



Sally Ross

See page 15

new church

Lifeline



Being loved as God's child



The Music Group



We begin in God's creative love; we are conceived and brought into being by our heavenly Father.

He has a dream or vision of a unique individual whom he wishes to love and be loved by.

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Lifeline

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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.

"I have set before you an open door." Rev 3:8

The more simple the image in correspondence - the wider and more varied can be its use in conveying spiritual insights. Take a door for example, which is any closable entranceway between two walled-off areas - a limited location of access in one's freedom of movement from one place to another.

In the Bible we read of doors being opened, shut, bolted, locked, marked, beaten, broken, lifted up and knocked at. They are stood at, slept at, laid in wait by, entered in and fled through!

Because they are limited, localised access points in some barrier, doorways and doors can easily arouse a variety of emotions within us - hope, expectation, frustration, excitement, fear or curiosity, for example. The state or position of the door can affect our state in some way - an open door is beckoning, a closed door intriguing, a locked door frustrating, a forbidden door enticing, a hidden or secret door mysterious.



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

www.new-church-lifeline.org.uk

Our New Company Accountant

Sally Ross (see picture on page 16) has been given the new title of Company Accountant after having worked for Conference for just under 3 years. During this time, she has been rapidly grasping the complexities of Conference finances and now produces both the Conference and Purley Chase accounts. She also pays our bills and deals with routine work at the banks. Sally qualified in December 2008 and is set on working to become a chartered accountant

In addition, she carries out a host of administrative work at Purley Chase, where she is based. Hers is the welcoming voice you hear on the phone, and she also deals with bookings and other enquiries, produces the Purley brochure, updates the website and carries out many other varied tasks.

Sally comes from Tamworth, the ancient capital of Mercia, where she currently lives. She is a qualified Swedish massage therapist, applying a technique that is good for both the body and mind, and is also learning Indian head massage and Acupressure.

Her most recent exploit was going off for a camping weekend, the first time in her life, on the back of a Harley-Davidson. Fortunately, it did not rain.

Sally became a member of General Conference last year, and many of you will have seen her at this year's Annual Meeting.

David Haseler

Conference Memorandum, Articles and Rules

David Friend has produced the latest amendment and copies are available from him upon application.

There are now over 150 hymns available in PowerPoint format on the Lifeline web site so why not visit:

www.new-church-lifeline.org.uk

North of England New Church House

The North of England New Church House require a new Hon. Treasurer with effect from May 2011 or earlier by arrangement with the outgoing Treasurer. Duties include attendance at 4 Board meetings and the Annual General Meeting all held in Manchester, keeping books of account, paying wages, accounting for PAYE to Inland Revenue on line, checking the shop's stock and accounts at the year end, taking advice from the Investment Advisers, preparing Annual Accounts for submission to the Accountants for audit. Further information can be obtained from the Secretary, Miss Doreen Metcalfe, Tel: (01282) 865179)

An Exhibition of Original Pictures from the Book of Revelation

by
G. Roland Smith

Hours of Opening: Monday 11th October 10 am – 4.30 pm
Tuesday 12th October 10 am – 4.30 pm
Thursday 14th October 12 noon – 8 pm
Friday 15th October 10 am – 4.30 pm
Admission Free

Swedenborg Open Learning Centre, 25, Radcliffe New Road,
Radcliffe, Manchester, M26 1LE
(between Coronation Park & Shorecliffe Rise)
Bus: 513, Metrolink: Radcliffe or Whitefield

For details of related workshop events
on Saturday 9th, Wednesday 13th
and Saturday 16th October,
phone: 0161-766 2521
e-mail: enquiries@solce.org.uk

"I am the door for the sheep. " John 10:7

What sort of 'door' is Jesus? And what emotion is aroused in us when he declares that He is the Door through which we will be saved? (John 10:9).

Is He a 'door' that we feel we want to go through? Are we attracted by or afraid of what we think might lie beyond it?

A Changing State - In the language of correspondence, to pass through a door is to undergo a change of spiritual state or condition from our outer life to an inner life, for example

- from merely knowing about some part of spiritual reality to actually experiencing its reality;
- from regarding our own needs in a situation to becoming concerned for the needs of others, or
- from remaining with what is known about oneself to discovering some new or formerly unconscious facet of one's character.

