

Sydney Society Newsletter

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

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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, while believing that they are from the Lord working in him and through him.



*O sing to the Lord a new song! Sing to the Lord
all the earth. Sing to the Lord, bless His holy name;
proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day.*

Psalm 96.1-2

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Our Mothers Day service and morning tea is on Sunday May

13th

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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

THE NEW CHURCH IN KOREA

You don't need me to tell that the world's attention over the last week was focused on something which seemed an impossibility just a few months earlier. A summit meeting between the two leaders of North and South Korea, fully orchestrated of course, with added inspired, said to be off the cuff, moments when, holding hands and smiling, the two leaders walked back across the demarcation line so that both leaders both stood in both North Korea and then South Korea, a symbolic gesture.

We remember the mutual angry words and taunts from both the United States and North Korea in late 2017, and the regional fear about missiles, erratically launched but showing growing capability. In some way, so it seems, the idea that "things have to get worse before they can begin to get better" currently seems (but as yet only 'seems') to apply to this particular situation where in 1953 an armistice was made but no peace treaty was signed, technically meaning a state of war for the last 65 years.

Well, we shall see how things develop, and it seems to be hopeful. And you will know that the recent Winter Olympic Games in South Korea, with sports men and women from both Koreas was attended by Kim Jong Un's sister, full of smiles, attractive, sociable, but still a high-ranking player in the North Korean politburo. And as has been said, a sports situation (where war and winning or losing is safe) may have helped turn the tables on the amazing recent changes.

However, politics apart, there are the people and families of both Koreas. North Korea has 27 million people and South Korea 53 million. One distressing fact has been the separation of close family members for 65 years, with occasional moments for visits, then back home, and the faces and tears say it all.

Many other Koreans live abroad, and here, near us in Roseville, there are many Koreans. We have had the pleasure in my time to have had several Koreans with us at church. A young couple Alvin and Su-Yong were with us for eighteen months in a lovely appreciative way. I kept in touch with Alvin for years after they returned and he skyped me. He's now married with two little children. He told me about his two years military service at the demilitarisation zone where he could see young North Koreans just metres away looking frightened.

Then there was Magdalena Kim and her son Michael who were members of the New Church in Seoul but came out to Sydney. Magdalena opened a coffee shop in Chatswood and I dropped in quite often. She was a delight to talk to and often shared aspects of her faith. She showed me copies of the regular Korean New Church bulletin "The Eternal Gospel" which is still produced.

Gracious graceful genuine people with a dignity about them. The New Church in Korea – I have no idea how big or small it is – like all other New Churches tries to help people understand the spiritual basis of life and its purpose through the Word and the teachings of Swedenborg. Bless them all and at this time, let us include them whoever they are in our prayers. I would love to know what they think about the developments currently taking place but I'm not able to do that and why should I?

There's the church in Gwang-ju where Rev Jong Lee is minister, and the church in Seoul where Rev Gyu Dea Yang is minister. 10 a.m. Sunday School. 11 a.m. Sunday Worship. 1.30 p.m. Bible class. "We warmly welcome visitors for attending worship and we are always happy to explain our faith and church." It sounds so familiar, and good.

Julian

ROSEVILLE SERVICES FROM MAY TO AUGUST

This chart gives the plans for services for the next four months in view of our move in late May and the arrival of the Thompsons later in the year. Ruth has also emailed this to members and friends. It works on the basis of us coming to Sydney fortnightly.

ANGEL SERVICE (Saturday)

