



**Becky Jarratt and family**

Becky was inducted as a Student Minister during the Conference Service (see page 11)

new church

# Lifeline



**Rev Clifford Curry**  
presents the 'Four Faces of Christ'  
during Conference 2013  
( see page 6 )

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

## Conference 2013 Report

Conference started a day after one of the hottest days in many years which for many meant traveling in humid and stormy conditions. Fortunately the humidity dropped during the first day although the actual room in which Conference met was uncomfortably warm some of the time. Nevertheless Conference got off to a very good start.

### Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> July

#### Family Worship

At 3pm Rev Bruce Jarvis led Family Worship in a very outgoing, joyful and exuberant style on the theme of The Good Shepherd. He led the meeting in singing "*Over my head I hear music ... there must be a God somewhere*", an African American Spiritual, and then talking to the children about his shepherd's crook that he had been given as a gift. Later everyone joined in a four part round using the words of the song "*Wonderful and marvelous is Jesus to me*". Liz Regan read from John 10 and this wonderful worshipful start to Conference concluded with the more traditional hymn "*The church's one foundation ...*".

#### Greetings

During the announcement of a number of greetings mention was made of a report by Rev Ian Arnold of a very successful radio broadcast in Soweto, South Africa, at the end of June. Details of this can be found under the title 'Red Hot News from South Africa' on page 14 of this issue.

(Continued on page 3)

## Contents

Conference 2013 Report	2	Red Hot News from South Africa	14
Letter	13	New Church Historical Society	15

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

[www.new-church-lifeline.org.uk](http://www.new-church-lifeline.org.uk)

## New Church Historical Society

Are Archives Dull, Dusty and Boring? Well the dusty bit might be right but dull and boring, never. Full of local history, social history and family history those of the General Conference are a precious record of more than 200 years of people, events and happenings in the various communities where New Church has existed in this country.

The Archives and how to make better use of them for Outreach work was the focus of the Society's AGM held during the General Conference in July. They can be yet another tool to help knowledge of our doctrines reach a wider world. The Convenor, Maeve Hawkins, spoke of her experiences of answering queries where this has been the case. People whose families once attended the church want to know more about us, what is special about us and was to their ancestors. And it's not only family historians who enquire. There are also local historians and academics who want and need the information.

But accessing our archives isn't easy for the public nor is getting in touch with us and they are underused. Good and adequate storage is a problem too. The strong room at Swedenborg House where the archives are kept is already too small for the quantity reaching it from closed societies and other sources. There was a lively and useful discussion following the talk when several concerns were aired about storage and access as well as a number of possible solutions. Could we have an archive centre, could we deposit some material in public archives and could we make much more use of the internet? This last is probably an essential. Members of the Committees of both the Historical Society and Library & Archives will be doing much thinking, talking and most importantly acting to make sure our Archives can play their part in Outreach work in the future.

### The 4th Get-Together at Purley Chase 15th-17th October 2013

The Society's Get-Togethers, besides being interesting and enjoyable events, have a serious side as they help to ensure the researching and publishing our history Talks given at the events plus other papers appear in the Society's Annual Journal now in its 14th year. This year the event begins with the Annual Lecture entitled "The Life and Sad Decline of the Rev John Roberts Boyle" given by Maeve Hawkins. It's dedicated to the memory of the late Dennis Duckworth. An enthusiastic historian he had collected information on Boyle intending to publish an article. Boyle became a respected Local Historian with some of his works being reprinted in the 21st century by the British Library. But his life was ultimately rather sad and unfulfilled. So come along and discover why! And there's much more too with several other talks, snippets, displays of information, photos and memorabilia.

Full details are available from Pauline Grimshaw, Maeve Hawkins or the Purley Chase Centre

## Red Hot News from South Africa

Dear Rev Arnold

I have been kept busy by church work which included organising a Live Radio Broadcast of our Sunday Service at Orlando on 30th June 2013. What a wonderful service we had. It was covered in the whole of Johannesburg on radio, and nationally on pay tv. I organised a special morning interview for our oldest member at Orlando, Mrs Selina Motingoe, to give a firsthand account of our history she remembers and was part of. A clip of the interview is currently used as a free advert for the church on radio.

