2020
Journal of the Swedenborgian Church
No. 198
THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH
UNITED STATES AND CANADA
INCORPORATED 1861

THE GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE NEW JERUSALEM IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

ANNUAL SESSION

“20/20 SPIRITUAL VISION: TRANSCENDING TIME AND SPACE”
JUNE 26 - JUNE 28, 2020

VIRTUAL CONVENTION
HOSTED ON FACEBOOK LIVE

ANNUAL THEME

THE YEAR OF THE LORD
JULY 1, 2019-SEPTEMBER 1, 2020

RECORDING SECRETARY

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CENTRAL OFFICE

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Oh, what a year! The 2020 Journal is different due to the COVID-19 pandemic that affected the annual session of Convention, the requirement for our churches to move to virtual services, and our camps not able to gather in-person, due to health safety concerns. It is important to produce an annual Journal because it is our legal record of the business and gatherings for the year between our annual sessions.

The decision to cancel the planned 2020 Convention in Bridgewater, Massachusetts due to the worldwide pandemic was made by the Executive Committee of General Council, March 2020. By that time it was evident we would be unable to gather in physical presence due to mandated travel restrictions and worldwide health concerns for potential transmission of the COVID-19 virus.

Our denomination came up with a “virtual” process to gather as a sacred community to worship, learn, share, and participate in many aspects of a regular convention over the same weekend previously planned, June 26-28, 2020. Our theme was: 20/20 Spiritual Vision: Transcending Time and Space.

As President, I officially opened Convention 2020 with the “opening of the Word”, welcome, and president’s address. We had a virtual parade of 36 ministries and offered a selection of mini-courses and worship services, including communion. The closing service included the formal “closing of the Word.” (See full report from the Secretary of Convention, page 45)

This 2020 Journal has a report of our virtual convention, but no minutes as business meetings were not held. Our governing constitution and bylaws at this time do not allow for conducting business virtually, therefore we did not have business meetings or elections.

Churches, Associations and Committees sent in reports, although the timeline recorded varies. Elected members of boards and committees have extended term limits because there were no elections.

The decision was made by ExCom of General Council and confirmed by the General Council that the virtual convention session in 2020 was officially The One Hundred Ninety Sixth Session of The Swedenborgian Church of North America, and should be recorded as such.

Rev. Jane Siebert, President
The Faith and Aims of Our Church

The Swedenborgian Church believes that a new epoch is opening in the spiritual life of mankind. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, as he promised to do, has come again, not indeed in a physical reappearance, but in spirit and truth; not in a single event only, but in a progressive manifestation of his presence among people.

Our Church regards as tokens of his coming the burst of scientific development, the rise of the spirit of inquiry, the progress toward political and intellectual freedoms, and the deepening sense of a national and international responsibility which have characterized the last few centuries. These are more remote signs, however, of epochal religious change. More directly denoting a movement of the spirit of God on the human spirit are the stirrings in world faiths, the revisions of thought and outlook in them, the searching after standards and spiritual power adequate to the needs and problems of the times, and this notably in the Christian faith. The Lord is everywhere at work, moving to the reestablishment of his kingdom, and specifically to the renewing of Christianity with the power and understanding to serve and speed his kingdom.

In any coming of the Lord, he brings about many things which people are slow to see. Our unseen, spiritual environment is made over as well as our visible world. A greater awareness of the good that there has been, a fuller justice and truer peace offer themselves for us to realize. Today, in a world that has contracted into a neighborhood, the responsibility to the neighbor makes its demands on all people of good will. Evils that have been long established begin to look as though they could be conquered. We believe that the Lord in his second coming has “reordered the heavens and subjugated the hells” as he did at his first coming.

This coming of the Son of man, “as the lightning comes out of the east, and shines even unto the west,” making the salvation of all people possible, is the direct and sole work of the Lord—a redemption of the world by the Redeemer of persons.

Our Church is also convinced that the Lord has given his followers word of all this, and done so by means of a servant from among them. We
believe that Emanuel Swedenborg thus served the Lord. A person’s destiny beyond the earthly life needed to be placed in fuller light; the Scriptures needed to be reestablished as the Word of God; and the Christian message was in need of renewed and contemporary expression. To supply these needs Swedenborg devoted half a lifetime, and an insight born of a regenerating experience. He was enabled “by the Lord’s mercy” to inform the Christian hope of immortality with knowledge of the world of the spirit; in Old and New Testament he set forth a meaning which speaks timelessly of the spiritual life and can nourish it now; and he freed Christian teaching from many crippling errors and formulated it anew from the Word of God.

In the theological works of Swedenborg the message of Christianity is restated to inspire the spiritual life of all anew. Its truths present themselves as truths of life here and hereafter. They invite inquiry and ask understanding. They open the door to spiritual renewal and urge upon everyone the personal responsibility to participate in this renewal. The Lord has taken initiative in his coming. We have our response to make. In that response three essentials are urged: that we acknowledge God in the Lord, and that he alone can bring about our redemption and regeneration; that we acknowledge the holiness of the Word and the inspiration which the Word gives us to seek and promote his kingdom; and that we live the life of charity, the exercising in all our relationships, large and small, the neighborliness enjoined by his commandments.

The Swedenborgian Church believes, then, that under Providence the world has received, through the instrumentality of a man, a revelation which confronts it with the universally valid truth of the spiritual life of all human beings. It believes that the Lord Jesus Christ, availing himself of human agency to give us this explicit guidance, has done a sweeping if hidden work of redemption, and created a new heaven and a new earth about us. He is ushering in the epoch, if we will, which he foresaw and which he promised at his first coming. In John’s vision on Patmos, the Risen Christ once more promised the dawn of this epoch in the descent of the Holy City, New Jerusalem, to earth. To signalize our conviction that the Lord is fulfilling his promise, we originally organized under the name the Church of the New Jerusalem. The spirit and the humanity which longs to be united to the Lord alike cry, “Come.” We lift our voice and pray, “Come. Even so, come Lord Jesus.”
THE OFFICERS OF THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH

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E-mail: president@swedenborg.org

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Gorham, ME 04028
Phone: (802) 345-0169
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Phone: (760) 872-3392
E-mail: secretary@swedenborg.org

Jennifer Lindsay, Treasurer
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Phone: (415) 706-6155
E-mail: treasurer@swedenborg.org

GENERAL COUNCIL

The General Council consists of the Officers of the Swedenborgian Church and the elected members listed below. (Constitution, Article II, Section 2.) The chair of the Council of Ministers is also an ex-officio member with vote on the General Council (Constitution, Article II, Section 3).

Numbers in parentheses are the terms currently being served for the positions so indicated, persons are limited to two consecutive three-year terms. Those fulfilling unexpired terms are indicated by (*).

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<td>Lon Elmer (2)</td>
<td>Rev. Jenny Caughman (1)</td>
<td>Rev. Betsy Coffman (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(206) 903-8043</td>
<td>(865) 482-9319</td>
<td>(937) 631-0899</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:lonelmer.wa@gmail.com">lonelmer.wa@gmail.com</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:jjcaughman@comcast.net">jjcaughman@comcast.net</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:bcoffman45@gmail.com">bcoffman45@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Barbara Halle (1)</td>
<td>Stan Conger (2)</td>
<td>Carl Helm (2)</td>
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<td>(219) 363-0528</td>
<td>(760) 872-3392</td>
<td>(620) 792-4295</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:stanconger1711@gmail.com">stanconger1711@gmail.com</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:carlhelm66@yahoo.com">carlhelm66@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Thom Muller (*)</td>
<td>Beki Greenwood (*)</td>
<td>Susan Hulcher (1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(267) 351-0122</td>
<td>(413) 563-0091</td>
<td>(403) 585-4333</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:tmuller@ses.psr.edu">tmuller@ses.psr.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:beki.phinney@gmail.com">beki.phinney@gmail.com</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:talktome@susanhulcher.ca">talktome@susanhulcher.ca</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*Currently serving an unexpired term as interim as a result of the Vice-President resigning
## STANDING COMMITTEES

*(Constitution, Article II, Section 4 and Bylaws, Article X.) The President of the Swedenborgian Church serves ex-Officio without vote on all Standing Committees.*

### STANDING COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION:

**Chair:**
- Val Brugler 2022 (2)
- Rev. Kevin Baxter 2021 (2)
- Holly Bauer 2023 (1)

**Ex-Officio (without vote):**
- Beki Greenwood, Editor, *The Messenger*
- Rev. Thom Muller, Editor, *Our Daily Bread*
- Rev. Cory Bradford-Watts, Minister, Swedenborgian Community Online
- Jason Woofenden, Website Manager, Swedenborg.org
- Rev. Dr. James Lawrence, Dean, Center for Swedenborgian Studies
- Brittany Price, Operations Manager, Central Office

### STANDING COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION AND RESOURCES FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY:

**Chair:**
- Rev. Dr. James Lawrence, Representative of Center for Swedenborgian Studies, appointed by the CSS Board of Trustees
- Paul Deming 2021 (2)
- Rev. Julie Conaron 2022 (1)
- Rev. Robert McCluskey 2022 (1)

**Ex-Officio (without vote):**
- Kurt Fekete, Youth Director, SCNA
STANDING COMMITTEE FOR FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY:

Chair: Jennifer Lindsay, Treasurer, SCNA
Carl Helm 2021 (1)
Kurt Fekete 2021 (*)
Rev. Rachel Madjerac 2022 (*)
Rev. Lisa Solwold 2022 (1)
Bill Coffman 2023 (1)
Stan Conger 2023 (1)

STANDING COMMITTEE FOR NOMINATIONS:

Convention Bylaws, Article X. Sec. 4. “...There shall be a Standing Committee for Nominations of five members to serve for five years each; one member to be elected each year, but not from any Association from which his or her predecessor or any other member of the Committee is a member. The unexpired term of any member may be filled from the same Association. A member moving to another Association shall continue to serve and shall be regarded as coming from his or her former Association; but no retiring member shall be eligible for immediate reelection. Whenever possible, the Standing Committee for Nominations shall propose slates representative of the Swedenborgian Church’s overall constituency.

It shall be the duty of this Standing Committee to present, at each session of the Swedenborgian Church, nominees for the Swedenborgian Church officers (where applicable), vacancies in the elective members of the General Council and all other Boards and Committees, unless otherwise appointed. Each year the member whose term is next to expire shall act as Chair of the Committee.

Chair: Rev. Dr. David Fekete WCC 2021
Linda Kraus KS 2022
Bill Coffman OH 2023
Dr. Rebecca Esterson PCA 2024
BJ Neuenfeldt MI 2025
COMMITTEES

CENTRAL OFFICE REVIEW COMMITTEE:
Standing Resolution 11, June 29, 1983: “...it is the responsibility of the Vice President, together with a committee he may appoint, to conduct an annual review of the Central Office, covering staff, employees, organization, etc.”

Chair: Kurt Fekete, Vice-President, SCNA
Carl Helm

COMMITTEE ON AMENDMENTS:
Chair: Rev. Dr. George F. Dole
Rev. Kevin Baxter

COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY:
The General Council, at the request of the Council of Ministers, voted to form the Committee of Inquiry at its June 26, 1996 meeting. It was voted “that the Committee of Inquiry be under the auspices of General Council and that the committee consist of five (5) members to be appointed by the President of Convention in consultation with the Chair of the Council of Ministers of the Swedenborgian Church.”

Chair: Stan Conger
Karen Feil
Barbara Cullen
Rev. Richard L. Tafel
Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake

Ex-Officio (without vote): Rev. Susannah Currie, Chair, Council of Ministers
COMMITTEE ON LIBRARY AND DOCUMENTS:
“Resolved, That a Committee of three on Library and Documents, one of which shall be the President of the Theological School, shall be appointed by the President of the Convention to see to the collecting, depositing and cataloging of books, manuscripts and other documents which may have been donated to or otherwise procured by the Convention; the Chairman of this Committee shall report to the Convention annually.” (1911 Journal, Minute 90)

The archives of the Swedenborgian Church are held in two places: histories of societies and committees at the Central Office, and sermons/personal papers and CSS-related documents at the library of the Center for Swedenborgian Studies (CSS) at the Graduate Theological Union.

Chair: Nancy Little
      Polly Baxter

Ex-Officio (without vote): Rev. Dr. James Lawrence, Dean, Center for Swedenborgian Studies
                          Brittany Price, Operations Manager, Central Office

INVESTMENT COMMITTEE:
“The General Council, at its first meeting following each annual session of the Swedenborgian Church, shall appoint an Investment Committee of not less than three members, one of whom may be the Treasurer of the Convention, which shall be charged with the general oversight and care of the investments and securities of the Swedenborgian Church Common Fund, with full power to purchase and sell and to invest and reinvest as in their judgment and discretion may seem advisable.” (By-laws, Article XVIII)

Chair: Jennifer Lindsay, Treasurer, SCNA
      Pete Toot 2021 
      Bob Perry 2022 
      Herb Ziegler* 2023 
      Holly Gottschalk 2024

Ex-Officio (without vote): Rev. Jane Siebert, President, SCNA
RETIREMENT COMMITTEE:
Its duties are to administer the proceeds of Convention’s Permanent Pension Fund (1975 Journal, Fund 37) in accordance with the stated purpose of the Fund.

Chair: Rev. Richard L. Tafel 2022
      Meredith Conant Piotti 2021
      John McIntosh 2023

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE:
The Social Justice Committee is an ad hoc committee created by General Council as a forum to address social concerns for the purpose of bringing information to the body of Convention through the Messenger and other vehicles, and to offer resources for ways to be involved.

Chair: Rev. Robert McCluskey
       Rev. Cory Bradford-Watts
       Barb Boxwell
       Lori Gayheart
       Dr. Page Morahan
       Rev. Shada Sullivan
       Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake
       Dr. Devin Zuber

STRUCTURE REVIEW COMMITTEE:
“Design, adopt and maintain an organizational structure that is directly responsive to Convention’s Purpose and needs, and that includes provisions for its own self-evaluation and growth.” (Standing Resolution 1, Objective 9, July 3, 1986)

Chair: Rev. Lisa Solwold
       Bill Coffman
       Rev. Susannah Currie
       Kurt Fekete
       Alice Henderson
       Rev. Rachel Madjerac

SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH YOUTH LEAGUE (SCYL):
Youth Director: Kurt Fekete
President: Josh Moore
East Coast and Activities Officer: Jack Cadden
Midwest and Service Officer: Nathan Hamilton
West Coast, Fundraising and Finance Officer: Ronnie Viges
Canada Officer: Open
Clear Blue Sky Editor, Public Relations and Communication Officer: Ivy Little
League Chaplain: Rev. Renee Machiniak

SWEDENBORGIAN COMMUNITY ONLINE CENTRAL COMMITTEE:
Chair: Elbert Smith (2021)
        William Rotella (2022)
        Rev. Thom Muller (2023)
Ex-Officio (without vote): Rev. Cory Bradford-Watts, Minister, Swedenborgian Online Community
Ex-Officio (with vote) Kurt Fekete, Vice-President, SCNA

BOARDS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE WAYFARERS CHAPEL:
(In 1983 the General Council set the number of appointed members of the Board at six (6). Three (3) must be from the Pacific Coast Association [indicated by *].)
Numbers in parentheses are the terms currently being served for the positions so indicated, persons are limited to two consecutive three-year terms. Those fulfilling unexpired terms are indicated by (*).

Chair: Peter Gottschalk 2023 *2
Secretary: Amy Little 2022 (2)
Treasurer: Robert Carr 2023 *(1)
Members: Todd Board 2022 *(2)
        John Booth 2021 *(*)
        Katharine Carr 2021 *(*)
Ex-Officio (with vote): Michael Robbins, Representative of the PCA
        Jane Siebert, President, SCNA
Ex-Officio (without vote) Director of Administration and Finance
        Director of Ministry
BOARD OF MEDIATION:
Consists of five members. “Two such members shall be lay persons appointed by the President, and two shall be ministers appointed by the Chair of the Council of Ministers, and their terms of office shall be the same as that of the President of the Swedenborgian Church. The fifth member shall be the Vice President of Convention who shall serve as chair” (Bylaws, Article XVI).

Chair: Kurt Fekete, Vice President, SCNA
Lon Elmer
Bet Giddings
Rev. Kit Billings
Rev. Kathy Speas

BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE NATIONAL CHURCH:
“The Board of Trustees of the National Church, now holding the title to and having control of the Church property in Washington, D.C., shall continue to consist of fifteen members who shall be citizens of any part of the United States and of whom a majority shall be chosen from some other place than the city of Washington, DC, and shall not be selected from any one association, and vacancies in their number shall be filled by the Board with approval of the President and the Secretaries of the Convention, having in mind the restrictions stated above, and five members shall constitute a quorum” (Bylaws, Article XX).

Chair: Karen Conger
Polly Baxter MA Rev. Randall Laakko DE
Rev. Jenny Caughman TN Tom Neuenfeldt MI
Rev. Betsy Coffman OH Dr. Malcolm Peck VA
Stan Conger CA Helen Sioris VA
Lori Gayheart IN Rev. Ken Turley ME
Barb Halle IN Susan Wood FL
Carl Helm KS Herb Ziegler MA
TRUSTEES OF THE BUILDING FUND:

The Board of Trustees of the Building Fund shall consist of three trustees who shall be appointed by the General Council...to serve each for three years. (Bylaws, Article XIX)

The “Trustees of the Building Fund of the New Church of America” were appointed by action of the General Convention in 1875, “for the purpose of aiding societies in erecting New Church places of worship in America; provided the assistance given shall be in the form of loans secured by mortgage on real estate, at such rate of interest and such time and mode of payment as the Trustees may in their discretion from time to time deem best.” (1875 Journal, Minute 107 and 1910 Journal, Minute 55)

The purposes of this Fund were broadened in 1946 “to aid New Church societies in purchasing, remodeling, or erecting places of worship, Sunday School Quarters and Parish Halls in America.” (1946 Journal, Minute 42 and 1947 Journal, Minute 38)

In 2018, the Bylaws were amended (Article X. Sec 1.) to create the Standing Committee for Financial Accountability, which was given authority to administer “all funds.”

Chair: Rev. Paul Martin 2021
Rev. Betsy Coffman 2022
Debbie Dolley 2023

Ex-Officio (without vote): Jennifer Lindsay, Treasurer, SCNA
Jane Siebert, President, SCNA

TRUSTEES OF THE IUNGERICH PUBLICATION FUND:

The Fund to be used for supplying gratuitously the theological works of Emanuel Swedenborg to the Protestant clergy of the United States and Canada, including theological students and instructors in theology (see Journal 1882, pp. 89-97). The Board of Trustees is appointed by General Council.

In 2018, this fund was transferred to the direct purview of the Standing Committee for Financial Accountability.
TRUSTEES OF THE TAFEL FUND:
The Tafel Fund, established in 2011 to advance the mission and purpose of the Swedenborgian Church, is a permanent fund restricted to the use of income only. It is administered by a Board of Trustees: three appointed by General Council and those who are seated by virtue of having donated a minimum of $25,000. The fund was established to honor the service to the General Convention of past and present Tafel ministers.

Co-Chair: Linda Tafel
Co-Chair: Rev. Dick Tafel
Rev. Richard L. Tafel (aka Rich Tafel)
Karen Conger (Appointed)
Lon Elmer (Appointed)
Jennifer Lindsay (Appointed)

REPRESENTATIVES

DELEGATES TO THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES:
The President of the Swedenborgian Church, with the counsel and advice of the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers, shall make the various appointments of the delegation to the National Council of Churches, and then they shall be confirmed by the General Council.

Head of Communion: Rev. Jane Siebert, President, SCNA
Delegates:
Rev. Dr. David Fekete
Rev. Richard L. Tafel
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

All ministers of the Swedenborgian Church, twelve constituting a quorum
(Bylaws of the Council of Ministers, Article III)

Chair: Rev. Susannah Currie 2023 (1)
Secretary: Rev. Dagmar Bollinger 2021* (1)
Exec. Comm.: The Chair

The Chair
Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mitchell 2021 (1)
Rev. Shada Sullivan 2022 (1)
Rev. Terry Schnarr 2023 (1)

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:
(Bylaws of the Council of Ministers, Article IV, Section 1)

Chair: Rev. Wilma Wake 2021
Rev. Robert McCluskey 2022
Rev. Kevin Baxter 2023

ADVISORY PLACEMENT COMMITTEE:
This is the sole proper channel of communication for churches or groups seeking
to employ a minister, and for ministers seeking employment.

Chair: Rev. Jane Siebert, President, SCNA
Other Members: Rev. Susannah Currie, Chair of the Council of Ministers
Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence, Dean of the Center for
Swedenborgian Studies

COMMITTEE ON ADMISSION INTO THE MINISTRY:
(Bylaws of the Council of Ministers, Article IV, Section 7)

Chair: Rev. Kit Billings 2022 (2)
Other Members: Rev. Kathy Speas 2022 (2)
Rev. Alison Lane-Olsen 2023 †(*)
Dr. Page Morahan 2021 (2)

Ex-Officio Rev. Jane Siebert, President, SCNA

* Filling an unexpired term
† Elected by Convention
COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF THE ROLL:
(Bylaws of the Council of Ministers, Article IV, Section 8)
Karen Conger, Secretary, SCNA
Rev. Dagmar Bollinger, Secretary of the Council of Ministers
Brittany Price, Operations Manager, Central Office

ETHICS COMMITTEE:
(Bylaws of the Council of Ministers, Article IV, Section 6)
Chair:
Rev. Catherine Lauber
Rev. Betsy Coffman
Rev. Solomon Young-Min Kim

COMMITTEE ON WORSHIP:
(Bylaws of the Council of Ministers, Article IV, Section 4)
Chair:
Rev. Roslyn Taylor
Pastor Paul Deming

MISCONDUCT DETERMINATION BOARD:
(Bylaws of the Council of Ministers, Article IV, Section 9)
Chair:
Rev. Dagmar Bollinger
Rev. Betsy Coffman
Rev. Solomon Young-Min Kim
Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mitchell
Rev. Shada Sullivan

COMMITTEE ON PROGRAM:
(Bylaws of the Council of Ministers, Article IV, Section 5)
Rev. Susannah Currie, Chair of the Council of Ministers
Rev. Dagmar Bollinger, Secretary of the Council of Ministers
Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence, Dean of the Center for Swedenborgian Studies†

† The dba of the Swedenborgian House of Studies changed to Center for Swedenborgian Studies on July 1, 2015. The bylaws of the Council of Ministers were not amended to reflect this prior to publication.
OUR DAILY BREAD:

Managing Editor: Rev. Thom Muller
Editor: Rev. Dr. David Fekete

ODB Oversight Committee: Rev. Susannah Currie
Rev. Terry Schnarr

MINISTERS’ TRAVEL FUND:

Chair: Chair of the Council of Ministers
Secretary of the Council of Ministers
Operations Manager, Central Office

CHAPLAIN ON YOUTH AND THE MILITARY:

Rev. Andy Stinson

ENDORSER OF MILITARY CHAPLAINS:

Rev. Jane Siebert
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date of Ordination</th>
<th>Date of Death/Date of Severance</th>
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Auxiliary and Associated Bodies

The following organizations are legally independent bodies in which the Swedenborgian Church has an interest.

American New Church Sunday School Association
d/b/a Swedenborgian Church Children’s Ministries (SCCM):

Chair/President: Rev. Kit Billings
Vice-President: Rev. Kevin Baxter
Secretary: Rev. Carla Friedrich
Treasurer: Deborah Dolley

Trustees of the Gray Legacy:

Wesley N. Gray Fund - Legacy held by three Trustees appointed by the Probate Court of Middlesex County, MA, on joint recommendation of the Massachusetts New Church Union and the General Convention. The Trustees are instructed to expend the net income for “such church and missionary uses, preferably in Massachusetts first, then in the United States of America, and then in the whole world, as shall seem to them most deserving and most useful towards the growth of the New Jerusalem Church;” and to render “a report of said fund and of the proceedings under it...each year to the said General Convention” for printing in its Journal.

Secretary/Treasurer: Dr. Rebecca Kline Esterson
Trustee: Nancy Little
Herbert Ziegler
CENTER FOR SWEDENBORGIAN STUDIES (CSS), FORMERLY
SWEDENBORGIAN HOUSE OF STUDIES:
(Incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts on May 17, 1881, as the New
Church Theological School)

BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Chair: Rev. Jenny Caughman
Vice Chair: Terrie Crenshaw
Clerk: Karen Conger
Treasurer: Jennifer Lindsay
Dean of CSS: Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence
Liaison (without vote): President, Graduate Theological Union
Executive Committee: The Chair
The Vice Chair
Clerk
Treasurer

Ex-officio with vote: President, General Convention

ELECTED MEMBERS:

Term Expires 2021: Lewis Shaw* (0)
Karen Conger**+ (0)

Term Expires 2022: Robert Carr* (0)
Rev. Jenny Caughman** (0)

Term Expires 2023: Rev. Dr. Gard Perry* (1)
Rev. Anna Woofenden** (1)

Term Expires 2024: Jennifer Lindsey* (1)
Terry Crenshaw** (1)

*Trustees elected by Representative Class
**Trustees elected by At-Large Class
+To complete an unexpired term
Due to the COVID-19 pandemic it was judged to be unsafe to meet face-to-face for the 196th annual session of the General Convention. Therefore, Convention 2020, the first “virtual convention” in the denomination’s history, opened via Facebook and also on the Convention website (swedenborg.org) on the evening of Friday, June 26 with a beautiful musical prelude from Pastor Paul Deming, and a welcome and opening of the Word by President Rev. Jane Siebert. Jane’s welcome was followed by a virtual parade of ministries representing approximately 95% of our groups in North America, generating a lot of excitement as represented by the many comments on Facebook. The “parade” was presented in two-parts, intersected by the President’s annual report to the (virtual) floor, and the evening closed with a lovely musical meditation led by Pastor Christine Campbell.

The second session opened on Saturday morning, June 27th, with a very moving presentation and meditation entitled “Black Lives Matter: A Call to Reflection, Prayer, and Action,” led by Dr. Rebecca Esterson, Terrie Crenshaw, Rev. Gladys Wheaton, Rev. Shada Sullivan, and Rev. Anna Woofenden. During the presentation a place of silence was held for eight minutes and forty-six seconds in memory of the ordeal and death of George Perry Floyd Jr. and all victims of racialized violence.

This experience was followed by the beautiful Memorial Worship Service from Wayfarers Chapel, led by Rev. Rachel Madjerac with music by Rev. Ken Turley. The wonderful keynote speech by Rev. Dr. George Dole, entitled “For Heaven’s Sake,” very appropriately closed the morning session.
Saturday and Sunday afternoons were set aside for this year’s mini-courses, which were of a particularly diverse and fascinating nature. They included a look at “Swedenborg at the Movies” with Dr. Devin Zuber, “Blessed Are the Peacemakers: How You and Your Church Can Successfully Facilitate Political Dialogue in a Polarized Society” with Rev. Rich Tafel, “The Harmonic One: Suggestions of Divine Plurality in the Bible and in Swedenborg” with Dr. Rebecca Esterson, “Near-Death Studies and Swedenborg’s Spiritual World” with Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence, “Finding Church Beyond the Walls: Reimagining Church in the time of COVID” with Rev. Anna Woofenden, “Disability, Divinity & The Divine Human: Helen Keller’s Spiritual Legacy” with Rev. Sage Cole, and “T.S. Elliot: the Death of the Church in Swedenborg” with Rev. Dr. David Fekete.

The Saturday sessions closed with the wonderful Swedenborgian Church Youth League worship service, an event that is always greatly anticipated and enjoyed. Josh Moore and his use of salt in his cookie demonstration will be talked about for years to come! Youth Director Kurt Fekete is once again to be commended for his continued skillful and loving shepherding of our precious youth.

On Sunday afternoon President Jane Siebert opened the last days’ session with a welcome, and we were treated to a delightful musical prelude with Bet Giddings, after which followed the rest of the mini-courses (see above).

The Closing Worship Service with Communion was held on Sunday, June 28, with Pastor Paul Deming, Rev. Kevin Baxter, Rev. Sage Cole, Rev. Youngmin Kim, and Rev. Shada Sullivan, and included a musical prelude & postlude by Angela Papierski, with an Interlude by Karen Conger, accompanied by Bill Schuck. President Rev. Jane Siebert officially closed the 196th Session of the General Convention with a welcome to next year’s convention in Bridgewater, Massachusetts, followed by a benediction and the closing of the Word.

With regard to numbers of viewers for convention 2020, the highest “attendance” at any one time was 116 viewers (on Friday night), and the lowest was 62 viewers. Most of our viewers were in the United States, however several were from Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom, as well as Ger-
many, Norway and South Africa.

For the thirteen “events” there were 117 Facebook “shares,” and 1,441 comments were made throughout. Those numbers will continue to go up as folks go back and watch what they missed or wish to view again.

It was a wonderful experience and we urge those of you who might have missed all or part of Virtual Convention 2020 to go to swedenborg.org to view it, or search Swedenborgian Church of North America on Facebook and find it there. Our thanks to all who worked so very hard on the project, the Planning Committee made up of Rev. Jane Siebert, Beki Greenwood, Rev. Roslyn Taylor, Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence, Rev. Dave Brown, Kurt Fekete, Rev. Cory Bradford-Watts, and Rev. Susannah Currie, plus our Video Producer Nick Izzi, our Web Manager, Jason Woofenden, all our presenters and moderators, and all the ministries that submitted their own videos. See you next year!

Respectfully Submitted,
Karen Conger, Recording Secretary
Beki Greenwood, Editor of the Messenger
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<td>Robert H. Kirven</td>
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<td>Andre Diaconoff</td>
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<td>1976</td>
<td>Richard H. Tafel, Jr.</td>
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<td>Dorothea Harvey</td>
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<td>Ernest O. Martin</td>
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<td>Ronald P. Brugler</td>
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<td>F. Gardiner Perry III</td>
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<td>Gladys Wheaton</td>
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<td>Jaikoo E. Lee</td>
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<td>David L. Rienstra</td>
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<td>1989</td>
<td>David P. Johnson</td>
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<td>Jerome A. Poole</td>
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<td>Stephen J. Pults</td>
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<td>1993</td>
<td>Richard M. Baxter</td>
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<td>1994</td>
<td>George F. Dole</td>
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<td>Carl Yenetchi</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>Horand K. Gutfeldt</td>
<td>Urbana, OH</td>
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1997  Robert H. Kirven    Hutchinson, KS  
1998  James F. Lawrence    Leesburg, FL  
1999  J. Theodore Klein    Malibu, CA  
2000  Paul Martin    Urbana, OH  
2001  Renée Billings Machiniak    St. Paul, MN  
2002  Paul Zacharias    Gorham, ME  
2003  Ken Turley    Geneva, NY  
2004  Wilma Wake    Kitchener, Ontario, Canada  
2005  Marlene Laughlin    Berkeley, CA  
2006  John Billings    Urbana, OH  
2007  Eric Hoffman    Holland, MI  
2008  Sarah Buteux    Bridgewater, MA  
2009  Junchol Lee    Seattle, WA  
2010  John Maine    St. Paul, MN  
2011  Jonathan Mitchell    Cincinnati, OH  
2012  Andrew Stinson    Bridgewater, MA  
2013  Jane Siebert    Urbana, OH  
2014  Alison Lane-Olsen    St. Louis, MO  
2015  David Fekete    Bridgewater, MA  
2016  Solomon Young-Min Kim    Urbana, OH  
2017  Susannah Currie    West Chester, PA  
2018  Kit Billings    San Jose, CA  
2019  Kathy Speas    Valparaiso, IN  
2020  Paul Deming    Virtual
Rev. Bob Bossdorf, who was already an ordained Methodist minister and pastoral counselor, came into the community of the Swedenborg School of Religion and General Convention in the late ‘70s - early 80’s thru his association with Rev. Cal Turley who was an SSR faculty member and worked as a pastoral counselor with Bob. It was a good fit from the beginning and Bob began teaching at SSR as an adjunct faculty.

Bob served the SSR community well until 1990 (?) when he left the school and began pastoring full-time at a small UCC church in NH. Even so, Bob continued to fill roles on various Convention committees over the years. He participated in the Council of Minister’s Peer Supervision program as well as the occasional guest visit at one of Convention’s summer camps. As a pastor, as a peer, and as a friend, he was good hearted and good humored, compassionate, understanding and wise in a most down-to-earth kind of way. In his quiet way, he was a blessing to everyone he met.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Ken Turley
On Saturday, the 8th of August, The Rev. J. Theodore ‘Ted’ Klein entered into the fullness of the spiritual world in Boston, Massachusetts. Born in Abington PA, he was the cherished son of the late Harald Immanuel and Ruth Powell Klein. Ted graduated from the Academy of the New Church College (BA), Temple University (MEd in Education), and Boston University (MA and PhD in Philosophy). Beloved husband of 52 years of Mary Kay (McKeon) Klein. Loving father of John Klein and his wife Myriah Klein of Salem MA, Kevin Klein and his wife Heather Greer Klein of Durham NC, and the late Karen McNulty.

He was ordained by the Swedenborgian Church in 1984 and faithfully lived a life committed to that ministry for 36 years. Rev. Klein served as faculty at the Swedenborg School of Religion, presented lectures and talks at churches and conventions, served on several committees including being secretary of the Council of Ministers. The doctrine of usefulness and social justice were integral to Ted’s ministry, which is displayed well in his book published by J. Appleseed, The Power of Service. He also authored Why Is This Happening To Me and the Learning Compassion workbook. He served the Boston Society of the New Jerusalem (Church on the Hill, Boston) for 15 years, the last four as its Senior Pastor. Throughout all of the difficulties at the Boston Church, Ted remained a loving and stalwart presence of Swedenborgian thought doing all in his power to maintain the church’s historic identity.

In addition to his church ministry, Ted had a passion for educating minds. He started his academic career teaching Philosophy at Urbana university, then the Swedenborg school of religion, and UMass Boston yeah he had just retired at the end of the most recent spring semester. Colleagues described his talks as “…lucid, perfectly insightful, & extremely interesting.” And summarized his personality as being the “sweetest, kindest, gentlest individuals whom I ever knew.” The ethics of care was clearly at the center of his philosophical focus and he was working on a book on that topic. He wasn’t able to complete it, but his impact on students and faculty was such that, “his ideas will reverberate forever and ever.”

Ted was an artist, a lover of nature, music, and dancing. But most importantly he was a dedicated husband and father. Knowing that he was going to die, he was at peace and was ready for the transition, but his thoughts were not in his own life but of the difficulty his loved ones would face.
His body was laid to rest next to his late daughter in a graveside service officiated by the Rev. Kevin K. Baxter (NJM) and the Rev Colin Leitch (UU), yet his soul was already being welcomed into the splendors of the spiritual world.

Rev Dr Ted Klein was a kind and gentle man with a shining soul. He approached life with great insight and joyful humor. Dedicated to the vision of the New Jerusalem, he lived and taught a life of charity, understanding, and service. Well done good and faithful servant.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Kevin Baxter N.J.M
COVID-19 has turned our world, our churches, our camps, and even our Journal upside down and inside out. I am amazed with the ingenuity, personal time, and care that has gone into creating offerings for our members and friends to stay connected, worship together, and be the “church” in 2020 in a challenging and successful way.

Our church buildings were often closed overnight with no direction on how long this was going to last or what to do. We worked hard to stay connected with our ministries through weekly emails from the beginning of March through the end of June. Our email list grew as more and more people asked to join the list of members and friends of Convention. We requested updates from ministers and others on how they were coping with the pandemic. “Pandemic ponderings” was created with numerous and varied postings. We enjoyed humorous postings, helping to keep us sane, and deep reflections, echoing the uncertain reality we are living. Some members sent in poetry and artwork. In the emails sent out at first we also included written sermons from a variety of ministers throughout the country as this was how our ministries first offered “church.”

Soon the ministers and pastors adapted to virtual services on Zoom, Facebook, YouTube and other platforms, so our email included a list of services and times that people could join on Sundays. It was interesting to watch Swedenborgian church services around our continent happening at different times with a variety of participants. The isolation of the pandemic actually brought us together in new ways.

Next came the challenge of moving from a partially planned in-person convention to a virtual convention. A team of 8 volunteers created a magnificent opportunity for people to “attend” convention. (See report pg 45) We received many responses of gratitude for a time of worship, learning, and community in the midst of the pandemic.

Now we ask, “what is next?” We have learned lessons from this pandemic time and must expand on what we have learned:

1) We are connected in many ways even though our ministries are spread from Maine to Oregon and from Ontario to California. It is fun to see virtually what is going on and meet the people that care about this diverse denomination. We need this every year at convention.
2) It is important to offer opportunities to learn on-line. Our seminary, The Center for Swedenborgian Studies, is continuing this on-line learning this fall with a free class open to all titled: *Swedenborg and Pandemic Theologies*, taught by Dr. Devin Zuber.

3) We must continue to offer virtual worship services in conjunction with in-person when our churches can worship again in their locations. We need to support them, both financially and with recommendations for equipment and process to have quality virtual services.

4) We need to find a way for our denomination to act together to address social justice issues.

5) Together we can make things happen in ways we had never considered or dreamed of.

Thank you all in the vital ways you have contributed and volunteered your time and talent,

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Rev. Jane Siebert, President*

**VICE-PRESIDENT**

This report is written as we all experience the uncertain times that we have found ourselves in due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We have all been advised to shelter in place, resulting in conducting business electronically, and finding church services and camps cancelled. Our denomination’s churches have been accessible online, providing us with an opportunity to participate in services across the country, meeting with our friends virtually.

Central Office business is being conducted from homes. Our new Central Office manager, Brittany Price works 30 hours per week from her home in Pennsylvania. She replaced Angela Papierski who left Central Office on July 1, 2020.

Our highest gratitude goes out to Gina Peracchi, Angela Papierski and Brittany Price for their efforts and commitment in Central Office. This new circumstance of working from home has given them some unique challenges.

As Vice-President, I continue to be part of the Online Community Board. Chair Elbert Smith, Rev. Cory Bradford-Watts, William Rotella, and Rev. Thom Muller continue to reach out to the world through this platform.

The Executive Committee meets at least monthly to conduct the ongoing business of the General Council. I need to give a shout out to the President, Rev. Jane Siebert, Secretary, Karen Conger, and Treasurer, Jennifer Lindsay for the love and
commitment that they give to our church and all of us. They are truly concerned about the well being of every ministry across the US and Canada. Working with them has been a blessing.

Respectfully submitted,
Tom Neuenfeldt, Vice President

SECRETARY

During this very challenging time for our denomination, our country, and the world, I am filled with gratitude at the opportunity to continue to work for the Church. President Rev. Jane Siebert, Vice President Tom Neuenfeldt, Treasurer Jennifer Lindsay, and I have remained in close contact during the year, and it continues to be a joy to work with them.

One of the good things to arise from the necessity to engage in only virtual meetings is that the Executive Committee of the General Council now conducts all our meetings via ZOOM so that we can see each other, as well as just hearing each other, which we’ve all found comforting and useful. The spring meeting of the General Council was held via ZOOM, as well as the Post Convention meeting of the General Council and other meetings that were called to deal with various items of business involving the efforts of the entire General Council.

We have experimented with the first virtual convention meeting in the history of the General Convention, a venture that succeeded marvelously. Those of you that missed it can go and find it on Convention’s Facebook page (Swedenborgian Church of North America) and see the entire presentation, either for the first time, or again, if you like! There’s some talk about conducting convention meetings in this manner once every three to five years. We’ll see what develops as time goes on. Much of the money budgeted for 2020 convention expenses has been placed into a fund which may be applied to for aid for our struggling ministries around North America. May it be well.

In addition to other duties as Secretary of the denomination, I served on the Convention 2020 Planning Committee, and I also had the opportunity of clerk ing several virtual meetings of the Standing Committee for Communication and Information in 2019 and the first half of 2020 in my continuing capacity as that committee’s General Council advisor. In 2019, along with several other members of the General Council and the denomination, I was invited to join the Board of Directors of the New York New Church, as their numbers had dwindled below the point at which they were legally able to function.
Last December Samantha Johanson left her position as Operations Manager of the Central Office to take another job. We were sorry to see her go; subsequently we had the good fortune to be able to hire Cambridge Chapel organist Angela Papierski as an interim for several months. Angela worked virtually and part time, so we were able to experiment a little and determine whether or not a virtual arrangement might work permanently. It worked out so well that the Executive Committee of the General Council decided to institute the practice permanently.

Along with General Council member Carl Helm, Treasurer Jennifer Lindsay, and our Accounting Manager Gina Peracchi, in July of this year I engaged in the interview/hire process for a new Operations Manager, and on August 1, 2020, Brittany Price began work for the denomination working virtually from her home in Pennsylvania. We are so pleased to have her on board and look forward to our association with her in the years to come. I continue to be very grateful for the able and dedicated staff of the Central Office, Samantha, then Angela and now Brittany, as well as our wonderful Accounting Manager Gina Peracchi; they have all been unfailingly cooperative, helpful and professional.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Conger, Recording Secretary

TREASURER

The Office of Treasurer is the busiest during two times of the year. One of these times is from late August through the General Council meeting in November. These months are dedicated to drafting the annual General Convention budget and presenting it to General Council for approval, chairing the Standing Committee for Financial Accountability meeting when it awards Augmentation, Mission, and Jungmin fund grants, and chairing the Investment Committee meeting when it sets the Common Fund payout rate for the following calendar year.

During Fall 2019, I also had the good fortune to attend both the Wayfarers Chapel board meeting and the Pacific Coast Association (PCA) annual meeting. The Wayfarers Chapel board meeting provided an understanding of the current renovation plans and capital fundraising efforts. The PCA annual meeting was hosted by the New Church of the Southwest Desert and enabled me to witness the ministry and its new Oasis and sanctuary space that are currently supported through Augmentation and Missions grants.

The other time of year when the Office of Treasurer is at its busiest is from late April through the Convention Session. It has been a strange journey to perform the Treasurer’s role during these months completely on-line due to the COVID-19
pandemic. Typically my duties would include several in-person events, including chairing the Investment Committee bi-annual meeting, preparing with Gina Peracchi for the annual financial review, working with our independent financial auditors who perform the financial review, and preparing for and attending the Convention Session and the General Council meetings held during the Convention Session.

Gina Peracchi and I are in touch most days through either email or telephone. Fortunately, she is quite flexible and nimble in being able to continue to perform her critical accounting work productively and diligently from her home during this time of social distancing.

Financial Results

The independent financial auditors finalized their professional review of the 2019 financial statements and issued the financial statements in early August 2020. The financial statements are available from Central Office upon request.

Through the end of calendar year 2019, General Convention experienced an operational surplus of $30,375 in unrestricted funds. This surplus would not have occurred without your generosity as General Convention received over $50,000 through appeals, pledges, donations, and bequests. Thank you to all who gave during 2019 with your time, your talent, and your treasure. These gifts make all the difference within General Convention and our ministries.

During 2020, General Convention continues to be on firm footing with a balanced budget and an expected surplus through the end of the calendar year. There is a silver lining with the current Covid-19 pandemic as several budgeted line items will not be fully expended during 2020. The most significant change was the 2020 Convention Session which was held virtually instead of in person due to the pandemic. General Convention is also experiencing cost savings related to the limitation on travel and in-person meetings for General Council, the Council of Ministers, various Committees, and the office of the President. The Swedenborgian Church Youth League (SCYL) is also unable to gather together for its normally scheduled retreats.

