

Faith in the Lord

WHEN WE HAVE FAITH IN THE LORD we then place ourselves in the stream of His providence. We allow Him to lead us in all things towards eternal happiness. We may not know how the Lord is leading us. We may not know the actual paths along which we will take us. But it does not matter. It is not our concern, for we have placed ourselves in the hands of the Lord Himself.

We have our responsibilities, our part to play. We must live each day to the best of our ability, and according to our best understanding of the Lord's Word. And to live each day properly we must, it is true, have the vision and the foresight to plan prudently for the future. The Lord does not expect us to ignore the future. He has given us the use of reason, and He expects us to use our heads in planning for our future worldly needs and in guarding against worldly dangers. But what He does not expect us to do, indeed, what He expressly forbids us to do, is to worry needlessly about the future. We can do our best each day, and that is that. We cannot do more. Only the Lord knows the future, and this is good. If people knew where the Lord was leading them, if they knew the future, they would then not have the opportunity of placing themselves in His hands. They would not have the opportunity of placing their trust in Him alone.

So it is that, as we look ahead to the months, we should realize that the fact that we do not know for sure what is in store for us is a blessing. It provides us with the wonderful opportunity of giving the Lord our trust, and of allowing Him to lead us forward into the future, and from there into all eternity. We can rest content and peaceful in the full knowledge that every instant He is guiding us, protecting us, and blessing us.

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; . . .”

“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”

How to Love the Lord

It is easy to speak of “loving the Lord.” What, though, does it really mean, to love the Lord? This is a question that was raised in the pages of *New Church Life* some ninety years ago, and in answer there is given the following remarkable quotation from *Divine Providence*:

To love the Lord above all things is nothing else than not to do evil to the Word, because the Lord is in the Word, not to do evil to the holy things of the Church, because the Lord is in the holy things of the Church, and not to do evil to the soul of anyone, because the soul of everyone is in the hand of the Lord. (DP 94)

*Thank
You*

Dinah and I would like to thank the society for the generous gift you gave us following the Christmas Eve service.

We hope you all had a good Christmas and we wish you all the best for 2009.

Patrick & Dinah.

AroundTheSociety

- ❖ The names of the boys and girls of the honor roll have been sent out. Congratulations to Caleb Sansom who was on the 2008-2009 First Term Boys School Honor Roll.
- ❖ During the last week of December Derrick, Eden and Jack Lumsden were in town to visit with Janice and Cedric for Christmas.

Derrick is the assistant pastor at the New Church in Durban, South Africa. While here he preached the service on Sunday the 28th.

- ❖ Sasha Dike and Matthew Weber were married on December 28th in the Bryn Athyn Cathedral. Friends and family came from all over the country. Making the day especially memorable was having her grandparents, Henry and Joan Dunlap present and celebrating their 63rd anniversary.



Rethinking in the New Year

We are now in a New Year (2009). It is a great time to consider the story of John the Baptist. From a New Church perspective, his arrival pictures the human need to repent before the Lord can enter our lives. The word 'repent' comes from the Greek word meaning to reconsider or rethink. Much of our lives we spend "stuck" -stuck in a way of thinking, stuck in our own concerns and fears, stuck in paralysis by analysis. The voice of John the Baptist cries into that wilderness, a wilderness that does not really know God, asking us to rethink, to get unstuck. That becomes the world the Lord can be born into.

Of course as a minister, one wishes everyone a happy, fun, holiday season. And yet part of the New Year is the call, albeit not a happy or fun one, to rethink, to look at our lives and candidly admit areas where we need the Lord's help in moving forward. In no small part, I often feel I more resemble Scrooge or The Grinch -someone badly in need of a change of heart -than an angel of the annunciation, a shepherd, or a wise man. The New Year are powerful times to recommit to the higher ideals that the Lord calls us to. John the Baptist !

By The Rev. Chuck Blair
(adapted for a New Year printing in Atlanta)

Upcoming Events

- Sun. Jan. 4 11:00am Church Service. Holy Supper Service. Trustees.
- Sun. Jan. 11 11:00am. Church Service.
Informal service in meeting room.
- Mon. Jan. 12 6:30pm Swedenborg-Atlanta event in Marietta / Smyrna.
- Sun. Jan. 18 11:00am Church Service.
Potluck and doctrinal class.
- Fri. Jan. 23 8:00pm Reading Discussion via Phone Conference.
- Sun. Jan. 25 11:00am Church Service
Pastor's Council.

Go to <http://www.morningstarchapel.org/calendar.html> to get the latest calendar information. Information on Swedenborg-Atlanta events can be found at www.swedenborg-atlanta.org.

Teacher's Resolution



Dr. John W. Keith of Oak Ridge, TN tells about a high school principal who, at the beginning of a new year, decided to post his teachers' new year's resolutions on the bulletin board. As the teachers gathered around the bulletin board, a great commotion started. One of the teachers was complaining. "Why weren't my resolutions posted?" She was throwing such a temper tantrum that the principal hurried to his office to see if he had overlooked her resolutions. Sure enough, he had mislaid them on his desk. As he read her resolutions he was astounded. This teacher's first resolution was not to let little things upset her in the new year.