



THE NEW CHURCH CANADIAN

A Bi-monthly Newsletter of the General Church in Canada

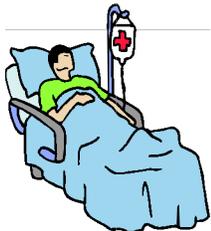
Issue 142

March 2011

Pessimism and Gloom – or Hope and Joy?

By Rev. Brian Smith

I'm the kind of kind of guy who enjoys making sweeping generalizations about "our times." I like to look for and think about trends, and because of my natural leanings towards pessimism, most of my sweeping generalizations have us headed towards disaster.



It sort of depends on the day whether I am thinking about a disaster of health, environment, war, economy, moral decay or declines in our church. I'm quite comfortable moving between all sorts of different disaster scenarios in my contemplation. And this tendency only gets worse in the middle of winter.

What I realize is that I am not unusual in this past-time of pessimism. People seem to be very drawn to thinking about coming doom. Whether its youthful angst about the entrenched institutional problems handed down from previous generations or the elderly lament over slipping values and waning integrity in modern society, most people find themselves engaging from time to time in some gloomy thoughts.

This type of thinking is not unique to the 20th and 21st centuries. The content of our worries change but the basic pattern remains the same. Some people think especially about a broad, global disaster, such as nuclear war, while others focus more on personal problems such as the fear of losing a job and going bankrupt.

Some of the most spectacular imagined scenarios of end times come from religious groups thinking about Judgment Day. Many Christians, as well as adherents of other faiths, draw on the dramatic imagery from the bible to set their imaginations running.

I don't personally worry much about stars falling to earth or rivers turning to blood. Not only are many of the apocalyptic descriptions in the Bible physically impossible, but there are indications even in the text that they are not to be taken literally (Rev 1.10). But, I think the Bible is a good place to look in order to understand human tribulation and fear. What can we learn from the Lord's Word about our fears and concerns of disaster?

In some ways, pessimism is all about expectation management. If I am miserable now, and expect life to get worse, then I can only be positively surprised. Though many things could be said about the contrasting attitudes of pessimism and optimism, I'd like to focus on one question which can be phrased in different ways: Is life bad? Should we expect hardship and suffering? Can we count on hard and sometimes, terrible times? If the answer to these questions is yes, then perhaps we are justified in regularly frowning up at the sky and muttering that it looks like a storm is coming.



I'd like to offer a fly-by tour of the literal teaching in the bible. I don't expect the bible to tell us about whether the economy will crash in 2017 or if a disease will break out, but I expect the Bible to tell us about our spiritual life and to indicate the type of path we need to walk on the way to heaven.

We begin in Paradise; the Garden of Eden is a place of plenty, of security and of closeness with our Creator. But we disobey and leave. By stepping outside of the Lord's plan we curse ourselves with painful child birth and laborious effort required to find sustenance (Gen 3.16-19).

Cain kills his brother Able. Mankind is so evil that it is to be destroyed in a massive flood. Noah survives, but only after enduring 150 days at sea. After the storm, there is a time of multiplying and bearing fruit. Noah makes grateful sacrifices in worship and the Lord provides a beautiful rainbow and a promise.

At the end of chapter 8 of Genesis we read the Lord's words to Noah: "I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done. While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease." (Gen. 8. 21, 22).

Now even though we haven't made it far in our exploration of the bible, this promise to Noah gives a strong indication, in a literal way, about the pattern of life. We see that the Lord is promising not to "curse the ground" or "destroy everything living thing" This gives us some confidence that there is some limit to the hardship we have to endure. We also learn that "the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth" which indicates that we know where to look for the source of our troubles. Then there is the poetic promise of cycles of life, "seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, day and night". There is a beautiful rhythm to these words, just as there is a rhythm to our lives. The Lord promises that these cycles of good and bad times, of warm and cold times will not cease.

