



NUNC LICET INTRARE
INTELLECTUALITER IN
MYSTERIA FIDEI

These words from TCR 508 “now it is permitted to enter with understanding into the mysteries of faith” occur at the top of the stained glass window on the right of the picture.

Blackpool Closes

(See page 15)



Lifeline

Lifeline is published in the first week of the month by the General Conference of the New Church. Articles and notices should reach the editor by the end of the second week of the month prior to publication.

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new church

Lifeline



Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord

Isaiah 2:3

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

Conference 2012 Reporting

The report for Conference 2012 will be in the September issue of Lifeline together with the sermon preached by Rev Jack Dunion on Thursday 26th July during the Conference Service. There will also be an announcement about the way in which further information will be provided relating to the issue of Human Sexuality and Church Ceremonies which was the subject of much discussion at Conference.

Meanwhile in this issue you will find the Keynote Speech for Conference 2012 delivered by Rev Gillian Gordon on Tuesday 24th July.

Because members of the spiritual Church do not have perception, as those of the celestial Church do, of what good and truth are, but instead acknowledge as truths things which they have had to learn, they are therefore constantly engaged in discussion about them and in reasoning whether they are true.

From Arcana Caelestia 3241:3

Change of Address

Mike and Judith Wilson are moving to Kesters, 21 Montagu Road, Highcliffe, Christchurch, BH23 5JT from the 1st August 2012. Their phone number will be 01425 277002 with a new email address of wilson.kesters@btinternet.com Judith's conference email address will remain unchanged.

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www.new-church-lifeline.org.uk

Closure of the New Church in Blackpool

The last Sunday in June saw the closing service of the New Church in Reads Avenue, Blackpool. It was a sad day both for me and for others who still attend or who have attended the church over the past years. Will anyone else notice or care that this lovely little building with its beautiful windows and fine woodwork has ceased to function as a house dedicated to the worship of the Lord Jesus Christ?

There has been an organized New Church in Blackpool, since the eighteen nineties, and I am sure that many people were familiar with the older, traditionally styled red brick, stone trimmed building that was demolished in the nineteen eighties.

The closing service was taken by Peter and Thelma Wilson who had conducted many of the services over the past decade or so. They undertook this poignant task with their own special gifts of empathy and positivity whilst acknowledging the deep feelings of those present. In his opening words of welcome Peter said "We thank you for allowing us to share in this poignant time, when past experiences will be remembered and apprehension about the future will be felt. This is not an easy time especially for those who worship regularly in this church, but it is worth knowing that this building is not the church. It is a vessel for holding the real church - the people who hold the Lord dear - together. In 'Divine Love and Wisdom 79' we read that 'The largest entity in which divinity is present is all of heaven and the whole church together; the smallest is an individual angel or an individual member of the church'

Peter's sermon compared our spiritual lives to a worldly journey, albeit with the Lord in His Word, as the guide and the compass. As the service neared its close Peter presented the Word from the altar to George Hunt and a copy of the Word also to Eileen Morrison, who had both attended the church faithfully since childhood and who had both striven to keep it alive.

After the service we went into the hall and met together over a beautifully prepared spread. It was really nice again to see adults that I knew as children, this time with their own children, and to relive happy times in the past. George Hunt in a post meal speech recalled some of the highlights of past years and thanked all those who had worked for the church. It was good too that friends came from Burnley, Preston, Accrington and Kearsley to remind us that we are all one 'family.' Hopefully we will remain in touch and the bonds we have made over the years will not be broken.

Pauline Grimshaw



member of the Society, and was accepted as a Conference Student for Ministry. His fellow students were David Allsopp and Trevor Moffat.

