

THE NEW AGE

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Here for you to enjoy and gain things from is the Summer 2022/3 issue of The New Age.

As I write this, it's twelve days until Christmas Day itself. Carol services have already happened and some are still to make their joyful sound, often going on outside.

The core of Christmas is in the actual presence of God in this dimension we all are now living in. It's called the "physical world" and it doesn't get more solid than that. God came into this world as a human being. That suggests a lot of things, for example that God had to get "down and dirty" and start his work for us from the bottom upwards.

It also suggests that God wants to be there with us in the details, commonness, and every practicality of daily life, in our joys, worries, egos, endeavours, chores, griefs and exhaustions. That's the idea I get from the words that talk about Immanuel, God with us, and the Word made flesh.

But you and I don't only live in the physical world; we're living in the spiritual world, veiled over, yes, until we die and come into that world completely. On this deeper plane, our will, our love, our understanding, our intentions and commitments become filled with strengths and struggles. We know both sides of ourselves.

God comes into this plane of our life, and works with us, wanting to humanise us, and help us grow in patience, compassion, caring and belonging.

Let God and his loving humanity come to us yet again and affect us, so that we feel we are in the right place in our grasp on life, living with God, but always under God, led by God in all our dealings with what and who we encounter. Jesus, born in our midst, born in my heart.

SERMON : "SEE, MY HANDS AND MY FEET" by Rev David Millar

All Scripture deals with the processes involved in the regeneration of the human mind. And certainly, from a Logopraxis perspective, that is what we are interested in so far as our understanding of Scripture is concerned. So we come to this remarkable passage which, really expounds upon the processes involved in the opening of the Scriptures as we willingly open ourselves to them so that that inner work can be done. Who hasn't had the experience of their heart burning within them as insights begin to unfold within our conscious awareness as we engage with the Word.

"Did not our heart burn within us while He spoke to us in the way."

The Lord speaks, "in the way," that is, when we are "in the way" or, when we are engaging with truths from the Word, so then, the opportunity is open to us for the divine influx of the Lord's life to put in front of us an awareness of things unseen in our normal mode of consciousness.

For the Scriptures to open, we have to be opened. Our hearts have to be opened in order to receive from the Lord. And so, as we engage in our practice or, as we are "in the way," insights begin to flow. And because it is the Word that we are engaging with, we begin to see the Lord. We see the Lord, as the Word, as the Sacred Scripture, as divine revelation. And so our appreciation of the Word is elevated and along with it, so are we. And in that elevation we come to see what it means to be standing up or, to arise...

"and standing up in that same hour, they return to Jerusalem."

And so it is that new insights dawn out of practice. We return to our understanding of the Lord and it becomes modified to reflect the new experience of the Word working in our life. A new understanding is beginning to be born here. That is something that is only possible when the Word is taken into our life and integrated through practice. For Jerusalem is our understanding of the Heavenly doctrine, which is our understanding of the Lord.

And what is it that we find there? We find that the 11 are assembled, that things are there in order, in the order of what has been our past experience. But now something new is beginning to dawn and as we come into contact and begin to reflect on our understanding of things from our experience arising from practice, so changes have to take place within the mind in order to accommodate things. Those changes alter our understanding of the Word and

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so we begin to see how things are actually able to be applied to the life of the human mind.

To find the 11 assembled constitutes the organic form that doctrine takes within the human mind. For doctrine, as a living form within the mind, is a body, a spiritual body, that houses our understanding of the Lord. This is the temple that the Lord spoke of that if destroyed, He would raise in three days.

For whether it is the 11 curtains of the tabernacle, the 11 stars and sheaves that bowed down in Joseph's dreams, the Arcana Coelestia tells us in each and every case that by the number 11 is meant all the goods and truths of the church. And that these should be subject to Joseph, who is the Lord Himself, and to be subject to means to be extended from for all the goods and truths of the Word represented by this number 11, constitute the Lord as understood by those present here.

Indeed it is our own understanding of the Lord as found in what we hold to doctrinally that is under consideration here and the impact that a direct experience of the opening of the scriptures has upon that understanding which, to this point, serves as an historical faith but not as a living faith. And so now through direct experience of the Word working in someone's life that whole structure comes under scrutiny and stress as it needs to accommodate the new revelation that arises when the Word is opened through its practice.

