



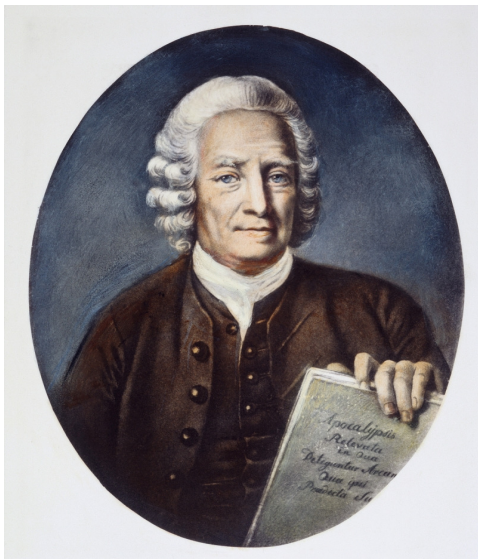
New Church Canadian

A Bi-Monthly Newsletter of General Church in Canada

Issue 214

SWEDENBORG'S INSPIRATION

By Rev. James Cooper



In this article I'm going to address the question of how Swedenborg's experience as a revelator of Divine Truth differs from those of other revelators chosen by the Lord, and what his experience was. The problem is that on the one hand we have the Lord with His Infinite Divine Truth

which He desires to give to people so that they might use it to come to the life of heaven. On the other hand, those people whom the Lord is trying to teach are finite, and cannot comprehend the slightest part of that Divine Truth as it is with the Lord Himself. That which is essential to a person is in itself incomprehensible to him! The obvious solution is for the Lord to clothe the Infinite Divine Truth in forms compatible with a person's natural mind so that people are able to understand it come to love it, and live it.

The story of how this is done is the story of all the prophets throughout the ages, and the History of the Churches. The Divine Truth Itself and the Divine Good Itself are the two essential qualities of God. Since we think spatially, it is common to think of the Lord in His Divine Itself

(Continued on page 2)

In This Issue:

Swedenborg's Inspiration.....	1
The Lord Appears.....	6
Comparing Freedom to Aspects of Nature.....	8
Maple Leaf Academy.....	9
Message from the Regional Pastor....	10
Contacts.....	11
Colouring Page.....	12



(Continued from page 1)

dwelling “above” the heavens, much as the sun of our world is “above” our earth. Similar to the way that the Sun of Heaven provides good and truth, the sun of our world provides heat and light. And further, angels can no more approach the Spiritual Sun than we could approach near to our own sun. Yet all life in heaven is from the Spiritual Sun, and all the energy in the natural world, in the last analysis, is from the natural sun. This is possible because the Lord has provided atmospheres that clothe the power of the two suns so that their benefits are received without destroying angels or people on earth.



If we understand this much, we have come half the distance. When the Lord seeks to instruct people on earth. He sends His Divine Truth in two ways: immediately into the affections in the interiors of the mind, and by means of the spiritual atmospheres, angels in each of the three heavens, and ultimately into a prophet's mind. This prophet then writes down what he perceives, or tells it to others. In either case, the truth has descended from the Divine Itself through the agency of the minds of the angels in the three heavens, into a form acceptable to the minds of people on earth.

For the prophets of the Old Testament, this came in the form of a vision, or a dream, where the Divine Truth was dictated in a living voice by an angel sent by the Lord, and which they wrote down, or spoke to others. The Old Testament deals in sensual images of things familiar to the prophets, rules and laws that were most explicit and could be followed without any understanding.

When we compare the works of the Old Testament prophets with the works of those whose writings became the New Testament, it appears

that there was more of the understanding of what was written in the New Testament, for we see several different versions of the same event — something that is almost never found in the Old Testament. Even the casual reader of the New Testament can perceive that each of the four gospels might have been written with a specific audience in mind from the choice of the words, and the selection of the events that are recorded.

