

Candela



Newsletter of the Swedenborg Association of Australia Incorporated
Organisational Details are provided on next page

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The Value of Prayer in Modern Life

Swedenborg teaches the unity of all life emanating from the one Source. This is by no means a novel idea but is in fact ancient wisdom. Called by different names throughout history the Source is described as Love Itself and the condensation of this state is an organic outpouring into more and more coarse states. Swedenborg likens this Creation to the Grand Man or Homo Maximus. Man's inmost thoughts and feelings are therefore not of himself but part of the Whole. At the same time, man exhibits an outer personality that appears to be of himself, being quite distinct as an individual and acts as if from an independent source. This may be called his outer self and he may even sever himself from the Whole. So man is an outer and an inner person. In each of our inner reaches we can feel united to the Source and it is when in this united state that prayer can take place.

Within certain limits what one prays for makes little difference. Our prayer is from our coarse state towards the Divine state of all Love and one cannot dictate to the Source (as much as we would sometimes like to think otherwise). When we pray we formulate in words our will but it may not be the will of Divine providence and therefore our prayer as stated will not be actioned exactly as we propose.

The idea of the Grand Man can be useful. Let us imagine we have a sore finger and the finger calls out for help to be relieved of the pain. We may simply ask for the pain to be taken away. However the pain may be there for a very important reason - say, insufficient blood flow and it may be a flag towards something far more critical. The finger is part of the whole but does not dictate to the essence of the whole. It can only ask for relief but relief may be counterproductive.

Who rises from prayer a better man, his prayer is answered.

- George Meredith (1828 - 1909)

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Two copies of this Newsletter are being sent to members as usual, the second for giving away.

I think prayer, whilst a personal and solemn request, must allow the Divine to decide how a particular event is to be played out. Recently I have been praying for a successful outcome for a friend who is undergoing a serious operation. I must confess to having a very personal need for a good outcome. I am attached, as it were, to the outcome. I cannot imagine the future without my friend and cannot foresee the future without her and her husband's involvement in my life. There is still so much for us to experience. I must also recognise my personal identification with undergoing such an operation. So there are three unknowns at least; my friend's pain and suffering, the unknown future, and my fear of such an ordeal as if it was myself on the operating table. When I pray I would do well to remember that I may unconsciously be asking selfishly for some alleviation of my pain, not another's.

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The Value of Prayer in Modern Life (Contd)

In the universal scheme of things, providence will take care of the future better than I could plan. I accept this as part of my faith but I still need to voice my present needs and prayer helps me to define what I think I need now. And we all have needs. To pray is to formulate a wish, about the future, to clarify our needs. How we proceed from there is important. The future is unknown and prayer is a means of having a say in the future. If we knew the future we would spend less time wondering about it. Prayer is like casting a vote in an election. We often think our individual vote does not count but logic should tell us that a vote is more than a tick on the ballot paper. When we stand up to be counted we stand for a new outcome because we feel strongly about an issue. Prayer is standing for a particular outcome. I also believe collective prayer is very powerful, a little like the ballot box - it can and does make a difference. In the modern world our prayers may be for friends, for our country and even for the earth itself. Such can the actions of modern man affect our very existence in the universe.

To feel a part of Unity is I believe the state of prayer. It is the inmost part of man that partakes of the process of prayer not the outmost part. The invocation of "Thy will be done" allows the ego to step aside for a time.

In many ways not knowing the future is a very fortunate state of affairs. The secret is to live each moment, no if-onlys and maybes, just do it.

If we knew but one fact, one date of what the future holds for us, we would be paralysed by life. The uncertainty of life is its chief charm.

Agape,

John Brogan, President

SWEDENBORG ASSOCIATION of Australia Incorporated

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Registered Office:

Swedenborg Centre

1 Avon Road, North Ryde NSW 2113
Tel: 02 9888 1066 Fax: 02 9888 1166
Email: saa@swedenborg.com.au
Website: www.swedenborg.com.au

National Committee Members:

John Brogan (President)
Louise Brogan (Secretary)
Kirk Holst (Treasurer)
Kevin Attwater
Julian Duckworth
Neville Jarvis (Newsletter)
Wayne Kasmar
Christopher Skinner

Executive Manager/Public Officer
Neville Jarvis

Please Note: The views expressed in this Newsletter are those of each contributor and do not necessarily reflect any particular position of the Swedenborg Association of Australia or its Committee.

Membership of the Swedenborg Association of Australia Inc. is open to anyone who wishes to pursue an interest in Swedenborg, the man, his science and his spiritual teachings.

For details on how to join, please refer to page 12.

Candela - December 2005 Issue

Thank you to everyone who submitted items for this issue. We are sure that all readers will find them helpful and of interest. The response to our appeals for submissions to our thematic issues in March, June and September has been really encouraging. Not only has there been insufficient space to publish everything on the various subjects for each issue, readers have also sent in items on other topics and in other directions. So it has been decided to use the December 2005 as an opportunity to provide this worthwhile material to the wider readership.

