



The teenage group present a closing service on the theme of "The Senses" at the Accrington All Age Gathering in September.



'Winter' All Age Gathering

See page 12

Lifeline

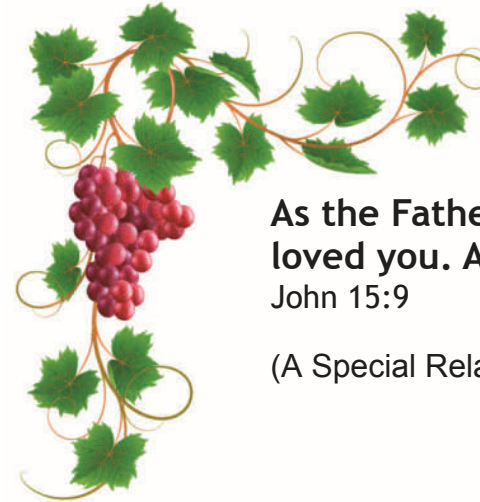
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new church Lifeline



As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love.

John 15:9

(A Special Relationship - page 2)

Loving others - as our neighbour

(3rd Essential Part 2 - page 13)



The road from Jerusalem to Jericho

October 2011
Number 402

Our mission is to express, share and experience with others in life an inclusive, non-judgmental vision of God's kingdom.

A Special Relationship

Before you read the following article it may be useful to read and reflect on the following:

John 15:1-11
Isaiah 5:1-7
Paul's letter to the Galatians 5:22 and 23
Doctrine of Life 102

The vine was part of the religious heritage of the Jewish nation. It was often pictured as the vine of vineyard of God. It was also a symbol of the nation of Israel. Its emblem appeared on the coins of the Maccabees of that period. The vine was grown all over Israel and still is of course and interestingly it is a plant that needs **a great deal of attention if the best fruit is to be obtained from it.** Many vines are grown on terraces where the ground must be perfectly clean and sometimes on trellises as well. It is even allowed to creep along the ground, sometimes upheld by forked sticks and I have often seen them trained around doors of cottages. But one thing is very clear, that whatever your preference is in growing your vine there must be careful preparation of the soil. If it is not trained it will creep over the ground at great speed! A young vine is not allowed to fruit for the first three years and each year it is drastically cut back to develop and conserve its life and energy. An Interesting thought?

The vine bears two kinds of branches – one that bears fruit and one that does
(Continued on page 3)

Contents

A Special Relationship	2	From the Council ...	10
Does the New Church have a future?	4	Rev Alexander Gorbenko	11
In Memory - Dora Alice Preston	8	All Age Gathering	12
In Memory - Daisy Caroline Smith	9	Loving others - as our neighbour	13

For the current issue of Lifeline, back issues and other resources visit:

www.new-church-lifeline.org.uk

Say a prayer of thanks to your Heavenly Father for His love and care for you.

Experience

Two organisations have used the message of the Good Samaritan to form charities to serve people.



It is an international relief and development organisation that works through local churches to proclaim and demonstrate the love of God. They provide spiritual and physical aid to hurting people around the world by sending shoeboxes of gifts overseas at Christmas and working on issues like water and sanitation, HIV and AIDS, sustainable livelihoods along with disasters and emergencies.



The Samaritans provides a 24 hour, 365 day confidential emotional support to those experiencing despair, distress or suicidal feelings.

The King will say, ... 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' *Matthew 25:34-40*

Wherever you travel, I'll be there, I'll be there.

Wherever you travel, I'll be there.

And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter, I'll be there.

Five Essentials - Aspects of Loving - a focus for the Church
 3rd Essential: Part 2: Loving others - as our neighbour
 Published by The General Conference of the New Church.
 Downloadable from www.new-church-lifeline.org.uk

[Leviticus 19:18] The tribe of Levi had been given a special priestly role and again historically there was a lot of animosity between the two groups. With all this in mind please re-read this story and perhaps wonder at the Samaritan who took such care of the man compared with the religious men who walked on by.

