



New Church Canadian

A Bi-Monthly Newsletter of General Church in Canada

Issue 210

THE SECOND COMING: WHY WE CELEBRATE NEW CHURCH DAY

Rev. James Cooper

Most Christians believe the Second Coming is yet to happen, but in June we will celebrate its 252nd anniversary! We need to stop for a moment and think about that. Do we realize how casually we speak about the Second Coming in the New Church? Do we have any idea how strange it must seem to those who are not familiar with our doctrines to hear us talk about the Second Coming, or even the life after death?

I once overheard a New Church woman express her sympathy for the death of a close friend's mother after a long and painful illness when they happened to meet at the pharmacy. She said to her friend, "I was so glad to hear that your mother died!" I remember looking around the store and seeing the shocked looks on people's faces as everyone turned to see who had said that. We in the church are so familiar with the spiritual world that the death of someone who is old and in pain is to us a blessing, a peaceful

passing from one life to another, something to look forward to when the end-of-life approaches.

Not only do we know what the spiritual world is like, but we also know some amazing things about its history, particularly the history of the Second Coming. This may also cause shock and surprise to those not in the church because the very idea that the states of heaven change and might therefore have a history to know is quite an idea in itself!

The Heavenly Doctrines of the New Church tell us that the Last Judgement and Second Coming of the Lord, foretold in the Prophets (such as Daniel), in the Gospels (particularly the 24th Chapter of Matthew), and in the book of Revelation, actually took place in the World of Spirits and was completed 252 years ago on the 19th Day of June, 1770 (See True Christian Religion 791).

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The World of Spirits is a place of introduction for people who have died, for although we have all been created to live in the spiritual world, hardly anyone is ready to go straight into heaven or hell immediately upon the death of the natural body. This is because everyone has elements of both good and evil, and these need to be sorted out before we can enter our final home. The World of Spirits lies between heaven and hell just so that it can be a place where both the good and evil from the world can be gathered, instructed, and finally prepared to enter their home society in heaven or hell when they themselves are ready.



Each of us, while we live in the world, has within us a mixture of good and evil, truth and falsity. While we live in the world, the mixture is acceptable, but once we die, we must either remove all the evil and falsity before entering heaven, or remove all good and truth before entering hell, for there cannot be a confusion or mixture of good and evil in either heaven or hell, and no one in heaven or hell is allowed to have a "divided" mind, that is, a mind that contains both good and evil loves.

At least, this is what happens when things are in the order of creation. But when a church is coming to its end, as happens from time to time in history, and before the Lord has established a new church to take its place and serve its uses to the human race, the World of Spirits comes into a state of confusion and disorder because those spirits who are entering it from the world are themselves in a

state of confusion and disorder. And whenever and wherever there are confusion and disorder, the evil spirits are sure to be there, adding to the turmoil and unhappiness. We are told that the evil spirits pretended that they were angels, and the new spirits from earth were so ignorant about spiritual things that they were unable to see through their deception, and so were captured in "false heavens" set up in the World of Spirits. This was the spiritual circumstance within the Jewish Church that made it necessary for the Lord to assume the Human form and come to earth, the First Coming.

These spirits were made captives by their own ignorance of spiritual truth. The only way that they could be freed was by being taught the truth. The problem was that the truth of their own churches had been so changed by the ideas of men that it could no longer help with the process. The genuine truth of the Word was no longer known in the churches because it had been replaced by the doctrines of men. And so the Lord began His great judgement by coming to earth Himself and teaching truths about heaven in words and stories that were suited to those times and those people. These new truths were heard in the spiritual world as well and served to free the captives in the World of Spirits. They heard the Lord's teachings, and saw their captors for what they were, and fled from them. Once they could see the difference between good and truth, evil and falsity, they could then prepare themselves for heaven or hell, and were free to do so, and find their eternal homes.

The state of humanity was such at the time of the Lord's first coming that He was not able to reveal everything that He wanted us to know. What He could teach was enough to lead men to heaven and to provide for their spiritual freedom, but He wanted to give far more than people were ready to receive then. As He Himself said, *"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth"* (John 16:12, 13). Jesus had taught enough to get things moving, but there was more to be done, more to be taught, but He had to wait until the human race had digested what had already been taught before He could add anything more. So He returned to the spiritual world while humanity worked with the teachings that are now in the New Testament.