However, that does not mean that **you** can sit back on your laurels and wait for the items to appear in print. Our thoughts in December will be focussing on Christmas and **we appeal for submissions on what Christmas means for you - spiritually, personal/relationships, even commercially** (the deadline is 2nd December).

We will be taking up the full thematic approach in March next.



Prayer by Chris Skinner

In giving consideration to this subject, I was mindful of the fact that prayer may have different connotations and meanings for different people. This article is therefore not meant to be prescriptive but a reflection on what part forms of prayer can play in our life.

At the outset, we should look briefly at the similarities and differences between prayer and meditation. Swedenborg in his writings says prayer is talking or communicating with God. This can be done in various ways which we speak about later. Meditation is a way to clear our mind of the trivial and allow us to connect with the one who is life itself, free of clutter. We tend to accept the appearance that we are life but we are only the recipients of life from God. Meditation can be one way to open up the channel between God, the angelic realm and ourselves. Meditation is the method of bringing a scattered disorganized mind into a state of peace, quiet and tranquillity. In some respects therefore, there is an overlap between meditation and prayer but to say they are exactly the same would be doing an injustice to the power that prayer can play in our life and the part that meditation can play also. In early years, Swedenborg developed a form of minimal breathing to help him become in touch with the Divine.

In the book *Talking With God: the Healing Power of Prayer*, Gwynne Dresser Mack provides some wonderful insights using Swedenborg's spiritual writings as a basis for our prayer life and I commend it to anyone wishing to explore this subject further. In some respects, I consider that Swedenborg's contribution to understanding the associations and linkages between the natural and spiritual realms and how they support and enhance the use of prayer, are not given the prominence they deserve.

Perhaps I could begin by posing a question:

What part if any, does prayer play in our day to day life? - perhaps a little, perhaps a lot.

The ultimate reality is God who is Divine Love and Divine Wisdom. In Swedenborg's book *Divine Love and Wisdom*, he states '*Love is the life of a person*' (paragraph 1). Prayer, then, can be the measure by which we communicate with God.

People pray in different ways:

- ▶ by finding a quiet or sacred place for themselves, or (at the other extreme)
- ▶ do it on the run literally by talking with God as they go about their daily business.

In a sense, I suppose we could say that whatever works for us is okay because it is not about the form but the attitude or the state we are in when we undertake prayer.

Using an analogy in life, I am sure we all know that any relationship must be nurtured with direct or indirect forms of communication. Lack of communication creates distance and the relationship weakens.

Those familiar with the Bible will be aware that in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus places great importance on prayer - what it is, and what it isn't. The Lord's Prayer is first given there and Swedenborg demonstrates in his writings that looked at in its inner or spiritual meaning, it provides a perfect example of God's relationship with us and ours with Him. There were also many instances of prayer being of great significance in the life of Jesus.

It is easy for us to think of prayer as purely a request for seeking what we want from God or a source of comfort only when things are not going our way or there is turmoil in our life for whatever reason. Whilst we should not dismiss this, we should also see prayer in a much wider context. Prayer opens us up to influx from God. It is more about resonating and being in the flow of Divine Love. The joining together of thought and affection brings results but thought without affection does not. Prayer is about our heart of love joining with the Divine Love. It's about our feelings for others who may be experiencing difficulties and bringing them into the sphere of Divine Love. Speaking about this flow Swedenborg writes '*From God there is influx into every person, a continuous impulse into everything pertaining to a person*'.

Prayers establish communication with God. Swedenborg speaks a great deal in his teachings of The Grand Man of Heaven. Variety brings perfection coming together as one whole. We desire and seek God's presence to work both in our life and in the lives of others. The concept of intercessory prayer or prayer for others, is about



linking people together as part of the harmony of God's creation. Most of the time, we only seek God when we are in need. A much more powerful truth is that God is always there but we should regularly make that conscious connection. Asking is a means of opening ourselves up to the presence of God.

There are many forms of prayer including intercessory and contemplative. Many Christian mystics of centuries past such as Julian of Norwich and St Teresa of Avila and more recently Evelyn Underhill have reflected on what is Reality, what is God for them and have been given insights which they have communicated to others.

We are always ready to accept that we progressively learn, acknowledge and accept something as truth for us. Prayer is the means by which truth comes alive and has more power as we communicate with God seeking strength, guidance and support.

It is a human weakness to pray for things that we want or a particular circumstance to change or improve or be more advantageous for us. How often do we just lay ourselves before God and seek help to develop spiritual qualities or strength of character? God looks more at our eternal welfare than our everyday wants; God is more about providing for our needs than our wants.

The support that can be given to others through prayer is not just an act of faith because research has shown that prayer for others and for healing does work. Changes can be demonstrated and both the physical, emotional and spiritual state of people can improve.

In prayer we are the vehicle not the instrument, we provide the channel in which God can work. Swedenborg uses the phrase 'thought brings presence' In the case of prayer our concern, our love, our support and request is linked to the Divine and the connection is made.