Teaching focus

By the neighbour, individual persons are meant who are to be treated each one differently according to the nature and amount of good that resides with a person. Thus good itself is meant, and therefore in the highest sense the Lord Himself since He resides in good and is the source of good; for good that does not originate in Him is not good. *Arcana Caelestia* 3419:3

Each individual is the neighbour. A smaller or larger community is more of a neighbour, one's country even more so. Even more so is the Lord's kingdom; and the Lord is the neighbour above all. In a universal sense the good proceeding from the Lord is the neighbour.

The New Jerusalem and Heaven's Teaching for it 103

Charity towards the neighbour is thought to consist in giving to the poor, helping a person in need, and doing good to everyone. But genuine charity involves acting circumspectly and with the end in view that good may result. Anybody who gives help to some poor or needy person who is a wrong-doer does ill to the neighbour through him, for through the help he gives that wrong-doer he strengthens him in evil and supplies him the wherewithal to do ill to others. It is different with one who supplies help to the good. *Arcana Caelestia* 8120

Reflection/Meditation

Imagine that you are that man travelling along the rocky road, in an area of wilderness where danger lurks and robbers can hide behind the rocks ... How are you feeling? ... Suddenly a group of bandits appear from nowhere, beat you and steal your belongings and leave you injured and very frightened ... You lie there unable to move and then hear footsteps walking along. Looking up you see a priest moving along the road ... How do you feel now? He walks away from you and hurries on ... You lie there wondering what will happen to you when miraculously you hear other footsteps coming towards you ... perhaps the priest has returned with help ... but no, it's a Levite. He'll help me, you think, he knows how to behave, he knows all the commandments ... What utter disappointment you feel when he also hurries away ... Surely you will die out here ... there's no-one to help. You close your eyes and give up hope of rescue

You are spoken to gently by a caring, loving voice, he comforts you, pours oil and wine on your wounds and bandages them ... He gently carries you, places you on his donkey. and leads you to an inn where he comforts and cares for you ... Soak up that wonderful feeling of love and comfort.

Next day your carer instructs the innkeeper to look after you till you are healed and well enough to leave.

not. Branches that do not bear fruit are drastically pruned back so that they will not drain away anything of the plants strength. **The vine cannot produce the crop of which it is capable without drastic pruning.**

The wood of the vine is in fact useless because it is too soft for any fruitful purpose. At certain times of the year it was laid down by law that people must bring offerings of wood to the Temple for the altar fires. **The wood of the vine must not be brought.** The only thing that could be done with the wood pruned out of a vine was to make a bonfire of it and destroy it. The Jewish nation in the past had been characterised as a vine planted by the Lord; **"Thou didst bring a vine out of Egypt; thou didst drive out the nations and plant it"** Psalm 80:8.

Israel however did not live in accordance with this symbol and where they had been watched over and cared for by God so that they may live as a loving and compassionate people, they instead backslided and became unworthy of the symbol.

The Lord is speaking to us in a very real way about what our relationship should be with Him. **John 15:9.** The Lord needs all of us just as much as we need Him! The branch is useless without the vine and except for the stem it will wither and die. So the branches depend on the stem and the stem depends on the branches. A Reciprocal relationship of giving and receiving which makes the bond of friendship grow stronger and more loving. **The sap that runs through the branches perhaps?** This relationship that we share with the Lord has to be one that is real and truly grafted together.

We as the branches must bear the fruit in a special loving relationship with the Lord. Without Him we cannot achieve anything fruitful or what Paul in his letter to the Galatians calls the 'fruit of the spirit'. We must day by day draw nourishment from the Lord by reading the Word of God, meditating upon it and asking ourselves these questions as we read; "Lord, as I read this passage what are you asking of me to change in the way that I live now and in my relationship to others"? We must respond in useful loving ways by what we understand of the truth, and so power it with the love of God to make it fruitful and lasting. Happy pruning!