Unlike the prophets of the Old and New Testaments, Swedenborg was not at all reluctant to speak about how he came to be a revelator, and even his feelings about it. There are literally hundreds of passages that give us an overview of how Swedenborg became the “Servant of the Lord.” When these passages are read in a chronological order, the story of this miracle unfolds. The careful reader can easily perceive the change in Swedenborg as the years of experience accumulated. Compare one of the earliest references to his experience with one of the last:

“I sacredly attest that I have been intrmitted into the Kingdom of God by the Messiah Himself, Jesus of Nazareth, and have there spoken with heavenly Genii, with Spirits, with the dead who have risen again, yea, with those who called themselves Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Esau, Rebecca, Moses, Aaron, and the Apostles, especially Paul, and James; and this now through a period of eight months, almost continually, except during the journey from London to Sweden; and continually while these things were written by me which are now made public. Yea, they themselves, or their angels, and many others, most accurately introduced the *ipsissima verba*... It is granted me to add this only: that in a certain manner I have been intrmitted into Heaven itself, not merely as to the mind, but also as it were with the whole body, or with the sense in the body, and that too when I was quite awake.”

“That this Second Advent of the Lord is effected by means of a man, before whom the Lord has manifested Himself in Person, and whom He has filled with His Spirit, to teach the doctrines of the

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

New Church through the Word from Him. As the Lord cannot manifest Himself in Person ... and yet has foretold that He will come, and found a New Church ... it follows that He will do this by means of a man, who can not only receive the doctrines of this Church with the understanding, but can also publish them by the press. That the Lord manifested Himself before me His servant, and sent me to this office, and that He afterwards opened the sight of my spirit, and so intromitted me into the Spiritual World, and granted me to see the Heavens and the Hells, and also to speak with the Angels and Spirits, and this now continuously for many years, I testify in truth; and likewise that from the first day of that call I have not received anything WHICH PERTAINS TO THE DOCTRINES OF THAT CHURCH from any Angel; but from the Lord alone while I read the Word."

Swedenborg's statement in the passage from the Word Explained, quoted above, that he was present in Heaven as to his "whole body" seems startling when first encountered. However, as more and more of the passages dealing with this subject are read, a pattern begins to develop, where it becomes apparent what is meant by this and like statements. Swedenborg is struggling with an experience that is unlike that of any other human being in the entire history of the world. He is not seeing visions of angels that speak in terrifying voices, then disappear, as they did to the prophets of the Old Testament. He is not having strange dreams. He was walking around in the spiritual world in his spiritual body, speaking with spirits face to face. He sat in chairs, walked long distances, felt pain, saw the incredible beauties, tasted the angels' food. He was trying to explain that angels live much as we live. Heaven was not an alien place, but rather our true, intended home. He was actually conscious in both worlds at once, much of the time, and thus was uniquely able to speak of spiritual things in natural terms — there was a sensual foundation to rest his spiritual discoveries upon.

The great majority of people believe that dreams are the playthings of the resting mind, and are given no great weight. Thus Swedenborg said over

and over again that he was in heaven in his body, and in full wakefulness. He is saying to his reader that he is not a "dreamer." These are not the images of an overactive imagination, or a mind having a period of playful recreations.

There is another aspect of dreams that Swedenborg was seeking to dispel: in a dream, the dreamer is usually a passive observer, things happen that he experiences in a very real way, but he has no control over the situation. Swedenborg was trying to dispel this view of his work, by telling us that he seemed to himself to have a body as "real" as the body he had in the world. When he talked with the angels, he was not a passive observer, out of body, but it was exactly like when we have company over to our homes, and sit and discuss things that are important and interesting. He was not observing angels doing things from a distance, but right there with them, taking part in what was going on. In short, he was making an effort at the almost impossible task of teaching a world convinced that spirits were specters and breaths of air, that the spiritual world was in fact more real than this world, that when you are there, you have a body.

"I was in the state in which Spirits are, and was wholly like them, with a human body, and human senses, in a chamber. ...I said that I am in the world, and yet at the same time in the other life. I touched one of them, and he felt it, and I said that in man there is a man that lives after death. As he believed this, he appeared wholly present; but the rest vanished..."



(Continued on page 4)

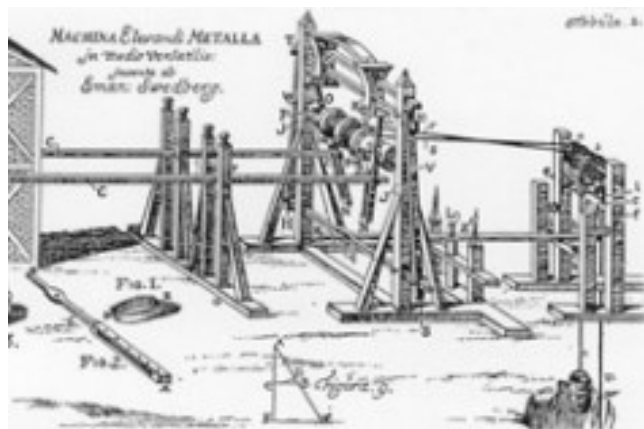
(Continued from page 3)

Another important issue concerning Swedenborg's writings is that of whether the Writings are from the Lord alone, or from angels. This is an issue, because there are many references where he states that everything that he writes is from the Lord alone and not from the mouth of any angel.

