

“All religion has relation to life and the life of religion is to do good”.

Swedenborg

The New Church In Victoria Newsletter

February / March 2019

Locations

Melbourne

(until 20 March 2019)

426-434 High St Rd

Mount Waverley 3149

(after 20 March 2019)

Wadham House

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A fresh phase of life

“Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden light.”
(Matthew 11:28-30)

A new, or fresh phase of life often attracts thoughts of bewilderment, and at times confusion! Yet it can also be a time of optimism, of looking forward with hope, trust, and faith. In this context we can move forward in the understanding that, as we work together looking to the Lord God Jesus Christ, as our focus; and the goal of being of use to Him in all we do in His Name, we cannot fail.



The New Church in Victoria is about to enter into a fresh phase in its history; I take this opportunity to congratulate everyone involved in this courageous step forward. Let us all remain confident in the Lord's words remembering that His 'yoke' is easy and His burden 'light.' Whatever He asks of us is never beyond our capabilities, in His Name we succeed.

So, here we are at the beginning of a new year and, as well, a new phase of Church life, as I sit down to write this article it is the middle of the month, and my thoughts are a mixture of the recent years actions, and inactions, along with thoughts of a positive future. How fitting is this for January? With the assistance of modern technology (the Internet) I've been able to research the Ancient Roman Myth of Janus, the god who is reported to have had two faces, one looking back and one facing forward, looking to the future. I've heard many people say, "The past is the past so let it go, but the future fascinates me." Yet, surely we can learn from the past, so we may build a strong future!



While our personal and collective trust in the Lord God Jesus Christ may come and go, with times of strengthening experiences, along with those of draining doubts and challenging temptations, the overall vision of life must certainly re-affirm a progressive and developing Faith.

Hindsight can be a great instructor, if only we would be aware, and willing to accept, the opportunities to learn.

“We can now see that it is not so hard to lead the life of heaven as people think, because it is simply a matter of recognizing, when something attractive comes up that we know is dishonest or unfair, that it is not to be done because it is against the divine commandments. If we get used to thinking like this, and from this familiarity form a habit, then we are gradually united to heaven. To the extent that we are united to heaven, the higher levels of our minds are opened.....

However, once the process has started, the Lord works His wonders within us, and causes us not only to see evils but to refuse them and eventually to turn away from them. This is the meaning of the Lord's words, 'My yoke is easy and my burden light'. (Emanuel Swedenborg: *Heaven and its wonders, and Hell* paragraph 533). All this is in the context of the Laws of Divine Providence which state that we humans, "shall not perceive or feel any of the activity of Divine Providence, yet should know and acknowledge providence" (Emanuel Swedenborg: *Divine Providence* paragraph 175f).

So, we do our best, this is all the Lord requires of us in every sphere of life.

I'm sure that many readers will have amazing memories of past activities, of the vision for Mt Waverley and Woori Yallock, of times shared, of experiences and friendships developed over several years. Be reassured that none of these are lost. They are still as real as when they took place and we now need to build upon them. Like Janus we may face the memories but let us also look forward to a positive future with trust in our hearts and minds without being overwhelmed by an unknown future. Again I urge us all to hear the Lord's words when He said,

"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble." (Matthew 6:34)

A Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we offer thanks for the collective experiences of past workers for Your Church. We ask that You strengthen us through their example, dedication, commitment, and energy. We give heartfelt thanks for Your ongoing presence and re-assurance offered to all people through Your Word, and the Revelation of Your Second Advent.

Lord, while leading us forward, continue to remind us of the Laws of Your Providence, which is always guiding us toward the ideals of life. Amen.

From **Rev. Trevor Moffat**, a New Church Minister now living in semi-retirement in Perth, who served The New Church in Victoria as its Minister for 6 years from 1986 to 1992.