Stephen Thomas

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Galatians 5:22-23

Does the New Church have a future?

I was interested in the article in the July Lifeline written by David Lomax about the future or otherwise of the New Church. It is a question that concerns me, as I suppose it must concern everyone who is a member of the General Conference of the New Church. I don't feel that I am writing from the point of view of a woman but rather from the point of view of someone who has been a member of a worshipping society for many years.

Firstly perhaps we need to clarify what we mean by the New Church. I assume from the context of the article that it is the General Conference that might not have a future as opposed to the entire dispensation begun at the time of the Second Advent. I personally believe that the Lord's purposes will prevail whatever we do or do not do as an organization. Whether or not the non-separatists, such as John Clowes were right, at the beginnings of our organization, I don't know.

One thing I do feel is that in those times there was a feeling of belief and certainty in the teachings of the New Church. There was also a confidence and excitement about the early New Church that we certainly do not have today. People did not seem to worry about being regarded as different or strange in their belief. I think today we feel much more diffident and embarrassed to talk about our teachings. The name 'Swedenborg' for starters can be difficult enough to explain. Then certain teachings also raise problems - for example the fact that we regard the Second Advent as having taken place (and still taking place) we tend to keep to ourselves, because some people might consider that a 'cranky' idea; although again to me it is a far more likely scenario than the Armageddon type coming that others believe is now imminent.

Since 1770 the pace of change in the world has increased and as the centuries have passed the rate of change and momentum has gone into overdrive, especially over say the last twenty years. Twenty years ago the first mobile phones were like bricks, blackberries grew on bushes and computers were a rarity in most homes. This increase in technology appears to me to have had two effects. Firstly technology instead of providing us with more leisure time has had a reverse effect - we seem to have less time than ever, because technology, whether it's Facebook or Twitter or twenty four hour television, is absorbing more and more of our time and in some instances becoming an addiction. As technology becomes more and more visual, it makes pursuits such as reading books seem very dull indeed; it also seems to make listening and reflecting more difficult because generally speaking we are becoming unused to silence. I used to feel before I finished my career as a teacher that I had to be a cross between a circus clown, stand-up comic and lion tamer to compete with the media all

3rd Essential: Part 2 - Loving others - as our neighbour

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind”; and, “Love your neighbour as yourself.” Luke 10:27

**When I needed a neighbour, were you there, were you there?
When I needed a neighbour, were you there?
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter, were you there?** Song by Sydney Carter

An expert of the Law questioned Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life. Jesus answered him by asking another question, “What is written in the law? How do you read it? The expert answered Jesus by repeating, what is known as, the Two Great Commandments. Jesus replied, “You have answered correctly,” do this and you will live.” But the expert asked him another question to justify himself, “And who is my neighbour?”

Some questions to ponder

Who is our neighbour? Is it just the people who live in our neighbourhood? Is it those with whom we have a relationship? Is it everyone in the whole world? Can we love others if we don't love ourselves?

Bible focus

Jesus answered the expert's questions by telling a story, a parable, which is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning containing a special message for us and how we live our lives. The road from Jerusalem to Jericho is about eighteen miles. The road is rough and steeply downhill. It's lined with jagged rocks where danger could lurk.

Please read the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:30-37

Some historical background to make this story even more amazing: there was a long history of hatred between the Jews and Samaritans. When the northern kingdom of Israel had been conquered by the Assyrians in 722/1BC the Israelites were dispersed among many other countries and people from other races were brought into the area. Therefore, the Samaritans were not pure Jews and were considered 'untouchables' by the Jews even though they worshipped the same God and viewed the five books of Moses, the Pentateuch, as their Scriptures. The Priest and Levite were both religious leaders who would have known the Scriptures and the command to love your neighbour as yourself

predicaments and send our love and warmest greetings for all of you. Your friends' relationship gives us the strength to overcome our temporary difficulties.