At our physical birth we enter from our life in the womb into a whole new world of experience. In adolescence we go through the door of discovering our ego, often becoming painfully self-conscious as a result. And so it is with spiritual rebirth or awakening - we pass through psycho-spiritual barriers and begin to see and experience the world in a radically new way. Exciting thought - or fearful?

What then about Jesus as the 'Door'? Jesus is the door of compassionate love that opens onto heaven itself where we enter into the beautiful experience of His Peace and Joy that exist eternally and unchanging at the heart of our being - heaven itself.

Rev Michael Stanley

"I looked, and there before me
was a door standing open in
heaven."

Revelation 4:1



Five Essentials - Aspects of Loving

On page 15 of the September issue of Lifeline reference was made to the availability online of guidance notes for the 'Five Essentials' focus for the church. It was also stated that the Introduction and the first set of guidance notes would be printed in the October Lifeline - so here they are.

Five Essentials – Aspects of Loving

A focus for the Church

An introduction

1 Being loved

We all need to be loved and cared for. How can we ensure that all our members and people in the church are loved and cared for?

We are all loved by the Lord and he never fails us. 'You are mine. I will be with you. You are precious in my sight, and I love you. Do not be afraid, for I am with you.' From Isaiah 43.

Do we look to other people to fulfil some need in us rather than looking to the Lord? Perhaps we have looked to the minister for this in the past - but this is no longer possible. In fact such expectations of other people are unrealistic and lead to feeling let down. It is then that we become aware that only the Lord is unfailing love. 'I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour.' Isaiah 43.3.

How might we reinforce the Lord's love for us all?

2 Relating to God's love

We need to know the Lord and his ways and their relevance in our lives. How can we work together, ministry and lay, to evolve a new pattern of learning about the Lord and his ways that is relevant to the young and not-so-young in the church today?

The Lord's love for us is always constant. Yet in the Bible this is expressed in so many different forms: Jehovah giving edicts from on high; as a caring Shepherd, loving Father, Healer in sickness, Teacher, and Lamb gently leading. We relate to different aspects of him at different times. Our ways of learning and relating are varied: some of us are predominantly doers, some thinkers and some feelers. Can we cater for this when planning how we might relate to God's love?

example of this was a suggestion for electing more Trustees. Do you have any comments on this?

Be assured that the present Council represents a very diverse cross-section of the Church when these ideas come up. Debate is lively, every member contributes and the Chairman is made to work hard! It often feels that those around the table form a microcosm of the wider church.

The CEO is writing minutes to inform you further and these will be available electronically for all to read. A new volunteer will record and minute the Council's November meeting. Volunteering is alive and well in our church – for which we thank the Lord.

Judith Wilson

"I am especially fond of you"

The title above is a recurring line in the book 'The Shack' by William Paul Young.

The synopsis on the back of the book reads as follows:

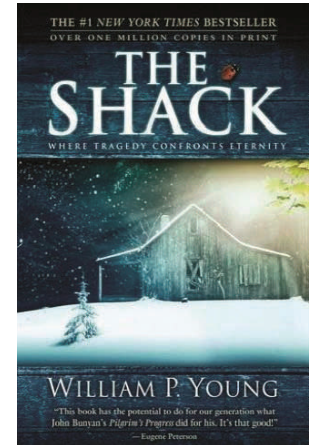
"Mackenzie Allen Philips's youngest daughter, Missy, has been abducted during a family vacation and evidence that she may have been brutally murdered is found in an abandoned shack deep in the Oregon wilderness. Four years later, in the midst of his Great Sadness, Mack receives a suspicious note, apparently from God, inviting him back to that shack for a weekend. Against his better judgement he arrives at the shack on a wintry afternoon and walks back into his darkest nightmare. What he finds there will change Mack's world forever."

This is a book like no other I've read before and gives an interesting vision of Christianity and what our relationship with God could be. It is an uplifting story which deals with family tragedy and looks at how our relationship with God can help us deal with such situations. It's primarily concerned with the age old question 'Where is God in this world'.

Read it - I guarantee you'll be intrigued and more than a little surprised!

Alison Plunkett

From the Derby Newsletter



From the Governing Council ...

There are so many exciting developments in our organisation that the Council, consisting of Chairman, Vice Chairman, 5 Trustees, CEO, Treasurer and 2 Ministers, met earlier than usual on the first of two sunny days in September.