We see these cycles throughout the bible, hardship and struggle interspersed with victories and times of peace. The pattern set in these first couple chapters of the Bible is continued throughout. We have cyclical stories culminating in mountain top moments of plenty, but characterized by confusion, struggle and pain along the way. The Lord's life in this world was no different. He was transfigured on a mountain, He touched, fed, healed and taught crowds of people. But He was also dogged by spiritual and natural trials. The power-brokers of day spent their time trying to trick Him in His words and also working to physically harm Him.

Life can come across as extremely rough at times. In early March it can feel like winter will never end. Wars, famine, illness, corruption, depression, loss, fatigue and natural disasters plague us. We look to the book about our life for answers about what to expect.

If you've ever tried reading straight through all the books of Kings and the prophets it can seem like endless misery. So, part of the message in the bible is that we should not expect the path to heaven to be all singing and dancing.

But even there, in the darkest seeming descriptions in the bible, we consistently find moments of light and hope. Bad king follows bad king, leading Judah and Israel deeper into sin. But then we might find an Asa or Jehoshaphat or even a Hezekiah or Josiah. Amidst the predictions of invasion, plague and oppression in the prophets we find beautiful moments of inspiration: "Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you." (Isa. 61.1)

This pattern reminds me to keep a couple things in mind to balance our bleaker times. The Lord promises cycles. How ever bad things are, I can trust that change will come. More broadly, the Lord has a plan. The messy and dark seeming nature of the bible mirrors my hardships in life, but threaded throughout is a perfect plan. Even when I cannot see the purpose of a given moment, I can trust that there *is* a purpose. Bitter resignation is not the appropriate response to hardship. *Secrets of Heaven* teaches that "one who overcomes [in temptation] is indeed in doubt, but still, if he suffers himself to be cheered by hope, he stands fast in what is affirmative." (AC 2338).

There are countless trials and temptations described in the bible and likewise in our lives. But our task is to remain in what is affirmative. Jesus told His disciples, "In the world you *will* have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (John 16.33, emphasis added).

This is His promise. He has overcome the world of hardship. We are being drawn toward a blessed purpose. Just as the bible begins with a Paradisaical scene, it culminates in one. The holy city New Jerusalem has the same tree of life. It has a crystal river. The Lord promises to wipe away every tear; all the hardship and pain of our journey. "Surely" He says, "I am coming quickly" (Rev. 22.20).



General Church Assembly

Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

June 23 – 26, 2011

- The **Assembly Planning Committee** has finalized all the details for registration.
- Registration will be available online www.qcassembly.org by March 18.
- A print registration piece will go out by mail with the next issue of *Around the New Church*.
- Look for the cost-saving strategy.

- Plan now to attend the Assembly with your friends and family.
- More than 48 different workshops and presentations will be offered.
- 15 or more activities will be running in the afternoons.

- It is happening!
- It's going to be great!
- Stay tuned!

The Rule of 30

Rev. James P. Cooper



From time to time I speak to a widow or widower who has been left behind in the natural world for a long time. I have sometimes heard from them that there is great sorrow when they reach the 30th year because, they believe, that means their spouse has gone on to heaven without them. They believe this to be true because they've heard that no one stays in the World of Spirits for more than 30 years. Since *Heaven and Hell* 426 says that in so many words, they have good reason to think so. But what does that teaching really mean in our world? Does it apply in the way we think it does?

People are fond of saying that there is “no time and space in heaven” which is something that needs to be understood in context. When Swedenborg says there is no time in space in heaven, he is getting ready to explain how time and space in the spiritual world are different from time and space in the natural world – not that they don't exist at all (See *Heaven and Hell* 162 ff). He describes how an angel's day is divided into morning, afternoon, and evening and how there are different activities for the different parts of the day. That's time. He also describes how angels have homes that are distinctly and uniquely their own, and the homes are reflections of their own loves and character. An angel knows where his home is. He can go visit a friend somewhere else and find his way home again. That's space. So we can see that heaven really does have both time and space, it's just that they are measured by states of love and wisdom which are spiritual things rather than the relative positions of natural things like stars, planets, and their moons.