We send our love and our heartfelt regards to all of you. We'd like to express our gratitude to you for your considerable support that was come just on time (providentially!). On Thursday the 18th I've had an urgent eye operation on my right eye only capable of seeing. An operative intervention was successful. Now I am recovering.

Could you pass our love and thankfulness to all who remember us?

With very best wishes,

Rev Alexander Gorbenko and Tamara Gorbenko”

Michael Hindley, Council Secretary

All Age Gathering Theme : Winter

**Saturday 19th November 10.30am to 4pm
Keighley New Church**

Details of the day

You are invited to an all age day, which is for anyone between 1 and 100. The morning will start with refreshments from 10.30 a.m., with an opening service starting at 11 a.m. This will be followed by craft sessions for all ages and a biblical reflection, aimed at adults. There will be a shared lunch; we ask that you bring some food for everyone to share. In the afternoon, there will be fun and games for all ages and the day will end with a concluding service.

There is no cost for the day, though we ask that you make a small donation to cover the craft materials and drinks.

Please contact **Christine Bank** for more details by telephone: 01274 772451 or email: christine.bank@generalconference.org.uk and please confirm your attendance with Christine by November 12th.

singing, all dancing presentations.

Secondly technology has reduced the sense of commitment to organizations including churches. In the past the church provided the social life that television does today. It provided somewhere to go and something to do at weekends. Now with practically every household having a car it appears to be much more pleasurable to go shopping or to a gym or to some other place of entertainment on a Sunday. People take more holidays, have relatives that live at a distance and generally are far more reluctant to commit to attending a church and maintaining its buildings and serving on committees etc. Many voluntary organizations suffer from this lack of commitment.

The foundation of religion, as I understand it, is revelation through the Word of the Lord in a written form accommodated to our understanding. As far as I can see, the only thing that we have, that other churches do not have, and the only thing that justifies our existence as a separate denomination is the revelation given by the Lord through the instrumentality of Emanuel Swedenborg. This does not mean we automatically accept its authority - it does mean that we should try to understand something of what is said in this revelation and if we find the beliefs reasonable to affirm them and try to live by them. However in our church as opposed to most churches we need to know something of the beliefs that are expressed in the Writings. Unfortunately the process of learning through being taught or discovering through reading complex books with a difficult vocabulary does not fit the experiences of many people who prefer something instant, visual and perhaps emotional-hence the appeal of evangelical denominations nor does this more thoughtful approach appeal to those who want a very basic 'believe this, black and white' approach.

Changing things is never easy and it is even harder when a change is made to halt a perceived slide or to reverse a trend. It is even more difficult when we not at all sure what that change should be, even assuming we have the personnel to effect change. Thoughts and trends today change with amazing rapidity. Originally our societies were based on the concept of the angelic societies in heaven which even today should be the ideal model. A society was a like minded group of people interested in the Writings given through Emanuel Swedenborg who found it hard to worship in the established and non-conformist churches of the day because of their beliefs. Personally speaking I still feel the same today and feel uncomfortable with much of the phraseology within other Christian denominations.

In many ways I feel out of step because I actually enjoy going to church. I like the slightly old fashioned language of a church service (although to me it feels more eternal than transient language of today) and I like singing hymns, Victorian and modern! As for talks I usually find the ones that other people give stimulating and interesting; as for the ones I produce I'm afraid I cannot

comment! Most of all though I love going to church and seeing the happy faces of people who I have come to know and love as very dear friends, friends with whom I have shared a great part of my life and whose lives I have shared in return. Building relationships is a slow process in a more hectic age.

On the whole a church group is, or ought to be, a group that supports each other and a group that finds happiness in being with each other and enjoying a whole range of activities together. It should be a group that grows together but yet is always open to receive others.