And we see that this is indeed the case for what they testify to is that the Lord has certainly risen and has appeared to Simon. From out of the death of a historical faith, now comes a living faith, that what was seen by Simon that is, what truths testified to intellectually is now known experientially.

And so it is from a Logopraxis perspective, when we take hold of the Word, when we find our task, when we begin to work with it, when we go out into "the way," so as new insights arise, we return, and begin to see and understand what the implications are for our doctrine. For the things done "in the way" transform us. The things done "in the way" also transforms others. Through the sharing of our direct experience of the

Word working in our life others can also be supported and transformed as they too engage and work with the Word.

Verse 35 reads .“And they related the things done in the way and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.”

In verse 36 we read...“but as they thus spoke, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them and says to them, peace be to you.”

When we unfold our experience of the Word to others, so it is that the Lord Himself stands in the midst of them. He rises in our midst, if you like,

“and as He stood in the midst of them, He says to them, peace be to you.”

So it is that the Word speaks “peace.” It seeks our peace. Yet we have to go through a process by which those things in our mind that are opposed to the Word are brought into subjection to it.

And when that subjection is realised, so heaven is realised, this is the peace that the Word speaks into our life. The concept of speaking is one of influx and perception that comes from that influx. So as we perceive what is of heaven drawing nearer, so things come into a different light.

It is as we speak of our experience of the Lord working in our life as the Word that He appears in the midst. And so we’ve come to know Him in a different way. For the Lord appearing is insights arising and as He stands in the midst of us, so to, He orders all things from the centre to the periphery. And in ordering the mind, there is stress and strain placed upon it as we struggle to incorporate new insights into our old understanding of things.

So while the Word looks to bring the peace of heaven, so the mind that is in disorder resists that peace, that movement toward what is higher and seeks to understand things on its own terms. And so it is, we read in verse 37,

“but being terrified and in fear, they thought that they beheld a spirit.”

What can this possibly mean? Well, initially it has to do with something manifesting that is not of an earthly or material nature. It is seen to be otherworldly. Something that stands outside our normal understanding

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of things. Something that is beyond the capacity of our historical faith to explain and something that to our historical faith appears threatening. This is the nature of any true spiritual insight for our attachment to our historical faith must be loosened if we are to enter into a living faith. Insights that arise directly from the practice of the Word can call into question long held belief structures. These come under threat when that which is of a living nature approaches. For it is a dead thing until it is resurrected and made living. For it is a dead thing, that sits purely in the understanding. It has to be resurrected. That is, it has to enter into the very life of our being. Otherwise, it just remains knowledge that is contained in the memory and something in the memory is never inside the person.

For something to be integrated into the life of a person the truth of it has to be seen and that truth is the Lord. They thought they "beheld a spirit." That is, their understanding of things saw this new understanding as something disembodied, so high, so much more deeper was the direct experience of the Lord that the old understanding could not conceive how the letter of the Word could hold it as its body.

The old understanding saw it as something disembodied separated from itself. Yet the Word responds in mercy and love. For in verse 38, the Lord says,

"why are you disturbed and why do reasonings arise in your hearts."

The new understanding the new insights that are arising out of direct experience of the Lord as the Word working in one's life needs to be re-grounded in the letter of the Word.

Only now the letter must support a new way of seeing and being. So where the historical faith understanding was once in place now it is being dislodged and what we see is that the Word has to be understood at the level of the letter in a way that supports the new insights.

This is them being terrified and in fear. For to enter into these new insights so that they become integrated into life as our doctrine, there has to be a willingness to let go of the old way of being, the old way of knowing, the old way of seeing which can no longer serve to move the process of the regeneration of the human mind forward.

So the process involves a disconnecting from an old understanding and the integration of new insights into the self same letter that supported the old view. Now it has to be recast so that it can support the new understanding that is a rising out of direct experience. When that new experiential understanding is grounded in the letter of the Word, then it is established in us because it has become integrated into us. No longer will it be disembodied, no longer will it be seen as a spirit, which brings terror and fear, but it will be seen as that which the Lord has implanted within the mind. A doctrine born of life, resurrected from the death of that historical understanding which, was purely constituted of memory knowledge.