Christopher was ordained in the former Church in Burnley by the Rev John Booth, President at the time, in 1978, and in the course of the same Service he was inducted into the Burnley and Clayton le Moors pastorate. He changed pastorate to Bath and Bristol in 1982, with pastoral oversight of Ynysmeudwy Society. Although he spoke Welsh he never preached in the language, not sufficiently confident of his fluency for delivering a full sermon. Margaret moved with him to the Bath and Bristol area, and while here Christopher supported not only his own pastorates but also offered help to the

Bournemouth society during the time their own minister, Paul Vickers, was terminally ill.

He also spent some time at Purley Chase as part of the team leading summer activities for teenagers in the early 1980's, the final evening was always a talent show, with sketches and reminders of the events of the week. Christopher was generally the butt of some good-humoured teasing in these and he always led the laughter!

As an ordination student in 1976 Christopher had spent three months based at Bradford and wished to be able to return to the area; the opportunity arose in 1988 and Christopher, together with Margaret, moved to become minister to the Bradford and Dalton congregations. In 1999 he became a founder member of the New Church Historical Society, and gave their Annual Lecture in 2006, his subject being the Rev William Rees, an independent New Church Minister who ministered in the Swansea Valley in the years each side of 1900.

Christopher and Margaret were extremely private and discreet about their own lives, but always interested in and caring about the situation of their neighbours and congregation. Their presence in the locality was appreciated; people of many faiths (and none) counted Christopher a friend and confidant and his gentle presence and influence will be missed. The Bradford church was full for his funeral and the volume of the voices singing "Guide me, O thou great Jehovah" to the wonderful tune of Cwm Rhondda would have absolutely delighted him.

Pan yn troedio glan lorddonen
 Par i'm hofnau suddo i gyd;
 Dwg fi drwy y tonnau geirwon
 Draw i Ganaan - gartref clyd:
 Mawl diderfyn. Mawl diderfyn.
 Fydd i'th enw byth am hyn.
 Fydd i'th enw byth am hyn.

Conference 2012 - Keynote Speech

See I have engraved you on the palms of my hands. Isaiah 49:16

I have a confession to make – I AM AN ADDICT – you weren't expecting that now were you? I am addicted to antique programmes on the t.v. 'Bargain Hunt', 'Put your money where your mouth is', 'Antiques Roadshow', 'Flog it' - you name it, if it's got antiques in it - I like it. This bracelet of mine, if I took it on one of those programmes it would probably be valued at 50 - 80 PENCE. In other words its monetary value is negligible but its spiritual value is huge to me. Because it is exactly the same as one I had through my childhood which I wore to church and it has the 10 commandments engraved on each of the droplets and at the end there hangs a miniature Bible. In Arcana Coelestia 9416 Swedenborg tells us that 'engraving' means a memory composed of real things which are to remain there permanently. Permanently. That is why this bracelet is valuable to me because it is a physical symbol of The Lord as 'The Word' and the engraving represents permanency and commitment ... both ways - the Lord with us and we with The Lord.

At this point I'd like to do something else you won't be expecting - I would like to pause for just 3 minutes for us all to listen to some music to help us focus during this speech on the reason for our own existence and indeed for the church's existence and for our decisions and deliberations within it. That focus is the Lord Jesus Christ, a real person; born as a child, raised to manhood in earthly circumstances, dying and rising and being glorified for us. The reason for our church is to facilitate a personal relationship with Him. Jesus. Let's listen with open hearts. (Music)

Our theme last year was based on the quote from the Bible, from Jeremiah, "*For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper and not to harm you*". The Lord has a plan and a purpose for each of us and it is a plan so personal that **He has engraved us on the palms of His hands**, and that is our theme for this year - "*See I have engraved you on the palms of my hands.*" That quote demonstrates the Lord's commitment to us. He is totally committed to us and knows our problems and difficulties. This quote is about the Lord always remembering us even when we forget Him. "*Even though they may forget, yet I will not forget you, behold I have engraved you upon my hands*". And when God speaks of the walls that surround us He is talking about the truths of faith with which He defends us, as a city is defended by the walls that surround it. Those walls do not keep us in; they do not imprison us, they are the truths of faith which protect the good within us as the walls of a city would protect the good people within. The truths of faith, lead us into making discerning decisions thus protecting the good within us and those around us.