This year's stimulating Conference resulted in a nicely balanced mix of reflection, decision making and planning, in the comfort of Purley Chase, with Anne's wonderful cooking and the added pleasure of meeting holiday makers over-nighting at the centre.

Welcoming a new trustee would have been good and is important for any Council. Changing ministerial representation has helped; there are benefits from fresh ideas and approaches that others bring and Conference needs a gradually changing representation on its Council.

There is, however, a significant number of volunteers following the AGM. The Council is very grateful to the seven or eight people who will cover the essentials of the CEO's role following his retirement after the 2011 Conference. Michael will be missed, not least because he will not be available at the end of a 'phone as he is at present. He has, however, offered to be Council Secretary so his expertise will not be lost. Zoë has volunteered as Company Secretary. Further details will be circulated in due course and the Council is thankful that so many of you have offered help. Ahead of us are new ways of working.

The 'visioning' team of two ministers and two council members challenged the Council with its energetic picture of our church in a few years time - a linking of 'cells of activity' and active individuals working, each in different ways, to bring people nearer to the Lord. Technological communication has made this possible and exciting. The vision, very much at an embryonic stage, is in line with our Vision Statement as in the Year Book. It will be considered by the Ministry next. There are certainly interesting times ahead.

Meanwhile SOLCe and CAM are working together, offering training as it is needed. David Lomax and Jan Millar presented their ideas and dilemmas then involved Council members in a thought-provoking exercise. There was resulting agreement that funds are available for appropriate needs-led or vision-led training and priorities were identified. Is there help you need in your work for the Church? If so, please talk to David or Jan.

The Council agenda covered six A4 pages with twenty six items. Some were for information only although rarely was there no comment or question. Others seemed very straight forward but resulted in unexpected disagreement. An

Let us look for what we enjoy and respond to and go from there. This gives us energy and life.

3 Loving others

We need to live from what we have learned and experienced. How can we love our neighbour and live a useful life?

Empowered by God's love we need to give it to others.

'Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.' John 13.34.

'The essence of love is that what is ours should belong to someone else.'

Divine Love and Wisdom 47.

'By its very nature, spiritual love wants to share what it has with others. It gets this quality from God's divine love, which is like this in infinite measure.

Divine Providence 27.

Kindness is an inner desire that makes us want to do good things even if we do not get anything in return. It is the joy of our life to do them. When we do good things from this inner desire, there is kindness in everything we think, say, want, and do.' The Heavenly City – A Spiritual Guidebook 104.

'Love and wisdom without good, useful action are nothing. They do not become real until they exist in usefulness.' True Christian Religion 387.

4 Loving ourselves

We need to reflect on our own lives and work on our regeneration. We cannot love others if we don't love ourselves. Yet we do not love others when we focus only on ourselves. How can we love ourselves in a truly balanced way?

'You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy... You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' Leviticus 19.2,18

Holy, like the Lord. That sounds challenging. It will require some real work and effort on our part but the Lord will be with us making the real changes, which only he can do.

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.

5 Loving the Lord

We need to return the Lord's love for us to be whole. When we really receive the Lord's love into our hearts, we are so filled that we can't help but love him and want to offer him worship, thanks and praise. At this stage we live from him rather than from ourselves. What ways do you love the Lord individually and in community?

'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with

all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Fear the Lord your God, serve him only. Do what is right and good in the Lord's sight, so that it may go well with you.' Deuteronomy 6.4-6,13,18

How might we develop our love for the Lord personally? and in community?
How might we creatively offer worship, thanks and praise?

A focus

How might we enable each person in our family, group, church, area, throughout the church to know and experience God's love?

Together

We don't have to do this on our own. Ask others what their response is. I did, sharing the idea first with a colleague, then the Ministers' Committee, the Governing Council, the Annual Meeting of Conference and now the whole church. We can work together, sharing our ideas and letting each other know how we are loved and loving.

Team

If you are wondering where to start or want help in developing your ideas, contact Helen Brown, Alan Misson or myself. Over the next year or more Helen is producing material in 4 parts for each essential, offering suggestions for working with it - available via the Lifeline website:

www.new-church-lifeline.org.uk and email. She can enlarge on this if you want more material for a group or workshop. Alan is a wizard at the technical side of production and putting things on the internet. We would all be happy to talk with you about any ideas to help 'love' them into being.