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Woori Yallock

In the above article, Rev. Moffat refers to Woori Yallock which needs explanation for some more recent members and friends of The New Church in Victoria. About 1950 an approximately 7 acre block of land in Woori Yallock, which at the time was a small, very rural township in the Yarra Ranges 50 kilometers east of Melbourne, was given to the Church by Nora Coleman, a member. A secondhand timber building was erected shortly afterwards to serve as a kitchen and, with additions, a dining / meeting room. Overtime, cabins were built or road-workers huts brought in by members to provide more permanent accommodation. Early conditions were primitive to say the least until a team of members undertook the task of building a new ablution block. Over some thirty years summer camps were held there with New Church members also attending from Interstate and even overseas. There were regular maintenance working bees. In the late 1980s, the land was subdivided and gradually blocks were sold to provide funds for the needs of the activities in Melbourne. Today, Woori Yallock is a thriving community over an extending area with land sought after for housing.

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Our Melbourne History

The New Church organisation was founded in England in 1784 when a group of readers of the spiritual writings of Emanuel Swedenborg decided to separate from the established churches in which they were worshipping. While records show that an assortment of Swedenborg's published theological writings came to the newly formed Colony on the flagship of the First Fleet in 1788, the first known adherents of these teachings arrived in Sydney in 1833.



From 1843 onwards, New Church immigrant families began to come from Britain and settle in Melbourne and surrounds. The first formal meeting was held 10 years later at the City Temperance Hotel in Bourke Street with other rental accommodation being utilised until a place of worship was built and opened in 1873 on the corner of Albert Street and Morrison Place in East Melbourne (this building, now a home, still stands with a Heritage Plaque indicating its origins). The Foundation Stone was laid by Jacob Pitman, developer of phonetic shorthand, a former New Church Minister in Adelaide then living in Geelong. In the years that followed, the congregation was led by long- serving Ministers – Revds. John Thornton, Richard Teed and Leslie Bennett – all trained for ordination in England. Rev. Bennett retired in 1962 at the time when the congregation had decided to sell the East Melbourne Church and Hall in order to purchase land in High Street Road, Mount Waverley. 140, overflowing into the hall, attended the Church closing service in East Melbourne conducted by Revds. Teed and Bennett. Rev. Bennett offered the use of a room in his home while the congregation was without a permanent home.



A striking building was erected at Mt. Waverley at a cost of £19,910 (including the land) with its dedication taking place on 24 August 1963. Ministers who have served during the 55½ years since its opening, each brought their own unique strengths and abilities to the role. Those Ministers were Rev. Bruce Williams (8 years), Rev. John Teed, son of Rev. Richard Teed (8 years), Rev. Trevor Moffat (6 years) and Rev. Christopher Skinner (14½ years), the first Minister in Victoria to have been trained for ordination in Australia and to pass into the higher life while actively serving the Church as Minister.

The details of this very potted history of our Church was mainly extracted from a chapter in the book *A History of the New Church in Australia 1832 – 1980* by Ivan Robinson (father of Karl and Brian Robinson). Should anyone wish to read this book, copies are freely available by contacting Neville Jarvis, 03 8555 9116 or email New.Church.Victoria@gmail.com.

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Vale Lorna Brown, New Church in Victoria member

Just days short of her 91st birthday, Lorna Brown passed away beautifully and peacefully mid-morning on Thursday, 10th, January. Lorna had known she was being called; had said her goodbyes as recently as the day beforehand; had earlier chosen songs to be sung at her funeral; assured family she had no fear of what was to come and told them she was looking forward to it. What daughter Judy has described as a “joyously sad” celebration of her life, (albeit funeral Service), was held on Thursday, 17th, led by Rev Julian Duckworth. It speaks volumes about Lorna that some 120 people gathered to honour her at this Service, all ages being present from a month old baby to a long time dear friend, 94 years old. Many people said to family afterwards it had been the best and most uplifting funeral service they had ever attended.

The last decade or so of Lorna’s life hadn’t been wonderful, healthwise; though talking with her you would scarcely know that. Lorna didn’t focus on those challenges, or complain about them; and only if you asked did she talk, always briefly, about them. No, invariably she would shift the conversation to others, concerned at what was unfolding for them, anguished that she couldn’t do more, and trusting the Lord that in the end all would be well for them. It was always Lorna looking out for others, at the same time quietly accepting of the limitations that health issues imposed on her in the latter part of her life here.