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Sometimes, when a person is critically ill, there is more than one disease attacking him. The main disease responds to medication and only then reveals second disease lurking behind it. But once it has been revealed, the second disease can also be treated. The same kind of thing happened in the spiritual world. Once the problems caused by the literalistic and power-hungry Pharisees and Sadducees had been solved by the teachings of the Lord, other evils in humanity began to reveal themselves as the leaders of the Christian Church began to use that church as a means to get personal power and possessions. By the year 325 AD the leaders of the Christian Church were deciding the doctrine of that church by political councils.



The Nicene council was convened by the Roman Emperor Constantine whose ability to rule depended on support from the Christian faction within his government. He wanted this issue of Christ's divinity solved quickly because the Christians couldn't be helping him if they were bickering among themselves. So he compelled them to come to a compromise doctrine so they could get back to the work of ruling an empire. When that happened, when the leadership of the Christian Church turned away from scripture and toward their own power and prestige, it marked the spiritual end of that church.

Any student of history can trace the fall of the Christian church from that time. Soon the leaders of the church became so corrupt that a whole period of the history of the church is called "the pornocracy," the rule of filth, by Christian historians. Hard on the heels of that came the Inquisitions, the Crusades and quite a few other un-churchlike things. It was forbidden for anyone but a priest to take the wine of the Holy Supper, or read the Bible, and no church

services were conducted in a language understood by ordinary people.

Still speaking from the point of view of history, as Europe emerged from the "Dark Ages" (a spiritual darkness caused by the doctrines of the Church) and began to experience a rebirth of freedom of thought, many great men began to question the hold that the church had placed on the bodies, minds, and spirits of men, and through their questioning and thought, the Reformation was born. But as often happens when a movement arises to counteract an abuse, the pendulum swings too far in the other direction. While the Catholic church had put emphasis on obedience to the rituals of the church, or "works," the Reformers decided to move entirely away from works to faith without works and began to teach that faith alone would save. The problem with the Catholic Church was with the doctrines that were made by men in councils, but the Reformers missed that point, and instead of turning back to scripture, based their doctrine on the views of different men in different councils. The two great movements of the Christian Church swept back and forth across the face of Europe, and thousands died because they said their prayers in the wrong language – or their kings did.

And as they died, they were entering the World of Spirits without sufficient genuine truth to be able to make the basic decisions between good and evil, truth and falsity. The hells were again able to rise up and set up their false heavens in the World of Spirits. Again, innocent people from the world were prevented, through their own ignorance of spiritual truth, from entering heaven and remained in the Word of Spirits. The falsities that had lain hidden beneath those that had been dealt with by the judgement on the Jewish Church were now exposed in their fullness. It was time for the Lord to finish the work that He had begun when He came to earth as Jesus Christ, it was time for Him to show all people that the Word did not teach either works alone, or faith alone, but the truth that the life of faith and charity together is the path to heaven.

The nature of prophecy is such that it is very difficult to tell what it really means when you first hear it. It is only after the prophecy has been fulfilled that you can recognize it. We know that the 12 disciples did not understand that Jesus Christ had come

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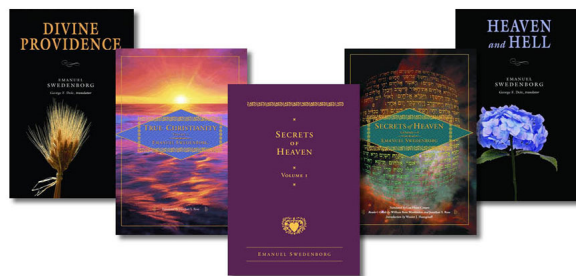
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to establish a heavenly kingdom until after He had refused to fight the soldiers who arrested Him when betrayed by Judas in the Garden of Gethsemane and allowed Himself to be crucified and then rose again, although the Old Testament was full of prophecies of exactly that sequence of events. In the same way the prophecies of the Second Coming are not so clear until you have seen the event in the past. Then you can look at what happened and see if it fits the prophecies.



