

YEAR BOOK OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE NEW CHURCH: 2017-2018

**INCLUDING THE MINUTES
OF THE 210th ANNUAL MEETING**

**Held at the Hayes Conference Centre,
Swanwick, Derbyshire
from Tuesday 25th July to Friday 28th July 2017**

The Deeds of Conference were enrolled,
in the High Court of Chancery, on 14th February 1822

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2017

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THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE NEW CHURCH

MISSION STATEMENT

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

VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is of a network of individuals and groups interacting together to share spiritual insight and understanding in an open and non-judgmental way, in order to promote spiritual growth through the application to life of the Word, and the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg.

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COUNCIL

[Linked responsibilities are listed after the names of the Council members]

TRUSTEES

Mrs JM WILSON, BA	[until 2019]	Chairman [Training and Development, CAM and Local Churches]
Ms JZ BROOKS, BA	[until 2020]	
Mr RH CUNNINGHAM BSc	[until 2018]	[Web Development, Health and Safety]
Mr MD HASELER, BSc	[until 2019]	[Purley Chase]
Mr MJ HINDLEY, BA	[until 2020]	[Human Resources]
Mrs LK NICHOLLS	[until 2018]	[Youth]

NON-VOTING MEMBERS

Revd DE GAFFNEY BSc	[Spiritual Leader]
Revd C BANK	[Ministers' Committee Secretary]
Mrs SG FIELD FMAAT, MSc	[Company Accountant] [Finance]

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS

Mr MICHAEL CLUBB
Mr PATRICK LEONARD JOHNSON
Mr DAVID RICHARD ALFRED FRIEND
Mr GORDON ROLAND SMITH
Mrs FRANCES MARY BURNLEY
Mr GORDON STANFORD KUPHAL
Mrs ELSIE JEAN CHAMBERS
Mrs PAULINE ANN GRIMSHAW
Mr ALAN C MISSON

AUDITORS:

BW SERVICES LTD

INVESTMENT MANAGERS:

RATHBONE INVESTMENT
MANAGEMENT LTD

NEWTON INVESTMENT
MANAGEMENT LTD

SOLICITORS:

HARRIS AND HARRIS

USEFUL CONTACTS INCLUDING VOLUNTARY WORKERS
(Voluntary Workers are shown in italics)

Company Secretary	<i>Ms JZ BROOKS, BA</i>
Finance Manager	<i>Mr A BENTLEY</i>
Payroll & Pensions Manager	<i>Mr CV SKINNER, BSc</i>
Insurance Manager	<i>Mrs SG FIELD</i>
Lifeline Editor	<i>Mr AC MISSON, BSc</i>
Auxiliary Ministry Co-ordinator	<i>Mrs J MILLAR</i>
Technology Manager	<i>Ms G MCLEAN, BA</i>
Child Protection	<i>Revd R RUSSELL</i> <i>Mrs LK NICHOLLS</i>
Youth Leaders:	<i>Mr R CLARK</i> <i>Mrs J JONES</i>
Property Manager North	<i>Mr J FORD</i>
Property Manager South	<i>Mr M WILSON</i>
Church Support North	<i>Mrs P GRIMSHAW</i> <i>Mrs A CLARKSON</i>
Church Support South	<i>Revd G GORDON</i>
Health and Safety	<i>Mr W WOODHOUSE</i>
Lifeline Distributor	<i>Mr H TURNER</i>
Conference Organiser	<i>Mr J FORD</i>
Conference Bookings Secretary	<i>Mrs M PRESLAND</i>
Conference Programme Secretary	<i>Mr RH CUNNINGHAM, BSc</i>
Magazine Ordering	<i>Mrs M CURRY</i>

HEAVEN - Keynote Address - General Conference of the New Church - AGM - Swanwick - July 2017

“And I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.” (Mtt 16:19)

Introduction

How do you summarise in a half hour talk, a subject which Swedenborg wrote whole books about? Well, I prayed about it, and here it is in varying levels of “inspiredness”.

On a few occasions in my life, I have experienced - each time only for a fraction of a second - a sort of timelessness. There seems to have been no pattern to its occurrences, nothing to predict its return, and no apparent trigger that I could ever work out. But during these brief moments I seemed to understand the sense of eternity I associated with being in the spirit. In this brief glimpse of eternity, there was no stress or apprehension of any kind and there was a feeling that I could quite happily be there forever in a deep sense of peace. I could understand how you could be in eternity forever - it made perfect sense. I don't for a moment think this is a unique experience, I have spoken with others who have experienced something similar and no doubt some or many of you have also. I associate this experience with heaven, and to look towards the Lord and heaven is, according to Swedenborg, the reason we are here. As he says in his Writings: ***“The purpose of creation is to create a heaven of angels from the human race.”*** (DLW 329 & TCR 773). This statement incorporates a great deal of information: that there is a creation; with the implication that it is by the Lord Himself; and that human beings are at the pinnacle of that creation, capable of being created or regenerated as they can learn about and understand the nature of the Lord and love Him themselves so that they may have a place there in heaven, and a life of joy, peace and bliss for ever. I think, there is a sense that we need to demonstrate our allegiance by giving up what is selfish and this can only be done by going through a struggle; called temptation. We are also told that, ***“Heaven holds a place for all those people who have lived well, whatever their religion”*** (DP 330); and that ***“All religion has relation to life, and the life of religion is to do good”*** (Doctrine of Life 1).

These are powerfully progressive and healing statements which I think give people an explanation as to what the human situation is all about, why we are here. They are also what the psychologists might call existentialist statements. I'm of the view that people need to know why they are here, and where they are going after this life; their raison d'être. Raison d'être is defined in the dictionary as: “Reason for being; the claimed reason for the existence of something or someone; the sole or ultimate purpose of something or someone”; literally ‘reason to be’. When I was young and fancy free, I used to

live for rock climbing, you could perhaps have called it my *raison d'être*, and no doubt there are things some of you like doing to the extent that you could call these things your *raison's d'être*. But according to Swedenborg, and I think most of us would agree with him, the *raison d'être* supreme over all is to enter into a walk with the Good Lord who will lead us, through the processes of regeneration - to a deepening connection with Him and with heaven. So *"The big issue is getting heaven into people NOT getting people into heaven"* (anon); although getting heaven into people, does result in people experiencing a heavenly environment for eternity in the afterlife. This might perhaps be crudely compared to a person who runs a business and puts service to people first, from which profit inevitable follows.

All of us are unregenerate, without exception, all of us have improvements to be made, gradually with the Lord's gentle encouragement; we can let go of our self centredness and materialism and develop a real love for the Lord and our fellow men and women instead. Like the bruised reed which the Lord wouldn't break off or the smouldering wick which He wouldn't snuff out, the Lord breaks no-one, but gently bends us to Himself (Mtt 12: 14-21, AC 2053); and He will continue to endeavour to do so for as long as we continue to cooperate with Him. This is building heaven within. However, some of our deep rooted self centred loves can be difficult to let go of; so we need to trust in the Lord that he will replace them with something better if we step out in faith and turn away from our more destructive tendencies; the Ten Commandments list all their categories. And also, we need to be patient, it can take a long time, and is a process which, once begun will continue to eternity.

The concept of creation then is central to the theme of heaven and so as a final point in this introduction, I feel it is important to point out a miscomprehension most of us have concerning the first chapter of the first book of the Bible - Genesis Chapter 1 - the Creation story. Without a good understanding of this, we will struggle to see this as an allegory about our spiritual regeneration in six stages; but instead, we will see it as a story about the historical creation of this material world by God, in six days. I have copied the first three verses of Genesis Ch 1 below; firstly from a conventional translation and secondly from a more literal translation of the Hebrew; I'll read them both to you; see if you can detect that the first reading is in the past tense and the second is in the present or what is ongoing and about to unfold - I will emphasise the tense to help out:

*Firstly: "In the beginning God **created** the heavens and the earth. Now the earth **was** formless and empty, darkness **was** over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God **was** hovering over the waters. And God **said**, "Let there be light," and there **was** light." (New International Version: Genesis 1:1 - 3)*

*Secondly: "In the beginning of God's **preparing** the heavens and the earth — the earth has existed waste and void, and darkness **is** on the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God **fluttering** on the face of the waters, and God **says** (saith), "Let light **be**;" and light **is**." (Young's Literal Translation: Genesis 1:1 - 3)(if you look up saith then it says that saith = a third person singular present tense of the word 'says')*

The first is about God having created something in the past and the second seems to be more about God creating in the now, continually.

This is a passage which delights children and young people, and the Lord put it at the beginning of the Word for a reason. I feel that it is important that our children are read this passage if possible, before anything else in the Bible, as it states that everything **is** created by God and that it **is** all good, that mankind **is** in a sense superior to all other aspects of creation which he has a **responsibility** to conserve because it is an essential concomitant to his regeneration; that everything God **creates** is for a purpose or a use, and that everything has its proper place and order.

There are two problems: firstly, translations into English tend to put things in the past tense and secondly, there has been an assumption by past translators generally that Genesis Ch 1 is not allegorical. How we deal with this past and present tense conundrum with children may be a tricky one, but it is good to be aware of it. It may be helpful to know that Swedenborg himself seems to use a conventional past tense version for his exposition in the Arcana Coelestia. However, I wonder if the *creationist* versus *science* debate in education would ever have arisen if the Hebrew had been more accurately translated from the beginning.

So let us continue to explore how we can assist the Good Lord in creating a heavenly character within ourselves.

What is heaven?

As already said: "*The big issue is getting heaven into people NOT getting people into heaven*" (anon).

"There are two inmost things of heaven, namely, innocence and peace. These are said to be inmost things because they proceed directly from the Lord. From innocence comes every good of heaven, and from peace every delight of [that] good. Every good has its delight; and both good and delight spring from love, for whatever is loved is called good, and is also perceived as delightful. From this it follows that these two inmost things, innocence and peace, go forth from the Lord's Divine love and move the angels from what is inmost. ..." (HH 285)

And we find at the end of the Bible a description of a new church descending - which is called the New Jerusalem - which is capable of supporting people in becoming 'innocent in wisdom':

1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth did pass away, and the sea is not any more;

2 and I, John, saw the holy city -- new Jerusalem -- coming down from God out of the heaven, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband;

3 and I heard a great voice out of the heaven, saying, 'Lo, the tabernacle of God [is] with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they shall be His peoples, and God Himself shall be with them -- their God,

4 and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes, and the death shall not be any more, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor shall there be any more pain, because the first things did go away.'

5 And He who is sitting upon the throne said, "Lo, I make all things new; and He saith to me, "Write, because these words are true and stedfast;" (Revelation 21:1-5, Young's Literal Translation)

The new heaven is a new church in heaven and the new earth is a new church on earth. According to Swedenborg, the principles which are laid down in his writings will lead to a way of interpreting and using the Word of God in ways which will remove the mental obstacles of irrational misconceptions - will unlock closed doors in the human psyche - which have been building up and hampering us for centuries and maximise the power of the Word to change our lives and give us the means to follow the paths which lead to the "Innocence of Wisdom". At the beginning of mankind, the angels from this Earth were in the innocence of ignorance but as the planet ages, more and more the angels will be created in the innocence of wisdom. You may have heard that some old people seem to go back to their childhood; I think this reflects this concept that if we approach life rightly with the Lord's help then the wisdom we acquire imbues us with a childlike countenance.

Heaven is laid out like a "Gigantic Human Being" which in Swedenborg's latin is called the "Maximus Homo". I get the sense that it is not laid out geometrically like a human body, but functionally. There are different levels one above the other and different sections side by side and a myriad of societies which all interact with each other. There is according to the Writings, infinite capacity for expansion in the heavens; a capacity which is beyond our ability to comprehend it. Regarding this, Swedenborg said:

"I have also been permitted to see the extent of the inhabited as well as the uninhabited heaven; and I saw that the extent of the uninhabited heaven was so great that it could not be filled to eternity, even if there were many myriads of earths, and as great a multitude of people on them as on ours." (HH 419)

There is a similarity, between this Gigantic Human - the Maximus Homo and our own human bodies; and I shall try to explain it in fairly simple terms if I can. Firstly, there are millions of parts in the human body from cells to nerves to bones to minor and major organs etc., and everything plays an interconnected part which contributes to the functioning of the whole body as a unit. In a similar way, there are millions of parts in the Heavens and they also each contribute to the whole as a functioning unit. Each of the parts in heaven is a society of angels, and for a given society, all the angels there love to perform a similar spiritual use. Clearly, there are millions of different uses being performed by all the millions of societies in the whole of the heavens and these are all represented by the organs and parts in the human body. To give you an example, the kidneys in our bodies separate toxins from the good blood and dispose of them. So the societies of the kidneys in the heavens would do something similar, but their function would be spiritual. In fact, the angels in heaven's kidneys are adept at seeking out the falsified beliefs - the spiritual toxins - which seep in from the hells and they dispose of them before they can poison the whole of the heavens. There is much on this subject in the Writings and I give a brief account here from Heaven and Hell about the functions of a few of the types of societies there including the kidneys:

“Those in the arms and hands are in the power of truth from good Those in the eyes are in understanding ...Those in the kidneys are in truth, searching separating and correcting.” (HH96, For a fuller account you can go to Swedenborg’s book Heaven and Hell section numbers 78 - 102.)