The exciting moment was the event being publicised on radio for a full two weeks before the event, and myself being invited to speak two nights:- on the first night to explain our doctrine, and on the second night to quote a Scripture and give its meaning according to our teachings. I chose 1 Kings 10:18-20 as it was Youth Month. Our youth aspire for success and the finest things in life, and I thought the text best explained the path to be followed. The listeners were fascinated by the spiritual context of the Word - especially expounding on the steps (effort), lions (courage), stays (faith to hang in there), the number 6 for the steps (the six steps towards Regeneration), and the seat of power. Also exciting was how the station itself went onto the internet to do research on the New Church, something which caught us by surprise when we unexpectedly heard our church history on radio for two weeks!

This, without doubt, will go down in history as the most fulfilling project I've ever gone into in my short life as Priest. The extended church was packed beyond capacity - but fortunately the radio station had organised a tent. Their entire staff and management were present. They broadcast all their programmes for the day from Orlando, and the entire Sunday Service was live on air. So much for a normal Sunday Service! My Sermon was on the contrasts between the dove released by Noah to ascertain the destruction process - end - (from inside the ark facing upwards) and the Spirit that came upon the Lord as a dove (downwards from above) - introduction to a new 'beginning' through baptism.

Hope the books delivery is on course.

Yours in Christ,

**Fats Montsho**

Minister of the Orlando Church and Principal-Designate of the Mooki Memorial College

Editor's Note: My thanks to Rev Norman Ryder for ensuring that this letter was brought to my attention.

## Memorial Notices

The service was followed by a series of brief memorial notices to members of Conference who had passed away during the past year - Pamela Russell-Lacy, Rev Esther Byrne, Margaret Jackson and Dorothy Chalk.

## Introducing Youth Leaders

The first session was 'Introducing Youth Leaders'. Lifeline has already reported the appointment of Jen Pickard and Bob Curry as Youth Leaders and this first session gave them an opportunity to talk about themselves, how they saw the role, and the sort of things they were already doing or planned to do. Jen spoke first and described her background and what drew her to apply for the job. She spoke very enthusiastically and described what



**Jen Pickard**

she had doing at the Bournemouth church which is very close to where she lives. She is working with a toddlers group in the church which has already drawn in quite a group of parents and toddlers and is planning a 'Tots toddle' - a sort of charity walk organized on behalf of Barnardo's but for very little ones. She then went on to describe how she planned to trial activities at Bournemouth and then support similar activities in other parts of the country.



**Bob Curry - video presentation**

Bob Curry could not actually attend Conference but he had prepared a video presentation in which he discussed in a light hearted but committed way his ideas for older teenagers and young adults. Both presentations were brilliant and were delivered with such enthusiasm that Conference was clearly moved and delighted by these new appointments.



## Workshops

Rev Helen Brown then made a presentation on the programme of workshops that she is involved with. She described how, although progress seemed initially slow workshops were now blossoming and she went on to describe how new leaders and new locations were extending the uses and benefits of workshops. In particular she read the personal feedback of one attendee at a workshop run by Helen Newton describing how it had affected and changed her. Helen also commented on the value of the Apocalypse Paintings and the Cards derived from them. The latest workshop 'Signposts and Waymarkers' includes consideration of how the Word, the created world, interaction with other people and dreams can all act as mirrors reflecting the Divine.

## Spiritual Friends

This was followed by a presentation from Cathy Mahmood on the vision and development of the Spiritual Friends website – [www.spiritualfriends.org.uk](http://www.spiritualfriends.org.uk) She showed how in just a year it was beginning to grow and fulfill a use and she encouraged everyone to become part of the Spiritual Friends community. She talked about the hopes and fears people had expressed about the site and how she felt that the fears were diminishing as people got more involved. She concluded by giving an online demonstration of the site and explained that those interested should attend the choice session on Spiritual Friends on Wednesday evening.