General Convention received a Payroll Protection Plan Loan (“PPP Loan”) in the amount of $47,175 from the Small Business Administration (“SBA”) under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (“CARES Act”). This loan has an interest rate of 1.0% and will be eligible to be fully forgiven (including any accrued interest) by the SBA if the funds are exclusively expended for payroll, rent, and utilities.
Funds Impacted by Urbana University Closure

During Spring 2020, Urbana University permanent closed its operations. General Convention maintains two restricted funds which depend on Urbana University being in operation to be utilized: (1) Helen Keller Memorial Fund; and (2) Urbana University Student Aid Fund. Please see the section titled “Invested Funds of the Swedenborgian Church” in the 2020 Journal for a complete description of these two funds.

With the closing of Urbana University, General Council assessed how best to repurpose these funds while respecting the intention of the original gift. General Council passed a motion during its Post-Convention Session meeting that directs the income from both the Helen Keller Memorial Fund and the Urbana University Student Aid fund to be used in support of on-going SCYL activities.

It is a privilege to serve General Convention as Treasurer. The Office of Treasurer takes time and attention to detail with an eye on the bigger financial picture – both short term and long term. It is rewarding to work with General Council and the other officers in support of the overall General Convention mission. The work is sometimes challenging, yet the relationships forged make all the difference.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Lindsay
GENERAL COUNCIL

The General Council met in person twice during convention 2019 at Valparaiso University, in Valparaiso, IN, as well as November 8 & 9, 2019, at the Cenacle Retreat Center in Chicago, IL. In addition, the General Council met by ZOOM for two special meetings, one on January 23 and one on March 21, 2020, as well as for their Spring meeting on May 9, 2020, and their Post-Convention Meeting on June 30, 2020. The Executive Committee, composed of the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer of Convention, continue to meet by ZOOM at least monthly.

In addition, several members of the General Council are serving as Trustees of the National Church in Washington, D.C. and as members of the Board of Directors of the New York New Church, the latter’s numbers having declined to a point necessitating that involvement.

Each member of the General Council, except for the officers, has become a liaison with approximately four ministries in Convention, and continue to be in contact with the laity of those ministries two times a year in order to build/maintain communication. The liaisons are:

- Jenny Caughman: Hillside Community Church, El Cerrito, CA; New Church (Swedenborgian), LaPorte, IN; Fryeburg New Church Assembly, Fryeburg, ME; Church of the New Jerusalem, Cambridge, MA.
- Betsy Coffman: Church of the New Jerusalem, Bath, ME; Church of the New Jerusalem, Pawnee Rock, KS; New Church, Portland, ME.
- Stan Conger: San Francisco Church, San Francisco, CA; Virginia Street Church, St. Paul, MN; Church of the Holy City, Wilmington, DE; Church of the Holy City, Edmonton, Alberta, CN.
- Lon Elmer: Wayfarers Chapel, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA; Church of the Open Word, Newtonville, MA; Korean Church, New York, NY.
- Beki Greenwood: Church of the Good Shepherd, Kitchener, ON, CN; Church of the Holy City, Royal Oak, MI; Church of the Holy City, Washington, D.C.; Paulhaven Camp, Edmonton, AB, CN.
- Barb Halle: New Church, Fryeburg, ME; New Church, Elmwood, MA; The New Church, New York, NY; New Church of the Southwest Desert, Silver City, NM.
- Carl Helm: Swedenborgian Church of Puget Sound, Redmond, WA; Church of the Open Word, St. Louis, MO; New Jerusalem Church, Bridgewater, MA; Society of the New Church, Urbana, OH.
• Susan Hulcher: Garden Church, San Pedro, CA; Revelation of the Spirit, Cambridge, ON, CN; New Jerusalem Church, Pretty Prairie, KS; New Church of Montgomery, Cincinnati, OH.
• Thom Muller: New Church Society, Calgary, AB, CN; Swedenborgian Church at Temenos, West Chester, PA; Almont New Church Assembly & Retreat Center, Allenton, MI; The Swedenborg Library & Spiritual Growth Center, Chicago, IL.

Respectfully submitted:
Karen Conger, Recording Secretary

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

Here is what the Council of Minister’s EXCOM has been working on:

Zoom Group Meetings – Contact comchair@swedenborg.org for more info
• Chaplain Support Group – this is a closed group
• Compassionate Communication Group
• Sunday evening ‘COM Chair Chat’ has between 1 and 10 participants weekly at 7pm ET
• Support group for Pastoring Challenges in Pandemic Times with Rev. Kathy Speas
• Support group for Licensed Pastors with Rev. Susannah Currie
• Human Services Professionals Support Group with Rev. Betsy Coffman

Virtual Peer Supervision

Due to the difficulties of having meetings by region, an ALL-COM Peer Supervision took place virtually on Friday, May 1, 7pm ET and Saturday, May 2, 11am-5pm ET for all clergy & consecrated LP’s. 28 clergy & LP’s attended. Rev. Dr. George Dole presented a program. Thursday, June 25th, sessions were held at 11am and 7pm EDT for ministers to gather.

Our Daily Bread

A review process is underway and evaluation forms are being sent to all Convention to participate in EXCOM’s review of the www.spiritualquesters.org website. 58 responses were received and have been forwarded to the editors, Rev. Thom Muller & Rev. David Fekete

Committee on Worship

Chair Rev. Ros Taylor & Paul Deming have created a survey to all of COM to assess worship needs. They are also supplying churches with downloadable sheet music and mp3’s for Songs for the Journey Vol. I & II. A ‘Collaborative Online
Service,’ is in development for July 5th. 2020 Virtual Convention worship has a number of COM ministers involved. ExCom member Rev. Shada Sullivan is collecting confirmation materials to make samples available. Chair Rev. Ros Taylor began an email thread to share how COM is using technology for worship.

Licensed Pastor Program Review Ad Hoc Committee

Sent drafts of templates for LP job descriptions & contracts to the Committee
Revisions of COM Bylaws and Ministerial Conduct Guidelines will be drafted to include LP’s.

Respectfully submitted:
Rev. Susannah Currie, Chair, COM
Rev. Dagmar Bollinger, Secretary
Rev. Jonathan Mitchell, Member-at-Large
Rev. Terry Schnarr, Member-at-Large
Rev. Shada Sullivan, Member-at-Large
Rev. Jane Siebert, President (ex-officio)

STANDING COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

We recognize and thank Herb Ziegler for his years of service as Messenger editor. At his request to retire, the process to find a replacement was initiated. After a thorough applicant search, Beki Greenwood took over as new Messenger editor in February 2020.

New member Holly Bauer was appointed by President Rev. Jane Seibert in May, 2020 to fill the vacant position on SCCI.

Jason Woofenden was hired in June, 2020 to maintain the Convention’s website, swedenborg.org. We will work with him to update and improve the website.

Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, the 2020 Annual Convention, “2020 Spiritual Vision: Transcending Time and Space”, was held live online from July 26-28 and is available on Facebook and swedenborg.org. Convention videos include opening and closing services, workshops, and the keynote speech by Rev. Dr. George Dole. The opening session included videos from ministries of the church.

Our committee has met via Zoom monthly, including input from Jim Lawrence for CSS, Cory Bradford-Watts for The Swedenborgian Online Community (swedenborgiancommunity.org/), Thom Muller for Our Daily Bread, and Beki Greenwood for the Messenger.

Respectfully submitted,
Val Brugler, Chair
THE MESSENGER

The Messenger is an official publication of the Swedenborgian Church of North America (ten issues, including combined January/February and July/August issues) and had a successful year of supporting and serving its readers. The Messenger publishes information that the Church wishes to communicate to the membership, such as church membership statistics, reports from meetings of the General Council and the Board of Trustees of the Center for Swedenborgian Studies, nomination information, news about ministries of the church, and information about the upcoming Annual Convention. In addition to news articles and announcements, the Messenger published articles on theology, Swedenborg and Swedenborgian related issues, personal reflections from members and clergy, and articles by and about churches, church members, clergy, and other ministries.

The September issue carried full coverage of the Annual Convention, held in Valparaiso, Indiana, last year, including reports on business sessions, the Annual Meeting of the Center for Swedenborgian Studies, ordinations, Swedenborgian Church Youth League (SCYL) activities, and sermons by the convention minister and the newly-ordained ministers.

At the 2019 Convention, Herb Ziegler announced his intent to retire after twelve years of serving as Editor of the Messenger. A search and interviews were conducted in the fall, and Beki Greenwood was chosen as his successor, beginning in February of 2020. Herb supported this transition through the beginning months and continues to be of service on the editorial committee, and as mentor and proofreader. A special thank you goes out to Herb for his years of service and continuing support.

The online and social media presence of the Messenger has been prioritized this year to bring information to a wide range of readers and to keep current with the ever-evolving technology needs. This has become an even greater need with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the growing need for a continual virtual presence.

The Messenger would like to thank the many unpaid contributors and proofreaders, without whom the Messenger would not be possible.

Respectfully submitted,
Beki Greenwood, Editor
STANDING COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION AND RESOURCES FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY

1. Standing Committee for Education and Resources did all its work on email this year.

2. Three projects have been given attention:
   • **Denominational Website:** This work has been kept warm on a back burner as we proceed with the larger team that is evolving the website—a work somewhat on hold while we find a new webmaster. The primary issue that needs to be worked through is how much content to put on the new website. A general plan evolved last year to include content in the form of worship materials, sermons, Sunday School plans and materials, copyright-free music resources and various Convention songbooks, church organizational materials, the seven-year cycle of themes for Convention, Good Practices documents, etc.
   • **Mini-Courses for 2020:** We worked with the group planning the virtual convention and went with the request to limit and feature seven mini-courses to be selected partly by strategizing excellent content deliverable through a recorded presentation. We are aware that attendance will be somewhat different this year due to its virtual availability leading to the likelihood of new visitors sitting in. A slate of seven has been selected, with tech support provided by Dave Brown.
   • **Seven Themes Support:** A plan to run regular small articles in the Messenger under a series carrying a banner for the current theme has been accomplished. This has been “The Year of the Lord” and a number of small articles have run using a variety of authors. The upcoming theme is “The Year of the Spiritual World.”

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Rev. Dr. James Lawrence, Chair*
STANDING COMMITTEE FOR FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

In September 2019, the SCFA met in East Tawas, Michigan. Marjie Leas graciously hosted and arranged the required lodging and meeting space. We also spent time with BJ and Tom Neuenfeldt over meals in their lakefront home.

During this meeting the SCFA reviewed the draft 2020 General Convention budget and recommended that it be forwarded to General Council for approval; appointed itself to also serve as the Augmentation Fund Committee; made granting decisions for applications related to the Augmentation Fund, Missions Fund, and Iungerich Fund; and captured a set of revisions to be incorporated into the next version of the combined grant application form to be utilized in Summer 2020.

The SCFA continued to utilize the following five priorities in its grant decision making and assessment that were confirmed during the November 2018 General Council meeting.

- Focus on the promotion of a General Convention based Swedenborgian perspective to the broader world and community.
- Impact on people and the potential for growth in the number of people served. Ability to attract people to participate in the ministry or project.
- Expressed commitment to the ministry or project, including buy-in from the local Swedenborgian religious leaders and donations of time and money from the local community.
- Effort toward becoming sustainable and self-funded with other sources of financial support.
- Accountability to the General Convention denomination including a willingness to accept and incorporate constructive feedback.

The ministries and projects supported through the SCFA grant decisions for calendar year 2020 are:

**Augmentation Fund**
- Edmonton
- Fryeburg New Church
- Garden Church (San Pedro)
- General Convention – Committee on Admission to the Ministry
- General Convention – Office of the President
- Hillside (El Cerrito)
• Korean New Church (New York City)
• Puget Sound
• St. Paul (automatic per donor requirement)
• Southwest Desert (Silver City)
• Swedenborgian On-Line Community
• Washington, DC
• Wilmington

Missions Fund
• Cohort Program
• Garden Church (San Pedro)
• Hillside (El Cerrito)
• Korean New Church (New York City)
• Kitchener
• Southwest Desert (Silver City)
• Swedenborgian On-Line Community
• Washington, DC
• Wilmington

Jungerich Fund
• Center for Swedenborgian Studies
• Rev. David Fekete
• Swedenborg Foundation
• Swedenborgian On-Line Community
• Wilmington

Each grant recipient is expected to submit both a mid-year and year-end report on the use of the grant and how it supported the ministry or project.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Lindsay, Chair
CENTRAL OFFICE REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Central Office Review Committee is chaired by the Vice President of the Swedenborgian Church.

Central Office has its physical presence in the basement of the Swedenborgian Chapel in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, operations from Central Office are being conducted remotely by both the Operations Manager and Accounting Manager, since March, 2020.

Several changes have occurred in the Operations Manager position over this past year. Samantha Johanson was hired for the position on November 20, 2017. Samantha accepted a job closer to her home, and left our employ on December 6, 2019. Angela Papierski was hired as an interim Operations Manager on December 19, 2019. She worked in that position until July 1, 2020, working remotely for three months.

A search committee consisting of Carl Helm, Jennifer Lindsay, and Karen Conger interviewed candidates to fill the Operations Manager position. The decision was made by General Council that Central Office could continue to operate remotely and the requirement to live near Cambridge was lifted.

The search committee recommended hiring Brittany Price as the new Operations Manager. Brittany works from her home 30 hours per week. Her first day of employment was August 3, 2020.

None of the above transitions could have been possible or successful without the extraordinary efforts of our Accounting Manager Gina Peracchi. Gina conducted the business of both the Operations Manager and Accounting Manager during the vacancies in the Operations Manager position. Her work ethic and attention to detail are impeccable.

The future of the physical home of Central Office is a topic that needs to be explored. The lease with the Cambridge Society expires on March 31, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,
Tom Neuenfeldt, Chair

COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY

The Committee on Inquiry has nothing to report.

Respectfully submitted,
Deanne Currie, Chair
COMMITTEE ON AMENDMENTS

No matters have been referred to the committee since last report.

Respectfully submitted,

George F. Dole, Chm., and Rev. Kevin Baxter

COMMITTEE ON LIBRARY AND DOCUMENTS

In 2019 the Library and Documents Committee had a change in personnel in committee members. In December, Samantha Johanson stepped down as Central Office Manager. The committee is currently composed of Nancy Little, chair; Polly Baxter, Rev. Dr. James Lawrence (ex-officio), and Central Office manager, Angela Papierski (ex-officio).

Rev. Lee Woofenden inquired about donated materials from his personal collection of Swedenborgian related documents such as historical and archival material relating to the Swedenborgian Church and various groups and organizations associated with it. These include record books, photos, journals, and other materials. Including a mostly hand-written book of records, photos, and drawings of League house parties at Fryeburg and elsewhere dating from 1935. He was advised where to send the items. Rev. Woofenden also inquired about having the remaining stock of J. Appleseed books in storage at Iron Mountain shipped to South Africa, where he is planning to move to join the faculty at the seminary there.

Chapel Hill School in Waltham, MA requested boxes be retrieved relating to the school’s history. Samantha arranged for the boxes to be sent to Chapel Hill. They copied the items they were interested in and the boxes were returned and then sent to CSS.

In April, a small group of volunteers worked on culling materials stored in the “cage” storage area in the basement of the Cambridge Church in order to reduce the size of the cage area being used by Convention.

In June, at the request of General Council (GC) to reduce the inventory at Iron Mountain, and after much deliberation on how that might happen given the limited library and archive space at CSS, the committee proposed donating General Convention documents and materials currently stored in “the cage” and in Iron Mountain (approximately 500 boxes) to Harvard Divinity School Andover Harvard Theological Library (HDS- AHTL) to be cataloged and stored at AHTL. (Donation agreement details pending.) Center for Swedenborgian Studies (CSS)
Library will continue to be the repository for all personal papers, sermons, and photographs. The remainder of documents and materials stored in Iron Mountain will be donated to HDS-AHTL. Prior to donating, the Iron Mountain inventory will be carefully reviewed. Boxes will be culled per the Documents retention policy. Personal papers, sermons, and photographs will be retrieved and sent to CSS. The proposal was tabled to the fall meeting of GC. The committee chair met with GC during their fall meeting in November to address questions and concerns about the proposal. GC approved the proposal at that meeting.

In December, the Central Office manager shipped boxes retrieved from Iron Mountain to churches and affiliated groups who had requested them. A box of items for Almont Summer School, and several boxes for the Boston Society were retrieved by Rev. Kevin Baxter. Several boxes belonging to the Urbana, OH Society were retrieved by Rev. Betsy Coffman. Several boxes belonging to Wayfarer’s Chapel were retrieved by Rev. Dan Burchett.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Little, MSLIS, Chair

INVESTMENT COMMITTEE

At the end of both October 2019 and April 2020, the Investment Committee convened during its regularly scheduled semi-annual meetings. Due to an opportunity to sell private real estate holdings and market disruptions from the Covid-19 pandemic, the Investment Committee also met two additional times during December 2019 and June 2020. Our investment advisors from Marquette Associates joined each meeting to provide updates regarding the overall economic market and reports on the performance of the Common Fund portfolio.

As of June 30, 2020, the Common Fund earned 2.9% over the past year; 6.0% per year on average over the past three years; and 8.9% per year on average over the past ten years. These returns are net of the quarterly payouts returned in the form of cash to each participant.

The Common Fund payout rate is a key component for the budgeting of General Convention and most of the other Common Fund participants, such as Associations, Societies, and the Center for Swedenborgian Studies. The Investment Committee carefully considers short-term and long-term impacts of the payout rate on the future growth of the Common Fund, recent inflation rates, and performance of the Common Fund and the market over the past few years. The healthy tension in the payout rate discussion is between meeting the needs of today in the
form of the quarterly cash payout and cultivating asset growth for the needs of the future.

The Investment Committee voted to increase the per unit payout rate by 1.6% from $1.23 per year ($0.3075 per quarter) in 2019 to $1.25 per year ($0.3125 per quarter) in 2020. All participants in the Common Fund have the choice to take the quarterly payout as set by the Investment Committee in the form of cash or reinvest part or all of their payout in the form of purchasing additional units. Participants are also able to purchase additional units or withdraw funds by selling units at the end of each quarter.

Given the dramatic change in the market and global economies due to the pandemic and resulting global slowdown, Spring 2020 became a prudent time during the Covid-19 pandemic to review and potentially revise the existing asset allocation strategy for the Common Fund portfolio. Our investment advisor, Marquette Associates, assisted with identifying possible changes to the current asset allocation including the addition of new investment vehicles into the asset allocation mix while maintaining the target growth and/or reducing the risk profile of the existing asset allocation. The Investment Committee approved the addition of High Yield Corporate Bonds and Global Low Volatility Equities to the Common Fund portfolio during its June 2020 meeting.

The Investment Committee will meet in October 2020 to set the payout rate for 2021. At this time, there is no indication that the payout rate will be reduced for calendar year 2021. The intention of the Investment Committee is to not provide in the form of the payout the full asset growth during bull market years. This allows for a buffer to accrue for the payout to hold steady during bear market years. The Common Fund is well positioned to recover and grow along with the overall market and continue to generate returns that the participants can rely on for years to come.

Dan Dyer completed his current five-year term on the Investment Committee as of July 2020. Dan has also served on the Investment Committee during the 1990s and 2000s. We thank Dan for all of his years of dedicated service and wise input.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Lindsay, Chair
RETIREMENT COMMITTEE

The Retirement Committee researched the possibility that retired ministers could count their pension payments as part of their housing allowance under US tax law. The Committee presented this to General Council in coordination with the Chairperson for the Council of Ministers for approval. In January 2020 a resolution was produced approving this policy for ministers in our denomination, which could amount to a nice savings for our ministers.

Rev. Tafel fielded questions from many ministers, some of whom moved themselves into the retired category following discussions. The text of the resolution is as follows.

RESOLUTION
Resolution voted on January 23, 2020 by General Council of the Swedenborgian Church of North America.

The General Council of the Swedenborgian Church of North America voted on January 23, 2020 to allow all ministers who have retired in the United States to be able to count 100% of any pension or retirement payments to be designated toward their housing allowance. We ask each minister to work with their accountant to be clear about the appropriate designation of what constitutes housing costs.

We encourage retired ministers to talk with your tax advisor or refer to IRS publication 517, Social Security and Other Information for Members of the Clergy and Religious Workers, for further information. Please review the attached document from our Retirement Committee and contact them if you have any questions.

A Message from the Retirement Committee
January 2020

Dear Swedenborgian Minister,

If you are retired or disabled, all or part of your pension, disability, or retirement savings benefits that you received may be excludable as housing allowance from your gross income for federal (U.S.) income tax purposes, subject to certain provisions established by federal tax laws. In other words, you can apply your pension fund income toward your housing allowance. (Surviving covered partners and retired lay employees do not qualify for this exclusion; members should plan for this contingency.)

When you served as a church pastor your church board voted on your housing allowance. Now that you are in retirement, the General Council serves that role
and voted to allow retired ministers to consider their retirement income as their housing allowance.

Here’s a summary of what you need to know and share with your accountant.

General Council has voted to allow all retired Swedenborgian ministers to designate their entire pension income toward their housing allowance.

Keep your own records with your accountant of the actual amount spent by you for housing-related expenses (housing, utilities, maintenance, repairs). The amount of your housing allowance cannot be more than what you spend on housing.

General Council has provided you with one housing allowance letter for all retired ministers that you should share with your accountant. Housing costs include fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and utilities.

You should maintain records to substantiate the exclusion you claim.

The IRS requires that the housing allowance exclusion be designated in advance of the tax reporting year for which it applies. To satisfy this requirement, the Retirement Committee, acting “ad interim” for the General Council of the Swedenborgian Church of North America, designated that 100 percent of pension, disability, and retirement savings plan benefits to eligible ministers would constitute a housing allowance, provided that such allowance did not exceed the home’s fair rental value, including furnishings and appurtenances, such as a garage, plus the cost of utilities and any other applicable tax law limits.

Talk with your tax advisor or refer to IRS publication 517, Social Security and Other Information for Members of the Clergy and Religious Workers, for further information.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Rich Tafel, Chairman
Committee Members: John McIntosh and Meredith Conant Piotti

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

This past year, the Social Justice Committee has provided resources to our churches re: politics and racial justice, and maintained contact with groups and individuals related to our work.

In April, the Social Concerns Committee sent a document to our church leaders re: church/state issues: excerpts from a Christian Century article entitled “Do Politics Belong in Church” (Oct., 2018). In July, General Council approved changes to the committee’s name (now the Social Justice Committee), description, and mission statement (see below). Also in July, at the committee’s request, General
Convention unanimously endorsed a resolution on Gun-Violence coming from the National Council of Churches.

In August, under the leadership of committee member Page Morahan, we initiated a project focusing on racial justice in our society. Copies of “United Against Racism: Churches for Change,” coming out of the NCC, were sent to 30 church leaders/centers along with a cover letter indicating how it could be used and the expectations of the committee. We also commend to the church the Nov., 2019 issue of the Messenger, which includes strong pieces on racial justice issues from Jim Lawrence, David Fekete, and Herb Ziegler.

In October, General Council approved and distributed a letter from the committee to the church: “A Position Statement Regarding the Interface of Swedenborgian Faith and Politics,” stressing the need to rise above mere partisan politics and instead embrace the larger, more inclusive vision of our common life found in Scripture and our church’s teachings.

Mission Statement: The Social Justice Committee believes that bringing awareness and action to humanitarian issues is essential in carrying out our Lord’s commission to us as stewards of all peoples. The prophets of Scripture, our teachings of the larger neighbor, and our own By-Laws, challenge the church to fulfill its prophetic role. With this as our foundation, the Social Justice Committee will seek to express a spiritual perspective on contemporary issues, voice its convictions on ethical and moral issues in our nation and our world, and provide relevant Swedenborgian thought for use by individuals and churches. We will periodically update Convention through its website and The Messenger.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Robert McCluskey, Chair

STRUCTURE REVIEW COMMITTEE

No requests were made to the committee this year.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Lisa Solwold, Chair
YOUTH DIRECTOR

It’s hard to believe this is my eighteenth year as your Youth Director. I continue to work primarily with youth ages 10 – 18, however, I also actively contribute to the young adult, 18 – 30 year old Transitions group. Our preteen program is called SPLATz (Super Powered Lovable Almost Teens). Our teen program is the SCYL (Swedenborgian Church Youth League). The youth are building an exciting, caring community while learning much about our church theology. The youth are discovering spiritual truths and valuable life lessons from talented ministers and mentors.

Here are the highlights of year 2019:

- January LaPorte SPLATz Retreat – Theme: Seven Days of Creation. 9 youth.
- May Almont SPLATz Retreat – Theme: Being in the Middle. 10 youth.
- May Memorial Day SCYL Retreat – Theme: Dreams, Visions, and Ghost Stories. 22 teens.
- July Almont Summer Camp – 7th – 9th grade class. Camp theme: Catastrophes!
- July/August International Summer Camp – Led 14 teens on an adventure to London then to Purley Chase, England to attend an International teen summer camp.
- October SCYL Cedar Hill Retreat – Theme: What’s in a Name. 12 teens.
- October LaPorte SPLATz Retreat – Theme: Animals in the Bible. 5 youth.
- December Almont Winter SCYL Retreat – Theme: The Seven Deadly Sins. 20 teens.

Similar to previous years, I close with words of gratitude and requests for participation. Thank you to all the youth for being an active part of our church community. Thank you to our amazing team of retreat leaders and ministers. I also thank all of you who generously give time and money to our church youth program and purchase merchandise sold by the youth. Without your support there
would be no youth program. I look forward to another year of youth work and pray that my work is of use.

Respectfully submitted,
Kurt Fekete, Youth Director

YOUTH LEAGUE

The Swedenborgian Church Youth League (SCYL) is having an overall, interesting time. Uncertainty is the name of the game and we are playing it like softball in the summer of July. Since our Convention worship service this summer, the group has been very busy in preparation for the new school year. For many youths, the biggest challenge might include trying to learn without the hands-on interaction that everyone is so used to for school. For others, it could be concerns with trying to stay safe while receiving said hands-on learning. There’s a problem to every solution, but the SCYL is no stranger to problem solving.

Back in the stone age of 2019, we began with a retreat on the concept of dreams and the significance they carry. Another great trip to Lapeer for mini golf and go-karts made for a good outing to finish the retreat! Then came Convention held in Valparaiso, IN. There we got more exposure to the church as a whole, and also gave some insight into ourselves via the youth service. Of the three summer camps, I attended Almont Summer Camp 2019. The theme was biblical CATASTROPHES! We learned a lot about what catastrophes mean in the Bible as well as what they can mean for us. It was a lovely camp for frisbee, friends, and worship. Soon afterwards, the group had its first International Summer Camp in a very long time! Though British and American culture might not differ too wildly, there was still plenty to learn from all the new faces and new perspectives on the Swedenborgian faith. Friendships were made, songs were sung, and lifelong lessons were learned at the Purley Chase Centre. None of us will forget anytime soon the wonderful adventure that was. I was unable to attend the fall Duxbury retreat but I heard many fond memories of the event from my fellow teens. Then the new year finished with a fun and heartfelt winter retreat, at which we learned about the nature of the seven deadly sins and their virtuous counterparts. It wasn’t too soon after the new year that things we took for granted became scarce and uncertain. There is no doubt that the SCYL will be ready to take on whatever challenges might come next year!

Respectfully submitted,
Joshua Moore, President SCYL
Greetings beloved church family,

The Online Community has flourished this last year with your help, connecting many across the world and producing uplifting written, spoken, image, and video messages across many platforms. People can subscribe to our offerings on YouTube (1.3k subscribers), Facebook (900 subscribers), over email, or through podcasting platforms to catch our interviews and book discussions as well! We’ve seen quite the start to our growth this last year on these platforms and hope to continue to uplift people in their diversity, wherever they’re at.

Check out our new website at swedenborgiancommunity.org where we continue to make improvements and work on ways to connect with people. You can also sign up for our small groups by emailing swedenborgiancommunity@gmail.com, touching base with Rev. Cory Bradford-Watts. We’re always open to new connections, supporting with pastoral care and membership classes, as well as hearing feedback! It’s more important than ever to stay connected and strive to empower those around us with the light of God’s grace, insight, and love.

Love, peace, and care to you.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Cory Bradford-Watts

BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE WAYFARERS CHAPEL

“Pause for a moment, Wayfarer, on Life’s Journey. Let the beauty of holiness restore your soul. May the harmony of sky, water, leaf and rock nourish the creation and growth of your inner being as you fare through this life and on into the life beyond.”

The Wayfarers Chapel continues to provide sacred space for the wayfarer and those who come for a wide variety of worship experiences. Our ministry continues to be a strong presence in the community and witness to God’s work in our world.

The Board of Directors met several times during the year in 2019 to review and direct the ministry and Leadership of the Chapel with monthly conference calls and occasional business by e-mail between meetings.
The income for weddings in 2019 was $1,551,400. One of our most successful outreach tools is our website helping prospective wedding couples and other wayfarers to find information about the services we offer.

The Chapel’s worship community continues to thrive, with new participants joining long time participants for worship, coffee hour, and our spiritual discussion groups. With the help of volunteers from the informal congregation, the annual cycle of special worship services continues, including: New Year’s Renewal (88 attendees), Palm Sunday Pageant (92), Holy Thursday Communion Service (6), Easter Sunrise Service (118), three Easter Services (268), Blessing of the Animals in July (97), Marriage Renewal Service in June (62), and Christmas Eve Services (435). A Sunday or special worship service was conducted every Sunday of the year, with a total 3,833 wayfarers attending services.

In 2019, we celebrated 448 weddings, 96 baptisms, and 24 memorial services. We held 9 Marriage Workshops with 17 couples participating. We also held several multi-week courses, including a Swedenborg 101 theology course, a meditation class, and a theological discussion group all were very successful.

Our video service and streaming ability continues to generate excitement. In addition, we have incorporated this new medium in our outreach programs. It is a wonderful way to reach those who cannot be physically present at the Chapel, but still want to be engaged.

The music program continues to thrive under the incredible leadership of Michael Waring, using the gifts of a talented pool of musicians who perform at weddings, memorials, worship services, and special concerts. An increasingly wide variety of musical styles ranging from Gregorian chant to rock, jazz and blues are incorporated into worship services.

The Visitors Center continues to be an important part of the Chapel. Wayfarers come to the Visitors Center where they are greeted by staff and invited to explore the displays about the Chapel and the Church, browse among the bookshelves, and purchase Chapel gifts and remembrances. The book selection and inventory are constantly being researched and expanded. A number of titles were added, offering books on prayer and meditation that reflect the Swedenborgian theological perspective. Literature on the Chapel Architect Lloyd Wright, Chapel history, ministry and special services are available as well.

In addition, guided tours continue to be popular. The Visitors Center Staff give a 30-minute talk covering the architecture, ministry, Lloyd Wright, and Swedenborg. Most tours make a donation and purchase gifts from the Visitors Center.

The gardens and grounds are as beautiful as ever. The comprehensive Landscape Plan designed by Eric Lloyd Wright in 2004 continues to guide develop-
ment of the gardens and grounds. This plan, utilizing native California plants, will take many years to fully implement and add to the beauty of the Chapel site.

The continued success of the Chapel is due in large part to the energy, commitment and dedication of our Leadership and Staff. For this we are very thankful.

A special thank you is extended to all the donors past and present who continue to contribute to the ongoing work and ministry of The Wayfarers Chapel. Through these donations and gifts, we are better able to support our ministry, outreach, Chapel structure and beautiful grounds for generations to enjoy.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. David Brown, Director of Ministry
Rev. Dan Burchett, Director of Finance and Administration

BOARD OF MEDIATION

The Board of Mediation is comprised of members Kurt Fekete, Bet Giddings, Rev. Kit Billings, Rev. Kathy Speas and the Chair, Tom Neuenfeldt as the Vice President of Convention.

The Board of Mediation did not meet during the past year.

Respectfully submitted,
Tom Neuenfeldt

BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE NATIONAL CHURCH

In 1889, General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America commissioned a committee to build a house of worship in Washington D.C., to raise funds for that purpose, and to act as the trustees of the property in the name of Convention. The Trustees of the National Church operate as agents of the General Convention which holds title through the Trustees as their agent. The Board of Trustees (BOT) is a body of fifteen people, per the 1895 Deed.

As of September 2020 the BOT has met just once, in January, to discuss and agree upon a new rental agreement entered into with a local Christ Reformed Church plant. This agreement was duly ratified and Christ Reformed continues to rent space at 1611 16th ST. NW, even through the COVID-19 restrictions.

During that same meeting discussion led to the consensus decision that the arrangement of having three separate governance bodies (the Washington DC Society, The Trustees of the National church, and General Council) should remain as is. This allows for a more diverse and transparent decision-making process.
Blessings!

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Conger

TRUSTEES OF THE BUILDING FUND

The Building Fund Committee meets by conference call as needed, usually a few times during the year. We consider requests from churches and camps for loans for building repairs, improvements, and purchases. We no longer fund ministers’ housing.

Ex-Officio: Rev. Jane Siebert (President) and Jennifer Lindsay (Treasurer)

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Paul Martin, Chair

TRUSTEES OF THE TAFEL FUND

No report submitted.

DELEGATES TO THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Rev. Tafel and Rev. Fekete represented the denomination at the National Council of Churches gatherings in 2019 and 2020.

As part of the bold pledge to A.C.T. Now! (Awaken, Confront, Transform) to End Racism, the National Council of Churches and representatives of its 38 member communions gathered at Old Point Comfort near Hampton, Virginia to remember the “20 and odd” enslaved Africans brought there over 400 years ago. More than 250 leaders came to lament and remember the enslaved Africans brought to this place 400 years ago, marking the beginning of institutionalized slavery in what would become the United States of America.

The site of Old Point Comfort came to prominence this year as the nation marked 400 years since enslaved Africans, first captured by Portuguese and Imbangala forces from the kingdom of Ndongo, in West Central Africa, arrived aboard the White Lion in 1619 after being taken from a Spanish slave ship. Colonial officials traded these persons for food, valuing white lives above black lives, beginning the horrific legacy of race-based bondage that has defined the American experience ever since.
The outdoor ceremony was quite moving.

The Christian Unity Gathering continued nearby with speakers and reports. Rev. Tafel serves both on the Governing Board, the Interfaith Dialogue Table and the Christian-Muslim dialogue committee. Rev. Fekete serves on The Faith & Order Convening Table. The spring 2020 Governing Board took place on Zoom and Rev. Tafel represented the denomination at the day-long event on April 28.

The NCC has been working for years to end the crisis of mass incarceration in the United States. Now, in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, we are addressing this reality. As a member of The Justice Roundtable, a coalition of more than 100 organizations, we strongly urge Congress to act on the comprehensive list of “Recommendations for Protecting Incarcerated Youth and Adults During the COVID-19 Pandemic” as it considers various legislative responses to this global crisis.

The NCC posted daily prayers and reflections during this time of the novel coronavirus. Ecumenical Advocacy Days was canceled. The Jewish-Christian dialogue was postponed until later this year. The Hindu-Christian & Buddhist-Christian dialogue sessions have been canceled. The Faith & Order Convening Table of the NCC has canceled an upcoming workshop but plans a Zoom meeting. Fortunately, the Committee on the Uniform Series, which produces the International Sunday School Lessons, met before the recent wave of cancellations.

Work is proceeding as planned on the update of the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible under the leadership of Friendship Press and the Society of Biblical Literature. Planning continues for our October 12-14 Christian Unity Gathering during which we will celebrate the 70th birthday of the National Council of Churches.

A few important messages from Jim Winkler, the Executive Director:

“The National Council of Churches is a manifestation of the ecumenical movement which itself is an expression of the intensely held desire for Christian unity. Today, we also engage in interreligious dialogue as a demonstration of our desire for solidarity and striving for understanding. The world is a small place, and it is imperative we remain connected to one another and not shrink into former practices of isolation and suspicion.”

and

“In this time of deep division...
The National Council of Churches brings its 38 member communions together to work on today’s most challenging issues. We strive together to live in God’s preferred future where swords are beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks.”

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Richard L. Tafel, Denominational Representative to the NCC Governing Board

AUXILIARY AND RELATED BODIES

CENTER FOR SWEDENBORGIAN STUDIES (FORMERLY SWEDENBORGIAN HOUSE OF STUDIES)

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

- Launched the Annual Appeal for the George Dole Chair in Swedenborgian Studies
- We held a successful Winter Intensive in Berkeley with seven students participating
- Thanks to Iungerich Grant, CSS web presence overhaul went forward
- Devin Zuber’s book from University of Virginia Press, The Language of Things came off the press, and he has given multiple presentations on it
- Rebecca Esterson’s immersion trip to Israel with much planning in place needed to be postponed to spring 2121 due to COVID-19
- Also due to COVID-19 all school work moved into virtual spaces for all CSS faculty and students
- Prof. Esterson was elected 2020 recipient of the GTU Excellence in Teaching Award at the Graduate Theological Union. This is a process where the various faculties of the GTU vote to submit a nominee (they cannot nominate someone from their own faculty), and a committee decides based on various criteria whom to select from among the nominees. A tremendous honor!

CURRENT SWEDENBORGIAN STUDENTS

We have been working with eighteen Swedenborgian students in various
paths this semester. This list also includes six Licensed Pastor students who
are in continuing education mode and thus are not in close contact with us but
whose journey we continue to track.

Berkeley:

- **Colin Amato** (Pacific School of Religion graduate finishing CAM
  requirements and final coursework for the Certificate of Swedenborgian Studies.)
- **Jeffrey Adams** (M.A. Graduate Theological Union; seventh-semester student
  studying Swedenborg’s influence on the major Fourth Way figure, Maurice Nicoll;
  expected to defend thesis next Sept.)
- **Tassy Farwell** (Active Licensed Pastor status at Hillside working on
  her second module of learning units)
- **Dru Johnson** (Has completed all the work for the Certificate of
  Swedenborgian Studies and is currently doing a field education
  course at Hillside)
- **Elly Schnarr** (First-semester M.A. student at the GTU)

Florida:

- **Carolyn Salyer** (Licensed Pastor candidate at the Chrysalis Center
  in Deland, FL was working on her first module for part of the year
  and attended the winter intensive but has since left the program)

Los Angeles:

- **Rev. David Brown** (Fourth-year D.Min. student at PSR; director of
  ministry at Wayfarers Chapel; late in dissertation phase and expects
  to defend next September)
- **Connie McOsker** (Licensed Pastor candidate with the Garden
  Church, San Pedro, CA, first module)
- **Jae Hyon Chung** (Licensed Pastor candidate with the Korean New
  Church, Irvine, CA, first module)

Mid-Atlantic:

- **Christine Campbell** (Licensed Pastor with the Temenos Society in
  the annual continuing education phase)

Seattle:

- **Helen Barler** (Licensed Pastor with the Puget Sound Society in the
  annual continuing education phase)

Midwest:

- **Paul Deming** (Licensed Pastor with the St. Louis Society, in the
  semi-permanent continuing education cycle; has taken both George
Dole community education courses this year)

• **Karen Feil** (Licensed Pastor with the Chicago Society in the annual continuing education phase)

• **Robin Ferriman** (Licensed Pastor candidate with the Urbana, OH church, first module)

Silver City:

• **Linda Browning Callander** (Licensed Pastor with the New Church of the Southwest Desert in the annual continuing education phase)

New England:

• **Lorraine Kardash** (Licensed Pastor candidate with the Portland, ME Swedenborgian Church in the annual continuing education phase)

• **Kelly Milne** (Licensed Pastor Candidate with the Bridgewater, MA church, first module)

Africa:

• **Robert Hagan** (a Swedenborgian student pastor in Accra, Ghana, currently exploring online studies with us by taking a tutorial class)

**STRATEGIC PLANNING**

The board joined with the faculty to work with a consultant in the fall meeting to begin transitioning in the future leadership, goals, and strategies that CSS faces at this time of the nearing retirement or redefinition of long-time Dean Jim Lawrence and the current long decline of those electing to study in accredited M.Div. programs for ordination in our denomination. After the fall retreat day held on-site in Berkeley, the work was shaped into three “challenge” areas, and the board and faculty were divided into small groups that each had a faculty member and board members. The three challenge areas that clarified are: 1) Balancing the demands of the GTU and of the Church; 2) Leadership transition with Jim’s retirement from the Dean’s position in sight; 3) CSS operations (where and who are our future students, where is our center space, what are our financial challenges). Some processing of each groups’ challenge questions was accomplished before the spring virtual meeting on Zoom. The second day Zoom day was devoted to continuing the work of the board on planning for the near- and midterm future, and a plan for continuing and consolidating movement on goals and tasks is shaping up in the immediate aftermath of the spring meeting and is continuing this summer.

**AFRICA CONVERSATIONS**

We have had some level of conversation with three African Swedenborgian denominations interested in exploring engagement with CSS. These include groups...
in Nigeria, Soweto (South Africa), and Ghana. All three groups in some way are looking for support in theological education. Work has proceeded in a small way with the student pastor of a congregation of 35 adults and 28 children in Accra, the capital city of Ghana. See Robert Hagan in the above list of students with whom we’ve worked this past semester. Conversations are at an early phase with the African Swedenborgian college in Soweto (Mooki Memorial College) in possible support with their ministerial training program. The conversation with the Nigerian church that includes approximately 35 churches has been quiescent recently but not terminated.

**IUNGERICH GRANT HELPING VISIBILITY OF CSS SCHOLARSHIP AND SWEDENBORGIAN IDEAS AND DISCOURSE**

The generous grant from the Iungerich Fund has enabled the CSS faculty to engage in a thorough-going analysis and retooling of how we reach out to the world. Working first with a GTU doctoral student, Rachelle Syed and now with a web consultant, Tom Crawford, helping to finalize and further strategize the work, we are starting to move forward to finding a steady state plan for continuing. We now have a YouTube channel, Instagram account, a revitalized Facebook page, and web site that are all linked.

**FACULTY WORK IN THE PRESENT TENSE**

**Devin Zuber (Associate Professor in Art and Religion and in Swedenborgian Studies):**

Participation in the work of the Swedenborgian Church, locally and nationally includes:

- “Ministerial Assistant” at the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church (regular duties include preaching—6-7 times a year--and assisting as liturgist, pastoral care)
- Organizing / planning 2-day symposium at San Francisco Swedenborgian Church to celebrate 125th anniversary (9 academics / specialists, plus plenary with Obi Kaufmann). Canceled in March due to COVID-19; may occur in fall 2020

My courses this year are:

- Intro to Swedenborgian Thought (Fall 2019) – cancelled (no enrollees)
- Angelology and Religious Imagination (Fall 2019)
- SRC: Special Reading Course on Reading the Right: Religion and/or Esotericism in the Alt-Right (5 students) (Fall 2019, Spring 2020)
- William Blake and Religious Countercultures (Fall 2019)

In April, I gave a Zoom “gallery talk” on the landscape photographer Richard Misrach virtually at the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA): this is from a partnership between GTU and BAMPFA. It was (incredibly, astonishingly) Zoombombed by the artist himself, and Misrach now wants the talk to be lodged at the Amon Carter Museum website / archives (which holds a lot of his work).

