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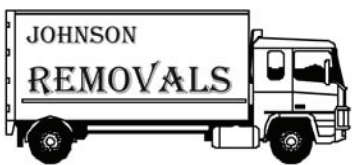


JOURNAL OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE NEW CHURCH

LifeLine

“The kingdom of heaven is like...”

Inside this issue:























Warm welcome from The Friendly Church

Our column that takes a look at what's going on at our local places of worship: **TODAY – The New Church, Dalton**

AT YOUR SERVICE
by Colin Logue

NEW year; new, true millennium; new church, except that the church I visited last Sunday morning, the New Church in Dalton, isn't a new church at all!

Hidden away off the beaten track this church, which celebrated its 175th anniversary last year, is a beautiful example of a small Georgian Non-Conformist chapel. Yet its origins go further back still, to the 1790s and its foundation under the patronage of an enlightened mill-owner from Cooper Bridge, James Senior.

When I first decided to visit this church I asked a colleague of mine who lives nearby what she knew about the "New Church".

"Ah! The Friendly Church," she said, "for that's what we call it in Dalton — the Friendly Church!"

"The New Church" movement was founded by the 18th century Swedish philosopher Emanuel Swedenborg, a man whose profound religious insights are far beyond the scope of this brief article, and yet with its familiar and traditional style of worship it's a church in which any first-time visitor would feel comfortable.

Last Sunday I had the added bonus that it was the church's monthly Family Service and the worship was led by the local lay reader, Derrick Pearce.

After a hymn and a reading Derrick Pearce gave his "Children's Talk." The conclusion was that the greatest gift at Christmas is Jesus himself.

"What did you get for Christmas?" Derrick asked the children.

"Me!" one boy struggled to answer, "I got a LOT!!!"

After the children left for Sunday school there was a reading from the works of the church's founder Emanuel Swedenborg on the topic of "time". Then came the main sermon, a reaffirmation by Derrick Pearce of an article written by a previous minister, Bruce Jarvis, which continued his theme.

"Time is the big issue" he said. "Angels have no concept of time but God has placed us in this dimension as the best setting to make choices, to learn and to grow."

And later reflecting on how, despite increased leisure, life can still seem so hectic that we decide we must "make time" to do something special, he added, "How can we 'make' time. Time is God-given. What we actually do is re-arrange the priorities of our life."

This is an open and accessible church, one which welcomes visitors and puts up no barriers to those who wish to be married or have children baptised in it and yet at the same time it's a church of profound principles.

I can only repeat, after my visit last Sunday, what that young boy had said earlier . . . What did I get from the New Church at Dalton? — I got, a LOT!

AT YOUR SERVICE: THE NEW CHURCH, DALTON
LAY READER: Derrick Pearce

SERMON: The topic of time

ARCHITECTURE: Small Georgian chapel

MUSIC: Traditional hymns. Ebullient organist

ATMOSPHERE: Friendly by (nick)name, friendly by nature

AFTER-SERVICE CARE: Biscuits and coffee you could stand a spoon in!

Lifeline

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