SUNDAY SERVICE

* is the Holy Supper Sunday

May 5 th	NO SERVICE	*May 6 th	Julian Duckworth
May 12 th	Julian Duckworth	May 13 th	Julian Duckworth
May 19 th	Julian Duckworth	May 20 th	Julian Duckworth
May 26 th	NO SERVICE	May 27 th	NO SERVICE
June 2 nd	Julian Duckworth	*June 3 rd	Julian Duckworth
June 9 th	NO SERVICE	June 10 th	Michael Chester
June 16 th	Julian Duckworth	June 17 th	Julian Duckworth
June 23 rd	NO SERVICE	June 24 th	NO SERVICE
June 30 th	Julian Duckworth		
		*July 1 st	Julian Duckworth
July 7 th	NO SERVICE	July 8 th	Graham Hall
July 14 th	NO SERVICE	July 15 th	Julian Duckworth
July 21 st	NO SERVICE	July 22 nd	Wayne Kasmar
July 28 th	NO SERVICE	July 29 th	NO SERVICE
August 4 th	Julian Duckworth	*August 5 th	Julian Duckworth
August 11 th	NO SERVICE	August 12 th	Graham Hall
August 18 th	Julian Duckworth	August 19 th	Julian Duckworth
August 25 th	NO SERVICE	August 26 th	NO SERVICE



Swedenborg Association of Australia

FRIDAY MAY 25th at 7.30pm

COST: \$10

**AT THE Royal Arch Masonic Complex,
23-25 New Canterbury Road, Petersham**



Exploring The Egyptian Room

Tour guide: Bill Richards

For those having a fascination with Ancient Egypt, here is a golden opportunity to see a national treasure depicting beautifully coloured scenes of the afterlife from an Ancient Egyptian perspective.

The scenes are based on the Scroll of Ani, found in Thebes in 1888. Ani the Scribe lived during the 18th Dynasty (1500—1400 BCE). He was an important and well to do man who was a Royal Scribe, and the Governor at the Granary at Abydos. The Scroll of Ani contains declarations and spells to help him and his wife in their transition to the Spiritual world.

An experienced guide will explain the significance of the beautiful imagery before our eyes. And there will be opportunity to ask questions and share insights. The guided tour will go for around 1-1.5 hours and the cost is \$10.

It would be appreciated if those intending to go, would let Joe know via email (joe@swedenborg.com.au) or phone message (9888 1066) so that we have an informed idea of likely numbers attending, which we can pass on to the people at the Egyptian Room. Please arrive around 7:15pm for our 7:30pm start.

To view images of the Egyptian room, do an image search using 'egyptian room petersham'.

More SAA events info at www.swedenborg.com.au/meetings
(NOTE THERE IS NO READING GROUP THAT DAY)

STEWARDS AND FLOWERS FOR MAY

Note, this is based on the revised services schedule (on page 4)

Sunday	Steward	Flowers
May 6 th (Sacr.)	David Curry	Ruth Duckworth
13 th	Graham Hanna	Elizabeth Kemmis
20 th	Wayne Kasmar	Lynne Twemlow
27 th	NO SERVICE	

FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Our next Friendship Group gathering will be on **Friday June 1st** beginning at 10.45 p.m. with coffee and cake. Julian will talk with us about 'The food we need' and afterwards, appropriately, we will enjoy our shared lunch together.

Everyone is welcome to come and join us.

Our good wishes to a number of people who recently haven't been too well.

Glen Hart

SOCIETY NEWS

It was lovely for us to have a visit in early April from Dave Probert and Paula who had the opportunity to catch up with those there and report on their goings on up in Brisbane. As he was leaving, Dave said, "See you sometime in May!"

Ruth and I went to visit Elsa Harting at her home and had a very pleasant time with her. Elsa asked us to pass on her good wishes to people and said that she is very glad to have had the helpful time with the church which she and Michael had.

Several of us attended the thanksgiving service for Norman Heldon, at Hurstville, during April. There were a large number there, and some from quite a distance. Norman turned 100 last year, and was probably

the last of that generation all now gathered in the spiritual world. His love of poetry, including his own, his love of acting, his love of tending the church garden and his love for the New Church and for his beloved wife Ruth, were all very much mentioned and celebrated.

Our Good Friday service was a sharing of the Passover meal with accurate content (six items on what is called the Seder dish) and some explanation, followed by the celebration of the Last Supper. Jesus celebrated both of these that night before his arrest and crucifixion.