I co-authored a blog-post on “spiritual care and ethical leadership for these challenging times,” a new GTU Initiative in response to COVID-19, and appear in a video podcast (with Dr. Rita Sherma)

https://www.gtu.edu/projects/scel
https://www.gtu.edu/gtu-voices/meeting-waters

Other GTU work includes:

• Department Chair for Historical and Cultural Studies of Religion
• Co-Chair of Sustainability 360, Environmental Humanities Initiative @ the GTU (with Rita Sherma) – planning Spring 2021 conference on “Ecological Economics”
• Invited Committee Member on the GTU Board Task Force for Diversity and Inclusion
• Advisory Board Member for GTU’s Center for the Arts and Religion

Rebecca Esterson (Assistant Professor in Sacred Texts and Traditions and the Dorothea Harvey Professor of Swedenborgian Studies):

Participation in the work of the Swedenborgian Church, locally and nationally includes:

• 2020 Fryeburg New Church Assembly Everett K. Bray Visiting Lecturer on the topic of the Tabernacle of Israel
• May 2020 issue Messenger article
• Program Advisory Team for the Cambridge Church’s Helen Keller Center for Spirituality
• Guest Preacher, Swedenborgian Church of San Francisco and Hillside Community Church
• Trustee, Wesley Gray Legacy Trust
• Nominating Committee, Convention

My courses this year are:

• Genesis: A Journey Inward (Fall, 2019)
• Jews, Christians, and the Bible: Interpretation, Appropriation, and Exchange (Fall, 2019)
• Death, Grief, and Passing Over (Spring, 2020)
• In place of a fourth course, I spent much of my year planning our educational tour of Israel and Palestine, which was scheduled for March of 2020. Due to the pandemic, it has been postponed until Spring 2021.

Other CSS teaching activity includes:

• Part of the January Term CSS intensive teaching team
• Faculty sponsor of the Reading Swedenborg in Latin reading group
• I presented a paper at the 2019 annual meeting of the Society for Biblical Literature, for the program unit on Use, Influence, and Impact of the Bible. The paper is titled: “Judge Not? The Pedagogical Puzzle of Right Interpretation and Wrong Interpretation.”
• While at the Society for Biblical Literature, I was invited to join the steering committee for the SBL Program Unit on The Use, Influence, and Impact of the Bible (formerly called the Reception History unit).
I am serving as co-editor of the GTU’s academic journal, Teaching Theology and Religion.

Other GTU work includes:
- The Sacred Texts department PhD application review committee
- Principle Investigator for a Luce Foundation Grant Proposal on Inter-religious Pedagogy
- Invited to join a GTU Strategic Planning Committee
- Will chair the Sacred Texts department beginning Spring 2021.

Jim Lawrence (Dean):

Teaching:
- “New Religious Movements” (fall semester)
- “Beginning Seminar,” Doctor of Ministry program, (January)
- “Swedenborgian Winter Intensive” (January)
- Working with all Swedenborgian students in their various journeys of formation
- Directing the Doctor Ministry program at PSR involves working with the admissions team, working on public branding articles, advising 12 DMin students directly and overseeing the journeys of 33 DMin students
- Worked this year directly in coursework with ten DMin students supervising semester-long research projects that involved regular discussion sessions exploring and assessing their work
- Supervised PSR student Dru Johnson in the spring in a practicum around shaping social justice consciousness and projects in Swedenborgianism

Scholarship:
- I continue to anchor the GTU concentration New Religious Movements for M.A. and Ph.D. students and continue as core faculty for the Christian Spirituality concentration. I have six current Ph.D. students and four M.A. students directly under my advisement.
- Serving now for a third year as one of two faculty (along with the Dean and two advanced doctoral students) on the Doctoral Council that meets every month to evaluate every dissertation proposal for approval (or not)
- Recently published “The Swedenborgian Church of North America” on the World Religions and Spirituality Project (WRSP), which is the premier web site for the study of alternative religions, established in 2010 at Virginia Commonwealth University by David Bromley, a foremost scholar in New Religious Movements in America. Profiles are prepared
by scholars of record for the groups. You can read it here: https://wrdrels.org/  


• I serve as acquisitions editor for two blog series on the Swedenborg Foundation web site: “Scholars on Swedenborg” and “Spirituality in Practice.” This commitment has given me the chance to develop many new relationships, as well as to utilize CSS faculty, students, clergy, and board members in good public relations publishing.

• The first draft of my essay, “Revelation Unveiled: The Axial Volume of the New Christianity” as the introductory article to the new translation of Swedenborg’s commentary on the Apocalypse, has been submitted to the editors of the New Century Edition.

• Have begun working on a book with Rev. Dr. Rachel Rivers on the history and current state of the field of psychology and counseling in Swedenborgianism

George Dole (Adjunct Professor of Community Education):

George completed his spring course, “Square One,” to thus complete the two community education courses planned for this year. Both courses filled up and were popular. We use these courses for Licensed Pastors students when appropriate, and in the spring course 6 of the 8 students were Licensed Pastor students of LPs doing continuing education. His large manuscript The High Cost of Vision, is in the “scholarly” pipeline at the Swedenborg Foundation. It explores new insights that speak to Swedenborg’s inner journey while working on his massive 9-volume preparatory “practice session” for Arcana Coelestia that he never published but which was published posthumously in the twentieth century as The Word Explained, trans. and ed. by Alfred Acton.

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE’S INITIATIVE ON THE NAMED CHAIR FOR GEORGE F. DOLE

The exciting idea to organize broad community support and positive energy celebrating the teaching and scholarship career of George Dole went quite well,
especially thanks to Terrie Crenshaw’s persistence and guidance. The response led to a somewhat better than average annual campaign.

**CSS FACULTY SERVICE IN LOCAL CHURCHES**

All three faculty are active members and leaders in local Swedenborgian churches. Prof. Zuber has served recently as a board member at the San Francisco church and takes occasional turns in preaching and leading service. Prof. Esterson serves on a worship team at Hillside and takes a regular turn preaching and leading service. Prof. Lawrence serves on the board at Hillside and takes a regular turn preaching and leading service.

**STAFF**

*Much of our staff work can be accomplished in virtual spaces and has not been affected greatly by sheltering-in-place that started in March.*

Administrative Assistant: **Colette Walker** served from early September through end of June, steering us through the wilderness of IT challenges as we slowly became stable in the new platform situations with the GTU and PSR. She helped us get grounded in DonorSnap, our new fundraising database.

Operations Manager: **Alex Sicular** was hired to this new position that replaces the administrative assistant position. He began work in August.

Financial Manager: **Alan Thomsen** continues to manage our financial transactions and business with a steady hand. During the work-in-place he has still been coming in one day a week in order to handle paperwork exchanges with the GTU business office. Other functions he can handle off-site.

Librarian: **Michael Yockey** is able to stay in communication and to run certain searches working off-site. He is very helpful assisting a steady trickle of outside researchers on various projects. **Respectfully submitted,**

*Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence, Dean*

**FINANCIALS**

*At the time of publication of The 2020 Journal the reviewed 2019 year-end financials for CSS were not yet available. We anticipate that the reviewed financials will be available sometime in December 2020. Please reach out to the Treasurer or Accounting Manager of General Convention with any questions or requests for additional information.*
SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH CHILDREN’S MINISTRIES

No report submitted.

TRUSTEES OF THE GRAY LEGACY

Any Convention-recognized organization can request financial aid from the Gray Fund. Typically the grants do not exceed $3,000, and are limited to single-year requests. Copies of the request should be mailed to each of the Trustees and accompanied by a detailed description of the proposed programs for which the requested funds will be utilized. In addition, the Trustees require that the requesting organization submit proof of financial need. A monthly balance sheet or project budget will generally suffice. We request this background information because proper stewardship of a will trust such as the Gray legacy should not be used by organizations as a “reserve fund” to be tapped in order to protect current assets.

The following is a list of grants for the year 2019-2020. These grants were made under the Trustees’ interpretation of the will of Wesley N. Gray to fulfill programs and forms of ministry in Massachusetts, the United States, and the world.

Grants 2019-2020

San Francisco Church 125th Anniversary $3,000
Center for Swedenborgian Studies for Israel Scholarship Fund $3,000
David Fekete to attend the Christian Unity Gathering of the NCC representing General Convention $1,455
Fryeburg New Church Assembly, for representatives attending Convention $1,691
Cambridge Church of the New Jerusalem $3,000

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Rebecca K. Esterson, Secretary/Treasurer
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FUND DEFINITIONS

Listed below are the definitions of the funds invested by General Convention in the Common Fund. Where the name of the fund is italicized, the fund is comprised of multiple individual funds. More information on the individual funds can be obtained by contacting the Central Office or the Treasurer.

1. ADVANCED DEGREE EDUCATION FUND: Established in 1985, the ADEF provides funding to assist New Church Theological School (dba Center for Swedenborgian Studies) ordination track students and graduates who are seeking advanced degrees. Income only is to be used. As of November 1, 2013, applications for funds should be submitted to the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers.

2. AMERICAN NEW CHURCH SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION: ANCSSA funds are placed on deposit with General Convention for investment in the Common Fund. These funds are utilized at the discretion of the Swedenborgian Church Children’s Ministries auxiliary body.

3. AMERICAN NEW CHURCH TRACT AND PUBLISHING SOCIETY: On February 1, 1986, General Council voted to accept the assets of the ANCTS. The income of these funds is to be used first for the publication and distribution of Our Daily Bread, and second for other publication efforts at the discretion of the Treasurer of General Convention.

4. AUGMENTATION FUND: Established in 1912, the Augmentation Fund provides grants to assist “needy societies” to pay ministers’ salaries. It also assists with costs of ordination requirements for theological students who have been accepted into the Ordination Track by CAM. The fund is administered by the Augmentation Fund Committee which is part of the Standing Committee for Financial Accountability. Grant application information and forms may be obtained through Central Office.

5. BUILDING FUND: Established in 1875 to assist societies in erecting places of worship in North America. Purpose was expanded in 1946, to also assist societies in purchasing, remodeling, expanding, or erecting places of worship. Requests for loans should be submitted to the Trustees of the Building Fund.
6. COUNCIL OF MINISTERS: These funds offset operational costs of COM including, but not limited to, ministers’ travel to the Convention Session and continuing education. Income from these funds are allocated by the Treasurer of General Convention to the COM budget.

7. FOREIGN TRAVEL FUND: Established in 1926, the fund is for the use of selected students or graduates of the New Church Theological School (dba Center for Swedenborgian Studies). Grant recipients to be selected by the President of General Convention and/or the Dean of CSS in consultation with the Treasurer of General Convention.

8. ADRIENNE FRANK FUND: Upon dissolution of the Connecticut Association in 2003, the assets of the association were transferred to General Convention such that interest and principal from the fund are to be made available to constituent bodies of General Convention located within the State of Connecticut. In the absence of requests for funding from such constituent bodies, interest only from the fund is to be made available to individuals within General Convention studying for the ministry or the teaching profession for the purpose of supporting educational expenses. In the absence of requests for funding from such individuals, interest may be made available to constituent bodies of General Convention located within the states of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New York for the purpose of meeting General Convention’s guidelines for the salaries of ordained ministers in cases where the body in question demonstrates that meeting these guidelines poses a financial hardship. On November 1, 2013, General Council established a policy that instructs the Treasurer of General Convention to use the income that has not been utilized by individual grants to cover expenses first for Mission purposes and second for Augmentation purposes to the extent that those expenses fulfill the intentions of the fund.

9. GENERAL PURPOSES: These funds represent monies donated for the general operations of General Convention and are administered by the General Council through its approval of the General Convention budget in consultation with the Treasurer of General Convention.

10. LOUIS C. IUNGERICH FUND: Established in 1882, this fund provides grants for the publication, printing, and gratuitous distribution of the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg among the Protestant clergy of the United States and Canada, including theological students and professors of theology. The
fund purpose has been expanded to include supporting the digital distribution of the theological works of Emanuel Swedenborg and the written contemporary exposition of same. The fund is administered by the Standing Committee for Financial Accountability. Grant application information and forms may be obtained through Central Office.

11. **HELEN KELLER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND:** Established in 1968 with an initial contribution from the Chicago, Illinois Society to assist prospective ministerial students for the New Church Theological School during their third and fourth year of undergraduate work at Urbana University in preparation for entering formal ministerial education. With the permanent closure of Urbana University after the end of the 2020 Spring Semester, General Council on June 30, 2020 designated income from this fund to be used to support activities of the Swedenborgian Church Youth League.

12. **LAPORENTE SPECIAL PROJECTS:** Established in 2014 by members of the LaPorte New Church Society as an expression of their intent to continue support into the future. Administered by the Executive Committee of General Convention upon application by the governing board of the LaPorte New Church in support of special projects undertaken by the Society. Should the LaPorte New Church cease to hold regular weekly worship services for a period of ten years, the entire fund and its accumulated income will become part of the unrestricted portion of the General Purposes Fund of General Convention.

13. **J. J. LEHNEN FUND:** Established in 1896 through a bequest by John Jacob Lehnen, to support educational religious efforts. On July 2, 2006, General Council voted to restrict expenditures from the fund to be from income only. On November 1, 2013, General Council provided additional instruction to the Treasurer of General Convention that income from the Lehnen Fund be utilized to support educational expenses of General Convention that are in keeping with the original intent of the gift. Income from this fund is used to support activities of the Swedenborgian Church Youth League.

14. **MESSENGER FUND:** These funds are comprised of various bequests and contributions designated exclusively for the publication and distribution of The Messenger.
15. MISSIONS FUND: These funds are comprised of various bequests and contributions designated exclusively for the missionary and new ministry work of General Convention. The fund is administered by the Standing Committee for Financial Accountability. Grant application information and forms may be obtained through Central Office.

16. NEW CHURCH THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL FUND: Established in 1864 through a bequest from John H. Wilkins for the support of educational and missionary purposes. Income to be divided equally between the Board of Missions and the Theological School. On April 12, 2014, General Council voted that half of the income is to be paid to the New Church Theological School (dba Center for Swedenborgian Studies) and half of the income to be used in support of the Standing Committee for Education and Resources for Spiritual Community (fka Education Support Unit).

17. PENSION FUND: These funds are comprised of various bequests and contributions designated exclusively to provide assistance to retired ministers and their families. Requests should be submitted to the Retirement Committee.

18. PHILADELPHIA LIBRARY FUND: Established in 1993 through a transfer of assets from the New Church Book Association in Philadelphia for the following purposes: (1) to establish or maintain libraries or bookrooms in or by local Swedenborgian churches or other constituent bodies of General Convention that focus on books or other material written by, relating to, or having a marked interest in the theology of Emanuel Swedenborg; (2) providing Swedenborgian literature for free distribution; and (3) funding limited advertising programs by these libraries and bookrooms. On November 1, 2013, General Council established a policy that instructs the Treasurer of General Convention to use the income that has not been utilized by individual grants to cover expenses for free distribution of Swedenborgian literature to the extent that those expenses fulfill the original intent of the funds.

19. PUBLIC RELATIONS: Established in 1938 through a bequest from Rev. Rodney D. Book of Corning, Ohio. The income to be used in advertising the works of Emanuel Swedenborg.
20. **SAN DIEGO SOCIETY FUND**: Established in 2017 through a transfer of assets from the San Diego Society after its dissolution and sale of its church property. Income from these funds are available for unrestricted use by General Convention in support of its operations. Should a new recognized society not be established within the San Diego geographic area for a period of 25 years, the entire fund and its accumulated income will become part of the unrestricted portion of the General Purposes funds of General Convention.

21. **STANDING COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION (SCCI)**: Formerly known as the Communications Support Unit fund. Income from these funds are allocated by the Treasurer to the SCCI budget for expenses related to its various projects.

22. **SCYL FUNDRAISING ACCOUNT**: SCYL funds are placed on deposit with General Convention for investment in the Common Fund. These funds are utilized at the discretion of the SCYL Officers under the guidance of the Youth Director.

23. **TAFEL FUND**: Established by General Council in 2011 to raise new funds for the Swedenborgian Church and to honor our many Tafel ministers, both past and present. The funds are to be used for the sole benefit of General Convention and its constituent bodies. Requests for grants should be submitted to the Trustees of the Tafel Fund.

24. **URBANA UNIVERSITY STUDENT AID FUND**: Established in 1984 by numerous donations in memory of Roger Dean Paulson. To be used for the assistance of students at Urbana University. With the permanent closure of Urbana University after the end of the 2020 Spring Semester, General Council on June 30, 2020 designated income from this fund to be used to support activities of the Swedenborgian Church Youth League.
25. WAYFARERS CHAPEL: Established in 1992 by the Augmentation Fund Committee to assist in restoring an endowment that was unexpectedly expended by Wayfarers Chapel due to its financial difficulties at the time. An Augmentation Fund grant was approved in 1992 that was partially paid to Wayfarers Chapel in cash and partially held in this fund with the income provided to Wayfarers Chapel on an annual basis in support of its operations. Income from the fund was paid annually to Wayfarers Chapel through 2018. In 2018, the Augmentation Fund Committee voted to dissolve the fund by paying Wayfarers Chapel the original remaining grant amount of $15,000. This 1992 Augmentation Fund grant was fully paid to Wayfarers Chapel during 2019.

26. YOUTH WORK: These funds are comprised of various bequests and contributions designated exclusively for work among young people. These funds primarily support the work of the Swedenborgian Church Youth League.
MEMORANDA

CONVEYANCES

Conveyances or other instruments have been executed by certain bodies, of the properties owned by them, in such manner as to give Convention a present or possible interest therein. While these conveyances, etc., vary in form they are in general designed to vest in Convention the ownership of the properties in case the societies should go out of existence, and thus be continued for the benefit of the Church.

El Cerrito, California Society
Wilmington, Delaware Society
St. Louis, Missouri Society
LaPorte, Indiana Society
The Urbana Ohio Society

STANDING RESOLUTION

(ADOPTED BY GENERAL COUNCIL, JULY 18, 1949)
RESOLVED: With regard to properties of local societies in which Convention has a contingent interest through conveyances providing that, in certain circumstances, the title would come to Convention, it is the policy of Convention not to make contributions toward the cost of maintenance of such properties, such maintenance being the sole responsibility of the Society in whose hands the title to the property is vested.

MINERAL RIGHTS OF GENERAL CONVENTION

Through foreclosure of mortgages, the Convention has had occasion to sell a number of properties in Texas. In making sales, so-called mineral rights were reserved in many cases. It is impossible to tell what, if any, value there is in any of these so-called mineral rights. They do not appear in the Treasurer’s books or the Treasurer’s Report. The details of the mineral rights reserved are different in each case.
INVESTED FUNDS OF THE NEW CHURCH THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL D.B.A.
CENTER FOR SWEDENBORGIAN STUDIES

FUND DEFINITIONS

Listed below are the definitions of the funds invested by the New Church Theological School (d.b.a. Center for Swedenborgian Studies) in the Common Fund. Where the name of the fund is italicized, the fund is comprised of multiple individual funds. More information on the individual funds can be obtained by contacting the Central Office or the Treasurer.

1. FRANKLIN AND CAROLYN BLACKMER MEMORIAL FUND: Established in 1988 and supplemented in 1989. The income is to be used for the purchase and maintenance of library equipment and to support ways of making the New Church Theological School library more accessible and serviceable to all library users.

2. STARLING L. CHILDS FUND: Established for the benefit of the New Church Theological School, and if possible, the future endowment of a Department of Religious Education and a Department of Homiletics. On October 5, 2005, the Board of the New Church Theological School (d.b.a. Swedenborgian House of Studies) approved a redesignation of this fund’s restriction to be for faculty support.

3. CORRESPONDENCE COURSE FUND: Established in 1990. The income is to be used in support of correspondence courses offered by the New Church Theological School.

4. EDWARD H. CUTLER FUND: Established for the benefit of the New Church Theological School with the “income only being expended towards the maintenance of the New Church Theological School in New England.” On October 5, 2005, the Board of the New Church Theological School (d.b.a. Swedenborgian House of Studies) approved a redesignation of this fund’s restriction to be for facilities costs including rent, repair, and maintenance.
5. **DIACONOFF, TOBISCH, AND YOUNG FUNDS**: Established in 1990 through separate gifts in the memory of Rev. Andre Diaconoff, Rev. Othmar Tobisch, and Rev. Robert L. Young. The income is to be used in support of education in the practical skills of ministry and in support the development of students’ spiritual lives by funding faculty salaries, education of lay leaders, training and providing honoraria for ministers to supervise field education, developing resource materials for field education, and supporting educational outreach programs, particularly for the Pacific Coast Association.

6. **ELOCUTION DEPARTMENT ENDOWMENT FUND**: Established in 1901 through a gift from an anonymous donor. The income is to be used to endow a chair or professorship of elocution at the New Church Theological School. On October 5, 2005, the Board of the New Church Theological School (d.b.a. Swedenborgian House of Studies) approved a redesignation of this fund’s restriction to be for faculty support.

7. **GEORGE F. DOLE CHAIR**: Established in 2019 in honor of Dr. George F. Dole through multiple gifts. The income is to be used to endow a professorial chair at the New Church Theological School (d.b.a. Center for Swedenborgian Studies).

8. **THE GENERAL ENDOWMENT FUND**: Established in 1880 and subsequently added to through gifts and bequests from Rev. and Mrs. William B. Hayden, Henry B. Thacher, Flora F. Wainwright, Asa Weeks, many alumni, and innumerable others. The General Endowment fund provides general purpose support to the New Church Theological School.

9. **DOROTHEA WARD HARVEY CHAIR**: Established in 2010 through a bequest to the New Church Theological School of Dr. Rev. Dorothea Ward Harvey’s home upon her death. The sale of the home provided the funds to endow a chair at the New Church Theological School (d.b.a. Center for Swedenborgian Studies).

10. **HELEN KELLER FUND**: Established in 1984 by a gift from Elizabeth Chase in honor of her blind granddaughter. The income is to be used for the assistance of students at the New Church Theological School.
11. **LIBRARY PRESERVATION FUND**: Established in 1987. The income is to be used for the preservation of library materials held by the New Church Theological School.

12. **REV. TIMOTHY OTIS PAINE FUND**: Established in 1990 in memory of Reverend Timothy Otis Paine, a former School of Swedenborgian Religion faculty member. The income is to be used for general support of the New Church Theological School.

13. **REV. J. P. PERRY FUND**: Established in 1984 by Alice Van Boven in memory of her father, Reverend J. P. Perry. The income is to be used to assist students at the New Church Theological School.

14. **LEONORE DRESSER POOLE FUND**: Established in 1988 in memory of Leonore Dresser Poole. The income is to be used to assist in the development of a worship program, to encourage the use of the arts in ministry, and for general purposes of the New Church Theological School.

15. **JULIAN K. SMYTH SCHOLARSHIP FUND**: Established in 1938 with “the income to be used in the discretion of the faculty for the benefit of advanced students, in recognition of exceptionally good work in the preparation and delivery of sermons.” Over the years, many additional gifts have been added to this fund and it is used to provide tuition assistance to New Church Theological School students.

16. **REV. RICHARD H. TAFEL MEMORIAL FUND**: Established in 1988 to support the New Church Theological School with the income to be used to support education in worship and theology. On October 5, 2005, the Board of the New Church Theological School (d.b.a. Swedenborgian House of Studies) approved a redesignation of this fund’s restriction to be for faculty support.
17. MARY F. TAFT MEMORIAL FUND: Established in 1958 through a gift from the estate of Mary Florence Taft. The income shall be used to:

a) “Pay annually to the Cambridge Society of the New Jerusalem for the general uses of said Society the sum of five hundred dollars” with certain restrictions on its use by the Society.
b) “The balance of the income shall be applied by the [New Church Theological School] for the general expenses…except that none of the money given by me shall be expended in any way, directly or indirectly, in the erection of buildings.”

18. REV. CALVIN E. TURLEY MEMORIAL FUND: Established in 1984. The income is to be used to provide funds in support of New Church Theological School students for (a) counseling and to develop pastoral skills; (b) instruction in developing public speaking and preaching skills; and (c) music instruction and to develop skills in directing choirs and leading congregational singing and musical performance within the worship service.

19. WILSON VAN DUSEN DOCTORAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND: Established in 2006 by a gift from Marjorie Van Dusen in honor of her husband Dr. Wilson Van Dusen. The income is to be used to provide scholarships to doctoral-level students pursuing studies in the field of religion at the Graduate Theological Union and affiliated with the New Church Theological School.

20. JAMES G. WENTZ FUND: Established in 1928 through a bequest from the estate of James G. Wentz. The income is to be used for general support of the New Church Theological School.

21. JACOB EMANUAEEL WERREN FUND: Established for the benefit of the New Church Theological School with the income to be used for the teaching of the Hebrew language. On October 5, 2005, the Board of the New Church Theological School (d.b.a. Swedenborgian House of Studies) approved a redesignation of this fund’s restriction to be for faculty support.

22. REV. WILLIAM FREDERIC WUNSCH MEMORIAL FUND: Established in the memory of Rev. William F. Wunsch with the income to be used for the purpose of enhancement of the New Church Theological School’s library as a facility for scholarly research.
REPORTS OF ASSOCIATIONS AND CHURCHES

EASTERN CANADA CONFERENCE

Our mandate is to maintain and encourage the establishment of congregations and other groups within Eastern Canada that adhere to the Holy Scripture and to the doctrines of Emmanuel Swedenborg, to promote the theology of the church, and encourage outreach to members at large. At the start of 2019 the Eastern Canada Conference had two congregations/groups that were members: The Church of the Good Shepherd (a charter member) is located in Kitchener Ontario, and Revelation of the Spirit (who joined us in 2012) is located in Cambridge Ontario. At a special meeting in March, 2019 the board and membership of Revelation of the Spirit had to make the difficult decision to not continue. At that meeting a motion was made, and unanimously carried, to dissolve Revelation of the Spirit.

As of December 2019, there remains one group that is a part of Eastern Canada Conference, The Church of the Good Shepherd in Kitchener Ontario, Canada.

In 2019 we were able to support our spiritual community in a number of ways. We continue to support the Church of the Good Shepherd’s foray into Social Media and the internet. We offered financial assistance to our members for travel costs to attend general convention and retreats.

In 2020, we are continuing with these and other worthy projects.

Respectfully submitted,
David Ingard, Secretary

CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Kitchener, Ontario

With so much change the past number of years, in 2019 the board was looking forward to a quieter year, a year of ‘settling in’. However, with the changes at COGS also came momentum: momentum inspired by wanting to try new things and seeing the result of our collective re-imagining of church life … and some hard work.

Highlights from 2019 – Church Life/Business

• Reverend Cory and his partner, Alyssa, moved to Canada to join our church family
• Reverend Cory was installed. Pastor Dave wrote the installation ceremony and we welcomed Tom and BJ Neuenfeldt, who joined us for the ceremony.
• Alyssa Cover was confirmed as a church member.
• The Coach House was renovated, and beautifully, thanks to countless hours of work done by B&P members – and others.
  • Mags Stopinski volunteered to coordinate special events at COGS, and has been the lead in organizing a number of congregational lunches and celebrations.
  • Shepherd Stage has hosted five events, in addition to numerous rehearsals.
  • A “Know Your Church Building: Emergency Procedures Handbook” was drafted, and COGS staff trained, in case of an emergency – especially during a rental.
  • Several church members have been participating in meetings with Activa to discuss the property development planned for next door, and how the church may be impacted.
  • The Lower Hall was painted by a crew of volunteer members.
  • A new sign was erected in the Memory Garden, thanks to Ron Cuthbertson.
  • A new roof was built over the Queen Street entrance, again by volunteers.
  • We applied for, and were awarded, a $1,000 New Direction Grant for our communal garden, in hopes that seating (benches) and a potential expansion, can be added this spring.
  • Heidi Wall retired, and Keenan Reimer-Watts was hired as our new music director.
  • We had our first “Peace Pageant” co-hosted by Kate Harvey and Denise Kamo, involving adult members as well as the Sunday School.

**Highlights from 2019 – Related to our Five Priorities**

• As part of our ‘Staying Together’ priority, two volunteer teams were formed: a team of ‘Greeters’ to welcome visitors, when needed, and a ‘Visitor’ team to go out and visit new folk, shut-ins and members who were not well (in coordination with Rev. Cory).

• Related to our ‘Staying in the Building’ priority, early in the year the board realized that more and more time was spent at each board meeting dealing with issues connected to the business aspect of the church. As a result, we decided we needed someone to support us in that regard. We greatly appreciate that Grace Sudden stepped forward to provide much-needed administrative support.

• Our ‘Staying Swedenborgian’ priority is supported by initiatives such as Rev. Cory’s ‘Swedenborg Spirituality 101’ discussion group, as well as the Wednesday Morning Group.

• Pastor Dave supported the congregation, during his time with us, in articulating how we practice our spirituality – and how we might support others in practicing theirs. For more than a year we had talked about opening our sanctuary over the noon hour, midweek, to offer the wider downtown community a peace-
ful space for quiet meditation. Rev. Cory helped us make that vision a reality by initiating ‘Midweek Mindfulness’ and ‘Quiet Hour’.

• ‘Being Useful’ has been an exciting priority to explore this year. As a result of a congregational discussion focused on this priority, our communal garden was created – a joint venture with our neighbours. We also continue to support the Waterloo Chapter of Days for Girls, which has a home in our building. In addition, a number of members have volunteered to support the congregation in identifying other potential outreach programs to support and connect with the Downtown Kitchener community.

In Appreciation
I want to express my gratitude to the members of the Board, for their wise council and hard work this past year. Thank you to Eastern Canada Council for their financial support for the Shepherd Stage. Thanks also to the Swedenborgian Church of North America, for the financial support offered through the New Directions Funds.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine MacTavish, President

ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic an annual meeting was not held by the time of this publication. Therefore, there is no annual report at this time.

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Paul Deming, Secretary

CHICAGO SOCIETY OF THE NEW JERUSALEM/ THE SWEDENBORG LIBRARY AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH CENTER

Chicago, Illinois

In 2019, we hosted the following programs at the Swedenborg Library for the public:

- The film “Nothing Is Truer Than Truth,” with commentary by University of Illinois at Chicago professor Alfred Thomas. The film presents the argument that Edward de Vere was responsible for some of the Shakespeare plays. The professor presented the opposing view.
- A highlights tour of the Field Museum, led by docent Tom Lane.
- A group field trip to the Broadway Playhouse to see “An Evening with C.S. Lewis.”
- A special lecture by Rev. Matthew Fox on “The Mystical Connections of East-West Religious Traditions” (This was our most-attended program, with 55 attendees).

Our Common Ground-generated programs included:

- “Diversity in Early Christianity” with Jerrol Leitner
- “The Epic of the Persian Kings” with translator Ahmad Sadri
- “The Eleven Nations of North America” with Jim Kenney
- “Heroes Take Their Stands - a Silk Road Ensemble project with Yo-Yo Ma, presented by story contributor Ahmad Sadri of Lake Forest College.

Our monthly book group continued to meet, with discussion led by Karen Feil. Titles discussed in 2019 included Lighting Strike (Tesla) by John Wasik, The Screwtape Letters by C.S. Lewis, Becoming by Michelle Obama, Becoming Wise by Krista Tippett, Help Thanks Wow and Hallelujah Anyway by Anne Lamott, Educated by Tara Westover, Olive Again by Elizabeth Strout, The Sociopath Next Door by Martha Stout, and Why Is It Always About You by Sandy Hotchkiss. The regular group attending ranged from 7-8 people and participated in suggesting the books to discuss.

In December, we began a test of a monthly meditation/communion service on the first Friday of the month, to a small group of 5-6 participants.

In June, the Library sponsored Rev. Matthew Fox as the keynote speaker at the denomination’s annual Convention, in Valparaiso, Indiana. Following his presentation at the Library on June 29, Rev. Fox drove with Karen Feil for the opening evening of Convention. His talk on “The Order of the Sacred Earth” was well received. Karen Feil hosted a book sales table offering Fox’s wide variety of books on his behalf during Convention. Amy Pappageorge and Ray Mitchell were able to attend some of the programs.

As a licensed pastor, Karen Feil participated in the Midwest Peer Supervision session in Laporte in March, and made ten hospital visits to friends of the Library.
during the year. She also served as Treasurer for the Swedenborg Foundation Annual Report. Pastor Karen Feil represented the Swedenborg Library at a breakfast hosted by the Methodist Church for the World Parliament of Religions.

Our church library was open to the public for a total of 101 days in 2019. We circulated approximately 100 volumes during the year, including books by Swedenborg, on spiritual topics, and others related to our book group and other programs. We offered public access Wednesday and Friday afternoons (1-5 pm), and many Thursday afternoons, throughout the year, in addition to before and after evening programs.

In 2019, we had two individuals who became regular visitors to the Library several times after learning about Swedenborg via the Swedenborg Foundation’s Off the Left Eye programs on YouTube. We were sorry to see longtime participant Ray Mitchell move to Barcelona, Spain where his daughter lives, in December. Ray donated 200 books on spiritual topics to the Swedenborg Library prior to his move. He has been a dedicated volunteer in helping with hosting our public programs.

The Library continues to promote our programs via Vertical Response e-blasts, Facebook ads, postcards to our list, and via “Literary Event” ads in the Chicago Tribune. We maintain a website with information on upcoming programs, SwedLib.org. Our new MeetUp.com group, “Open-Minded Explorers,” currently has more than 400 members, providing a new outreach group for our programs.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Feil, Secretary/Treasurer, Swedenborg Library

LAPORTE NEW CHURCH

LaPorte, Indiana

This was a busy and wonderful year for LaPorte New Church preparing for the Annual Swedenborgian Convention which was held at nearby Valparaiso University. It was an exciting and rewarding time for our church and Illinois Association to be able to host this event for so many of our New Church friends. This was the year we also celebrated our church’s 160th anniversary.

We continued to meet each Sunday throughout the year with our lay leaders filling the pulpit when Rev. Kit Billings was away. Sunday School met from September through May with Heidi Potucek and Penny Billings as teachers. There were fewer children attending but their devotion remained strong as they shared
the love God gives us all. Enjoyed by all were the Christmas Pageant and summer pool party.

After Sunday worship, our Feeder Teams continued to make our Sunday more-than-coffee coffee hours enjoyable. On communion Sundays each month we enjoyed a meal at a local café. Monthly Men’s dinners and Ladies Lunches were a new and enjoyable social (non-church-work!) time for us.

Volunteers continued to produce weekly worship folders and newsletters, took part in Sunday worship services, and maintained our garden and two buildings for all to enjoy the peace we have to offer.

There were two well-attended tween SPLATs (Super Powered Lovable Almost Teens) Retreats held at Manna House in January and October under the able guidance of Youth Director Kurt Fekete. We hosted the Peer Minister Supervision Retreat at Manna House, the Illinois Association meeting, and the Swedenborgian Cohort Clergy Group. Two groups enjoyed meeting at Manna House for five weeks in the fall for the New Church Journey program Overcoming Divisiveness.

For the community, an AA group continued to meet every Saturday at Manna House. We collected ready-to-serve kid-friendly items for the Salvation Army’s Weekend BackPack Food for Kids. We also collected empty pill bottles for Matthew 25: Ministries. These are included in shipments of medical supplies to impoverished countries. We took part in the community Good Friday Cross Walk with Rev. Kit, offering one of the seven messages at our church. We helped staff and provided some meals at the local homeless shelter. The community was invited to attend a lovely program on “Wild Flowers of Northern Indiana.” We helped with background information and funding for the famed sculptor Isamu Noguchi mural project by a local artist. Noguchi lived with our New Church minister Rev. Dr. Mack in the early 1900’s during his teen years. The large completed mural, which includes our church logo and a picture of Rev. Mack, hangs in the LaPorte County Public Library across the street from our church. A smaller print is now in our church’s lower alcove. A Noguchi celebration and open-house is planned for 2021, hosted by the Library and our church.

Three rummage sales and a bake sale were held. We considered them charitable events (very low prices!) as well as being good fundraisers for our church.

We are mindful of helping the larger Church. In addition to serving on the Board of Illinois Association and national committees, our congregation has donated quarterly to our church’s Giftback Fund from which a check is given annually to Convention, usually about $1500, as a token thank-you for all it does for our denomination.
As we always have, we strive to keep our church in the eyes of the community and to create a space for people to connect, grow, and better understand that God is always with us and on our side.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia Tukos, Secretary

LENOX TOWNSHIP CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM

Norway, Iowa

No report submitted.

VIRGINIA STREET SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH

St. Paul, Minnesota

Another year has gone by and we continue to prosper in our small community. This year we have continued our weekly services and continued to provide the Sunday morning bible discussion group, coordinated by Rev. Eric Hoffman, as well as several specific topic discussion groups during the year. Unfortunately, this year one of our members, Judy Keena, is no longer able to physically attend, however she still keeps in contact with the church.

Our Church services continue to be provided by the Pastor Gordon Meyer and by members of the congregation performing lay led services. The mighty VSC choir provides a choral backdrop and Liz Zeno and Jeremy Zeno frequently provide solo and joint music in support of the services.

Part of our Outreach and Growth mission is to make our building available for community use, both to be of use and to attract new members and friends. We provide space for two AA groups and continue to the agreement with the non-profit group that provides training for developmentally challenged individuals. In return for the use of our building for training they provide free general cleaning of the Church and Parish hall. We successfully hosted an Open House and despite the miserable weather people did attend.

One of the special things we did this year was to have a church retreat on the Sunday of the Twin Cities Marathon when parking becomes an issue. Jean Schroepfer hosted the event at her home in Wisconsin beside the Mississippi River. Jeremy Rose, Liz Zeno, and Eric Hoffman provided the program for the day. Also,
as part of our Outreach we continue to raise donations to provide funds for a family in need in the community.

We again participated in the Saint Paul Art Crawl, where we hosted artists who displayed their items for sale. Blue Stratum, a musical group made up of VSC members and friends, provided music during the event as they did last year. All in all, it was a successful event.

We also recently performed our 99th Christmas Pageant which was well attended and open to all in the community. 2020 will be the 100th year we will have performed the pageant. In the last 101 years we have only missed one year when we were hit with a major snowstorm on the 24th.

We have requested the Illinois Association continue to provide the same amount of monthly financial support to our church in 2020. The Association is currently exploring options for the best way to provide support with the existing funds to churches within the Association.

The major success of the past year was provided by The Friends of the Virginia Street Church, a nonprofit group, whose charter is the preservation of our historic church. They presented a Grant Proposal to the Ramsey County Historical Society seeking funds to make the church handicapped accessible. Everyone was pleased to hear that they were awarded a grant in order to make that happen. A handicapped ramp will be added to the south side of the church and the current office will be converted to an accessible unisex bathroom.

The Board has spent many years trying to figure a way that this could be accomplished, so we are especially grateful to the Friends for their efforts in getting this done. Construction will start in the spring of 2020 and should be completed by the fall.

Respectfully submitted,
Carla Abler-Erickson, Secretary of the Board of Trustees

CHURCH OF THE OPEN WORD

St. Louis, Missouri

2019 was a year of growth for Church of Open Word, Garden Chapel. While our number of weddings was lower than the previous year, our overall number of services and members grew. We had eighteen Garden Chapel weddings (part of our wedding losses was due to the website being down for a month in January of 2019), forty-eight Sunday services (Due to some snow days in January 2019), four confirmations of new members, and a six-week Bible Study Course.
We added some young members to our Worship Team, and we started Monday and Wednesday, Karate Classes.

The wooded area restoration project was started, which resulted in honeysuckle removal and the clearing out of a lot of underbrush and clutter from our property. The outside maintenance made noticeable improvements in our landscaping and upkeep. Our annual giving increased almost $6,000 over the previous year. We upgraded the boiler system and have been making consistent payments on our loan from Convention. Our annual Eve of Christmas Eve Candlelight program took place this year with generous participation of eight singers from the Vita Cantus Chorale and the wonderful direction of Maestro Bruce Walker and pianist-extraordinaire Johanna Ballou. Our Annual Beatle-fest took place on the last Sunday in March and drew record-crowds to hear local artists perform 90 minutes of Beatle music. Both of these events are planned again for 2020 with an additional “Sinatra Night Concert” planned for February 23, 2020. In addition, a web-site committee is reviewing the current website options and interviewing design firms with a view toward a completely new website for the church.

We are greatly encouraged by the addition of board members and the encouragement from those attending and participating in Sunday Services. It is our hope to continue this trajectory of growth with plans to upgrade the AC system, make repairs to outdoor lights, as well as refurbish or replace the outdoor sign and make improvements to the lower parking lot which is in a state of disrepair.

With this in mind we are deeply grateful for the continued support from the Illinois Association and proud of our association with the Swedenborgian Church of North America.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Deming

KANSAS ASSOCIATION

There is no report this year as we have not be able to gather.

Respectfully submitted,

Veneta Lane, Secretary
In the last year (2019) we had church most Sundays during the Fall, Winter, and Spring. In June, July, and August we had Sunday School only. For the summer months we studied the book “A Swedenborg Sampler,” and we have continued studying it the rest of the year.

- Last year’s annual meeting was held January 27, 2019.
- On April 21st, our Church was a major part of the Pawnee Rock Community Easter Sunrise Service. This is held bi-annually on the odd years on the Rock. We held a regular Sunday Service after the pageant.
- This spring and early summer we had a lot of heavy rains. Our Church suffered some damage from water that came in through the bell tower. Insurance has helped pay for painting all the walls that got wet, for cleaning the carpet, and repairing some damage to the ceiling in the basement.
- This year the National Convention of the New Jerusalem Church of North America was held June 29-July 3 on the Campus of Valparaiso University in Valparaiso, Indiana. It was sponsored by the LaPorte, Indiana Church. Carl Helm attended.
- On August 25 members and friends met at 8 A.M. for breakfast and service on Pawnee Rock.
- September 15 was the date set for the service/picnic held at Sterling lake with the Pretty Prairie Church. It turned out that Rev. Jane was called away unexpectedly and quite a few members were unable to attend. So the rest of us decided to meet in Hutchinson and eat out.
- On October 3 a funeral was held for one of our long time members Luelma Hejny. Her funeral was held at Bryant Funeral Home, Great Bend.
- Camp Mennoscah was held the weekend of October 11-13. Renee Machiniak from Royal Oak, Mi. led our study session on Saturday morning and the worship service on Sunday morning. Jerold Hadley led the Sunday School Class.

- On Sunday evening November 24th, our Church was the host for the Pawnee Rock Community Thanksgiving dinner and worship service. The Church Service was held after the dinner and was led by Pastor Susan Galvin of Howard, Kansas.
- On December 1, we enjoyed Pizza and dessert while we decorated our Church for Christmas.
On Thursday, December 12, I hosted a Christmas luncheon at my home for both Kansas Churches members and past members.

On December 22, we stayed after Church and sacked candy, apples, and oranges to be given out after the Christmas Eve Service.

On December 24, at 7:00 PM we had a beautiful Christmas Program. It was directed by Tricia Prescott.

On Sunday December 29, we had a Baptism for Zander Kade Stout, Son of Kaitlin Walker and Eldon Stout. Rev. Jane Siebert led the service and the baptism and the service was followed by a potluck dinner.

I want to thank all the members of the Church. Being a small Church I think we all seem to bond together and everyone helps where needed. I’d like to thank Vivian Bright for partnering with me to do the services and playing the organ when Karen is gone, and also for being my mentor as Vice President. I am always asking her questions. Karen Hadley for her beautiful organ music. Howard Bowman for leading Sunday School and being the Treasurer. While I am on Howard, I would like to thank him, Jerald, Anita and Carl for all the work they did mowing, trimming and trash removal on the Rock. The State of Kansas pays our church for taking care of the Rock. I also want to thank Jerald Hadley for filling in on a few Sundays, and for all the yard work that he does. Toni Stimatze also helps with some of the yard work, and orders and picks up the candy for Christmas Eve. Anita Wilson keeps the inside of our church in perfect order, and also is secretary for the board. Tricia Prescott for directing the Christmas Eve program. She and Vivian took care of all the costumes for Christmas Eve and also for the Easter Sunrise Pageant. I would especially like to thank my husband Carl who helps me with everything for the church. He usually reminds me of things before I think of them. I really appreciate his help on the newsletter.

This completes the 131st year of our church. I sincerely hope God will bless this church with many more years to come.