In Matthew 7:7 it says '*ask and it will be given you, seek and you will find, knock and it will be opened unto you*'. There is no hint of doubt. It is important for us in our prayers to ensure that we go with expectancy, in a positive way and guard against anger, hate or lack of forgiveness. Go with confidence that the prayer will bring an answer. It may not be what we expect and it may not be immediate but be confident it will receive a response. Allow God to do His work and do not hinder the process with negative thoughts. He may not meet every small desire or want but being in communication sets up the channel.

Swedenborg explains that thought flows from mind to mind. If we are not actively participating and in conjunction with the Divine Love and

Wisdom, which is God and which is our very life, then by seeking and communicating in humility of spirit, we can be a channel for spiritual strength and healing. Prayer is that constant turning to God. Swedenborg writes '*The Lord regards nothing in the person who is at prayer but their heart, as to love and faith*' (Arcana Caelestia # 10143).

At the same time, though, prayer brings us to an awareness of God's power and presence - of the infinite depth of Love and Wisdom. For genuine prayer reveals God not as a product of human imagination, but as the ground and truth of our own identity. Genuine prayer reminds us not only that we are but a reflection of God's reality, but that because God is love, we are deeply cared for by that same reality, and provided with every help for spiritual wholeness and joy.

I 'pray' that this article may stimulate you to pursue the subject of prayer yourself and I have extracted below a section from Gwynne Dresser Mack's book which may be of help.

SEVEN STEPS IN PRAYER

"Commit your way to the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.... Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him" Psalm 37:5.

1. *Relax Completely.* Both prayer and healing require physical relaxation. To relax physically, you need to first relax emotionally and mentally. For this, you need to let go of self-centredness. You must want and feel your dependency on the Lord, and entirely trust this dependency. All tensions come from self-assertion and from opposition to divine influx. The body expresses this in tightened muscles. Let everything in you be loose and passive and serene.
2. *Visualise* the Lord, a radiant Person, right there with you. Feel His warmth, see His light, enveloping you and filling the room.
3. *Think of the situation* needing help, as something you are showing to the Lord.
4. *Ask Him to help*, with sincere and humble desire, with love where another is concerned. Do not tell Him what should be done. He knows the need and meets it according to His wisdom.
5. *Believe* that help is being given.
6. *Desire* that the help will be received. Visualise yourself or another holding out hands to receive God's inflowing power (This image can be impressed upon another's mind).
7. *Thank the Lord* for His presence which is always here, and for His wise and loving care which never ends.

Chris Skinner is on the committee of the Swedenborg Association and convenor of the Melbourne Group. He also ministers to the New Church (Swedenborgian) congregation in Victoria.



ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Hello Everyone and a big welcome to our new members! Well, as you may already know, I am your new Secretary, and I must say that it is a delight to come into this role to connect with each of you, as well as assisting the Committee.

New Members:

The following people have joined our SAA community:

Visnja Calic (VIC)	Kerry Dent (QLD)
Kelly-Lea Harding (NSW)	Terry Mulhall (NSW)
Randall Rabone (SA)	Naomi Robinson (VIC)
Jamey Shelton (NSW)	Merle Taylor (WA)

Again, a warm welcome to you all.

Business Items:

The Association's Annual General Meeting was on the 12th August, with Chris Skinner presenting an interesting and thought provoking talk on Coincidence, Divine Providence and how this dynamic can and does play out in our lives. I'm still thinking about it! It was recorded onto CD so if you want to listen to it, do contact the registered office (see page 2 for details).

I won't go into all the details of the meeting, as you will be receiving your own copy of the Minutes, however, it was an interesting evening including the election of the Association's Officers and Committee Members for the coming year and other general business. We do still have a couple of vacant places on the Committee, so if anyone wishes to make their unique contribution, please let us know. Remember, meetings are only once a quarter, with any other contact via email or 'phone. We may even be able to organise a telephone link up if you are unable to attend physically - although I'll have to check on the logistics of this before I make any rash promises! Please do think about it.

The next Committee meeting is the 20th October, so any ideas or suggestions you want us to consider, please ensure they arrive at the Registered Office (the North Ryde address) in good time. They will be most welcome.

I love reading the billboards put up outside roadside churches! I saw one earlier this week saying "*God always answers kneemail*" – and mused on, firstly, the coincidence of the topic being in the same vein as this Candela's theme (Prayer); and secondly the connection of kneeling and prayer. Now I don't know about anyone else, but my form of prayer consists of a cuppa and a chat! Well, I'm not sure how the Divine manages the cuppa, but we certainly have some great chats! Is this another use for the "Internet Café"? and on that note, I shall bid my farewells. Until next issue!

Your Secretary,

Louise Brogan

Some Quotes on PRAYER

More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.

- Lord Tennyson (1809 - 1892)

Prayer is the song of the heart. It reaches the ear of God even if it is mingled with the cry and tumult of a thousand men.

- Kahlil Gibran (1883 - 1931)

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed,
The movement of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.