We had an enjoyable and bright Easter Service on the theme of “But Jesus IS the gardener!” using the lovely meeting and misunderstanding of Mary that the man she saw was the tomb gardener until he spoke to her. I also used the saying “Good, better, best, never let it rest, till your good is better and your better is best!” which, while it sounds like a TV ad jingle, actually goes back to Jerome (380 AD) who famously translated the Bible into Latin so that people could understand it.

The church committee is busy with the work that will be done on the manse and many other things to do with preparations for welcoming and providing for the Thompsons. The visa process is still unfinished and we are simply waiting to hear.

Ruth and I had a delightful letter from Myriam Albert in Mauritius who has moved for the third time! But she says that this move will suit her perfectly. I have her new address if you would like it. She sends her love and best wishes to us all.

The various books in the church vestibule bookcase will go during May to allow for storage of books I am leaving for general church use.

SNIPPETS FROM THE SCRAPBOOK

If youth knew and if age could.

Unknown

Do not lose faith in humanity. It is an ocean. If a few drops in the ocean are dirty, it does not make the ocean dirty.

- Mahatma Gandhi

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When I do good I feel good, and when I do bad I feel bad. That's really my religion.
- Abraham Lincoln

My mother taught me the value of life. Her mother, my grandmother, saved her life during World War II.
- Leonardo DiCaprio

Unable are the loved to die, for love is immortality.
- Emily Dickenson

Your talent is God's gift to you. What you do with it is your gift back to God.
- Leo Buscaglia

SWEDENBORG CENTRE

It has been a busy month at the Centre. A number of visitors and callers have been interested in stocking up their collection of Swedenborg writings to get deeper into the material. We have also sold a number of the correspondences dictionaries thanks to the promotion in the Candela magazine.

The monthly open discussion groups plus any weekly discussion visitors to the Centre continue to take an interest in relating Swedenborg to life concerns such as defining many of the terms Swedenborg uses as they are often radically different to the conventional understanding of these spiritual ideas, such as charity, goodness, use, regeneration, etc. We have also paid the occasional visit to various friends of the Centre such as Ben Tranter (happy birthday Ben!), Rosemarie Lorenz and others.

The building we lease is a hive of activity, apart from the nearby café which brings a lot of street traffic, we have also used the Centre for council wanting to meet with local residents and business owners to discuss beautification of the streetscape and surrounding areas, so we are becoming well known as a local venue. Still, we are already preparing to move from North Ryde to Roseville so that we are ideally placed for access by those relying on public transport and having the good fortune to be close to a major train station and through traffic. We can there also collaborate more closely with other Swedenborg-related

activities and learn from others while sharing our insights from valuable conversations and visitors to the Centre. We do hope that you will continue to support us as well as you have done in the past as we make the transition by the end of July this year.

Thank you for your enthusiasm and phone and email conversations, letters and visits, it is a delight to be part of such a keen hub around the topic of personal and inner growth using the valuable insights added to our lives by Swedenborg.

All the best to all of you,
Joe Vandermeer, Director

GRASS



Grass is such ordinary stuff, so much so that we rarely give it a second thought or glance. We walk on it, mow it, pull it out of cracks and play bowls on it. Nature clothes meadows and hillsides with a green grass covering. We carpet a lot of garden areas with grass to be our lawns. And there are many different kinds of grass for us to choose from, from thick springy buffalo grass to fine-bladed fescue and couch grasses.

Our wheat, barley, rye, oats and even rice are all from grasses which were all once wild but became cultivated and cross-fertilised to make their seeds bigger and better for food. Because, as we know, grass left unmown, grows upwards, then it flowers and seeds, like many other plants.

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Grass is very resilient, being so close to the ground. During a drought, it looks as if it has died and goes brown. But it has only gone to sleep, and the next rain will immediately green it back. The Sydney Botanical Gardens stopped watering all their lawns early in the 2007 big drought because they knew this, while they kept watering the bushes and shrubs.

Two things that are worth knowing about grass: it spreads by sending long runners out in all directions (as some of us know) which helps with lawns which bind because of this. And grass blades are arranged spirally round the stem, like so many other spirals in nature, perhaps to keep the uprightness of the plant.