Respectfully submitted,
Connie Helm, President

NEW JERUSALEM CHURCH

Pretty Prairie, Kansas

No report submitted.
MAINE ASSOCIATION

No report submitted.

BATH NEW CHURCH

Bath, Maine

As we pass mid-year heading towards 2021, I think nearly everyone on planet Earth has the same wish – that in Providence we see a return to health, peace and ‘normal’ life for everyone!

We largely maintained our church attendance up until quarantine was ordered mid-March. In Maine we have been fortunate to have fewer problems than some in the country, but of course it has been a challenge for everyone.

We continue to be blessed with outstanding musical offerings from our professional musician, Jesse Feinberg. We hope to resume a concert schedule this fall, as Jesse is well known locally and is a magnet in himself for our church.

We were able to get our streaming services up and running with complications and technical glitches largely resolved immediately prior to shutdown, for which we are grateful. Pastor Bell’s sermons are available on YouTube, through our church Facebook page and on Vimeo. We have had a gratifyingly large number of viewers throughout North America and we are pleased and excited to be able to spread peace, hope and news of salvation through the Writings of the New Church to all and sundry!

After our customary summer hiatus we will resume in-person services after Labor Day, observing mandated government limitations. We look forward to seeing friends and hopefully some newcomers as well on September 13.

With hopeful attitudes we look forward to welcoming 2021 and hope for health and positivity for all.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill D. Bell, Secretary
FRYEBURG NEW CHURCH

Fryeburg, Maine

In 2019, the Fryeburg New Church remained active and, we pray, a spiritual benefit to the community and open to changing with the times. The church continued to offer services on Sunday mornings, as well as a Sunday School program for children in the 3-12 age range. Other somewhat regular offerings included a Depression Support Group offered by one of our congregants, and a monthly meditation group.

Other long-standing traditions brought our community together, like operating our New Church Fair booth during the week long Fryeburg Fair in the fall (we serve breakfast, lunch and dinner for a week, and the profits helps the budget tremendously). Church members also organized and hosted a craft fair in a local park in late summer, as well as a Wreath Sale in December. With the help of our members, we also offered a successful Breakfast with Santa for the first time in 2019.

We continued to work ecumenically with other churches, joining the local Congregational Church for Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve services. Rev. Alison Lane-Olsen, minister at FNC, was also invited to be present at community events, offering invocations and benedictions at the Academy music concerts, welcoming Santa in the Park, graduation, etc.

We continue to be blessed with a hard-working, loving community!

Respectfully submitted,
Re. Alison Lane-Olen, Minister

PORTLAND NEW CHURCH

Portland, Maine

No report submitted.
MASSACHUSETTS NEW CHURCH UNION

No report submitted.

NEW JERUSALEM CHURCH

Bridgewater, Massachusetts

The Bridgewater Society reflects on another year of activity and fellowship with continued optimism. Under the leadership of Rev. Susannah Currie, we continued to try out different themes for worship and music, while also expanding our development of discussion and inquiry. Rev. Susannah brought periods of meditation into the beginning of each sermon, adding to the thoughtful ‘child within us’ segment earlier in each program. Rev. Susannah is an inspiration and we appreciate all she brings to us.

Music has always been a big part of our worship services and it was with regret that we accepted the resignation of our loving, devoted and experienced music director, Bet Giddings, in June. (Bet was also our Moderator). Bet was an inspiration to us and we miss her commitment to our music program. In the interim, for the remainder of the year, we invited a variety of musicians to play for us with hopes of finding the right fit. Rev. Ken Turley provided beautifully arranged guitar music for our Christmas Sunday worship service. On Christmas Eve the Milne family band performed and filled our sanctuary (which has extraordinary acoustics) with trumpet, clarinet, bass guitar and ukulele music. We loved it!

During the church year a spiritual discussion group continued bi-monthly after worship, a bi-monthly discussion group met on the second and fourth Wednesday afternoon each month, and, new this year, our very own Preparatory Pastor Kelly Milne led a discussion group on alternative Thursday evenings, discussing Rise Above It by Ray and Star Silverman. Kelly also taught our Sunday School as lead teacher and superintendent.

Sunday morning worship services streamed live on Facebook, videos were posted on our website, and activities were covered in local publications. Seasonal newsletters were issued to all and collections for the local Food Pantry continued.

Our relationship with Pilgrim Area Collaborative (PAC) continued successfully. PAC is a life skills educational program for cognitively challenged young adults, ages 18-22, living in the Plymouth Country area. The constant use of our building has been taxing but, at the same time, it has been good to have the property used almost daily. Partnering with this group through the property rental has
been motivating, even though, at times, stressful. We appreciate that we can work together and hope this rental agreement continues onward.

Throughout the year anticipation for the 2020 Convention to be held in Bridgewater brought inspiration and an opportunity to explore different approaches to this special event. Our building continued to make available friendly space for meeting and fellowship. We look forward to greeting many old friends and making new friends as well.

In review: 2019 was at times challenging, yet interesting and rewarding. It was a good year for us.

_Respectfully submitted,
Merrilee Phinney, Treasurer_

**CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM**

*Cambridge, Massachusetts*

_No report submitted._

**ELMWOOD NEW CHURCH**

*Elmwood, Massachusetts*

For the first time in probably 100 years, the Elmwood New Church did not hold its annual meeting in the spring due to Covid-19 issues. By member poll, we have decided to continue with the present officers until we can meet again in person and conduct the meeting as scheduled.

We have had a busy year before the shut down in March, with regular Sunday morning services and music by our pianist Paul Huberdeau augmented by Dave Horton playing his guitar and often singing along with members of his family for the anthem.

We have had a very dry summer and the lawn and landscaping has suffered from it. We will hope for a more moist and wet fall to see if some of the vegetation will come back before the snow flies!

Obviously since we have not had access to the building for any programs to raise money for the church, we are relying on our generous members to continue their donations even when we have not gathered together for church. During June we began having Parking Lot Church services where people wore masks, brought chairs, and chairs were brought out of the church after being sanitized and set
up in whatever shade we could find at 9am in the morning! The services lasted about 45 minutes, with music by Dave Horton, songs, and with some folks from the Bridgewater church joining us on occasion. Without having coffee hour, we often stood outside with masks on to chat but not for long as the sun rose and the temperature climbed!

Each Thursday the minister Rev. Donna Keane has taped a service in the church for the local Channel 9, our East Bridgewater television station. It airs at 9 o’clock every Sunday morning for those who cannot come to the periodic outdoor services. This will continue through the coming church year until we can again gather in the church.

For several Sundays, Dave Horton hosted a Zoom meeting when we didn’t meet at the church and many parishioners joined in, including Priscilla Ebbs from Ohio where she now lives with her daughters and brother. It was a real feeling of community while we participated in it.

The officers voted to increase our donation to the local food pantry to $80 a month as more town people struggled with loss of income and need for food.

Our plans for much of this church year are obviously on hold, but we remain committed to increasing our income through programs when we can open the church again as well as reaching out to local residents to use the church for their family or community group meetings.

A new members list has been created with addresses, phone numbers, email addresses and names of emergency contacts.

As we enter into this new phase of living in the COVID-19 world, we are praying for the health and well-being of all. We have a healthy group of members, thank God, and everyone has been diligent about masks, social distancing, and washing hands whenever inside the church for use of the bathrooms. All of the facility is sanitized before and after each use.

May we all have a safe, healthy and prosperous year!

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Dr. Donna Keane, Minister
CHURCH OF THE OPEN WORD

Newtonville, Massachusetts

“In Heaven there are two distinct loves, love to the Lord and love towards the neighbor, in the inmost of third heaven love to the Lord, in the second or middle heaven love towards the neighbor.” - Emanuel Swedenborg

We believe in the Gospel, that through Jesus Christ, God’s power and mercy act to bring about his kingdom and a new world.

The Newtonville Society seeks to serve the city of Newton by sharing how real peace and wellness can come about through the Scriptures. We have seen how the Lord, through Bible study has affected personal change, so others were accepted as who they are, rather than judged according to external factors. As Jesus gives us a new identity, we are given the freedom to accept people we once ignored or dismissed. So the Newtonville Society welcomes all individuals of good will.

Throughout this year there have been unexpected events, and demands simultaneously with the World’s events, such as COVID-19. The Society has met weekly throughout the year, meeting on line from March until May 24th which was when Churches could reopen safely.

Some members of the Newtonville Society have also been meeting weekly on Saturdays to go over the Scriptures and readings from Swedenborg which Rev. Tafel provides. The Society notes growth with hopes that in following years to come, current members and new members will have a better understanding of worship, Biblical Scriptures, and the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg.

The Parish building, under the leadership of Ward Williamson, with the assistance of the youth and other members, has made an assessment of needed repairs, and organization of the building and grounds. Also, the library’s collection of interesting books have been organized for visitors and members. The youth, members, and visitors have done excellent work with these projects regarding the Parish building, landscaping, and the Sanctuary. Repairs in the kitchen and social room were accomplished and they have been used for gatherings for individuals who want to know more about the Swedenborgian Church.

Worship and Bible studies are led by Rev. Tafel, with assistance of Associate in Ministry Antonio Ortega, and Reverend Gladys Wheaton. Personal growth and learning among members and visitors are experienced in sharing and working together in distinct modules. The first module, reading stories of the Bible, sing-
ing hymns, and praying, is done virtually, through the Hangouts program on-line, Monday through Friday at 7:30 PM, with presentations on the U.S. Constitution and Biblical Scriptures, contemporary news, and church history. The second module, to go over the Scriptures for Sunday, is done on Saturdays. The third module is on Sunday mornings during worship. Several visitors have been present during these modules and Rev. Tafel and Rev. Wheaton provides presentations on Swedenborg. In each of these modules, attendees come and go, but usually attendance is ten to twelve. The youth have made progress in reading comprehension and vocabulary, as well as, increased proficiency in reading aloud. The youth have been a blessing for all. There’s an individual from Vietnam that cannot return because of COVID-19, but still communicates with us. Some struggle to attend because of a mask requirement.

Rev. Wheaton, now emerita, remains an active and important part of our Society, as she celebrates forty years of New Church ministry. She is a great contributor in many ways, assisting in worship services and meetings during the year.

The ministers and members meet on-line every Thursday at 5 PM, discussing Church matters and keeping in touch with each other. The Newtonville Society acknowledges and greatly appreciates the continued recognition and support of the Massachusetts New Church Union. The Newtonville Society has transferred ownership of its property to the Union, under a prior arrangement. Our Society continues to meet and prosper under a Usage Agreement with The Union. While the future is uncertain, we continue to trust in the Lord’s Divine Providence that has brought us thus far.

Respectfully submitted,
Antonia Ortega, Secretary

MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION

APPROVED Minutes of Michigan Association Annual Meeting
October 5, 2019 (Edited for length)

There were 17 members in attendance:
Acting President Barbara Barber, Rev. Renee Machiniak, Treasurer Barbara Boxwell, Secretary Pro Tem Ian Barber, B.J. Neuenfeldt, Chris Laitner, Barb Tourangeau, Rhett Billings, Marjory Leas, Lori Patana, Fawn Lange, Dorie Litchfield, Betsy Aldrich, Mary Lou Jerrett, Nancy Gehringer, Sharon Billings, Jeanine Keller.
Acting President Barbara Barber updated the membership that two board members, Tom Neuenfelt (President) and B.J. Neuenfelt (Secretary) resigned from their positions on the board on April 15th. On September 17th, Acting President Barbara Barber appointed Ian Barber as Secretary Pro Tem.

**Secretary’s Report**

Minutes from October 6, 2018 were distributed and read in silence. There were two corrections to the spelling of Purley Chase and Indiana. Marjory Leas made a motion to approve the minutes as amended and Dorie Litchfield seconded the motion. Minutes were passed unanimously.

Chris Laitner read correspondence from the youth that went to Purley Chase (Josh Moore, Molly Moore, Heather Guzik and Ivy Little) in England, and gave the letters to Secretary Pro Tem Ian Barber, letters are on file.

**Almont New Church Assembly and Retreat Center Report**

Camp went very well this year, there were few less people due to the date change because of Purley Chase which proved to be a manageable number of attendees. The theme for this upcoming year will be “Music & The Bible.” There is work being done to update the Website. Lori Patana gave a report on the improvement updates and projects for the facilities including dry wall replacement, window replacements for the Big House. Discussion was held on the possibility of doing a “wedding registry” for items needed for the Rental Facility. There have been 5 weddings this year, with three scheduled so far for next year.

Betsy reported on the Financials. Betsy gave an update on the facility that is on the North end of the property called Seraphim Spring, that is being renovated with the idea of renting, youth group events, and potentially using it as an Air B&B. Betsy reported that $35,400 was received from the Cleveland Church. Discussion was held regarding using the funds towards beds for the Boys’ Building and shower doors. Discussion was held for other potential facility projects with the “Teen Storage” building. Rhett suggested a Live Fundraiser Karaoke event to help fund these projects where those participating would talk about their gratitude and experiences with ANCA.

**Ministerial Reports were received** from Rev. Dagmar Bollinger, Rev. Jenn Tafel and Rev. Renee Machiniak.

**Old Business**

Convention 2019

- Chris Latiner reported the expectations of knowing what the delegates need to do at the Convention and presented the reports from the 6 delegates who attended Convention 2019. Reports on file. Michigan Association gave financial support to the 6 delegates to attend Convention 2019. Fifteen teens were very
active this year: Convention 2019, then Almont, then Purley Chase. We have 8 available slots for delegates for Convention 2020, consider attending if interested.

Next joint meeting with Michigan-Ohio Association: Suggested name of Healing through Vibrations, discussion was held on the name comprehension. Discussion was had on including other associations in the Michigan-Ohio Association Meeting.

Satellite Gatherings/Outreach Ministries: Dorie Litchfield asked, “Who wants to host?” B.J. said she would be interested in hosting. Discussion was held on Advertisement/Promotion.

Midwest Gathering Meeting: Barb Barber spoke to Peter Toot, and he indicated there were no future plans set currently. B.J. reaffirmed there are no plans at the moment.

**New Business**

Fall Gatherings at Almont Retreat Center: Lori encouraged the Michigan Association to utilize the facility for events:

- Fall Event and/or Fun Family Friendly Event (Community Based Event)
- Spring Event to correspond with the Flower Fest
- Discussion was had on potential ideas including an Open House
- Betsy suggested on the off years that Michigan Assoc./Ohio Assoc. don’t meet:

  - Suggested that Michigan Association and the Illinois Associations could meet

Convention 2020 is to be held in Bridgewater, Massachusetts June 24 – July 1, 2020

**Slate of Officers for 2020 Year** - Barb Barber presented the slate:

President – Barbara Barber
Vice President – Marjory Leas
Secretary – Ian Barber
Treasurer – Betty Jean Neuernfeldt
Trustee – Dorie Litchfield 2020
Trustee – Mary Lou Jerrett 2021
Trustee – Lori Patana 2022

Dorie Litchfield made a motion to cast a unanimous ballot for the slate, Chris Laitner seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.

**Presentation of Budget 2020**

Barb Boxwell presented the Proposed Budget for 2020 and discussion was had on various line-items. Fawn Lange made a motion to forgive the debt by Almont
to Michigan Association of $5,390, Mary Lou seconded the motion. Discussion was had on the debt by Almont to Michigan Association of $5,390. Marjory Leas moved to “Call The Question. Due to Lori having just came back, there was a brief explanation on the initial motion. Vote was held to forgive the debt by Almont to Michigan Association of $5,390. Passed unanimously. Betsy moved to approve the Proposed Budget for 2020 as amended, Ian seconded the motion. Discussion was held. Vote was held on the approval of the Proposed Budget for 2020. Passed unanimously.

Ian Barber motioned to adjourn the meeting and Chris Laitner seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:41 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ian Barber, secretary

CHURCH OF THE HOLY CITY

Royal Oak, Michigan

Our Church of the Holy City congregation gathers for worship and spiritual growth on Sunday mornings, with an average attendance of 12 people per Sunday (35 active members and 25 inactive members). We are happy to report that new friends of the church have joined our worship services this summer, i.e. Bob and Ruth Porter, Jacqui Russo and Jeff Krone. They found our congregation through Beaumont and the internet. We are grateful to meet at the Women’s Club during the months of October through June. During the summer months, July through September, we meet at our Royal Oak home under the ’ole crabapple tree, or by fireside with a higher attendance: 15 people on average.

Our church remains active in our community. As of last month in November, we have collected $200.00 worth of coins to raise money for Veteran Service Dogs, helping veterans with canine companions who are at risk for suicide. We collected and also delivered to the Madison Hts. Methodist Church veteran’s non-perishable backpack and toiletries drive. We continue to contribute to the local Lutheran Church Food Pantry and support the Starr Church Coffee House fundraiser for the Warming Shelter.

Our Sunday School, led by Barb Barber, ministers to children when they are in attendance and we invite youth who attend to remain upstairs during the Sunday sermon message. We continue to offer our Sunday morning Adult Discussion Group before the worship services. Our new book is “Seven Days of Spiritual
Evolution” by E. Kent Rogers. We offer online sermons as outreach to isolated members and seekers on our church website. The Police Chaplaincy volunteer ministry continues, including monthly briefings at the station and occasional ride-alongs. Last spring our congregation, and myself, were invited by the Madison Hts United Methodist Church to participate in their Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services. Our church choir continues to meet and sing and share the gift of music at Christmas and Easter time. We celebrated last Easter with 42 people in attendance! We are grateful for everyone who supports the ministry of our church in the variety of ways that enrich our faith community.

I continue to serve as a part-time Oncology chaplain at Royal Oak Beaumont Hospital. I was made faculty at the Beaumont School of Yoga Therapy in January 2019 and continue to teach spiritual care with first year medical students throughout the year. It is my joy to continue to serve the Church of the Holy City ¾ time. One Sunday a month, I take a weekend off for rest/renewal and take Mondays off for self-care.

The church continues to offer our Women’s Alliance & Women’s Spirituality groups, as well as participate in the annual Almont spring Women’s Retreat, Flowerfest, and Summer Camp. As the Youth League Chaplain, I led sessions at Memorial Day Teen Retreat and plan to lead sessions at Teen Winter Retreat this winter: “Seven Deadly Sins.” Our congregation continues to look for educational/outreach opportunities to help awareness of Human Trafficking in our region and we hold a raffle bi-annually to donate to our local Royal Oak Animal Shelter. Last year, our church offered a successful Musical Extravaganza fundraiser in memory of Charley Gehringer on Saturday, October 27th. For the event organizer, Joe Machiniak, and the musicians who offered their gifts of talent, we are most grateful: Joel Palmer & band, Rhett Billings, Julie Beutel. And we thank everyone who attended and supported the event! This year, we took a break from the Extravaganza fundraiser and will re-visit the possibility again.

When possible, we met for Women’s Alliance gatherings and met at Nancy Gehringer’s home with our Women’s Spirituality Group. We enjoyed our annual spring Women’s Retreat held here at the retreat center May 3-5, 2019 with the theme “Nourishing Ourselves in Body, Mind and Spirit.” We also met monthly at the Women’s Club with our “Rising Above Stress” community outreach group, including guest speakers such as Nandini Jayaprasad on Hinduism, Buddhist Priest Kevin Hickey and Beaumont’s Integrative Chaplain, Sister Karen Wieleba, on Reiki healing and Jennifer Stewart on Mindfulness and the Ketogenic Diet. We also explored breath work, self-hypnosis and the link between Homeopathy and...
Swedenborg’s theology. May Membership Classes were offered throughout the month on Sunday mornings before worship.

I participated with this spring’s regional Peer Supervision with the LaPorte, Indiana, New Church, attended the 2019 Caring Coalition Conference for continuing education and attended the 2019 Council of Ministers Meetings and Annual Convention. I offered pastoral support at our Almont Summer School on weekends this year and kept in touch with our Michigan Association members and friends through weekly church updates and Facebook postings.

I traveled to one of our sister churches, The New Church of Montgomery in Cincinnati, Ohio, to fill the pulpit on August 25, 2019, and plan to lead Camp Mennonscnah in Kansas October 11-13th.

The Church of the Holy City planned to sponsor this year’s Michigan Association Saturday activity with the Song and Spirit Institute for Peace in recognition and gratitude for the ongoing support received from Michigan Association. However, the leader became unexpectedly ill. We plan to re-schedule them for the 2020 Women’s Retreat. We offered a free seminar on planning Advance Directives in conjunction with the Madison Hts. Methodist Church on Sunday 10/20/19. I am most grateful for everyone’s friendship and faithful participation in our ministry

RITES & SACRAMENTS PERFORMED IN 2019

**Weddings: 2; Baptisms: 4; New Members: 0; Memorial Services: 2**

- Officiated at Dan and Sheila Linna, Jr.’s Wedding at their home in Pinckney on Sat., October 19, 2019
- Officiated at Samantha and Ryan Coffey’s Wedding at Almont Retreat Center on Sat., October 26, 2019
- Baptized Rachael Lynn Dearing @ Almont New Church Assembly on July 13, 2019
- Baptized Roberto Charles Barnaby, Fernando Lynn Barnaby and Jose Alexander Barnaby @ Almont New Church Assembly on July 15, 2019
- Officiated Mary Kleiss Memorial Service @ Sullivan Funeral Home on February 7, 2019
- Offered Eulogy at Sherry Cantrell’s Memorial Service in Farmington, Michigan on March 17, 2019

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Renee Machiniak, Minister
The Mid-Atlantic Association planned and postponed our gathering this year due to the pandemic. In the interim year we have the following officers:

- Rev. Richard L. Tafel, President, Washington Society, D.C.
- Christine Campbell, Vice-President, The Swedenborgian Church at Temenos, PA
- Robin Tafel, Treasurer, The Swedenborgian Church at Temenos, PA
- Rev. Shada Sullivan, Wilmington, DE Society
- vacant, Recording Secretary.

Elfa Halloway retired to her home country of Germany and resigned as secretary of the Association. At this time, the secretary position is unfilled.

**Bylaws Update**

The officers drafted and approved new bylaws for the Association and submitted them to General Council for any issues. No issues were reported, and the bylaws will go to a formal vote when the Association can meet again post-pandemic.

**Deland Society Request**

In January of 2020, the Mid-Atlantic Association responded to a request of the Deland Society and Chrysalis Retreat Center of Florida to join the Mid Atlantic Association. The officers voted to include the society pending evidence that the society was viable by sending both a budget or summary and profit loss statement for 2019.

The Mid-Atlantic Association never received the required information, but instead received a letter of resignation from the Society from the President who had asked for inclusion in the association. At this time, the Mid-Atlantic Association has not formally moved ahead to include the Deland Society in the Mid Atlantic Association.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Richard L. Tafel, President

**CHURCH OF THE HOLY CITY**

*Wilmington, Delaware*

Like all churches, The Church of the Holy City in Wilmington was challenged to embrace new ways of doing church and being in community due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Before the pandemic, the church continued with both old and new uses. We held our Annual Lobster and Wreath Festival in December to great
success. Our Christmas Eve service also remained very popular with the surrounding community. We continued to host the Copeland String Quartet, along with the Quartet’s various guest artists, for three well-attended concerts. In the Fall of 2019, the church joined the Wilmington Art Loop, displaying the works of local artists in our parish hall and hosting a reception for the neighborhood. Additionally, the church held a sermon series and discussion group on angels, and welcomed Chelsea Rose Odhner to preach and give a presentation on her work with Off The Left Eye YouTube channel.

We continued to sponsor a monthly meal at The Emmanuel Dining Room, a locally run soup kitchen, ran both a food drive and a school supplies drive for a local homeless shelter, and gave ongoing support to our local food pantry, at a neighboring church.

We have continued with our endeavors to take care of the restorations that our historic building requires, and we were happy to receive grants from The Crystal Trust and the Marmot Foundation. These grants bring us roughly a third of the way to raising enough funds to begin Phase One repairs.

In March 2020, the church suspended its in-person worship services and shifted to online worship due to the pandemic. Weekly services were uploaded to YouTube, while Lectio Divina meditations and a virtual coffee hour were offered weekly via Zoom. Coloring packets were sent periodically to our families with children. In July, The Church of the Holy City was very excited to take part in a joint virtual book group, along with two other Wilmington Churches, reading and discussing the book “I’m Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness” by Austin Channing Brown. It was a useful experience, hopefully the first of many collaborations!

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Shada Sullivan, Pastor

CHURCH OF THE HOLY CITY
Washington, District of Columbia

For the Church of the Holy City, as for the rest of the world, the dark cloud of the COVID-19 pandemic has overlain all our activities and plans during the past few months, and has rendered the future uncertain. Nevertheless, this has been a time of church growth and development, including creation of a new model to assure enhanced income, dramatic improvements to the church’s facilities, and a gratifying increase in membership.
Although the pandemic and the disruption caused by installation of our new air conditioning system have had a negative impact on church rentals, these have continued in careful compliance with the Washington, DC pandemic protocols. Our major renter is Christ Reformed Church. Not only does this arrangement provide a critical, assured source of income, it has also brought about a close relationship between Rev. Tafel and Rev. Brian Lee, pastor of Christ Reformed. We are exploring a possible cost-sharing scheme for recording the services of both churches to reach their long distance members.

Our rental process has been altered to be more effective. All rentals are now made through a PeerSpace platform and Ms. Shalonda Ingram, who came to us through the church’s spiritual entrepreneurship program, is paid on a commission basis. We stress in our rental policy the use of church space for activities that promote religious and spiritual understanding. Our partnership with PeerSpace has led to many new rentals, even under the shadow of the pandemic. These have included the BBC, PBS, NPR, and other broadcasting companies. We feel certain that, through PeerSpace, our outreach to individuals and groups will be greatly extended. Outreach will also be enhanced through the recent improvement of our website, which now carries the church newsletter.

Now that our facilities have been upgraded, with the renovation of the downstairs reception hall and the installation of air conditioning in the main sanctuary, parlor, and library, we can launch our Spiritual Entrepreneurship Center. We anticipate that this will draw a significant number of people, mostly young, and generate significant income.

Our younger members tend to be socially and politically engaged. Rev. Tafel has encouraged them to use the church as an instrument in the struggle for equality and justice. Our vice president, Annabel Park, led a summer reading group focused on the Christian response to racism. Rev. Tafel has been working with Rev. Joseph Smith, pastor of an African American church, to promote understanding of the Black perspective on racism.

While it has been painful to suspend our Sunday evening services in the church, we have found that Zoom provides a real sense of connection among our members. In addition to these virtual prayer services, Malcolm Peck led a Swedenborg reading group by telephone during the summer. Surprisingly and gratifyingly, we added seven new members this summer, including Rev. Tafel’s father. We now have 24 active members and 20 active “friends.” Our new president, Helen Sioris, is focused on finding ways to enhance our giving program. Annabel Park is working closely with her to develop a new fundraising strategy. We are fortunate
to have a new treasurer, Tony Raffa, who brings to that position impressive professional credentials.

On a sad note, we bade farewell to Elfa Halloway, who returned at the end of July to Germany, the land of her birth and source of her Swedenborgian roots. More than any other person, Elfa was responsible for the survival of Church of the Holy City when we were without a pastor. As church administrator for the past several years, she assumed many heavy responsibilities, becoming the face of the church to the public. We will sorely miss her.

At the same time, it is a pleasure to report that we have just engaged Edith Mendez as church administrator, assuming Elfa’s duties not otherwise assigned. She brings to the job an impressive set of skills developed in working for many churches in the Washington, DC area, including the National Cathedral.

Respectfully submitted,
Malcolm C. Peck, Secretary

SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH AT TEMENOS

West Chester, Pennsylvania

“Above All Else Just Love”

This has been a fertile year for Temenos. We have seen an increase in regular attendance with many new friends dropping by in different ways. We have increased our presence in the community at large through our involvement in outreach and also our presence on Facebook. This has brought in new people. We count around 75 people that join us in a semi regular way. Most of our attendees live 20 – 50 miles away so we may only see them once a month. It has been interesting this year as we have shifted from a mainly plus 50 congregation to now mostly under 50 with quite a few 30 – 40 year olds.

Our services are always evolving and have a contemplative air with a call to engaged activism.

Our Easter Service this year was standing room only. We started a once a month “Wild Church” service held outside comprised of meditation, readings and engagement with nature.

As always, we had an annual Animal Blessing which this year was in November on Diwali – Nepal’s Day - Honoring of the Dogs

In April of this year we brought in Dhami Boo a longtime organic and very skilled gardener to broaden our community garden for the food bank – while teaching the young people how to cultivate a diverse garden. The garden grew...
and we contributed much produce to the food bank. The only hitch was that while we thought the young people would be committed and learn much – it turns out they were not that interested in hard work. However, we had some very dedicated adult volunteers and all went well.

This year we also expanded our arts offerings to include a monthly “Writer’s in the Round” – where we have a main presenter followed by an open mic. We had our second Summer Concert Series which brought much joy and was well attended.

In November, we participated in our community Multi Faith celebration for the 10th year. Pastor Christine was the chair and leader of the event. There were about 400 people there with a good number from our congregation.

As we ended the year we committed to helping “Family Promise” an organization devoted to helping “homeless” families to reintegrate back into regular life. We housed several families between Christmas and New Year’s. It was a learning experience for all of us.

Christmas Service this year was packed with standing room only (90plus) – many were out in the hall. We count our blessings that we can offer spiritual nourishment for so many. We meet people where they are and encourage them in the Way of Love.

“Above All Else Love”

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Christine Campbell for the Temenos Council

NEW YORK ASSOCIATION

No report submitted.

KOREAN NEW CHURCH

New York, New York

We were very sad that the former pastor of our church, Rev. Chungsun Moses Lee, passed away in March this year. Rev. Youngmin Kim attended his resurrection service in Los Angeles. Rev. Chungsun Lee was the one who introduced Swedenborg to the congregation because the former Mirral church belonged to the Korean Presbyterian denomination before that.
In the past year, we had Sunday worship services regularly and enjoyed chats during the coffee hours. The Taekwondo Leadership program went well and 4 new participants. The program director, Master Lee, moved to an area closer to the church. This is significant because he used to drive 2 hours each way to come to the church. Tai-Chi program also continued. This program allows, the mind and body to be refreshed before having worship service on Sunday.

Our church celebrated because one of its youth members has graduated from college, and another one was awarded a PhD degree. It was the joyful and thankful celebration. Praise the Lord!

We thank the Lord for having another blessed year.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Young Min Kim

NEW YORK NEW CHURCH

New York, New York

No report submitted.

OHIO ASSOCIATION

166th Annual Meeting Minutes-Ohio Association of the Swedenborgian Churches in Glendale Ohio at the New Church of Montgomery on October 5, 2019

Call to Order: The 166th Annual Meeting of the Ohio Association of the Swedenborgian Church was called to order at 1:00 pm on October 5, 2019 by President Bill Coffman.

Present: President Bill Coffman, Vice-President Gloria Toot, Treasurer Frank Doyle, Recording Secretary Robbin Ferriman, Nominating Committee Betsy Coffman, Pete Toot, and Kent Myers, Karen Cowen, Albie Cowen, Destini Cowen, Steve & Janie Dzeba, Eileen Franz, Dick Sommer, Barb Mackey, Nancy Doyle, Linda Myers, Michael West, Brenda Helton, Pat Sommer, Barbara Clark, Corina Fain, Anna Clem, Maggie Panyko
President’s Welcoming Remarks

Announce that the General Counsel sent the Ohio Association a “Thank You” card for our donation to Convention 2019. It was used for coffee breaks, and the children’s program.

Secretary’s Report:
Cards will be sent to Kurt Lowry, Ron & Val Brugler, Sylvia Lloyd, Norm Vester, Jack Cashen, and June & Edmund Swiger.
Minutes were accepted, M/S/V

Treasurer’s Report:
Frank Doyle stated there was an $2000 increase of budget, with the common fund making more money. It is $12,000 above budget, with only 2 churches applying for grants. The Johnny Appleseed loan, used to print a book, was paid back. The Ohio Association does not charge interest.

Report was accepted, M/S/V

A discussion was had around Line Item #14, we have previously given to Almont for renovations, that we should do so again, in addition to assisting the Splatz group. A proposal was made to give $1000.00 grant to each program.

For Line Item #15, which is a one-time Student Loan, we should put it into a scholarship at Urbana University if it isn’t used.

Regarding Line Item #13, it was discussed that the money that would normally have gone to the Cleveland Church, now be split between the Montgomery and Urbana Churches. Betsy mentioned that Robbin is now enrolled in the Licensed Pastor program and the church, financially supporting that may need additional funds from the Association. Pete mentioned that their church helps support the Glendale Church with renovations and would like support also. Perhaps a small grant to Glendale?

Discussion about donating $500.00 to CSS - Center for Swedenborgian Studies, to help fund sending students to Israel.

Wayfarers Chapel needs to replace all their windows and is requesting monies. It was suggested to give them a $1000.00 grant, in addition to the annual $250 that the Ohio Association already gives them.

Regarding Line Item #18, - Johnny Appleseed Society, it was proposed to bump up the amount to $5000.00 as a line budget item for every year. The new projects to be funded are, “Appleseeds in Space,” and “Johnny Goes to the Zoo,” which involves planting apple trees at the zoo.

A motion was made to accept all the above proposals in one grouping to vote on and it was accepted as such. M/S/V
Nominating Committee Report:
It was moved to combine the Corresponding Secretary and the Recording Secretary’s positions into one, as no one else wanted to take either position. Report accepted with no nominations from the floor.
Vice President - Gloria Toot
Treasurer - Frank Doyle
Corresponding Secretary - Robbin Ferriman
Recording Secretary - Robbin Ferriman
Nominating Committee - Maggie Panyko
Motion to accept the slate of officers as presented. M/S/V

Old Business:
Barbara Barber, president of Michigan Association, contacted Pete Toot about next group meeting. Betsy was contacted by Renee Machiniak about group association meeting.

New Business
No new business.
Respectfully submitted,
Robbin Ferriman, Corresponding Secretary

NEW CHURCH OF MONTGOMERY

Cincinnati, Ohio

We continue to meet at the Glendale New Church, having worship every Sunday except the 2nd week of the month. We have Sunday school for the kids when they are present, and we continue to have Swedenborg Study Group before church, studying “Seven Days of Spiritual Evolution” by Kent Rodgers.


We held our usual events again this year including our annual Easter pancake breakfast and combined worship with the Glendale church congregation, a homecoming picnic which was well attended, and the annual Harvest Feast. We held our 5th annual Toy Swap and Bake Sale benefiting the Bethany House Women’s and Children’s Shelter and attendance gets better every year. A new event this year was the “Something Beautiful” Art Show. There were fourteen artists dis-
playing and selling their work. The art show included some hands-on Fluid Art as well as a raffle. We raised over $400 for the Bethany House Women’s and Children’s Shelters.

This spring, having determined that the Children’s Community Vegetable Garden did not work as well as we hoped as far as community involvement, hard-working volunteers from the congregation are busy transforming it into a beautiful flower garden.

A new outreach program called “Food Share” began this year. Red “New Church of Montgomery” reusable bags were given to each member to purchase an extra non-perishable item in, each time they go to the grocery. The bags are to remind them. On the 1st Sunday of the month they bring in the items which are then taken to an area food store. We participate in several outreach programs, including Matthew 25 Ministries and “Operation Giveback.” Another ongoing program is our “Coffee and Conversation” at a local McDonalds every Friday. The program began ten years ago and is going strong.

The church was represented at the Cincinnati Festival of Faith. This event had over 90 participants from every major faith and faith organization. New Church of Montgomery had a table with posters and brochures describing our church and its outreach efforts and several church members there to interface with visitors.

We recently sold two more of our lots on Kemper Rd., leaving only two to be sold. We thank God for this good fortune. We are pleased with what our small group manages to accomplish.

Respectfully submitted,

Gloria Toot, Chair

CLEVELAND SWEDENBORG CHAPEL

Cleveland, Ohio

No changes to report for this year. We are still holding our Bible Study classes at each other’s homes and various parks. No new members. Norman Bestor now 102 on July 1st, still living with his son in Avon Lake, Ohio.

We distributed a large amount of our church funds to several committees.

- The Swedenborgian General Convention Church
- The Swedenborgian Augmentation Fund
- Center for Swedenborgian Studies
- Almont, New Church Assembly & Retreat Center (to support the youth of the retreat)
• The Swedenborg Foundation

We donated our electric piano to Almont and Steve and Janie delivered it to them during their summer camp. We were reimbursed for our travel expenses. We continue to discuss any possible plans for our future and lift each other in our prayers and thoughts.

Respectfully submitted,
Janie Dzeba, Secretary

URBANA SOCIETY OF THE NEW CHURCH

Urbana, Ohio

Worship & Related Activities: Sunday worship continues with a reading and discussion format except for special services such as Easter, Pentecost, Thanksgiving and Christmas. We held our annual Seder and several church potlucks. We are utilizing “Overcoming Divisiveness” published by the Swedenborg Foundation in our worship reading and discussion. We continue with a monthly “Heaven and Hell” discussion group and a weekly meditation group, both led by lay members. Robbin Ferriman is now in her first year of training in the Licensed Pastor program and attended the Winter Intensive training.

Wider Church Activities/Programs: Thirteen local members attended the Ohio Association weekend meeting hosted by the New Church of Montgomery and 9 members attended Convention 2019 at Valparaiso IN.

Community Outreach & Connections: Our wedding outreach ministry continues under the leadership of Robbin Ferriman, who also oversees our Facebook page. Our Outreach Committee promoted projects of community giving throughout the year that include needed donations of items and money to local community centers. We provide space for four weekly 12-step meetings in the church. We also support our community by having a presence at the Martin Luther King Jr. program and the National Day of Prayer service. Pastor Betsy is the Vice President of the Champaign County Ministerial Association.

UU/Church Connections: Many of our church members participated in and supported the following events.

“Swedenborg Scholar-in-Residence” program: Rev. Anna Woofenden was the 2019 “scholar.” Our members attended her public presentation and hosted a dinner for her on campus.

“The Alicia Titus Memorial Peace Fund”: The annual “Alicia Titus Run for Peace” at Urbana University was held on September 7th, 2019. About 200 people joined in the “run/walk”, including a number of church members. Others volun-
teered with setup, teardown and other necessary tasks. Non-violent Communication Workshop: Alicia’s fund provides a certified instructor in non-violence to students, faculty, staff and the community. Several of our members attended this program. “City of Peace Exhibit” included a film and panel discussions about how to be a community dedicated to working together in peaceful ways.

**Urbana University Interfaith Chaplaincy:** Rev. Betsy Coffman continues to lead this program which supports the spiritual life of students and all members of the U.U. community.

**Johnny Appleseed Foundation:** Pastor Betsy is the president of this foundation, whose board supports through fundraising and other activities, the work of the Johnny Appleseed Museum on campus.

**Worship & Related Activities:**

- **Membership:** On September 29th of this year, Kurt Lowry was confirmed as a member by Rev. Betsy Coffman.
- **Licensed Pastor Candidate:** Robbin Ferriman was accepted into the LP program, has started online classes and attended the January intensive.
- **Sunday Worship:** In our continuing reading and discussion format we are using “Overcoming Divisiveness”, published by Swedenborg Foundation.
- **Summer services:** Led by Robbin Ferriman and Sherry Rutledge. Robbin Ferriman also led most other services when Betsy was absent. Barb Clark has led readings during the services. We are grateful to Barbara Mackey in providing cello accompaniment at a number of our services.
- **Meditation Group:** Sherry Rutledge leads this group 3 weeks of the month, utilizing the Inner Light Ministries meditation path in which she has been trained.
- **Traditional annual services:** We continue with to celebrate special times of year such as All Saints, Thanksgiving, Advent, Christmas Eve Candlelight, Easter and Pentecost. Special shared meals include our annual Thanksgiving potluck and our Seder meal on Good Friday and Easter Brunch, as well as special fall food with our “All Saints-All Souls” service.
- **Monthly Fellowship Meal:** This was instituted by several members as an opportunity to socialize and invite other friends or family to join us. Participants meet at different restaurants in the area.
- **Ad Hoc Committee on Research and Archives:** Robbin Ferriman and Barb Clark have been working diligently this last year to research and organize materials on our church history. They gave an amazing presentation at our local Historical Society in May with about 100 attendees.
Denominational Activities/Programs:

Community Outreach & Connections

- **Wedding Outreach Ministry** – Robbin Ferriman continues as our wedding officiant & coordinator.
- **Outreach Committee** – chaired by Robbin Ferriman, our members have donated to our local animal shelter, Caring Kitchen, the “Friday Backpack” program and several foodbanks. Financial donations and cookies were provided for the annual area “Community Christmas” program.
- 12-step meetings - Our church continues to provide space for several weekly meetings.

Urbana University/Church Connections

- **“The Alicia Titus Memorial Peace Fund” Programs:** The Annual Alicia Titus “Run for Peace” September 7th: Because of the level of our consistent member volunteerism, our church was the recipient of the annual “Alicia Titus Memorial Peace Ambassador” award and plaque at this year’s award ceremonies.
- **UU Swedenborg Scholar-in-Residence:** This year’s “scholar” was Rev. Anna Woofenden, founder of the Garden Church. She spoke with students in various classes and gave presentations on “Food & Faith – Conversations from the Soil and Around the Table” and “Urban Gardening & Community Engagement”. The church hosted a dinner for her at which time members had the opportunity to interact and discuss her experiences in founding an unconventional “church”

Church Building & Grounds:

- The church board has decided on a goal of improved accessibility rather than total handicap accessibility. Our previous efforts led to unresolvable obstacles involved with the historical structure of our church building, including a zoning requirement of 2 separate handicap access points to the sanctuary. At this point, the church has installed a chair lift from the basement to the sanctuary and is developing a plan for easier access from outside to the basement
- Bruce Stevenson continues to chair our maintenance committee, completing many repairs, overseeing outdoor work on our trees and cement garden wall. Mike West maintained the mowing and yard work. Kent Myers cleaned the sanctuary floors. Many members continue to volunteer during yard plant-
ing & cleaning day as well as with seasonal changing of decorations in the church.

Respectfully submitted,
Barb Clark, Secretary

PACIFIC COAST ASSOCIATION

The Pacific Coast Association currently has six member congregations: Puget Sound, Hillside Community Church in El Cerrito, the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church, The New Church of the Southwest Desert in Silver City New Mexico, the Garden Church of San Pedro, and the Agapao Church of Orange County.

The Wayfarer’s Chapel, while it does not have congregational membership, offers classes annually which lead up to confirmation and member-at-large status in the PCA.

Rev. Jonathan Mitchell as former pastor and president of PCA remains in regular contact with former San Diego Society.

At the 2019 PCA Annual meeting the Agapao Church based in Orange County California was accepted into membership in the PCA. They are a Korean-speaking house church, led by Jae Hyun Chung, who is enrolled in the Licensed Pastor program.

The PCA has eighteen ministers and three licensed pastors. Eight of the ministers serve Convention Centers including Wayfarer’s Chapel and CSS; six serve PCA recognized ministries and four are retired. Three licensed pastors serve in Puget Sound, New Church of the Southwest Desert and Hillside Community Church.

The PCA Annual Meeting was held in Silver City New Mexico and hosted by the New Church of the Southwest Desert the weekend of October 19-20, 2019.