- James Montgomery (1771 - 1854)

It's not enough to bend the knee,
And words of prayer to say;
The heart must with the lips agree,
Or else we do not pray.

-John Burton (1803 - 1877)

We thank Thee for this place in which we dwell; for the love that unites us; for the peace accorded us this day; for the hope with which we expect the morrow; for the health, the work, the food, and the bright skies that make our lives delightful; for our friends in all parts of the earth, and our friendly helpers in this foreign isle.

Give us courage and gaiety and the quiet mind.

Spare to us friends, soften to us our enemies.
Bless us, if it may be, in all our endeavours.
If it may not, give us the strength to encounter that which is to come, that we be brave in peril, constant in tribulation, temperate in wrath, and in all changes of fortune, and down to the gates of death, loyal and loving to one another.

- Robert Louis Stevenson (1850 - 1894)

Submitted by Stella Green, Sydney, NSW



GROUP'S NEWS

Brisbane:

On Wednesday 27th July, **John and Louise Brogan** from Sydney visited the group, there were 10 of us altogether. John gave a fascinating talk accompanied by slides and illustrations on *Church architecture and the relationship to the Grand Man*, explaining the ground plan of the ancient 1200 BC Temple of Luxor near Karnak, south of Cairo, built from the plentiful stone in Egypt.

He illustrated the ground plan of the ancient uncovered ruins of this temple, by overlaying a transparent sheet on which was a human skeleton, which corresponded in every way in shape and meaning.

The worship at that time was of one God Ra. The Nave, Transept, and Chancel relate to the torso - heart and lungs - and head areas of the human body, excluding the very crown of the head, which signifies the most holy area outside the chancel.

The number of columns also had a great correspondence. The ancient plan we were told - amazingly - has been replicated in eleven Notre Dame Cathedrals in France.

John whet our appetites for much more information, so we thank him and hope he will return to us again.

Lenore Sandow



Melbourne:

Our speaker in June was **Julian Duckworth** who spoke on one of the series of myths he is providing in Sydney. The one chosen was *'Eros & Psyche'* and Julian provided a very good broad scope of the use for us that can be made of the myth. The presentation was well received by those present and provoked some good discussion in the group. We had one person who attended for the first time and a total of 23 at the meeting.

In July our speaker was **Chris Skinner**, convenor of the group, and his topic was *Psychology and Spirituality*. The talk looked at the contributions made by Freud, Jung and others and the contribution made to understanding our own spirituality and how much psychology has helped in this area. The talk could only touch the surface of the area but it provided food for thought. An outline was given of Swedenborg's contribution to psychology and spirituality which in one sense spans the two disciplines as 'psyche' means soul. There was some good discussion and observations made and it was generally felt that more recent developments in psychology are paying a little more attention to the mind and spirit than was the case for many years. We were pleased to have two new attendees and a total of 17 present.

We were pleased to have **Tony Downey** speak to

us in August on the subject of *The Problem of Evil*. Tony is a regular attendee at the group and is also very much involved in the Theosophical Society (Pasadena). He provided an excellent summation giving details from Christian, Hindu, Buddhist and the Theosophist traditions. At the conclusion of Tony's talk Chris Skinner provided a brief synopsis from a Swedenborgian perspective. Everyone present appreciated the balance in the talk which gave a very good understanding of the development of thought on the part that evil plays or does not play in our life. We were pleased to have one new attendee and a total of 18.

Chris Skinner



Perth:

Since our last report we have been attempting to expand the range presentations. **Ian Arnold** from Brisbane and **Julian Duckworth** from Sydney have both travelled to Perth. Ian addressed a relatively large gathering on *Reading the Arcana*, which stimulated healthy discussion. In turn Julian grasped the opportunity to develop an interactive format by selecting the subject *Swedenborg's concept of Uses and other theories*.

Our monthly meeting for September will be set around a "workshop" format and provide opportunity for those present to contribute to the overall presentation on the theme of *What I've learned from Swedenborg!*

We look forward to growing this group.

Trevor Moffat



North Ryde, Sydney:

John Brogan gave a talk on Friday 24th June titled *'Anatomy of a Church; Symbols and Meanings'*. Eleven people attended this interesting talk, which built on the ideas presented in his 2002 talk *'Ancient Wisdom, Ancient Church'*. In 2002 he showed that the Temple of Luxor was designed using the proportions of man and the extensions of the Temple emphasised the principal stages of human growth. In this way the Temple was dedicated to the spiritual development of the human being. In this latest presentation he illustrated a remarkable discovery - the plan shapes of Notre Dame de Paris, Notre Dame de Chartres and Luxor were curved, all in the same direction and of the same magnitude. When the plan of Luxor was placed accurately onto the plan of Paris and Chartres with only the scales adjusted, they fitted exactly. That is, not only was the curve the same but the seven columns of the nave matched up, the twelve columns of the transept matched up and the sanctuary proportions were the same.



