beginners, who cannot yet verbalize their own prayers and have to read somebody else's, nevertheless claim that they can pray silently without words! Prayer is "communication," and language has been developed to aid us in communication. **Only when you are really in love with someone can you communicate silently, without words.** So it is between us and the Lord.*

**Intercessory Prayer** *Many people say they can understand prayer for one's self, and also prayer that is thanking God for something, or even praising him for his mighty power and glory. Our Lord, when he was on earth, set us an example of intercessory prayer when he prayed for the disciples. (John 17:6-19) He interceded for Simon Peter that he might not fail in temptation (Luke 22:32); and he tells us to pray for those who spitefully use us (Luke 6:28), meaning that **we should pray not only for our friends but for our enemies also.***

*There is no guarantee, of course, that our prayers for other people will be effective. There may be a blockage on their end that we cannot get through, or some negative force at work over which we have no control. But we can be confident that **our prayers will release additional influences into the immediate environment, which will help to improve the situation.***

**No Man is an Island** *Swedenborg's doctrinal system shows how intercession can work. We are living in the intermediate region of the spiritual world here and now, and **we influence one another unconsciously.** You cannot think of yourself as cut off from everybody else. **We are all part of one another,***

**and each is partially responsible for what happens to all.** The Lord's life flows directly into each one of us, but also **indirectly from one to another.** This explains the process of intercession. **Prayer brings us closer to God, so that his holy spirit flows into us more powerfully;** it also brings us closer to the person for whom we are praying, so that we can redirect the Lord's power to that person. It is like reflecting the light of the sun in a mirror and shining it through the window into someone's darkened room. (Swedenborg shows how members of the Church on earth, who possess the Word, receive the Lord's light and redirect it unconsciously to those in deprived lands.) **The Lord wants us to help one another, to bear one another's burdens. It is part of love to the neighbour.**

**Godly Play:** Mary has trained in Godly Play and Deb will train in 2018. The result of a lifetime of research and practice by theologian, author and educator The Rev. Dr. Jerome Berryman, the Godly Play® method is a curriculum of spiritual practice **exploring the mystery of God's presence in our lives.** The Godly Play curriculum engages what is most exciting about religious education: God inviting us into—and pursuing us in the midst of—Scripture and spiritual experience. Godly Play practice **teaches us to listen for God and to make authentic and creative responses to God's call in our lives.**

**Rev Todd Beiswenger** will be visiting Perth on the weekend of **25<sup>th</sup> September.** Please mark this in your diary.

## ***Calendar for July, August.***

<i>9 July</i>	<i>Worship 10 am followed by Godly Play 10:30am</i>	<i>McDougall House Clydesdale Road</i>
<i>16 July</i>	<i>Godly Play 10:30am</i>	<i>McDougall House Clydesdale Road</i>
<i>23 July</i>	<i>Worship 10 am followed by Godly Play 10:30am</i>	<i>McDougall House Clydesdale Road</i>
<i>30 July</i>	<i>Godly Play 10:30am</i>	<i>McDougall House Clydesdale Road</i>

## ***Calendar for August***

<i>6 August</i>	<i>Godly Play 10:30am</i>	<i>McDougall House Clydesdale Road</i>
<i>13 August</i>	<i>Worship 10 am followed by Godly Play 10:30am</i>	<i>McDougall House Clydesdale Road</i>
<i>20 August</i>	<i>Godly Play 10:30am</i>	<i>McDougall House Clydesdale Road</i>
<i>27 August</i>	<i>Worship 10 am followed by Godly Play 10:30am</i>	<i>McDougall House Clydesdale Road</i>

***Birthdays:*** *Kayla 6th, Bernice 15th, Genevieve 23rd, Lorna 25<sup>th</sup>.*

***Amy Dwyer' married Ben Glen*** *on July 1<sup>st</sup> in Bryn Athyn attended by all the family. We wish Amy and Ben every blessing in their lives together and remember with fondness meeting him on his visit to Perth*  
*The service can be viewed on*

<http://www.ustream.tv/channel/brynathynservice/videos>

***We are all created to become angels of Heaven  
which is a kingdom of communities.***

*Based on the Holy Bible, **The New Church** gains further inspiration and understanding through the Heavenly Doctrines revealed by the Lord and published by 18th century scientist and theologian **Emanuel Swedenborg**. In the 35 volumes of this new Revelation we see the Lord's plan for a rebirth of Christianity, a clear vision of God in His own Word, and what that means in our lives.*

***Worship:*** at 10am on the **Second and Fourth Sundays**

***Godly Play :*** at 10.30am every Sunday

*Venue: McDougall House, Clydesdale St, Como.*

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

*email:* [swedenborgnewchurch@angel.com](mailto:swedenborgnewchurch@angel.com)

*Book orders:* [0407448405](tel:0407448405)

***ONLINE donations***

***Church: Westpac:*** BSB 036302: account number 189720

***The General Church of the New Jerusalem-Perth Circle:***

*We sponsor **"The Loving Arms Mission"** in Nepal,*

*Home for orphaned children.*

***Loving Arms: Westpac:*** BSB 036019: account number 230169