The more you came to know Lorna the more you came to love her. She was cheerful, unaffected, down to earth and friendly, had a lovely sense of humour and was full of good fun. She also loved the Lord and her walk with Him was absolutely central to her. And for all that Lorna didn’t claim vast knowledge, or reading, her New Church faith ran deep and strong. A truly loyal member of the Ballarat Group Lorna loved the Services, more recently led by daughter Judy, and the fellowship over a meal afterwards. And at Hobson House, she regularly read from the Word at Services conducted in the Nursing Home, most recently the Christmas story of the angel Gabriel’s appearance to Mary (Luke Chapter 1: 26 to 38).

Whilst happy in the thought of her resurrection, family especially will miss Lorna's physical presence. In addition to her and Arthur's (her late husband's) children - Judy, Wendy and Dot - there are 12 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren. They were all close to her heart and Lorna will surely be present, in spirit, at the forthcoming marriage of grandson Richard, Peter's and Dot's son, to which she had so looked forward.

I write as one of many whose lives have been truly blessed by knowing Lorna and sharing something of life's pilgrimage through this world with her.

by **Rev. Ian A Arnold** (retired New Church Minister living in Brisbane)

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Important – Arrangements for February and March

Sunday 17 February

The Service this day will be conducted by Rev. John Teed and will focus on the sacrament of the Holy Supper. This will be the last occasion when the sacrament will be administered in the Church at 426 High Street Road. The service itself will be somewhat shorter than usual to allow time for everyone who wishes it to view the area in Wadham House where services will be held from mid-March until further notice. Transport can be arranged over to Wadham House and back to the Church for those who would prefer not to drive on this first occasion there.

Sunday 3 March

This is the day for the closing service at 426 High Street Road. Rev. David Moffat, President of The New Church in Australia, has kindly agreed to travel from his home in Canberra to lead worship. We will also be delighted to have two Ministers, who served our Church in past years ~ Rev John Teed from 1973 to 1981 and Rev Trevor Moffat from 1986 to 1992, present and taking a part in the service.

While a first Sunday in the month, there will be no separate activity for the children although they will be included in the service via a separate talk, songs and pictures to colour and books to look at. It would be nice to have all the children sitting close together.

Following the service, a light catered lunch will be provided by the Church for those present to enjoy. An invitation to the service and lunch is being issued separately to all members and friends of the Church and their families and friends. For those wishing to attend, especially for the lunch, it is most important that you RSVP by the due date for catering purposes.

'The end is never the end for every ending is the beginning of a new adventure'

- Carl Jung

Sunday 17 March

This will be the first occasion when we will meet at Wadham House. A map is attached to this Newsletter to make it easy for those attending to locate it. The service will be on the ground floor and the best entry point is from the rear of the building either via the double doors or the ramp.

Sunday 31 March – 2019 Annual General Meeting

The annual meeting of members, to which all friends of the Church are equally invited, will be held at Wadham House commencing at 11.30am following a shorter than normal period of worship. A separate Notice will be issued along with the required Reports.

To the extent that we detest evil, goodness enters from heaven.

To the extent that we detest promiscuity, what is chaste enters.

To the extent that we detest fraud and unlawful gains, sincerity and justice enter.

To the extent that we detest hatred and revenge, loving kindness enters.

*And to the extent that we detest arrogance,
humility before God and love of others enter.*

To shun evil is to do good.

E. Swedenborg: *Apocalypse Explained* para. 803

Vacating 426 High Street Road, Mt. Waverley

With settlement due on the sale of the property on 20 March next, the building has to be cleared of all non-fixed furniture and equipment. As reported to members and friends who attended the Society meeting on 18 November, much thought had been given by the Board to what items should be retained or otherwise disposed of, the future direction and expectations of style of building being paramount. A listing of items indicating the Board's recommendations was handed out. Following discussion, the list was accepted. A new listing of items not to be retained was then prepared, one of its principle purposes being to give members and friends the opportunity to request any items they might wish to acquire. A copy of that listing is attached to this Newsletter; please note that should you wish to acquire any items listed, details need to be advised to the Church Secretary by Sunday 3 February.

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED. In the days after the closing service on 3 March and before settlement on 21 March, help will be need to pack up items which are to be retained ready for storage and the disposal of other items not otherwise being taken by members and friends. Any assistance that members and friends are able to give during this period would be greatly appreciated. Please phone Neville Jarvis on 8555 9116 or email anjarvis72@optusnet.com.au giving dates and times when you would be available. Thank you.