The Lord first opened the spiritual eyes of Emanuel Swedenborg in the year 1743. He spent the next 27 years being guided through the spiritual world, and, like John, being commanded to write down the things he saw. His observations filled volumes, detailed notes of things seen and heard at the command of the Lord Himself, and perhaps the most important thing he saw and reported during those years was that the Lord was making His Second Coming, not in person, but in the spiritual sense of the Word. Swedenborg was shown that every verse in the Old and New Testaments contained a spiritual sense that could be worked out using what was called “the science of correspondences.” By this new science, the Bible became a work that spoke of the Lord and His kingdom in every verse instead of being a book that appeared to be merely a history of the Jewish people. But most important, it told us that when Jesus said that He would return in “the clouds of heaven,” it meant that He would be reappearing through a new understanding of the stories of the Old and New Testaments. The stories are represented by clouds because, like mist, they stand in the way of the genuine meaning within, but they are

clouds of heaven because the truths contained in the Bible are heavenly truths from God.



So, the Lord came again, not in person, but through a new revelation that opened the spiritual sense of the Word so that for the first time it could speak to all the spiritual states of people if only they used the proper key. This new truth was revealed in the World of Spirits as well, and as before, when the confused unhappy spirits who had lived a good life on earth heard the genuine truth from the Lord, they immediately recognized it, loved it, and made it their own. This new truth made it possible for them to see their captors for what they were and reject them, thus allowing them to freely choose their own heavenly society.

As reflect on these things, let us resolve to turn to the Word for ourselves, and with the knowledge that it contains heavenly truths that will help us live happy lives in this world and the next, make a covenant with the Lord today to make those truths our own by bringing them into our daily life, by striving to throw out those evils that oppose them, and by living a life of charity to all. If we do these things, then the Lord will indeed have made His Coming, for He will have come into our lives bringing peace, happiness, and eternal life.



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2022 MARRIAGE RETREAT REVIEW

By Rev. Justin Schorran

Last month, we had the pleasure of holding the marriage retreat once again. This time we had a few friends join us from Toronto! Nine couples attended altogether which made for a great group size and lively discussion.

The retreat consisted of four worship services, led by Rev. Jim Cooper, the Rt. Rev. Bradley Heinrichs and myself. On Saturday morning, we had a discussion on the Faith of the New Church with an eye to its relation to marriage. We noted that the core doctrinal tenets of the faith of the New Church do not include any statement on marriage (see *Conjugal Love* 82), but this doesn't make marriage any less important to the faith and life of the New Church. Saturday afternoon, the Rt. Rev. Bradley Heinrichs led a discussion on honesty and simulations in marriage and we considered whether or not the idea of "fake it 'til you make it" is good doctrine. Both were useful and productive conversations.

In addition to the worship and doctrinal class, we had lots of free time to explore and enjoy the nearby town of Collingwood. And on Saturday night, we went out to dinner together.

All in all, the marriage retreat was a great time to relax and focus on the precious jewel of human life that the Lord wishes for all of us to enjoy, if not in this world, then certainly in the next!

Would you be interested in joining next year? Stay tuned, because we are planning to have it again in the spring. Hope to see you then!

-Justin Schorran



FROM THE GCIC EVP/REGIONAL PASTOR

By Rev. James Cooper

RETIREMENT OF REV. MICHAEL COWLEY

Bishop Buss travelled to Toronto on May 22 to announce the retirement of Michael Cowley, Pastor of the Olivet congregation. Michael has served as a priest of the New Church in a several pastorates since 1982. We are happy to say that Michael has agreed to continue serving the church in his retirement as travelling minister, primarily serving Dawson Creek, B.C. and Grande Prairie, AB.

At the same time, Bishop Buss has appointed Rev. Dr. Jong-Ui Lee, the current Assistant to the Pastor, to be Interim Pastor. The plan is for Olivet to take some time to revisit their strategic plan and then enter into the pastoral selection process.

TRAVEL

Things seem to be opening up, and we have been able to have good visits to Vancouver, Dawson Creek/Grande Prairie, and Ottawa recently. The restrictions on worship have been removed and the airline schedules are getting better, but we still have to work around the shortage of rental cars which has gotten especially bad during the summer holiday season. We usually have a lighter schedule during the summer, and we will use the quiet time to work on the visiting schedule for next fall. I expect that it will be very similar to what we were doing before the pandemic. The bulk of the visits will fall to Michael Cowley and Justin Schorran. We will be in touch in due course.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

In the previous issue, Paula Niall asked for additional information about The Rev. William Worcester. Here's what we found. Thanks to the Rev. Stephen Cole, and the Rev. Kurt Nemitz who assisted me in the search.