The Word places us in front of our disturbed mind. It places us in front of the reasonings that arise of the doubts that we face, and it says to us in verse 39,

“see my hands and my feet, that it is I, myself, handle me and see for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you behold me having.”

and verse 40...

“and as He said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.”

The hands and feet of the Lord are those parts of the Word that are open to us and bring us into connection with the deeper aspects dealing with the processes by which the human mind is regenerated. Those insights, those insights that relate to process are here being reconnected with the hands and feet of the Lord so that they can be seen to be supported by the letter of the Word.

In order to be able to see how new insights relate to the Word we have to follow the Lord's injunction here and “handle Him.” That is, we have bring our experience into contact with the Word itself, with the letter of the Word, in order that the experience can be validated by the Word itself.

The letter of the Word holds all things within it, that is, every aspect of the processes involved in the regeneration of the human mind can be grounded and seen in the letter itself for the letter affirms and confirms what is of the spirit and so gives the spirit a basis and foundation within which it can sit within the human mind.

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But it is not the letter literally understood. It is the letter understood as to its spirit that gives it life. For, as we handle or, engage with the Word, we come to see that it has flesh and bones, that is, it has goods and truths adapted to a natural mode of thinking from which the human mind can be elevated into a genuine spiritual life. For by flesh is to be understood natural forms of good and by bones, natural forms of truth which together forms the ultimates of the Lord's Divine Natural.

That these ideas that constitute the internal sense of the Word are not something disembodied, they are not spirit in the sense of having no concrete manifestation and so it is, the admonishment is to handle the Word, to work with it, to engage with it. It is only as we do that, that we can come to see that it has flesh and bones, that it is something substantial and real, and something that can absolutely transform our life and understanding of reality.

Flesh and bones refers to the letter of the Word. That letter is present with us, yet through our experience of it, through our direct experience of working with truths from the Word, so the letter arises, is resurrected, becomes Divine in itself. The Word is seen to be the Lord. The important point here is that the letter is not removed, not separated from the spirit, but serves as a body by which the things of the spirit can be known.

The difficulty of integrating new insights continues. Having seen His hands and feet, having experienced His flesh and bones, doubt continues and the struggle to integrate new insights remains. The next phase of the process is one of assimilation. That those elements of the Word that have supported the old understanding have to be assimilated through a process of digestion. They have to enter back into the Word and be reborn as it were, so that they can be seen to be one and the same as the Lord Himself.

And so He requests from them what they possess that is truly His own. There is always a need to hand back to the Lord what we have taken to ourselves and claimed as our own. And so in the midst of our doubt, there arises a sense of the possibility that the Lord Himself is present with us as the Word. Dare we believe it! That He is never far from us and that, even in our darkest hour, we need only turn and acknowledge that He is life Itself, that He has not died and can never die and that He

Lord Jesus,

I give You my hands to do your work,

I give You my feet to go Your way,

I give You my eyes to see as You do,

I give You my tongue to speak Your words,

I give You my mind that You may think in me,

I give You my spirit that You may pray in me,

Above all, I give You my heart,

that You may love in me.



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is constantly rising in order to bring new life into our life. And so He asks of us, "have you here any food?"

And so it is the Word when engaged with questions us, it raises the question, what do you have to give that will nurture and sustain the spiritual life?

Return this to the Lord that His hunger for your salvation might be fulfilled. And what is it we have to give? But a piece of broiled fish and honeycomb. The broiled fish represents those things of the letter of the Word that have been processed through practice. For the broil, something is to cook it through the application of heat.

And as we know, heat is good, and in this case, the good of practice, which prepares the fish or those things of the letter of the Word for their assimilation into the body. This, like all things from the Lord, has to be returned to Him. And in a Logopraxis context it is when we bring what the Lord has given to us through the experience of having worked with something from the Word, we bring that to the group and offer it up back to the Lord in the midst.

It is our willingness to work with the Word, with its truths to examine our life that produces an offering acceptable to the Lord. Its acceptability is in the fact that it is able to bring life to our life. That through an experiential knowledge of the Word we find our salvation. To bring, as it were, broiled fish and to offer our experience through sharing it with our life group is to feed the Lord in each other.

Now, honeycomb represents the delights of the letter of the Word, and it's the delight that arises from seeing the Word in terms of its application to life whereby new insights are made available. That delight, as much as the broiled fish which are the truths of the Word, needs to be returned to the Lord so that all that is attributed to Him is returned to Him. And when this is done from sincerity of heart, He takes it and He eats it. So verse 43 we read,

"And taking it He did eat before them."