There are also a large number of references where he quotes spirits, either directly, or indirectly. The question of whether it is from himself is not at issue here, for the references are consistent in this — any time he even tried to write according to his own words, or tried to reason an explanation out on his own, he was thrown into utter confusion and despair. He quickly learned to stop even trying, to suppress his proprial desire to improve on the Lord's words, to elaborate, and he says repeatedly that not one whit of what he wrote is from himself.

Which still leaves us with the other issue. Did the angels instruct him or not? How can the Writings be from the mouth of the Lord alone when they are at the same time full of quotes from spirits? I believe the key to this question lies in TCR 779:

“...And likewise that from the first day of that call I have not received anything which pertains to the doctrines of that Church from any angel, but from the Lord alone while I read the Word.”



Swedenborg was a man, still living in the world, carrying on his other uses, entertaining people in his home, writing secular books. He was not yet an angel. When one reads his references to his experience in the Word Explained and the Spiritual Dia-

ry, it can be seen that he was struggling mightily with the enormity of what he was being asked to do. He felt completely inadequate, and even stupid. At times he was overwhelmed by the delights of heaven, other times tormented by what he experienced at the hands of evil spirits. In short, if the Lord wanted to use Swedenborg to reveal the Divine Truth in rational form. He had to immerse him in the life of the spiritual world, let him live among its inhabitants as one of them so that he could begin to see just a glimpse of what it was like, and then be able to put it into human words.

The doctrine of the Church was from the Lord alone, while he read the Word, but it could not have been given through Swedenborg unless he was first prepared and versed in spiritual things by his life in the spiritual world. The doctrine is from the Lord, the background experience is from the Lord by means of spirits. Spirits were often present with him while he wrote, but while he was actually writing, they were silent. After he had finished, and was reading what he had written, they affirmed and consented to what was written. If there were evil spirits present, they sometimes tried to stop his hand, or obsess his mind to prevent the truth from being written.

SD 1389. THAT THE SAME SPIRIT CONTINUALLY DESPISED ME, BUT STILL HE COULD NOT DEPART FROM ME However much I have striven with that spirit, he still desires to intermingle himself with what I have written, so that he has not been able to desist from it, even though he despises me in his heart. He would like it if only the things that are being written were to come forth from him. He is now back again above my head, and he says that he will continue to remain with me and thus direct [what I write] so that it suits himself. This signifies that there are those who will indeed read what I have written, but who, because they are natural, will still remain in their own opinions, and interpret it according to their phantasies from which they are unwilling to desist, even though they see truths. 1748, Mar. 15.

Any time they spoke to him, it was by the Lord's permission, and according to strict laws. In the early years of Swedenborg's intromission, there

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

were times when spirits dictated to him, but he says that was for the sake of teaching him that such a form of revelation existed. After the lesson was learned, anything written in that form was obliterated. At other times, his hand was guided in such a forceful manner that he could not deviate from what was supposed to be written. This is only referred to in the very early works, and it seems safe to assume that this too falls into the category of lessons needed by Swedenborg before he could fully take on the work as a revelator. He needed to know that such revelation was possible, but that it was not what was required or desired at that time. Perhaps it was necessary to help Swedenborg achieve the proper humility. He was, after all, a scholarly author in his own right, and no doubt felt that he was quite capable of describing a doctrine in his own words. He had to learn to remove himself from the revelation.