WILLIAM LORING WORCESTER was born in Waltham, Mass., Aug. 16, 1859; died in Intervale, NH, Nov. 18, 1912. He served as Ass't. Pastor of Philadelphia New Church Society from 1885-1894; Pastor, 1894-1911. He was President of the New Church Theological School in Cambridge, Mass., 1908; Minister of Cambridge Society of the New Church, 1911; President of the New Church Theological School, Cambridge, Mass., 1908; General Pastor of the Pennsylvania Association, 1899-1911; General Pastor of the Mass. Association; and President of the General Convention of the Church of New Jerusalem.

Rev. W.L. Worcester was the fourth minister in direct line. He accompanied his father on a journey to Egypt and Palestine, 1881-2. In 1904 he published *On Holy Ground. Bible Stories with Pictures of the Holy Lands*. He has also published several books entitled *Sower Notes* together with sermons in the *Helper* and religious papers in the *New Church Review*.

William Loring Worcester (1859-1939) was a grandson of Thomas Worcester, famous (or infamous) in New Church history. William was the author of a number of New Church collateral works, including *Language of Parable*.

One would have to go pretty far back to connect him with a "large English Worcester family," given that his immigrant ancestor came to New England 8 generations before him (in the 17th century.) He was certainly part of the large NEW England Worcester—one of the Worcester "dynasty" of New Church ministers.

Jim Cooper



THE ACADEMY OF THE NEW CHURCH



Bryn Athyn College of the New Church Presidential Search

Bryn Athyn College is seeking applicants for the position of President. The President is the chief executive officer of the school, reporting directly to the Board of Trustees which is chaired by the Chancellor, and has responsibility for and oversight of all campus administration, faculty, and students. More specifically, the President of Bryn Athyn College is responsible for:

- leading the school toward the achievement of its Charter purposes,
- leading the implementation of the strategic plan,
- working collaboratively with key stakeholders, such as the Board of Trustees, Academy Corporation, administrators, Faculty Council, students, Alumni Association, and other divisions of the Academy,
- developing the college's assets and seeking new ones.

Currently reporting to the President are the Dean of the Theological School, the Dean of Academics, the Dean of Faculty, the Dean of Student Life, the Chief Financial Officer, the VP of Enrollment Management, and the Director of Institutional Advancement.

Bryn Athyn College currently offers the following undergraduate majors: Biology, Business, Early Childhood and Special Education, English, Human Society, Interdisciplinary Studies, Psychology, and Religion. Its graduate degrees are the Master of Divinity Master of Arts in Religious Studies, and a Master of Science in Special Education. Eighty-five percent of students in a major graduate, and the general graduation rate continues to increase as more students see the college as their four-year degree school. While presently at 250 students, enrollment is expected to increase to 400.

As stated in the institution's by-laws, the successful candidate will be a member of the General Church of the New Jerusalem. Thus, the college seeks a candidate who loves both the New Church and liberal arts education. Professional experience in academia and a graduate degree are preferred, but the position is open to candidates with other backgrounds.

Applicants should submit a letter of interest and a curriculum vitae by **September 15, 2022**.

Nominations, application materials, and inquiries should be addressed to:

Bryn Athyn College Presidential Search Committee
Attention: Chancellor Peter Buss, Jr.
P.O. Box 743
Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Peter.Buss.Jr@newchurch.org
267-502-4918



PRAYERS FOR THE NEW JERUSALEM

Lord, thank You for giving us Your word so that we may come to know and love You. Help us to take delight in reading Your Word and teach us to understand Your new revelation. Amen.

Lord, thank You for the great signs in heaven that You showed long ago to Your disciple John. They were a prophecy of the birth of a new Christian Church. We praise You for the wonderful fulfillment of that prophecy, which happened on the 19th day of June in 1770, when You gathered Your disciples together in the spiritual world. Teach us to proclaim, as they did on that day, "The Lord God Jesus Christ is King, and His kingdom shall last forever and ever!" Be with us as we celebrate the anniversary of this joyful day. Amen.

O Lord, in Your second coming, You have revealed the hidden secrets of Your Word and showed us the marvels of heaven. Thank You for these blessings. Help us to grow closer to You and to Your heavenly kingdom. Amen.