So, if Swedenborg knows that in the spiritual world the notions of time and space are quite different from how they are perceived in the world of nature, why does he say that no one stays in the World of Spirits for more than 30 years? My conclusion is that what he is trying to convey is how that process feels to the spirit that is passing through those states.

Imagine, if you will, that you were giving a spirit an exit interview as he was finishing up his work in the World of Spirits and getting ready to move on to his permanent home in heaven. You ask him, “so, how long did it take?” He responds, “You know, I was a very confused person when I first came here. I had so many different ideas about things that it was really hard to sort out what was true from what was false, what was right from what was wrong. But the teachers here are so patient. They wouldn't quit on me. They gently led me by showing me what was really in my own heart, and helped me find the way. But, I was a hard case. It seemed like it took 30 years! But now I'm truly ready for life in heaven.”

If a spirit said that it felt like 30 years in spiritual time, how long would that be in natural time? Exactly. You really can't do the math. There's no fixed ratio between the natural and the spiritual.

Although there are always exceptions, it seems that the thrust of *Heaven and Hell* 494 and *Conjugal Love* 45 is to reassure those of us still in the world that earthly relationships are preserved and do matter to spirits. When we arrive in the World of Spirits we will be greeted by family and friends, and especially sweet will be the greeting of a beloved spouse that's gone before. There's no statute of limitations on love.



The Law of Attraction vs. Divine Providence

by Liz Lichti

I wrote this article with the intention of putting my thoughts down in writing, more for my own benefit than others. However, when asked to submit something I decided to expand this. I do not profess to be an expert on the doctrines of Emanuel Swedenborg, but do love reading and meditating on them as often as possible and would welcome any other views and ponderings on this topic.

I have been reading books on the “Law of Attraction” and positive thinking for almost 2 decades , including titles such as *Think and Grow Rich* by Napoleon Hill, and I guess I could say I have been actively ‘practicing’ it in my life for the past 6 years, with limited success. I figured I knew this subject pretty well. I even coached others on it within my energy coach practice. However, being raised Swedenborgian and familiar with the law of Providence, I started pondering how it compared to the Law of Attraction, as this was proving to be pretty elusive to many, including myself. I had asked a New Church pastor years ago how Providence worked, yet walked away dissatisfied with the answer, as it implied a hint of favouritism on God’s part, which didn’t sit right with me.



Over the past year I have been studying the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg more deeply and consistently, and pondering this Law of Attraction along with Providence. In November of 2009, I read *There is an Answer* by Candace Frazee, which was the catalyst for what felt like a ‘rebirth’ and awakening of Swedenborgianism for me. It completely lit me up to what my faith has to offer. On page 216 of her book, Candace addresses the Law of Attraction; however still being stuck in the new age view of it (with whom energy techniques are more widely embraced at this point), I had trouble completely grasping the Swedenborg view of it. I had come to the conclusion that Providence must actually be what has been termed “The Law of Attraction”, but couldn’t orchestrate in my mind how it all worked until recently.

It was during a Swedenborg Seekers book club gathering at my house where we have been studying *There is an Answer*, that I had one of those wonderful “aha” moments. It obviously took me that long to be in an open state to grasp the new truth. Candace Frazee had Skyped in from California with one other member and I posed the question yet again after mulling over in my mind something I had read in her book relating to the Law of Attraction.

In a nut shell, the Law of Attraction is based on our thoughts; that what we think about and put our attention on, we consequently attract into our lives. So, anything tragic or a disease that may happen in a good person’s life is something that person has brought upon themselves due to their own thoughts. Candace makes reference to Rhonda Byrne’s best-selling book, *The Secret*, in her book *There is an Answer*. She introduces the fact that the Law of Attraction is actually completely opposite to the law of the Divine Providence! It took me months to get the ‘aha’, even after reading her book 3 times.