This describes the assimilation once again of that which is of the Word being restored back through acknowledgement to the Word. For all things received from the Lord are assimilated back into the Lord, and that is described by the process of digestion. That these things are

indeed of the Word and not to be taken literally is revealed in verse 44 where it says,

“and He said to them, these, that is the broiled fish and the honeycomb, these are the words which I spoke to you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses and in the Prophets and in the Psalms concerning Me.”

for when the Word is seen to be the Lord then our understanding is opened.

Verse 45,

“He then opened their understanding that they might understand the scriptures. And He said unto them, thus it is written and thus Christ had to suffer and to rise again from the dead the third day. And that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in His name to all the nations beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things.”

And so it is that we bear witness to the internal processes involved in the regeneration of the human mind and that we see that the Scriptures describe these processes so far as their spiritual meaning is concerned. For it is only through such an understanding that repentance and forgiveness of sins can take effect throughout the whole of the human mind.

As stated from verse 47,

“and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in His name to all the nations beginning at Jerusalem.”

That Jerusalem being our own understanding of doctrine, that that needs reforming and understanding in the light of spiritual process is clear from what the spiritual meaning of the Word reveals.

To be a witness of these things is to be in their practice so that we are witnesses to the power of the Word to transform our life. That is what we bear witness to. To bear witness means to testify to one's experience, and in order to do that, one must first have an experience. The final stage of having truths integrated into the life through their practice is described from verse 49 where it reads,

“and behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you. But sit ye in the city of Jerusalem until you put on power from on high.”

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Every authentic, genuine, spiritual experience has to be integrated into the life. And that integration involves a reforming of our understanding of doctrine; doctrine seen in the light of process as opposed to that which is constructed around a historical faith.

That transformation requires a time of contemplation, a time of meditation, a time of sitting in Jerusalem that is sitting with those ideas of a doctrinal nature, that guide and direct our life. As we sit with these, "behold," the Lord says, "I send the promise of my Father upon you..." and once that promise has been fulfilled, so there is "power from on high."

Power from on high relates to the idea that things have been integrated deeply into the life. For on high means within, and it is from within that all that is authentically spiritual can flow forth.

These are the blessings that the Lord bestows upon, those who wait upon Him.

"And He led them out as far as to Bethany and lifting up His hands He blessed them. And it came to pass while He blessed them, He was parted from them and taken up into heaven. And they having worshipped Him, returned to Jerusalem with great joy and they were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God."

We see then that the process culminates in the Lord blessing His disciples. This blessing constitutes being endowed with all that is good and true. As those goods and truths fill the regenerate mind, so to the Lord is taken up into heaven. That is, He is seen to be the Word, the Word is seen, to be the Divine Human.

And so He departs from their sight at a sensory level to be held deep within the heart from which all things flow forth. For when the Lord or the Word is seen to be Divine, there is no longer any need for sensory proof. For to enter into a deeper understanding of the Word is to see the Word as the Divine Human itself. The Divine Human passes beyond all comprehension, all understanding, and so all finite forms depicting the Lord are seen to be appearances of the Lord, and the Divine Human is seen to be as it truly is, the infinite and the eternal God. Thus, we have a returning to Jerusalem or a new way of understanding the Sacred Scriptures so that they can be read spiritually rather than

naturally. To see the Lord as the Word is to behold Him as that temple in which the Lord is praised and blessed continually.

"See my hands and my feet that it is I myself, handle me and see for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you behold me having." *Amen*

President's Page **Continuing The Lord's Prayer**
"And do not lead us into temptation"
 καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν

What do you think of when you hear the word, "temptation"? What does it mean to be "tempted"? Perhaps you think of taking the last chocolate. Or indulging in some forbidden pleasure, something you know to be wrong but intensely desire nevertheless. Perhaps you imagine the devil, hidden behind a curtain or in an innocuous disguise, offering some carrot (or apple!) to lead us astray, that we - as his naive victims - might be condemned as a result. It seems odd, then, to plead with the Lord not to lead us into temptation!