Cathy Mahmood

## One Attending Member One Vote

After the evening meal there was a formal debate on 'One attending member one vote'. Last year there had been an unsuccessful attempt to pass a motion on 'One member one vote' but the motion was thrown out. This year David Haseler presented a revised motion which after further amendment was carried with a number of abstentions. The motion is an enabling motion in that it 'enables' the Council to call an Extraordinary General meeting in 2014 to debate the matter in greater depth and vote on it. The motion carried on the Tuesday

*my feet*'. The older children under the guidance of Tonia Jarvis presented a wonderful play of Jonah and the big fish emphasizing the darkness that Jonah was in when he was inside the big fish. Harriett Jones played the part of Jonah and literally threw herself out of the mouth of the model fish to great applause.

## Conference Review, Votes of Thanks and Closing Family Worship

During the review of Conference and the votes of thanks it was announced that the offertory during the Conference Service had amounted to £1500. It was also announced that in 2014 Conference would take place from Tuesday 29th July to Friday 1st August. Rev Christine Bank led the closing Family Worship bringing to a conclusion a very positive, happy and encouraging Conference.

## Letter

Dear Editor

Peter Cunningham's short, interesting article on tools (July 2013) sparked three immediate thoughts in my mind all linked by his 'War and Peace' theme. A few years ago I bought a Kalashnikov rifle as a Christmas present for my brother! It was on offer from Sierra Leone after the ending of the terrible civil war there. In fact it was through the Gift Aid catalogue and I paid for the destruction of just one of these terrible weapons which are allowing the war lords in many African countries to kill so many with such ease. The scrap metal from the guns was then put to peaceful uses.

Secondly, a word about the charity I work for – *Tools for Self Reliance*. This charity works through small groups around the UK collecting and refurbishing tools which are sent in kits to our partners in several Sub-Saharan African Countries. There, with training, artisans can start to earn their own living, often for the first time. Any surplus income is almost always spent on education for their children. And lastly, a memory of my father, John Sanctuary, a lifelong New Churchman, teacher, scientist and Pacifist. Also of his aunt, Maud Nutter (nee Sanctuary) a doughty little woman born like Dad in Yorkshire. She was born into the New Church but quarrelled with it over its refusal to take a pacifist stance in the First World War, and left it never to return.

Thank you Peter for starting this little train of thoughts.

Ruth Ogden

P.S. If anyone with surplus old tools (other than for gardening) would like to donate them I would be pleased to give more details.(015394 45828)

message –

*“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.”* Joshua 1:9

### **Games and Social**

Thursday evening was devoted to ‘Games and Social’ which started with games for the children and all those young at heart. This was followed by a sequence of ‘variety’ acts starting with a version of Cinderella – the highlight was the two ugly sisters played by Stephen Thomas and Phillip Brooks somewhat in the style of Les Dawson and Roy Barraclough. Later there was delightful performance of ‘A Windmill in Old Amsterdam’ led by Lynda Pierpoint and Stephen Thomas with a large group of children. Other items included singing by David Friend and Alan Misson, a monologue by Clive Goalen and a reading by Gordon Kuphal all rounded off by some country dancing led by Bruce Jarvis.

### **Friday 26<sup>th</sup> July**

#### **Swedenborg Open Learning Centre SOLCe**

Patricia Russell presented news about the work of the college and described how the college was supporting Becky Jarratt in her work based training and mentoring programme. Patricia also described how the college was moving forward with the advertising of two posts - Leader of Studies and Leader of the SOLCe Spiritual Centre.

#### **Committee for Auxiliary Ministry (CAM)**

Jan Millar spoke about the work of CAM and a presentation of a lay preaching medallion was made to Gwendolen Rowe. Liz Regan spoke about her joy in attending CAM worship leader weekends at Purley Chase. A short presentation was then made by Gwendolen Rowe on the work of the Youth Association. It is worth noting that Gwendolen produces the publication ‘Sunrise’ for the youth association 2/3 times a year and Carolyn Kennion produces around 30 Home Sunday Club packs each month.