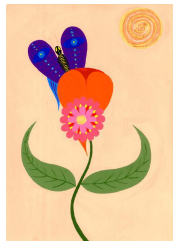
When John placed an anatomically correct skeleton onto the plan of the cathedral, we saw for ourselves a remarkable fit of knees, pelvis, abdomen, rib cage, throat and head to the structure of the temple. The big idea that guided John's presentation was that this common design presented the Grand Man/Cosmic man in stone with messages that guide people on their spiritual evolution. Embodied in the temple is a code, by means of which is inscribed the knowledge - practical and physical, spiritual and metaphysical - of the culture.

In focussing on the six principal areas or rooms at Chartres (the two towers at the entrance, the Narthex, Nave, Transept, Chancel and the Sanctuary), he connected the function of some of these areas with corresponding parts of the human body. For example the nave corresponds to the human body between the knees and the sex organs. When a person kneels it is a gesture of submitting. This situation is what the Nave represents. It is the place where one submits to the Higher Source.

For those having an interest in the Temple of Luxor and/or cathedrals, this will help them appreciate some of the messages built into the structures and appreciate the efforts of the people involved in building these places of worship to pass on a spiritual view of life. The video is available at the Swedenborg Centre.

Michael Chester

Friday September 2nd saw the opening of a wonderful exhibition at the Swedenborg Centre titled *The Random Walk*. It was an exciting event with close to 50 people attending. John Brogan's introduction to the Talk which accompanied the opening was, as usual, very insightful - into both the artist and the person of **Robert Bryce** - explaining his dedication to Dr Philip Groves and Emanuel Swedenborg as sources of instruction and inspiration, and also elucidating Robert's recent experience of prolonged and debilitating illness. The exhibition itself consists of 36 pieces of artwork, with images of flowing colour and line, producing a highly vivid sensation for the viewer and a great sense of aliveness and freedom, being for the most part painted onto silk 'canvases' stretched across a frame; some very large indeed, and all relating to the inner workings of his spiritual experience and understanding. In addition there is a remarkable coffee table of polished Mahogany, which features an eight-pointed symbol joined by a continuum of living energy depicted by an inlaid timber pattern in pale gold. This symbol is an ancient device employed in esoteric schools to map our inner processes, acting almost like a dynamic time-line. The talk given by Robert was extremely interesting, as he explained his method of painting on silk and about the meanings of a number of the works. He finds that



symbolism is a very important aspect of how we deal with the world, and in this case he consciously employed the symbolism of colour and image to encourage an awareness of certain concepts of spirituality and states of awareness, and to heighten participation with them. The title piece, 'The Random Walk' is a large work using vibrant green and earthy-brown inks with a crimson and gold centre, which represented various meanings to Robert, one being the cosmological reality outlined by Emanuel Swedenborg with the inner golden circle being the Divine, and moving outwards the next crimson being the Celestial, then the Spiritual, the Spiritual/natural, the natural and finally the outer darkness. Another explanation of the work is as a diagram of the soul's journey to the Lord God (or a photon's journey to the Sun), showing that it is not a direct and simple process in a straight line, but is frequently complex, intermittent and random. Fortunately, the period of incapacitating illness seems to be passed now, and we are looking forward to hearing of his continued good health and productive creative output.

Liz Coggins

Giving Thanks

Most of us can make five minutes a day if we really want to. For some, it will be before the family begins to stir, for others it will be during a quiet coffee break, while others will wait until the day is drawing to its close. When we come into God's presence with praise matters little. What does matter is that we do come. And I think I can guarantee that those who set aside a regular time to express their thanks to God will discover that every minute is time very well spent.

From Joyce Hugget's *Prayer Journal*

Submitted by Alexis Jarvis (NSW)

Regarded in itself prayer is talking to God and at the same time some inner view of the things that are being prayed for. Answering to this there is something akin to an influx into the perception or thought of the person's mind, which effects a certain opening of the internals towards God. But the experience varies according to the person's state and according to the essence of whatever is being prayed for.

Swedenborg: *Arcana Caelestia* #2535



The Answer

Mick phoned early on Monday morning and said “My mum’s on oxygen 24 hours a day and she hasn’t got long to live. She wants you to go around and see her as soon as you can. She’ll tell you why when you get there.”

I’d known Mick and his family for years, and I guessed that his mother, Ollie, wanted to see me to say goodbye. In my lunchbreak, I caught a tram to East Brunswick where she lived with Liz, one of her daughters. When I arrived, Liz said “Whatever you do, don’t make her laugh or upset her, or we’ll have to call the ambulance again.” She showed me to Ollie’s room and left us alone.

She was in bed, propped up on pillows, and with an oxygen mask covering her nose and mouth. To talk, she lifted the mask and pushed out her words with wheezy effort, pausing to gasp a bit of oxygen into her lungs. Our small-talk was minimal.

“I’m stuck here in bed,” she said, “... and I feel useless. ... I’m a burden on my kids.”

As she strained to catch her breath, she motioned her hand towards the mask and rolled her eyes. I felt a surge of pity. “I understand,” I told her. “Plenty of time.” And I breathed in deeply myself, as if to help her.