The Executive Board of PCA met at Hillside Community Church in El Cerrito February 28-29, 2020. Plans were made to have the fall membership meeting shared with Garden Church and Wayfarer’s Chapel, but due to the continued concerns with the COVID-19 virus this will be held virtually instead.
The in-person West Coast Peer supervision was cancelled this 2020 due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Several PCA ministers and LPs took part in the denomination-wide virtual peer-sup program.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mitchell, president, Pacific Coast Association

AGAPAO CHURCH
Santa Ana, California

Unfortunately because of the COVID-19 pandemic our new church has not been as active as we had hoped. We have been meeting individually and by Zoom once a month. Last year (2019) in November and December we visited San Pedro Garden Church and brought some winter blankets, hats, and scarfs to be given to the homeless. Last May and August our church members cooked Korean food and made ‘To-Go’ boxes for the homeless. We sent the San Francisco Church Christmas Gift Baskets for homeless young people and made a donation for their 125th Anniversary Event which was to be held in May 2020. We were planning to visit them for the event, but due to COVID-19 public gathering and travel restrictions, they cancelled the event. Unfortunately we have not been able to do any outreach which has been sad for us.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jae Hyon Chung, Chief Executive Officer

THE GARDEN CHURCH
San Pedro, California

Report of The Garden Church and Feed and be Fed Farm

The Garden Church continues under the leadership of our ministry team, consisting of Rev. Dr. Amanda Adams Riley (PCUSA) and Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mitchell (Swedenborgian Church), both serving part-time.

We took in two new members since last report, and have expanded our Board of Directors with three new board members. (One member went off the board.)

Pre-pandemic, we continued to open our garden on W 6th St to the public for a variety of uses: open garden time, garden volunteering, farm-stand sales, Sunday and special worship services, community meal time, story-telling events, dinners, weddings, film screenings, live music and more.
Due to the pandemic we are currently closed to the public. We are using Zoom video conferencing to host interactive worship services, with the sermons livestreamed to Facebook. The garden is tended by a dedicated group of volunteers following strict pandemic safety protocols. Every Tuesday volunteers deliver bags of fresh produce for donation to those who request them, and every Friday we offer a farm-stand at our gates. In place of our community meal we offer grab-and-go meals at our gates every Sunday afternoon. We are serving 20-25 people and this has been an opportunity to stay connected and offer pastoral care to community members who can’t join us online. We also have available at all times meal replacement bags, containing an assortment of healthy, nutritionally balanced, shelf-stable food items. We are grateful to Wayfarers Chapel, other area congregations, and individual donors for providing the meals and the meal replacement bags.

Pre-pandemic, Little Sprouts, our program for preschool children and their care-givers, went through an amazing growth spurt, with a growing community of parents and children. We attracted two recently retired educators as Little Sprouts volunteers. Feed and be Fed applied for, and received, community grants for the construction of a children’s garden area. The construction of the children’s garden continues during the close-down.

Feed and be Fed has opened a second garden location at a demonstration farm owned by the Los Angeles United School District (LAUSD). This property had been closed for several years and the LAUSD has turned to us to help bring it back into production. This effort has two prongs:

1) we are using phytoremediation to clean up the existing soil from the aftereffects of DDT contamination and

2) we are growing produce in raised beds using clean new soil.

The harbor area community has turned to Feed and be Fed to hold the funds of the newly formed Harbor Neighborhood Relief Fund, which makes small grants to individuals in need and to non-profits. Members of the Feed and be Fed board serve on the grant-making committee.

While the pandemic has brought painful losses, we are pleased to find new ways to be of use.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mitchell, acting Co-pastor
SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH OF SAN FRANCISCO

San Francisco, California

Since our last report in June 2019, much has changed for our church. Last year unfolded as expected in terms of lower-than-desired event income but relatively strong member and community engagement. We held our fourth annual concert series from February through October, which has grown in popularity and allowed us to donate profits to three local charities. Our Christmas concert, *A Bach Christmas Cantata* organized by our Music Director Jonathan Dimmock, sold out two performances and was very well received. We held our first outdoor “Animal Blessing Service” in September, which attracted new attendees. We invited the community to participate in pumpkin carving in October and a Santa Claus visit in December. Our members also began planning a two week long celebration of the 125th anniversary of our building to be held in March of 2020. However, this highly anticipated event was summarily cancelled at the last minute due to the unfolding COVID-19 pandemic.

Since the pandemic, all activities and operations have shifted considerably. Nearly all weddings and events, a significant portion of our annual income, were cancelled or postponed. While this was a considerable and painful loss, we were able to draw from our savings and receive a Payroll Protection Loan to cover expenses through the remainder of the year. Other planned events, such as our Memorial Day Retreat and the 2020 concert series, were cancelled as well.

The pandemic has also brought new, positive changes for us. We shifted all services and gatherings to an online streaming format with much success and high engagement from members and friends near and far. Rev. Lee began offering weekly online gatherings for meditation and bible study, which are proving popular, as well as extensive pastoral care.

Our congregation has shown a generous outpouring of support through donations as well. The council’s stewardship committee has focused on both financial and congregation stewardship with an emphasis on outreach and maintaining our community through these isolating times. We have even welcomed three new members to our congregation in 2020: Cortland Bell, Alice Popejoy, and Dorothy Person.

Looking ahead to 2021, we will be faced with significant financial shortcomings and difficult decisions. Our council has scheduled additional congregation-
wide meetings to address these financial concerns. Despite the challenges of 2020, we are so grateful for all our many blessings and hopeful for the year to come.

Respectfully submitted,
Laurie Carlson, Secretary

SWEDENBORGIAN COMMUNITY CHURCH AT HILLSIDE

El Cerrito, California

We enjoyed the fourth year with Rev. Thom Muller as our minister and the second year in which he has been joined on a ministry team with Licensed Pastor Tassy Farwell. As of the end of the calendar year 2019, we had 30 members and approximately 10 active friends, with Sunday attendance usually around 20. We hold worship services every Sunday throughout the year, though we had a brief hiatus at the beginning of the pandemic. These were resumed virtually with recorded services and a live coffee hour on Zoom. Multiple discussion groups have been moved to Zoom as well, and as of this writing we’re still in a virtual mode as a church. All board meetings have been on Zoom since the pandemic.

The ministry team oversees the operations of what is usually a busy facilities calendar, but the pandemic has changed that too, in dramatic ways. A significant consequence of the extended pandemic is the permanent closure of Peter Pan, the day school that has been operating on the premises since the year the church opened in 1952! In addition, the normally vibrant calendar of numerous spiritual community organizations and music and dance organizations holding their events and meetings at Hillside has ground to a halt while the campus is on lockdown now for several months. Due to the significant disruption in the business model for the current ministry, the board has begun to engage in some strategic planning to imagine alternative approaches to meeting the objectives of our ministry mission in the near and long-term future.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Jim Lawrence, Recording Secretary
WAYFARERS CHAPEL

Rancho Palos Verdes, California

(Please see page 95 for annual report)

NEW CHURCH OF THE SOUTHWEST DESERT

Silver City, New Mexico

Worship: We’ve established ourselves in a prominent location. Though some of our members are self-isolating in this time of crisis, we have had several new members join us for Sunday services and classes. We strive to maintain connection to our absent friends. New Church of the Southwest Desert and Oasis Coffee and Tea have remained a prayerful and peaceful presence in our community throughout these COVID Times.

Outdoor Worship, and Garden: Recently, we’ve enjoyed some outdoor services in the Big Ditch Park on San Vicente Creek behind the church and plaza. We intend to continue this tradition as we upgrade our green space beside the church with a brand new church door, a prominent sign, two large wooden Tori-gate entry arches, a stone altar, and landscaping. Toward the street end, it will also provide seating for Oasis Coffee and Tea House.

Zoom: We’ve added a Zoom classroom for Swedenborgian Bible Study Wednesday nights.

Small groups: The near future holds the promise of resuming our small groups indoors for AA, Creative Arts, Recovery, Cosmic Nights, And Regenerative Living Lectures. Always with an interactive feature to Swedenborgian teachings.

COVID-19: In the beginning we had prayerful presence at the door of Oasis and distributed food to the homeless when services elsewhere were curtailed. Members also distributed food and personal hygiene items to the public.

Oasis: Singer/songwriter Chandra Visser has been performing Fridays & Saturdays in Oasis Coffee & Tea House, and brings her guitar to Sunday services. Chandra also has experience in retail and food service and has obtained her New Mexico Food Handlers License with an eye toward volunteering at Oasis when not performing.

Espresso: Rev. Carla and LP Linda have learned to use the espresso machine and word is spreading that we now have lattes available. As they acquire expertise, additional hot and iced drinks will be offered.
Healing & Arts Market: We have provided outdoor space to vendors on Saturdays that generates some income. Two additional vendors have committed to renting outdoor space. We have four more spaces to fully optimize. Our 5th Annual Healing Arts Market will be Saturday, Oct. 10, 2020. In addition to outdoor vendor space we will provide virtual lectures and presentations in the sanctuary. We will also ZOOM record those lectures for further viewing and distribution. If restrictions are still in effect we will take steps to ensure social distancing and safe practices.

Makers Market: The town has initiated a Makers Market for Artists and Artisans in the newly developed public plaza behind our building on Saturdays that has resulted in increased sales and interest in the shop. The focus is “Homemade, Homegrown, Handcrafted.”

Go-Fer: Requests for our Go-Fer service have increased and we continue to do our best to provide essential transportation, grocery shopping and other errands to those in need.

Challenges: Certainly, none of us could have predicted the changes and challenges we have all faced this year. Goals and plans have had to be adjusted, altered, adapted, or postponed, and canceled in light of the restrictions and social changes related to COVID-19, but we persevere. New Church of the Southwest Desert and Oasis Coffee and Tea have remained a presence in our community.

Homeless: Our unhoused neighbors have also been having increased difficulties. Providing water, masks and an occasional cup of coffee offers some small comfort. The medium is a multi-camera Zoom lens platform.

Border Ministry: Friend Doug Winter is promoting a Border ministry which provides entertainment and Education to the children of Asylum seekers in Juarez.

Setbacks: We have unfortunately had several break-ins resulting in damage to both front and back doors, loss of cash, and general disarray. One of our new members was able to reinforce and repair the sanctuary entrance and a locksmith fortified the front door locks. We closed for business for a full day to clean and disinfect all surfaces as a precaution against COVID-19.

Covid Recovery: It has been difficult to regain the traction for Oasis that we had at the end of 2019 and the beginning of 2020, yet, we are continuing to plan for the future, pray for guidance, and trust in the Lord’s providence.

Going Forward: We will continue with each good and sound goal we have set and recover lost ground. Regain traction for the rest of the year and persist into the new year with renewed vigor!

Respectfully submitted,
Carley Preusch, Secretary
SWEDENBORГIAN CHURCH OF PUGET SOUND

Redmond, Washington

I have continued to serve part-time as the minister of the Swedenborgian Church of Puget Sound. We met twice a month at a Dance Studio in Redmond until the pandemic forced us to stop meeting in person. Since then, we have been meeting about once a month online via Zoom. Traditionally, we hold several special events throughout the year. We celebrated our annual Christmas Eve-Eve service at the Redmond United Methodist Church. Mosswood Hollow usually hosts an Easter Service and a Church weekend retreat, but this was not possible this year. I plan to retire from this position at the end of the year.

I also own and operate the Mosswood Hollow Retreat Center, with my wife, Sandie Grumman. We have been hosting workshops 85-95 days each year, however, due to the pandemic, we have not had any workshops since mid-March. We have used the time to catch up on maintenance and repairs and put up a greenhouse and plant a large garden. We expect to resume hosting workshops sometime in the spring.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Paul Martin
WESTERN CANADA CONFERENCE

No report submitted.

CALGARY NEW CHURCH SOCIETY

Calgary, Alberta

Greetings from the Calgary New Church Society!
In the past year we continued with our in-home gatherings for our worship services, including a visit from Pastor David Fekete for our Christmas service.

At our 2019 AGM the following officers were elected:

President: Hartmut Lipski
Vice President: Susan Hulcher
Secretary: Sharon Williams
Treasurer: Garry Loewen
Board Members: Pat Ravenhill, Laurie McKendry

Since March 8th we have had two virtual gatherings to check in on each other, visit, and have a modified worship service. Several of our members also enjoyed the virtual Convention presentations this year.

Respectfully submitted,
Hartmut Lipski, President

CHURCH OF THE HOLY CITY

Edmonton, Alberta

The Edmonton New Church had a 40 day & 40 night experience in 2019 when funds were running out and attendance was at a low point. With a little scraping, balancing, donations, and the promise of a casino in 2020 we pulled through. With the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March we were under the wire to work one of our two days to share in a small portion of the proceeds, as the casinos were closing.

Our Christmas program proved to be a smashing success as our guests were the African church congregation, who rented the sanctuary on Sunday afternoons after we had completed our service. Turkey had to take second place to the tastefully prepared dishes, which few of us had ever experienced. At the end of the
celebration Santa had a surprise for us; why did we always assume that Santa would be white!

Weddings were another important part of our ministry and community function. The wedding chapel attracts many couples by being a spiritually warm, welcoming, holy place to start their lives together in holy union.

COVID-19 has certainly taken its toll on church attendance and groups who provide community services during the week. We look forward to a brighter future.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Runka, President
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ACT OF INCORPORATION

An act to incorporate the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America. Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois represented in the General Assembly.

Section 1. That Rev. Thomas Worcester, D.D. of Boston, Massachusetts; Rev. J.R. Hibbard of Chicago, Illinois; Rev. T.B. Hayward of Brookline, Massachusetts; Robert L. Smith, Esq. of Jamaica, Long Island, New York; J. Young Scammon, Esq. of Chicago and I.S. Britton, Esq. of Springfield, Illinois; Hon. Jno. B. Niles of LaPorte, Indiana; Dr. Charles Shepherd of Grand Rapids, Michigan; Rev. Chauncey Giles of Cincinnati, Ohio; David Snyder, Esq. of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; N.F. Cabell, Esq. of Warminster, Virginia; Hon. Jno. H. Wilkins and Sampson Reed of Boston, Massachusetts; Oliver Gerish of Portland and Henry B. Hoskins of Gardiner, Maine; their associates and successors, be, and they are hereby constituted a body Corporate under the name of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America; under which name they shall have perpetual succession, with power to receive, take by gift, purchase, devise or otherwise, property and real estate, real, personal or mixed, for educational or religious purposes, and to hold, lease, and sell or convey the same at pleasure.

Section 2. The business Affairs of said Convention shall be managed and controlled by its Executive Committee, (or General Council) subject to the direction of the Convention, when in session. Said Committee (or Council) shall be chosen or appointed from time to time, in such manner as the Constitution of said Convention may direct, and act in conformity to its votes. Said Committee (or Council) may create such offices, and appoint such Officers as they may see fit, and remove the same at pleasure; and may change its business affairs in such a manner as a majority of said Committee (or Council) may determine, subject to the control of the Convention.

Section 3. Said Convention may sue and be sued, plead and be impleaded, prosecute and defend, in all courts and places, in its corporate name, by Attorney or otherwise. All deeds, conveyances, or leases of the property held by said Convention, for the purpose of leasing or conveying such property, shall be made under the hands of the President and Recording Secretary, and under such seal as said Executive Committee (or General Council) may adopt; but all such deeds must be approved by a majority of said Committee (or Council).
Section 4(a). The purposes for which this Convention exists are: religious, charitable and educational as follows:

1. The specific and primary religious purpose is to aid the teachings of Christianity as taught by Emanuel Swedenborg.

2. The specific and primary charitable purpose is to aid the poor and unfortunate by collection and disbursement of funds, food, clothing and shelter.

3. The specific and primary educational purposes are to distribute funds for scholarships, to help organizations present education programs of general public interest and to disseminate educational material in the public interest.

4. The general purposes and powers are to have and exercise all of the rights and powers conferred on Convention under special charters under the laws of Illinois. However, this Convention shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the primary purposes of this Convention.

5. No substantial part of the activities of this Convention shall consist of the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, nor shall this Convention participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements), any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office or perform any act that will disqualify the Convention for tax exempt status conferred by any local, state or federal government which has jurisdiction over the Convention.

6. This Convention is incorporated and exists not for pecuniary profit and no part of any net earnings shall inure to the benefit of any person, private shareholder or individual.

Section 4(b). The property of this Convention is irrevocably dedicated to religious, charitable and educational purposes and no part of the net income or assets of the organization shall ever inure to the benefit of any director, officer or member thereof or to the benefit of any private persons. On the dissolution or winding up of the Convention, its assets remaining after payment of, or provision for payment of, all debts and liabilities of this Convention, shall be distributed to a nonprofit fund, foundation, or corporation which is organized and operated ex-
clusively for religious or charitable or educational purposes and which has estab-
lished its tax exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code
and/or any future provisions amending, succeeding, supplementing or replacing
this section.

If this Convention holds any assets in trust, or the Convention is formed for chari-
table purposes, such assets shall be disposed in such a manner as may be directed
by decree of a court with jurisdiction over such trust, its assets or the Convention,
on petition therefrom by the Attorney General or by any person concerned in the
liquidation, in a proceeding to which such Attorney General is a party.

**Section 4(c).** All the property of the Convention held or located in the State
of California is irrevocably dedicated to religious or charitable or educational
purposes meeting the requirements for exemption provided by Section 214 of the
Revenue and Taxation Code, and/or any future provisions that amend, supple-
ment, succeed or replace such section, and upon dissolution or winding up of the
Convention such property shall be distributed to a nonprofit fund, foundation, or
corporation with religious or charitable or educational purposes meeting the re-
quirements for exemption provided by Section 214 of the Revenue and Taxation
Code. In all other respects, property in the State of California shall be subject to
Section 4(b) above.

**Section 5.** Nothing in this Act contained, shall be so constructed as to in-
terfere with the right of said Convention to alter, amend or abolish its Constitu-
tion, or to form a new one whenever it shall see fit to do so.

*Approved January 29, 1861*

The original Act of Incorporation is on file in the Office of the Secretary of the
State, Springfield, Illinois; and it has also been recorded on page 1 of Record 48
in that Office.

By vote of a number of members of the New Church from various parts of the
United States, assembled in Philadelphia on January 1st, 1817, a call was issued
for a convention of the receivers of the doctrines of the New Jerusalem Church to
be held in Philadelphia on May 15th of that year, “for the purpose of consulting
upon the general concerns of the Church.”

The first meeting of the General Convention occurred as planned on May 15-17,
1817.
The General Convention was incorporated, under the laws of Illinois, on January 29, 1861. Its legal office is at the rooms of the Chicago Society of the New Jerusalem, 77 W. Washington Street, Room 1700, Chicago, IL 60602-2901.
CONSTITUTION
of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem
in the United States of America, Inc.

Article I.
Name, Purpose and Membership

Section 1. This body shall be called the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America, Inc., commonly known as the Swedenborgian Church.

Section 2. The Swedenborgian Church exists to help people be open to the Lord’s presence and leading, especially by fostering personal and ordained ministries which facilitate the spiritual well-being of people, and which have in common a working for the Lord in bringing in the New Age, the descent of the Holy City, New Jerusalem.

The light in which we seek to walk shines from the Lord Jesus Christ in His second coming, available to us through the divine presence in our hearts and minds, and through revelation in the Holy Scripture and in the life and teaching of the Lord’s servant, Emanuel Swedenborg.

This section shall hereinafter be referred to as the PURPOSE of the Swedenborgian Church.

Section 3. Constituent bodies of the Swedenborgian Church shall be those collective bodies which subscribe to this Purpose and which unite with the Swedenborgian Church in performing the distinctive uses of a church. All bodies entitled to voting delegates at the time of adoption of this article shall be considered to be constituent bodies. Additional bodies may be admitted to membership on recommendation of General Council and vote of the Swedenborgian Church.

The members of the Swedenborgian Church shall be those persons who are adult active members of a constituent body or who have been accepted as members at large through Rite of Confirmation and by vote of the Swedenborgian Church.

For membership in the Swedenborgian Church, an adult active member is
one who is at least eighteen years of age and who has been accepted by a constituent body through confirmation or by transfer, and who within the calendar year immediately preceding a session of the Swedenborgian Church has shown an active interest in his or her membership by joining in programs of worship and work or by contributing physically or financially.

Article II.
Officers, Councils and Administrative Functions

Section 1. The officers of the Swedenborgian Church shall be a President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, and Treasurer, all elected by ballot. The President and Treasurer shall each be elected for three-year terms, and the Vice President and Recording Secretary shall each be elected for one-year terms. The President and Treasurer shall assume the duties of their offices at the close of the next annual meeting after their election and the other officers shall assume the duties of their offices at the close of the annual meetings at which they are elected.

The election for President and Treasurer shall be held at the annual meetings of the Swedenborgian Church in the year prior to the beginning of each such term. In the absence of such session the term of office of the President shall be extended for one year following the succeeding session in order that the succeeding President may be elected one year prior to taking office. In the event of the death, resignation or incapacity of the incumbent President and/or Treasurer, the successor shall be installed for a full term immediately after the successor’s election. A President who served for two successive terms shall not be eligible for election to the next succeeding term. The other officers shall be eligible for re-election without limitation.

The newly elected Treasurer shall be the Treasurer-elect and participate as a non-voting member of Standing Committees and other committees with the current Treasurer, including but not limited to, the Investment Committee and other funding committees. In the absence of such annual meeting of the Swedenborgian Church, the term of office of the Treasurer shall be extended for one year, in order for a new Treasurer to be elected one year prior to the expiration of the outgoing Treasurer’s term.

Section 2. There shall be a General Council consisting of the President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer ex-officiis, together with three ministers and six laypersons to be elected by ballot by the Swedenborgian Church,
one minister and two laypersons to be elected annually for terms of three years. Members who have served for two consecutive three year terms shall not be eligible for immediate re-election.

Section 3. There shall be a Council of Ministers consisting of all the ministers of the Swedenborgian Church, of whom twelve shall constitute a quorum. This Council shall select a Chair who shall be an ex-officio member, with vote, of General Council.

Section 4. There shall be Standing Committees as specified in the Bylaws. Standing Committees shall consist of three members, one to be elected annually for a three-year term, or of six members, two to be elected annually for three-year terms, together with such ex-officio members as the Bylaws shall require. Members who have served two consecutive three-year terms shall not be eligible for immediate re-election. Each Standing Committee shall have specific focus as defined in the Bylaws and unless otherwise provided in the Bylaws shall elect a chair.

Section 5.

Section 6. All elected persons shall hold office for the respective terms for which they are elected, or until their respective successors shall have been elected or qualified, provided, however, that the terms of all such elected persons shall be automatically extended for one year for each year in which because of national emergency or other compelling reason no annual meetings of the Swedenborgian Church are held.

Section 7. The term ‘year’ or ‘years’ as used in the Article shall mean, unless otherwise specified, the periods between elections at succeeding annual sessions of the Swedenborgian Church.

Article III. Duties and Powers

Section 1. The President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer shall perform the duties implied by the names of their several offices, the duties listed in the Bylaws and such other duties as the Swedenborgian Church may require of them.
Section 2. The General Council shall serve as the Executive Committee of the Swedenborgian Church, shall have superintendence of the business of the Swedenborgian Church, and shall exercise the powers of the Swedenborgian Church in the interim of its sessions. It shall be responsible for all corporate, legal and financial functions of the Swedenborgian Church and shall act as a Court of Appeals as defined in the Bylaws. The President, the Vice President and the Recording Secretary of the Swedenborgian Church shall be ex-officio Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary, respectively, of the General Council. The General Council may fill any vacancy in the General Council or in any office or position regularly elected by the delegates; provided, however, that any such appointment to fill a vacancy shall last only until the next session of the Swedenborgian Church.

The General Council shall annually review all committee and Standing Committee reports and shall recommend to the Church any necessary revisions or clarifications of fundamental principle or priority. It shall receive budget recommendations, revise them as its wisdom shall indicate, and adopt a budget.

Section 3. The Council of Ministers shall have as its central focus the facilitating of ordained ministries serving the Swedenborgian Church’s PURPOSE. It shall have primary responsibility in matters pertaining to doctrine and worship of the church and shall have charge of the ministry. This council shall oversee the pastoral, teaching, liturgical and administrative dimensions of the ordained ministry; it shall practice and support disciplined and creative theological research and reflection, and it shall oversee the provision of ordained ministry of the Swedenborgian Church and its collective bodies. It also bears responsibility for the pastoral support of all ministries and for providing them with clear ethical standards. It shall exercise such disciplinary functions over the ordained clergy as it may in its collective wisdom adopt, subject to the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 4.

Section 5. The primary duties of each Standing Committee shall be to facilitate, initiate and evaluate activities relevant to its focus. Its primary means shall be the provision of supportive supervision for the planning, realization and evaluation of such activities, such supervision to function under criteria approved by the Swedenborgian Church. It shall be responsible for annual review of its efforts with explicit reference to the Swedenborgian Church’s Purpose, Objectives
Persons or groups desiring denomination support for new or existing activities shall communicate their desire to the President, who shall refer the request to an appropriate Standing Committee. The Standing Committee shall then appoint a supervisor acceptable to the requesting persons or groups to assist in the planning and the evaluation of the activity.

Within the limits of its budget, each Standing Committee shall meet at least semi-annually, either in person or electronically, as provided in the Bylaws. They shall submit written reports, at least annually, to General Council via the Recording Secretary.

Within the limits of its budget, each Standing Committee shall enlist the services of resource persons as supervisors, make decisions concerning the funding of activities in its care and receive and evaluate reports therefrom, submitting to the General Council at least annually a report of its decisions and the activities in its care.

The Chair of each committee shall bear primary responsibility for coordinating these activities with those of other Committees.

Article IV.
Representation and Voting

Section 1. All members of the Swedenborgian Church shall have the right to be present at its meetings and to take part in its deliberations. They may be eligible for election or appointment to any office or position in the Swedenborgian Church as the Constitution and Bylaws shall provide. But the right to vote shall be limited to the members of the Council of Ministers, to the lay officers of the Swedenborgian Church, to members of the General Council during their terms of office and to the delegates of constituent bodies entitled to representation at the annual meetings. No member shall be entitled to more than one vote.

Section 2. Every constituent body of the Swedenborgian Church shall be entitled to two delegates and an additional delegate for every ten members, such delegates to be members of the body which they represent.
Membership is to be determined as of the 31st day of December of the calendar year immediately preceding the date of the Swedenborgian Church annual meetings. For this purpose, only adult active members as defined in Article I, Section 3 shall be counted. It shall be the joint responsibility of the members and the bodies involved to ensure that no member is counted by more than one body for delegate strength.

Section 3. In determining delegate strength and in selecting delegates, only those bodies shall be included which are in good standing with the Swedenborgian Church.

Good standing of constituent bodies shall be forfeited if such body, without express consent of the Council of Ministers, employs a minister on an annual basis who is not on the Roll of Ministers as defined in Article XII, Section 1 of the Bylaws.

Article V. The Ministry

Section 1. The Swedenborgian Church shall at its discretion, on recommendation of the Council of Ministers, and subject to the provisions in Article XII of the Bylaws, authorize the ordination and induction of qualified individuals to serve as its ministers. Such ordination and induction shall confer the privileges and responsibilities of leading in worship, administering the rites and sacraments, teaching, and pastoral care, together with those of full membership in the Council of Ministers.

Section 2. The Swedenborgian Church’s interest in education for its ministers shall be exercised through the General Council in its role as the representative class of members of the Corporation of the New Church Theological School. It is the denomination’s interest that such education focus on the spiritual growth of its participants by development in understanding of our theology, sensitivity in human relations, appreciation of other traditions and the technical skills required for effective ministry.
Article VI.
Meetings of the Swedenborgian Church

Section 1. Sessions of the Swedenborgian Church shall be held at least triennially, at such times and places as it may determine. Meetings of the Swedenborgian Church must be called with 90 days’ notice published in The Messenger or through a mailing to the members.

Section 2. A quorum to hold a convention shall consist of twenty percent of the number of persons qualified to vote as defined in Article IV, Representation and Voting.

Section 3. A quorum to conduct business at the convention shall be a majority of the registered voters at the convention, as defined in Article IV, Section 1, Representation and Voting.

Article VII.
Amendments

This Constitution may be amended at any session of the Swedenborgian Church by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting, provided that the proposed amendment shall first have been referred to the General Council, and public notice of the substance thereof shall have been given at least three months before the time of such meeting. Such notice may be dispensed with for any special occasion by a three-fourths vote of those present and voting.

Revised June 28, 1996.
Bylaws of the Swedenborgian Church

Article I. Religious Observances of the Annual Meeting

Section 1. The annual business meeting of the Swedenborgian Church shall include each day a reading from the Word and prayer.

Section 2. The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper shall be administered at an appropriate time during the annual meetings of the Swedenborgian Church.

Article II. Enrollment of the Swedenborgian Church

Section 1. A Committee on Credentials, to consist of three persons, shall be appointed prior to the opening of each session of the Swedenborgian Church, to examine the credentials of the delegates, and to make up the Roll of the Swedenborgian Church; said Committee to sit during the whole of that session and to add to and correct the Roll, as may be proper.

Section 2. Friends of the Swedenborgian Church, who are in attendance at any session of the Swedenborgian Church, are invited to inscribe their names and residences in a register to be kept for that purpose and to take seats in the meetings. Such registry shall entitle them, without vote, to participate in its deliberations by addressing the Chair for permission to speak from the floor.

Article IV, Section 1 of the Constitution and Article II, Section 2 of the Bylaws shall be read by the Recording Secretary immediately after the opening of the session of the Swedenborgian Church.

Article III. Order of Business

Reports and Communications shall be presented in the following order:

1. Reports of the Officers of the Swedenborgian Church
4. Reports of the Committees
5. Reports of the Associations
6. Reports of Churches not affiliated with Associations
7. Reports of Trustees
8. Reports of Auxiliary Bodies
9. Special Reports
10. Unfinished Business
11. New Business

When any report called for is not ready, its presentation shall be postponed until all other reports have been presented in their order. This rule shall not apply to the reports of the Council of Ministers or of the General Council, which may be presented as soon as prepared.

No debate shall be allowed on any of the above reports until all of them have been presented; but a motion to refer, or to adopt a recommendation without debate, shall be in order.

The above Order of Business may be suspended at any time by a two-thirds vote.

Article IV.
Annual Meeting Planning and Operation

Section 1. Planning for Sessions of the Swedenborgian Church.

The President shall appoint a committee representing the Swedenborgian Church body for each year’s session for the purpose of planning the overall program, including selection of theme, specific programs, allocation of times for these programs and development of the published program.

Section 2. Local Arrangements.

The President may appoint a committee representing the local church or association where the sessions are to be convened for the purpose of planning and coordinating with the Central Office and the host institution such matters as transportation, housing, meals, meeting room requirements, audio-visual equipment, special event requirements, and any other arrangements appropriate for the planned program.

Section 3. The Swedenborgian Church Business.

The Executive Committee of the General Council shall serve as the Committee on Business for each year’s session. It shall be the duty of this committee to assign the order under which different subjects shall be presented and the time allotted to each subject, and to prepare and print the program for that session; but such program may be changed at any time by majority vote of the delegates. Any item of new business wished to be placed on the floor for the session must be submitted in writing to the Recording Secretary of the Swedenborgian Church. To ensure an agenda position in the Order of Business, the items must be submitted in advance.
Article V.
Parliamentary Procedures

Section 1. The provisions of Robert’s Rules of Order, so far as they are consistent with the Bylaws, shall govern the proceedings of the sessions. The President shall at the beginning of each session appoint an advisor on parliamentary matters.

Section 2. The yeas and nays shall be taken whenever they are called for by one-fifth of the persons voting.

Section 3. No member shall speak more than five minutes at one time, nor more than twice upon any subject, without affirmative vote of the delegates present.

Article VI.
Duties of the President

Section 1. The President shall perform the duties required by the Act of Incorporation, the Constitution and these Bylaws. The President shall preside over sessions of the Swedenborgian Church, and shall address the Swedenborgian Church setting forth the state of the Church. In the absence of the President, the Vice-President shall fulfill these duties.

Section 2. All Committees shall be appointed by the President of the Swedenborgian Church, unless otherwise ordered by the Swedenborgian Church, or provided in the Constitution or Bylaws; and vacancies in Committees so appointed shall be filled by the President. Vacancies in Standing Committees shall be filled by the President of the Swedenborgian Church should they occur between annual meetings of the Church, with such appointed members remaining in their positions until elections are held as provided in the Bylaws.

Section 3. The President shall have the privilege of participating, ex-officio without vote, in the meetings of all Standing Committees and committees.

Article VII.
Duties of the Recording Secretary

Section 1. The Recording Secretary shall perform the duties required by the Act of Incorporation, including the execution of deeds, conveyances or leases, provided by the Act of Incorporation; and any duties that may be prescribed by the Constitution, the Bylaws, the Swedenborgian Church or by the General Council.

Section 2. The Recording Secretary shall be responsible for securing reports from the bodies below named, to be received at least four weeks prior to each annual session of the Swedenborgian Church, or if any such session is not
held in any one year, not later than June 30th of such year. The Recording Secretary shall see that copies of such reports, so prepared, are mailed to each minister and association of the Swedenborgian Church, and to such officers or interested persons as may be deemed desirable at least ten days prior to each session, and distribute them to members at the annual session. Reports received after the deadline may be presented to the Swedenborgian Church orally or in print, in full or in summary.

Such reports are to be requested from: Officers, General Council, Council of Ministers, Support Units, Committees, Associations, Trustees, Auxiliary Bodies and Churches not affiliated with Associations.

**Section 3.** The Recording Secretary shall be responsible for providing the Committee on Credentials with a list of the number of delegates to which each constituent body is entitled, as defined in Article IV, Section 2 of the Constitution. The necessary information shall be solicited from the constituent bodies in the January preceding the session. Any constituent body failing to comply with this requirement by April 1 shall forfeit the right of its additional delegates (as defined in Article IV, Section 2 of the Constitution) to vote at that session. Should such body submit the necessary information after the deadline, this forfeiture may be waived by a three-fifths vote of the Swedenborgian Church. A numerical table of the maximum delegation shall be published in *The Messenger* not less than one month before each annual session.

**Section 4.** The Recording Secretary, with such persons as may be appointed by the General Council, shall constitute a Committee on the *Journal*, to procure each year the publication of the *Journal of the Swedenborgian Church*. Said *Journal* shall include the Act of Incorporation, the Constitution and Bylaws, the minutes of the session of the Swedenborgian Church held during the current year; the names of the officers, General Council members, administrative bodies and members of committees of the Swedenborgian Church, current membership statistics, and any other matter that is required by the Constitution or Bylaws to be included; together with any reports presented to the Swedenborgian Church as provided by these Bylaws in such forms as such committee shall deem proper, together with any additional information which the Committee shall deem appropriate. Such Committee shall cause to be printed such number of copies of the *Journal* as it may deem necessary, and arrange for the distribution thereof.

**Section 5.** The Committee on the *Journal* shall publish in a supplemental or special *Journal* every five years such matters of information of a permanent nature, not required to be published in each *Journal*, as it may deem suitable; and
shall distribute such supplemental or special *Journals* in the same manner as the *Journals*.

**Article VIII.**

**The General Council**

**Section 1.** The General Council shall meet without notice within forty-eight hours after the final adjournment of the Business Session of the Swedenborgian Church. The Council shall also hold two other regular meetings, an interim meeting and a meeting just before the convening of a session of the Swedenborgian Church. Twenty days’ notice of these meetings and of any special meetings called by the Chair or by any five members of the Council, shall be given by letter to all members of the Council at their last known address, the time to be computed from the mailing of the letter. The notices of special meetings shall contain brief statements of the purpose of the meetings. At all meetings of the Council seven shall constitute a quorum.

**Section 2.** There shall be an Executive Committee of the General Council consisting of the President, Vice President and the Secretary of the General Council, and the Treasurer of the Swedenborgian Church, which shall deal with any matters referred to it by the General Council. In routine matters not involving policy decisions, the Executive Committee may act for the General Council between General Council sessions, all such actions to be reported to the next meeting of the General Council.

**Section 3.** Any action required or permitted to be taken at a regular meeting of the Council may be taken without a meeting if two-thirds of the members of the Council consent to the action in writing and the written consents are filed with the records of the General Council’s meetings; provided further that if any member entitled to vote on such action shall so request, the Secretary shall notify all members of the General Council in writing of any objections to the action and allow two weeks from the date of such notice before the count of the vote is finally made.

**Section 4.** The General Council may, in its discretion, appoint such officers or employees not otherwise provided for, as it may deem necessary or desirable; and it shall define the duties of such officers and employees, and such officers and employees shall hold office at the pleasure of the General Council.

**Section 5.** The General Council shall serve ex-officio as the representative class of members of the Corporation of the New Church Theological School, and in accord with the provisions of the Bylaws of said Corporation shall represent the denomination’s interest.
Section 6. Any member of General Council, of any committee appointed by General Council, or of any Support Unit who fails to attend at least one duly called meeting during a calendar year may be deemed by General Council to have submitted his or her resignation, and shall be so informed by the Secretary. If no good and sufficient reason for said absence is offered, General Council may appoint a qualified individual to serve until the next meeting of Convention.

Article IX.

Article X.

Standing Committees
(Established by Article II, Section 4 of the Constitution)

Section 1. The Standing Committee For Financial Accountability.

There shall be a Standing Committee for Financial Accountability whose central focus shall be on the wise use and development of such resources as are directly under the Swedenborgian Church’s control, and the provision of advice and counsel in such matters to the Swedenborgian Church’s collective bodies. It shall oversee the management of the Swedenborgian Church’s properties and investments, shall seek new sources of material support and shall provide consultants for the Swedenborgian Church’s collective bodies toward the best coordinated and wisest use and development of their financial and physical resources. This Standing Committee shall work in close cooperation with the Common Fund Investment Committee. It shall consist of six (6) members, two of whom are to be Swedenborgian ministers or pastors, four of whom are to be lay members of the Swedenborgian Church, plus the Treasurer of the Swedenborgian Church, ex-officio with vote, who shall serve as its Chair.

Based on its assessment of the overall needs of the denomination, the Standing Committee for Financial Accountability shall make recommendations to General Council as to how best to manage its funds and properties. It shall administer all funds, including but not restricted to, the Augmentation Fund, the Mission Fund, and the Iungerich Fund. It shall oversee the distribution of all restricted and unrestricted funds of the denomination and their application process, if any. It shall receive all preliminary budget requests, including but not restricted to, those from General Council, the Council of Ministers and all Standing Committees and committees, and shall prepare therefrom a preliminary budget for submission to the General Council.
Section 2. The Standing Committee For Education and Resources for Spiritual Community.

There shall be a Standing Committee of Education and Resources for Spiritual Community, whose central focus shall be the development and dissemination of resources for worship, small groups, church growth, stewardship, and board development and outreach. It shall be concerned with resources, personnel and programming, and will strive to provide materials for the development of ministries and seek to anticipate and develop programs and resources for local communities’ needs for worship, programming and outreach. It shall consist of three (3) members, including at least one minister with five or more years of pastoral experience, plus a representative appointed by the Center for Swedenborgian Studies Board of Trustees.

Section 3. The Standing Committee For Communications and Information.

There shall be a Standing Committee for Communication and Information consisting of three to six members, the number to be determined annually by the President of the Swedenborgian Church based upon the needs of the church at that time. The Standing Committee’s central focus shall be on coordinating, initiating and promoting communication both within and across the boundaries of the denomination in all variety of media. It will seek to foster coordination among the Swedenborgian Church’s publishing and information and technology activities. This Standing Committee will be alert to the climate of opinion both within and beyond the boundaries of the Swedenborgian Church and will also be alert to developments in communication technology. The official organ of the denomination, The Messenger, and the denomination’s WEB presence shall be under the supervision of this Standing Committee.

Section 4. The Standing Committee For Nominations (moved from Article XVII to this article).

There shall be a Standing Committee for Nominations of five members to serve for five years each; one member to be elected each year, but not from any Association from which his or her predecessor or any other member of the Committee is a member. The unexpired term of any member may be filled from the same Association. A member moving to another Association shall continue to serve and shall be regarded as coming from his or her former Association; but no retiring member shall be eligible for immediate reelection. Whenever possible,
the Standing Committee for Nominations shall propose slates representative of the Swedenborgian Church’s overall constituency.

It shall be the duty of this Standing Committee to present, at each session of the Swedenborgian Church, nominees for the Swedenborgian Church officers (where applicable), vacancies in the elective members of the General Council and all other Boards and Committees, unless otherwise appointed. Each year the member whose term is next to expire shall act as Chair of the Committee.

Section 5. It is recommended that no individual serve on more than two administrative bodies or more than two committees of the Swedenborgian Church, the Standing Committee for Nominations and the Chair being similarly instructed. This does not apply to persons serving ex-officio as provided by the Constitution and Bylaws.

Article XI.
Electronic Meeting Guidelines

Section 1. General Council, Cabinet, and other boards, committees, and support units of the Swedenborgian Church may use telephone conferencing and electronic communication to conduct business when not in regular session, or when face-to-face meeting is impractical. Such communication must follow procedures adopted by the denomination to ensure an orderly deliberative process is honored.

Section 2. It is critical to the deliberative process that all members of a body participate in discussion and votes at the same time (synchronous meetings). Thus, business requiring voting must be done by phone conferencing or “real-time” electronic conferencing (e.g., instant messaging or chat).

Section 3. All deliberations conducted by telephone or electronic means shall be duly recorded and filed with other records of the body. These minutes shall be reviewed and approved at the next meeting of the body.

Section 4. Procedures for using phone conferencing and electronic communications will be the responsibility of a standing committee, appointed by the President. Such committee will present to the General Council proposed procedures for the General Council’s approval. This committee shall also be responsible for proposing to General Council from time to time revisions that may be desirable for the efficient and orderly operation of the church’s business.

Section 5. The procedures approved by General Council under this Article shall be communicated by the Central Office to all members of all boards, and committees of the Swedenborgian Church at least once a year, following the close
of annual convention sessions. They shall also be published in the annual Journal of the Swedenborgian Church.

Section 6. Nothing in this Article is meant to prohibit the use of e-mails, faxes, or other electronic media for communication and information sharing purposes.

Article XII.
The Council of Ministers

Section 1. Application for ordination or other matters relating to the office of the ministry shall first be received and considered by the Council of Ministers. Its report on such matters as require immediate action shall be privileged at any session of the Swedenborgian Church.

Section 2. The Council of Ministers shall revise the denomination’s Roll of Ministers annually, and shall report such revision to the Swedenborgian Church for its actions.

Section 3. Every minister ordained or inducted by authority of the Swedenborgian Church, and not serving any church, ministry, or other collective body acting under the rules of the Swedenborgian Church, shall report his or her official acts to the Council of Ministers. If the minister shall have performed no official acts, he or she shall report that fact, and shall signify whether he or she desires to be retained on the denomination’s Roll of Ministers.

Article XIII.
The Ordained Ministry

Preamble: Jesus said unto his disciples, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.” (John 15:16)

The ordained ministry exists to facilitate the spiritual well-being of people, helping them to be open to the Lord’s leading and enabling them to live useful lives. Resources for the ordained ministry in serving the church include the Holy Word, the doctrines of the church, the rites and sacraments, experiences of worship, and growth-oriented skills insofar as they promote the process of regeneration.

Section 1. A member of the Swedenborgian Church shall be ordained into or inducted into its ministry by recommendation of the Council of Ministers and by affirmative vote of the Swedenborgian Church. The Council of Ministers shall have first received a written vision of ministry from the applicant, and determined that one of the following requirements has been met;
1. He or she shall have earned a Master of Divinity Degree from the Pacific School of Religion, the Certificate in Swedenborgian Theology from Pacific School of Religion, and passing evaluations on all denominational requirements.

2. He or she shall have earned a Master of Divinity Degree or equivalent degree from an accredited institution, the Certificate in Swedenborgian Theology from Pacific School of Religion, and passing evaluations on all denominational requirements.