Just as all the variety of the parts in the human body contribute to its functioning as a unit, so do all the societies in heaven. And so unity comes from the integration of the uses of many diverse parts and not from uniformity. This is the reason why we should embrace the diversity of the charitable cultures and people of our world which work together to make one world when we embrace charity and ignore the differences (see AC 6628). So to summarise, unity is from the cooperation of many diverse societies or cultures and not from the uniformity of every society being the same. This ancient concept which has been revived by Swedenborg is the solution to religious fundamentalism; which says that **“my religion is the only valid religion”**. The Lord who loves everyone, has provided a religion for all people on the Earth, not just Christians, or Muslims, or Jews etc. Fundamentalism, is faith alone, or what is the same, faith without charity. And charity is the desire that the neighbour should enter heaven; it has our eternal welfare as its primary concern, not just our earthly welfare except that this supports our eternal welfare; it often has to take the form of ‘tough love’ and is not always soft. And as the heavens contain all those who have lived good lives from a sense of God from the beginning of the world, we have an important lesson to learn from this. The lesson is that all religions truly lived-out produce charitable, helpful, loving, kind people who are concerned not just about the

welfare of their brothers and sisters of the human race whilst they are on earth, but about their welfare in the afterlife. Different religions are necessary to produce different types of societies as they all have a different genius and different ‘tones and colours’ of *ruling loves*, but which nevertheless are all charitable towards one another. And so no religion has a monopoly on God or heaven.

But what about *the soul* of the heavens? The Divine itself - whom Jesus calls the Father - is internal to everything, is infinite Love, and is incomprehensible to us and so He has manifested for us as the Divine Human. He has also made the heavens in this human form as well as our human bodies. The Human Form as the Lord's Divine Human - if we could see it - would be the most beautiful picture of Perfect Wisdom. The heavens are made in this image and likeness, as are our human bodies, and also are the spiritual bodies of angels and spirits. The Lord flows into the heavens as its soul and, the Lord's Holy Spirit, and the spheres of the heavens flow into us. Thus everything is connected and in a kind of symbiotic relationship with the human form as the common exemplar. Also, as the Lord *is* His Word, and the Word *is* the Lord, and this Word describes the order and structure of heavenly life, then *to live in obedience to it* from a sense of love towards God and the neighbour is to build heaven within, and thus to come into heaven as an environment after death. The beautiful environment of the angels is an expression of the states of their minds. Without guidance from the Word, our loves will go wayward and we will miss the mark. Swedenborg tell us that:

“The life of angels is cheerful and blessed. It consists of worthwhile activities that are deeds of thoughtfulness.” (HH535).

So how do we ‘get to heaven’?

If anything, it is genuine charity which is the saving quality in Christians and people of any religion, but we cannot get there without the use of the truths of faith, or Peter - the rock - who represents the immutable divine truths of faith; and incidentally, it is these very truths of faith which are meant by the keys to the Kingdom mentioned in the opening quotation (see: Preface to Ch. 22, Arcana Coelestia). By Swedenborg's time, these keys(truths of faith) had been so severely damaged that they needed to be rediscovered and his Writings which were given to the world show us how to achieve this repair. These writings embody:

“... the Son of Man coming on the clouds with power and great glory” (Matthew 24:30)

Anyone taking this statement literally, would think that the Lord is going to return to earth ‘in person’ riding on the clouds in the sky with awesome

powers to destroy all evil whilst shining gloriously. But in fact, Swedenborg tells us that it simply means that the Lord mentioned here as the ‘Son of Man’ is *within the Word* specifically with respect to teachings and the ‘glory’ means the inner meaning of scripture which has been obscured for so many centuries by the ‘clouds’ which are the literal meaning; and that the “power” is the power of the inner or spiritual meaning of the Word to transform and regenerate our beings. For instance, to give you a very simple example of this spiritual meaning: when Jesus said to the paralytic: “Raise up your bed and walk” (John 5:8), he also meant for the man to *elevate the quality of his belief in God* (raise up his ‘bed’) and therefore *make spiritual progress* (walk) as a result.

This passage (Mtt 24:30), according to Swedenborg, in its context, was a prophecy told by the Lord to His disciples about the coming of a time when the Christian Church would be bankrupt of charity and the Lord would then, through the writings of Swedenborg reveal the inner meanings of scripture which would then give support to a better interpretation of scripture; because the literal meaning had been so destructively misinterpreted over the intervening centuries. (for a detailed description of this see: Heaven and Hell 1). This would also coincide with a necessary great upheaval which the Lord would bring about in the spiritual worlds where the evil spirits which had infiltrated the lower heavens would be thrown out into a new hell bringing a new and concomitant flow of Truth and Love from the Lord through the heavens to people on Earth (see Swedenborg’s book: The Last Judgement).

So we now have in the Writings of Swedenborg, many reliable interpretations of the Word of God and the undoing of many dangerous ones, which we can use to guide us into genuine charity through the truths of faith. In the words of Swedenborg:

“Charity therefore is an internal affection, from which a person wills to do good, and this without remuneration; the delight of his life consists in doing it. With those who do good from internal affection, there is charity in each thing which they think and speak, and which they will and do; it may be said that a person and an angel, as to his interiors, is charity, when good is his neighbour. So widely does charity extend itself.” (NJHD 104)

As the Lord says in His Word: *“Create for me a clean heart, O God, and renew a firm spirit in the midst of me” (Ps. 51:10).*

So:

1. Acquire for yourself reliable teachings from the Word,
2. endeavour to live by them,
3. resist the temptation to live the old ways,
4. and all along the way implore the Lord through prayer for His help.
5. Thank the Lord for the change you undergo

Finally, the Church cannot function without our constantly trying to work out what the Word is saying to us (doctrine); so **when anyone is trying to find true meaning (doctrine) from the Word:**

1. **take it only from the literal sense** of the Word
2. **confirm it only from the literal sense** of the Word
3. **corroborate it using correspondences**; examples of which can be obtained from the Writings - but only **if you are truly enlightened (which is in genuine good)**.
4. Honesty and transparency is needed because **false beliefs can also be formulated from the literal meaning of the Word, but it is harmful to confirm them**. It is harmful to those receiving such 'doctrine' and to those formulating it especially if it is done intentionally (see: Swedenborg, Doctrine of Sacred Scripture 53-56 and 91-97).

In this process, we need to be very careful that it is the Word which is guiding us and not our own wishes which are subconsciously or otherwise turning the Word itself to suit our preconceived views as this - as I have said - would be spiritually dangerous for anyone doing this - as Swedenborg warns us against in (D of SS 91 - 97).

Heaven is the ultimate place, but in getting there we all need to help each other, and quite often, the hells will use our best qualities and intentions against us. **Clear, honest and true teachings from the Word are essential as guides to create heaven within, for without them the journey is bound to lead us in the wrong directions and be fraught with difficulty.**

I wish you useful deliberations on the subject, blessings,

Revd David Gaffney, 2017

**MINUTES OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND TENTH ANNUAL
MEETING OF
THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE NEW CHURCH**

Company Number 00006039

Tuesday 25th July 2017

1 In accordance with Minute 44 of the last Annual Meeting, the Conference assembled, as arranged by the Council, at 3.00 p.m. at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire, on Tuesday, 25th July 2017.

2 The Revd Bruce Jarvis led a family service of worship, during which the Pledge of Commitment was repeated as follows:

“I promise to honour the Lord Jesus Christ as the One God of heaven and earth, who is love itself and in whom is the Divine Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I will endeavour to follow the teaching of His Holy Word, contained in the Bible and revealed anew in the theological books of Emanuel Swedenborg.

I will seek to overcome all evils in thought, word and action, and strive to do what is good as if of myself, whilst acknowledging that the saving power to do so comes from the Lord alone.”

3 Mrs Judith Wilson, the Chairman of the Council, took the chair and welcomed Members to the 210th Annual Meeting of The General Conference of the New Church.

4 The Chairman announced that she had invited Mrs Erica Cunningham and Mrs Sally Field to check the credentials of Voting Members and to supervise the signing of the Conference Roll.

5 The roll, when completed, contained the following names:

COUNCIL

Chairman	J M Wilson
Vice-chairman	M J Hindley
Members	J Z Brooks
	R H Cunningham
	M D Haseler
	L K Nicholls
Officer	S G Field

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS

F M Burnley
M Clubb
D R A Friend
P A Grimshaw
G S Kuphal

MINISTERS

Spiritual Leader	D E Gaffney C A Bank H T Brown G Clarkson M E Duckworth J Dunion R M Jarratt B R Jarvis I Russell R M Russell M W Stanley B M Talbot
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AREA COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

Scottish Association	M Blair
Yorkshire and North-East	T Millar

GROUP REPRESENTATIVES

Stockport	J M Chadwick
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SOCIETY REPRESENTATIVES

Bournemouth	L M Pierpoint
Bradford	P Blomfield, J E Millar
Dalton	C Mrozek, W Richardson
Derby	B Clubb, E B Nicholls
Kearsley	K A Dunbar, C E Kennion
Keighley	A E Clarkson, J L Raistrick
Kensington	H W Turner
West Wickham	D E Brooks, A Skinner
Paisley	A Macpherson, J Macpherson
Seaburn Dene	L Griffiths, T M Jarvis

SOCIETY VOTERS WHO ARE NOT REPRESENTATIVES

Bournemouth	J Pike, S Thomas
Bradford	G E Rowe
Derby	G C Bentley, J Jones, S Jones, R J Kennion
Dalton	J Mrozek
Kearsley	S Kennion, A J Presland, M Presland
Keighley	P Brooks
Kensington	B D Friend, S Friend, L F Wells
West Wickham	H G Johnson, C V Skinner
Paisley	W Laing

CENTRAL REGISTER MEMBERS

E S Cunningham
J Cunningham
L Differ
C Goalen
C M Hawkins
I Hindley
D A Lomax
P M Russell
A Southcombe
V Stewart-Wood
S Wilson

6 The Company Secretary read messages received from the Revd Ian Arnold, the Revd Trevor and Mrs Joy Moffat, the Revd John and Mrs Jenny Sutton, Mrs Frances Fisher, Mr Patrick Johnson and Mrs Madeleine Taylor and drew attention to the fact that these messages were displayed on the noticeboard.

The Company Secretary stated that she had also received messages of good wishes from the Revd Leslie and Mrs Jean Chambers and Mrs Rachel Turner.

Resolved: That the Conference, through the Chairman, sends greetings and best wishes at her discretion to those named above.

7 *Resolved:* That Mrs Pauline Grimshaw and Mr Gordon Kuphal be a Committee to co-operate with the Chairman and the Company Secretary in revision of the Minutes; Secretary, Mr Kuphal.

8 The Revd Christine Bank spoke about the contribution to Conference made by Mr Geoffrey Cunningham, Mrs Renée James, Mr Ian Johnson, Mrs May Liversedge, the Revd Norman Edward Riley, Mrs Edith Schofield Mrs

Pamela Sutton and Mr Geoffrey Turner, who had all passed into the spiritual world.

9 *Resolved:* That the Conference expresses its high regard for these friends and their various services to the Lord's Church, and requests that a copy of the Memorial Notice be forwarded to the families, with the sympathy and goodwill of the Members of Conference.

10 The Revd Christine Bank presented the Report of the Ministers' Committee.

11 *Resolved:* That the Report of the Ministers' Committee be adopted.

12 *Resolved:* That Ms Alison Southcombe be ordained as a Minister upon the satisfactory completion of her studies.

13 *Resolved:* That the Revd Robin Wooldridge be added to the list of Ministers ordained by other New Church Organisations who are recognised by Conference.

14 The Revd Helen Brown and Ms Karen Nolan gave the Conference news from the Swedenborg Open Learning Centre. Following this, the Revd Helen Brown presented a Certificate in Swedenborgian Studies to Mr Lee Differ and a Diploma in Swedenborgian Studies to Ms Alison Southcombe.

15 Mrs Jan Millar presented a report from the Committee for Auxiliary Ministry.

16 At 8.00 p.m. the following special interest groups were held in parallel:

New Church Historical Society Annual Lecture and Meeting,
Views on Homosexuality led by the Revd Brian Talbot,
Hands-on Help using the New Christian Bible Study website.

Wednesday 26th July 2017

17 The morning session was opened at 9.30 a.m. with 'Heavenly Harmonies', an illustrated presentation accompanied by music, arranged by Mr Lee Differ.

18 At 9.45 a.m. a Family Holy Supper service was conducted by the Revd Christine Bank. There were 89 communicants including children.

19 The Revd David Gaffney delivered the keynote address based on the Conference theme 'Heaven', during which he encouraged discussion.

20 The afternoon was devoted to two sessions entitled 'Heavenly Joy'. It opened with a presentation by the Revd Jack Dunion and the Revd Rebecca Jarratt, after which the Conference broke into six separate groups, each of which gave a short dramatic presentation of different expectations of the nature of heavenly joy.

This was followed by two videos and twelve short readings with space for reflection. Ms Alison Southcombe then read a description by Swedenborg of the experience of entering the spiritual world immediately after death. This was followed by discussion in small groups.

21 At 8.00 p.m. the following special interest groups were held in parallel:

IT users' session led by Mr Keith Dunbar,
Circle Dancing led by the Revd Rita Russell,
Any Spiritual or Theological Questions led by the Revd Michael Stanley.

Thursday 27th July 2017

22 The morning session was opened at 9.30a.m. with family worship led by Miss Gwendolen Rowe.

23 Mrs Sally Field presented the Report of the Company Accountant.

24 *Resolved:* That the Company Accountant's Report, the Balance Sheet and Accounts be adopted.

25 *Resolved:* That the body referred to in Article 29 to conduct the business of Conference between General Meetings of Conference shall be known as the Conference Council.

26 Mrs Judith Wilson presented the Report of the Council.

27 *Resolved:* That BW Business Services Ltd., of The Mills, Canal Street, Derby, be appointed auditors to the Conference.

28 *Resolved:* That the Report of the Council be adopted.

29 There was a discussion on possible arrangements for future Annual Meetings.

30 Following a ballot Ms J Zoë Brooks and Mr Michael Hindley were declared to be members of the Council until 2020.

31 Mrs Jenny Jones introduced a presentation on the work with children and young people, to which Miss Gwendolen Rowe, the Revd Christine Bank and Mr Robert Clark contributed.