“So I’d like to just go, ... just ... turn the oxygen off, ... but is it **right**? ... the kids said to do ... what I think is best ...” With a pained frown, she leaned forward and cried out: “But it’s all up to **me**! ... and I don’t **know**!” She sank back, fumbling with the mask as she fought to breathe. She blinked tears away and tapped her fingers on the eiderdown until she was able to continue: “So that’s why ... I wanted you to come.”

“Gees,” I said, “That’s a matter for God, not for me.”

“Yes,” she said. “Will you ... ask him for me?”

That stunned me for a moment. I wasn’t religious or a churchgoer. I wasn’t in the habit of praying. But I liked her, I wanted to help, and it seemed such a small thing to do. I said “Okay.”

I closed my eyes. Compassion rose up through my chest and throat as I spoke within: “Lord, Ollie needs your answer. What do I tell her?”

Almost immediately, I heard these words in my mind: “It’s not for you to decide in matters of life and death. It’s time to just relax into it.” There was a slight pause, and then: “She has a week to go.”

The wonder of it!

I opened my eyes and said “Here’s your answer.” The wheezing stopped. Her eyes were steady on mine. “I’ll tell it to you the same as I heard it.” She nodded once, all ears. “‘It’s not for you to decide in matters of life and death.’” Her eyes searched my face. “‘It’s time to just relax into it.’” I paused.

She gave a wheezy sigh and said “Thanks. ... That’s all I wanted ... to hear. ... I’ll be alright now.”

She closed her eyes and worked at her breathing. I felt the stillness in the room and looked at my watch. It was time for me to leave to catch the tram back.

At lunchtime again on the Friday, I called in to see how she was going. She didn’t talk, but her eyes told me a lot: the weariness, the pain, the waiting. I sat with her for a few minutes. After a while, I could sense a peacefulness in her, a deep calmness. It made me glad.

As I got up to leave, I touched her hand and said “See you later.” Her eyes gripped mine, intense with something she would like to have said. I had to breathe in hard as something leapt in my chest. I gave her a grin and a nod, then tore myself away to go back to work.

On the Monday, Liz phoned to say that she’d found Ollie in the morning with the mask still on and the oxygen flowing. She said she’d gone in her sleep with a smile on her face.

James Baillie



James Baillie, who submitted the article on the previous page, now lives in Maldon, Victoria. It is a true story from sixteen years ago. In recent years he too has had to battle many difficulties, not the least crippling arthritis. Prayer and finding a book about old remedies have been the catalysts to turn things around, both for him and many in the district. Ed.



- ~ Born June 27, 1880 in Tuscumbia, Alabama
- ~ February 1881 becomes deaf, dumb and blind
- ~ 1904 graduates from Radcliff College cum laude
- ~ Goes on to live a full life of usefulness and inspiration
- ~ 1948 visits Australia

Helen Keller encountered Swedenborg's works during her early teens through John Hitz, Swiss-born ardent Swedenborgian who was engaged by family friend, Dr. Graham Alexander Bell to enquire into the remarkable progress being made by Helen to communicate with the world around her through the help of teacher Anne Sullivan. These works, translated into braille by John Hitz, supplied answers to the profound questions about her own life, God and religion. They inspired her to make the most of her life in service to others.

To commemorate the 125th anniversary of Helen's birth, the Swedenborg Foundation (USA) is issuing:

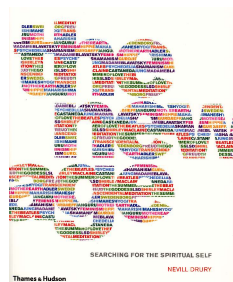
**Shining Soul:
Helen Keller's Spiritual Life and Legacy**

~ a 60 minute documentary in DVD and VHS format
Available December 2005

The practice of the presence of God

"The most holy practice, the nearest to daily life, and the most essential for the spiritual life, is the practice of the presence of God, that is to find joy in his divine company and to make it a habit of life, speaking humbly and conversing lovingly with Him at all times, every moment, without rule or restriction, above all at times of temptation, distress, dryness, and revulsion, and even of faithfulness and sin"

Brother Lawrence



the new age
*SEARCHING FOR THE
SPIRITUAL SELF*

by **Nevill Drury**
223 pages, paper
ISBN 0 500 28516 0

The awareness of Emanuel Swedenborg has been helped through a book published last year in the United Kingdom. Its author, though, has lived most of his life in Australia and is a well-regarded writer with more than forty books in the broad field of esoteric studies, both Eastern and Western to his name. Holding a Masters degree in anthropology from Macquarie University, Nevill Drury is also a regular speaker at conferences and has made radio and television appearances over the years. According to the cover, his latest work offers a coherent response to the question of whether or not the New Age movement presents a serious challenge to the orthodoxies of mainstream Western religion. At the same time, we are told that the book provides an accessible overview of the principal themes that unite New Age followers into a distinct spiritual movement in the world today. His relating of metaphysical approaches, pioneer analytical thinking, Eastern traditions, transpersonal psychology, quantum physics, consciousness research and personal spiritual experience bring interesting ideas. Whilst recognising that the rise of the New Age movement in all its diversity does have lasting and challenging implications for traditional Western belief structures, his conclusion involves the absolute necessity to remember that any spiritual path is but one of many possibilities - "an essential attitude if we are to have any hope of nurturing religious tolerance in an increasingly polarized world".