3. After preparation recognized by the Council of Ministers as adequate, and he or she shall have served as an Authorized Candidate for the Ministry for one year.

4. After preparation recognized by the Council of Ministers as adequate, a minister ordained in another communion who accepts the doctrines of the Swedenborgian Church and expresses allegiance to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Swedenborgian Church may be inducted into our ministry.

Those persons applying for ordination or induction shall also have a request for employment from a church or other employing body of the Swedenborgian Church, or shall have a proposal for ministry approved by the Council of Ministers. Upon recommendation by the Council of Ministers, and affirmative vote of the Swedenborgian Church, upon ordination or induction his or her name shall be added to the Roll of Ordained Ministers.

Section 2. The Ordaining Minister.

(a) A Minister who is elected President of the Swedenborgian Church shall be invested with the office of Ordaining Minister during his or her term as President. The Ordaining Minister shall be empowered to ordain duly qualified candidates for the ministry (cf. Section 1), to authorize for one year Candidates for the Ministry (cf. Section 3), to confer upon suitable persons, at the request of the church to be served and in accordance with the provisions of Article XIII (below), the title Lay Leader, and to consecrate as Worship Leaders persons selected by their congregation or group to provide leadership for public worship (cf. Article XIII, Section 2).

b) In the event that a lay person is elected as President of the Swedenborgian Church, then the Chair of the Council of Ministers shall be invested with the office of Ordaining Minister, during his or her term as chair.

c) When the President is the Swedenborgian Church’s Ordaining Minister and is adjudged by the General Council to be incapacitated, the Chair of the Council of Ministers shall be invested with the office of Ordaining Minister until such time as the President is recovered. In the event of resignation of the Presi-
dent, the investiture of the Chair of the Council of Ministers shall be for the dura-
tion of his or her term of office, until such times as the Swedenborgian Church
shall again have a minister as its President.

(d) In the event that subsequent to the invoking of the provisions of
section 2(c), or when the President of the Swedenborgian Church is a lay person,
the Chair of the Council of Ministers should resign, or become incapacitated or
die, the Secretary of the Council of Ministers shall be invested with the office of
Ordaining Minister, such investiture to terminate upon the recovery of the chair,
or in the case of the chair’s death or resignation, upon the election of a new chair
of the Council of Ministers, or on the election of a minister as President of the
Swedenborgian Church.

(e) In the event that it is not possible for the Ordaining Minister to
travel to a suitable place for the ordination of candidates for the ministry, he or
she may appoint an ordained minister to act as the Ordaining Minister pro tem for
a specific ordination.

Section 3. The Authorized Candidate for the Ministry.

(a) A member of the Swedenborgian Church, after preparation recog-
nized by the Council of Ministers as adequate, may upon recommendation of the
Council of Ministers, and after affirmative vote of the Swedenborgian Church,
be authorized by the Ordaining Minister as an authorized candidate for the min-
istry and for one (1) year. He or she may lead in worship, teach the doctrine of
the Church and officiate at resurrection services. Such persons shall be known
as Authorized Candidates for the Ministry. Where authorization does not lead to
ordination at the end of one year, the candidacy may be reviewed by the Council
of Ministers.

(b) The Ordaining Minister of the Swedenborgian Church may empow-
er an Authorized Candidate for the Ministry or a Swedenborg School of Religion
student intern to perform a marriage where the laws of the state or province permit
and in specific instances may empower him or her to administer the Sacrament of
Baptism and/or the Holy Supper.

Section 4. Special Circumstances.

The Swedenborgian Church by a three-quarters vote may, in individual cases,
dispense with limiting requirements, outlined in Article XIII, upon the recommend-
dation of the Council of Ministers showing the need or desirability thereof, such
recommendation to be made only on the agreement of at least three-fourths of the
members of the Council of Ministers present and voting at the Council Session.
Section 5. The Swedenborgian Church’s Roll of Ordained Ministers is the record of all those who have been ordained or inducted into the ministry of the Swedenborgian Church.

Article XIV.

The Ministry of Lay Persons

Preamble: Every Christian is called to minister. Jesus said that inasmuch as we minister to one another, we minister unto Him. “I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.” (Matthew 25:35-36)

The Apostle Paul declared that “there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. To teach is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.” (I Corinthians 12:4-7)

The church encourages all members to exercise their unique talents and gifts in assimilating the spiritual and well-being of people. Some are called to ordained ministry within the framework of the Swedenborgian Church. Others are called to specific, part-time service in the church and are recognized and consecrated as Lay Leaders and Worship Leaders. Other men and women are called to minister to the world and around them, in their homes, and in their chosen vocations. In addition, some wish to offer their gifts through programs and services in the church. The Swedenborgian Church encourages these ministries and recognizes them as manifestations of the Spirit of God.

Section 1. Lay Leader.

(a) The Swedenborgian Church commends the efforts of lay people throughout our church who have served in many ways and ministered to the needs of local churches. Out of this experience, the Swedenborgian Church sees the potential for even greater service to the church by trained qualified lay persons to augment the work of its ordained ministry.

(b) In order to meet ongoing needs of local churches, suitable persons may be consecrated as Lay Leaders to serve particular congregations or to serve within clearly defined geographical areas. For such consecration, the following requirements must be met.

(1) The candidate must apply to the Swedenborgian House of Studies for enrollment in its Lay Leadership Education program. This application must be supported by the endorsement of the individual’s congregation or appropriate supervisory body, granted on the basis
of leadership ability, knowledge of the Church’s teachings, character, and devotion to the Church. Neither acceptance into the program nor completion of the program guarantees approval by the Council of Ministers.

(2) On satisfactory completion of the first year of this program, duly certified by the School, the individual must request of the Ordaining Minister and be granted status as a Probationary Lay Leader, this request to be supported by the recommendation of the Council of Ministers. With this status, the candidate is authorized to lead in worship, teach the doctrines of the Church, and officiate at resurrection services. The expected duration of this status shall be two years. The Committee on Admission Into the Ministry or other committee recommended by the Council of Ministers will be responsible for monitoring the progress of Probationary Lay Leaders. The Ordaining Minister may rescind the status of Probationary Lay Leader if the candidate fails to keep pace with the educational requirements, if the congregation or appropriate supervisory body requests such rescission, or for other due and weighty cause. If for good and sufficient reasons the person is unable to complete the prescribed training within the normal period, the Ordaining Minister may extend the authorization for one year. Extensions of more than one year will require review by the Council of Ministers.

(3) Consecration as a Lay Leader, administered by the Ordaining Minister, shall take place when the following conditions have been met.

a) The Swedenborgian House of Studies shall certify to the Council of Ministers that the educational program has been satisfactorily completed.

b) The congregation of the candidate shall reaffirm to the Council of Ministers its desire for such consecration.

c) The Council of Ministers shall recommend the consecration to the Swedenborgian Church.

d) Said Church shall authorize the consecration. The consecration itself shall take place in a public service held in the congregation or area to be served.

(c) Henceforth, the title “Lay Leader” shall be reserved for individuals so consecrated.

(d) Following consecration, the Lay Leader may administer all the rites and sacraments to the congregation or in the area
served. This authorization shall include the right to perform marriages where the laws of the state or province permit. Lay leaders are expected to comply with the guidelines for ministerial conduct.

(e) Lay leaders shall be accountable to the Ordaining Minister of the Swedenborgian Church, who shall be responsible for providing appropriate supervision. If the Lay Leader serves a congregation which employs an ordained minister, said minister shall act as the immediate supervisor and the Lay Leader shall not offer pastoral or liturgical services without the knowledge and consent of this minister. The local congregation or other supervisory body shall have the right to terminate the services of the lay leader. A lay leader may not serve in another congregation or geographical area without a request from the new congregation or other supervisory body, and the approval of the Council of Ministers.

(f) Administrative details of the above procedure shall be available in writing from the Swedenborgian House of Studies and the Council of Ministers.

Section 2. Worship Leader.

Nothing in this Article shall in any way be interpreted to place restrictions on those lay persons selected by their congregation or group to provide leadership for public worship. Indeed, an appropriate service of consecration for such persons functioning as worship leaders is recommended. Following consecration, such persons shall be known as Worship Leaders.

Section 3. Special Circumstances.

The Swedenborgian Church by three-quarters vote may, in individual cases, dispense with limiting requirements, outlined in Article XIV upon the recommendation of the Council of Ministers showing the need or desirability thereof, such recommendation to be made only on the agreement of at least three-fourths of the members of the Council of Ministers present and voting at the Council session.

Section 4. The Roll of Lay Leaders.

Any person consecrated as a Lay leader shall have his or her name listed on the Roll of Lay Leaders with indication of the church or area which each serves. The names shall appear on the Roll so long as the persons continue actively to serve the church or area for which they were consecrated.
Section 5. Licensed Pastors

Upon application by a member of the Swedenborgian Church and an eligible and recognized body of the Swedenborgian Church of North America, and with preparation recognized by the Council of Ministers as adequate, the candidate upon recommendation of the Council of Ministers, and after affirmative vote of the Swedenborgian Church, may be given license to pastor a society by the Ordaining Minister for two (2) years. Said license empowers the bearer to provide all sacerdotal duties and to fulfill the pastoral role. Such persons shall be known as “Licensed Pastors.” The license may be renewed by vote of the Council of Ministers upon recommendation of the Committee on Admission to the Ministry. A Licensed Pastor must maintain a mentor relationship with an Ordained Minister of the Swedenborgian Church and follow the Guidelines for Ministerial Conduct. The two year license period will have educational objectives that will prepare the “Licensed Pastor” for Ordination over an extended period of time if the licensee wishes to apply to the Committee on Admission to the Ministry for Authorized Candidacy for Ordination. A licensee may make application to the ordaining minister to become a “Lay-Leader” if they wish to not renew a license.

Article XV.

Theological School

Section 1. The Swedenborgian Church shall by majority vote nominate annually the number of nominees for election by the Board of Trustees of the New Church Theological School, commonly known as the Swedenborgian House of Studies, as provided for, or allowed, by the Bylaws of the Corporation of the New Church Theological School, and shall forward these nominations to the General Council, in its role as the representative class of the Corporation of the New Church Theological School, for consideration for election to the Board of Trustees.

Article XVI.

Board of Mediation

There shall be a Board of Mediation consisting of five members. Two such members shall be lay persons appointed by the President, and two shall be ministers appointed by the Chair of the Council of Ministers, and their terms of office shall be the same as that of the President of the Swedenborgian Church. The fifth member shall be the Vice President of Convention who shall serve as Chair.

Whenever any dispute or irregularity shall arise which affects the fulfillment of the PURPOSE of the Swedenborgian Church or any of its constituent or sub-
sidiary bodies, if the efforts of the ministers or officers immediately concerned have not proved effective, the President or the General Council shall refer the situation to the Board of Mediation; or any member, collective body, or subsidiary body may apply to said Board for relief or determination. The Board shall then use its best endeavors to resolve the matter through the voluntary agreement of those concerned, or failing to effect such resolution shall render a judgment as to the disposition thereof, after hearing the complaints and considering the facts.

Should the Board be unable to effect a resolution or settlement, it shall render its report or judgment to the General Council, together with such recommendations as it may deem appropriate. The General Council as the Executive Committee of the Swedenborgian Church shall then take such actions and issue such directions as it shall deem suitable. Anyone aggrieved by said report or judgment shall have the right of appeal to the General Council, as a final resort to seek reconsideration by the delegates at the annual session of the Swedenborgian Church.

Any member of the Board of Mediation may decline to participate in the consideration of a specified situation due to conflict of interest. In this case, the President of the General Convention or the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, as may be appropriate, shall appoint a substitute, who shall serve as a full member of the Board during its consideration of that issue only.

**Article XVII.**

*(Moved to Article X and Article XVII blank for future use).*

**Article XVIII.**

**Common Fund Investment Committee**

The General Council, at its first meeting following each annual session of the Swedenborgian Church, shall appoint an Investment Committee of not less than three members, one of whom may be the Treasurer of General Convention, which shall be charged with the general oversight and care of the investments and securities of the Swedenborgian Church Common fund, with full power to purchase and sell and to invest and reinvest as in their judgment and discretion may seem advisable. Any members constituting a majority of said Committee may exercise all of the authority and powers hereby granted to or conferred upon said Committee. This Committee is authorized to make investments and reinvestments in such bonds, notes, debentures, corporate stocks and other securities and such real estate, real estate mortgages, interests in real estate mortgages, and other property as the Committee, in the exercise of reasonable intelligence and caution, shall
Article XIX.

Board of Trustees of the Building Fund

Section 1. The Board of Trustees of the Building Fund shall consist of the Treasurer plus three trustees who shall be appointed by the General Council, to serve three years. One of the trustees, including the Treasurer, shall be a member of the General Council.

Section 2. The Board of Trustees shall review Building Fund loan applications. Loans of up to $50,000 may be funded by the Board of Trustees of the Building Fund. Loans over $50,000, but less than $100,000, shall be reviewed by the Trustees, with a recommendation referred to the Executive Committee of General Council for final approval. Loans in excess of $100,000 shall be reviewed by the Trustees, with a recommendation referred to the full General Council for final approval.

Section 3. General Council may periodically adjust the dollar amounts based on governance oversight.

Article XX.

The National Church

The Board of Trustees of the National Church, now holding the title to and having control of the Church property in Washington, D.C., shall continue to consist of fifteen members who shall be citizens of any part of the United States and of whom a majority shall be chosen from some other place than the city of Washington, DC, and shall not be selected from any one association, and vacancies in their number shall be filled by the Board with approval of the President and the Secretaries of the Convention, having in mind the restrictions stated above, and five members shall constitute a quorum.


Article XXI.

Application for Admission as a Constituent Body

The application of an Association, Church or other body of the Church to be received by this body and represented in the Swedenborgian Church, may be made through the General Council, and upon their recommendation shall come before the annual session. When the session has voted to receive such Association or other body, the President shall announce the names of its delegates, and invite
them to come forward. The President shall then inform them of the vote, and all rising, shall give the new delegates the right hand of fellowship, and welcome them to all the privileges enjoyed by other delegates.

Article XXII.
Indemnification

To the extent now or hereafter permitted by the laws of the State of Illinois, the corporation shall indemnify its officers and directors against all costs and expenses reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with or arising out of any claim, action, suit or proceeding of whatever nature in which he or she may be involved as a party or otherwise or with which he or she may be threatened by reason of his or her having served as an officer or director of the corporation or by reason of any action alleged to have been taken or omitted by him or her as such officer or director, whether or not he or she be such officer or director at the time of incurring such cost or expense, including amounts paid or incurred in connection with reasonable settlements (other than amounts paid to the corporation itself) made with the approval of the General Council and with a view to curtailment of costs of litigation.

Article XXIII.
Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended at any session of the Swedenborgian Church by a three-fifths vote of those present and voting, provided that the proposed amendment shall have been first referred to the General Council, and public notice of the substance thereof shall have been given at least three months before the time of said meeting. Such notice may be dispensed with for any special occasion by a three-fourths vote of those present and voting.

Dated May 3, 1985
Typed July 2, 1985
Revised July 10, 1985
Delegate Version
Revised October 31, 1985
Revised December 7, 1985
Revised General Council, February 1, 1986
Revised May 27, 1986
Revised June 26, 1992
Revised July 8, 1994
Revised July 7, 1995
Revised June 28, 1996
Revised June 26, 1998
Revised July 9, 2005
Revised July 1, 2006
Revised June 28, 2013
Revised June 28, 2013
Adopted as amended July 1, 2017
Adopted as amended July 3, 2018
Adopted as amended July 3, 2019
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Standing Resolutions

STANDING RESOLUTIONS

1. (Adopted by the General Convention July 3, 1986)

THE PURPOSE OF CONVENTION

The General Convention exists to help people be open to the Lord’s presence and leading especially by fostering personal and ordained ministries which facilitate the spiritual well-being of people, and which have in common a working for the Lord in bringing in the New Age – the descent of the Holy City, New Jerusalem.

The light in which we seek to walk shines from the Lord Jesus Christ in His second coming, available to us through the divine presence in our hearts and minds, and through revelation in the Holy Scriptures and in the work of the Lord’s servant Emanuel Swedenborg.

With the purpose of creation being a heaven from the human race, we see the central purpose of the church as the promotion of the process of regeneration. External forms such as buildings, liturgies and organizational structures are valid only insofar as they are useful to this end. It is especially vital for an “organized religion” that its life of piety be constantly grounded in a life of charity. In the case of our Convention, constant accountability to the standards of Scripture and doctrine is the primary warrant for our existence as an organization. In particular, we are offered a vision of a New Age, a New Church radically different from the old, by which we can evaluate our present practices and directions.

OBJECTIVES

1. Facilitate the formation and growth of groups of people who support each other in understanding, loving and living “the life that leads to heaven.” We will work to bring together such individuals and groups in a network which amplifies the creative spiritual energy that emerges when we work together.

2. Bring doctrine and life together constructively. We will support this being done in a way that allows them to challenge and enrich each other and that encourages the diverse activities of Convention to express Convention’s Purpose consistently.

3. Provide for the discovery, development and evaluation of excellence.

4. Commit ourselves to growth in the number of active members.

5. Continue our commitment to the cause of religious unity.
6. Clarify and intensify our participation in and contribution to the Lord’s New Age.

7. In accordance with our Doctrine of Use and in cooperation with Convention’s constituent bodies, improve the management and use of the physical/financial resources available for the fulfillment of our Purpose.

8. Design and implement effective means of communication: means which will ensure an open and timely flow of information and will promote Convention’s Purpose.

9. Design, adopt and maintain an organizational structure that is directly responsive to Convention’s Purpose and needs, and that includes provisions for its own self-evaluation and growth.

**Objective 1**

**The Formation and Growth of Groups** – Facilitate the formation and growth of groups of people who support each other in understanding, loving and living “the life that leads to heaven.” We will work to bring together such individuals and groups in a network which amplifies creative spiritual energy that emerges when we work together.

Regeneration, or the life of charity, takes place in connection with other human beings, and is impossible in isolation. The spiritual model we are offered, one of individuals gathered into societies which in turn are gathered into provinces, is inseparable from that individual’s relationship with others in his or her immediate society; and the spiritual well-being of the society is inseparable from its relationship with the larger church, and with the world in which it is living.

Healthy relationships are characterized by both love and wisdom, which means that neither uncritical acceptance nor unsympathetic criticism is truly constructive. As even love of self is necessary and good in its proper place, so particular interests, talents and skills contribute to the health of the whole as they are appropriately and appreciatively related to each other.

**Strategies**

A. Provide administrative, material and advisory support for the formation and growth of such groups.

B. Provide training and resources for effective acts of worship, both individual and collective.

C. Provide for the training of appropriately skilled leaders.

D. Clarify criteria for membership in Convention in accord with Convention’s Purpose and suggest ways for people to become members.
E. Foster an understanding of networking, particularly as it applies to Convention.

F. Establish and maintain communication among individuals and groups who share particular interests in common, or who face the same circumstances.

G. Establish and maintain inventories of the available talents, skills and resources that are necessary for the formation and growth of groups, and provide for the best possible ways of meeting these groups’ needs.

H. Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies as they contribute to the formation and growth of groups within the church.

Objective 2

**Doctrine and Life** – Bring doctrine and life together constructively. We will support this being done in a way that allows them to challenge and enrich each other and that encourages the diverse activities of Convention to express Convention’s Purpose consistently.

This objective rests in the principle that doctrine alone, like external worship alone, does not make the church, but a life according to it. It looks toward a rejoicing in the fact that there are some of us who start from the books and some of us who start from involvement with people. For doctrine and life to come together, these need to be experienced as complementary rather than competitive approaches, each acknowledging its own incompleteness and therefore its needs for the other. Like the first objective, it assumes that the church cannot find an inner or spiritual well-being without trying to contribute to the spiritual well-being of the world in which it is living, and it further assumes that this contribution will not be made by conforming to that world but by seeking to understand and live our own distinctiveness.

**Strategies**

A. Bring people of different perspectives together for specific purposes such as: worship, team ministries, workshops, camp programs, committees, music and writing projects.

B. Support thinking that encourages differences of opinion, that acknowledges both the value of a variety of different approaches and the need to continue an on-going process, and that recognizes the beauty of finding inward coherence in a diversity of outward forms.

C. Develop the ability to use everyday language to express theological ideas.

D. Develop supportive procedures and resources for program planning and
evaluation. These procedures and resources must insist that theological presuppositions be made clear, that results be honestly evaluated, and that our primary concern be the relation between our central Purpose and the actual results of the program.

E. Accept and fulfill our responsibility to express a spiritual perspective on contemporary issues in local, national and global affairs.

F. Provide for the discovery, nurture and integration of diversity in all levels of structure.

G. Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies.

**Objective 3**

**Excellence** – *Provide for the discovery, development and evaluation of excellence.*

The Lord has created each one of us with quite extraordinary potentialities, and the church evades its responsibility if it falls into that common pitfall of volunteer organizations, becoming a haven for mediocrity. For example, we somehow expect people to become effective church treasurers by virtue of election, providing neither resources nor training, and then lament the sad state of local accounting procedures. It is the committee’s sense that we are, as a church, already doing many of the “right things,” and that we could do them more effectively if we worked toward providing appropriate training for available talent.

**Strategies**

A. Develop and maintain an accessible inventory of available talents and skills.

B. Develop and maintain an accessible inventory of needed talents and skills.

C. Develop and maintain an accessible inventory of training possibilities.

D. Facilitate the acquisition of needed talents and training in skills.

E. Develop means for identifying and improving criteria of excellence.

F. Update Convention’s understanding and appreciation of excellence.

G. Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies.

**Objective 4**

**Numerical Growth** – *Commit ourselves to growth in the number of active members.*

This is the “let’s finally face facts” objective. It is not an end in itself, and
Standing Resolutions

must not be achieved to the detriment of other directives, any more than an individual should focus on physical health to the neglect of regeneration. But it also follows that just as physical health for the sake of use cannot be neglected, and must be given specific attention, so we need to give specific attention to numerical growth for the sake of use. Given the intense need for the New Church in the world around us, we cannot avoid our responsibility to find means of outreach that really work, and the clear, objective criterion lies immediately to hand.

Strategies
A. In cooperative effort with associations, societies and other constituent bodies, develop programs intended to achieve growth.
B. Develop centralized efforts that both encourage a desire for growth among Convention’s constituents and strengthen our self-image.
C. Develop centralized efforts that create interest among non-Swedenborgians and thus stimulate growth.
D. Create programs that offer assistance and incentive to ministers and constituent bodies so that they develop the skills and programs necessary to increase growth.
E. Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies.

Objective 5

Religious Cooperation – Continue our commitment to the cause of religious unity.

With the Lord working through all religions to provide the means for the life that leads to heaven, we are again called to a relationship of critical supportive-ness. The committee is not recommending any notable increase in our national involvement, but the strategies are intended to relate that involvement more clearly to our purpose and to our other objectives.

Strategies
A. Continue our involvement in the National Council of Churches and make significant contributions to the policies and programs of the Council.
B. Improve upon the reporting of our Council representatives to Convention and make resources and services of the Council available to our churches.
C. Support our ministers’ and laity’s regional and local involvement in councils of churches and in interfaith activities.
D. Foster among our church membership an attitude of appreciation and open-
mindedness toward the religions of the world.

E. Provide for the ongoing evaluation of our participation in ecumenical activities, with a view toward focusing that participation in areas most closely related to our central purpose.

F. Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies.

Objective 6

The New Age – Clarify and intensify our participation in and contribution to the Lord’s New Age.

There are strong indications in the world around us that the whole climate of thought is beginning to change. Specifically, the materialistic, mechanistic, “either-or” mentality so hostile to our message is under attack from within the scientific community itself, and there is a widespread resurgence of interest in spirituality. Again, the committee recommends a policy of critical supportiveness, with a strong sense that there are major opportunities in this area for both internal and external growth. The phrase “critical awareness” is intended to convey our belief that not everything new is necessarily in accord with our purpose, and that we have a great deal to learn about how the Lord is working for the new church in the world around us.

Strategies

A. Foster an awareness of the freshness of our theology and its implications for our activities.

B. Foster critical awareness of the congenial trends that occur in thought and activity outside Convention.

C. Make ourselves and our theology known and available to persons involved in such thought and activity.

D. Encourage and support involvement in New Age activities.

E. Encourage the participation of “New Age” persons in Convention events and programming.

F. Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies.

Objective 7

Use Our Resources – In accordance with our Doctrine of Use and in cooperation with Convention’s constituent bodies, improve the management and use of the physical-financial resources available for the fulfillment of our
Purpose.

We are per capita a startlingly wealthy church, and yet we seem to have trouble finding the money to do what needs to be done. Given growth in the clarity of our sense of purpose, we need to be candid with ourselves about our use of resources, and foster a motion from less effective to more effective uses. The committee recognizes and values the distribution of responsibility inherent in our present situation of local autonomy, and insists that this motion cannot be healthy unless it is voluntary; but it also insists that the principle of local autonomy must not be used to evade accountability to the principle of use.

Strategies

A. In cooperation with Convention’s constituent bodies, create and maintain an inventory of these physical and financial resources.

B. Create and implement a system to improve the management of Convention’s resources. This system should include provisions for: resources evaluation, cost/benefit financial planning, accounting and other necessary items.

C. Create and implement a system to aid Convention’s constituent bodies in the management of their resources, and provide guidelines, standards, education and other assistance.

D. Create and implement a system to aid Convention’s financial resources. This program will take advantage of the breadth of our current support base and will seek new sources of income.

E. Keep Convention’s constituent bodies aware of the programs and persons involved in the efforts to accomplish this objective.

F. Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies.

Objective 8

Communication – Design and implement effective means of communication: means which will ensure an open and timely flow of information and will promote Convention’s Purpose.

The technology is available for the body of Convention to have a “central nervous system” that will overcome many of the liabilities of our wide geographical distribution, and both within and outside the church there is the expertise to design a system that will suit our particular needs. This objective relates closely to the “networking” strategy under Objective 1, as providing the means by which information resources may be made available when and where they are needed, and kindred individuals and groups kept in touch with each other.
Strategies

A. Provide means for the on-going evaluation of Convention’s communication activities. Make sure that they are consistent with Convention’s central Purpose.

B. Establish and maintain a central information exchange to collect, store, correlate and disseminate information both within and beyond Convention. This central exchange will:
   • Incorporate a relational structure rather than a hierarchical one.
   • Take advantage of advancing technology. For example, computers, video, communications satellites, etc.
   • Be the hub of a “distributed information system” (see Strategy C)
   • Administer this “distributed information system.”

C. Design and implement a “distributed information system.” This system will provide for the open, direct and timely flow of information among the various constituent groups and individuals of Convention.

D. Design and implement means to coordinate Convention’s various publications and productions. This way we will strive for greater effectiveness and economy.

E. Establish and maintain means to ensure that our communications to the world at large are coordinated and considered, and foster an appreciation of Convention’s purpose and objective.

F. Recognize and promote clear and precise communication.

G. Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies.

Objective 9

Organized Structure – Design, adopt and maintain an organizational structure that is directly responsive to Convention’s Purpose and needs, and that includes provisions for its own self-evaluation and growth.

Toward a Theology of Polity

The writings of our Church do not describe for us a particular form of church organization. Swedenborg insists that there must be order in the church; but since the possibility of a separate “Swedenborgian” ecclesiastical organization was not significant enough to mention, he was content to leave us with a few observations about church government based on eighteenth century European models.

Heavenly government is also a less useful model than we might expect. Since
heaven is characterized by essential unanimity, its “political system” can be described as democracy, aristocracy, oligarchy, anarchy, dictatorship, communism, socialism or what you will.

Our own polity has evolved pragmatically. It began from the desire of separate societies to get together on some regular basis, and has grown and changed in response to changing circumstances. It is largely a traditional pattern: though if one sees democracy as a result of the Second Coming, this would then be a major “New Age” feature.

Essentially though, our own polity rests on Newtonian, Euclidian mechanical models. That is, it seeks to promote order and effectiveness by such devices as marking off areas of responsibility – drawing a single territorial map, as it were - and by a system of checks and balances.

This leads to such anomalies as having the Board of Education responsible for Leaguers’ travel to convention, the Board of Missions’ virtual exclusion from the field of missionary publication, and cumbersome procedures for the guidance and support of any venture that does not fit some existing category. It also means that it is quite possible for an individual to have been a lifelong member of one of our societies without being able to identify one thing that Convention has done for the welfare of that society.

In order to distribute responsibility as widely as possible under this system, we need our policy that a single individual not serve on more than two Convention boards or committees at once. This means, however, that it is rare for members of one board to have an appreciation of the problems and labors of another; and General Council depends for its information largely on minutes which are not designed for such communication.

Essentially, the Ad Hoc Committee sees a pressing need that we reconceptualize our organizational presuppositions on a more profound and more realistic model, looking at patterns of relationship that are actually productive. We see three basic essentials in this – clear and direct lines of mutual communication and accountability, the ready gathering of compatible interests, skills and resources for particular tasks, and a constructive accountability to our common theological convictions.

The model that we have in mind may be unfamiliar in terms of physical models, but it is immediately recognizable in terms of personal experience. It involves seeing the identity of an individual or group as essentially determined not by fixed boundaries or “externals,” but by a particular center; and by the relationships of that center to other centers. Boundaries or circumferences may then expand or contract as we generalize or specialize; and the overlaps, rather than be-
problems to be eliminated, are the utterly necessary fields of mutual support, enlightenment and cooperation.

In this model, the primary function of the centralized administration would be to administer decentralization. This central body should be granted such power, and only such power, as it needs to accomplish this task, and should be held accountable by Convention to policies and priorities determined by Convention.

**Strategies**

A. Design an organizational structure that is directly responsive to Convention’s Purpose and needs, and includes provision for its own self evaluation.

B. Create an ongoing process which ensures that the organization exercises self evaluation, is open to change, and encourages growth.
   1. Generate criteria for self evaluation and prepare a plan for adapting to change and growth.
   2. Generate feedback and data annually and encourage continual feedback.
   3. Assess and review the organization annually.
   4. Revise and adapt the plan each year and revise the structure as necessary.

2. 

(Adopted by the General Council, July 18, 1949)

Resolved: With regard to properties of local societies in which Convention has a contingent interest through conveyances providing that, in certain circumstances, the title would come to Convention, it is the policy of Convention not to make contributions toward the cost of maintenance of such properties, such maintenance being the sole responsibility of the Society in whose hands the title to the property is vested.

3. 

(Adopted by General Convention, June 1960, Min. #58)
(Amended by General Convention, July 1, 1989, Min. #61)
(Amended by General Convention, June 30, 2015, Min. #20)

A Standing Resolution to Swedenborgians Everywhere:

Resolved: The General Convention/Swedenborgian Church assembled at Bridgewater State University, Bridgewater, Massachusetts for Convention June 30, 2015 reaffirms its belief that the Church Universal includes those of diverse origins.
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In its ever-growing desire to serve all of God’s children, the General Convention (aka The Swedenborgian Church), urges Swedenborgians everywhere to acknowledge that the Church Universal is inclusive and to act in this spirit. Let no Society of the Church exclude any from membership on such considerations as ethnic origin, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, condition of health, handicap or economic status; but seeking those who accept our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as Redeemer of the world and who accept the essentials of faith of the Church, welcome all with joy and affection into the full and free community of the Church.

4.

(Adopted by General Convention, August 3, 1969)

Resolved: That the Secretary of Convention maintain a register of young men and women within the fellowship of the Swedenborgian Church who are recognized by the Selective Service System as conscientious objectors to war, and that the President of Convention appoint a minister to serve as spiritual counselor and advisor to these young men and women and to others who may apply to the Selective Service System for recognition as Conscientious Objectors; the purpose being that the Church might in this way show its sympathy with those whose conscience dictates such a step and may be of some assistance to them as they struggle with all of the implications and legal problems which such classification brings.

5.

(Adopted by General Convention, August 3, 1969)

Resolved: That the General Convention support the legalization of abortion in cases where it is responsibly applied for the physical and emotional welfare of those involved. Be it also resolved that such therapeutic abortion shall be considered primarily a matter of concern between the patient, attending physician and personal counselor.

6.

(Adopted by General Convention, July 2, 1976)

Resolved: That General Council be given a standing order to recommend to the Convention the names of such persons who in its opinion should qualify for emeritus status, for a vote by Convention.
7. 
(Adopted by General Council, January 22, 1977)

**Resolved:** It is recognized that the establishment of the requirements for membership is the responsibility of the individual society or other body, and that various types of membership are utilized by different bodies. However, for the purpose of determining delegate strength for the voting at Convention sessions only adult active members defined as follows shall be counted: An adult active member of a society is one who is eighteen years of age or older and who has been accepted by the Society through Confirmation or other appropriate service of introduction, or by transfer from another Society, and who within the year has shown active interest in his/her membership. This is demonstrated by joining in the programs of worship and work or by contributing toward its needs physically and financially. It shall be the joint responsibility of members and Societies involved to ensure that the member is not counted in more than one Society’s count for delegate strength.

8. 
(Adopted by General Convention on recommendation of its Council of Ministers, July 1, 1978)

**SWEDENBORG’S REVELATION**

**Perspectives of the General Convention**

The Lord’s Second Coming promised in the Gospels is described in *True Christian Religion* 779 as a process of spiritual reawakening, beginning with a cosmic event in which Swedenborg was called to play a key role. Through spiritual experiences while reading the Holy Word, he received truth from the Lord into his understanding. From this enlightenment he worked out and published teachings for a new church to serve the new age of the Lord’s Second Coming. The truth of these teachings revealed by the Lord to Swedenborg is presented to us with the authority of the Holy Word from which they are drawn, and by which they are confirmed. This new revelation teaches us three essential things to believe and do. The first of these is to worship our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as the one God in whom is the divine Trinity. The second is to hold to the conviction that the Word of God is holy, not only in its plain sense, but also because of the deeper meanings lying within it. The third is to commit ourselves to a life embodying love to the Lord and the neighbor. In living these three essentials, each of us must search with discernment for critical meaning in Swedenborg’s theological writings. Any written form of revelation can be misunderstood if it is insisted that
a single interpretation is final and prescriptive. However, we are convinced that if love to the Lord and the neighbor permeate our perceptions, our church will be unified despite any number of particular differences of opinion as to interpretation and application of doctrine. In former times, when Christian doctrine was hammered out by theologians or determined by church councils, unity depended on obedience to creed, with reason subservient to faith. But in this new age, the spiritual freedom of the individual has been restored. Now it is permitted to enter with understanding into the mysteries of faith.

9. (Adopted by General Convention, July 2, 1982)

Resolved: It is recognized that it is the responsibility of the church to voice its conviction on ethical and moral issues that arise from time to time in our nation and in our world. Where the issue is one of long-term relevance, and where opportunity has been afforded to societies and associations for prior discussion, a member of Convention may submit to the President, in time for announcement on the first day of a Convention session, a written proposal for a Standing Resolution. The President shall at that time accept motions to refer or to place on the agenda with time for discussion.

Should the issue be one of immediate urgency only a member of Convention may submit to the President, in time for announcement on the first full day of a Convention session, a written proposal that a particular resolution be adopted as “the sense of this meeting.” The President shall at that time accept motions to refer or to place on the agenda with time for discussion. Should such resolution come to a vote, the vote shall be counted and the tally included with any use of the resolution.

10. (Adopted by General Convention, June 30, 1983)
(Amended by General Convention, July 3, 2019)

[This Standing Resolution is no longer an operating policy of the General Convention.]

General Convention no longer provides ministers personal loans through the Building Fund. Outstanding loans that remain in good standing will continue as agreed until fully repaid. Ministers with outstanding loans from the building fund, who cease to remain on the Active Roll of the Council of Ministers, may have their loan called in and due and payable within ninety days.”
11. (Adopted by the General Council, June 29, 1983)

Resolved: That it is the responsibility of the Vice President, together with a committee he may appoint, to conduct an annual review of the Central Office, covering staff, employees, organization, etc.

12. (Adopted by General Council, January 30, 1983)

Resolved: “Whereas: The American New Church Tract and Publication Society has indicated its desire to turn over its assets to the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the U.S.A. to continue the purposes for which the Tract Society was established, and

Whereas: these purposes are included within the broad purposes of General Convention; now therefore, be it

Resolved: that General Convention agrees to accept the funds of the Tract Society, and if when offered, to be held for the purposes given and specifically that the income of those funds be used first: for the publication and distribution of Our Daily Bread and second: for other publications efforts; and further be it

Resolved: that the Treasurer of General Convention be directed to assist the Tract Society in the orderly transfer of these funds.”

Addendum, May 12, 1988

Selection and appointment of the Editor of Our Daily Bread, its format, contents and distribution shall be in the hands of the Council of Ministers. The publication of Our Daily Bread shall not be terminated without a vote of the full Council of Ministers.

13. (Adopted by General Convention, June 28, 1989)

That the AIDS Ministry Committee appointed by the Cabinet continue to carry out its task which shall include support of Swedenborgian Ministries to HIV persons, their families and friends; facilitation of ecumenical involvement in these ministries; and the provision of educational materials.
Standing Resolutions

14.
(Adopted by General Convention, July 1, 2019)

Statement of the Swedenborgian Church of North America on Discrimination

As Swedenborgians we affirm the core truths of our faith that honor the diversity of both heaven and earth, and recognize that loving people who are different from us is integral to the practice of a religious life.

We also acknowledge that broad generalizations of races, nations, genders, sexual orientations, physical abilities, and religions can be found in our sacred texts when interpreted literally and that these texts have been used on occasion to promote opinions that run counter to these core truths.

We hereby affirm our responsibility to interpret our texts in the light of love and inclusion, in heaven’s light, and categorically reject interpretations of the Bible or of Swedenborg’s writings that promote a discriminatory viewpoint. Where any translation or interpretation appears to invite the reader to engage in exclusionary or hateful thinking, promote stereotypes, or justify discrimination against anyone for any reason, regardless of the source, we stand against this. If any member, clergy, employee, or other affiliated person indicates by word, deed, works, writings, affiliations, or any other means, racism, anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim bigotry, gender bias, heterosexism, ableism, or any other expression of prejudice, they do not reflect nor represent the practical doctrine of the Swedenborgian church.

We encourage one another to advocate for those who face discrimination and to address these expressions of bias in our personal interactions and in the larger society. We also acknowledge that forms of discrimination come in many subtle shades, and that we have a responsibility to regularly investigate our actions and beliefs, both individually and collectively to align them with these truths, so that we can be greater vessels for Divine Love in the world.
STANDING RECOMMENDATIONS

To Associations, etc.

Each Association, or other collective body of the Church, is requested to report annually a list of its ministers.

Associations are recommended to make such specific rules, under the general rules for the regulation of the ministry, as they may consider necessary or desirable.

Associations are requested to furnish the Secretaries with copies of all their printed Journals of past years, and also copies of their future proceedings, from time to time, as they may be published. (Journal of 1900, Minute 163.)

In the apportionment of delegates to the Convention, the Association shall try to secure a proportionate representation of the societies constituting them, and to that end shall consult the wishes of the various societies. (Journal, 1937, Minute 50.)

To Isolated Societies

To establish Sabbath school and to give it watchful care in which the truths of the Church shall be distinctly taught.

To adopt as rules of discipline, or laws of charity, what is taught by the Lord in Matt. v.23, 24, and xviii. 15-17.

To establish free libraries of the theological works of Swedenborg for loan to all who are interested.

To Ministers

To keep a record of names, ages, residences, etc. of all persons baptized by them.

To the Standing Committee of the American New Church Sunday School Association

To report annually to the Convention such statistics and such action by the Association as may be of general interest.

As to Collections of Convention

Collections at the Sunday morning service of the Convention to be for the general use of Convention. (Journal of 1993, Minute 6.)

Procedures of Appointments to the National Council of Churches

The President of Convention, with the counsel and advice of the Executive
Committee of the Council of Ministers, shall make the various appointments to the National Council of Churches, and that these then be confirmed by the General Council.

The Nominating Committee

It is recommended to the Nominating Committee, that when preparing a slate of nominees to fill the elective offices of The General Convention, the slate be of such order that if elected, a nominee shall not serve on more than two Boards or Committees or a Board and a Committee simultaneously. “No individual who has accepted nomination for an office shall accept nomination for another office if election to one would invalidate election to the other.” It is further recommended that this order be kept by the Chair when accepting nominations from the floor of Convention.

To the Convention

To submit (to the President or Treasurer), in advance of the business session of Convention, any request for appropriation of funds.
Seven Year Cycle of Annual Themes

It is part of the Lord’s Providence that in every challenge there is an opportunity and the bigger the challenge, the bigger the opportunity. That’s a good thing for us, not least because, as a church, we are facing a very big challenge indeed. The Education Support Unit (EDSU) proposes a way to meet that challenge, one that can offer us a considerable opportunity to grow and move forward as bearers of a new message of hope for the world.

A regular cycle of thematically-unified, denomination-wide programming, built around the key beliefs of our faith, will go far in restoring our church’s confidence and capacity to play its proper part in the building of the New Jerusalem. As Swedenborgians we are blessed in many ways but especially with a love of learning. This is our strength and our opportunity. Let’s learn and grow into a new future.

The Seven-Year Cycle of Annual Themes

   the primacy of Spirit:
   • the one Lord, Love & Wisdom, Creator & Life
   • the unifying truth, hope and power, known by many names
   • revealed for us in Jesus, as friend, mentor, model

2. THE YEAR OF THE SPIRITUAL WORLD (2020-2021)
   the nature of Life:
   • the diverse, multi-dimensional & eternal nature of life
   • the reality of the spiritual world; heaven, hell & world of spirits
   • our journey with angels & demons, from this life to the next

3. THE YEAR OF PROVIDENCE (2021-2022)
   the assurance of Purpose:
   • the universe makes sense and we have a special, angelic purpose
   • the laws of Providence are Love & Wisdom at work for us
   • our call to “choose life” and become who we (really) are

4. THE YEAR OF REGENERATION (2022-2023)
   the way of Change:
   • spiritual life as intentional, committed, relational
   • the journey of transformation & the second birth
   • the work of repenting, reforming & regenerating
5. THE YEAR OF SPIRITUAL USES (2023-2024)
   the call to be a Blessing:
   • true faith as the life of charity, what we actually do, not just think or say
   • discerning our gifts through love in action (charity)
   • becoming our true use for the building of the New Jerusalem

6. THE YEAR OF THE WORD (2024-2025)
   the power of holy Scriptures:
   • correspondences & the Lord’s presence in the Word
   • the story of our lives in the Word
   • the sacred character of all holy texts

7. THE YEAR OF THE NEW JERUSALEM (2025-2026)
   the emergence of a New World:
   • the Second Coming in the Spirit now
   • the new world & new consciousness emerging now
   • building the future: the unity of the human family in justice and peace
BYLAWS OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

PREAMBLE

The Council of Ministers is established by Article II of the Constitution of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America which reads in part as follows: “The officers of the Convention shall be…a Council of Ministers, consisting of all ministers belonging to the Convention, of whom twelve shall constitute a quorum…”

In order that it may in more orderly fashion exercise the powers and perform the duties committed to it by Article III, Section 3, and Article V, Section 1, of the said Constitution, and Article XII of the Bylaws of the said General Convention, the Council of Minister, establishes these Bylaws as a guide to its procedure.

Article I.
Categories of Membership

Section 1. Internal Categories of Clerical Standing with COM shall be:

Active:
defined as any ordained minister that:
1. is employed as a minister by a constituent body of Convention, or
2. is involved in a ministry recognized as valid by COM, or
3. is present at COM annual or regional meetings.