32 Miss Gemma McLean spoke about the new General Conference website.

33 At 4.30 p.m. the Conference Service was conducted by the Revd Helen Brown and the Revd Jack Dunion in the main hall of the Hayes Conference Centre. The Revd Helen Brown gave an address on “Today you will be with me in Paradise.” (Luke 23:43)

The offertory for the Conference funds amounted to £1,079.00 (inclusive of Gift Aid).

34 At 8.00 p.m. a social entitled ‘Party Time for Everyone’ was held, compèred by Mr Steve and Mrs Jenny Jones, ably assisted by their daughters, Harriet and Connie.

Friday 28th July 2017

35 The morning session was opened with ‘Images of Heaven’, an illustrated presentation accompanied by music.

36 The children, under the guidance of their leaders, presented the work they had undertaken during the Conference.

37 A number of speakers contributed to a review of the Annual Meeting.

38 *Resolved:* That, in accordance with the Council’s proposal, the 211th Annual Meeting be held at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, starting on Tuesday, 24th July 2018.

39 *Resolved:* That the warm thanks of the Conference be conveyed to all those responsible for making arrangements for the meeting, in particular Mr John Ford and Mr Steve Jones (the Conference Organisers); Mrs Margaret Presland (the Bookings Secretary); Mr Richard Cunningham, for the planning of Conference; Miss Gemma McLean, for Information Communication Technology arrangements; Mrs Jenny Jones, and all those involved in enabling and planning for families to be present at the Meeting; Mrs Erica Cunningham and Mrs Sally Field for acting as the Credentials Committee; Mr

Phillip Brooks and Mr Colin Skinner for acting as scrutineers; Mr Michael Clubb, Mrs Hazel Nicholls and Mr David Friend for arrangements for the Holy Supper service; Mrs Ruth Friend (Music Director), the musicians and the choir; Mrs Jenny and Mr Steve Jones for the Social and Mrs Erica Cunningham for the beautiful floral arrangements.

40 *Resolved:* That the warm thanks of the Conference be accorded to the Minutes Committee for their conscientious work in producing the minutes of the Meeting.

41 *Resolved:* That the warm thanks of the Conference be accorded to the Chairman of the Council, Mrs Judith Wilson, and to the chairmen and vice-chairmen appointed by her, for their conduct of the Annual Meeting. Those who acted in this capacity were Mr Richard Cunningham, Mr David Haseler, Mr Michael Hindley and Mrs Lara Nicholls.

42 *Resolved:* That the warm thanks of the Conference be accorded to the Company Secretary, Ms Zoë Brooks, for her work throughout the year.

43 *Resolved:* That the warm thanks of the Conference be accorded to all those unsung volunteers and church workers whose dedication to the Conference fills the 362 days of the year when the Annual Meeting is not happening. These include the members of the Conference Council, the Spiritual Leader and the other members of the Ministry, both active and retired, the Purley Management Team and the Company Accountant, plus many others who keep the Societies and institutions of the church running.

44 The session concluded with the Chairman's closing remarks.

45 At 12 noon a closing service of family worship was conducted by the Revd Rebecca Jarratt.

46 The Annual Meeting closed at 12:40 p.m.

Signed

Judith M Wilson, Chairman

J Zoë Brooks, Company Secretary

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL YEAR TO 31 MARCH 2017

1 MEMBERSHIP

1.1 The Council held five meetings during the year, which included one short meeting before the Annual Meeting. Details of attendances are as follows:

Chairman	Mrs J M Wilson	5
Vice-Chairman:	Mr M J Hindley	4 (5 possible)
Trustees:	Ms J Z Brooks	5 (Also Company Secretary)
	Mr R H Cunningham	5
	Mr M D Haseler	5
	Mrs L K Nicholls	5
	Mrs R F Turner	3 (5 possible)

In attendance were:

Company Accountant:	Mrs S Field	4 (5 possible)
Ministers' Com. Secretary:	Revd C Bank	5
Spiritual Leader:	Revd D E Gaffney	5

1.2 In July 2016 Mr David Haseler was re-elected as a Trustee.

Ms J Zoë Brooks and Mrs Rachel F Turner (Elected Members) and Mr Michael J Hindley (Vice-chairman) will complete their terms of office in July 2017. Ms Brooks and Mr Hindley will both be offering their services as Elected Members for the next three years. Mrs Turner is not seeking re-election. The periods of office of the other Members of the Council in their present roles are: Mrs Judith Wilson until 2019, Mr Richard H Cunningham and Mrs Lara K Nicholls until 2018 and Mr David Haseler until 2019.

1.3 At the Conference in 2016 only one of the two possible Trustees was appointed and subsequently the Council is still one Elected Member short, making it the eighth year during which it has been without its full complement. This year, therefore, it is possible to appoint two Trustees for a period of three years, and one for a period of two years despite the fact that only two are retiring. It is also possible to elect a vice-Chairman.

The Council needs people with legal and accountancy skills to join its membership.

2 GENERAL REVIEW

In order to continue to encourage young people to attend Conference the Council has again agreed that Mrs Jenny Jones be authorised to invite 16-19 year olds and those aged 20 and 21 who are undergoing full-time education to attend Conference 2017 as a free event.

As it is not only young families that sometimes have difficulty meeting the costs of attending Conference, the Council has also decided to continue to offer to reduce the price for all members to 75% of the actual cost for Conference 2017. Those who can afford to do so have been asked to make up the balance of 25% by donation, in addition to any donation they might wish to make towards the costs of young families. As a result of this reduction, young families are being offered attendance at only half of 75% but they are being asked to make this up to 50% by donation if they can afford to do so.

3 LINK MEMBERS

Details of the links between the Council and those engaged in ministerial work are:

Web Development	Mr R H Cunningham and Revd J Dunion
Purley Chase	Mr M D Haseler and Revd D Gaffney
Finance	Mrs S G Field and Revd C Curry
Human Resources	Mrs R F Turner and Revd C Bank
Youth	Mrs L K Nicholls and Revd J Dunion
Training and Development	Mrs J Wilson and Revd R Jarratt
CAM and Local Churches	Mrs J Wilson and Revd C Bank

4 STAFF & REMUNERATION

In 2016/17 the total of stipends, telephone and broadband paid to ministers was £105,495. In addition one worked as a part-time non-stipendiary minister throughout the year. In the same year the total of salaries, wages, telephone and broadband paid to lay employees was £183,976. These figures include people employed for part of the year.

The Council approved a 2.6% increase from 1 April 2017 for all employees, except those paid hourly, who are treated individually. This is in accordance with the Average Weekly Earnings index.

Mrs Jan Millar reduced her hours from 30 a week to 10 per week from October 2016.

In order to reduce the Manager's heavy work load a Deputy Manager for the

Purley Chase Centre, Mrs Jane Harbord, was appointed on 1 August 2016. She resigned on 21 September 2016 and Mr Graeme Harding was subsequently appointed to the post on 20 October 2016.

Mrs Anne Gaffney has handed in her notice of retirement and will be leaving Conference employment on 31 December 2017. The Council is in the process of recruiting a replacement, so that hopefully there will be some overlap to assist with a smooth handover to the new Manager.

5 MINISTRY

Reduction in Hours

The Revd David Gaffney will be giving up his position as Purley Chase Programme Director in the autumn and has informed the Council that he wishes to reduce his hours to around a third or a quarter from 1 February 2018. It is anticipated that from that date most of his time will be devoted to his work as Spiritual Leader, a post that he has agreed to occupy for a further two years from July 2017.

Non-Stipendiary Ministry

The Revd Clifford Curry has again worked as a contracted part-time non-stipendiary minister throughout the year. His voluntary work continues to contribute to Conference's improved financial position and the Council wishes to record its thanks to him.

Ordination Training

It is anticipated that Ms Alison Southcombe will finish her training on 31 October 2017.

Mr Lee Differ became a sponsored ordination student from 1 September 2016.

6 VOLUNTEERS

The Council again wishes to express its gratitude to all those who have taken on voluntary roles.

Mrs Patricia Russell was obliged to resign as Conference Recorder on health grounds and the Council was very much saddened by this event and wishes to record its appreciation and thanks for her excellent work.

7 SOCIETIES AND GROUPS

It has been a sad year. Unfortunately one Society and one Group have closed and two more Societies have taken the decision to close. In addition the Council is aware that other Societies are beginning to think about closure.

Brightlingsea Society

The Brightlingsea Society closed at the end of September, the final service being held on 24 September in the afternoon. Over 100 people attended.

Burnley Society

Burnley had its final service on 4 March but will not officially close until 30 April. The service was attended by many friends from other Societies.

Southend-on-Sea Society

Southend-on-Sea will close on 13 May, on which date its final service will be held.

Preston Group

This Group decided to close during the year as it had only two members and was no longer meeting.

8 CONFERENCE PROPERTIES

General

One Society failed to respond to requests made by the Health and Safety Officer for a Legionella risk assessment and for a Statement of Intent regarding its Asbestos Survey and it has therefore been necessary for the Council to write to pursue the matter. Otherwise this work has progressed well.

A bad electrical report has meant that one Society has been obliged to have substantial remedial work done in order to continue to use its premises.

Brightlingsea

An offer of £237,000 for the purchase of the church was accepted in October 2016 and pre-contract enquiries were dealt with before the end of the year. Unfortunately it proved impossible to obtain a response to a request to agree dates for exchange of contracts and completion. As a result our solicitor wrote to the buyer's solicitor on 24 March 2017 saying that unless contracts were exchanged within three weeks Conference would withdraw from the transaction.

Burnley

The matter of reinstatement of the Management Company in respect of the flats has yet to be resolved but is still being pursued. As the Society is going to close it is hoped to sell the freehold interest in the flats as well as the church. As required by law the tenants have been given first refusal. They made an offer of £9,000 on 29 March but the estate agent felt this was inadequate and it is hoped that they will be persuaded to increase it to £12,000.

An offer of £180,000 for the church building was accepted on 2 February 2017.

Southend-on-Sea

An offer of £375,000 for the purchase of the church was accepted on 12 January 2017.

9 MERGER OF SOLCe AND NORTH OF ENGLAND NEW CHURCH HOUSE

This merger has now been completed and Conference act as Trustee of the merged charities on the same terms as before.

10 WEBSITES

As it was little used the spiritual friends website has been taken down and anyone putting in the website address is taken to the spiritual friends Facebook page.

11 COMMITTEES

Broadfield Memorial Benevolent Fund

Mr Ray Pulsford retired as Secretary/Treasurer at the end of March and Mrs Helen Laidlaw has also resigned. The team now consists of Mrs Judith Wilson, Mrs Erica Cunningham (who takes over Mr Pulsford's duties), and Mrs Liz Regan. The Council wishes to thank Mr Pulsford and Mrs Laidlaw for their many years of service.

12 MEMBERS OF CONFERENCE

Since the last Annual Meeting Mr Geoffrey Cunningham, Mrs Renee James, Mr Ian Johnson, Mrs May Liversedge, the Revd Norman Edward Riley, Mrs Edith Schofield, Mrs Pamela Sutton and Mr Geoffrey Turner have passed into the spiritual world.

13 NOMINATIONS AND MOTIONS

a) Nominations

The Council proposes that Messrs BW Business Services Ltd of Derby be re-appointed auditors for the Conference.

b) Motions

The Council will move that its name be changed to the Conference Council.

14 FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Company Accountant, Mrs Sally Field, reports on the Income and Expenditure accounts for the year ended 31st March 2017 and the Balance Sheet as at that date, subject to audit:

Overall Summary

The operational figures have gone from break even at 31 March 2016 to a slight operational surplus at the end of March 2017.

Income

Society income has risen slightly to £163,000, which is an increase of 1.2% compared with last year. This is due to increased contributions towards costs for ordination students, although general society contributions have continued to fall. Donations have decreased by 18.2% to £18,000 compared with £22,000 the previous year. This lower figure of donations is likely to continue in the coming years. Investment income continues to be the largest source of income to Conference.

Expenditure

There has been an increase in expenditure of 2.6% compared to the previous year. This is because Administration costs have been higher. The main increase is from Purley Chase due to a Deputy Manager being employed but most other administration costs have also risen slightly.

Exceptional Items

Legacy receipts relating to this financial year total £163,000. We also received the funds of the Women's League totalling £136,000 when it closed in 2016 to be used for our general charitable purposes.

Future Forecast

The forecast over the next 5 years is still very changeable but at the moment it looks as though we will be having an operational deficit each year. These deficits, for the short term, will be covered by previous surpluses. In the long term they will be covered by cashing in investments unless additional operational income is found. A Fundraising Group is in the early stages of becoming established and it is hoped that this will be a source of a much-needed new income stream for the future.

15 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PURLEY MANAGEMENT TEAM

(Mr Grant Brackley, Chairman (part), and Mr David Haseler, Secretary, report)

1 The Team

Michael Clubb	Chairman (part)
Sally Field	Company Accountant
Grant Brackley	Chairman (part)
Alison Plunkett	
Anne Gaffney	Manager
Alison Southcombe	Programme Leader Designate
David Gaffney	Programme Director
David Haseler	Secretary

During the year, Michael Clubb resigned as Chairman, having led the Team through the planning period, opening and the first 10 years of operation. His friendly and positive leadership will be missed. We welcomed Grant Brackley who has taken over the role.

We also welcomed Alison Southcombe, Programme Leader Designate, to the Team.

The Team is supported by the competent and reliable housekeeping and catering team who ensure the smooth running of Purley throughout the year.