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General Church in Canada Worship Services

Carmel New Church
Kitchener, ON



11:00am
In Person
and
Online

Dawson Creek New Church
Dawson Creek, BC



Olivet New Church
Etobicoke, ON

10:30am
In Person and Online



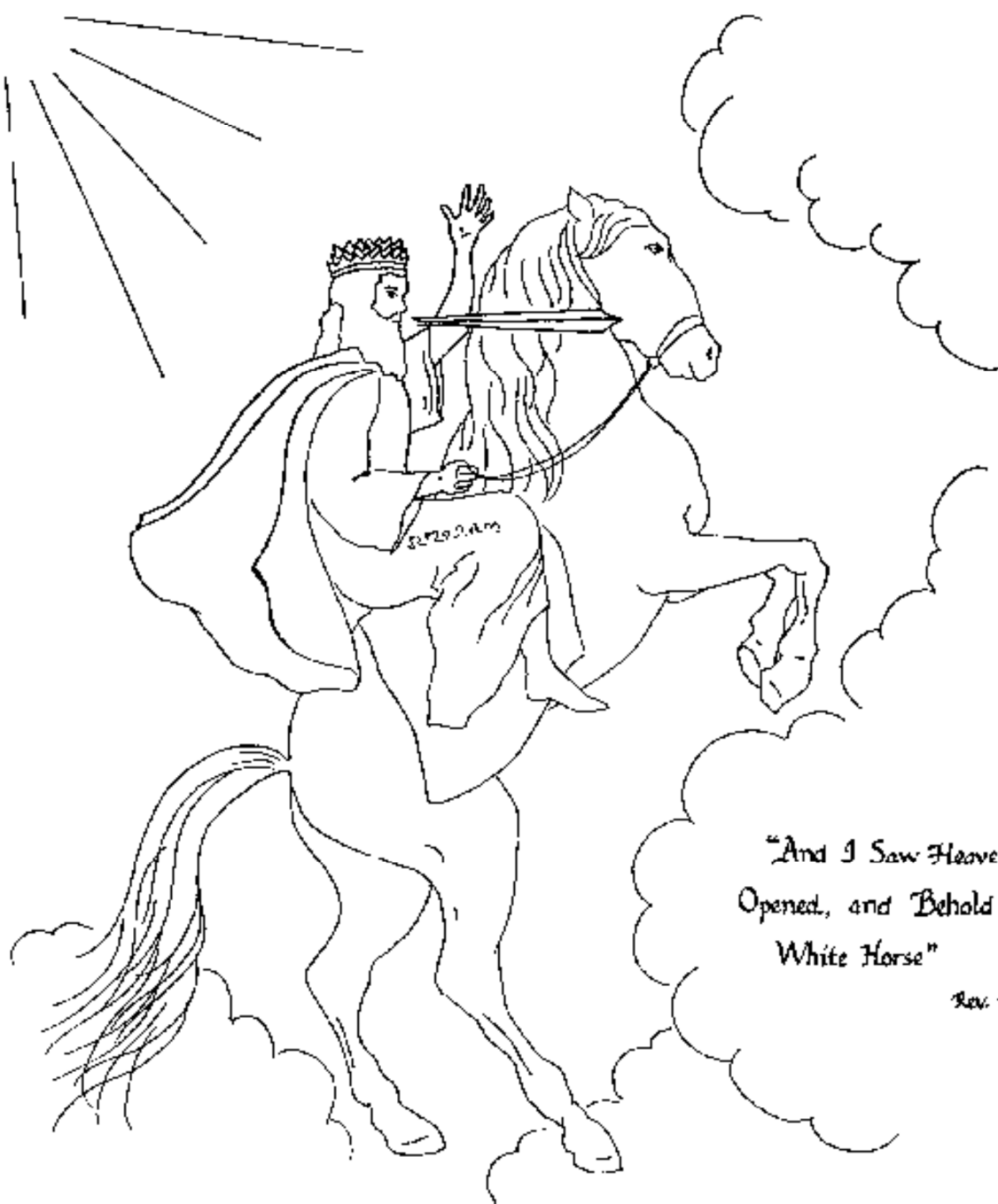
Editorial Deadline for the SUMMER 2022 Issue:

JULY 07, 2022

We always welcome your comments, letters and articles!

Please send submissions to Sandy Kuhl, Editor NCC
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"And I Saw Heaven
Opened, and Behold a
White Horse"

Rev. 19