Rev Mary Duckworth, Senior Minister, with a little help from Helen and Alan

Editor's Note

The first guidance notes in this series, '1st Essential: Part 1 - Being loved as God's child', follow on page 7 onwards. There are currently two sets of notes available online and the second of these, '1st Essential : Part 2 - Being loved - not abandoned, lost, but accompanied' will also be printed in the November issue of Lifeline. Thereafter guidance notes will be printed from time to time in Lifeline when they are available and therefore not on a regular monthly basis.

thoughts about which they feel passionately. There is an opportunity for someone or indeed a group of people to formulate a new vision or visions for New Church House to help it move into the future, with new growth leading to further fruit. Would you like to be part of this?

If you would like to do so, please send any response that you might want to make to the Secretary or President:

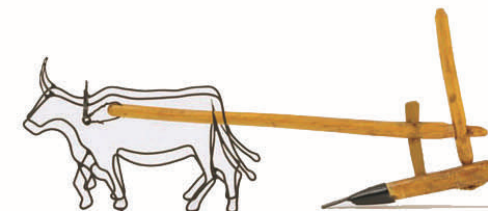
Doreen Metcalfe
Rev Mary Duckworth (e-mail: mary.duckworth@generalconference.org.uk)

Rev David Lomax

From the Writings ...

'In which there will be no ploughing and harvest' means that in the meanwhile no good will be seen nor any truth derived from good. This is clear from the meaning of ploughing' as the preparation made by good for the reception of truths, dealt with in what follows below; and from the meaning of harvest' as truths derived from good, for a harvest is grain that has ripened by the time it is gathered in, so that harvest' means truth derived from good. Before this truth is produced truths are indeed to be seen, but they are truths that lead to good, not truths derived from good. When truth guides a person in his actions his truths are truths leading to good; but when good guides him in them his truths are truths derived from good. The reason why 'ploughing' is said to mean good is that the field' which is ploughed means the Church as regards good, and so the good which constitutes the Church. Consequently 'ploughing' is the preparation made by good for the reception of truths; and 'the oxen' too that were used in ploughing means forms of good within the natural.

Arcana Coelestia 5895:1
commenting on Genesis 45:6



A New Vision for New Church House?

Over the last few months, I seem to have spent quite a bit of time in talking about visions for the future with various people and in various parts of the church. I wrote an article which appeared in the March *Lifeline* about some of these discussions in relation to North of England New Church House.

These discussions have been continuing. A number of possibilities have been aired. This feels like a 'turning of the soil'. The current Board feels, however, that it is unlikely that any of these can be moved forward with current personnel.

It was therefore suggested that a further article go into *Lifeline*. Readers are encouraged to see if any of the following ideas inspire them or stimulate them to think in other terms. We hope that they will encourage you to see yourself as part of the future of New Church House. You may also like to mention this opportunity to people who don't read *Lifeline*. Think of this as a time for new seeds to be identified, planted and nurtured.

These are some of the ideas which have been discussed:

- Selling the current premises/re-locating to a more suburban location or to a smaller city/town
- Opening a 'café-bookshop'
- Opening an 'outreach centre' (possibly in the current location) with display material, books and other items for sale and regular events
- Publishing material on the Internet
- Renewing a publishing function in other ways
- Becoming a distribution centre for these and other materials/books via mail order (rather than a bookshop/mail-order centre in the current premises) including selling books via the Internet
- Selling some old stock via 'remainder' bookshops

These ideas are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Realistically, they are only likely to happen if people are enthused by them or find ways of expressing other



New Church House
Picture from Google Street View

'1st Essential: Part 1 - Being loved as God's child

'I made you. You are mine. I love you

Isaiah 43:1,4

'I drew you with cords of love.'

Hosea 11:4

'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings.'

Matthew 23:37

These words based on the Bible speak of God's great love for each one of us individually but also for all his children, no matter what culture, background or belief. He creates all and loves all unceasingly.

This booklet is an invitation to engage with and explore what it means for you to be God's child, to be loved as God's child. And as we are all different, there are a variety of ways for you to choose from in this booklet. Perhaps you will find your own way to connect with your heavenly Father - the way that speaks to you now. So choose what draws you. There is no right or wrong way that brings us back to remembering the constant and unconditional love of our God.

Pause - go back to the verses from the Bible; choose one and say the words to yourself silently, allowing them to settle in your mind. Repeat as many times as you wish, holding them in your thought and allowing any reflections to come into your mind.