We can panic and be outraged or sad yet relieved at recent events - but know this - The Lord has the whole situation in His hands and can and will use this circumstance to develop and mature all concerned and the church as an organisation in His providence, fit to go forward into new situations ... provided we interact with understanding and love and are not looking for whom to blame. We are precious to Him as individuals and as a church organisation. Let me take this opportunity to remind you that others have left during New Church study for ministry or during ministry itself in the past - there's nothing new in that - and some have returned and gone on to take leadership roles in the church. It was all part of their spiritual journey and part of the spiritual path of the church organisation also. The Lord alone knows the plans He has for us. We do not. The Lord develops and matures people and churches through the circumstances they are in. The hells, in their turn, use circumstances to divide and rule, to fill our minds and time with destructive rather than constructive thoughts and for us to miss opportunities for good because they try to get us to think on their level and not God's.

The Lord also knows that many in this church are tired and feeling the need and desire for fresh input and energy. He also knows we have young families coming up who need ministering to and being encouraged to take on roles within this church, to take over from the old stagers. It is interesting to note that some churches are getting more children attending with the need for extra family events being highlighted. Employment of a family or youth worker I feel sure would greatly help us in our work with families. The Lord knows that and it would appear He is providing the means to finance it now too. The Lord knows we have more money but less personnel willing or able to work for the Church but He also knows and remembers, with affection I am sure, the dedication and commitment of those who attend our churches week after week, year after year and who keep worshipping Him, studying His Word and the Writings and keep everything going. He knows the efforts being made in putting on new ventures and providing new avenues to bring people to Him. The Lord knows and He cares. We are not alone. Ever.

Another important point is this - as well as personal plans, the **Lord has a universal plan**, and His personal plans for us and the church organisation also fit into this **universal plan**. God is working in fulfilling his plan for us even today ... now, here at conference. But we must acknowledge, recognise and be fully aware that **His Word - the Bible - and the Doctrines** play a major part in that plan and **we dismiss His Word and its spiritual sense and act on our own opinions at our peril**. His Word and the Writings are what set us apart as individuals and as an organisation and forms and strengthens us. Once we start making decisions based on current events, cultural trends, politics, fashion or peer pressure we are no longer a church based on the Lord through His Word. We stand in danger of ending up like the judges when 'everyone did as they saw fit' instead of acting from guidance in the Word. That is the message

maintain what is fair and good in your dealings with other people for the benefit of both yourself and them.

Reflection

Think of people you value and bring to mind the qualities you associate them and how they express these in their life. Reflect on your own life and how you display these qualities too. They must be in you for you to recognise them in others. Thank the Lord for his gift of them to you and others.

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Five Essentials - Aspects of Loving - a focus for the Church
4th Essential: Part 4: Loving ourselves - in relationships
Published by The General Conference of the New Church.
Downloadable from www.new-church-lifeline.org.uk

In Memory

Rev Christopher Jackson 1934 - 2012

Christopher was born on 16th March 1934 and with his elder brother Peter was brought up by their mother Margaret. Their father left when the boys were young and Margaret moved with her sons to live with her family in Menai Bridge, Anglesey. Margaret ran the village grocery shop until her retirement in 1972 with the help of Christopher; Peter was a very different temperament and he left home to join the Navy, later serving with the police and also became a prison officer on the Isle of Wight. He died as a result of an accident in 1999 but he didn't seem to have maintained particularly close relationships with the family.

Christopher passed exams to attend a local grammar school, and at the age of 16 sat his 'School Certificate' exams. Having passed them, he stayed on in the 6th form to take his 'Higher School Certificate' exams, but his schooldays ended when he contracted rheumatic fever. At some point in this illness he had a 'near death experience' and during convalescence he asked Margaret to bring him religious books from the local library as he searched to understand what had happened to him. Through this he discovered Swedenborg's books and as his health improved he maintained that interest and worked alongside Margaret in the shop.