Thinking of an alternative model to societies is not easy. Getting together three or four times a year helps but it does not become an integral part of daily life. An internet church for many people who are isolated or enquiring will certainly fulfill one need and as someone who attended the Visioning Meeting at Purley Chase I thought the way it was planned to function was really exciting and had great possibilities. However as human as human beings we do need contact with other human beings who share our spiritual interests. The meeting concentrated mostly on the internet website construction but it was also illuminating reading the letters contributed by people who could not attend the meeting. Most of them also stressed connect with others and the uses of publications. Who knows perhaps 'Kindle' might have some answers.

I read recently in a daily newspaper that people join and become members of organizations because there is something in it for them. The article suggested that churches considering increasing their membership should target older members as they have most to gain in the form of friendships and support, but also because with death increasingly looming on the horizon it makes sense not to hedge your bets!

David mentions that perhaps a way forward is to apply the teachings of our church to life and to focus on using our doctrines or teachings. The well known (to us) quotation 'all religion has relation to life and the life of religion is the doing of good,' would seem to be very applicable here. Most of us I am sure do try to do this in our individual lives but seeing how to do this as an organization is not easy. Also again this is a concept that is not particularly embraced outside of churches at the present time as the emphasis is on finding one's individual pathway, cherishing one's self and ensuring that there is plenty of 'me time.'

Whilst we still have functioning churches we still have community uses such as weddings and funerals and speaking for myself this can lead to other uses such as blessing a home or even exorcising a home. With the conduct of funerals particularly, I feel that our church has a definite message, a message of hope, to impart. One mourner summed it up when she said to me 'You have put into words what I have always thought.' Through services to people it is possible to build up a relationship within a community over a period of time. Whilst this may

throughout Council meetings, Christine reports in full to the ministry, links are established between individual members of both bodies and all but a few confidential minutes are sent to individuals, churches and groups. We hope that Lifeline reports help too.

Some of the Council's deliberations involve the law relating to Conference as a Company and Charity. This affects rules, finance and procedures and often restricts what would seem to be the simplest solution. It seems that becoming one of the about-to-be-implemented CIOs (Charitable Incorporated Organisations) might eventually simplify matters for the Conference after an initial upheaval. Google fans might like to read all about this!

Other deliberations and decisions relate to properties, news about or queries from churches at home and overseas; and potential needs for lay and ordained ministries in the foreseeable future. As always the agenda was interesting for anyone who loves the organisation, which exists only to support and facilitate the work of the Lord in the New Church.

Judith Wilson

Rev Alexander Gorbenko

At Conference this year, we learned some sad news about Alex. He had been registered as semi-blind, but was not receiving his disability allowance from the Moscow authorities so he has had to rely on the earnings of his daughter, Tamara, now the only bread-winner, to cover basic expenses. In addition, during the last year he had suffered the deaths of his mother, his wife, Irina, and his father-in-law.

As a result of this news, the Annual Meeting decided to make a collection for Alex and Tamara, and this raised £640. This was given to Tamara at the General Church Summer School at Purley Chase where she was a subsidised student. We have recently received the following letter.

"Dear Friends

My daughter Tamara has delivered money collected by members of the General Conference of the New Jerusalem Church and given by Rev. David Gaffney in Purley Chase to Tamara. It was unexpected surprise for us. Also by post quite soon we've got a nice card signed by many people whom I know personally and who remember us. We've been so moved. Thank you very much.

Your spiritual support, your prayer and good wishes are very important for us in our difficult situation now. We appreciate your attention to our

From the Council ...