It's equally odd to say that God can be "tempted". Can God be persuaded to commit evil? But that is exactly how the Bible phrases it:

"You shall not tempt the Lord your God as you tempted Him in Massah." (Deuteronomy 6:16; see also Exodus 17:2, Matthew 4:7)

So, it should come as no surprise that "temptation" doesn't mean that at all. In both the Hebrew and Greek of the Bible, the word we typically translate as "tempt" actually means, "test", "trial", "examine", or "prove". That carries quite a different connotation. Immediately we can see why God might be said to "tempt" us or to be "tempted" Himself. There are a few familiar passages in the Bible where the word is usually translated in that way: the Lord tested Abraham (Genesis 22:1), and Gideon tested the Lord (Judges 6:39). Indeed, I have heard

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this phrase of the Prayer sometimes expressed as, "Lead us not to the time of trial."

What is the purpose of a "test"? It is the means by which our true nature or character may be discovered, assessed, or confirmed. Never mind how things look on the surface, what is their inner reality? By that means, Abraham's trust in the Lord was proven. Gideon was allowed to seek reassurance that his mission had received Divine backing.

But even that doesn't sit quite right. God actually has no need to test us at all: being omniscient (all-knowing), He knows our character far better than we know ourselves. In short, it is inconsistent with the nature of God to say He tests anyone. It is inconsistent with His knowledge of us. But it is also inconsistent with His love for us: to what end is the test, when the result is already known?

We find these words in the epistles:

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

According to Paul, there is something inherent in the nature of humanity that causes this testing, while the Lord's activity seems to be concerned with limiting, keeping the lid on such trials, preventing them from overwhelming us. This is the action of a loving God!

We see something similar in the image of "stumbling blocks". We are commanded not to cause others to stumble:

You shall not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear your God: I am the Lord. (Leviticus 19:14)

Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way. (Romans 14:13)

But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. (1 Corinthians 8:9)

Yet, the Lord is said to do just that:

Therefore thus says the Lord: "Behold, I will lay stumbling blocks before this people, And the fathers and the sons together shall fall on them. The neighbour and his friend shall perish." (Jeremiah 6:21)

Would God do that which He commands should not be done? God would have a rather capricious nature if that were the case, not at all loving! The reality is that evil brings stumbling blocks with it because they are integral to the nature of evil - an inherent consequence - both for the person doing wrong, and for those caught up with them:

"Again, when a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die; because you did not give him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; but his blood I will require at your hand. (Ezekiel 3:20)

'They will throw their silver into the streets, And their gold will be like refuse; Their silver and their gold will not be able to deliver them In the day of the wrath of the Lord; They will not satisfy their souls, Nor fill their stomachs, Because it became their stumbling block of iniquity.'
([Ezekiel 7:19](#))

And David says: "Let their table become a snare and a trap, A stumbling block and a recompense to them." (Romans 11:9)

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Those consequences may sometimes be attributed to God, but that is only the way it looks. The Lord is the cause of neither the stumbling block nor the test, it is the person him or herself. In a similar way, a judge presiding over a court of law is not responsible for the sentence, rather it is the criminal in his crime who makes him subject to the punishment. The judge's only job is to make known what has already been earned. And the purpose of the test, the temptation, is to the end that we might know ourselves.

So, when we pray, "Lead us not into temptation", recognise that the temptations we experience are part of our own inherited human nature. We do not need anyone to lead us into temptation, we are more than capable of doing that for ourselves. The belief that we are somehow "innocent victims" of the devil's wiles is a spectacular denial of our inherited nature. We fail any such test, entirely on our own merits. We have no one to blame except ourselves.

The second thing we acknowledge here is that without the Lord's leading we would remain entangled in temptations forever. We turn to Him to lead us out, knowing that it is exactly the opposite direction to the one we habitually want to take. If we ever reach the condition of being impervious to temptation, we can know that it will only ever be because of the Lord, upon whom we will rely for direction. As the psalmist wrote:

The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord,
And He delights in his way.
Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down;
For the Lord upholds him with His hand. (Psalm 37:23,24)

David Moffat



SOCIETY REPORTS

ADELAIDE

Another year comes to a close and we will hold our final service of carols and readings on December 18th.

June and Ken Johnson have returned from the U.K. after a long overdue trip to see family and friends. It was very tiring for Ken as one does not get much assistance these days.