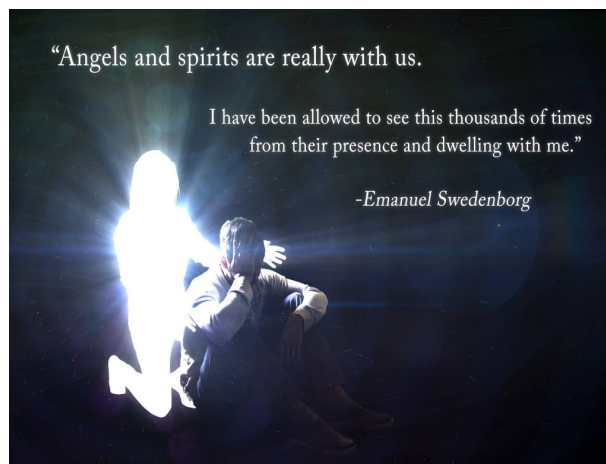
The essential point is that the Lord is trying to communicate with people on earth, so that there can be a church which serves as a foundation for an ordered heaven. This truth originates above the heavens, and must descend, taking on clothing so that people can understand it. Swedenborg was able to receive this revelation, because the vessels of his mind were prepared for the explanation of rational truth by a life devoted to study of the relationships of natural truths. Do not angels also have minds that can serve as vessels? Could not angels be prepared by a life of study of the Word in heaven? Is it not the orderly flow of influx from the Lord through the heavens to man?

The real key to the question is not the vessels, but the will. The intellectual parts of the angels' minds could serve to contain the specially prepared truths from the Lord — as long as there was nothing of their own will involved. The test is whether what they say agrees with the doctrine of genuine truth. When Swedenborg confirmed an idea by traveling to some society or place in the spiritual world, or spoke with angels about spiritual matters, they were serving as means for the influx of Divine Truth. The Lord flowed directly, immediately, into

his mind in secret ways — then angels were directed to him to speak with him, and call his attention, his rational thought, to the subject about to be revealed. Once interested in this manner, he began to seek more information about it, and was permitted to travel about the spiritual world to confirm what he had learned by his own experience. Although the angels and all of spiritual creation is involved, is this from any source but the Lord alone?

Swedenborg records that from time to time he was told something by angels, and he did not at the time perceive it. It was in his memory, but not understood. Then, later, he was elevated into an interior heaven, and the lessons learned before and stored in his memory were perceived. It appears that the angels and subject spirits were the source of raw information, which was then later formed into the doctrine of the Church in Swedenborg's mind by the Lord in secret ways.

This is all part of the process of ordering the vessels of the mind. The study of the world, the study of the letter of the Word in its original languages, the conversations with spirits, and the observation of events in the spiritual world all provided vessels into which the Divine Truth could flow. What came from the Lord was the ordering of these vessels into a cogent doctrine adapted to the understanding of people on earth. This was an inspiration (or inflowing of the Holy Spirit) from Swedenborg's own perception. Thus, we can say that many facts were from angels and spirits, but the doctrine was from the Lord alone.



"Angels and spirits are really with us.

I have been allowed to see this thousands of times
from their presence and dwelling with me."

-Emanuel Swedenborg

Love comes into being through useful service to others." Emmanuel Swedenborg

THE LORD APPEARS TO SWEDENBORG

Oak Arbor New Church Sunday School - Lesson 22 for Intermediate Level

INTRODUCTION:

Emanuel Swedenborg was a good man who was called by the Lord to do a very important job. The Lord wanted to tell people much more about the spiritual world and the way to heaven, about Himself, and the deeper meaning within the Word.

Why did He choose Swedenborg for this work? He was a brilliant man who loved the Lord and had a keen interest in science, philosophy and religion. The Lord was preparing Swedenborg for this important work from the time he was a young boy.



Emanuel was the third child of his parents, Jesper and Sara Swedberg, and his name means "God with us." Don't you think that was an appropriate name, since later he would write things that would bring God to us in a new way? Later, the Swedberg family was made into a noble family, and then their name was changed to Swedenborg.



Jesper Swedberg

Emanuel's father, Jesper, was a minister who loved the Lord and His Word. He encouraged Swedenborg to read the Word, pray to God, and think about religion.

The Lord had given Emanuel an intelligent mind. When he was eleven, he went to study at Uppsala University, which is like a college! The lessons there were given in Latin, and later Emanuel would master eight more languages! Emanuel spent several years living with his sister, Anna, and her husband, Eric Benzelius. Eric Benzelius loved science, and encouraged Emanuel in his studies.

When Swedenborg graduated, he traveled around Europe visiting many important scientists. (While on this journey, Swedenborg's life was in danger several times! The ship ran into a sand bar, pirates came aboard, and an English boat fired guns at the ship mistaking it for a pirate ship. But Swedenborg made it safely ashore.)