My moment came while we were going over the formula that Candace put in her book to simplify Swedenborg's explanation:

“Thought + love = action
Thought – love = thought
Love – thought = impossible
Action – thought = compulsion
Action – love = compulsion”



So, having already re-acquainted myself with the fact from my Swedenborgian roots, that we are not responsible for our thoughts neither good nor bad, (we are only recipients or vessels for good and evil and the origin of thoughts comes from good spirits and evil spirits as Swedenborg tells us), the appearance that we attract bad things into our lives due to our thoughts, is just that, an appearance. It reminds me of the cartoons where an angel sits on one shoulder and a devil on the other and we have the responsibility of the choice only. If we are presented with a good thought and we have a love of doing good, we can choose and most likely will take action, because our love is equal to our will. The same with evil, if we have a will towards evil when the thought of doing evil arrives from the hells into our mind and we act on it, we will attract the outcome of that choice when combined with the action.

In my experience, that makes sense of why the Law of Attraction does not work consistently, because if a thought is just a thought with nothing else it is nothing. Just thinking about receiving more money isn't going to make it appear, unless we are driven by our love to take the action necessary to receiving that money (good or evil), whether that be manipulating and controlling others to get to that end or helping people. I believe that's also why people actively practicing evil can appear successful and fortunate - it's all about their will and action. If they have a love of money driven by their ruling love for power, they will become wealthy. Likewise the person who is driven by a ruling love of helping others will find wealth and success as an effect of that love, but not if the focus is on the monetary rewards. It all comes down to our intention or 'ruling love', as Swedenborg refers to it.

In the example of someone suffering from an illness or disease; they are not responsible for bringing it on themselves because of their thoughts, as bad things come from the hells and affect us all in different degrees, and our lifestyle and diet choices are part of those good or bad choices. If we choose to be bitter and resentful about a disease or plight, then the enjoyment and consequent abundance of our life will be determined from our choice of how we deal with it and we will either be in the flow of Providence, or blocking it. When we make good choices in bad situations, then we allow ourselves to catch the wave of Providence – a law that is always consistent, non-preferential and never changing, as is God's love.

I'd like to see evil spirits get more credit for bad health, misfortune, accidents, etc. They love when we look to ourselves and others for responsibility of our life's struggles. I guess we could say it's like the hell's twisted form of modesty; they hate to be discovered, so I say, let's expose them! ONLY good and ALL good comes from the Lord.

The law of Divine Providence is available for everyone; we just have to get out of its way. In my experience, it's all about saying “No” to the evil spirits on one shoulder and saying “Yes” to the good spirits on the other, according to our loves, and praying to the Lord for help with the process.

(Just for the record, I usually make the wrong choice first and have to correct it before moving on). Even with all of my faults and mistakes, I have personally found that when I constantly lean on the Lord through life's temptations and human tendencies toward evil, and just put complete trust in the Lord's care, I mean **really know** that he WILL provide no matter what valley of hell I'm working to crawl out of, He provides answers. But the Lord doesn't stop there. When I put His answers to use, He provides far beyond what I could ever wish for; spiritually, physically and materially, and yes even monetarily! Not only that; temptations don't last as long and have less of an effect.

As Swedenborg conveys:

"When temptation reaches the last limit of a person's power, that person is elevated by the Lord and brought into a bright state of hope." Secrets of Heaven 8165

"Those who are in the stream of Providence are at all times carried along toward everything that is happy, regardless of the appearance of the means." Secrets of Heaven 8478:4

"There is no such thing as chance; apparent accident or fortune is Providence in the ultimate of order." Secrets of Heaven 6493

"The Lord wishes to draw a person all the way to Himself and in so doing to bless him in every way with glory and happiness." Secrets of Heaven 6645

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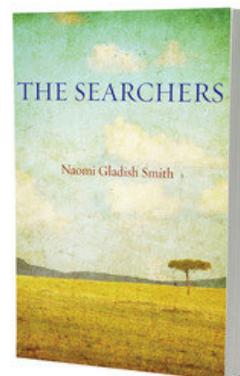
New Book from the Swedenborg Foundation

The Searchers

The third book in an acclaimed series about souls in the afterlife.