It will be lovely see Rev. Roslyn Taylor in January as she spends time in Adelaide visiting family and staying in our church hall.

After so much rain and storms in S.A. the Church lawn had grown to record heights. Looks better now cut and gutters cleared of big weeds growing.

A new attendee, Glenda, has found solace at our Church after losing her only daughter to cancer. Our teachings have helped greatly in her grieving process.

Best wishes to everybody around the country for Christmas and 2023.

Randall Rabone

ROSEVILLE (SYDNEY)

On Sunday November 13 we did not have a service at church here at Roseville in Sydney, but instead went to be with the Hurstville Society where they were celebrating the centenary of their church building.

Actually, it was a 101st anniversary, as the celebration originally had to be postponed due to Covid. It was good to catch up with not only the locals but a number of other church people from further afield who were there also.

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More recently, we hosted here in Sydney the New Church in Australia committee as they held a two-day meeting. They are certainly an efficient bunch, getting through their business in just a day and a half. On the following day it was nice to welcome to church the out-of-towners, three of whom, Kevin and Erlinda Attwater and Ruth Duckworth, were past-time regular attenders at this church. Rev. David Moffat preached during the service, and the whole thing was meant to be streamed live to Melbourne, where, since David was here and not there, church was closed for the day. Unfortunately, for some unknown reason the technology did not cooperate and the stream did not happen. At least the service was recorded for later viewing.

Our minister, Howard, is currently working on arranging the next church retreat. It is to be in a year's time in or around Sydney. A retreat this summer proved out of reach as demand for venues was too great after all the Covid lockdowns. In the meantime Howard is organising another of our virtual retreats which will be held next month. January 20-21 are the planned dates.

Wishing everyone across Australasia a very enjoyable and meaningful Christmas season, and, with natural disasters in mind, a safe and uneventful summer.

Wayne Kasmar

PERTH

Seasons greeting and best wishes to everyone, especially those members and friends of our sister New Church groups around the nation and across the Tasman.

The month just past saw several of our members here in Perth go down with various ailments. Trevor and Joy Moffat caught Covid-19 and had to isolate. They are now on the mend, but tire quickly. Have been told to remember, "that they are not spring chickens any more!"

Lynne Rocke' is awaiting surgery to implant a "pacemaker," and due to a shortage of hospital beds there has been a delay. Meantime Cliff Rocke' is having a "break" in a respite care facility.

We have kept up with our fortnightly Services of Worship with Trevor and David Walker alternating in conducting them.

As we're trying to find another New Age Reporter this will be the last report by Joy after many many years.

Have a wonderful time with family and friends in celebrating the Birth of our God Lord Jesus Christ into the Natural Plane of Human existence.

Joy and Trevor Moffat

VICTORIA

Our Spiritual Leader, Rev. David Moffat, and his wife Pam took a well-earned fortnight's holiday in Queensland, including a five-day walking tour of K'Gari (Fraser Island), which they reported being both spectacular and hard work! David has also been away in connection with his New Church in Australia Presidential responsibilities. In recent times, occasional Lay services have been led by Vidura Jayaratne and Neville Jarvis. David has continued his participation in the Mt. Waverley and Chadstone Interchurch Council, lately being appointed Vic-President, and with the Monash Interfaith Gathering where he recently presented a well-received introductory talk on Swedenborg and New Church teachings, the meeting being held on our premises.

Normal Sunday and weekday activities have been maintained under David's leadership. David has also continued to upload his Sunday morning addresses and other talks, including those for children, to YouTube together with shorter introductory presentations to other social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Soundcloud and Tik Tok. Numbers of views and likes do vary but the trend has generally been upward. Social

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media subscribers / followers certainly jumped in November partly through the use of paid advertising on Facebook and Google. You can explore the content on each of these social media platforms by searching 'Swedenborg Community Victoria [include social media platform here] channel'.

Sadly, we report the passing into the higher life on 13 November of Bernard Boulton, a member of our Church community for over 50 years, after several years fighting the aggressive Mesothelioma cancer caused by asbestos fibres entering the lungs. Our condolences go to Dallas (nee Robinson), his wife of nearly 52 years, their 3 children and 7 grandchildren.

Members Rose Robinson and Klaus Dreverman have both had prolonged periods in hospital and then rehab. At the time of writing, both are still in rehab but are expected home quite soon. They remain in our prayerful thoughts as do their spouses.