2 The Future

The Team is conscious that the role of Purley will become more important within Conference as the number of Societies continues to decrease and as the need for people to be educated and to meet socially increases. We will endeavour to ensure that there are events to suit all interests and ages.

3 Events

EVENTS	TOTAL	CONF	GC	SPIR	OTHER
04.14-03.15	56	19	3	25	9
04.15-03.16	55	20	3	21	11
04.16-03.17	59	18	3	29	9
ATTENDS	TOTAL	CONF	GC	SPIR	OTHER
04.14-03.15	946	380	107	296	163
04.15-03.16	930	357	120	305	148
04.16-03.17	1002	344	108	414	136
NIGHTS	TOTAL	CONF	GC	SPIR	OTHER
04.14-03.15	3225	1012	1076	787	350
04.15-03.16	2815	921	660	877	357
04.16-03.17	2807	927	524	990	366

It is encouraging that the overall number of events and the number of attendees have increased, though the number of person-nights has decreased slightly.

As the result of a focus group at Purley and a feedback session at Conference, Alison Southcombe has identified several new events that she is planning to introduce from summer 2017 onwards.

The Sunday service and the Arcana Caelestia study group continue to be held monthly and are now well-established and important events in the Purley calendar. In addition to a core group of attendees, there is also a trickle of newcomers.

The Team are conscious that David Gaffney has the pressures of being both Spiritual Leader and Programme Director.

4 Finance

There was a nett deficit of £53.5K compared with a deficit of £41.2K in the previous year, mainly a result of the employment of a Deputy Manager in October 2016.

A Standing Order donation scheme is being introduced to encourage more people to support Purley financially.

5 Staff

Graeme Harding, Deputy Manager, started in October 2016 and his experience and expertise have enabled him to fit easily into this new role and to relieve the pressure on Anne Gaffney.

A new Cook, Annie Davidson, is about to start in the Kitchen.

6 Buildings and Grounds

(a) General

There have been no major problems during the year but minor repairs have been carried out.

The Team realises that, after 10 years in operation, more major works of redecoration, repair and maintenance will soon be needed.

(b) Grounds

The holly hedge has been professionally cut back, allowing future trimming to be much easier and safer.

(c) Health and Safety

Professional audits of the water system for Legionella and of the building for asbestos have been carried out with minimal work needed to become compliant.

7 Thanks

The Team continues to be grateful to our hard-working staff who often work long and inconvenient hours to ensure that Purley continues to run smoothly. The overall responsibility falls on Anne Gaffney, Graeme Harding and David Gaffney, and we thank them for their efforts to ensure the continued success of the Centre. Sally Field's work underpins the financial side of Purley.

The Team would also like to thank the numerous volunteers who help in many different ways and also to the people, known and anonymous, who support Purley financially.

On behalf of the Council:

Judith M Wilson, Chairman

J Zoë Brooks, Company Secretary

REPORTS FROM AROUND THE CHURCH YEAR TO 31 MARCH 2017

1 AREA COUNCILS

1.1 SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION

(Mrs H Laidlaw reports)

The Scottish Association has met three times between May 2016 and February 2017.

We continue to take part in the Paisley “Open Doors Day” and once again this event was well attended and enjoyed by both adults and children. A large Noah’s Ark which had been purchased during the year, proved to be a happy attraction to the young people.

The new glass panels which were inserted in the front door of the Church now display some attractive photographs of the inside of the Church with a warm invitation to join our worship. The Committee also chose a selection of quotes from the Writings which were made into suitably sized Posters to display in the glass panels.

Other improvements have involved updating the web site address and this year the church President arranged an attractive display in the “wayside Pulpit window” of a Nativity Scene over the Christmas period and during other times there are bright floral displays and a quotation.

1.2 YORKSHIRE AND NORTH EAST AREA COUNCIL

(Mrs Jan Millar reports)

The AGM was held as usual on a Sunday as part of a day of worship and activities to which all churches in the Area were invited as well as families and individuals who live in the area but are unable to attend a church on a regular basis. It was well attended and gave us the opportunity to share in worship and fellowship together.

The reports received from all four churches at the Area AGM show that the number of people attending Sunday worship continues to drop due to the ill health and death of some of our members. Seaburn Dene continues to meet twice monthly; and Keighley, Bradford and Dalton meet each week, with Bradford and Dalton having several joint services throughout the year.

We are as always grateful to the Ministers, Retired Ministers and Lay Worship Leaders who lead our services and to all those who work so tirelessly behind the scenes to maintain the life of our churches.

1.3 NORTH WEST (MANCHESTER) AREA COUNCIL

(Mrs Pauline Grimshaw reports)

1. Two meetings have been held during the past year which were attended by representatives from Kearsley, Radcliffe and Stockport.
2. During the past year the Council has organised our three usual events: - the Celebration of Christmas which was held at the New Church College, the Swedenborg Birthday meeting held at Radcliffe and the New Church Day Service which this year was hosted by our friends from Accrington. The latter two events were led by Mr Christopher Chambers who is continuing with the Apocalypse theme of the past few years.
3. At our October meeting we discussed our role as a Council and the uses which we serve. It was felt that our activities enabled us to meet together and maintain contact with one another rather than being in isolated groups.
4. Again one of our main concerns has been with the maintenance of regular services of worship over the past year. We are thankful for the devoted efforts of lay people, including Mr Clive Goalen and Mr Jeff Lomax who travel lengthy distances to lead worship and for the services of Rev Brian Talbot at Radcliffe and Stockport.
5. We were sorry to hear of the illness of Rev Norman Ryder during the past year and also of the poor health of Mrs Pamela Ryder both of whom have given so much devoted service to the Chester Society and to our area.

2 KILDWICK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

(Mr Keith Sandiford, the Secretary, reports)

Following the severe winter flooding a small group of people worked hard to ensure that the season opened on time.

Details of 2016 bookings were as follows (2015 figures in brackets). There were 21 bookings on 58 days (23 on 80), of which New Church bookings were 12 on 39 days (13 on 50) and outside groups 9 on 19 days (10 on 33). The type of bookings were broadly similar to those in previous years and included the Discussion Day led by the Revd Geoffrey Clarkson and a day for young people organised by Mrs Jenny Jones, as well as various church parties. Outside bookings were mainly family parties but also included a group of pupils from Bedford School.

Checks for legionella and asbestos fortunately showed that everything was clear but the cost of £478 contributed to what was an expensive accounting year, as £720 was spent on new equipment, and £216 on hedge cutting (both generously paid for by Friends of Kildwick) plus £930 on decorating. Basically the centre is now in a satisfactory condition.

The introduction of the new £1 coin means that several payment meters will

have to be replaced or modified. Any other work that is carried out will depend on what money is available and more winter flooding could prove to be a serious setback.

3 OVERSEAS

(The Revd Norman Ryder, Overseas Secretary, reports)

Illness has limited what I have been able to do in this year, especially since the first of October.

Until then I continued to send parcels and New Church books to my contacts in Nigeria at no cost to Conference funds. Last year I reported the defection of an unordained pastor to the General Church of the New Jerusalem in Bryn Athyn. He is now being trained for ordination by this body. When he wrote to ask for still more books which he needed for his training, I told him to ask the General Church to supply them; he no longer writes to me. My other contacts still express very warm thanks for what I send, with news of their church's continuing organisational problems. No annual Conference was held in 2016 and no one has been appointed in succession to the late Archbishop Wariboko.

Since 1 January 2017 my daughter has helped me to pack more parcels of books and she and her husband have posted them on my behalf.

I have been privileged to receive inspiring messages from many of my overseas contacts as news of my terminal illness spread.

Archbishop Benjamin Ngwexane has written on behalf of the New Church in Southern Africa. Messrs Oyeabuan Saturday and Okuro Ubughenaan reported prayers have been said for my cure in their church and family worship. Similar messages have come from Sweden, Australia and New Zealand.

4 BROADFIELD MEMORIAL BENEVOLENT FUND

(Mr Ray Pulsford, the Treasurer/Secretary, reports)

The Fund has continued to make grants, on request, to pensioners and ministers and a total of £16,142 has been distributed compared with £16,140 last year.

Donations remain at £16,000 and other income was £316 from CIF dividend. There was a balance of £923.69 on 31st March 2017 compared with £778.39 last year.

5 REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR AUXILIARY MINISTRY (The CAM Coordinator, Mrs Jan Millar, reports)

General

From October 2016 I have reduced my hours from 30 to 10 per week and this has seen a reduction in some of the work undertaken by CAM. In conjunction with SOLCe CAM will, however, endeavour to still offer workshops, training events and support to both churches and individuals.

Worship Leader Training and Support Programme

Worship leaders attended the Worship Leader Weekend that was held at Purley Chase in October 2016. The theme for the October weekend was 'Holy Week' and the inspiring weekend was led by Revd Geoffrey Clarkson. Instead of meeting at the weekend during April 2017 we plan to meet midweek and if this proves to be a successful experiment it has been decided that in future CAM will host one weekend and one midweek event for Worship Leaders each year. CAM would like to thank all the ministers and lay people who have given of their time, insights and expertise to support and encourage the worship leaders.

Resources

CAM has a wide variety of resources to assist lay people in their ministry but from now onwards no further additions will be made unless a need arises.

Finally CAM would like to thank the Council and the Committee of Ministers for the support they continue to give to the work of lay people in all aspects of church life. Despite the reduction in my hours the committee is always looking for new initiatives to meet the changing needs of the Church so please don't hesitate to continue to approach CAM if any training or support is required.

Finally, the committee would like to thank all the Auxiliary Ministers who give so generously of their time, knowledge and enthusiasm to serve the Church in many different capacities. Without their dedication the Church would be unable to function.

6 REPORT OF THE NEW CHURCH YOUTH ASSOCIATION (Miss Gwendolen Rowe, the Secretary, reports)

Council Meetings: Three Council Meetings have been held during the last year.

NCYA Conference: Our AGM in 2016 was held at Kearsley New Church. This was felt to be a worthwhile meeting although we were only a small group. We acknowledged the work of Rev Christopher Hasler, who had

passed into the spiritual world since our last meeting. We received an invitation to have our next AGM at Derby New Church.

Purley Chase: We continue to sponsor Summer Camp 1 and Family Weekends and it is always a delight to hear how well these are attended and enjoyed.

Home Sunday Club: Home Sunday Club has been sent to over 60 children each month this year. The Starters leaflets are being updated by Carolyn Kennion and Pauline Grimshaw. We value the support we receive from Mrs Lara Nicholls and Miss Alison Presland who write letters to go out with the packs.

Colouring Exhibition: This year the children were invited to design a Thank You card or to write a Thank You prayer. We hope to display some of these at Conference, and make them available for Worship Leaders to use if they wish. Each child will receive a small prize for their efforts.

Sunrise Magazine: With the increasing number of activities for children our Editor has had plenty of material but would always welcome new ideas. A regular article has been supplied by Jenny Jones who has been looking at a popular film and linking it with a Biblical story and making it relevant. There continue to be requests for the magazine from new sources.

Children's Day: This was held on the third Sunday in January and Ministers and Worship Leaders were invited to use some of their service to focus on children & young people. Miss Gwendolen Rowe produced a useful leaflet with a short talk and some prayers as a handy guide for those who wanted it.

Youth Leader: Mrs Jenny Jones was welcomed to our January meeting and we had a very worthwhile discussion about joint ventures for the future. A joint venture was held at Kildwick New Church Centre last November and this was very successful. It is proposed to hold another event in November this year, on Light, and this is planned to be held at Bradford New Church.

Grants: We continue to offer financial assistance when needed. We were happy to hear that the tablet purchased by Bradford New Church Sunday School, through an NCYA grant, is proving to be very worthwhile and enables the children to watch bible stories and play interactive bible games.

Store Cupboard at Purley Chase: We continue to provide a store cupboard at Purley Chase and this is available to all leaders working with children and young people. All we ask is that everyone puts things back where they came from and lets us know when materials need replacing.

Website: Mr Keith Dunbar has been looking at setting up a website for the NCYA. This is still in the planning stage and nothing has been decided but it is felt to be worth exploring.

Finally our thanks and appreciation go to all those who work so hard with the children and young people in our organisation.

7 YOUTH AND FAMILIES

(Mrs Jenny Jones Reports)

The Youth and Family team has continued to evolve over the past year and we are now a team of four consisting of Robert Clark, Jenny Jones, Rev Jack Dunion and Rev Becky Jarratt. We have focused on creating a programme of events that covers all ages; from small children and families to young adults into their late twenties. Our aim is that our families and young people should be able to attend a range of events all around the country that allow their needs for New Church fellowship and spiritual guidance to be met. Robert and Jenny have also been studying SOLCe courses to increase their personal knowledge of the Word and the writings in order that this greater depth of understanding can be passed onto the young people we work with.

A programme is sent to as many families and young people as possible in January and the programme contains family weekends at Purley Chase and at other rented centres, a 13 plus event at Wellspring House, several adventure activity days that are particularly suitable to bring friends to, an outdoor weekend for young adults aged 16 and over, two weekends for those aged 18 and over and a variety of family Worship and Fun days. Becky Jarratt has also been running regular “Make a noise for God” services in her local area. Our aim is that regular opportunities to meet with other like-minded families and friends will improve communication, relationships and opportunities for spiritual growth for all our young people especially in a world where fewer people are attending church in a traditional way on a weekly basis.

Family weekends continue to be successful although many of our “children” are now teenagers and we have noticed a drop in the number of younger children attending. If this trend continues, this will have an impact on the events and activities we may need to offer over the next few years. We continue to welcome the occasional new family to our “Purley family” but, as ever, finding leaders to work with our three age groups is difficult. We are very grateful for the support we get but we are looking to continue expanding so we do need more people to help. This year we have also trialled hiring bunkhouses in different areas of the country so that families who struggle to get to Purley Chase for a weekend can participate in an event closer to home.