A desperate young man takes his life hoping for nothingness, only to find an existence in an afterlife full of its own troubles and challenges. The aunt who appears when he awakens, the damaged girl who seeks solace tending her roses, a Chicago cop he fears will discover his past, an alluring young woman—all lead him through his discovery of this new world.

The Searchers follows these people and their classmates at a spiritual academy where they are given the opportunity to learn eternal truths and about themselves. While some will move on to heaven, others discover a place we might call hell, but they will call home.



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Editor's note: The following articles are three of six papers written by the present eighth grade students of the Carmel New Church School in Kitchener, ON. They presented them to the Society at the Swedenborg Banquet on January 29, 2011. The last three will be published in the May issue of NCC.

The Early Life of Emanuel Swedenborg

by *Natalie Kuhl*

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Tonight, I'd like to ask you to think back to when you were eleven years old. Remember how you were in grade six or so, in elementary school. But if you had been in Swedenborg's time, you would have been going to university. Imagine! University at eleven years old! Also, imagine what it would be like to have a discovery of yours put in the museum of that same university with your name on it. You are imagining what it was like to be Emanuel Swedenborg in his early years.

Swedenborg was born in 1688 on the 29th of January in Stockholm, Sweden. His father was Jesper Svedberg, and his mother was Sara Behm – she died when Swedenborg was eight years old. Swedenborg also had an older brother who died when he was also eight years of age – whose name was Albert.



Swedenborg enjoyed learning when he was young, and at eleven years old, Swedenborg went to university – it was named Uppsala Academy. His father worked there, in the Theology department. While in university, Swedenborg studied chemistry, mechanics, mathematics, geology, anatomy, astronomy, and physiology, to name a few. Later in his life, he wrote books on some of these subjects, and they all came together to prepare him to understand and study spiritual teachings, as well as to be able to pen the Writings.

Swedenborg eventually decided not to go to his university anymore, and went to live with his family in a place called Brunsbo. He wanted to go to England to continue and finish his schooling immediately - but there was a war taking place in Sweden so he had no access across the sea – and therefore, he had to stay and live with his family for a year. However, throughout his life, Swedenborg made multiple trips to London, England; including being there when he died in 1772 on the 29th of March.

Along with Swedenborg's family, there was a man named Dr. Johan Moraeus. He and Swedenborg were looking for fossils one day, around the year 1710, and they found a huge bone – a whale's jaw bone. It was put in the Uppsala Academy museum and named "Swedenborg's Whale." However, people did not know how the whale could have ended up in the middle of Sweden.

During this time, there was a plague that spread into Sweden – called the bubonic plague – which killed 20,000 people in Stockholm in the year 1710. Luckily, Swedenborg was not one of those people. Around the time of the plague, a friend of Swedenborg's family, who was a sea captain, asked if Swedenborg wanted to come on a boat voyage along with him. There were different encounters with danger on the voyage. The most dangerous event that Swedenborg encountered was when Swedenborg and a few of his friends went into a restricted area meant for sick people only. The people in control found out that Swedenborg came from Sweden – the place that had just had a plague pass through it – and they gave a warning to Swedenborg that they would hang him – but they ended up not doing so.

Swedenborg never married. This can be considered as a positive thing, because once Swedenborg began contacting spiritual beings and devoting his time to writing, he may have not had much time for his wife. There was also the fact that when Swedenborg visited heaven, he found out that his future wife was waiting for him there.

Swedenborg's life had experiences and tragedies, setbacks and accomplishments. He wrote the Writings; a collection of spiritual books that give us knowledge about heaven, hell, and many spiritual truths. The Writings also gave us knowledge about the Lord and the angels, which Swedenborg had the privilege to be able to see himself.