#### **Children show their work**

In one of the highlights of Conference the different age groups of children presented some of their work and activities. The youngest children under the leadership of Gwendolen Row presented paper chains, pictures of shadows, candle holders and stars all connected with the theme *“Your word is a lamp to*

evening was as follows:

*Every attending Member of Conference should have the right to speak and vote at General Meetings and that the matter should be brought to an Extraordinary General Meeting in 2014 to effect the necessary amendment to the Articles.*

### **Evening Worship**

Tuesday sessions closed with a thoughtful service led by Stephen Thomas in which he quoted from paragraph 231 of True Christian Religion which commences with the words *“Enlightenment comes only from the Lord ...”* He encouraged everyone to go to the Word and listen to the Lord speaking to them. The service concluded with another song sang as a round – *“Seek ye first the kingdom of God ..”*

### **Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> July**

#### **Praise the Lord**

Wednesday morning sessions commenced with an opportunity to ‘Praise the Lord’ through the singing of three songs ably led by Rev Bruce Jarvis. The first was *“I am the bread of life”* by Julian Duckworth, the second was the new hymn written and performed by Becky Jarrett last year at Conference – *“I am the vine”* and the third was a hymn which Bruce had used at the Conference in 1982. Rev Brian Kingslake had been present and had offered to add some verses of his own and music. This was the version sung this year and it was a simple but inspirational hymn.

#### **The Holy Supper Service**

The Conference Holy Supper Service then followed. This was led by Rev Mary Duckworth and Rev Gillian Gordon. Children were present throughout the service and it was very much a ‘family’ celebration of communion. Early on in the service Gillian gathered the children together and asked them to pretend they were lost in a wood and couldn’t find their way out. They soon realized they needed a light and a map to show them the way and some food for the journey. Gillian explained in simple ways that the youngest child could understand that the Word of God was both a light and a map to show us the way in life and that the bread and wine or juice of the Holy Supper represented spiritual food we needed to live the way Jesus wanted us to live. There were readings from Deuteronomy 8 and Luke 4 linked by the expression *“Man does not live by bread alone”* and Mary gave a short address on this subject. The actual celebration of the Holy Supper was led by Mary, and Gillian, Rev Jack Dunion, Rev Clifford

Curry, Trevor Millar and Gordon Kuphal acted as servers. The bread was served to the congregation whilst they remained in their seats whereas the wine or juice for the children and adults who preferred it was served as people came forward to the front. At the close of the administration of the Holy Supper the choir sang "*Rejoice in the Lord always*". It was a beautiful, quiet and reflective family celebration of the Holy Supper.

### **Churches as Power Houses**

Rev Gillian Gordon then gave an uplifting talk about involvement and engagement with other Christian churches urging people to keep in contact with our teachings but at the same time reach out to others.

### **Keynote Address**

The Keynote Address delivered by Rev David Gaffney before lunch on the Wednesday morning has already been published in the August issue of Lifeline and is also available to be downloaded from the Lifeline website.

### **The Four Faces of Christ**

After lunch Rev Clifford Curry made an enthusiastic, inspiring and stimulating presentation using PowerPoint on the theme the 'Four Faces of Christ' during which he talked about the way the four gospels present Jesus. The following is a very brief summary of what he said but it would be excellent if the complete material could be published in some form.

#### *Matthew*

This gospel presents Jesus the Teacher and seems to have been written especially for the Jews. It presents Jesus as the Messiah, his kingdom, his worship, his church, his teaching and his authority.

#### *Mark*

This gospel is full of expressions like 'immediately' and 'straight away' and it is all about Jesus as a man of action or a 'Hero' and seems to have been written for Rome and the Romans. It also sees Jesus as the 'Suffering Servant' and covers his supernatural abilities, his mighty works and his real compassion.

#### *Luke*

By contrast Luke presents Jesus the Saviour and seems to have been aimed at Greeks and Gentiles. It makes the point that Jesus is the Saviour of all people, that he is one with the angels, that he rescues the rejected, is the sinner's friend, and he brings lasting joy.

requirements of the Minimum Living Wage

- a request for individual church reports and not just Area reports in the Council Report and thus the Year Book – this was debated at some length and an offer was made by the Editor of Lifeline to include such reports in an issue of Lifeline prior to Conference

### **Ballots and Motions**

After a break for tea there were ballots for the positions of Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council and a Trustee as well as motions relating to rule changes. In accordance with standing orders the ballots were held despite only three people standing for three posts. The following were duly elected: Chairman – David Friend; Vice-Chairman – Judith Wilson; Trustee – David Haseler.

