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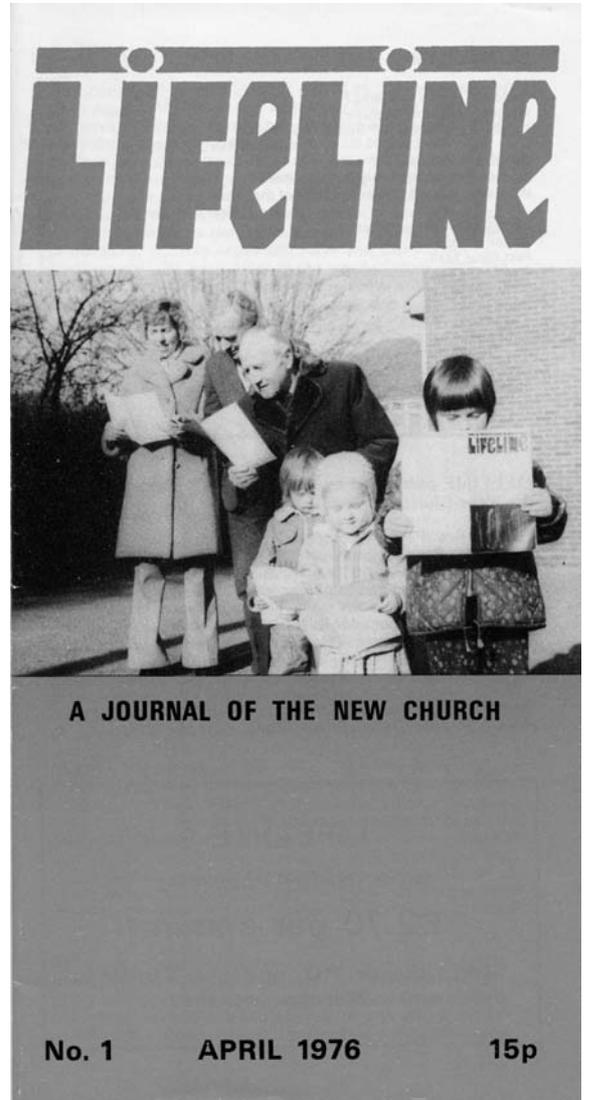
Number 300



JOURNAL OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE NEW CHURCH

# Lifeline

## 300<sup>th</sup> Issue



Inside this issue:


# Lifeline

A JOURNAL OF THE NEW CHURCH



EMANUEL SWEDENBORG  
Born  
JANUARY 29th.1688

No.46 JANUARY 1980 20p

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JOURNAL OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE NEW CHURCH No.193 APRIL 1992 80p.

## A DRAMATIC CHURCH

Over the centuries there has been a strong link between the church and theatre. As with many other aspects of society, where the church led, others followed and theatre became largely secular and commercial. So I was particularly interested to read in an article by Michael Billington in *The Guardian* in which he wrote, "British theatre has abandoned Mrs. Thatcher and discovered God. Or, to put it another way, a passion for politics is gradually being replaced by a preoccupation with religion. It is early days yet, but so far the characteristic sound of the Nineties is of dramatists seeking a solution to our travails not in militant action or party politics but in some form of moral re-birth.....Ayckbourn's Eighties plays, from *Way Upstream* to *Revengers' Comedies*, have constantly dealt with the way evil seems to burgeon in secularised society."

One theatre director is quoted as saying, "At the moment we are getting a thousand new plays a year and a huge proportion of them deal in some way with religion.....plays set in Heaven and Hell, starring God and the Devil, keep pouring in. Something is clearly going on."

There is also the suggestion that Aids is producing a much stronger sense of personal responsibility "in the place of the Bomb, which offered the prospect of collective death." So a lot of the plays received "see death as a constant partner rather than a comfortably distant prospect."

The article refers to Beckett's "Waiting for Godot" in which, it is said, "the honour of God transcends personal loyalty.....a modern morality play on permanent Christian themes." Having in the past played the part of Estragon in that play, to audiences ranging from one in which there were many senior schoolboys, one arranged by an Anglican Bishop and one for the students of a University in Copenhagen, I can testify to the depth of response that play gets and, despite its music hall analogies, the seriousness with which it is taken by those watching it.

All this raises the question - where are the New Church dramatists? How can we take advantage of this trend? One Society in the church - Kearsley - produces plays, sometimes

of a religious nature. There was a play for children written by Eric Sutton - is there a copy anywhere? Or is there any other play by a New Church author that is available for production. I know that this editorial will be read by people in many countries of the world. If you have knowledge of any play with a New Church background, we'd be glad to hear from you.

It seems that here is an opportunity for the presentation of the teachings of the New Church in one of the most effective art forms. We know that we have some New Church artists; have we some playwrights too?

Editor

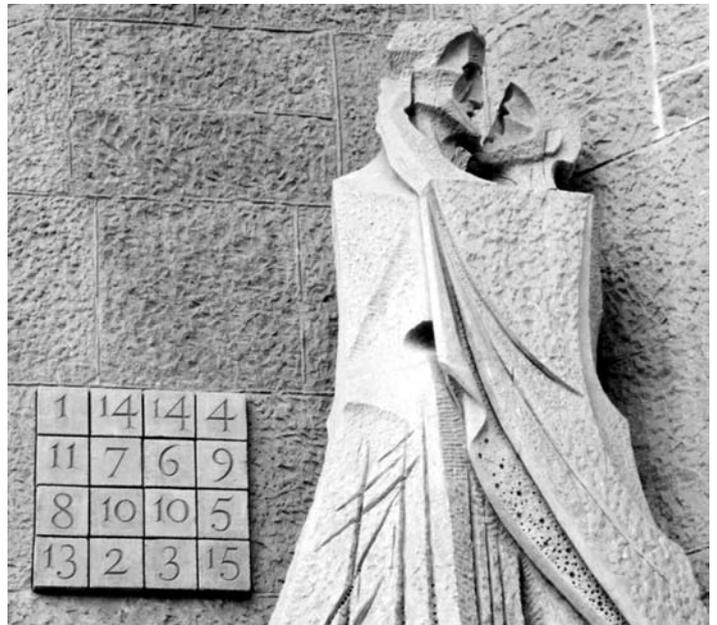
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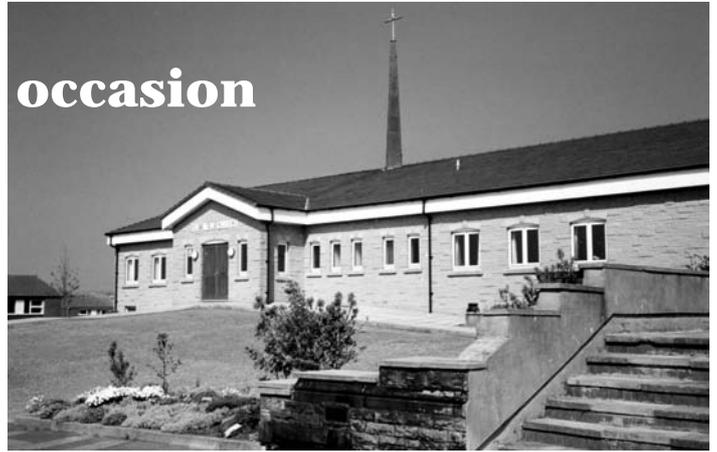






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# Readers Letters



A large, empty rectangular box with a decorative border, intended for readers to submit their letters. The border consists of multiple parallel lines with small square corner ornaments.

## **Lifeline**

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