Christopher became a loyal member of the Swedenborg Society from his first discovery of the Writings, and attended the New Church World Assembly in London in 1970. During this time he was attending the North Wales Study Circle and driving more isolated members to their meetings. In 1972 Margaret retired and sold the business and Christopher moved to Chester for a year, became a

It is perhaps easier to say what not to do. Not jumping to conclusions about the character of the person. Only judging the behaviour rather than the perpetrator.



Sometimes the most that can be hoped for is a compromise that is second best for each after both sides have negotiated to find a middle ground. But this surely is better than walking away from the person and thus making future communication even more difficult. And certainly better than verbal aggression.

The needy person

Sometimes you might get involved with someone who turns out to be quite needy. It seems that you are doing all the giving and the other person doing all the taking. This can happen at work, with your friends, or even in the family. You seem to be giving more and more of your time to listening to their worries and complaints -- time that you would have spent pursuing your favourite hobby. And when we try to put some limits on what you do for him or her, this person seems very good at pressing your guilt button. You start to dread that phone call or knock on the door.

How can one love this kind of neighbour without becoming burnt out? One answer is to remember that by acquiescing to selfish demands of others this does not help them in the long run. For the church's teaching on charity is that it is the good in the neighbour that we are to love just as we are to love the good in ourselves.

Loving what is good

You need to love the good in yourself in order to be able to recognize and love the good in others. This means following your own conscience, respecting your own abilities, and getting in touch with your own needs.

The Lord was useful to himself by taking time out for his own needs at Gethsemane before facing his arrest and trial. We also need to look after our own needs.

Usefulness to oneself is also usefulness to others, for to be of use to oneself is to be in a state to be of use to others.

Divine Love and Wisdom 318

You need to turn to the best part of yourself -- the Lord within you -- so you can

and guidance from your Spiritual Leaders - commit yourselves to the Lord by looking to The Word and the Writings for guidance. Mature with it spiritually ... and grow in knowing the Lord more clearly and more dearly as a result. That is the great reward. Take note of current trends, but do not take your leadership from them.

For the truth is that we simply cannot live out God's purposes by leading an ordinary worldly life. We have to strive to lift up and develop our spiritual life for Him to meet and to use us within His plans. In other words, The Lord wants us to grow and mature spiritually not for His sake, but for ours. Do you feel you are growing in your spiritual life within the church and its associated events - services, workshops and Purley Chase? Can you help with those processes? Are you able to find within yourselves the willingness to volunteer to help?

I believe that recent events are facilitating **the spiritual growth process** whether we like it or not, because in past years, conference has had a few ups and downs on practical matters. Now we face genuine spiritual decisions and views which we, as your Spiritual Leaders, believe must be based on the Bible and the Writings, for that is what separates us from any other Christian organisation. We are **not to judge people** but we *are* to discern people's actions prayerfully for ourselves as spiritually mature adults. Also to discern the right way forward individually and as a church. This kind of discernment requires wisdom not clever intellectual argument from one's own prudence. *"They are in their own prudence who confirm appearances in themselves and make them truths, especially the appearance that one's own prudence is everything and the Divine Prudence is nothing ..."* [Divine Providence 310]

God works on us and with us spiritually as individuals if we are willing to be worked on, if we are open minded enough to listen and learn from His lead. **We** are all different and the way God works on us will be different also. We can receive knowledge and instruction from Ministers and from our own study but we have to take personal responsibility for our own spiritual growth.