Undoubtedly, Swedenborg's writings which respect the usefulness of all spiritual pathways containing universal truths of acknowledging a Divine creator and living a good life fit well with this conclusion. It is not surprising then that Nevill Drury spends four pages early in the book on Swedenborg, the first of four precursors of the New Age (Mesmer, Blavatsky and Gurdjieff being the others). In those four pages, Nevill Drury presents Swedenborg's life and teachings in a most succinct, masterful and positive way which could but only leave the reader impressed. Swedenborg even gets a mention on the front cover!

The May 2005 issue of *Nova* magazine, distributed freely with a circulation of 70,000, has a detailed review of the book and Emanuel Swedenborg is briefly mentioned there too.

We very much look forward to having Nevill Drury as our guest at the Swedenborg Centre, North Ryde, in April 2006 to talk about his book.

Neville Jarvis, Executive Manager



Hurt

*One day I dug a little hole
And put my hurt inside
I thought that I could just forget
I'd put it there to hide.*

*But that little hurt began to grow
I covered it every day
I couldn't leave it and go on
It seemed the price I had to pay.*

*My joy was gone, my heart was sad
Pain was all I knew.
My wounded soul enveloped me
Loving seemed too hard to do.*

*One day, while standing by my hole
I cried to God above
And said, "If You are really there-
They say, You're a God of Love!"*

*And just like that - He was right there
And just put His arms around me
He wiped my tears. His hurting child
There was no safer place to be.*

*I told Him all about my hurt
I opened up my heart
He listened to each and every word
To every sordid part.*

*I dug down deep and got my hurt
I brushed the dirt away
And placed it in the Master's hand
And healing came that day.*

*He took the blackness of my soul
And set my spirit Free!
Something beautiful began to grow
Where the hurt used to be.*

*And when I look at what has grown
Out of my tears and pain
I remember every day to give my hurts to Him
And never bury them again.*

Prayer doesn't come before the battle;
prayer is the battle.

(Common saying in many Christian circles)

Eastern Europe Embraces Swedenborg

by *Duncan Smith*

The seeds for growing interest in Swedenborg's works may have been planted as early as 1814 when the English New Churchman Robert Hindmarsh sent copies of Swedenborg's writings to Emperor Alexander of Russia. Or perhaps they were sown by General Mauravieff, an earnest student of the writings. Though remaining dormant until this time, Swedenborg's theology is finding a fertile seedbed in the now-free countries of the former Soviet Union that make up the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), with most activity taking place in the Ukraine.

Responding to public demand, publishers are acquiring translations, printing Swedenborg's works, and distributing them to Russian-speaking readers. Sales figures indicate that more than a hundred thousand people have acquired these books from Moscow and the Ukraine in the west, to Vladivostok in eastern Russia. Sales of *Heaven and Hell* alone are reported to have been more than 110,000 over the past 10 years! Other works translated in the past five years are in popular demand as well. Ten major volumes of Swedenborg's works are now published, as well as some of the shorter works. This spring the second volume of the *Arcana* will be published, the two volumes of *True Christian Religion* are in the publisher's hands, and translation of the *Arcana* continues.

In January 2001, twenty participants - all but two from the CIS - attended a conference at Yalta to promote development of translation and publication.

Work and planning continue to keep this interest growing. In addition, a flat has been purchased, rooms are being refurbished, and a new entrance is being constructed for a Swedenborg Center, scheduled to open this year in Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine. The center will house a library and sales office, and provide a place for "a meeting of minds."

From the Summer 2005 Edition of *LOGOS*, the newsletter of the Swedenborg Foundation, USA.

Author unknown
Submitted by Rosemary Goodwin (QLD)



Books for the Quarter

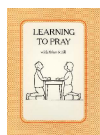


If you order the following titles in the October to December 2005 Quarter, you will receive approx. 25% off the retail price (see the discounted price and postage on the form below)

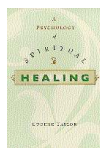
Complete the form below (you can copy it) and return it to the Swedenborg Centre or telephone on 02 9888 1066 and mention this notice



Talking with God: the Healing Power of Prayer by Gwynne Dresser Mack **RRP \$15.00**
 120 pages, paper. See **article on Prayer** (pages 3 & 4) on how this publication can be very valuable in the processing of communicating with God in many areas of life. We are offering it at **half price** to make it possible for readers to buy multi-copies for Christmas gifts.