Inactive:
defined as any ordained minister who does not meet the above requirements, but who has submitted an annual accounting of ministerial activity to the COM Secretary in accordance with denominational Bylaws, Article XII, Section 3.

Not in Good Standing:
A member who has not met the professional standards of ministry in the Swedenborgian Church.

Lapsed:
defined as any minister that has not met any of the above requirements and has been not in good standing for a period of three years.

Retired:
defined as any minister that has drawn on his or her retirement benefits and who has requested to be considered as retired on the Council’s Roll. Only those members that have retired in good standing shall be eligible for supplemental retirement benefits.

Severed:
defined as any minister who has been removed from the Roll of
Ministers by request or as a result of disciplinary action.

Deceased: defined as any minister who has died.

Section 2. Definitions of Clerical Standing

“Good Standing” is defined as a member of the Council that: participates in continuing education on a biennial basis for the purpose of building and maintaining professional competence, in accordance with COM Standing Resolutions, paragraph 2, and participates in supervision on an ongoing basis for the purpose of maintaining a personal system of emotional support, in recognition of “Guidelines for Ministerial Work in the General Convention,” Section III, preamble, and is not under disciplinary action by the Council of Ministers.

“Not in Good Standing” is defined as a member of the Council that has not met the above requirements.

Amended 2008, Bridgewater, Massachusetts

Section 3. Credentials

All members of the Council who are not retired are requested to communicate with the COM Secretary before the end of May regarding their continuing education and supervision activities during the time since the last COM annual meeting. Those who do so shall be recorded as in good standing. The names of those who have not done so will be shared with the Executive Committee, who shall respond as follows.

Procedure for Changes in Clerical Standing

A member of the Council’s Executive Committee shall contact any member of the Council whose standing is in jeopardy at least thirty days before the Council convenes for its Annual Meeting. The Executive Committee shall take into account such member’s specific situation and shall suggest reasonable rectifying measures before any change in standing is considered. If the member in question is unwilling to comply with such measures, he or she will be considered temporarily “not in good standing” until such measures are taken. The Executive Committee shall continue to support and encourage an individual who is not in good standing throughout a restorative period.

A member who is not in good standing and who is in disagreement with such a standing may make an appeal to the Council as a whole, whose majority vote shall determine the standing of the member in question. The name of a member who is not in good standing for a period of three years shall be presented before
COM. They shall decide by vote whether or not to designate such member in the Roll of Ministers as “Lapsed.” A person whose membership has lapsed and who wishes to become active again may make a written appeal to the Council’s Executive Committee.

Amended July 8, 2005, Berkeley, California

Amended June 2008, Bridgewater, Massachusetts

Article II.
Sessions and Meetings

Section 1. Sessions of the Council of Ministers shall be held in connection with every session of the General Convention, at such times as may be assigned to it by the Business Committee of the Convention.

Section 2. Special meetings of the Council may be held at any time at the call of the Executive Committee or by letter vote initiated by petition of at least seven members. Public notice shall be given of the time and place of the proposed meeting.

Section 3. “Meetings of the Council of Ministers shall be of three types: public meetings, open to anyone who may be interested; business meetings, at which the business of the Council shall be transacted, attendance at business meetings being limited to members of the Council, the President of Convention if said person is not ordained, the Dean and full-time faculty of the Swedenborgian House of Studies, if said persons are not ordained authorized candidates, theological students, and others who may be admitted by vote of the Council; and executive session, for which all persons who are not members of the Council shall withdraw at the request of the Chair. Any guest may be invited to remain for executive sessions at the request of a Council member, together with a three-quarters vote of the Council.”

Article III.
Officers

Section 1. The officers of the Council of Ministers shall be a Chair, a Secretary and three at large members of the Executive Committee.

Section 2. At its 1993 sessions, the Council of Ministers shall elect a chair for a two-year term, and a secretary for a three-year term. In subsequent years, when the offices become vacant, the chair and secretary shall each be elected for a three-year term. Officers who have served two consecutive full terms shall not be eligible for immediate re-election.

Amended June 27, 1992.

Section 3. The Chair of the Council shall preside at all meetings, and shall, unless in any case it be otherwise ordered by the Council, appoint all members of committees, except the Executive Committee and the Program Committee. The Chair shall designate the chairmen of such committees as he may appoint.

The Secretary of the Council shall perform the usual duties of a secretary, and in addition shall present to the Convention a report of all meetings of the Council, including the titles of all papers presented, a summary of the important business transacted and a statement of all matters referred by the Council of Ministers to the Convention and of all recommendations made to said Convention.

The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, the Secretary, and three members to be elected initially by the Council for terms of one, two, and three years, and thereafter one member to be elected annually by the Council for a term of three years. Executive Committee members who have served two consecutive full terms shall not be eligible for immediate re-election. It shall be the duty of the Committee to fill vacancies and to consider and act on matters connected with the business of the Council in the interim of its sessions. It shall have no power, however, to make decisions in the name of the Council with reference to any matter within the province of the Council’s Standing Committees.

Amended June 2008, Bridgewater, Massachusetts

Section 4. In the interim between the sessions of the Council of Ministers matters requiring the immediate decision by the Council may be acted upon by
vote recorded by the Secretary through a letter, e-mail, or conference call, to be determined by the Executive committee. For such votes to be valid, at least twenty ministers must cast ballots. If by letter, ballots must be received within 30 days from the date of issuance. If by e-mail, ballots must be received within 7 days from date of issuance. If by conference call, the ballots shall be recorded orally at the time of the call. Every reasonable effort will be made to contact every active member of the Council.


Article IV.
Committees

Section 1. There shall be a Nominating Committee of three persons which shall present to the Council at each annual meeting a full slate of nominees including two nominees for Convention Preacher. At the meeting at which this Bylaw is adopted, one member shall be elected for a three-year term, one for a two-year term, and one for a one-year term, with the member whose term is next to expire to serve as chair.

Section 2. The Standing Committees of the Council shall be the Committee on Worship, the Committee on Program, The Committee on Ministerial Ethics, the Committee on Admission into the Ministry, the Committee on Revision of the Roll, the Misconduct Determination Board, and the Advisory Placement Committee.

In addition, the Chair of the Council upon the decease of any member thereof shall appoint a committee to prepare a memorial to be offered for presentation before the Convention. The Council may from time to time order the appointment of such special committees as it may deem necessary.

Amended June 2012, Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

Section 3. Members of Standing Committees shall serve until their successors are appointed.

Section 4. The Committee on Worship shall consider and report on all matters connected with the worship of the Church, as well as proposed changes in or additions to its liturgical books.
The Committee will explore and develop new forms, style and materials of worship and liturgy to meet the expanding needs of Convention Worship Leaders.

The Committee, or an appointed individual by the Committee, will oversee and coordinate, in conjunction with the host group and/or the Convention Planning Committee, the worship and music expenses of our annual convention.

Amended June 2009, Seattle, Washington

Section 5. The Committee on Program shall consist of the Chair of the Council of Ministers, the Secretary of the Council, and the Dean of the Swedenborgian House of Studies. Its duties shall be to prepare the program for each session of the Council.

Amended June 2008, Bridgewater, Massachusetts

Section 6. The Committee on Ministerial Ethics shall consist of the council appointed by the Chair for their depth of pastoral experience and background in the study of ethics. This committee shall:

1. periodically present issues for reflection and discussion for meetings of the Council and shall consist of three members of the council.
2. be available for consultation and advice in cases of need, and
3. propose such revisions in the Guidelines for Ministerial work in the General Convention of Swedenborgian churches as it may deem useful.

Section 7. The Committee on Admission into the Ministry shall consist of a chair, who will be a member of this council who has served at least one complete term (3 years) on the Committee on Admission to Ministry and shall be elected by the council for a three year term; two at-large members who are ministers with at least five years ministerial service within the denomination, one to be elected by the Council of Ministers and one to be elected by Convention; one lay person to be elected by Convention; and the President of Convention. The three elected members are to be elected for three-year terms, one to be elected each year. At-large members who have served two consecutive full terms shall not be eligible for immediate re-election. The chair may not serve more
than two consecutive terms as chair and is not eligible to serve as an at-large member following a term as chair. Members of the regular faculty of the theological school shall not be eligible for election, and should either the President of Convention or Chair of the Council of Ministers be a member of that faculty, said officer shall designate a member of the Council of Ministers as replacement, subject to the approval of the Council.

The primary duty of this committee shall be to oversee the maintenance of high standards for Convention’s ministry. To this end, it shall interview all candidates for ordination or induction into our ministry, and make its recommendations to the Council of Ministers. It shall also annually grant or deny the status of candidates for ordination to all Swedenborgian affiliated theological school students or applicants who request it, confer regularly with such students, and report its decisions to each student concerned, to the faculty of the School and to the Augmentation Fund Committee.

It shall also confer with the candidate before ordination, to the end that the candidate may be mindful to the task ahead, and approach the Rite of Ordination truly prepared for consecration to the Lord’s service.

*Amended July 9, 2004, Waterloo, Ontario; Amended June 25, 2015, Bridgewater, Massachusetts*

**Section 8.** The Committee on Revision of the Roll shall consist of three members; to it shall be referred without further action by the Council all matters of record involving changes in the Roll of Ministers of the General Convention, for report and recommendation to the Council.

It shall also be the duty of this Committee to keep a Roll of Former Ministers of Convention, to which the names of those who have ceased to be minister thereof, through death, resignation, or removal, shall be transferred in accordance with the rules of Convention.

**Section 9.** The Misconduct Determination Board shall consist of five members, three of which will be from the Executive Committee and two from the Ethics Committee. It shall be the duty of this Board to review charges and evidence given it from the Board of Inquiry and determine:

i) if misconduct occurred, and

ii) what actions should be taken.

The Misconduct Determination Board is to follow the polices laid out in the misconduct procedures adopted by the Council of Ministers and General Council.
Section 10. The Advisory Placement Committee shall consist of three members; the Chair of the Council of Ministers, the Dean of the Swedenborgian House of Studies, and the President of Convention who serves as Chair. It shall be the duty of this committee to provide resources and advise ministers who are seeking employment within the denomination and also societies that are seeking to call ministers.

Added June 2012, Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

Article V.
Business

Section 1. The business of the Council shall be considered in the executive meetings in the following order:

1. Call to order
2. Address of the Chairman
3. Adoption of report of the Program Committee
4. Appointment of special committees for the session
5. Communications
6. Report of the Executive Committee
7. Reports of Standing Committees
8. Reports of Special Committees
9. Old Business
10. New Business
11. Election
12. Adjournment

The Standing Committees shall report in the order in which they are named in Article III, Section 1. If a report is not ready, it shall be passed over until all other committees have had an opportunity to report, unless the Council set a specific time for hearing of a report. No debate shall be allowed on any of the above reports until all of them have been presented, but a motion to refer or adopt a recommendation where there is no desire to debate shall be in order.

Section 2. The parliamentary procedure of the Council of Ministers shall be governed, in all cases not specifically covered by the Constitution and Bylaws of Convention or by these Bylaws, by Roberts Rules of Order. The Secretary of
the Council shall keep a copy of these Rules available for ready reference.

Section 3. All requests for appropriations in connection with the work of any of the committees of the Council, as being beyond the power and authority of the Council of Ministers, shall, if the Council of Ministers approves, be presented to the General Convention.

Article VI. Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended or suspended by a three-fourths vote of those present at any regular meeting. They may be suspended at special meetings by a three-fourths vote of those present at such meetings.
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS STANDING RESOLUTIONS

Whereas ministry as a professional endeavor requires continuous development and personal growth, and, whereas education is a lifelong process not ending with ordination; therefore, be it resolved that the Council of Ministers of the General Convention of Swedenborgian Churches affirms that planned continuing education is not an elective but is a necessary process to build professional competence.

(Preamble, adopted at General Convention, June 28, 1988)

Periodically during its history, Convention has faced issues of suitability for ministry. It has dealt with questions of social class, race, divorce, and gender, as it currently faces the issues of sexual orientation and may in future years face questions presently unseen. Its decisions have in each case affirmed a consistent principle, which the Council of Ministers expresses as follows:

(Adopted at General Convention, July 3, 1986)

“In light of the inclusiveness of the vision of the Holy City, New Jerusalem, from which our theological perspective is drawn, the Council of Ministers believes that the central consideration in evaluating requests for ordination is the quality of the ministry that it believes the individual is capable of providing.

“It is the responsibility of the Council of Ministers, using the good office of its Committee on Admission to the Ministry, to evaluate the readiness and suitability of individual candidates in accord with the general principles outlined in Article V, Section 2 of the Constitution, and in the Preamble to Article XIII of the Bylaws of the General Convention.

“Article V, Section 2 reads: ‘Through its Board of Managers of the New Church Theological School, commonly known as the Swedenborg School of Religion, the General Convention shall within the limits of available resources, provide for the thorough professional training of individuals seeking ordination, such training to focus on the spiritual growth of its participants by development in understanding of our theology, sensitivity in human relations, appreciation of other traditions, and in the technical skills required for effective ministry.’

“The Preamble of Article XIII reads: ‘Jesus said to his disciples, you have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.’ (John 15:16)

“The ordained ministry exists to facilitate the spiritual well-being of people, helping them to be open to the Lord’s leading and enabling them to lead useful lives. Resources for the ordained ministry in serving the church include the Holy Word, the doctrines of the church, the rites and sacraments, experiences of worship, and growth-oriented skills insofar as they promote the process of regeneration.”
Guidelines for Ministerial Conduct

The Constitution of the General Convention (Article III, Section 3) assigns to the Council of Ministers “responsibility for the pastoral support of all ministries and for providing them with clear ethical standards.” It adds, “It shall exercise such disciplinary functions over the ordained clergy as it may in its collective wisdom adopt, subject to the provision of the Constitution and Bylaws.”

Given the importance of our purpose—to facilitate the spiritual well-being of people—and the variety of ministries devoted to this end, the task is both urgent and difficult. Our theology points to clear principles of spiritual well-being which do not change. It recognizes also that there are outward behavioral expectations which we ignore at our peril, but which do change with the passage of time, and which vary from region to region.

Accordingly, we have tried in the following revision to distinguish these two aspects of ministerial ethics, in an effort to be uncompromising in devotion to the Lord’s service and responsibly flexible in the means used for that service.

Theological Basis

For the Swedenborgian, spiritual well-being is a state of oneness of heart, mind, and life. The most adequate ministry will therefore lead by affection, precept, and example. Our theology also insists that human life is a process, that we do not achieve perfection, but can move toward it to eternity. As ministers, we need both self-forgiveness and forgiveness of others. Since charity is “acting with prudence to the end that good may result” (The New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine 100), we are called in all circumstances, with no exception, to consider not just what has happened, but what we can do for actual betterment. When we fail to hear or to heed this call, as we all do at times, then the call simply comes again, asking us to recognize our failure, and not to dwell on it but to consider what we can do about it.

In this effort, we cannot stand alone. Our very being is constituted in part by the affection and understanding we receive from each other, and our common involvement in ordained ministry gives special weight to our treatment of each other. Genuine affection, clear understanding, and unfailing fidelity within this fellowship work strongly for our purpose, and their lack brings a profound distress.

Under the Lord’s providence, something could emerge from this distress
which would recommend itself to everyone. There are times, however, when we fail to discover that ideal solution, and must resort to the discipline authorized by the Constitution. This may be freely accepted by all parties; but even when it is not, the imposition of discipline may be the best course of action available. We must then accept our imperfections and focus our efforts on minimizing the harm. It is at such times that the distinction between fundamental principle and local, human tradition is most critical, and when the spirit of the discipline is as important as the discipline itself.

As concerns ministry in particular, doctrine, history, and experience point up the perils of reliance on the authority of the clergy. It is particularly tempting to try to solve difficult problems by clerical pronouncement, ignoring the fact that to the extent that any course of action is taken under compulsion, it is not conducive to spiritual growth. At the heart of the following guidelines is the conviction that our choices as ministers need to be informed by the central purpose of our church, to facilitate the spiritual well-being of those who rely on us.

I. Personal and Interpersonal Conduct

We are unanimous in our acceptance of the law of love, but not necessarily in our understanding of it. Our understanding of the word “love” is demonstrated primarily by our behavior, which is at least as instructive as our words. We communicate by the way we act that the good life is difficult or easy, joyous or bitter, flexible or rigid; and no amount of talking effaces these messages. It is vital that we recognize that we ourselves are in process, being open about our failings and about our ideals alike.

1. Persons live only as they receive life itself from God. We have made public acknowledgment of that life by seeking and accepting the laying on of hands of ordination. We have a special responsibility to open ourselves to our own emotional, intellectual, and spiritual depths, to the wisdom and power of the Bible, to the theology of our church, and to the Lord in meditation and prayer. To work toward our goals, we need also to keep abreast of current developments in the religious and secular worlds around us, with a special responsibility for attention to currents of thought and feeling within Convention.

2. However differently understood and accepted, the Divine is equally present in all People, regardless of such outward attributes as race, class, sexual orientation, creed, gender, physical capabilities/limitations or age. Prejudice or discrimination of any kind is a denial of this central tenet of our theology.

3. As we are drawn to become more intimately connected to persons in our communities, it can be that a pastor finds a real friendship developing. Choosing
friends from among those one serves and leads has inherent complications. There is a difference between being friendly and being a close friend who shares confidences. It is better to find friends among colleagues and through organizations that promote your values and interests. However, if you develop a close friendship with a congregant, the following steps must be taken.

- Discuss the difficulties of being both spiritual leader and friend.
- Avoid discussing the business of the congregation with him or her.
- Avoid spending time together at congregational events.

4. Pastors who are single must often decide whether to date someone in their congregation. It is, after all, a place to meet someone with similar values and commitments. To date a congregant, however, introduces myriad complications and opportunities for misunderstandings. If you find yourself attracted to a member of your congregation, you must take the following steps.

- Inform him/her that you cannot be his/her spiritual leader and have a romantic involvement. Therefore, if the person wants to pursue a dating relationship, he/she should find someone else to serve as spiritual leader.
- Tell your governing body and supervisor about the relationship.

5. Human sexuality is a gift from the Lord, providing an avenue to the deepest and most abiding of human relationships. It is also an avenue to our deepest vulnerabilities, and its misuse can have tragic personal consequences, and can lead to severe legal consequences. We are called to fidelity in all our relationships, and particularly to the utmost respect for the sexual integrity of all persons. Sexual contact or sexualized behavior between a faith leader and a congregant, client, student, or employee with whom the faith leader has a pastoral or professional relationship is an abuse of power and constitutes sexual misconduct. Sexual misconduct is defined as sexual contact (not limited to intercourse) that violates the trust developed by the congregant, student, client or employee in the context of the pastoral or professional relationship.

6. The community in which we live is our neighbor, and our constructive participation in its affairs is an essential element in religious life. As ministers urging others to live by the Lord’s commandments, we make a special commitment to live consistently ourselves. It is important that we be unquestionably fair in our financial dealings and reliable in keeping commitments made. This includes such matters as preparation for and attendance at meetings, clear and adequate reports, and prompt attention to correspondence. We should neither ask nor expect special favors or immunities because of our ministerial status. Where discounts, privileges, or special fees are offered, they may be accepted with appreciation, and with the acknowledgment that we are to give as freely as we receive, though not
7. In keeping with our sense of the holiness of all life, we are aware that excessive drinking and other forms of substance abuse, obscene stories and expressions, and raucous behavior diminish our effectiveness, as do the other extremes of prudery and self-righteousness. Both extremes betray a narrow egocentricity that renders us insensitive to the feelings and needs of those around us.

8. Personal appearance is one of the ways in which we communicate with each other, and excessive concern with and willful disregard for appearance are equally damaging. Our dress and grooming should reflect our interest in and concern for the human situations in which we engage and should be in general accord with local traditions.

9. Clergy use of social media for personal and professional use contribute to the public face of our denomination, and therefore constitutes clergy conduct. Decisions about what to post must conform to the ethical standards set forth in these Guidelines. Decisions on how and who to e-mail need careful attention, with thought given to include all who should be included, and not communicating electronically in ways we would not consider communicating in person or on the phone.

10. There are no quantitative measurements of spiritual well-being, and therefore no simple standards of evaluation of ministerial effectiveness. It is necessary that we be fully honest with ourselves and our employers, neither inventing unnecessary tasks nor avoiding necessary ones, fulfilling the terms of our employment in the spirit as well as in the letter. It is permissible to take other remunerative work with the knowledge and consent of the employer; but again, there is need of honest evaluation of the effect this has on our ministry.

11. The personal nature of ministry can allow it to intrude on the minister’s personal and family life. It is vital that the family not feel engulfed by the church and that the minister have time that is genuinely free for family involvement. Regular days off and complete vacations are necessities, and should be openly negotiated with the employing body.

12. As human service professionals, we are accountable for a self assessment of our physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. When mental health issues, stress due to family discord, and any other factors interfere with our daily lives and ability to minister to others, we have the responsibility to address our concern with peers, and when warranted, to contract for appropriate professional support. We also have the responsibility to be aware of signs of depression, substance abuse, domestic violence, mental illness, etc. that may arise in congregants, fam-
ily members or colleagues, and to assist them to access appropriate assistance.

II. The Relationship to the Group Served

The relationship of employee to employer can be ambivalent in the ministry. We are enjoined to lead our “employers” by truth to the good of life, a good which is genuine only if it is freely chosen. There are times when it seems that the welfare of the institution is at odds with the welfare of one or another of its members, or of its minister, and the available alternatives seem equally painful. Devotion to our central purpose is essential at all times, and never more than in times of difficulty.

1. Professionals in all the helping professions receive confidences, and are both legally and ethically bound to respect them. Ministers especially tend to be trusted, and a constant sensitivity to that trust is vital. Confidences, whether explicitly labeled or not, are not to be shared, even with colleagues and spouses. However, if individuals give us reason to believe that they are intending harm to themselves or others, we are obliged to weigh carefully the resources we have to prevent such harm, and to act according to our most prudent and compassionate judgment. We are responsible as well to know and to abide by the laws that apply in the particular regions of our ministries. We are to be guided at all times by a pastoral concern for those who trust us.

2. We recognize the trust placed in the therapeutic relationship, its unique power, and the inherent danger of exploitation in any dual role relationship. The role of Pastor and Congregant develops a ‘dual’ aspect when there are additional roles played by either party; i.e., committee chair/member, officer/employee, counselor/counselee, etc. These relationships need careful ethical attention. It is unethical to enter a counseling relationship with anyone with whom we have sexual, family, business, or friendship relationships.

3. Different ministers respond to different aspects of our theology. We should not make our own special interests into idols, but should try to present the full depth and breadth of our teachings and to foster an appreciation of colleagues whose special interests differ from our own.

4. We do not exist in a vacuum, but are sustained in our mental and emotional growth by our communications with each other. Our open acknowledgment of our inter-dependence upon each other is of critical importance to the health of our church.

5. Our belief in the Divine of the Lord entails rather than precludes the presence of that same Divine in all religions of the world. We are true to this principle only as we seek the best in and for all faiths; and we are false to it whenever we try
to exalt our own religion by demeaning others. Our task is not to try somehow to make our own understanding universal, but to discover the universality to which it points.

6. Ministers are responsible to whole congregations or groups, and have a responsibility to nurture a fabric of healthy relationships. Ministers employed by hospitals, hospice organizations, schools, non-profits, etc. have a call to see these organizations as sacred community, and have the responsibility to support the relationships within these communities in the same manner as described for church communities. In all our communities, the fabric of healthy relationships is damaged by any form of favoritism toward individuals or subgroups, and by involvement in political games. Such issues require particular attention when critical decisions must be made, as when a group is relocating, or a minister is leaving.

7. The health of a society depends not only on its internal relationships, but on its relationships with the community and world in which it finds itself. Every effort should be made to nurture the conviction that the church is not a self-righteous enclave in a world of sin, but a participant in the process of community, nation, and world, called by virtue of its gifts to special service.

8. The minister’s relationship to an employing body has personal, professional, and moral dimensions. A formal contract can be helpful in making unspoken assumptions explicit. No agreement, however informal, is to be terminated without adequate notice, except by mutual consent. We should be freely accessible to the employing body for discussion of continuation or termination of service, and should, unless explicitly invited to remain, absent ourselves from further discussion and from the actual voting procedure.

9. The minister’s self-evaluation is essential to growth in service. An annual report to the employing body, with an open review of it by that body, is an excellent means of improving the effectiveness of the minister and the group, and of discovering hidden expectations.

10. A group grows far more by making decisions than by having decisions made for it. Ministerial leadership encourages general involvement in the understanding and formulation of policy and in the choice of particular courses of action.

11. Our spouses, while under no professional obligations, may come into positions of significant influence. It is incumbent upon us to do our best to communicate to them both the substance and the importance of these guidelines, and to nurture an appropriate sense of accountability to them.

III. Relationship to Other Ministers

Ministry as a profession is sufficiently different from most others in that we
look particularly to each other for understanding and support. We are not only professionals, but professionals dedicated to a common service to God in a calling that points beyond our human strength. For this we need relationships with our fellow ministers of comradeship, frankness, mutual respect, cooperation, mutual help, and recognition of a spiritual imperative over and above any professional standards. We need to hold ourselves ready to offer affection, understanding, and assistance, defending our colleagues against misunderstanding or injustice, and being with them in loving concern in times of need or distress.

When support and understanding are forthcoming, this is especially meaningful, and when they fail, the sense of lack is especially severe. Our geographic isolation intensifies the significance of every communication, both for better and for worse.

1. Our ministries are tending increasingly to take different forms, and there is a risk that this may provide occasions for dispute. Given the principle that a form is the more perfect as its constituents are distinctly different, and yet united (Divine Providence 4), we are called to see these differences as complementary rather than competitive, and to enrich our own limited understandings by insights that come from endeavors outwardly unlike our own.

2. As professionals, we are responsible for normal professional standards. This means a respect for the integrity of the professional work of fellow ministers, doing nothing directly or indirectly to interfere with that work (e.g., performing ministerial services in another parish without its minister’s permission). This is in no way to be construed as a license for possessiveness or defensiveness, and calls us to support any efforts that further our central purpose (e.g., welcoming the participation of another minister in any such service, or the performance of tasks complementary to our own). Because we identify so closely with each other, we may well overreact when opinions or policies diverge. In cases of serious professional or personal misconduct, we should in virtually all instances refer the concern to the responsible officials. In most instances of disagreement, however, the most sympathetic interpretation is also the most constructive. Unsympathetic criticism of another minister, particularly one’s predecessor or successor, is contrary to the central principles of a life of charity.

3. The relationship between a minister and an employing body is a sensitive one. It is unethical to make overtures to a church or employing body whose minister has not expressed the intent to resign or retire; and if overtures are received from such a body, the well-being of the incumbent minister should be of primary concern.

4. A pastorate, particularly a long one, builds strong bonds of affection which
can place an incoming minister at a serious disadvantage. Resignation or retirement should be handled with special sensitivity in this regard. Every effort should be made to enable the church to make its own free choice, to create a favorable climate for the successor, and to leave the field free by avoiding anything that might be interpreted as interference with the successor’s work. It should be made clear to the church before departure that, however painful it may be, a decisive break in the relationship is necessary. If an invitation is received to perform ministerial services for a former parish, the present minister’s permission must be sought and the participation of that minister encouraged.

5. An affirmative attitude needs to be expressed in visible forms. A departing minister should demonstrate his or her acceptance of the successor by some form of public welcome and by cordial introductions to as many of the members as possible. Personal notes and any materials of a confidential nature should be destroyed; but the successor should have free and immediate access to all official records; including membership and address lists, minutes, financial records, and legal and constitutional materials. Every effort should be made not to perpetuate divisions by prejudicing the successor against any individual or group within the church.

6. The best use of our limited ministerial resources requires constant attention. A minister contemplating a change should seek the best information possible concerning current areas of need, using the Ministerial Placement Committee as the most appropriate resource.

7. In the search for ministerial employment, if a minister should feel aggrieved, or should feel that the well-being of another is put at risk, by the conduct of another minister, the first step is to raise the issue privately with the individual concerned. If this effort fails, the good offices of the ordaining minister of Convention should be sought. Should this not provide a resolution, the Council of Ministers may be asked to render assistance.

IV. Relationship to Convention and Association

The essence of the church is the Divine presence with us as individuals and collectively. This essence is therefore the Infinite; but it works through forms of human design, for which we must take responsibility. Our highest loyalty in regard to Convention and the Associations is to their essential purpose, and this, to be effective, must be expressed in the most critical and caring participation in the organizations themselves.

1. The larger collective bodies of the church have provided the foundation on which current ministries rely, with significant contributions to the local churches,
Guidelines for Ministerial Conduct

to theological education, and to resources for ministry. Ordination therefore involves pledges to uphold the Constitution of Convention and be mindful of its welfare; and these pledges should be remembered and fulfilled at all times. We should stand ready to serve Convention, the Council of Ministers, and our Associations gladly as our particular abilities are needed, with the knowledge that their health contributes to the health of our own local efforts.

2. The wisdom and effectiveness of the collective bodies can be no fuller than we make them. Regular attendance at meetings of Convention and the Council of Ministers, responsive participation in them, and regular and accurate reporting of activities, developments, and statistics are the necessary foundations of a supportive larger church.

3. For the sake of the unity of the larger church, it is vital that its individual members share in its essential values. It is the responsibility of the minister on the local level to admit into membership to all who do so share, and not to admit those who, so far as can be ascertained, do not. The irreducible essentials of our faith—the Divine of the Lord, the holiness of the Word, and the life of charity—should be clearly presented, and a genuine commitment to them expressed.

4. Many of us work in relative isolation from each other, and the Supportive Peer Supervision program has been instituted to compensate in some measure for that isolation. It is left to individual ministers to stress the supervisory or the supportive aspects of the program; and this freedom entails a responsibility to exercise it well. Whether through the program or in some other way, it is our duty to periodically review our fitness for Convention’s ministry. Should such a review raise serious doubts, the course of greatest wisdom is to seek the help and counsel of laypersons or clergy with whom there are bonds of affection and respect.

5. Standards for “Good Standing” as a Member of the Council of Ministers, and the requirements for Continuing Education and Professional Supervision, are outlined in Article I of the Bylaws of the Council of Ministers. “Good Standing” membership in the Council gives ministers an external affirmation, in the same manner that upholding these ministerial conduct guidelines gives an internal affirmation, of our appropriate living of our ministerial call from God.

6. Convention and its collective bodies are human institutions, and true loyalty to them includes the duty of thoughtful and constructive criticism. Experience indicates that if such criticism is addressed to the body’s will to improve, without a prejudgment as to the best response, the result will be affirmative. The ideal is an unswerving devotion to fundamental principles, with a willing openness to the process of change.
V. Ministerial Misconduct

1. If an issue of ministerial misconduct arises, persons are required to follow the reporting process outlined in “Procedures for Handling Allegations of Misconduct Against Our Ordained Ministers Or Our Lay Leaders” from the Council of Ministers Handbook (dated July 2012).

Epilogue

For our own sakes, the Lord expects and wants our very best. The preceding guidelines are an effort to define that “best” in the context of our own times and culture, and they are offered in the knowledge that there will be failures and shortcomings. As we try to live up to them, there will be needs for clarification and change, and it is the responsibility of the Council of Ministers to keep us working on the subject of ethics for our ministry. Only to the extent that we are in agreement in principle will the guidelines be felt as supportive of our best rather than as threatening, and it is therefore crucial that any disagreement with them be openly expressed. They are not valid for all time, and will be effective only as they are truly an ongoing part of our collegial process.
Bylaws of the Corporation of the New Church Theological School
DBA Center for Swedenborgian Studies

Article I.
Name, Purpose and Location

Section 1. The Corporation of the New Church Theological School operates the Center for Swedenborgian Studies, an institution serving the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America and Canada (hereafter referred to as General Convention). The Corporation was incorporated in 1881 as the Corporation of the New Church Theological School under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and is a non-profit, tax exempt institution operating for religious and educational purposes.

Section 2. The address of the principal of the Corporation shall be as follows: Center for Swedenborgian Studies, 50 Quincy St., Cambridge, MA 02138-3013.

Article II.
Members of the Corporation

Section 1. The membership of the Corporation shall consist of two classes:

A. At-large Members
Any person who (i) has been accepted as a member at large of Swedenborgian Church pursuant to the Constitution of the General Convention or (ii) is a member of any Association or Society constituent of the General Convention, who is 18 years of age or older, may become an at-large member of this Corporation by signing these Bylaws and he or she shall cease to be an at-large member hereof upon ceasing to have the qualifications above named, or upon filing with the Clerk a written withdrawal of membership.

B. Representative Members
Each member of the General Council of the Convention shall be a representative member of the Corporation upon election to the General Council and each shall cease to be a representative member of the Corporation upon expiration of his or
her term of office on the General Council or upon his or her resignation therefrom.

Section 2. An adequate and current alphabetical file of the active membership of the Corporation shall be established and maintained in the offices of the Corporation by the Clerk, and shall be available for inspection at all reasonable times to the Trustees and members of the Corporation.

Article III.
Meetings of the Members

Section 1. Place for Meetings. All meetings of the at-large and representative members shall be held at the principal office of the Corporation in Massachusetts unless the Articles of Organization permit the holding of meetings of members outside of Massachusetts and unless a different place is fixed by the Trustees or the Dean and stated in the notice of the meeting.

Section 2. Annual Meeting. The annual meeting of the members shall be held during the annual convention of the Swedenborgian Church. If no annual meeting is held in accordance with the foregoing provisions, a special meeting may be held in lieu thereof, and any action taken at such meeting shall have the same effect as if at taken at the annual meeting.

Section 3. Special Meetings. Special meetings of the members may be requested by the Chair or by the Trustees, and shall be called by the Clerk, or in the case of death, absence, incapacity or refusal of the Clerk, by any other Officer, upon written application of three or more members entitled to vote thereat.

Section 4. Notice of Meetings. A notice of every meeting of the members, stating the place, day and hour thereof and the purpose for which the meeting is called, shall be published by the Clerk in accordance with the provisions of Article V, Section 4 of these Bylaws.

Section 5. Quorum of Members. Ten at-large members and a majority of the representative members as shown on the records of the General Convention shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the members of the Corporation.
Section 6. **Adjournments.** Any meeting of the members may be ad-
journed to any other time and to any other place permitted by these Bylaws by the
members present at the meeting, although less than a quorum; or by any Officer
entitled to preside or to act as Clerk of such meeting if no member is present. It
shall not be necessary to notify any member of any adjournment. Any business
which could have been transacted at any meeting of the members as originally
called may be transacted at any adjournment thereof.

Section 7. **Voting.** Each member of each class of the Corporation shall be
entitled to one vote on all matters before the members, and at-large and represent-
tative members shall each vote as a separate class. When a quorum is present, a
majority vote shall decide any matter except where a larger vote is required by the
law, the Articles of Organization, or these Bylaws.

Any election of Trustees by the members of a class shall be determined by a
plurality of the votes cast by members of that class present and entitled to vote at
the election.

**Article IV.**

**Board of Trustees**

Section 1. The business and affairs, including all academic affairs, of the
Corporation shall be managed by the Board of Trustees, who shall have and may
exercise all the powers of the Corporation except such as required by law or the
Corporation’s Articles of Organization or Bylaws to be otherwise exercised. Ex-
cept as so limited, the powers and duties of the Board of Trustees shall include,
but not be limited to, the following:

1. to determine and review periodically the purposes and the mission of the
   institution.
2. to select the Dean of the institution, and to support the Dean in the exer-
   cise of his or her responsibilities.
3. to recommend, review, and approve changes in the educational programs
   of the institution, consistent with its mission.
4. to establish policies and procedures regarding salary schedules, appoint-
   ment, and dismissal of each class of employees.
5. to oversee and approve the budget of the institution, and establish policy
guidelines for the endowment and for all investments and major fund
raising efforts.
6. to authorize the purchase, management and sale of all land, buildings or
7. to authorize the construction of new buildings and major renovations of existing buildings.
8. to authorize the incurring of debts by the institution and securing thereof by mortgage and pledge of real and personal property tangible and intangible.
9. to authorize any changes in tuition and fees within the institution
10. to authorize officers or agents of the institution to accept gifts or bequests on behalf of the institution.
11. to ensure that adequate due process policies and procedures exist.

Section 2. Election and Tenure. The Board of Trustees shall consist of eight (8) elected members and four (4) ex officio members. At-large members and representative members shall each, voting as a separate class, be entitled to elect four (4) of the members of the Board of Trustees; PROVIDED THAT at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the members of the Board of Trustees elected by the at-large members of the Corporation and at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the members of the Board of Trustees elected by the representative members be members of the Corporation.

Other than as hereinafter provided, Trustees shall be elected for a term of four (4) years. The terms of the elected Trustees shall be staggered, so that the term of one at-large elected Trustee and one representative elected Trustee shall expire each year. When Trustees are elected, their term shall be designated in order to achieve such staggered terms.

No member of the Board of Trustees shall be elected for more than two (2) consecutive full four-year terms unless the members at the annual meeting of the Corporation vote to permit a member of the Board of Trustees to be elected for one (1) additional consecutive four-year term or part thereof, if applicable, where the members agree that extraordinary circumstances warrant such extension of the maximum term; PROVIDED HOWEVER THAT no further extension of the consecutive term of office for such member of the Board of Trustees shall be granted.

Upon the completion of the maximum term of the Board of Trustees, a minimum of a one-year absence is required before eligibility for re-election to membership on the Board of Trustees is restored.

As the terms of the Trustees originally elected by at-large members expire, successors will be elected by at-large members. As the terms of the Trustees originally elected by representative members expire, successors will be elected by representative members.
Notwithstanding the foregoing, any Trustee who fails to attend at least one (1) meeting of the Board of Trustees during any one (1) calendar year of their term (provided that more than one meeting was held in such year) shall be deemed to have submitted his or her resignation as a Trustee, with no further act on his or her part, to the Board of Trustees as of December 31st of such year; PROVIDED THAT the Chair, in his or her reasonable discretion, may waive such resignation requirement (either before or after said December 31st, but prior to the filling of the resulting vacancy) upon the receipt of a written notice from such absentee Trustee providing good and sufficient reasons for his or her absence. In the event that a Trustee shall be deemed to have submitted his or her resignation in accordance with this paragraph, the vacancy thereby created shall be filled in accordance with Section 3 of this Article IV.

The President of the General Convention of the Swedenborgian Church and the Dean of the Center for Swedenborgian Studies shall be ex officio members of the Board of Trustees with a vote. If the Clerk and Treasurer elected by the Board are not members of the Board, they shall become ex officio members of the Board without a vote. The President of the Graduate Theological Union and one representative from the CSS student body (see Section 9) shall sit on the Center for Swedenborgian Studies Board of Trustees without a vote. The aforesaid President, Dean and Graduate Theological Union representative ex officio members serve at the pleasure of the Corporation and are not governed by the term restrictions or rotation requirements of these Bylaws.”

Section 3. Vacancies. Any vacancy in the Board of Trustees, however occurring, may be filled by appointment by the Board of Trustees until the next annual meeting provided, however, that a vacancy resulting from the enlargement of the board shall only be filled by election by the members of the Corporation. In the case of a vacancy occurring other than by enlargement of the Board of Trustees such vacancy shall be filled at the next annual or special meeting only by the Class of Members who had elected the prior Trustee.

Section 4. Enlargement of the Board of Trustees. The number of the Board of Trustees may be increased or decreased at any annual or special meeting of the members provided however that the number of members of the Board of Trustees shall always be set at an even number.
Section 5. *Trustees’ Meetings.* The Board of Trustees shall meet at least three times each year. One of these meetings shall be held without notice as soon as practicable after the adjournment of the annual meeting of members.

Section 6. *Notice of Trustees’ Meetings.* Meetings of the Trustees may be called by the Dean, the Chair or any three or more Trustees by a request in writing addressed to the Clerk. Notice of the time and place of all regular meetings of the Trustee shall be given by the Clerk and of any special meeting of the Clerk or the Officer calling the meeting. Notice may be given orally, by telephone, telegraph, email or in writing; and such notice given in time to enable the Trustees to attend, or in any case, notice sent by mail, email, or telegraph to a Trustee’s usual or last known place of business or residence or email address, at least ten days before the meeting, shall be sufficient. Any meeting of the Trustees shall be a legal meeting without notice if each Trustee, by a writing filed with the records of the meeting, waives such notice.

The Board of Trustees may permit any or all Trustees to participate in any meeting of the Trustees by, or conduct any meeting through the use of, any means of communication by which all Trustees participating may simultaneously hear each other during the meeting. A Trustee participating in a meeting by this means is considered to be present in person at the meeting.

Every Trustee who attends a meeting without protesting prior thereto or at its commencement the lack of notice to him or her, and every absent Trustee who shall before or after meeting waive notice thereof by a writing filed with the records of the meeting or who shall sign such records, shall be deemed to have been fully notified of the meeting.

Section 7. *Quorum of Trustees.* At any meeting of the Trustees, a majority of the trustees then in office shall constitute a quorum. Unless otherwise provided by law, the Articles of Organization or these Bylaws, a vote of a majority of those present at any meeting at which there is a quorum shall be sufficient to transact business or to take any action by the Trustees.

Section 8. *Action by Unanimous Written Consent.* Any action may be taken by the Board of Trustees without a meeting if the action is taken by the unanimous consent of the Trustees, The action must be evidenced by one or more consents describing the action taken, in writing, signed by each Trustee, or delivered to the Corporation by electronic transmission, to the address specified by the Corporation for the purpose, or if no address has been specified, to the principal
office of the Corporation, addressed to the Secretary or other officer or agent hav-
ing custody of the records of proceedings of the Board of Trustees, and included
in the minutes or filed with the corporate records reflecting the action taken, Ac-
tion taken under this section is effective when the last Trustee signs or delivers the
consent, unless the consent specifies a different effective date. A consent signed or
delivered under this section has the effect of a meeting vote and may be described
as such in any document.

Section 9. Student Representative. At the annual meeting of the Board of
Trustees held at the annual meeting of the General Convention of the Sweden-
borgian Church each year, one student of the Pacific School of Religion enrolled
in the Masters of Divinity Program with the Center for Swedenborgian Studies
will be asked to serve on the Board of Trustees as a representative of all of the
students enrolled with Center for Swedenborgian Studies. Such student repre-
sentative is to attend all, or at least a portion, of any and all meetings of the Board of
Trustees. The Executive Committee will determine in advance of each meeting
whether such student representative is to be in attendance for the entire meeting
or portion therefore. If attendance of only a portion of the meeting is required, the
Executive Committee will also determine the parameters of attendance. Such po-
sition is an ex officio representation with no vote. Such student will be expected
to make a report to the Board of Trustees at each meeting.”

Article V.
Officers of the Board of Trustees

Section 1. The Officers of the Board of Trustees shall be the Officers of
the Corporation and shall consist of a Chair, a Vice Chair, a Clerk, a Treasurer,
and other such officers, including one or more Assistant Treasurers and Assistant
Clerks, as the Trustees may determine. These Officers shall be elected annually
at the meeting of the Trustees following the annual meeting of the members by
the Board of Trustees and shall serve until their successors are elected and assume
the duties of their respective offices. The Chair and Vice Chair must be Board
members but the Clerk, Treasurer, Assistant Clerks and Assistant Treasurers, need
not be. Officers are eligible for re-election.

All Officers of the Board of Trustees shall serve at the discretion of the
Board of Trustees and shall be subject to removal by the affirmative vote of two-
thirds of the Trustees present at a meeting of the Board of Trustees.
A vacancy in any of the offices of the Board of Trustees may be filled at any meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Section 2. **Chair.** The Chair of the Board of Trustees shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Trustees and at the annual Corporation meeting, serve as Chair of the Executive Committee, and appoint all committees and their Chairs in consultation with the Dean of the Center for Swedenborgian Studies.