Swedenborg spent many years studying all kinds of science. He was a genius, and became an expert and an inventor in many fields. But he became especially interested in one certain subject-the human body and the human brain. What he was really trying to find was the human soul. But he came to realize that he couldn't find a person's soul, or spirit, by studying the human body. Swedenborg would soon be called by the Lord to become a revelator.



The Lord appeared to Swedenborg several times. We are going to read about the second time. Swedenborg was still trying to understand what the Lord wanted him to do with the rest of his life on earth. It is interesting that Swedenborg was also trying to look to the Lord more fully. He was a brilliant man and it was tempting to take pride in his own intelligence and what he had accomplished. But he struggled against these thoughts and feelings and focused on the Lord being the source of all goodness and wisdom. This was an important step toward being able to serve the Lord as His humble and obedient servant. And what happened that night changed what Swedenborg did for the rest of his life in this world.

(Continued on page 7)

READING

How the Lord Called Swedenborg

One night, Swedenborg woke up and heard a loud noise. It was as if many winds clashed against each other. He felt a holy presence and prayed that the Almighty Jesus Christ would make him worthy of having the Lord visit him.

Swedenborg continued to pray with his hands folded together. A hand reached out and squeezed his hands.



Then Swedenborg was sitting with the Lord God Jesus Christ, seeing Him face to face. Swedenborg was aware of His holiness but could not begin to describe what he saw. When the Lord smiled, Swedenborg was convinced that His face had been like this when He lived on earth.



God asked Swedenborg if he was in good health, and he answered "Lord, Thou knowest better than I." Then God said to him, "Well, then do" which Swedenborg understood to mean "Love me truly."

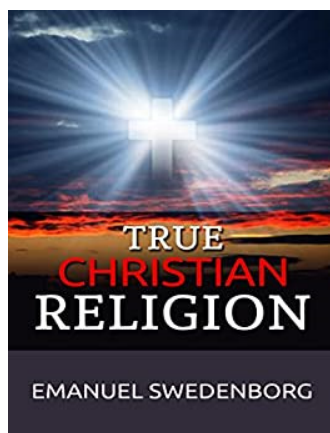
When Swedenborg thought about his experience that night, he was sure that it was the Son of God Himself. And he prayed to receive the love of Jesus Christ.

Over the next year, Swedenborg learned more about how he would serve the Lord as a revelator. The Lord told him that He had chosen Swedenborg to tell people about the spiritual meaning of the Word, and that He Himself would tell Swedenborg what to write. It was clear that the Lord wanted him to focus on spiritual things.

In November 1745, Swedenborg wrote these words:

*"Lord Jesus Christ, lead me to and on the way on which
Thou wilt that I shall walk."*

This humble prayer asks the Lord to lead him and show him the way to walk with God.



When Swedenborg published True Christian Religion - the last book of the Writings or Heavenly Doctrines - the Lord told him to sign his name as

*"Emanuel Swedenborg,
Servant of the Lord Jesus Christ."*

Comparing Freedom to Aspects of Nature

God has implanted freedom not only in people, but also in every beast, and an analogue of it even in things inanimate, enabling each to receive it according to its nature, as He also provides what is good for them all. That the objects themselves turn the good into evil, may be illustrated by comparisons.

The atmosphere gives to every person the ability to breathe, and in like manner to every beast tame or wild, also to every bird, the owl and dove alike. It also gives the ability to fly, and yet it is not the atmosphere that causes its gifts to be received by creatures of contrary genius and nature.

The ocean furnishes in itself an abode and also offers nourishment, to every fish, but the ocean does not cause one fish there to devour another.... The sun provides heat and light for all things; but objects, such as the various vegetable productions of the earth, receive these diversely, a good tree and a good shrub in one way, and the thorn and thistle in another; or a harmless herb in one way, and a poisonous herb in another.

The rain falls from the higher region of the atmosphere upon all parts of the earth; and the earth administers the waters therefrom to every shrub, herb, and grass, and each one of them takes to itself according to its need....

The like is true of people, in that the Lord flows into every person with spiritual heat, which in its essence is good of love, and with spiritual light, which in its essence is the truth of wisdom; but a person receives these according to whether he turns towards God or towards self.