Swedenborg knew the day he would die. On that day, he asked two women what the time was. The women said that it was five o'clock. Swedenborg then said thank you to the women, and silently drifted into the spiritual world. He would then go to the place where he had visited time and time again – and become one of the beings he had learned so much about – an angel.
Thank you and have a good night.

The Call of Emanuel Swedenborg

by Brock Reesor

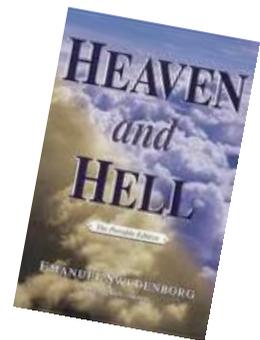
Good Evening peers, teachers, and parents;

We are all gathered here today to celebrate our annual Swedenborg Banquet. But not just to celebrate, but to honour a man, Emanuel Swedenborg; a scientist, philosopher, writer, inventor and zoologist. But out of all those brilliant things that he did, I am going to talk to you about **THE CALL OF EMANUEL SWEDENBORG.**

The call of Emanuel Swedenborg occurred over a period of two years. The Lord called to Swedenborg in a vision to tell him that it was time to record The Writings. Swedenborg was lead to write all of the volumes of the Writings, including Conjugal Love, Heaven and Hell and many more books. Since then, these books have influenced and inspired others to do well.

The first time Swedenborg was called by the Lord, was in 1744 and the experience has been described as follows: Swedenborg went to bed at 10:00 p.m. and within half an hour he heard a roaring noise, like wind. He started to tremble from head-to-foot, and he describes that he felt that he was in the presence of something "indescribably holy". Swedenborg then asked the Lord to make him "worthy of this grace". Swedenborg continued to pray and felt hands upon his own and then saw the Lord face-to-face. "It was a countenance of a holy mien, and all was such as cannot be described ... His countenance was such, too, while He lived on earth." After this encounter, Swedenborg interpreted it as the Lord telling him to "Love Me truly". Swedenborg felt that it would be a sin to doubt that he had seen Christ, the Son of God.

The second time Swedenborg was called upon by the Lord was in 1745 and Swedenborg was doing something very ordinary – he was having a meal at an inn. Towards the end of the meal he noticed a sort of dimness that was then replaced with the sight of a man sitting in the corner of the room. At this



point, Swedenborg was frightened and the man said to him, "Eat not so much!" Later that same night when Swedenborg returned to his own room, he saw the same man, but this time was not afraid of him. The man said that he was the Lord God, the Creator and Redeemer of the world and that he had chosen Swedenborg to declare to men the spiritual contents of the Scriptures, and that the Lord, He himself would declare to Swedenborg what he should write on this subject.

That same night the world of spirits, hell and heaven were opened to Swedenborg. When the Lord opened Swedenborg's spiritual sight, he had sight of flames and lights, and he knew they were all signs from God in heaven. He also had very strange dreams, and he thought that they had no meaning. But they were meant for him in order that he could scribe the Writings; he was compelled to do so.

Now, we are getting close to the end of Swedenborg's life. The last book that he wrote was True Christian Religion; it was the last book that he ever wrote before he died. (Although it was all in Latin, it is now translated into English, French, German, Icelandic, Russian, Danish, Italian, Welsh, Dutch, Polish, Hungarian, Spanish, Arabic and Hindu languages.)

Emanuel Swedenborg died a happy servant of the Lord, knowing that he had succeeded, by following the Lord and doing what he dreamed of doing; being an inventor, writing the LORD'S Writings. This could be a lesson to all of us: If we follow our dreams and the Lord, like Swedenborg, we will have a successful life. You will be prosperous in the Lord's eyes and yours.