David and I, as your spiritual leaders, are conscious that we *must* spiritually lead from the Word and the Writings, not from fashion, peer pressure or European or British politics and directives. To respect and follow God's Word in our lives is an act of love and commitment on our part. *It is neither fanatic nor dogmatic. It is discipleship.* Remember the phrase *'everything changes but God changes not'*. To be a disciple of the Lord involves commitment to His Word. I have heard some people say the church is 'out of touch' - but isn't the truth that it is those people who are out of touch - out of touch with the Truth that guides within the Word of God, the Bible, and that leads to salvation and eternal life. Is it that they have fallen under the influences of politics, 'new age' thinking and worldly values and lost sight of what really matters?

Some people are naturally compassionate and they do not make their natural disposition spiritual because they do not act according to genuine charity, although they think that they do. They believe that charity or love means giving to every poor person and relieving everyone's difficulty and perceived needs without first inquiring whether they are good or malevolent. They say that such inquiry is needless as God regards only the help and assistance that is given. After death however, these people are carefully distinguished and separated from those who have carried out charitable acts prudently. Those who act from this kind of blind idea of love or charity give resources to good people and mischievous people alike and as a consequence allow bad people to cause mischief to the good. [True Christian Religion 428]

It is a sad fact of life, and causes so much havoc in the world, when well meaning people unwittingly facilitate the dubious and hidden motives of those who would, consciously or unconsciously, work against heavenly order.

In Genesis 12 God appeared to Abraham and gave him a promise, a vision, and a purpose in life. Though Abraham left his house in obedience to God's calling, the Bible says there were times when his faith was shaken. That will happen to each of us at some time or another too. In Genesis 12, 15, & 17 God appeared to Abraham and strengthened his faith and that also will happen to us if we seek God's help. Finally in chapter 17 of Genesis Abraham responds by complete obedience. By now Abraham began to mature in his faith and God finally gave him a son when he was 100 years old. It took 25 years for Abraham's faith to mature. I don't know about you, but I don't think I've got that long so I'd better start working on maturing my faith right now!

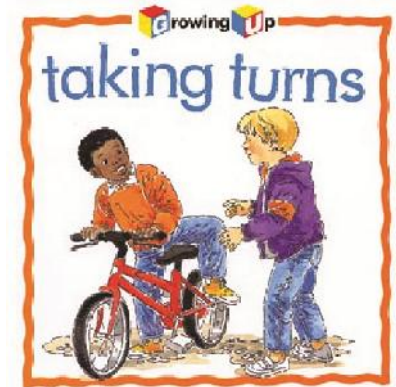
... Jehovah was with Sarah; she said to Abraham, "Cast out this servant-girl and her son"... this being very grieving in the eyes of Abraham, ... God admonished him, "Grieve not... but comply with Sarah in all this matter..." [Genesis 21: 1-12]

Here, natural goodness and truth represented by Hagar and Ishmael had become of such a nature that they had ceased to serve spiritual truth represented by Sarah. Meaning that there is a time for us to let go of our liking for simple natural good and truth and use the discernment of heavenly or spiritual truth which brings all things into line with Divine Order and the heavenly life. This was a real struggle for Abraham as it is also for us.

Our struggles in both church and secular life are permitted by The Lord so that we may turn to Him and mature in our spiritual life. When our spiritual life begins to grow so the problems of this world become less important and our focus will be more on what God is calling us to be and do. The Lord God is 100 per cent committed to you. The Lord is with Sarah - your spiritual Truth. The question is,

presence of a parent when hearing a story. Each individual gets a slice of cake as it is shared out. Restaurant staff often share out tips customers have left. You may contribute food for a shared lunch at church. When you come to think of it there are innumerable examples of how people practise sharing.

It is not only children who learn that squabbles can often be sorted by being fair in who gets what and when. It is all part of the spirit of 'give and take' that helps oil the way we rub shoulders with others.