(True Christian Religion 491)

Free nations in regard to the spiritual things of the church called theological, are like eagles which rise [soar] to whatever height they please; while nations that are not free are like swans in a river. Again, free nations are like the larger deer with lofty horns that roam the fields, groves, and forests at perfect liberty; while nations that are not free are like the deer kept in parks to please a prince.

(True Christian Religion 815)



A New Church Camp for Teens
Held at the Ecology Retreat Centre in Mono, Ontario

We look forward to welcoming campers from
Saturday, July 8 – Friday, July 14, 2023.

This will be a week of friendship building, laughter, restorative relaxation, and spiritual growth for teens who will have just completed any year of high school.

After our unfortunate hiatus due to the pandemic, we look forward to at last exploring the theme of **LIGHT**.

*Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "
I am the light of the world.
He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness,
but have the light of life."
~ John 8:12 ~*



Want to register or get more information? Please visit the recently updated maplecamp.com or contact:

Stephanie Kuhl, Camp Director, regarding any questions at gcic.mapleleafcamp@gmail.com. Maple has been serving New Church youth since 1969; it is sponsored by the General Church in Canada and staffed by experienced volunteers.

After GCIC contributions, regular camper fee is **\$300**, with discounts for early bird registration (before May 1) or for "junior staff" (returning campers finishing high school). A deposit of at least **\$50** (\$5 non-refundable) is required with registration and full payment is due by **June 16**.



From the GCIC EVP / Regional Pastor

by Rev. James Cooper

And suddenly, it's the new year! I recently had lunch with all the Canadian pastors and it was exciting to hear all the things that are being planned for members of all ages between now and the summer, all of which will be announced and described in due course. After two years of enforced isolation, it can be hard to get back into the thought of going out of the house and interacting with people again, but you should try it, it's fun! Especially useful is coming back to church. Something we all do is notice how many other people are in church and we all feel happier when the church is full. So, let's all do our part in making each other happy by getting back in the habit of attending church.

WORSHIP SERVICES

- * I will be in Dawson Creek and Grande Prairie on February 19th.
- * Michael Cowley will be done his winter break and resume regular services on March 12th.
- * Justin Schorran will be in Ottawa on February 26.
- * The Vancouver group is coordinating their services with Portland and Seattle and I'm hoping to be able to announce dates for in person visits soon.
- * Members in Vancouver will be notified by email as usual.

ONLINE

Our website, www.newchurch.ca is also a good source of information for schedules. You can find the current copy of New Church Canadian there as well as some recent editions. And there are links to our three Societies that have live links to the Society calendars. It's a one-stop answer to all (well, many of) your questions!

Rev. James Cooper
31 Dalegrove Cres.
Toronto, ON. M9B 6A5

Mobile: 416-508-0758
Home: 416-236-0841
Rev.James.Cooper@gmail.com

*"Love consists in desiring to give what is our own to another
and feeling his delight as our own"* Emmanuel Swedenborg



Administrative Office

Olivet Church, 279 Burnhamthorpe Rd.
Etobicoke, ON M9B 1Z6

Phone: 416-239-3054, Fax: 416-239-4935

Rev. James P. Cooper
Executive V.P.
rev.james.cooper@gmail.com

Lee Horigan Administrator
Horigan@outlook.com

newchurch.ca

Carmel New Church and School
40 Chapel Hill Drive, Kitchener, ON N2R 1N2 Phone: 519-748-5802

Rev. Mark B. Allais, Pastor
pastor@carmelnewchurch.org

Rev. Justin Schorran, Assistant to the Pastor
asstpastor@carmelnewchurch.org

Stephanie Kuhl, Principal
Grades K - 8
stephkuhl@live.ca

Dawson Creek New Church
9013 - 8th Street, Dawson Creek, B.C. V1G 3N3 Telephone: 250-782-8035
www.facebook.com/DawsonCreekNewChurch

and
Grande Prairie & DeBolt Circle

Pastoral Contact: Rev. James Cooper
rev.james.cooper@gmail.com

Olivet New Church and School
279 Burnhamthorpe Road, Etobicoke, ON M9B 1Z6
Phone: 416-239-3054 Fax: 416-239-4935