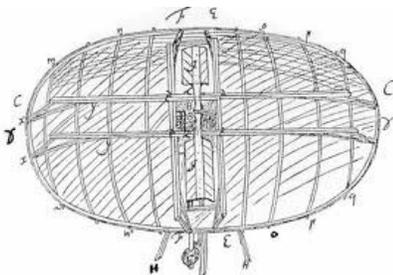
This concludes my speech on the call of Emanuel Swedenborg. Thank you all for coming, and listening.

Swedenborg's Inventions

by Calvin Heinrichs

Hello Parents, Teachers, Mr. Heinrichs and Fellow Students;

Tonight is the night when you will all hopefully go home knowing a little bit more about a great man named Emanuel Swedenborg. I will be specifically touching upon his scientific life, when he made many great inventions and discoveries. He was a man who was always thirsty for more knowledge, he developed a good work ethic, and was driven to become a successful scientist.



Swedenborg was a scientist and inventor, well-known for his wonderful ideas in Science and Anatomy. He was very smart and some of the things he invented were way ahead of his time. For example, he created schematics for a flying machine, a submarine, a flying carriage, and a machine gun. These were things that most people of that era could only dream about.

He created a floating dry dock which had the ability to remain stable because of a counter weight under the dock which held it in a stationary position. In addition, he developed a system of locks for moving large ships across land in Sweden from one port to another. He designed an airtight hot air stove as well, and on top of all that he fixed the problem of foaming chimneys, which was a very real danger at that time. What happened was that too much pressure would build up in the chimneys and then they would start to spew forth poisonous toxins that even killed some people who inhaled the fumes in the

house. Plus, to round things out, he even made an ear trumpet to aid those who were hard of hearing.

Swedenborg was also highly noted for his knowledge in the area of magnetism. One of his theories was that North and South always pulled the same capacity, otherwise the earth would go off rotation and then life as we know it would look very differently today. He then used his extensive mathematical knowledge to write and publish the first Swedish book on algebra.

Swedenborg was intelligent in more than just the sciences of Mechanics and Mathematics; he also studied the science of Anatomy. He managed to discover the function of the ductless glands and that the brain animates synchronously with the lungs. Some of his discoveries in this field were included in the two volume work called *The Brain*. The main part is in the second volume and was called *The Search for the Soul*.

As a scientist, he was always eager to learn, so one day he decided that he would try to find the soul. But it was not as easy as he would have thought. His plan was to dissect cadavers and search in places like the brain and the heart, but when he could not find it there, he decided that he would search extensively throughout the entire human body. The soul was there and he knew it, but he could not see it with his earthly eyes, so he came to the conclusion that it belonged to the spiritual realm and therefore could only be seen with the eyes of the spirit.

In addition to his book on the brain he wrote a scientific book called *The Principia*. The Latin word "Principia" means: a fundamental principle, primary, or general law or truth from which others are derived. The work included much analysis of the experiments done by a man named Musschenbroek, who was a professor of natural philosophy and mathematics.

According to Ripley's "Believe It Or Not," Emanuel Swedenborg was the smartest man who ever lived by the estimate of his IQ which registered at an astounding 205, a whopping 29 points higher than Albert Einstein's IQ of 176. More recently, Steven Hawking, an English theoretical physicist and cosmologist as well as a Lucasian Professor of Mathematics and Science at Cambridge University, and is considered by many to be a modern day genius, had his IQ recorded at 169, again well short of Swedenborg's lofty score.

Swedenborg truly was a genius and Ripley in his book called him - an "explorer of science". Swedenborg was a man who had the remarkable ability to conceive ideas and make many things that no one else would be able to do until many years later. He was in some people's eyes a brilliant scientist, in other's a groundbreaking inventor, and in other's a skilled anatomist. But in my eyes, the most important thing he did was to be a dedicated Revelator. He spent the last thirty years of his life writing down all that the Lord revealed to him, in the books that we in the New Church call the Writings.