Close relationships

All this might seem a bit too obvious but it also applies to interactions in close relationships. Loving one's partner as oneself means working on the relationship; striving for fairness; and considering the wide range of duties and responsibilities that go to make up a modern marriage. How each partnership negotiates their relationship will differ but the spiritual principle is that each puts something in and each takes something out. And to discover how this works means asking questions. How money for the family is earned. Who does the DIY? the social organizing? the gardening? How are social arrangements made? Who looks after the children and spends time with them? Does each have time to do their own thing? How do you ensure your needs are met as well as your partner's?

Neighbours and work colleagues

When you want one thing and your work colleague or next-door neighbour wants something completely different, how do you go forward fairly? One answer is to try to give time for collaborative discussion. With a bit of searching it sometimes is possible to find something that really suits both of you that wasn't immediately apparent to start with. Hopefully you and the other person can work together as a team in this way.

Fraught relationships

But what if the relationship is fraught? What if there is a dispute or basic difference of opinion and an unwillingness to co-operate to find original solutions to a problem? How does one 'love the neighbour' who is such a difficult and challenging person to get on with whilst at the same time loving oneself? Collaboration may be a non-starter – after all it takes two to tango and however willing you are to work on the issue the other person may not be.

4th Essential: Part 4 - Loving ourselves - in relationships

Love your neighbour as yourself.

Leviticus 19:18

First care for self

As the plane's engines were warming up, the flight attendant showed the passengers how to put on the oxygen mask in case of an emergency. "Pull it down from above and pull it over your face – but make sure you do your own before helping your child's." She was right, you cannot care for others if you don't first care for yourself.

It's the same with all aspects of daily life. We cannot love others if we don't love ourselves. The problem can be one of balance. The Word expresses this balance "*Love your neighbour as yourself.*" [Leviticus 19:18]

We are to love other people as much as and in the same way that we love ourselves. It is ok to love ourselves. It must be because the Lord loves us. We are lovable.

How to find a balance

But just how does one do this? We don't choose our neighbours, nor our bosses and work-mates, not even our relatives. Sometimes these people are uncomfortable to live with, difficult to talk to, or they oppose our hopes and aspirations. The challenge is to follow one's own values and beliefs when confronted by different ones from other people. How do you deal with the unwelcome challenge of having to respond to what others want that conflicts with your own interests?

Taking turns and sharing

Children learn to take turns in throwing the dice in a board game. Adults resolve difficulties by adopting this approach too; taking turns with friends to pay for a round of drinks in the pub or taking one's turn in the checkout queue at the supermarket.

Children also learn to share things. They might share a toy or share the

as individuals and as a Church Organisation are we 100 per cent committed to Him? And if so, how? Are we willing to give more of our time and energies to release those who have done so for so long in the past? Are we willing to speak but also to listen and learn? Are we willing to stand up and be counted? Are we committed?

The Lord works on others as well as us as individuals to collectively establish His plans. Remember, Abraham alone could do nothing to see God's plan come to fruition of providing a son for him. He needed support from his wife, Sarah. God had to work with Sarah's co-operation after working with Abraham to accomplish His purpose. God has to work co-operatively with members of this church, church congregations and with groups. This is often where the struggle lies in conflicting views and decisions. One function of the Ministry is to point people to the Truth. The Lord will flow into those things showing us their 'spiritual' meaning, ordering them, and uplifting them. As a Committee of Ministers we acknowledge we have different views on some subjects but we are committed to listen to each other respectfully and move forward together in love. This is a maturing process for both us as a Committee and as a lead for the church organisation.

The value of tough situations is that within the turmoil the Lord can, and does, lead us to genuine deep thought about spiritual matters and what is important to us, to our peers, to our organisation and to God. What seems good to us as individuals may not seem good to the wider Church and it is vitally important to David and I that the wider church is never forgotten and that their views and concerns are also considered. If we are committed then we need to unite as a Church Organization. For we are precious to Him, and He is committed to us. Today all that you are going through is a plan of The Lord. He wants you to be mature in your faith and spiritual life. The more Abraham was obedient to God, the more God became intimate with Abraham. The more you fall in line with God's plan the more He will reveal His plan and purpose to you. The more you will become enriched and mature in your spirit when you stand on your own two feet.