Two weekends a year for young adults aged 18 and over have taken place at

Purley Chase allowing young adults the opportunity to have fun and study the teachings of our church at a deeper level with those of a similar age.

Various other events such as the “Walk and Talk” days for all ages and Worship/Fun days are also planned throughout the year and it is hoped that these could be a way to welcome new families and friends to our community in a more informal way. Four adventure activity days are taking place in 2017. These are spread around the country at various activity centres and will take place in Halifax, Birmingham, Maidenhead and Stockton on Tees. We have offered all sorts of adventures including skiing, canoeing, climbing and raft building.

Our Facebook page, Purley People, has attracted new members and it is one of our key ways to communicate and advertise. It is also a way for everyone to interact with each other and continue to build relationships. Photos of events are put on as the events take place and we often have up to 80 “watchers” for every post. Members are able to check that they have booked for events, find out who is attending and check details.

8 REPORT OF THE LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES COMMITTEE (Mrs Maeve Hawkins, the Secretary, reports)

The Committee members, The Rev Norman Ryder, Chairman; Mrs Maeve Hawkins, Secretary; Messrs Patrick Johnson, Gordon Kuphal and Howard Turner met in June and September 2016 for what proved to be the last meetings with Norman as the Chairman.. Sadly, soon after the September meeting Norman became ill and it was necessary for him to resign from the Committee. His extensive knowledge of the history of the Church not only in this country but also of New Church organisations in other countries is unique. We miss his contribution to all matters coming before the Committee which he joined in 1990 and we thank him for his many years of service. As Mr Johnson and Mr Lines were unable to attend the December and March meetings only three of us were present on those occasions. Nevertheless much has been achieved. We also appreciate the help given by our Associate Committee member Mrs Pauline Grimshaw.

We are delighted the negotiations for the transfer of the Library and Archives Collection to the care of the Swedenborg Society have been satisfactorily completed. In February 2017 the Transfer Agreement was signed on behalf of the Conference Council and the Board of the Swedenborg Society safeguarding the Collection for the future.

The ordinary work of the Committee has continued with many enquiries being answered. For a second time we provided information for an edition of the television genealogy series “Who Do You Think You Are?” The subject of the programme, broadcast in March 2017, was Sophie Raworth. Sophie’s

Mott ancestors were members of the Birmingham Society in the 1790s. The family emigrated to New York where they made contact with other New Church families living in the city. The story of the family was placed in the context of the Priestley Riots against Dissenters which took place in Birmingham at the time.

We have given advice in dealing with their Archives to Societies which have recently closed or are considering closure in the near future. Mrs Hawkins and Mrs Grimshaw visited SOLCe to give advice when the team there wished to dispose of books no longer needed. A collection of New Church periodicals including some dating back to the 19th century will be retained in the Library at Wellspring House.

Archives have been moved to Swedenborg House from the Brightlingsea and Southend Societies and Conference Archives stored at Brightlingsea have also been moved to London. A start has been made in organising the Conference Photographic collection which is part of the Archives collection. This is important work requiring in many cases the identification of the people, places and events depicted.

We look forward to continuing with the Committee's work and supporting and advising Mr Stephen McNeilly, Mr James Wilson and Mr Alex Murray of the Swedenborg Society as the new custodians of the Conference Library & Archives Collection.

9 REPORT OF THE MARKETING AND RESOURCES GROUP (Mr Stephen Russell-Lacy, Chair, Reports)

The Group continue to meet twice yearly. We are in the late stages of the publishing process of an exciting new book *Creating the Kingdom* and hope to be able to sell copies at the Annual Meeting of Conference. This will be available at the on-line shop at www.spiritualwisdompublishing.co.uk There is a desire to commission or finance the production of suitable resources to support and encourage the green shoots of our movement and any information about what is needed should be directed to us through the ministry and leaders of Conference. We continue to support promotion of our spiritual teachings and welcome attention drawn to www.spiritualquestions.org.uk particularly to people outside our membership.

REPORT OF THE MINISTERS' COMMITTEE 2016/17

1. Meetings

The Committee meeting took place from 8th-9th November 2016 and the AGM from 14th-15th March 2017. Nine members were present at the November meeting with Mr G S Kuphal as Recorder. In March there were 11 members plus Mr G S Kuphal as Recorder. In addition Ms Alison Southcombe, final year ordination student, attended by invitation. Both meetings took place at Purley Chase.

2. Spiritual Leader's comments on the past year

It has been a very busy year for Anne and me at Purley Chase. Anne's main interest, as well as continuing to keep Purley running as smoothly as possible, has been in preparing for her departure at the end of this year, in assisting with the acquisition and training of new staff who can continue once we leave. As for myself, I note the following:

At the end of the week following Conference, I ordained Robin Wooldridge by proxy on behalf of the New Church in Australia at Purley Chase. It was a memorable and joyful occasion. I'm sure that we all wish him all the very best in his ministry here in the UK as he listens to the Lord's leading and feels his way into what is in store for him and walks into the unknown. Robin has also taken a service at Purley and we enjoyed the message and his humour.

Anne and I finally seem to have found a house to move into when we leave Purley in December, so who knows, perhaps it will be 'third time lucky'.

The Arcana Study Group which I run at Purley continues to be well attended; and seemingly those who attend enjoy it. I for one have learned an immense amount from it. It has been an exploration and an adventure for us all and I think I have sensed a character change in the Group as we have walked this road together; an eagerness to learn more seems to continue to develop. I have not had the time to keep up with my Small Group unfortunately, but the demand is still there and I hope to return to it soon. We are working through Swedenborg's "New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine" which sounds - well - doctrinal, but it isn't 'doctrinal' as you might understand the term - rather we use it to discuss life, what it has taught us, and the pitfalls to avoid in the future; and the Lord's constant striving through His Providence for our eternal well-being. The shorter version of this book is what we use and I would recommend it as a guide to discussions about life.

I have continued to lead services monthly here at Purley and have also led services at Chester, Kensington, and Southend. As I write this, I am reminded that I am due to travel down to Southend to lead the Closing Service for their church building, a sad occasion, but also a thanksgiving to the Lord and His

people for the gift of this Church to the community of Southend for all those years. Sadly, the Burnley Church also closed its doors on the 4th March 2017, the service being taken by the Revd Michael Stanley with the Revd Christine Bank present as a representative of the Ministers' Committee. Also, I had an interesting day at Geoffrey Turner's Memorial Service at Kensington. I walked from Euston Station to Kensington and took time to see London life along the route. I met some old friends including Richard Lines who sadly has since passed into the spiritual world a few weeks ago. I reflect on Geoffrey and Richard's passing with a little sadness as I think of the conversations we have had and the times together. All this makes me think how important it is for young people to have an opportunity to have access to our wonderful teachings, and what an amazing organization we are part of.

Life is full of meetings for me these days: the Council, the Ministers' Committee, the Purley Management Team and Working Parties, and the Sponsored Student Monitoring Group meetings for our ordination students, Alison and Lee, both of whom seem to be thoroughly enjoying their work although it is clearly challenging at times. I wish them all the best and the Lord's blessings for the future.

A couple of people who attend the Purley monthly service and other things here wish to become Members of Conference so I look forward to talking to them in a bit more depth about what we are about.

The Carol service at the beginning of December 2016 was well attended and a 'good time was had by all' and I loved it - the music and the singing was 'something else'. Quite a few people came from afar and stayed the weekend or just over Friday night. Coincidentally the 18+ Weekend was running at the same time and they joined us and had a great time. The Centre was decked with holly and the like, the bar was open, we provided a buffet and drinks afterwards and the log fire roared up the Olive Room chimney.

Robin Wooldridge has also started a Discussion Group meeting at his house in Selly Oak Birmingham on a monthly basis. I attend when I can; if anyone wants details please get in touch.

And so that more or less brings me up to date with things from me which I feel to be notable of mention; if I have forgotten anything or anyone then my apologies. The Green Shoots continue to emerge, and I feel confident that throughout the Church, if we can - with the Lord's help - manage and nurture these well, then we have a bright future.

With best wishes,
Revd David Gaffney (Spiritual Leader)

3. Ms Alison Southcombe.

Ms Alison Southcombe continues as a sponsored student working towards Ordination later this year. We are delighted that she will be the Programme Leader for Purley Chase Centre and will succeed Revd David Gaffney on his retirement.

4. Committee for Auxiliary Ministry (CAM) / Local churches

The Ministry affirm their ongoing support for the work of CAM and appreciate that as the co-ordinator has reduced her hours the ways support is given may change in future. We continue to be grateful for the faithful and quiet work of so many who volunteer with dedication and commitment to enable regular worship in our churches and group settings.

This year has seen church closures and the physical presence of a place of worship being lost in the community they served which is, of course, a loss to those faithful members who have had to recognise they can't continue with the responsibility and workload of keeping their church open. CAM is happy to support groups and smaller gatherings as our ministries to each other and among the communities we hope to serve take on different forms.

5. Web presence

The Spiritual Friends website has been discontinued and the name has now been moved to an open Facebook account. Purley People is on Facebook as a closed group and is well used for sharing the activities of those who know and love Purley.

6. Youth and Family

Revd Jack Dunion has provided an update on the work of The Youth & Family team, now in their second year. They offer a wide range of exciting and stimulating activities throughout the year covering all ages, but especially those under the age of 18. Our activities include: family weekends, outdoor pursuits weekends, activity days, 18 plus weekends and residential camps like Easter Rally and Summer Camp. These activities are offered across a wide geographical area which takes in Manchester, Yorkshire, Warwickshire and Bournemouth.

Also this year, our team members have been involved in work based training and development, in liaison with SOLCe, as well as taking on SOLCe modules to improve our knowledge of New Church teaching.

The team are delighted to have witnessed a rise in the number of people attending events over this past year, events such as Easter Rally & Summer Camps for example, and it is thought this is due to the increase in the number of activities offered along with improvements we have made in the areas of outreach and communication.

Due to the closure of several societies over recent years, a trend which is set to continue, the steady stream of young people coming to us through societal contacts will begin to dry up. The team may need to look at future ways we might replenish the stream of people in contact with the church from an early age by developing new activities which involve infants and toddlers.

The team would like to express our grateful thanks to all these who support and encourage our activities; from the Conference Council to the volunteers who help out with activities etc. Your support is invaluable.

7. Apocalypse Study Group (ASG)

Revd Bruce Jarvis reports on behalf of the ASG:

Our work this past year has progressed at a much slower rate than we would have wished, largely due to varying pressures on each of the members, and, doubtless, because of the impact of the ageing process. We had an abbreviated workshop attached to the Ministers' Committee 2016 autumn meeting, but were unable to meet this spring. We have tried to maintain progress by using Skype and email.

As indicated last year, advertisements for the Apocalypse Card Deck did appear in *Caduceus* during the autumn. We do not have any details of sales arising from that campaign.

We prepared an A5 leaflet to accompany large posters advertising the Card Decks on sale at the Purley Chase Centre bookstall, New Church College and the Swedenborg Society shop.

We have also prepared a 3-page A4 leaflet for supplying to librarians and curators who might be interested in mounting the Apocalypse of John Exhibition. The next stage is to prepare handouts for visitors to the Exhibition.

As previously, we invite local Churches and Members of Conference to consider mounting the Exhibition in their area. The Group would be happy to give advice. It would also be a timely stimulus to encourage us to complete this project!

8. Safeguarding

Revd Rita Russell and Mrs Lara Nicholls have been working to ensure the necessary DBS checks have been carried out for new people and that timely renewal of checks on those already working with children are completed. The Ministers' Committee join with the Council to affirm their commitment to this process.

9. New Christian Bible Study website

www.newchristianbiblestudy.org

At the 2016 Conference the membership of the church gave generously to support the work of the New Christian Bible Study website. Conference Council agreed to match the funding and this led to a total of £9,200 being sent towards their work.

This website is based in the USA and is a valuable resource for Swedenborgian ideas supported by the different branches of the New Church family. It already contains the Writings (or part of them) in many languages and as the work of translation continues the intention is to upload not only the text of the Writings for a truly global reach but also to add to the depth of the site as Bible Stories and Spiritual Topics are explained.

10. Home worship

The team who have produced Home Worship over many years are now handing on the task of co-ordinating and producing this resource to new generations. The Ministry are grateful to the Chester congregation and the Revd Norman Ryder who have quietly and efficiently produced this quarterly mailshot or email for many years. Home Worship is received by around 100 recipients in the UK and overseas and at the time of writing a new group are meeting to look at ways of taking this forward.

11. Retired Ministers

The Committee wish to acknowledge the work of Ministers who do so much in retirement to support and lead congregations or groups and who continue to research, translate and write new material. Not all colleagues attend our Committee meetings or the Conference AGM but we all benefit from their continued service to the church in their own ways.

12. Salary rates

Once again the Committee agreed that the standard salary rate for Ministers should be published in this report, and to record our thanks to the Council for their decision to increase the salaries of employed Ministers, the fees of self-employed Ministers and the fees of retired Ministers by 2.6% from April 2017.

The full time salary (gross) for an ordained Minister for the year 2017/18 including telephone and broadband is £31,653.70.

13. The Council

Maintaining good communication between the Council and the Ministry continues to be a priority and the established pattern of having both the Spiritual Leader and Secretary of the Ministers' Committee attending the Council meetings is working well. The Trustees take immense care in their work of managing the business and charitable affairs of Conference but there

is a need for new volunteers willing to serve as Trustees to come forward.