The obvious fact about grass is that, compared to other plants, it is low down at ground level. And it's this which gives it its correspondence and meaning.

Let's take a look in the Bible. In the creation story, on the third day, God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, herbs which yield seed, and fruit trees which produce their fruit. The very first *living* things, and the first of them is the grass. When Jesus fed the five thousand, he commanded them to sit down on the grass (Mark says 'the green grass'). And Isaiah says, "The grass withers, the flower fades but the Word of our God stands for ever."

The basic meaning of grass, for us, is our need to be instructed about or come to know spiritual things. It's a bit like children in school who learn basic things but they are not able to see their use at this point, but without this, they can't build any real understanding of life for later. This is grass.

This is there in the way grass sends out runners which weave into a mesh we call a lawn. Something we know begins to touch something else and we start making connections. The fact that everybody is different is a grass-like idea but it leads on to us having respect and gaining new feelings from being with these different people.

Next time you mow the lawn, be mindful of the loveliness of its grass.

THE JANUARY 2019 RETREAT (aka CAMP) in JINDABYNE



Most of our church camps are coastal for obvious reasons. This coming camp won't be, being very inland, in the mountains.

The 2019 New Church Retreat will be held from **Monday January 21st to Sunday**

January 27th 2019 at the Jindabyne Alpine Village in their lodge.

Jindabyne Alpine Village is a peaceful, safe haven, set in natural bushland and located close to Kosciusko National Park in the Snowy Mountains. The New South Wales snowfields and surrounding areas are great places to visit during the warmer months. There is plenty of adventure to experience and places to explore.

More information on the location can be found at: www.alpinevillage.com.au

Bus transport to get to Jindabyne Alpine Village will be available from Canberra airport.

BOOKINGS *The cost of the retreat includes the full week's accommodation and full catering. Rooms are either twin rooms or shared and will be allocated dependent upon bookings. The Twin Room price below is for a guaranteed twin share room. Unfortunately we are not in a position to offer single rooms. All rooms have ensuite facilities and bunk beds are equipped with a pillow, comforter and a blanket:*

Adult (18+) \$560; Twin Room (with Ensuite) \$615 (per person);
Student (14-17) \$490; Young People (9-13) \$420; Children (3-8) \$280
Pre-School (0-2) Free

Linen Hire (includes sheets, a pillow case and a towel) .. \$15.00

DEPOSITS to secure your place

\$100 per person / \$300 for a family group

Deposit and final numbers are required by **1st September 2018**.

For information and booking form go to www.newchurch.net.au/newchurchretreat

FOR MOTHERS DAY (from the UK Daily Telegraph)

Mother is the most beautiful word in the English language, according to the rest of the world.

More than 40,000 people in 102 non-English speaking countries rated mother, passion, smile, love and eternity as their top five choices, according to The British Council survey. And while mother was voted most beautiful, father did not make the list at all.

"It is great to see words in the survey that are so positive and suggestive of the British Council's purpose - words such as freedom, liberty, peace, renaissance and destiny.

"These chime with our aim to help millions of people worldwide access opportunity through English and promote stronger ties and improved perceptions of the UK."

The British Council promotes the learning of English around the world and teaches the language to more than 500,000 people each year.

Poll results:

- | | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|------------|------------|
| 1. Mother | 2. Passion | 3. Smile | 4. Love |
| 5. Eternity | 6. Fantastic | 7. Destiny | 8. Freedom |
| 9. Liberty | 10 Tranquillity | | |

FINAL FABLE

A young man spent the whole autumn sowing and preparing his garden. In the spring, the flowers opened, and he noticed a few dandelions that he had not planted, so he pulled them up. But the seeds had already spread, and others grew. He tried to find a poison that would kill only dandelions but an expert told him that any poison would end up killing all the other flowers too. In despair, he sought help from a gardener. 'It's just like marriage,' said the gardener. 'Along with the good things, there are always a few inconveniences.' 'What should I do, then?' 'Nothing. They may not be the flowers you intended to have, but they are still part of the garden.'