When we say the Lord's Prayer it begins with the words "Our Father in heaven". I wonder whether we take in the meaning of this phrase, 'Our Father', because it implies each one of us is God's child. It's one thing to say the words, even to think about them; but to let the essence or meaning within the words sink into our hearts and life is yet another. For this is a deeper knowing of what it is to be God's child. Each of us has his or her beginning in God's energy and Being which is pure love. The Bible starts with the words "In the beginning". God always is and has Being in himself - but we all have a beginning.

We begin in God's creative love; we are conceived and brought into being by our heavenly Father. He has a dream or vision of a unique individual whom he wishes to love and be loved by. He has a yearning to bring forth you and me so that he may bless us with all that he can give - joy, peace, and all that is good and blissful. This is the essence of creative love. Perhaps we can get an insight

into this when we 'birth' something new; a new idea, project, vision, a new human being. Because God includes us as co-creators, we are part of this birthing process in being creative on all levels.

Reflect for a moment on holding a new baby for the first time and experiencing the miracle of a new life or perhaps you can relate to the excitement of envisioning a new project, at work, in the garden In the moment of holding this newness in your mind what do you feel?

In our 'vision' of a new creation perhaps we see the perfection of what could be realised. We can get a glimpse of what it must be like for God as our loving Father who dreams or envisions what each of us might be. We are all stamped with the hallmark of our Creator. If we believe we are created by God as beloved children then it must be possible for us to reflect his beauty of spirit, courage and service in our living. This is our heavenly heritage that is never shut off from us; our Father holds it out to us in every moment of our lives, whoever we are and whatever mistakes we have made in the past.

He has called us by name - we are his and he loves us.

The following are ideas of different ways you can explore and experience being loved as God's child.

Bible focus: Isaiah 43: 1-7 or Hosea 11: 1-4

Choose one of these to focus on - (or do both separately; it's up to you) and read the complete passage. Maybe something jumps out at you; it may be a phrase or a word. Allow this to turn over in your mind, reflect and meditate on it. What does it say to you in your life at this time, in the circumstances of your life? Be open to the Lord to connect with you as your ever-loving Father.

Teaching focus:

"All things are full of God, and all take their portion from that fullness."
"The Lord flows into every human being with all his Divine love, and all his Divine wisdom, and so with all his Divine life."

Genesis 2:7 speaks of this, where it says that Adam (who symbolises humankind) was created an image of God, that God breathed into Adam's nostrils the breath of life, and that thus Adam became a living being. This is true not only in humans but in all creation, for we are told, "The Lord is present everywhere, and where God is present, he is there with his whole essence." *Way of Wisdom, Meditations on Love and Service*, Swedenborg (ed. by Grant Schnarr & Erik Buss).

Name - *I have called you by name:*

- a name means the essence of a thing, its quality. Calling someone by his/her name symbolises knowing or foreseeing the person's nature. When the Lord is said to call us by name it means that he knows what we are like. He knows everyone. No one knows anyone's name in heaven, but each knows what the other is like. (paraphrased from *Secrets of Heaven* 145)

Experiential:

Go out into nature and look again at what beauty the Lord creates which is beyond our understanding. Look at an ant, a flower or a tree. Really look at these things seeing how they fit into the bigger pattern and yet are true to their Creator and reflect an aspect of his nature. Look as a child does prefer Look as if through a child's eyes (or look with your small children/grandchildren) and wonder at being made by this creative energy and design.

Meditation:

Seeing the Lord looking at you (taken from Anthony de Mello, *Sadhana, a way to God*; origin St Teresa of Avila).

Prepare a quiet space for yourself, sit comfortably, and take three deep breaths letting out any tension with the outward breath.

Imagine you see the Lord standing before you he is looking at you Notice him looking at you, lovingly and humbly.

Notice the love in his look notice the humility just allow yourself to be loved.

Personal reflection:

We often fall into the trap of thinking that we need to earn our place in heaven, but this is a fallacy. There is no need for you to work towards this. It is about allowing the Lord to work this creation within you. The closer we come to the Lord the more he can realise the inherent potential within us; he unfolds it for us. The only things to stop this are the blocks we put in the way - pride, fear, lack of trust Turn to the Lord and be open to what is to be 'birthed' through you - ask for him to show you what is blocking his love and wisdom flowing into you at this moment in time. Say to yourself '*I am open to what God needs to create in me at this moment*'.

Five Essentials - Aspects of Loving - a focus for the Church
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