14. Appointments and nominations

In addition to the Spiritual Leader and Secretary attending the meetings we maintain links between the Council and the Ministry as below:

Web Development	Mr R Cunningham and Revd J Dunion
Youth	Mrs L Nicholls and Revd J Dunion
Purley Chase	Mr D Haseler and Revd D Gaffney
Finance	Mrs S Field and Revd C Curry
Human Resources	Mrs R Turner and Revd C Bank
CAM and Local Churches	Mrs J Wilson and Revd C Bank
Training and Development	Mrs J Wilson and Revd R Jarratt

We have appointed Revd Christine Bank as our representative on the Committee for Auxiliary Ministry

David Gaffney [Spiritual Leader]
Christine Bank [Secretary]

REPORT OF THE COMPANY ACCOUNTANT YEAR TO 31 MARCH 2017

During the year, three legacies were received, £2,540 from the Margaret Jackson Estate, £500 from the Margaret Neely Estate, and £1,000 from the L L De Moubray Estate. The funds from the closed New church Women's League, totalling £136,000, were also received.

Income had increased by over 1% in comparison to the previous year, which was due to an increase in investment income and a £3000 increase in society income. Although there was an increase in society income overall, unrestricted society income fell, following the same pattern as previous years.

Expenditure increased by 2% compared with the previous year. Administration costs had increased by £5,000, with a split between travelling expenses, insurance, education & training and office costs. The main increase was the cost of Purley. Human Resources costs had actually decreased in the year, with a £9,000 decrease in housing costs. This has meant an overall operational surplus of £17,000.

Investments in the Common Investment Fund have increased in unit value to £8.011 and the split between capital growth and income received from the investments still remains at a 50/50 split.

Purley has seen a large increase in costs of £38,000, due mainly to the addition of a Deputy Manager part way through the year. This additional cost is seen as essential for the continued success of the centre. Purley has also seen a large increase in donations of over £27,000, which shows how much the centre is valued.

Costs are predicted to increase in the coming years due mainly to the employment of the full-time deputy manager at Purley. With the decrease in unrestricted society contributions predicted, this will mean an operational deficit over the coming years.

As in previous years, new income streams are needed as we are heavily reliant on investment income. A fundraising team is trying to get established to help find new income sources, so that we don't find ourselves selling off our investments in the next 10 years, as this would decrease our income from investments. Major costs had been cut in previous years meaning we heavily rely on volunteers without which we would not be able to function, unless we employed people to do the work which in turn would increase the deficit.

Sally Field – Company Accountant

Income and Expenditure Accounts

For year ended March 31st 2017

	£,000	£,000
	2016/17	2015/16
Societies	163	161
Donations - Conference	18	22
Investment Income	222	194
Trust Income	74	73
Bursary Grant	10	10
Other Income	1	1
Total Receipts	488	461
Human Resources		
Ministry	114	106
Laity	77	84
Student grants	30	25
Self Employed Fees	13	17
Employment Allowance	-3	-2
Pensions	18	16
Housing	27	36
	276	282
Administration		
Travelling Expenses	24	20
Professional fees	34	42
Insurance	14	11
Office	19	13
Marketing /Resources	0	0
Central Costs	19	21
Education & Training	26	24
Youth Leading	6	5
Purley Chase	53	41
Kildwick	0	2
	195	179
Total Payments	471	461
Operational Surplus/(-Deficit)	17	0

Other Receipts and Costs

	£,000	£,000
Depreciation	-69	-65
Legacies	164	213
Closed Society Funds	-1	419
Women's League	136	
Homelands Waived Fees	10	10
Non Conference - CIF (Common Investment Fund)	0	7
Net Surplus/(-Deficit)	257	584

Note. The market value for the CIF per unit

2017	2016
£8.110	£7.207

Balance Sheet as at March 31st 2017

	£	£
	2017	2016
FIXED ASSETS		
Tangible Assets	2,614,011	2,677,974
Investment Assets	15,165,357	13,015,439
	17,779,368	15,693,413
CURRENT ASSETS		
Net Current Assets	418,867	339,277
Less Creditors		-25,000
NET ASSETS	18,198,235	16,007,690
Represented by:-		
Endowment funds	1,367,690	1,179,694
Restricted funds	9,582,664	8,588,871
Unrestricted funds	7,247,881	6,239,125
	18,198,235	16,007,690

STATISTICAL TABLE

	Society Members	Non-resident	Total new members	Deceased	Removed	Increase	Decrease	Members of Conference
*Accrington	37	16	0	3	0	0	3	32
Bournemouth	32	8	1	3	0	0	2	30
Bradford	17	0	0	2	1	0	3	17
Burnley	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Chester & Wallasey	31	13	0	2	0	0	2	23
*Clayton	16	7	0	1	0	0	1	9
Dalton	34	2	1	0	0	1	0	21
Derby	50	24	0	3	1	0	4	32
Kearsley	40	12	0	5	0	0	5	20
Keighley	37	10	3	1	0	2	0	24
**Greenhill	19	8	0	1	0	0	1	8
Kensington	14	7	1	1	0	0	0	9
West Wickham	27	10	0	0	1	0	1	22
Paisley	47	11	1	0	0	1	0	23
Radcliffe	16	2	0	0	0	0	0	6
Seaburn Dene	30	4	5	2	0	3	0	22
Southend	16	6	0	0	0	0	0	7
Other members								180
Total 2016/17	477	140	12	24	3	7	22	493
Totals 2015/16	505	148	0	22	13	0	33	510

* 2016 figures

** 2015 figures

	Baptisms	Marriages	Funerals	Sunday School No. of children	Avg. attend. 16-	Holy Supper Administrations	Holy Supper Average Attendance	Overall Average Attendance
*Accrington	0	0	3	1	1	5	14	14
Bournemouth	1	0	5	9	5	11	20	23
Bradford	0	0	0	1	2	12	12	12
Burnley	0	0	0	0	0	10	8	8
Chester & Wallasey	0	1	5	6	3	8	13	21
*Clayton	0	0	1	0	0	4	6	5
Dalton	1	0	0	8	1	12	6	9
Derby	1	0	1	10	4	6	17	20
Kearsley	2	0	5	3	2	4	17	19
Keighley	4	3	11	0	2	12	18	27
**Greenhill	0	0	0	0	0	11	11	11
Kensington	0	0	0	0	0	12	7	8
West Wickham	0	0	0	5	1	12	12	13
Paisley	1	0	0	0	1	4	12	13
Radcliffe	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Seaburn Dene	1	0	4	0	8	8	14	22
Southend	0	0	0	0	0	5	7	8
Totals 2016/17	12	4	35	43	30	136	194	238
Totals 2015/16	9	5	28	49	33	154	204	257

THE NEW CHURCH COLLEGE REPORT OF THE COLLEGE COUNCIL 2016 – 2017

This Report covers the work of the College Council for the year ended 31st March 2017. The New Church College uses the working name of The Swedenborg Open Learning Centre [SOLCe] and is based at Wellspring House.

A COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

1 Attendance at Council Meetings

The Council met for full Council meetings on 3 occasions during the year (April 2016, October 2016 and January 2017). There was a short Council meeting following the AGM.

Membership and attendance at meetings were as follows:

	Council mtg
Dr PM Russell, President (resigned April 2016)	1
Mr C Chambers (appointed July 2016)	3
Mr RJ Nicholls, Treasurer	4
Mrs C Mahmood, Secretary	4
Mr JE Ford	3
Revd MW Stanley	4
Mr R Kennion	4
Dr E Foster (formerly Taylor)	2
Mrs D Lewin	4
Mrs M Duckworth (appointed July 2016)	4
<i>(invited to April mtg)</i>	
Mr S Kennion (appointed July 2016)	3
<i>(invited to April mtg)</i>	

The Administrator, Ms Melanie Bennett, attended 2 Council meetings (4 possible) by invitation.

The Leader of Education, Revd Helen Brown attended 4 full Council meetings (4 possible) by standing invitation.

The new Centre Leader for Wellspring House, Karen Nolan, attended one full Council meeting (1 possible) by invitation in January 2017.

Peter Isherwood and Rob Taylor attended one full Council meeting by invitation in January 2017.

2 Attendance at the Annual Meeting

The 152nd Annual Meeting of Governors was held at New Church College (commonly known as SOLCe, Swedenborg Open Learning Centre) on Saturday 2nd July 2016 with an attendance of 17 Governors and 6 guests/friends.

3 Membership of the Council

Patricia Russell resigned from the Council in April 2016 due to serious ill-health. Patricia has been a guiding light for SOLCe since joining as President in 2012. Her vision and wonderful support to staff and other Council members has been greatly appreciated over the years, and we honour her strength and wisdom in all we continue to do. Patricia gave huge amounts of time and commitment to SOLCe and we have kept her in our thoughts and prayers over the past year. Thank you Patricia.

We were pleased to welcome Chris Chambers back to the Council as President at the AGM in July. We value his efficient approach to meetings and support in steering us through some significant staff changes in recent months.

The Council were pleased to welcome Mary Duckworth and Sam Kennion to the Council, who were elected at the July AGM. They had previously served as Board members of New Church House (NENCH). We have completed the merger of the two charities this year and it has been a wonderful opportunity to expand the Council membership and develop fresh ways of working together on a shared vision.

B EMPLOYEES

Revd Helen Brown	Leader of Education (20 hrs)
Karen Nolan	Wellspring House Centre Leader (20 hrs)
Melanie Bennett	Administrator (25 hours per week, Mon, Wed and Fri)
Linda Stoney	House keeper (ad hoc hours, generally 5-7 hours a week)

1 Centre Leader Changes

The news of Patricia Russell's diagnosis, and her immediate resignation as President of the Council, impacted on our ability to manage Phil Wood in his role as Spiritual Centre Leader. Phil Wood resigned on 1st May with a 3 month paid notice period. We needed to temporarily narrow our focus with a sudden loss of volunteers in management roles and a small Events task group was formed to discuss programming for the centre. Many thanks to this team, including Helen Brown, David Lomax, Helen Newton, Carolyn Kennion, Margaret Presland, Diane Lewin, and Melanie Bennett for convening meetings and organising events this past year. This group will continue to meet and be a source of support to the new Wellspring House Centre Leader, Karen Nolan.

Karen Nolan began a new role of Wellspring House Centre Leader, including line managing Melanie Bennett, on 1st January 2017. Her enthusiasm has brought a wonderful fresh energy to SOLCe and made a huge difference to Melanie, who found much of 2016 rather quiet.

The Council are delighted with Karen's first few months in post; her professionalism, organisation and communication skills are a great asset to the

small team at SOLCe. The Council would also like to thank Peter Isherwood who has been line managing Karen, providing invaluable support.

C EMPLOYEE REMUNERATION

In line with the current policy of the Council to follow the lead of General Conference, the salaries of the Leader of Education, Leader of the Spiritual Centre were increased by 2% from April 2016 and the Administrator by 5%.

D GENERAL REVIEW OF THE WORK OF THE COLLEGE

1 Performance of the Charity

The Council considers that the Charity has performed well in the year 2016-2017, in line with our new charitable objectives. For the majority of 2016, despite the lack of a Centre Manager, Melanie Bennett 'held the fort' admirably and Helen Brown worked closely with local and national supporters of SOLCe to ensure that the education and courses we offer were promoted and strengthened by a growing team of volunteers. During this period, the Collaborative task group finalised the merger with New Church House (NENCH) and the new website for SOLCe was launched, with support from Rob Taylor and designer Leonie Winson.

Much has been achieved leading up to the merger between NENCH and SOLCe. This has taken place in a spirit of co-operation and openness. The final charitable object of the new merger submitted to the Charities Commission is as follows;

*“The object of the Charity shall be the promotion of **education and life based upon the Word and the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg**; and the training of suitable persons for Ministry, leadership and service in accordance with this object; in all or any of the following ways or in such other ways as shall be thought fit:*

The provision of educational resources, services or facilities calculated to further the said object;

The provision and maintenance of premises for use in furthering the said object;

The assistance in cases of need of persons whose education is being promoted under the said object;

The assistance of other charitable organisations or institutions having similar objects.”

SOLCe now has two full time sponsored students; Alison Southcombe, who is in her third year of ordination training for the role of Programme Director at Purley Chase Centre, and Lee Difffer. This year, Jenny Jones and Rob Clark

as Youth leaders, have been studying modules and there are 14 other students who are studying either through open learning or in tutorial groups.

A varied programme of workshops and events continues with highlights including The Summer School, our tutor event, a follow up Mysticism workshop in April and a special weekend at Purley in February.

Workshops and events in 2016/17

9 th April 2016	Full day workshop, Mysticism, 20 attended
1 st / 2 nd July 2016	Summer School, 17 attended including speakers
2 nd July 2016	AGM, 23 attended
18 October 2016	Tutor Event, 13 attended including speakers
12 November 2016	Full day workshop, Finding Spirit in Ordinary Things, 24 attended
13 December 2016	Christmas Gathering, 20 attended
10/12 February 2017	Weekend at Purley, In the stillness of the mind, 23 attended
25 March 2017	Full day workshop, Opening the door, 18 attended

Other uses of the building

Easter Rally
Creative Living Away Day
Shorecliffe Rise AGM
MASCS trustee meetings and supervision meetings
New Church Youth Association meeting
Parenting group 6 x weekly blocks
Council meetings, quarterly
Education committee meetings, quarterly
Merger NENCH/NCC meetings
Task group meetings, quarterly
MASCS – 8 counsellors, weekly
Meditation – fortnightly
Slimming World – weekly until Oct 16
Tutorials
Residential overnight stays

In May 2014, our Trustees, the General Conference of the New Church, approved a 3 year financial plan (2014-2017) to enable SOLCe to draw on investments in order to invest in its future. We projected a budgeted deficit in order to fund our activities.