There have been suggestions to reduce the size of the Council and this is happening as circumstances change. There were ten of us around the table at Purley Chase in early September – for the first time in many years all officers and trustees being volunteers. The Trustees are six in number, three of whom double up as Council Secretary, Company Secretary, and acting Chairman. The non-voting attendees are the Treasurer, Recorder and representatives of the Ministry. It is sad that there have been no new Trustees for five years, but, more importantly, no volunteers for key roles such as Treasurer and Chairman. Several members of this group have borne considerable responsibility for many years and there is a sense of deep concern about the future. Meanwhile there is much to celebrate with the beginning of an era in which new volunteers are dealing with everyday management of Conference in their own ways; the rules cannot keep up with the changes being made of necessity! There is agreement that less detail and restriction is urgently needed and Zoë Brooks, Company Secretary will join the long-standing, hard-working Rules Committee.

Following an introductory thought-provoking reading from Arcana Caelestia 428 the Council spent time considering July's Conference about which both new and old attendees had submitted their observations and ideas. These will be communicated to Jan Millar to help with the organisation of the next AGM from 23rd to 27th July 2012. Why not put it in your diary now? It was good to receive a positive letter of thanks from Rev Alexander Gorbenko to all contributors for the considerable gift raised at the Conference. He is recovering from eye surgery and is feeling better.

Conference's resolution which urged 'the sponsorship of students and employment of Ministers to be a priority' was responded to positively and immediately. There is also enthusiasm for some form of employed help for young families within the foreseeable future. This is a growth area in our organisation and the Visioning Team is urging support at a time when the Treasurer is able to forecast a possible small operational surplus for 2012 to 2013.

Another growth area is Purley Chase where increasing revenue from events is reducing the cost to Conference to its lowest-ever figure. Successful repairs to the chimney stacks and gables have come in under budget. Dawn, a local lady, is now added to the part-time list of employees to help support the increasingly varied and exciting programme of events.

Open and clear communication is one of the aims of the Council and an area sometimes criticised. Rev Christine Bank and Rev David Gaffney attend

not have a reward in the filling of seats it does help to give people at the very least a more positive image of a church.

In a New Church periodical I recently read the following:- *"This year has been in many ways depressing for the New Church - a year of great anxiety and trouble in many ways, a year of strenuous work carried on under great difficulties ... The ranks of our ministry are being depleted ... many of the older ones are verging on the time for retirement ... We are absolutely without resident students... We have much to depress us ... many of our societies are small and feeble at present ... the days are dark and our progress is slow ... We cannot as yet see the end of the dark days."* When was this written? - this year last year, next year? Surprisingly enough it was written in January 1918 by Rev Isaiah Tansley, the Editor of New Church Weekly - a time that we think of as being one of the blossoming times of our church. Yet in reality it was a time at which both the church and the country seemed at their lowest ebb. How did Tansley conclude? By saying *"Our GOD is the LIGHT of the World and he has told us that the MORNING COMETH - and COME IT WILL, if we are faithful to the truths we have learnt from Him."*

Ninety three years ago! How this natural world has changed! I have no idea where the world is going. I have no answers as to where or how the church is going, what is best for it or what is not. At times I feel much like Tansley must have felt when he wrote his editorial. But I do know that circumstances and attitudes can literally change overnight. The First World War marked a great watershed for the world, our country, our church. It altered so many of attitudes and opinions but it was an effect of the change and turmoil in the spiritual world consequent to the Last Judgment (try explaining that!) In 1914 our Church was confident and thriving - over the next four years the situation changed so dramatically that today it is almost beyond our comprehension. But in 1918 resolution came so dramatically. Today sea changes in attitudes occur and can be spread almost overnight and a week becomes a long time in politics.

We cannot see into the future - we cannot even second guess the future - all we can do is as Tansley said *'to be faithful to the truths that we have learnt'* and act as lantern bearers until the morning comes to the very best of our ability. The true morning ultimately WILL COME in the Lord's good time.

Pauline Grimshaw

Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

John 12:24

In Memory Dora Alice Preston

1914-2011

Dora Alice Joslin was born in Worcester on 25 September 1914, the youngest of three children. A few years later the family moved to Kidderminster when her father changed his job. While in the sixth form at Kidderminster High School Dora began to attend the New Church in Kidderminster, where she found in the preaching and teaching of the Rev Charles Newall a solution to her puzzlement about the Christian doctrine of the Divine Trinity; and she remained a committed member of the New Church for the rest of her life.