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How the Lord teaches us



The Lord teaches us when we read or hear the Word. When we read the Word regularly, we open ourselves to being guided by the Lord. And if we try to use what we learn to do good things and turn away from evil, it is as if we are being lifted up a stairway with angels at our side.

Heavenly loves — such as loving the Lord and the neighbour— open our minds to receive heavenly light or enlightenment from the Lord. People with these loves want to help other people so they are reading the Word with a useful purpose in mind. It is said that these heavenly loves soak up heaven's truths like a sponge soaks up water!

How do these passages from the Word and the spiritual writings of Swedenborg help us see the importance of looking to the Lord in His Word?

- *The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.* (John 6:63).
- *When the Word is read, the Lord comes in and teaches.* (*Secrets of Heaven* para. 6516:3).
- *Everyone who, while reading the Word, approaches the Lord alone, and prays to Him, is enlightened in the Word.* (*Doctrine of the Lord* para. 2).

Consider also these ideas from *The Steps of Truth* by Harold Cranch:

- The Lord has given each one of us the ladder or stairway that goes up to heaven, with angels going up and coming down.
- This ladder is the Lord's Word. As we learn truths from the Word it is as if we are taking steps up the ladder that leads to the Lord.
- As we learn the deeper meaning within the Word of God, we will be led to see the Lord Himself in it, teaching and leading us. For the Lord Himself is the Word.

From an article published in *New Church Vineyard*, an educational resource issued by the General Church of the New Jerusalem, USA -www.NewChurchVineyard.org

The Word has Divine force; it links together heaven and earth. For when the Word is read on earth the angels in heaven are stirred by the holiness contained in the internal sense. This happens because of the correspondences which exist within all the details of the literal text.

From *Secrets of Heaven* para 8971

Diary of Events in February, March and April 2019

February 2019

Sunday 3 10.30am **Family Service** led by **Neville Jarvis** at 426 High Street Road, Mt. Waverley
There will be **Bible story time** and related activities for the children

Sunday 10 No service

Sunday 17 10.30am **Sacramental Service** conducted by **Rev. John Teed** at 426 High Street Road, Mt. Waverley followed by an inspection visit to Wadham House

Sunday 24 No service
Ballarat – 318 Fussell Street. Devotional worship led by Judy Robinson commencing 3pm. For more information, phone 03 53 315 638

March 2019

Sunday 3 10.30am **Closing Service** conducted by **Rev. David Moffat, President of The New Church in Australia** at 426 High Street Road, Mt. Waverley
A light lunch will be served in the hall following the service. See details on page 4.

Sunday 10 No service

Sunday 17 10.30am **Service of Worship** led by **Neville Jarvis** at Wadham House, 52 Wadham Street, Mt. Waverley.

Sunday 24 No service
Ballarat – 318 Fussell Street. Devotional worship led by Judy Robinson commencing 3pm. For more information, phone 03 53 315 638

Sunday 31 10.30am 11.30am **Devotional Worship** led by **Karl Robinson** at Wadham House, 52 Wadham Street, Mt. Waverley.
2019 Annual General Meeting – A Notice of Meeting together with all relevant Reports will be forwarded to members separately.

ADVANCE NOTICES – APRIL 2019 ~

Activities at Wadham House, 52 Wadham Street, Mt. Waverley

Sunday 7 10.30am **Family service** led by **Neville Jarvis**. There will be **Bible story time** and related activities for the children

Sunday 14 No service

Friday 19 9.30am **Good Friday Morning Service** led by Karl Robinson

Sunday 21 10.30am **Easter Morning Service** led by Neville Jarvis

Sunday 14 No service

Duty Roster – Mt. Waverley / Wadham House

February 2019: Sunday 3 Elke & Klaus Drevermann
Sunday 17 Norma Whelan / John Cook

March 2019: Sunday 3 Marika Sivak
Sunday 17 Alexis & Neville Jarvis
Sunday 30 Karl & Rose Robinson

April 2019: Sunday 7 Elke & Klaus Drevermann

Note: If you are unavailable on the Sunday allocated, please contact a member of the Duty Roster to swap.