The total deficit over three years was originally forecast to be within £116,000.00* approved by our Trustee [the Council of Conference]. This represents approximately one third on payment of employees, one third on professional budgets and one third on the house and grounds. Due to a shortage of staff this year, the physical improvements to the building have

slowed down which has reduced the expected deficit. Rooms continue to be decorated and made fit for purpose, as part of our investment plan to improve the look and feel of Wellspring House and increase room lettings.

2 Future Development

The Council are exploring how the NENCH and SOLCe merger will guide our future activities. There is a real sense of momentum brought about by the merger. There are seeds of new interest from outside the organisation in our work and the spiritual resource we offer. The merger has the potential to bring a sharper focus, fresh ideas and new direction to our work.

Our energy in the coming months and years will be to develop and implement a strategic plan to achieve our shared NENCH/SOLCe vision:

“Wellspring House is a vibrant and inspirational Spiritual Centre, providing an **educational resources centre** and meeting place for New Church Members and students of Swedenborg. We serve as a beacon and place of support, contemplation, guidance and encouragement for spiritual seekers of all faiths and none.”

We have a continuing role to provide for the education and spiritual development needs of those within the Church. Alongside this our essential role has been and will continue to be to train individuals for ordination. This role is set within a context where the role of ministry has changed and will continue to change, particularly in the way Ministers engage with the community and the wider social, psychological and spiritual role they play in a world that is facing huge economic, political and social change and upheaval.

We have recognised Ministers need different skills and ways of communicating in our present culture. These are skills that SOLCe/NENCH are well placed to provide.

We are increasingly taking more of a role in providing education for laity, who are taking up vital roles in worship leading, youth work etc. and it is anticipated this will continue to grow.

We are also seeing a decline in Church numbers, ageing congregations and local churches closing. This is set against a growing youth movement. It may be that we can provide a focus for worship for existing Church Members and in supporting the growth of the Church by providing an access point for new members.

We propose that there is a basic need in every human being to feel connected to a higher purpose, whether that is through a belief in God, Nature or the Universe. We believe that spirituality is a crucial aspect of all human wellbeing.

The pace and complexity of modern life, change and uncertainty, fears about the future mean that increasing numbers of people are experiencing a desire to *reconnect with what matters*. The Action for Happiness initiative seeks to address this through a secular, mindfulness based programme. Programmes of this kind can open a door for deeper spiritual exploration.

We suggest that many people are experiencing a ‘God shaped hole in their lives,’ a search for a deeper meaning and higher purpose to their lives that a secular programme cannot fill. There is a potential role for our organisation in providing a place of safety, a space for quiet reflection and a supportive resource for spiritual seekers.

The traditions and values of the New Church and SOLCe mean that we are uniquely placed to reach out to people in spiritual crisis. We have a caring, motivated and inclusive team of volunteers at Wellspring House, who are well equipped to welcome and support spiritual seekers from all backgrounds. This work could take place alongside and be integrated with our ongoing commitment to support New Church Members and serve as a spiritual resource for all who have an interest in Swedenborg’s philosophy and teachings.

To ensure our vision is successfully implemented we will be establishing a ‘Guiding Coalition,’ a project team built on trust, mutual co-operation and a common goal. This project team will deliver the strategic vision, providing leadership and managing change.

3 Staff

a) The Leader of Education

The focus of the Leader of Education role is needs-led education, facilitating spiritual understanding and reflection, mainly within the context of Swedenborgian teachings, and supporting students and tutors, especially those who are called to reach out to others e.g. in ministry, leadership, writing, workshops and worship leading. Rev Helen Brown is an ordained New Church minister. She liaises with the Committee of Ministers, the Council (Conference), the Sponsored Student Monitoring Group (SSMG) and the Education Committee. Helen continues to organise Tutor events which give our network of tutors an opportunity to share skills and interests.

b) Wellspring House Centre Leader

The Centre Leader’s focus is to coordinate a programme of events and workshops to facilitate personal spiritual reflection and learning at Wellspring House and to manage the development of the centre’s role within the community it serves – locally and nationally. Karen Nolan has been appointed to provide strategic leadership for the development of Wellspring House as well as ensuring the practical day-to-day

smooth-running of the building and its programme. The role covers marketing, an emphasis on partnership working and line management of the Administrator.

c) Website Designer and Website Management support

A new freelance Website developer was appointed in October 2015, Leonie Winson, who also developed the Purley Chase website. She attended the Task Day in March 2016 and completed the website build in Spring/summer 2016. Helen Brown is uploading modules to the new website and Rob Taylor is helping with student and tutor login.

d) Administrator

The Council would like to thank Melanie Bennett for maintaining and developing the administrative, financial and communication systems which ensure the day-to-day smooth running of SOLCe.

e) Housekeeper

Linda Stoney is the Housekeeper at Wellspring House, the home of the Swedenborg Open Learning Centre. She cleans the building, prepares food and the rooms for visitors and launders the bedding and towels. She generally works 5 – 7 hours a week.

f) Volunteers

We expect this area of our work to increase and would like to better capture and celebrate the contribution of volunteers to the life of SOLCe. We are grateful to Patricia Russell, who has continued to provide line management support to Helen Brown.

4 SOLCe

a) Sponsored Students

Alison Southcombe started as a full time sponsored student in October 2014 and is training for the role of Programme Director at Purley Chase Centre. She is undertaking a full three year training course.

We are delighted that a second full-time ordination student, Lee Differ, joined us in September 2016.

b) SOLCe Students

There have been 2 sponsored students in 2016/17, and there are currently 14 others studying either through open learning or in tutorial groups.

Those who have completed courses April 2016-17:

- Synoptics 1 (April 2016)
- Skills in Swedenborg Studies 1 (May 2016)
- Intimate Relationships 1 (March 2016)

- Group Leading 1 (October 2016)
- Doctrine of The Lord 2 (May 2016)
- Mysticism 2 (December 2016)

Those who are still studying courses begun before March 2017

- Divine Providence 1
- Introduction to Swedenborgian Thought 1
- Introduction To The Gospels 6
- Old Testament People 1

c) Education Committee

The Committee meets regularly throughout the year. The Committee plays a major role in developing the educational work of SOLCe and benefits from the experience and expertise of its members. The updating of current modules is an ongoing task. Mrs Sue Chesworth is continuing in her volunteer role to provide student liaison and support.

The Committee would like to encourage more people from the wider organisation to take up learning opportunities and has changed the old ‘bursaries’ to student ‘sponsorship’.

E PUBLIC BENEFIT

The College advertises its open learning courses and the Wellspring House programme on the new website www.swedenborg-openlearning.org.uk.

Events and courses are available to the general public as well as to our church members, who can access sponsorship support towards the costs of fees. We endeavour to create a welcoming spiritual centre with open doors to the local, regional and national community – building on existing networks and establishing new relationships to widen our reach and impact. We hope our new website will reach a wider audience, accompanied by an increasing use of social media.

The College building is used by several neighbourhood groups.

F THE FABRIC

The fabric and grounds continue to be kept in good condition by the Estate Management Committee, now Chaired by Ray Kennion. There have been several improvements and repairs during the year. This year a number of bedrooms have been redecorated.

The SOLCe Council would like to find a way of developing an accessible resources room for people to interact and engage with spiritual ideas within a well-designed workshop area. It would like to create an attractive visitor

experience that is educational and inspiring with exhibition style displays and book displays. This would be planned to stimulate discussion on spiritual concepts for a broad audience. Curated exhibition-style displays would provide an educational experience for all users of the Centre and would illustrate who we are and the concepts we value.

We would like to make full use of the outside space, creating a peaceful garden area for reflection, prayer and connection with Nature.

We can visualise this educational resources centre and we would like to provide a modern, welcoming and artistic space for the venture.

To bring this vision to life, we would like to see an annex built on the side of the existing building. We envisage this as a two storey annex with the library and storage space on the top floor and an exhibition space on the ground floor that would also be used as a workshop/seminar room. This would allow for exhibitions of all types from art, themed exhibitions e.g Apocalypse, 7 Days of Creation. It could be rented or used by ourselves for seminars etc.

The library would have wifi and broadband access and be equipped with terminal(s) to provide library users with access to internet resources. It would incorporate a secure area for first editions and rare books. It would be used by students and researchers as a study area.

Facilities such as access for disabled people and toilets would be needed.

This would enable:

- Library, periodicals etc to be gathered into one area.
- A multipurpose seminar/workshop room of a usable size/dimensions.
- Part of the existing lecture room could be set aside as a chapel/worship space.
- More small meeting spaces for use or renting out.

G RELATED PARTY

The Trustee, The General Conference of the New Church, is a registered charity. The General Conference is entitled to a proportion of the net incoming resources from the Jersey Fund and provides payroll facilities for which The College pays a service charge. The College also relies on the support of Conference for tutors, examiners and module-writers.

H GOVERNORS

There are currently 7 Honorary Governors (-1), 11 Life Governors, and 52 Annual Governors (-6); in total 70 (-7). (The numbers in brackets show the changes during the year).

At the last Annual Meeting, there were 17 Governors present.

I FINANCE

1 Annual Accounts

The Treasurer reported a net increase in funds of £863,581 for the year to 31st March 2017 (decrease of £103,329 in 2015-2016), primarily as a result of the transfer of funds and investments by NENCH and an improving stock market.

During the year, gains on the disposal of investments of £19,887 were realised with notional gains of £324,809 arising from the revaluation of investments.

The budget for 2016–2017 projected a deficit of £21,900 (before the transfer of funds from NENCH, investment management fees and property expenditure of £13,500) but the actual surplus for the year was £13,662 before investment management fees and a deficit of £1,244 when these are included. The main reason for the reduction in the budgeted deficit was a deferment in some of the planned property developments.

A budget for 2017-2018 projects a deficit of £9,000 before any adjustments arising on the real and notional gains and losses or charges for managing our investments. Once again the reason for this deficit is to allow for some of the developments at the College which were postponed in the previous year in part due to staff changes which resulted in a surplus last year.

2 Investments

The unrestricted funds, including the Jersey Fund, are amalgamated to minimise trading costs and to form a larger portfolio. The funds continue to be separated from an accounting point-of-view.

Following a visit to the investment adviser, Brewin Dolphin, with the Conference Company Accountant they have been instructed to continue concentrating on capital growth rather than income.

J FUNDING AND RESERVES POLICY AND RISK REVIEW

1 Objective

The objective of the Charity is stated in the Charity Commission Scheme dated 13th July 1977. This states that the Charity shall promote the education of members of the New Church, with emphasis upon the doctrine and life of the New Church. The land and investments belonging to the Charity shall be held in the name of the Trustee (The General Conference of the New Church). The Trustee shall administer and manage the said investments and shall pay the clear income thereof to the Council for application in furthering the Objective of the Charity.

2 Principle

The New Church College operates to a balanced budget, while recognising that, within each individual year, a small operating surplus or deficit may arise. Any deviation from this objective will be agreed with the Trustee in advance.

Monies available to the College are invested to obtain an income but with a focus on capital growth. The income is used to fund the day-to-day activities of the College, while the capital growth ensures the continuing viability of The College, enabling it to meet future commitments and objectives.

Small donations and legacies, which are not given for a specific purpose, will be used at the discretion of the College Council to fund and enhance the day-to-day activities of the College.

Substantial donations and legacies may be added to reserves to fund the future development of The College's Objective. These monies will be added to the Non-Permanent Endowment account at the discretion of the Treasurer of the College, in consultation with the Council and/or the Trustee if appropriate. Donations or legacies that are given for a specific purpose may require the establishment of new endowment funds. When required, these will be set up with the agreement of the Trustees.

The handling of these accounts, the level of reserves, and investment policy are subject to regular review by both the Trustee and the Council at their respective meetings, and as part of the annual budgeting exercise. This is supplemented by regular discussions between the two Treasurers of these organisations.

To assist in this objective, The New Church College currently operates the following accounts:

- National Westminster Bank account. This is used for meeting day-to-day operating expenses.

Investment accounts are detailed below. In addition, the Council and the Trustee have responsibility for the assets as defined on the Balance Sheet, including the property in which the College currently resides.

- Investment accounts operated by Brewin Dolphin Securities Ltd.
- Deposit accounts. For each of the investment accounts below, Brewin Dolphin hold cash balances from the purchase and sale of investments and to meet transaction expenses.
- Permanent endowment account established under the Charity

Commission Scheme. This restricted fund contains the investments as defined in the Scheme. Over time, the detailed investments have changed as the result of sound investment decisions, but the principle of income together with capital growth remains. (These funds fall under the definition of Permanent Endowment as defined in the Charities Reserves booklet CC19, and are therefore not classed as reserves).

In one combined account, the two following funds are maintained with separate records of income kept for the two constituent funds.

- The non-permanent endowment account contains additional non-restricted funds that have been donated to the Charity over time. These have been invested in line with the above principle, thus increasing investment income while allowing additional flexibility for funds as required by the Council. (These funds fall under the definition of Expendable Endowment as defined in the Charities Reserves booklet CC19, and are therefore not classified as reserves).
- The Jersey Educational Fund was established following a substantial donation from the Jersey Society, and the non-restricted fund was established so that the income from the Fund would be allocated to the College for the development of New Church education. This is administered in line with the 'Memorandum of Intent' agreed by the Councils of the General Conference of the New Church and of The New Church College, signed on 8th April 1998. (These funds fall under the definition of Expendable Endowment as defined in the Charities Reserves booklet CC19, and are therefore not classified as reserves).

Note. Included within the funds, which are administered on behalf of the College by Brewin Dolphin, are investments in both the General Conference Pool, which is administered by the General Conference of the New Church, and the COIF Charity Funds administered by CCLA Investment Management Ltd.

This means that The New Church College does not currently hold reserves as defined in the Charities Reserves booklet CC19.

This policy is subject to an annual review as part of the budgeting process to ensure that the reserves still meet the requirements of the Charity, and that the policy is still being followed.