### **Conference Service**

The Conference Service, late on Thursday afternoon was led by Rev Rita Russell on the text from the first chapter of Joshua – "*Be strong and courageous*". Early in the service Trevor Millar read the whole of the chapter and this was followed by a beautiful induction service, led by Rev Gillian Gordon, for Becky Jarratt into the role of Student Minister. During this induction Gillian presented Becky with a new golden ribbon to use with her Alpha and Omega medallion rather than the blue one she had received as a recognized worship leader.

Rita then talked to the children about being brave and courageous and invited some of them to wear a blindfold and put their hands in a box of 'jelly fish' and a box of 'worms'. Unfortunately but hilariously, as she brought out the box of 'worms' she referred to them as a box of noodles, thus giving the game away!

Gordon Kuphal then read from Matthew 14 starting at verse 13 with the feeding of the five thousand and concluding with Jesus healing the sick. During the Conference Service Address Rita talked about how Matthew 14 is in 4 parts with repeated ups and downs. It starts with the 'down' of the beheading of John the Baptist, the 'up' of Jesus feeding the 5000, the 'down' of the disciples frightened in the boat and Peter sinking and finally the 'up' of Jesus calming the storm and then healing people. In many ways, she explained, it is a reflection of the repeated ups and downs we experience in the life and the need for us to trust in the Lord and be strong and courageous.

The service included a variety of lovely hymns including a new song that was introduced and led by the children and the choir sang "*You are the centre*" by Margaret Rizza. At the end of the service, after the benediction, a recorded song, "*Take me as I am*" was played, synchronized with the words on the screen. Overall this was an inspirational and heartfelt service with a very clear

significantly reduced and was £10,000 last year. However with charges not being increased the loss this year had risen to £16,000.

Sally concluded her excellent presentation by displaying her view of the 10 year operational trend the organization was moving through, from loss to breakeven to surplus and how this trend might continue in the future. She expressed her thanks to the Council and to Colin Skinner, David Friend, Gordon Kuphal, Mike Wilson and Anne and David Gaffney for all the help and support she had received in her first full year in the role.

During the questions and answers session that followed Sally was asked about -

- the balance of her work between Conference as a whole and Purley Chase
- what suggestions she might have to develop other income streams
- the issue of the Restricted Funds from the Missionary Society and how they were meant to be applied to the work of the Marketing and Resources Group
- increasing income at Purley Chase and the resulting problem associated with VAT and TAX thresholds

### **Report of the Council**

The Report of the Council was presented by the Acting Chairman prior to lunch. He highlighted a number of matters in the report including the following:

- the need for a ballot in the election of officers and trustees even when there is no choice of candidate
- the thanks of the Council to the West Wickham church for making £4000 per year available to support the cost of Youth Leaders
- the thanks of the Council to Nigel Sutton for his work as Treasurer for 11 years until his resignation in July 2012
- that Andrew Bentley has taken over the management of Conference and Common Investment Fund investments
- the thanks of the Council to Cathy Mahmood for her work on the Spiritual Friends website
- the way in which the new volunteer structure had settled in and was working effectively
- that the Bristol church would be closing on October 2013
- the huge debt of gratitude owed to Anne and David Gaffney for their work at Purley Chase

The session continued after lunch with a range of questions and observations. These included the following:

- a concern about whether churches employing local people are meeting the

### *John*

John is seen by many as the spiritual gospel. It presents Jesus the Life-giver and is for the churches. In it Jesus is the bringer of eternal life, the Word made flesh, the Son of God, the Divine I AM, and the gospel shows God's glory and concludes with the breathing of the Holy Spirit.

After the main part of the presentation Clifford invited everyone to form into small groups to discuss how they individually responded to the gospels. After this Clifford went on to explain that there are four gospels because the Word needs to speak to the variety of human spirit. He then discussed the many ways in which the Writings seem to divide people into four groups as for example in Heaven and Hell 31 and Divine Love and Wisdom 121.