Learning to Pray by Brian and Jill Kingslake **RRP \$2.00**
 16 pages, paper (booklet)
 Brian, a Swedenborgian minister, and his wife Jill focussed much of their life's work on prayer and meditative practices in Africa, UK and USA. Prayer fellowship formed a very important part. This small booklet comprises nine very insightful areas - from "Love and Healing" (which includes a number of helpful prayers), types of prayer, the language, group praying to the mystical aspects.



A Psychology of Spiritual Healing by Eugene Taylor **RRP \$25.00**
 208 pages, paper
 Dr. Eugene Taylor (Harvard Medical School) uses modern psychology, concepts from the world's religions, and a lifetime of spiritual experiences and interior exploration to show how true healing comes from within. Taylor asserts that everyone has the capacity to develop a healing personality. He draws on diverse interpreters of transcendental experiences including William James, Swedenborg, Jung, Frankl, and Maslow in exploring divisions between science and religious traditions. He also provides glimpses into the spiritual lives of the Dalai Lama and Tenzin Norgay who have shared their experiences with him in meetings.

ORDER FORM ~ Send to: SWEDENBORG CENTRE, 1 Avon Road, NORTH RYDE, NSW 2113

I wish to buy a copy of the following (please insert Number of copies and Total but see "Postage" below):-

Title	* Postage etc.	Discount Price	No.	Total
<i>Talking With God</i>	\$3.00	\$7.50		\$
<i>Learning to Pray</i>	\$1.00	\$1.50		\$
<i>A Psychology of Spiritual Healing</i>	\$5.00	\$12.50		\$
Total Payable by Cheque/Money Order/Credit Card #				\$

Cheques/Money Orders payable to "Swedenborg Centre" * For multiple orders, actual postage will be charged if less.

Credit Card Payment: Visa/Master/Bankcard No. _____ Expiry ____ / ____

Signature: Name on Card Telephone No. (.....)

Details (Capitals please)

Name : Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms. _____

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WHAT'S HAPPENING



For Group activities, contact your nearest Group Convenor

- Brisbane (Ian Arnold on (07) 3369 0054; email: iaarnold@ozemail.com.au)
- Gold Coast (Kevin Attwater on (07) 5545 2401 and Jack Benson on (07) 5545 4115);
- Melbourne (Chris Skinner on (03) 9432 0322; email: cskinner9@optusnet.com.au);
- Perth (Trevor Moffat on (08) 9470 9775; email: trevorm@ic-net.com.au;)
- Sydney region (Michael Chester on (02) 9913 2421; email: mchester@accsoft.com.au);

It would be good to see additional viable Groups established in new areas. If you can help contact Michael Chester.

Brisbane: New Church Hall, 21 Agars Street, Rosalie. 4th Wednesdays commencing at 1 pm
2005 28th September ~ *Correspondences* with **Ian Arnold**
Remainder of the year ~ Being finalised

Melbourne: The New Church Hall, 426 High Street Road, Mount Waverley. Usually last Fridays commencing 8pm
2005 30th September ~ *Entertaining Angels* with **David Moffat**, Canberra
28th October ~ *Love of the Neighbour*. Panel of speakers from different religions and philosophies
26th November ~ (Saturday) Subject being finalised. Speaker: **John Brogan**, Sydney

Perth: Petros Lifeskills Bookshop, 281 Albany Highway, Victoria Park usually last Fridays commencing 8pm
2005 23rd September ~ *Biology, Psychology and the Purpose of Life* with **Trevor Moffat**
21st October ~ *Are we really free?* with **Trevor Moffat**
25th November ~ *How Swedenborg Describes a Useful Life* with **Julian Duckworth**

Sydney: Swedenborg Centre, 1 Avon Road, North Ryde. Usually 4th Fridays commencing 7.45pm.
2005 28th October ~ Subject being finalised. Speaker: **Dr Vladimir Dimitrov**
25th November ~ Details being finalised

Why a Swedenborg Association?

To promote Emanuel Swedenborg, the man and his message, throughout Australia by personal contact, meetings, etc.

Having active Groups for those with common interests.

Providing information on topical subjects by drawing on Swedenborg's contributions.

Ensuring Swedenborg's writings are kept before the community's awareness.

Why Join?

To share with others what has been of help to you in your quest for truth.

Pursuing areas of interest in Swedenborg through access to material and events.

A Free Newsletter every 3 months

20% discount on books, etc. other than sets of 3 or more books when a reduced discount applies

Free Swedenborgian-based book, tape, etc. each year enabling you to introduce others.

Membership Application Form (for use of New Memberships only)

I wish to apply for membership of the SWEDENBORG ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA Incorporated and agree to be bound by the Rules of Association (copy available on request).

Name (Capitals Please) Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr/Rev/ _____
Given Name Family Name **n.b. only one person per application**

Address (Capitals Please) _____

_____ Tel. No. () _____ Email _____

Postcode _____ Signed _____ Date / / 200

Subscription: \$30 (One year regular) \$75 (Three year regular)
 \$20 (One year Concession - Students and Pensioners holding a Social Security Card)

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I am willing to have my name and telephone number provided to other members in my locality Yes / No (please circle)