From the High School Dora went to Homerton College, Cambridge, to train as a teacher. On completing her studies she taught at a Senior Girls' School in Kidderminster. She also began a close relationship with Ronald Preston, who lived near her home and was a member of the New Church congregation.

Dora was a pacifist, and when World War Two began Ronald registered as a conscientious objector – his father had been killed in World War 1 and had never seen his son – and as a conscientious objector Ronald was directed to employment on a local farm. He and Dora married at Kidderminster New Church on 23rd March 1940. Their son Roger was born in August 1945, and the family moved to Stourport-on-Severn, about 4 miles away.

Ronald trained as a New Church Minister; and on his ordination in 1952 the family moved to Failsworth in Manchester. Throughout Ronald's career as a Minister he had full-hearted support from Dora, first in Failsworth; then in Seaburn Dene; back to Manchester, in Radcliffe; north to Accrington; and finally in 1975 to Brightlingsea.

Dora's life was to change radically again in January 1985 when Ronald died at the age of 68. Two years later Dora moved back to Kidderminster, where her sister still lived. By the year 2000, however, Dora's health was deteriorating steadily; and in 2005 when she could no longer live on her own she moved to Old Wall Cottage in Betchworth, where she could receive the nursing care which she needed.

Ministers have many privileges. Mine include having known Dora so well all my life. There are so many more things which I could tell you about her. Each of us who knew her has a fund of memories of Dora, also. We share a common regard and affection for a very lovely lady.

Rev Norman Ryder (abridged)

In Memory Daisy Caroline Smith

1909-2011

Caroline, her preferred given name, passed away just over a year after receiving the Queen's 100th birthday greeting card. She, as was her father, a lifelong member and unwavering supporter of the Southend-on-Sea Society. New Church lineage too – her grandparents had married at Brightlingsea New Church in 1869, the Essex town where her great grandfather, a mariner John Griggs, lived and who read Swedenborgian literature as early as 1840.

Caroline's infancy was marked by the privations of the First World War; including the absence of big brother Harold (the writer's father) who served on HMS Inflexible. By about 1930 she became a vegetarian, partly influenced by Rev Arthur Stanhope who was Southend's minister about 1927-1934. She was also a confirmed pacifist.

Whilst a pupil at Southend High School for Girls she had a desire to be a teacher but this avenue was sadly blocked by a Victorian father who obliged her to act the dutiful daughter to care for her parents – for board plus seven shillings and sixpence per week. Unfulfilled, she fled the nest at about age 25 and worked at a school on the Isle of Man until the outbreak of World War II. Thereafter came one of the profound events of her life, as live-in carer of two-year-old twin daughters of a Suffolk farming family, the parents and staff perforce ploughing and raising poultry for victory.

Further rewarding life-events blossomed when Caroline in 1945 came to be employed at The Briars Quaker Vegetarian Guest House, at Critch, Derbyshire. Caroline's interest in the Quakers was kindled and she continued association with the movement throughout her life, at Fritchley, Bury St Edmonds and also at the Leigh-on-Sea Meeting, when she returned to Southend in 1966.

Her retirement years brought contentment. There was continued active support for the New Church of her childhood and some attendances at Conference. Caroline maintained a friendship with Winifred Cook, Rev Stanhope's housekeeper, and for years they shared numerous holidays.

Although never with a partner, her life and particularly those later years witnessed her deep and abiding interest in her family: brother, sister, nephews, niece and their offspring. Generous to them and to a basket of charities, her unflinching love for her fellow creatures made hers, the family's and humankind's lives sparkle. Although we'll miss her, she is doubtless re-united with her brothers and sister and other loved ones who have gone before.

Peter Cunningham (abridged)