Rev. Dr. Jong-Ui Lee, Interim Pastor
assistant@olivetnewchurch.org

Laura Braam, Principal
Preschool - 5
principal@olivetnewchurch.org

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

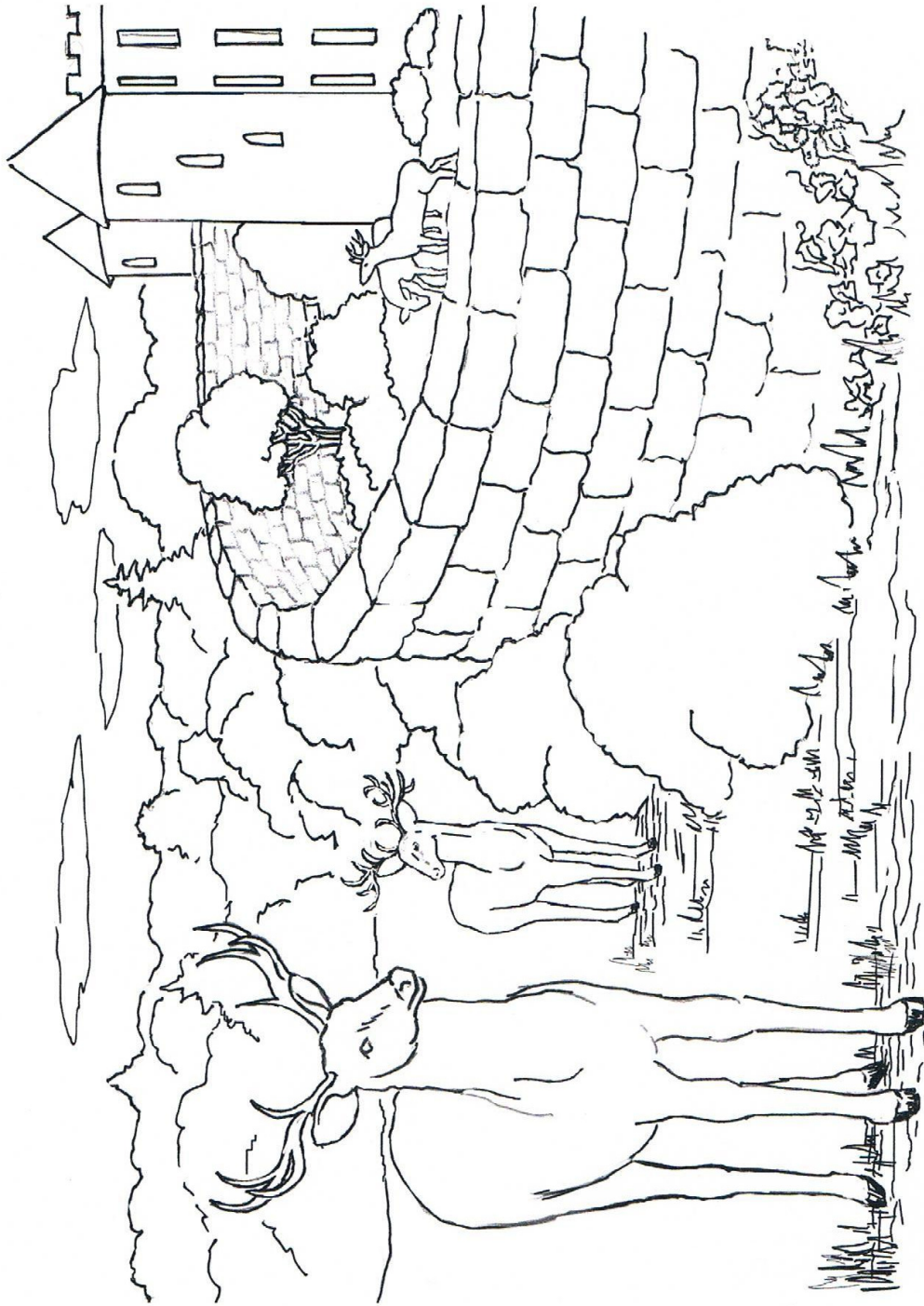


Editorial Deadline for the MARCH / APRIL ISSUE
MARCH 7, 2023

We always welcome your comments, letters and articles!

Please send submissions to Sandy Kuhl, Editor NCC
8 Marshall Avenue, RR #1, Ayr, ON N0B 1E0
Phone: 519-696-2070 Email: sandy.c.kuhl@gmail.com





Free nations (in regard to spiritual things) are like the larger deer with lofty horns that roam the fields, groves, and forests at perfect liberty; while nations that are not free are like the deer kept in parks to please a prince.
(True Christian Religion 815)