Covid continues to be amongst us with Alexis and Neville Jarvis catching it, thankfully mildly, in late October. Now we hear that Rev. John and Mary Teed are experiencing for the second time this year isolation in their aged-care facility due to a good number of residents there having come down with covid plus some nurses and other staff away from work due to the outbreak. Hopefully the outbreak can be quickly contained allowing life for John and Mary to get back to a normal pattern.

On a happier note, we have been pleased to welcome Clifford Phanjoo from Mauritius to our Sunday services over recent weeks. Clifford and his wife Linda have been visiting their two daughters Jennifer and Christelle in Melbourne, both of whom are teachers. However, we will continue to enjoy Clifford's presence online for services and other activities.

28 October was a special day for Alexis and Neville Jarvis celebrating their Golden Wedding anniversary. They were married by the late

Rev. Bruce Williams in the Mt. Waverley Church where their three daughters and three of their grandchildren were later baptised. Hearty congratulations are offered.

David has used one Sunday morning each month in 2022 to focus on each of the minor prophets. The addresses can be viewed online via a Google search – Swedenborg Community Victoria – [name of Minor Prophet here]. Malachi will be the prophet on the third Sunday of December with those familiar words from Chapter 3, verse 1:

“Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,” says the LORD of hosts.

In sending our Advent greetings to New Church members and friends throughout Australia, may these words resonate with you all in preparing for the remembering of our Lord’s birth into this world.

Neville Jarvis

ERIKA BROWN

It is with great pleasure I inform members of the church of the ordination of Erika Brown, into the ministry of Regional Spiritual Director. Erika's ordination service is scheduled to take place on Monday morning, 12 December 2022, 10:00am Melbourne Time, and - unusually - will take place via Zoom. Erika has been studying with the Australian New Church College, following her longstanding involvement in Logopraxis. Alongside that training, she has been studying chaplaincy, her ordination being an adjunct to fulfilling her role as a hospital chaplain, and she has married the two disciplines in her final thesis.

Erika will be working in the United States, where she currently resides, and will have no direct involvement with the New Church in Australia, although she will continue to participate in Logopraxis. This only goes

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to illustrate the expanding and international influence our college is enjoying at the present time.

We wish Erika every success as she develops her chaplaincy work. May the Lord go with you, inspiring all your efforts and guiding you along the way.

David Moffat President, The New Church in Australia



Erika and Dan Brown live in Kempton, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

Erika wished to make this statement of her appreciation and gratitude in being trained and prepared for ministry under the Australian New Church College :

"I was deeply grateful for the opportunity to study with the ANCC from 2019 - 2022. I am humbly joyous to be ordained into non-traditional ministry by the New Church in Australia. I very much wish to thank all

Genesis 32: 22

23 He (Jacob) took them and sent them across the stream, and everything else that he had.

24 And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day.

25 When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him.

26 Then he said, "Let me go, for the day has broken." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me."

27 And he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob."

28 Then he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed."

29 Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him.

30 So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been delivered."

31 The sun rose upon him as he passed Penuel, limping because of his hip.

This summarizes my work thus far with the Australian College of the New Church and in my chaplaincy training in the US. I move forward with a new name, the old churches forever changed in me, I am delivered to continue the journey and to the next deliverance.

My prayer during the ordination service is as follows:

I believe the Divine flows in me as Love clothed in the activity of Life's work.

I believe the perceivable God is what will engage with me and provide me with an experience of life as my own.

I believe I have states of dark and light and that the Lord is with me during both.

I will cultivate awareness of heaven and simultaneously acknowledge any connection I may feel is the Lord's gift.

I will exercise my spiritual practice with the understanding that the Divine Human surrounds me and reaches out in every moment, most perfectly in the Word.

I will use the Word as my guide when considering how to serve.

I will remain in relationship to my confusion and sadness about human suffering and Divine Love.

I will pray.

I will serve as a chaplain to the suffering, knowing that it is the Divine binding up the wounded.

I will return to the knowledge that this external service, while useful, does not mean that this is where the path is ended. Maybe this is another stop upon the way.

I ask the Lord to ready my heart so when the door shows
itself I will have eyes to see it and the courage to walk
through it.

Rev Erika Brown



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