To me, Emanuel Swedenborg was undoubtedly the smartest mortal man by measure of his IQ and accomplishments, except of course for when the Lord came down to earth. Swedenborg helped this world in so many different ways: in science, mechanics, and anatomy; but his most important accomplishment was the Writings for the New Church which enables others to grow spiritually and come closer to the Lord. Swedenborg is a good role model for me and I hope you see him as a good role model as well.

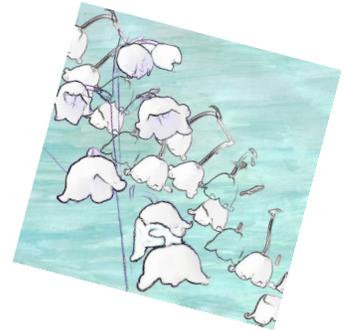
Thank you and good night!

This poem was written for the 1965 Arts and Crafts show sponsored by the Bryn Athyn Women's Guild, in appreciation for all that these women do for the church and community.

It combines allusions to two of the Lord's teachings that seemed to have special meaning for feminine uses: His admonishing His followers to have faith that, if God provides for the lilies of the fields "which toil not, neither do they spin," He will also provide for them; and His rebuking of Martha when she complained that Mary was neglecting the household duties to sit at His feet and listen.

To the Women's Guild

Asked to consider how the lilies grow,
Their satin beauty effortlessly lent,
And all that glory prodigally spent
To die unfruited after one brief glow —



Might not a Martha, now as long ago,
Turn from her cumbered serving to resent
Her sister's flower-like poise where calm, intent,
She sits withdrawn from bustling to and fro?



Yet from that better part which Mary chose,
Paused at His feet to love and understand,
The flowering of a woman's beauty grows
And turns to fruit in uses love has planned.

And see -- the sunlit garden paths disclose
Mary and Martha walking hand in hand.

Letter to the Editor

Re: General Church Survey

Hi, just wanted to say that the January 2011 issue of the NCC was most informative and I read it with great interest.

One thing I found interesting in the results of the recent survey was that there was no mention of the importance of sociability, nurturing, and the sense of belonging that membership gives one - or should give one. Perhaps it was expressed in another way or in areas that were not reported in this summary. To me the social interaction of those of like mind is very important, although, I am not in favor of forming a clique or being insular. Balance - that is what we need; supporting and encouraging one another's strengths and reaching out to others outside ourselves.

Thank you for your devotion to this use!

Paula Niall

NewChurchPerspective.com.

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SMILE

A little boy walked to and from school daily. Though the weather one morning was questionable and clouds were forming, he made his daily trek to the elementary school. As the afternoon progressed, the winds whipped up, along with thunder and lightning. The mother of the little boy felt concerned that her son would be frightened as he walked home from school and she herself feared that the electrical storm might harm her child. Following the roar of thunder, lightning would cut through the sky like a flaming sword. Full of concern, the mother quickly got into her car and drove along the route to her child's school. As she did so, she saw her little boy walking along, but at each flash of lightning, the child would stop, look up and smile. Another and another were to follow quickly and with each the little boy would look at the streak of light and smile. When the mother's car drew up beside the child she lowered the window and called to him, "What are you doing? Why do you keep stopping?" The child answered, "I am trying to look nice, God keeps taking my picture."



May God bless you today as you face the storms that come your way. And don't forget to SMILE!

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Worship Services

Carmel New Church, Kitchener – Sun., 11:00 am

Dawson Creek Church – Sun., 11:00 am

Grande Prairie / Debolt – Sun. / late afternoon

Olivet New Church, Toronto – Sun., 10:30 am

GCIC Meetings

Proposed Board Meeting Dates

April 9, 2011 2:30 pm Kitchener

Annual General Meeting

Preceded by supper at 6:30 PM

April 9, 2011 7:30 PM Kitchener

(A brief board meeting will follow immediately to elect officers)

Editorial Deadline

May Issue: April 15, 2011

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