The Chair shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by law or by the action of the Board.

Section 3. **Vice Chair.** The Vice Chair of the Board of the Trustees shall perform such duties as shall be assigned by the Board. In case of death, absence, or inability of the Chair of the Board of Trustees to act, the Vice Chair shall discharge the duties of the Chair until such time as a new Chair is elected by the Board.

Section 4. **Clerk.** The Clerk shall serve as the Clerk of the Corporation and shall keep the records of the Corporation and the Board of Trustees, and shall give notice of all meetings of the Board of Trustees and of the members.

The Clerk shall be responsible for the maintenance of the file of the membership of the Corporation. He or she shall provide the notice of the Annual Meeting of the Corporation to be published in The Messenger at least 60 days prior to the date of the meeting. If The Messenger is not published at a convenient time, notices of the Annual Meeting shall be sent by first class to each member at least ten days before such Annual Meeting. Notice of special meetings of the Corporation shall be issued in the same manner. It shall be sufficient notice if mailed to the last and usual place of residence of each member in accordance with the records in the membership list. The Assistant Clerks shall have such powers and duties including any and all of the powers and duties of the Clerk as the Board of Trustees may prescribe.

Section 5. The Treasurer shall be responsible for carrying out the mandates of the Board of Trustees in overseeing the financial resources of the Corporation, including cash securities, stocks, bonds and all other property, personal or real, owned by the Corporation. The Treasurer shall assure that all books and accounts are accurately kept, and furthermore, shall present a full and detailed statement properly audited by an independent certified public accountant to the Corporation at its annual meeting and, if requested, at any other meeting of the
Board of Trustees or any meeting of its committees. The Assistant Treasurer shall have such powers and duties including any and all of the powers and duties of the Treasurer as the Board of Trustees may prescribe.

Article VI
Committees of the Board

Section 1. Executive Committee. There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of the Officers of the Board of Trustees. The Dean shall be an ex officio member of the Executive Committee with a vote. The President of the General Convention shall be an ex officio member of the Executive Committee with a vote. The Executive Committee shall have authority to act on behalf of the Board of Trustees on all matters except for the following which shall be reserved for the Board as specified elsewhere in these Bylaws: Dean Selection; Trustee and Board Officer Selection; Charter and Bylaws Amendment; Review of Institutional Mission and Purposes; Incurring Corporate Indebtedness; Expenditure of Funds Not Provided for in the Budget; Approval of the Annual Budget; the Conferral of Degrees; and the Purchase and Sale of Real Estate.

Section 2. Nominating Committee – At-Large Class. On or before March 1 every year the Chair shall appoint a Nominating Committee to select at-large nominees for the Board of Trustees. The Nominating Committee shall be composed of three at-large members of the Corporation at least one of whom shall not be a member of the Board of Trustees. The Nominating Committee shall make its report to the Annual Meeting of the Corporation.

Section 3. Nominating Committee – Representative Class. General Convention shall present nominees to the representative class at the Annual Meeting of the Corporation.

Other Committees. At the discretion of the Board of Trustees, other committees may be formed and discharged as needed.

Article VII.
Officers of the Institution

Section 1. The Dean shall be the chief educational and administrative officer of the institution. He or she shall exercise general responsibility for the overall affairs of the institution and shall bring those matters to the attention of
the Board of Trustees that are appropriate and necessary to keep it fully informed and to enable it to meet its policy-making responsibilities. The Dean shall be an ex officio member of the Board of Trustees and of all committees thereof.

The Dean shall appoint all other administrators, staff members, and temporary faculty members. Regular faculty appointments shall be presented to the Board for prior approval.

Article VIII.
Indemnification

Section 1. Each person now or hereafter a Trustee or Officer of the Corporation (and his or her heirs, executors and administrators) shall be entitled, without prejudice to any other rights he or she may have, to be reimbursed by the Corporation for, and indemnified by the Corporation against, all costs and expenses reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with or arising out of any claim, action, suit or proceeding of whatever nature in which he or she may be involved as a party or otherwise or with which he or she may be threatened by reason of his or her having served as a Trustee or Officer of the Corporation, or by reason of any action alleged to have been omitted by him or her as such Trustee or Officer, whether or not he or she be such Trustee or Officer at the time of incurring such cost or expenses, including amounts paid or incurred in connection with reasonable settlements (other than amounts paid to the Corporation itself) made with the approval of the Board of Trustees of the Corporation and with a view to the curtailment of costs of litigation.

No such reimbursement of indemnity shall be paid or made for any expenses incurred or settlement made by such Trustee or Officer in connection with any matter as to which he or she shall be finally adjudicated in any such action, suit, or proceeding not to have acted in good faith and in the reasonable belief that his or her action was in the best interest of the Corporation, nor shall the amount of any such reimbursement or indemnity paid or made to any Trustee or Officer in respect of any matter on which settlement or compromise is effected, including the amount paid by such a Trustee or Officer in such settlement, exceed the expense which might reasonably have been paid or incurred by such Trustee or Officer in conducting such actual or threatened litigation to a final conclusion.

Payment by the Corporation of expenses incurred by such Trustee or Officer in defending any claim, action, suit or proceeding in advance of its final disposition may be made upon receipt of an undertaking by the person indemni-
fied to repay such payment if he or she shall be adjudicated to be not entitled to indemnification under the laws of Massachusetts. The Corporation and its Trustees and Officers shall not be liable to anyone for making any determination as to the existence or absence of liability, or for making or refusing to make any payment hereunder the basis of such determination, or for taking or omitting to take any other action hereunder, in reliance upon the advice of counsel.

Article IX.
Miscellaneous Provisions

Section 1. The Bylaws of the Corporation may be made, amended or repealed at any Annual or Special Meeting of the Members at which a quorum is present by an affirmative two-thirds vote of those at-large and representative class members present and voting, each class voting as a separate class, provided that notice of the substance of the proposed amendment is stated in the notice of such meeting.

Article X.
Miscellaneous Provisions

Section 1. Parliamentary Authority. The parliamentary procedure shall be governed, in all cases not specifically covered by these Bylaws, by Robert’s Rules of Order.

Section 2. Fiscal year. Except as from time to time otherwise determined by the Trustees, the fiscal year of the Corporation shall end on June 30th.

Section 3. Seal. The seal of the Corporation shall, subject to alteration by the Trustees, bear its name and the year of its incorporation.

Section 4. Execution of Instruments. All check, deeds, leases, transfers, contracts, bonds, notes and other obligations authorized to be executed by and officer of the Corporation in its behalf shall be signed by the Chair or the Treasurer except as the Trustees may generally or in particular cases otherwise determine.

Section 5. Evidence of Authority. A certificate by the Clerk or a temporary Clerk as to any action taken by the Trustees or any officer or representative of
the Corporation shall as to all persons who rely thereon in good faith be conclusive evidence of such action.

Section 6. **Articles of Organization.** All references in these Bylaws to the Articles of Organization shall be deemed to refer to the Articles of Organization of the Corporation, as amended and in effect from time to time.

**Article XI.**

**Former Bylaws**

Section 1. All former Bylaws will be revoked and repealed immediately prior to the Annual Meeting following the adoption of these Bylaws, provided that General Convention, by appropriate votes, supports the provisions therein.
BYLAWS OF THE WAYFARERS CHAPEL

The Wayfarers Chapel is a national memorial to Emanuel Swedenborg and its services and programs bear witness to the vision of Christianity set forth in the teachings of Swedenborg and in the tradition and practices of the Swedenborgian Church.

Honoring and respecting a variety of approaches to the religious life, the Chapel welcomes all people. The Chapel gardens and grounds are to be maintained beautifully, so that the whole site may be consecrated to the worship and love of God, nurturing the experience of the Divine presence among us.

The uses of the Chapel are many, providing a unique experience for individual wayfarers, couples, groups, and families as a place to meditate and commune with God; a place to nourish the soul and spirit unfettered by the usual man-made structural separations from the natural world that God has created.

The Chapel and grounds provide an inspirational background for the celebration of worship; sacraments and special services to commemorate our Lord’s birth, the Last Supper, and resurrection; and the celebration of marriage, baptism, and the transition which is called death.

The educational ministry of the Chapel can be carried out in the Visitors Center including the sale of books, classes and discussion groups, exhibits, lectures and films. Marriage counseling, personal growth enhancement programs and community events are also an integral part of experiencing the Wayfarers Chapel.

In summary the Chapel’s uses are: solace and meditation for the wayfarer, celebration of the Christian rites and sacraments, educational programs and exhibits, personal growth programs, and community involvement in an environment as harmonious with God’s own natural beauty as the imagination can envision.

BYLAWS

PREAMBLE

The Board of Directors was established by a vote of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the USA, Inc., currently known as and hereinafter referred to as The Swedenborgian Church, at its session in June 1950. The vote at that time read in part as follows: “Resolved – That the use, maintenance, and management of the property at Palos Verdes now known as ‘The Wayfarers Chapel: a National Memorial to Emanuel Swedenborg,’ be placed in the hands of a Committee consisting of five members, a majority of whom shall be members of this Convention, who shall be appointed by the President with the approval of the General Council, and in addition the President of Convention and the President of
the California Association (now known as the Pacific Coast Association) both ex officio:…the initial appointment of said five members to be for terms of one, two, three, four, and five years each; three of said members to be residents within the limits of the Pacific Coast Association.”

At the annual session of The Swedenborgian Church in June 1979, the General Council increased Board membership from five members to seven.

At the annual session of The Swedenborgian Church in June 1983, the General Council reduced the number of appointed members from seven to six.

ARTICLE I

MEMBERSHIP ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1.

In accordance with the action of the General Convention cited above, the appointive members of the Board shall consist of six persons, two appointments to be made each year by the President of The Swedenborgian Church with the approval of General Council. Board members shall be appointed for a term of three years. Those members who have served three consecutive three-year terms, including ex-officio members, shall not be eligible for immediate reappointment.

A member who is chairperson of the Board at the completion of the third year of his/her membership term shall have that membership extended to the close of the next fall meeting of the Board.

A person appointed to fulfill an unexpired term of two years or longer is eligible for reappointment to only two additional consecutive three-year terms. Vacancies on the Board shall be filled by appointment by the President of The Swedenborgian Church with approval of General Council.

Section 2.

Ex officio members of the Board shall include the President of The Swedenborgian Church, the President of the Pacific Coast Association, and the members of the Leadership Team. In the absence of the President of the Swedenborgian Church, the President’s designated representative may represent the President and be accorded full voting privileges. In the absence of the President of the Pacific Coast Association, or when a Leadership Team member is President, a designated representative may be appointed to represent him/her, and be accorded full voting privileges. The Leadership Team members shall serve without vote.
Section 3.
Three or more of the appointive members of the Board must reside within the limits of the Pacific Coast Association. All voting members of the Board must be members of The Swedenborgian Church.

ARTICLE II

OFFICERS
Section 1.
The officers of the Board of Directors shall be a Chairperson, Treasurer, and Secretary.
Section 2.
The Chairperson of the Board shall preside at all meetings of the Board and its Executive Committee. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Secretary will convene the meeting and preside over the election of a Chairperson, Pro Tempore.
Section 3.
The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and one other Board member (called a Member at Large) plus the Leadership Team serving ex-officio, without vote. The Executive Committee shall have the power to act for the Board in the interim between Board meetings with the limitations set forth in Article IV, Section 2.
Section 4.
The Officers and other members of the Executive Committee shall be elected by the Board at the fall meeting and serve for one year.

ARTICLE III

MEETINGS
Section 1.
There shall be three regular meetings of the Board, to be held normally in January, May, and September, open to all members of The Swedenborgian Church. The September meeting shall be the annual meeting. Special meetings of the full Board may be called by the Executive Committee or any three members of the Board, two of whom shall not be part of the Leadership Team. With the approval of the Board, any meeting can be held via telephone conference call. Votes taken by letter or the internet shall be confirmed at the next regular meeting of the Board. Minutes of the Board meetings shall be distributed to Board members and
shall be approved at the next meeting of the Board. A quorum shall consist of four
voting members.

Section 2.

In the interim between Board meetings, the Executive Committee may meet if
necessary. The Chairperson shall schedule an Executive Committee meeting upon
request of any two members of the Executive Committee, one of whom may be
an employee of the Board, or at the request of three members of the full Board,
one of whom shall not be part of the Leadership Team. The Executive Committee
minutes shall be distributed to all Board members. Actions of the Executive Com-
mittee shall be confirmed at the next meeting of the Board.

Section 3.

Between meetings of the Board, votes may be taken in any written form with
the same effect as if taken at a regular meeting of the Board, except that in such
written votes a two-thirds vote of the whole Board shall be necessary to decide the
matter, and provided further that if any member of the Board requests its Chair-
person in writing to delay action on the request under consideration, the Chairper-
son shall notify in writing all members of the Board of all objections made and
reasons therefore, and shall allow two weeks for reversal of votes before the count
of the vote is finally made.

Section 4.

The provisions of Robert’s Rules of Order shall be used as a guide for the
conducting of business.

Section 5.

Meetings of the Board or Executive Committee may be conducted by confer-
ence call, computer conference, or face to face.

ARTICLE IV

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 1.

The Board of Directors shall have superintendence of the services, programs,
and activities of the Chapel. It shall employ the Leadership Team and evaluate
their performance annually.

Members of the Board shall make themselves available to listen to problems
and concerns of the Leadership Team and either individually or as a group, but
decisions can only be made by the full Board or the Executive Committee as out-
lined in Article III.

The Board of Directors shall establish the general policies of the Chapel and
develop long-range plans for improvements.

The Board shall adopt the annual budget, submit copies to the General Council for their information and approval, and require a financial audit on the same schedule as the General Convention’s audits, with a financial review in the years audits are not conducted.

The Board shall submit an annual report of The Wayfarers Chapel to the Secretary of The Swedenborgian Church for inclusion in the annual Journal of The Swedenborgian Church.

In carrying out its duties, the Board is responsible to The Swedenborgian Church and its General Council.

Section 2.

The Executive Committee shall act for the Board of Directors in the interim between Board meetings. Between Board meetings it shall have the authority to amend the budget so long as expenditures do not exceed the anticipated income.

The Executive Committee shall carry out the directives of the Board and act on all matters referred to it by the Board. It shall evaluate the effectiveness of the Leadership Team members and make recommendations to the full Board regarding their employment and salaries and other matters germane to Chapel operation.

Section 3.

The Leadership Team shall implement policies of the Board through day-to-day administration of Chapel activities as designated in the Responsibility Matrix. They shall employ, supervise, and evaluate Chapel staff. They shall keep the Board and Executive Committee informed of services, programs, activities, capital improvements, and the financial status of the Chapel.

Section 4.

The Leadership Team, working with the Treasurer, shall annually prepare a preliminary budget for the Board.

In carrying out their duties, the Leadership Team is responsible to the Board of Directors and its Executive Committee.

ARTICLE V

AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended at any meeting of the Board of Directors by a two-thirds vote of the Directors present at the time the vote is taken provided that notice of the proposed amendment shall first have been sent to Board members at least two weeks before the Board meeting. This notice may be dispensed with
for any special occasion by a unanimous vote of the Board members present and voting, provided a quorum exists.

BYLAWS OF THE SWEDENBORGIAN COMMUNITY

A fully online, minister-led outreach and connectional ministry of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem, Inc.

The mission of this ministry is to create:

• a community where members are known to each other, feel free to share openly their personal journey of faith, and feel nurtured and supported in their walk with the Lord.

• an open and welcoming community for new spiritual seekers, introducing the Swedenborgian faith in an accessible way through powerful testimony and life experience with it.

BYLAWS

PREAMBLE – HISTORY

At its fall meeting in 2004, the General Council of the Swedenborgian Church (General Convention) determined to research the idea of an online ministry that would connect distant Church members and also be an outreach ministry to the world. A Research Committee was appointed for this project. The Research Committee reported regularly and in the summer of 2005, the General Council accepted a proposal to establish an online-only outreach and connectional ministry. The Research Committee was discharged with thanks and a Steering Committee was appointed to organize and create this Internet Ministry, with initial funding from the denomination.

In the fall of 2005, the Steering Committee brought a complete proposal to establish www.swedenborgiancommunity.org along with a request to fund a dedicated part-time minister. The General Council approved both requests and the search for a minister was opened. The General Council approved a part-time contract for the first denominational “cyber minister” in the early spring of 2006, supported the design and implementation of a dedicated website for this new ministry and www.swedenborgiancommunity.org was officially launched at the denomination’s annual convention at Urbana University on June 26, 2006.

The Steering Committee continued to serve through June 27, 2008, when it was officially thanked for its diligent, excellent work and discharged. The General Council appointed an oversight committee for www.swedenborgiancommunity.org at its meeting on June 27, 2008. This committee is appointed annually by the General Council and has been named The Central Committee since 2011.

The General Council affirmed www.swedenborgiancommunity.org as a specific, recognized ministry of the denomination at its post-convention meeting
on July 8, 2012, in Bridgewater, MA.

ARTICLE I. CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Number and terms. The Central Committee of www.swedenborgiancommunity.org shall consist of three appointed members. Central Committee members will serve three-year terms, with one consecutive renewal possible. Terms of service will be staggered so that the entire committee membership is not new each year.

Central Committee Member Functions. The types of expertise and experience that the Central Committee will consider in recommending new members for the appointment include: familiarity with the functions of the General Convention, writing, ministry, financial budgeting and reporting, Internet technology, program creation and presentational skills. All Central Committee members will become registrants of the ministry, and at least one should be selected from the online community. At least two must be members of a General Convention ministry.

Appointment Process. Upon ratification and implementation of these Bylaws, the Central Committee will recommend Committee appointments to the General Council annually for affirmation by the General Council at its post-convention meeting.

Ex officio members. The minister of www.swedenborgiancommunity.org will serve ex officio without vote on the Central Committee, and is not counted toward a quorum. The Vice-President of the General Convention will serve ex officio with vote on the Central Committee.

Quorum. A quorum is achieved with one less than the number of voting Committee members at the time. If the Committee size should be reconfigured to six or more members, one more than half of the number of voting members will constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE II. OFFICERS

The Central Committee will self-select its internal organizational structure regarding facilitator, financial overseer and secretarial position from within its membership. If the Committee size should be reconfigured to six or more members, the Committee will formally vote to fill offices.
ARTICLE III. MEETINGS AND DECISION-MAKING

Regular and special meetings will be held via telephone conference call or computer-generated voice or video conference. As is possible, the Central Committee will meet in person during the annual convention of the Swedenborgian Church.

Generally, the Central Committee will make decisions through consensus. The Committee will have formal votes on legal matters such as the minister’s annual contract recommendation, finalization of the annual budget for www.swedenborgiancommunity.org and on any major changes to the ministry’s website.

ARTICLE IV. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Section 1. General responsibilities

The Central Committee shall establish the general policies and have superintendence of the services, programs and activities of this ministry.

Individual members of the Committee shall make themselves available to listen to problems and concerns of the Minister or other employees, but decisions and/or adjudications can only be made by the Central Committee as a whole.

The Central Committee shall submit a report on the work of the online ministry to the General Council at least annually.

The Central Committee will also submit a report for inclusion in the annual Journal of the Swedenborgian Church.

Other reports will be prepared and submitted as necessary.

Section 2. Personnel Responsibilities

The Central Committee, following the denomination’s open search process, will select the Minister for www.swedenborgiancommunity.org from the Roll of Ministers of the General Convention and recommend the hiring of that minister to the General Council of the General Convention. The contract will be between the selected Minister and the General Convention.

The Minister is responsible to the Central Committee and the Central Committee will evaluate the Minister annually. The Minister will implement policies of the Central Committee through day-to-day programming and services of www.swedenborgiancommunity.org. The Minister will report regularly to the Committee (frequency to be determined by the Committee and the Minister), and will direct/supervise and evaluate any part time technical/administrative assistant
Section 3. Financial responsibilities

The Central Committee, in consultation with the Minister, shall annually prepare a budget for the needs of www.swedenborgiancommunity.org. The Committee shall adopt the annual budget and submit it to the General Council for its approval. The annual budget for this ministry will be part of the complete annual budget of the General Convention, but the budget for www.swedenborgiancommunity.org will be administered by the Central Committee.

All financial transactions for www.swedenborgiancommunity.org will be handled through the General Convention’s Central Office. As long as the day-to-day financial transactions are handled through the denomination’s Central Office, and the ministry’s annual budget is an identified part of the denomination’s annual budget, audits and financial reviews of the finances of www.swedenborgiancommunity.org will be part of the overall audit/review process of the denomination as established by the General Council.

ARTICLE V. AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended at any meeting of the Central Committee by a two-thirds vote of the members present at the time the vote is taken, provided that notice of the proposed amendment shall first have been sent to Committee members at least two weeks before the Committee meeting. This notice may be dispensed with for any special occasion by a unanimous vote of the Committee members present and voting, provided a quorum exists.

Amendments to these Bylaws are subject to the approval of the General Council of the Swedenborgian Church in North America.

Approved by the General Council of the General Convention, June 25, 2013

Adopted by Central Committee of www.SwedenborgianCommunity.org, July 13, 2013 (Central Committee membership at time of vote: Dr. Page Morahan, Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mitchell, Ms. Christine Laitner; Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake, ex officio w/o vote)
SWEDENBORGIAN BODIES

The following Swedenborgian organizations are independent of our organization but wish to maintain a close relationship with us. We welcome them in our fellowship.

UNITED STATES:
The General Church of the New Jerusalem
Mailing Address: Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009
P: (267) 502-4900
Website: www.newchurch.org

The Lord’s New Church Which is Nova Hierosolyma
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 7
Bryn Athyn, PA 19009-0007
Physical Headquarters: 1725 Huntingdon Road
Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006
P: (215) 947-2727
Email: info@thelordsnewchurch.org
Website: www.thelordsnewchurch.org

GREAT BRITAIN: The General Conference of the New Church of Great Britain
First Conference 1789; General Conference Deeds enrolled 1822. Incorporated, 1872

Headquarters: Purley Chase Centre, Purley Chase Lane, Mancetter, Nr Atherstone, Warwickshire CV9 2RQ, England
Spiritual Leader: Rev. D.E. Gaffney
david.gaffney@generalconference.org.uk
Chair: Mr. D. R. A. Friend
Web Site: www.generalconference.org.uk

THE CONTINENTAL (EUROPEAN) ASSOCIATION OF THE NEW CHURCH
(Organized in 1965 by the French Federation, the Swiss Bund, the New Church in Germany, the New Church in Vienna, and the New Church in Italy.)
Secretary: Rev. Jean Vidil  
c/o Nouvelle Eglise et Centre Swedenborg  
Rue Caroline 21  
CH-1003, Lausanne, Switzerland  
P: (0) 21-23-78-77

AUSTRIA: The New Church Society of Vienna  
President: Mr. Werner Prochaska  
Soesergasse 4, A-1010 Vienna

Secretary: Mrs. Gerda Scholz  
Untere Augartenstrasse 1/3  
A-1025 Vienna

Services: Intermittently at the home of Mr. W. Prochaska

DENMARK: Den Nye Kirkes Menighed  
Vice Pres: Mr. Oliver Bolsen  
Nansensgade 71 tv., 1366 Copenhagen V.  
Tel: 31 13 52 39

Secretary: Miss Inger Ullrich,  
Osterpark 1, 2630 Tastrup  
Tel: 43-99 25 59

Treasurer: Mr. Manfred Ullrich  
Valbyholm 33, 2, 292 Skellet, 2500 Valby  
Tel: 36-45 00 30

Board Member: Mrs. Laura Bolsen  
Osterbrogade 228, 1.th. 2100, Copenhagen O  
Denmark  
Tel: 369-27 04 15

Pastor: Rev. Gudmund Bolsen  
Osterbrogade 228, 1.th. 2100 Copenhagen O  
Denmark

FRANCE: Association Cultuzelle La Presle  
Secretary: Colette Gagnon  
Gvaude Rue, 71520 Tramayes
Chrysalis Centre (Workshops and Seminars)

Leader: Rev. Patrick Duvivier
Ipailla 06540 Saorge, France

Phone: 06 13 51 32 58
Email: Francecomechrysalis@msn.com

GERMANY: Neue Kirche in Deutschland

President: Mrs. Barbara Schmidt,
Rosbaumweg 21D-78 Freiburg i Br.

Berlin

President: Mr. Peter Keune
Schmarjestr. 2, D – Berlin – 37

Secretary: Mr. Werner Podlich
Falkenseer Chausse 207, D-1 Berlin 20

Treasurer: Mrs. Gertrude Engling
Services: Fontane Str. 17 A, Berlin 33, Grunewald

Berlin-Grunewald

Lay Leader: Mr. Peter Keune
Nordrhein Westfalen, Heuverstrasse 16, D-463
Bochum

President: Mr. Horst Moelleken
Im neuen Weg 34, D-5480 Remagen

Secretary: Rekha Moelleken
Im neuen Weg 34, D-5480 Remagen

Treasurer: Bernhard Willimzig, Detmold

South West Germany

President: Frau B. Schmidt
Rosbaumweg 20, 79110 Freiburg, Germany

Secretary: Mr. Friedmann Schmidt
Keferstrasse 3, Villigen D-7730

Lay Leader: Mr. Friedmann Schmidt

ITALY: Italian Society of the New Church

Secretary: Signor Fabio Barzelatto
Casella Postale 34, 30035 Mirano (VE), Italy
SWEDEN: Nya Kyrkans Svenska Forsamling
President: Mr. Milan Pokorny
Tallvagen 11, 12163 Johanneshov
Secretary: Mr. Nils-Sture Jansson
Distingsgrand, 37, Hagersten, Stockholm C
Services: Tegnerluden 7, Stockholm
(Occasionally at Gothenburg)
Pastor: Rev. Daniel Fitzpatrick
Lay Leader: Mr. Nils-Sture Jansson

SWITZERLAND: Neue Kirche Der Deutschen Schweiz
Apolostrasse 2, CH-8032 Zurich
www.swedenborg.ch
President: Mr. Heinz Grob Freie Str 22, CH-8280 Krenzlingen
Apolostrasse 2, CH-8032 Zurich
Treasurer: Mr. Philippe Galland, Rue San Pierre 3, case postale 62631002
Pastor: Jean Vidil
Rue Caroline 21, CH-1003, Lausanne
Tel: (0) 21-23 7877

PHILIPPINES: The National Convention of the Swedenborgian Churches (Philippines), Inc.
Incorporated in 1952. Consists of nine congregations totaling approximately 500 members.

General: Rev. Tomas C. Aquino
President: Dr. Simplicio de los Santos
Ministers: Rev. Tomas C. Aquino, Francisco Guzman,
Rev. Amos C. Aquino, Simplicio de los Santos

AUSTRALIA: The New Church in Australia
President: Rev. Julian Duckworth
Treasurer: Mr. Graham J. Hanna
Secretary: Mr. Kevin B. Attwatter
P.O. Box 9043, Port Macquarie, NSW, 2444
Website: www.newchurch.net.au/
AUSTRALIA: Australian New Church College

Director of Spiritual Training:

Rev. David W. Millar

Website: www.anccollege.org

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland, Society of the New Church, 5 Ballarat St., Ellerslie
Minister: Rev. Richard Keyworth

15 Dunkirk Rd., Panmure, Auckland
Phone: 64-9-527 6401, E-mail: drkeyworth@hotmail.com

For further information consult the General Conference.

OTHER NEW CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS AND ADDRESSES ABROAD

SOUTH AMERICA

Argentina, Buenos Aires
Christian Wildner
Sante Fe 1183, 3er Piso

Bolivia, La Paz
Richard Lago
Casilla 901

Ecuador, Quito
Hugo E. Happacher, c/o Lista de Correo

Paraguay, Chaco
Henry S. Bergen
Colonia Menno, Gruental

Surinam, Lilydorp
John Bosdorff

EAST INDIES

Java, Batavia
Ir. F. E. Eijken, Theresiahertweg 76

WEST INDIES

Cuba, Santiago
Dr. J. Cos Oramos
Dominican Republic, St. Domingo
Mr. E. Juliao Abreu
Calle 5A, No. 14, Los Minas

Puerto Rico, Mayaguez
Mrs. Velma B. Ramirez
2 Bosque Avenue, P.O. Box 848 00708

St. Kitts, Basseterre
George Herbert
College Street

ASIA

(Burma) Myanmar, Rangoon
Mr. John Tin Myint
93 Hrinsi Road, Alon P.O. Box 11121, Yang’oon

China
Swedeborg Society of China, Central P.O. Box 1063, Tokyo, Japan
James Wang Sum (MA, LLB, CCA), Honorary Secretary

Madurai
New Church Society, David Arul, Secretary
Swedeborg & Worldwide Publications
5-98 Butt Road, St. Thomas Mount, India Pin 6000016
Mr. David Samuels, 5-23, 7 Wells Street

Japan, Tokyo
Rev. Yoshii Yanase, Igusa 5-6-12, Suginami-Ku, Tokyo 167
Rev. Kei Torita, 1-170-3-1-606 Onuma-Cho, Kodaira-Shi, Tokyo 187-0001
Tokyo New Church, Rev. Kin’ichi Kiniyeda
30-5 Iwasaki-cho, Hodogaya-ku, Yokohama, 240 Japan
Phone/Fax: 011-81-45-331-4089

Seoul
Rev. Young K. Lee, IPO Box 1707

Sri Lanka, Rajagiriya
The New Church of Sri Lanka, Walter Jayewardene, Secretary
6 1/3, Old Road, Nawala, Rajagiriya, Sri Lanka
AFRICA

South Africa
Mooki Memorial College, P.O. Box 592, Orlando East 1803, Republic of South Africa
President: President Archbishop Benjamin Ngwexane

Nigeria, Ondo
The New Church in West Africa
Conference Secretary: Rev. Lawrence Wariboko
Headquarters: Owo, Ondo, Nigeria
46 Fajuyi Road, P.O. Box 22, Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria

Mauritius, Curepipe
The New Jerusalem Church, Rue Remono, P.O. Box 50, Port Louis,
Rue Champ-de-Lort row 2
Rev. Raghib Rizq
Directory of Associations, Churches, and Camps

Please notify the Secretary of the Swedenborgian Church and the Central Office of any changes to this list.

EASTERN CANADA CONFERENCE

CONTACT:
John McIntosh, 4 Dale Court, Thornhill, ON L3T 242 Canada
E: john.mcintosh@rogers.com.................................(905) 709-2980

OFFICERS
President .................................................................John McIntosh
Vice-President......................................................Peter Heuss
Secretary ..............................................................David Ingard
Treasurer .............................................................Grace Sudden

Member Churches and Camps: Church of the Good Shepherd (Kitchener, Ontario)

ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION

CONTACT:
Rev. Kit Billings, 1001 Madison Avenue, La Porte, IN 46350
E: revkit123@gmail.com.............................................(219) 380-4685

OFFICERS
President ...............................................................Rev. Kit Billings
Vice-President.......................................................Karen Feil
Secretary ...............................................................Paul Deming
Treasurer ..............................................................Barbara Halle

Member Churches and Camps: The Swedenborg Library & Spiritual Growth Center (Chicago, Illinois); Good Shepherd Community Church (Des Plaines, Illinois) (inactive); La Porte New Church (La Porte, Indiana); Lenox Township Church of the New Jerusalem (Norway, Iowa); Virginia Street Church (St. Paul, Minnesota); Church of the Open Word (St. Louis, Missouri)
KANSAS ASSOCIATION

CONTACT:
Veneta Lane, 2504 A Kent Place, Hutchinson, KS 67502
E: elane7@cox.net .................................................................(620) 662-3034

OFFICERS
President .................................................................Carl Helm
Vice-President ............................................................Rev. Eric Zacharias
Secretary .................................................................Veneta Z. Lane
Treasurer .................................................................Linda Kraus

Member Churches and Camps: Church of the New Jerusalem (Pawnee Rock, Kansas); Pretty Prairie New Jerusalem Church (Pretty Prairie, Kansas)

MAINE ASSOCIATION

CONTACT:
Susan Hougaz-McCormick, 27 Stonebrook Road, Windham, ME 04062
E: houmicks@gmail.com ...........................................................(207) 939-1609

OFFICERS
President .................................................................open
Vice-President .................................................................open
Secretary .................................................................Susan McCormick
Treasurer .................................................................Robin Thurston

Member Churches and Camps: Bath New Church (Bath, Maine); Fryeburg New Church (Fryeburg, Maine); Fryeburg New Church Assembly (Fryeburg, Maine); Portland New Church (Portland, Maine)
MASSACHUSETTS NEW CHURCH UNION

CONTACT:
Kelly Milne, MNCU, 50 Quincy Street, Cambridge, MA 02138
E: pastorkellyj317@gmail.com .......................................................(774) 444-0627

OFFICERS
President ............................................................................................ Kelly Milne
Vice-President .................................................................................... Rev. Donna Keane
Secretary ............................................................................................ Rev. Sage Cole
Treasurer ............................................................................................ Rev. Susannah Currie

Member Churches and Camps: Bridgewater New Jerusalem Church (Bridge-
water, Massachusetts); Cambridge Society of the New Jerusalem (Cambridge,
Massachusetts); Elmwood New Church (Elmwood, Massachusetts); Church of
the Open Word (Newtonville, Massachusetts)

MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION

CONTACT:
Barb Barber, 1247 Fontaine Street, Madison Heights, MI 48071
E: bribarber@netzero.net .................................................................(248) 376-4834

OFFICERS
President ............................................................................................ Barbara Barber
Vice-President .................................................................................... Marjie Leas
Secretary ............................................................................................ Ian Barber
Treasurer ............................................................................................ B.J. Neuenfeldt
Trustees ............................................................................................ Mary Lou Jerrett, Dorie Litchfield, Lori Patana

Member Churches and Camps: Almont New Church Assembly (Allenton,
Michigan);Royal Oak Church of the Holy City (Royal Oak, Michigan)
MIDDLE ATLANTIC ASSOCIATION

CONTACT:
Rev. Rich Tafel, 1611 16th Street NW, Washington, DC 20009
E: revtafel@holycitydc.org...........................................................(202) 462-6734

OFFICERS
President ............................................................... Rev. Richard L. Tafel
Vice-President ................................................................. Rev. Christine Campbell
Secretary ................................................................. open
Treasurer ................................................................. Robert W. “Robin” Tafel, Jr.

Member Churches and Camps: Church of the Holy City (Wilmington, Delaware); Church of the Holy City (Washington, District of Columbia); Swedenborgian Church at Temenos (West Chester, Pennsylvania)

NEW YORK ASSOCIATION

CONTACT:
Rev. Solomon Young Min Kim, Murray Hill Station, P.O. Box 1478, New York, NY 10156
E: newyorknewchurch@gmail.com...................................................(212) 685-8967

OFFICERS
President ............................................................... Rev. Solomon Youngmin Kim
Vice-President ................................................................. open
Secretary ................................................................. Anna Martinian
Treasurer ................................................................. Young Chon Min

Member Churches and Camps: Korean New Church (New York, New York); The New York New Church (New York, New York)
OHIO ASSOCIATION

CONTACTS:
Rev. Betsy Coffman, Urbana Swedenborgian Church, P.O. Box 840, Urbana, OH 43078
E: bcoffman45@gmail.com...........................................................(937) 631-0899

Robin Ferriman, Urbana Swedenborgian Church, P.O. Box 840, Urbana, OH 43078
E: robbincats@gmail.com...........................................................(937) 508-1601

OFFICERS
President .................................................................Bill Coffman
Vice-President .............................................................Gloria Toot
Recording Secretary .....................................................Robbin Ferriman
Treasurer ........................................................................Frank G. Doyle III

Nominating Committee: Betsy Coffman, chair; Pete Toot, Kent Myers
Scholarship Committee: Betsy Coffman, Dr. Barbara Mackey

Executive Committee: Consists of Officers, Ministers of the Churches within the Ohio Association and Representatives of each Church of the Ohio Association.

Member Churches and Camps: Swedenborg Chapel (Cleveland, Ohio); New Church of Montgomery (Cincinnati, Ohio); Urbana Society of the New Church (Urbana, Ohio)
PACIFIC COAST ASSOCIATION

CONTACT:
Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mitchell, Wayfarers Chapel, 1114 Opal St, Apt B, Redondo Beach, CA 90277
E:pacificcoastassoc.secretary@gmail.com ...................................................(310) 435-4907

OFFICERS
President ................................................................. Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mitchell
Vice-President .......................................................... Linda Callander
Secretary ............................................................... Laurie Pelayo
Treasurer ................................................................. Dan Burchett
Members-at-large .......... Helen Barler, Rev. Thom Muller, and Susan Golightly
Nominations Committee ........ Rev. Carla Friedrich, Rev. Junchol Lee, open

Member Churches and Camps: Agapao Church, (Santa Ana), Garden Church,
(San Pedro, California), New Church of the Southwest Desert (Silver City,
New Mexico), Swedenborgian Church of Puget Sound (Duvall, Washington),
Swedenborgian Church of San Francisco (San Francisco, California), Sweden-
borgian Community Church at Hillside (El Cerrito, CA), Wayfarer’s Chapel
(Rancho Palos Verdes, California)

WESTERN CANADA CONFERENCE

CONTACT:
Dianne Roesinger, NEED NEW ADDRESS
E:wcepres@shaw.ca ...................................................... (403) 239-4192-

OFFICERS
President ................................................................. Dianne Roesinger
Vice-President ................................................................
Secretary ............................................................... Taunya Semken
Treasurer ................................................................. Laurie Slough
Alberta Representative-Susan Hulcher, British Columbia Representative-Amy
Blanchette, Manitoba Representative-Gord Schellenberg, Saskatoon Representative-Amanda Watters

Member Churches and Camps: Calgary New Church Society (Calgary, Alberta);
Church of the Holy City (Edmonton, Alberta); Paulhaven Camp; Saskato-
toon Swedenborg Society (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan) (inactive)
DIRECTORY OF CHURCHES AND MINISTRIES

*Indicates name of church as listed in the local telephone directory.
Please notify the Secretary of the Swedenborgian Church and the Central Office of any changes to this list, including area codes.

CALIFORNIA

EL CERRITO
HILLSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH
1422 Navellier Street, 94530-2255 (510) 235-3646
E: hillside1422@gmail.com W: www.hillsideswedenborg.org
Minister .................................................................................. Rev. Thom Muller
Licensed Pastor ............................................................................. Tassy Farwell
President .................................................................................... Peter Gottschalk
Vice-President ............................................................................... open
Secretary ....................................................................................... Rev. Dr. James Lawrence
Treasurer ....................................................................................... Lesley Ferguson

RANCHO PALOS VERDES
WAYFARERS CHAPEL
5755 Palos Verdes Drive South, 90275-5950 (310) 377-1650
W: www.wayfarerschapel.org F: (310) 377-8589
Chair .......................................................................................... Peter Gottschalk
Secretary ....................................................................................... Amy Little
Treasurer ....................................................................................... Robert Carr
Member ........................................................................................ Todd Board
Member ........................................................................................ John Booth
Member ....................................................................................... Katharine Carr
Member ....................................................................................... Michael Robbins
Member ....................................................................................... Rev. Jane Siebert
Director of Finance & Administration:
Dan Burchett ............................................................................. E: danb@wayfarerschapel.org
Director of Ministry:
Rev. David Brown ..................................................................... E: davidb@wayfarerschapel.org
SAN FRANCISCO

*SAN FRANCISCO SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH
2107 Lyon Street, 94115-1611 (415) 346-6466

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W: tinyurl.com/BathNewChurch
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W: www.fryeburgnewchurch.org
Minister ............................................................... Rev. Alison Lane-Olsen
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2 Bedford Street, 02324-2503 (508) 697-3068
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Secretary/Moderator ................................................. Kelly Milne
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W: https://swedenborgchapel.org
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Vice-President ........................................................ Denyse Daurat
Secretary ................................................................. Paulina Mirenkova
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Secretary ................................................................. Donna Mitchell
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E: revrenee@aol.com (248) 229-5668
W: www.churchholycity.org F: (248) 629-4273
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NEW YORK

NEW YORK
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Minister/Chair ................................................................. Rev. Solomon Youngmin Kim
Secretary ........................................................................... Wan Soo Kim
Treasurer ........................................................................... Young Chon Min
NEW YORK

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Secretary ................................................................. Eileen Franz
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330 South Main Street, Urbana, OH 43078 (937) 653-6810
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W: weddingchapel-urbana.com

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W: www.almontretreats.com
President: Craig Carson
A family camp. Modern facilities and a pond for swimming and fishing make this camp outstanding, but the keynote of Almont is Camp Spirit! From the flag raising ceremony and the singing of “Fling to the Breeze Our Glorious Banner!” to the evening vesper service, Almont campers of all ages are alive with projects, classes, games and skits – helping one another, working and playing together as a big family.

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Trustee: Jeff Oelker
Retreat Center Manager: Lori Patana

FRYEBURG NEW CHURCH ASSEMBLY
Route 302, 84 Main Street, Fryeburg, ME 04037-1147
(207) 935-2338 (summers only)
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President: Colgate Searle, Jr.    (401) 489-6298
E: ColgateSearleJunior@gmail.com
Director: Alia Woofenden
E: Director@fryeburg.org

President: Colgate Searle, Jr.
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Clerk: Daniel Dyer
Religious Programs Coordinator: Rev. Susannah Currie
Director: Jonathan Crowe
Director: Kristina Madjerac
About the Fryeburg New Church Assembly:

The FNCA is a two-week, multi-generational, Swedenborgian family camp typically held the beginning of August, located on 20+ acres of pine forest on the banks of the refreshing waters of the Saco River in Fryeburg, Maine.

The Main Building includes our dining hall, kitchen, lecture hall, adult lounge, children’s lounge, teen girls’ dorm, several second-floor private rooms, and two first floor rooms—each with a private half bath. Other buildings include nineteen family units located in cabins along the ridge overlooking the river (typically available for Assembly Members to rent Memorial Day to Labor Day), teen boys’ dorm, teen lounge, and laundry room. Tent and RV sites are also available with a bathhouse nearby. The Summer Session program includes something for everyone: chapel, lectures, religion classes and special programming for the children and teens, swimming, canoeing, and evening programs presented by campers. Horseshoes, volleyball, four-square, and ping pong are enjoyed during free time, working up an appetite for delicious meals provided by professional cooks, supplemented by a well-stocked salad bar.

What was originally called “the Promised Land” is now called “Our little slice of Heaven on Earth.” The FNCA is planning a gala Centennial Celebration that all are invited to attend July 31–August 15, 2021.

PAULHAVEN

c/o The Church of the Holy City
9119-128 A Avenue, Edmonton, AB T5E 0J6 Canada

For more information:
Dianne Roessinger (403) 239-4192

Paulhaven children’s camp is held at a wooded site on a lovely lake. Accommodations are primitive. The children are housed in cabins, but there is no running water, so this is a true camping experience. Adults do the cooking, but the children share in the chores of housekeeping. The religious program is staffed by members of the Western Canada Conference, which sponsors the camp. Swimming, boating, crafts, sports, hiking and group activities are enjoyed by campers and staff together. Campers come from widely scattered places, and camp is a
high point in the lives of youngsters who often get only this opportunity to be with other New Church children.

TEMENOS AT BROAD RUN RETREAT & CONFERENCE CENTER
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E: information@temenosretreat.org
W: www.temenoscommunity.org
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CAMBRIDGE: MASSACHUSETTS NEW CHURCH UNION
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170 Virginia Street, 55102-2116 (651) 224-4553

PENNSYLVANIA

WEST CHESTER: SWEDENBORG FOUNDATION
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