



Missionary Memo

Issue Two 2003

General Church of the New Jerusalem Office of Evangelization



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Evangelization is Tough



Excerpts from Jack
Rose's Article:
Evangelization is Tough
BY JACK ROSE

Evangelization has been hard for Mr. Jack Rose, yet he has taken some creative steps to get word of the New Church out into the world. During the 300th celebration of Swedenborg's birthday he made a display that was

located in the Carnegie Library's main hallway for two months. Another way Jack tested evangelizing in his later years was taking religion courses at the University of Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania, and sharing Swedenborg's message in class discussion:

In the first religion course I took, the teacher assigned a five-page paper on the Will and the Understanding. *College for Over Sixty* students don't have to write papers, but I copied four pages from *Potts Concordance*, attached a cover sheet and turned it in. A week later all the other students got their papers back, and when I asked about mine the teacher said, "I'm still reading the attachments." In a course on "Blake and Dissent" I also turned in a paper and the instructor told the next class, "Good news, we have a live Swedenborgian in the class." In a course on Religions in America I was given permission to speak to the class about Swedenborg who was mentioned in their texts. In a course on Islam, I turned in a paper about Mohammed in Heaven. That professor also kept my paper. The last course I took was "Religion and Rationality", and the prospectus said we would cover questions such as "Is there an internal sense to the Bible?" and "Is there a heaven?" I thought this would be my best opportunity. This time I would do it right. I polished up my attitude.

That confirmed my belief that we cannot find persons interested in the New Church, but *we can make it easier for them to find us.*

When the teacher asked us to write why we were taking the course I wrote, "to share information about Swedenborg." I wrote five papers (not on assigned topics) to help inform the teacher. The *Missionary Memo* staff sent twenty copies of *Heaven and Hell*, and I figured out how to distribute these to forty-four students. I asked the teacher if I could speak to the class for four minutes, and told him exactly what I planned to say. And I gave him a copy of the New Century Edition of *Heaven and Hell*. But disaster struck in the form of the flu. Classes were cancelled and I never got my chance.

Did my efforts in these classes work? Not for the students, but for the teachers maybe. The last teacher thanked me for my papers and for *Heaven and Hell*. It turns out he is the head of Pitt's Religion Department! Twenty copies of *Heaven and Hell* found new homes.

Jack is aware that one challenge for New Church societies and the organization itself is that they are not always easy to find. One experience with that was the allegoric ballet, The Angels of Swedenborg, preformed at Carnegie Music Hall.

We asked if we could provide some hand outs, but were told that it was against Carnegie Music Hall's policy. That changed when we reminded them that Andrew Carnegie sang in a Swedenborgian Choir, and that the first of 800 organs he donated was to the Swedenborgian Church. The Swedenborg Foundation provided pamphlets, and we wrote one on angels. When we arrived Friday evening we found that our table was right between two entrance doors to the auditorium. We gave out 1,000 pieces of literature at each performance on Saturday and Sunday nights. Before the curtain raised it felt good to see the entire audience was reading about Swedenborg!

Was it useful? Well, someone got the idea of contacting the twelve dancers for the show and amazingly, another person happened to come across the names and addresses of those twelve dancers. I sent them each a copy of

Heaven and Hell, without explanation. Soon I got a phone call, "Why did you send me this book?" The caller said that after getting her part in the play she tried without success to find out if there were any Swedenborgians in Pittsburgh. And there were twenty-five of us in front row seats!

That confirmed my belief that we cannot find persons interested in the New Church, but we can make it easier for them to find us. I estimate that in the last sixty years I have mentioned Swedenborg to about 6,000 people. At a minimum all of my acquaintances know that I am a Swedenborgian. But from that number I can name only three that became serious Swedenborgians. *It is interesting to note that the one participant who "tried without success to find out if there were any Swedenborgians in Pittsburgh" did find a New Church and is now a baptized member.*

The road has been bumpy for Jack, and he concludes his article on this note: When I was young, I talked to a fellow Pittsburgher about an evangelization project. "What's the use?" he replied. "It's not worth it. It won't work." I was shocked by the attitude of this octogenarian, because I always considered him Pittsburgh's #1 "pillar of the church."


Today, there is not enough space to describe the countless failures. I'm almost eighty now myself, and don't have much energy left. And if a young person comes to me and suggests a major evangelization effort I can see myself saying, "Why bother? What's the use? It won't work." Evangelization is tough!

We can learn from Jack's rough times and know that despite the feeling of getting nowhere the Lord is definitely working through these efforts to get His truth out there. Thank you for the work that you have done, Jack, as hard as it has been.

For the complete article contact the Office of Evangelization.

Outreach in Action

coming
soon!



THE
NEW
CHURCH

A NEW CHRISTIANITY

General
Church
Outreach

GCOUTREACH.ORG

A new website to support outreach-focused ministers and lay people.

What will it include?

Resources: Logos, business cards, pamphlets.

Examples: advertising, signage, bulletins, newsletters, press releases.
Missionary Memo online!

Strategies: Assimilation, techniques on how to make worship services newcomer friendly, how to talk about the New Church, small groups, newcomers classes.

Discussion Board: An opportunity to communicate with other New Church people working to grow the New Church.

And so much more!

When will it be done? We hope to launch the site in June of 2003.

Ray and Star Silverman
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January 3, 2006

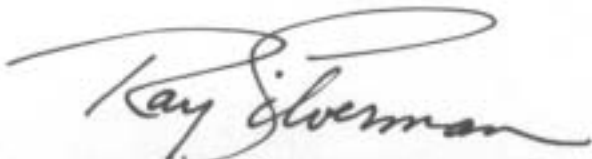
Gregory Davis
400 G Winding River Parkway
Sandy Springs, GA
30350

Dear Greg,

This is the book that we had intended to send to some friends in the Czech Republic . . . in clearing out some old clutter we discovered that we had already sent them the book (a different copy), so we had this extra one.

Please receive it with our compliments and blessings. All things, even the tiniest details, are in the Lord's Providence.

All the best to you as you continue to serve the Lord with gladness.


Ray Silverman

The Australian New Church College

June 13th 2006

Gregory Karl Davis,
Office of the Prophet,
400 G North River Parkway
Atlanta,
GA 30350

Dear Mr Davis,

Thank you for sending me the enclosed.

This is something I prefer for The Australian New Church College not to become involved in and haven't the time right now to follow up any possible interest myself.

I notice that you are in touch with the Secretary of the Council of Ministers of The General Church of The New Jerusalem in Bryn Athyn and, such is my impression, are dialoguing with him.

Thank you again.

And with best wishes,

Yours sincerely,



Ian A Arnold
Principal