Apocalypse Explained 666:4 '*To stand upon the feet*' signifies life itself when it is in its fullness; and life is in its fullness when the natural lives from the spiritual. But do not forget when we struggle with spiritual points of view that The Lord has us engraved in the palm of His hand and our walls are ever before Him - He knows exactly what we are going through and has our wellbeing and future prosperity also in His hand. So how do we achieve spiritual maturity? 1 Peter 2:2 – **Desire the pure milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby.**

The Word of God and The Writings teach that spiritual growth or regeneration is essential to our happiness and wellbeing. The Lord wants us to grow to maturity, to stand on our own two feet, to be strong and independent, to commit ourselves

to Him, both as individuals and as an organisation - to decide for ourselves to defy hell and yet at the same time to question heaven ... to think about what is taught, to listen critically, and to be rational and responsible for our own spiritual destiny. That is mature commitment. Yes, we may differ but maturity can unite us in our differences and we can go forward in confidence and love. We are in changing times when Christianity is sometimes seen as a weakness rather than a strength – another appearance of The Truth. That is not to say other religions and for some no religion have their strengths, but that is not what we are about as a New Church Christian organisation. Truth is a duality with falsity so that we can choose between them and become truly human. This is the gift of redemption. We must have knowledge of, respect and to some extent embrace other religions but at our core we must remain New Church Christians in spirit and soul. I believe everyone here has the desire to be useful and serve to the full extent of their ability. To do this we cannot work via public opinion or what is socially acceptable at the time. Matthew 4:4 – *Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.*

And He said to me, "Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak to you." Just as the Lord spoke to the Jews through Ezekiel in the hope that they would change into responsible, thinking, sensitive and mature adults, so the Lord speaks to us, hoping that we will "grow up" and mature spiritually and begin to take responsibility for our own spiritual life. That, in the view of the spiritual leaders is one of the new ways forward for our General Conference of the New Church, of course we must try new ventures but the truth is that for us a new way forward is to take responsibility for our own views and to show The Lord our own commitment.

In spiritual maturity people develop the commitment to do the things commanded in the Word. This is to act selflessly for the sake of others, to be useful. The New Church organisation has been led by people like that. Perhaps you today will feel you want to search your souls to see if you are willing to come forward to do the same - remember God is not interested in your ability - just your availability. The Lord's promise is that as we become useful, His truth will become increasingly open and clear to us. That is the reward. We will be enlightened and see truth from the light of heaven. That way the Lord's commitment to us becomes clearer and our commitment to Him becomes deeper as His truth is engraved on our hearts. From the Word and the Writings we can face difficulties together. We can, and will, mature and see The Lord, your God and my God more clearly and more dearly. And we will hear Him. We are certain The Lord is committed to us, let's reflect upon and work upon our commitment to Him.

See I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are ever before me.

Even if we believe that it makes no difference to the Lord whether we do some things He advised against, still we cannot just go ahead and do them to please ourselves; for we must bear the burden of being considerate of the doubts and fears of others - of those who feel these things are wrong.

I conclude with a quote from Romans 15 verses 3-6, a book which Swedenborg tells us is useful for the church.

For even Christ did not please Himself but, as it is written 'The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me'. For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify God.

Amen.

Rev Gillian Gordon

The New Church College

The President, Christopher Chambers, has resigned after having served more than ten years as President. The Council thanks him for his service and leadership to The College during a challenging period.

The Council is pleased to nominate Patricia Russell as President. She will attend meetings as a co-opted member until she considers she has gained enough knowledge about current matters to take over as President. We welcome her to the Council.

Please make a note in your diaries that the 2013 Annual Meeting will be held at Swedenborg Hall, London, on Saturday 29th June. We hope this will enable Governors and friends in the South to attend.

David Haseler
Secretary