### **Any Questions**

Last year there was an 'Any Questions' session on questions relating to Human Sexuality and Church Ceremonies with a Panel of Rev Mary Duckworth, Rev Jack Dunion, Rev Michael Stanley and Rev Bruce Jarvis. This year the same panel faced a series of questions on a wide range of subjects with no particular theme. Prior to the session those attending Conference had the opportunity to write a question and place it in a box from which Alan Misson, chairman for the session, selected questions to pose to the panel.

The questions included the following [these are edited versions]:

1. It is suggested that Churches might alternate worship with other activities on Sundays – do you have other suggestions?
2. I have seldom heard a reading from the New Testament Epistles in a New Church service or meeting ... I feel that our lack of use and understanding of these books makes a barrier to working with other Christians.
3. Is eternal progress open to every human soul, even after death? Can souls progress from hell to heaven?
4. Our ministers' committee is sometimes divided on important issues - what does the panel think about allowing ministers to act according to conscience regarding such issues?
5. We have 57 specially trained and qualified Worship Leaders and special courses are provided for them ... but we have no trained discussion group leaders or courses for such people ... do we have the balance right?
6. Has the New Church finally discontinued the [earlier] practice of withholding the Holy Supper from those under 21 years of age?



7. The literal sense sometimes expresses absolute truth, but at other times makes demands which ... are no longer sensible or relevant today ... does the Panel have any guidance on how to distinguish these two categories of the literal sense?

8. Are we fundamentalists? Do we believe that what Swedenborg wrote is right for all time ...?

### Any Answers

Rev Helen Brown invited everyone to form into groups and with a pre-chosen facilitator the groups discussed the questions and responses they had heard from the previous session and what they meant personally.

### Choice Sessions

In the evening there was an opportunity to take part in a choice of sessions: The Historical Society AGM (see page 15) and a presentation and discussion on preserving the archives; Sacred Dance led by Rev Rita Russell; and Working with the Spiritual Friends Website led by Cathy Mahmood.

## Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> July

### Family Worship

The day started with Family Worship led by Rev Jack Dunion on a number of themes from John's and Luke's gospel but especially on Jesus as the light of the world. He talked about this subject to the children by first getting some of them to be blindfolded and showing them that without Jesus we are in darkness and everyone joined in the delightful children's song "*Jesus bids us shine*".

### Report of the Ministers' Committee

Thursday was predominantly the 'business' day and the first session was the Report of the Ministers' Committee presented by Rev Christine Bank. In her report she drew attention to the following:

- the wonderful opportunity to appoint two part-time youth leaders
- the forthcoming induction of Becky Jarratt as a Student Minister
- the retirement in August of Rev Gillian Gordon – Christine expressed the thanks of Conference to Gillian for her work in Ministry over the past 13 years and more recently as a Spiritual Leader.
- that Rev David Gaffney would continue in his role as Spiritual Leader

- the passing into the spiritual world of Rev Esther Byrne
- the resignation of Rev David Lomax from the Ministry and as Principal of the New Church College
- the continuing excellent work of the Committee for Auxilliary Ministry (CAM)
- the development and uses of the Spiritual Friends web site
- the continuing debates within the Ministry on Human Sexuality
- the continuing work and use of the Home Worship scheme

A number of people then spoke from the floor of Conference including a question about David Lomax's resignation, an expression of thanks to Rev Gillian Gordon for all her work for the London churches and a question about how late in life someone could become an ordained minister.

### Report of the Company Accountant

After a break for coffee it was the Report of the Company Accountant presented by Sally Ross. This was the first time she had presented this report completely on her own and it was very professionally done with great clarity.

This is the summary Income and Expenditure Account [all £000s]:

	2012-13	2011-12
Income	633	592
Expenditure	566	570
Operational Surplus	66	23
Other Receipts/Costs	529	654
Net Surplus	595	677

*Note: Other Receipts/Costs is predominantly the receipts from closed churches.*

Sally explained that income had increased by 7% mainly due to investment income and expenditure had fallen by 1%. Three main sources dominated income – churches £172,000; investment £161,000; Purley Chase £173,000. Of these the income from churches is declining due to church closures and reduced numbers but investment income is rising due to the church closures! Net Assets now stand at £12.8M compared to £10.8M in the previous year.

Historically the old Purley Chase had made a loss of about £30,000 each year. Following the redevelopment and the massive growth in its use the loss had