Any variances from the agreed policy, or changes to this policy document will be agreed with the Trustee.

K TRUSTEE'S RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATION TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The charity trustee is responsible for preparing an annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the charity trustee to prepare financial statements for each financial period which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period. In preparing the financial statements, the trustee is required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply these consistently.
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP.
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.
- Prepare the financial statements on the ongoing concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustee is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enables it to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011 and the provisions of the charity's constitution. It is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

L ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Council thanks its employees for all their work. There are also many other people, both paid and voluntary, without whose contribution The College could not function. The Council expresses its gratitude to the College Governors and to all those who support its work in different ways.

Thanks are also due to all the students and participants, an essential component of The College.

Approved and signed on 1st July 2017 on behalf of the Council by:

C Chambers
President

C Mahmood
Secretary

LEADER OF EDUCATION REPORT

On reflecting on the last year I recognise that it has been a year of two halves. Initially because of the resignation of our previous Centre Leader we needed to draw on all our resources, our volunteers and our trust in the Lord to enable us to provide a programme of events at Wellspring House. However the second half of the year has been a blessing as Karen Nolan joined us in January as Centre Leader and has brought her own unique gifts to our team.

This has enabled me to focus again on our students and providing an education in its widest sense for those who come and study with us. The highlights for me, as always, is to see students developing both in their understanding of the Word and teachings but also in their ability to communicate this effectively. Every student is unique with different needs. This brings with it both challenges and joy as we endeavour to meet those needs.

It has been wonderful to see the new module Introduction to the Gospels being tutored for the first time. This has been written and tutored by Rev. Rita Russell. A group of worship leaders have been studying this module and it has been very well received. We have interest from others wanting to study this module in the future.

It is a great joy to see Alison Southcombe coming to the end of her ordination training and see her starting to move towards her new role as Programme Director at Purley Chase. We wish her every success in what promises to be a bright future.

We also welcomed Lee Differ as our new ordination student, who brings a wealth of knowledge of the Writings, having been a reader of Swedenborg for over 10 years. He is getting to know us and we are enjoying having him as a student.

Both Youth Leaders (Jenny Jones and Robert Clark) have been taking modules with us and this has been planned in conjunction with their line manager Rev. Jack Dunion.

During this year our new website was launched and this has meant uploading modules onto the website as well as getting used to a different way of students and tutors accessing modules. I was very pleased to have Robert Taylor volunteer to be our webmaster and appreciate the support he has given to this venture.

We provided a training day for our tutors in the autumn which focused on providing feedback for students. This was very much appreciated as this is the only opportunity when tutors can come together to share and really focus on

their role.

Links have been made with those who are working in a related area of interest in the Manchester area by asking them to come and speak at our summer school. Last year Helena Kettleborough from the Green Spirit movement and this year we have invited Steve Taylor who has been researching the possible spiritual transformation that happens after psychological turmoil. Both these people are university lecturers in their own disciplines. These are valuable links that can foster dialogue and develop a network with others who are working in other spiritually related fields.

In February this year we held a SOLCe weekend at Purley Chase on the theme In the Stillness of the Mind. A variety of speakers focused on the subject of mysticism and we had 23 people attend in total. This was well received, and by request, we shall be repeating this annually focusing on a different topic each year.

All that is provided under the umbrella of our education could not be done without a huge amount of valuable support from various people.

The first of these is David Lomax who has been a great support to me and to the students he has been involved with. He has a real skill for tutoring and brings a breadth of knowledge, understanding and skill to this role. He is now moving on to a full-time post elsewhere so will not be able to be so involved with SOLCe. I wish him well in his new employment.

Secondly Sue Chesworth has been a terrific support in supporting students (non-ordination) in their studies. I really appreciate her input and her wealth of experience in education. It has been invaluable.

I wish to express my appreciation to those who are on the Education committee and the tutors who work for our SOLCe students. Education committee are a real support to me in my role as Leader of Education. Each bring their particular unique skills and experience and broaden our discussion concerning matters relating to students, tutors and the modules we provide. If you have an interest in joining us in this valuable work please do contact me.

Finally, for me, our tutors are our most valuable resource and I thank them for their time, commitment and all they provide for our students.

Rev. Helen Brown
Leader of Education
SOLCe

**The New Church College
Statement of Financial Activities
For the year ended 31 March 2017**

TOTALS	2017	2016
	£	£
Incoming Resources		
Subscriptions and Donations	17,915	14,175
Investment Income	77,173	67,496
Fees	7,827	12,137
Miscellaneous Income	2,580	4,745
Transfer of funds from North of England New Church House	520,129	
	-----	-----
Total Incoming Resources	625,624	98,553
	-----	-----
Resources Expended		
Direct Charitable Expenditure	85,312	86,753
Other Expenditure	21,427	17,804
	-----	-----
Total Resources Expended	106,739	104,557
	-----	-----
Net Incoming Resources	518,885	(6,004)
Transfers	-	-
Gains and Losses on Revaluations and Disposals Of Investments		
Realised	19,887	(3,633)
Revaluations	324,809	(93,692)
	-----	-----
Net Movements in Funds	863,581	(103,329)
Fund Balances brought forward @ 1 April 2015	1,938,440	2,041,769
	-----	-----
Fund Balances Carried forward @ 31 March 2016	2,802,021	1,938,440
	-----	-----

Balance Sheet
As at 31 March 2017

	2017		2016	
	£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets				
Investments		2,758,010		1,926,116
Current Assets				
Debtors	20,281		20,913	
Cash at Bank and in hand	43,785		8,307	
	64,066		29,220	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	20,055		16,896	
Net Current Assets		44,011		12,324
Total Net Assets		2,802,021		1,938,440
Funds				
Endowment funds		1,451,330		1,247,682
Unrestricted funds;				
General		961,451		355,383
Designated - Jersey Education		389,240		335,375
		2,802,021		1,938,440
Total Charity Funds		2,802,021		1,938,440

The financial statements were approved by Council on 1 July 2017 and signed on its behalf by:

C Chambers President

The accounts have also been subject to Independent Examination and signed off by an by Douglas Grange Accountants 1 July 2017.

Full sets of the accounts can be obtained from the New Church College.

NEW CHURCH COLLEGE

Names of people who have successfully completed accredited Courses, other than those who have been recognized as Ministers.

Certificate holders

Ruth Duckworth	1979
David Fitzjohn	1979
Margaret Presland	1989
Alan Bowie	2002
Bev Johnson	2004
Lee Differ	2017

Diploma holders

Raymond Kennion	1990
Alison Southcombe	2017

Swedenborg Open Learning Centre

Certificate in Swedenborgian Studies (Level One)

Marion Curry	2004
Bev Johnson	2004
Lenka Machova	2004
Judith Wilson	2004
Thelma Wilson	2006
Peter Wilson	2006
Anna Woofenden	2007
Trevor Millar	2007
Stephen Thomas	2008
Helen Newton	2009
Alan Misson	2015
Alison Southcombe	2015

Graduate in Swedenborgian Studies (Level Three)

Alan Bowie	2006
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LAST 40 ANNUAL MEETINGS OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

Year	Place	President/ Senior Minister/ Spiritual Leader	Preacher	Members
1978	Chester	J.O.Booth	L.Chambers	86
1979	Clacton-on-Sea	J.O.Booth	R.A.Gill	84
1980	Radcliffe	C.V.A.Hasler	C.V.A.Hasler	93
1981	Leeds	C.V.A.Hasler	T.A.Moffat	97
1982	Swanwick	C.V.A.Hasler	C.H.Presland	92
1983	Southampton	C.V.A.Hasler	I.P.Johnson	86
1984	Swanwick	C.V.A.Hasler	F.Clarkson	95
1985	Clacton-on-Sea	N.Ryder	N.Ryder	91
1986	Swanwick	N.Ryder	J.O.Booth	85
1987	Manchester	N.Ryder	J.C.Duckworth	91
1988	Hoddesdon	N.Ryder	J.E.Elliott	77
1989	Durham	N.Ryder	B.R.Jarvis	82
1990	Swanwick	R.A.Gill	R.A.Gill	86
1991	Birmingham	R.A.Gill	C.V.A.Hasler	82
1992	Swanwick	R.A.Gill/N.Ryder	J.D.Allsopp	80
1993	Glasgow	N.Ryder	J.M.Sutton	72
1994	Hoddesdon	N.Ryder	B.J.Presland	77
1995	Swanwick	N.Ryder	B.M.Talbot	78
1996	Lancaster	J.M.Sutton	J.M.Sutton	83
1997	Hoddesdon	J.M.Sutton	O.C.E.Jackson	81
1998	Swanwick	J.M.Sutton	N.Ryder	72
1999	Swanwick	J.M.Sutton	G.Clarkson	79
2000	Hoddesdon	J.M.Sutton	D.A.Moffat	77
2001	Swanwick	I.Russell	R.P.Brugler	83
2002	Swanwick	I.Russell	I.Russell	68
2003	Swanwick	I.Russell	C.Curry	76
2004	Hoddesdon	I.Russell	M.E.Duckworth	70
2005	Swanwick	I.Russell	R.A.Gill	79
2006	Swanwick	M.Duckworth	G.L.Gordon	86
2007	Swanwick	M.Duckworth	J.C.Duckworth	98
2008	Swanwick	M.Duckworth	R.A.Gill	87
2009	Swanwick	M.Duckworth	D.Lomax	88
2010	Swanwick	M.Duckworth	M.W.Stanley	88
2011	Swanwick	M.Duckworth	G.Gordon/D.Gaffney	82
2012	Swanwick	G.Gordon/D.Gaffney	J.Dunion	74
2013	Swanwick	G.Gordon/D.Gaffney	R.Russell	76
2014	Swanwick	D.Gaffney	C.Curry/C.Bank	72
2015	Swanwick	D.Gaffney	C.Bank	76
2016	Swanwick	D.Gaffney	J.Dunion	83
2017	Swanwick	D.Gaffney	H.Brown/J.Dunion	77

MINISTERS, WORSHIP LEADERS, LAY PREACHERS AND CELEBRANTS

1 MINISTERS

The following are the Ministers recognised by the Conference:

*Retired or not in active service

#Overseas

Ordaining Ministers	ORDAINED	INDUCTED
* Norman Ryder	June 24,1964	July 30,1985
* Robert Arthur Gill	June 30,1970	July 25,1990
* Ian Russell	July 22,1983	July 23,2001
* Mary Elizabeth Duckworth, B.A	July 10,1996	July 27,2006

Ministers	ORDAINED
* John Edward Elliott, B.A., B.D.	June 23,1954
*# John Emanuel Teed	June 23,1954
* Leslie Chambers, B.A., Ph.D.	June 27,1956
*# Ian Allan Arnold	June 30,1965
*# John Maitland Sutton, B.Ag.Sc. (served as an Ordaining Minister 1996 to 2001)	June 30,1970
* Michael William Stanley, M.Sc., Ph.D.	June 27,1971
*# Trevor Alexander Moffat, B.A.	July 15,1978
# Julian Clayton Duckworth	July 19,1980
# Richard John Keyworth	June 23,1982
Clifford Curry, B.Sc	July 22,1983
* Bruce Roger Jarvis	July 30,1985
* Brian Mark Talbot, B.A., DipEd., B.Sc.	July 26,1989
* Geoffrey Clarkson, B.A.	July 26,1989
*# David Allan Moffat, B.Mus.	July 23,1997
* Gillian Lindsey Gordon	July 5,2000
* Rita Mary Russell	July 25,2001
David Edward Gaffney, B.Sc	July 29,2004
Christine Anne Bank	July 31,2008
Helen Thelma Brown	July 30,2009
Jack Dunion	July 30,2009
Rebecca Mary Jarratt	July 30,2015

(Ministers in the following categories are not entitled to vote at General Meetings of Conference)

MINISTERS ORDAINED FOR SERVICE ABROAD

Ministers Ordained for Service in the Czech Republic

Martin David Krejza April 3,1994
(Ordained in the Czech Republic)

Ministers Ordained for Service in the Commonwealth of Independent States

Alexander Gorbenko July 29,2004

MINISTERS ORDAINED BY OTHER NEW CHURCH ORGANISATIONS

RECOGNISED

Patrick Duvivier July 28,1999
(Ordained by the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America on July 2, 1982)

Catherine Lauber July 31,2009
(Ordained by the Swedenborgian Church of North America on July 5, 2008)

Robin Wooldridge July 25,2017
(Ordained by the Revd D. Gaffney on behalf of The New Church in Australia on August 7, 2016)

2 WORSHIP LEADERS AND LAY PREACHERS

The following are the Recognised Worship Leaders, Accredited Worship Leaders, and Lay Preachers recognised for service in Mauritius.

Recognised Worship Leaders

Geoffrey Charlton Bentley	1958
Bryan Richard Smith	1962
Patrick Leonard Johnson	1962
Gordon Stanford Kuphal	1968
Stephen Russell-Lacy	1979
Jeffrey David Lomax	1982
Anne Elizabeth Clarkson	1991
Michael Clubb	1991
Robert Joseph Kirk	1991
David Richard Alfred Friend	1992

Willie Huggins	1992
Kathryn Mary Brooks	1993
Phillip Nicholas Brooks	1993
Frances Mary Burnley	1993
Maurice Garnett	1993
Alan Christopher Misson	1994
Recognised as a Lay Pastor	2013
Pamela Joy Moffat	1995
Clive Goalen	1995
James Alan Bowie	2001
Constance Thelma Wilson	2001
Peter Michael Wilson	2001
Judith Margaret Wilson	2003
Pauline Ann Grimshaw	2004
Jan Millar	2004
Trevor Millar	2004
Recognised as a Lay Pastor	2008
Madeleine Mary Josephine Taylor	2004
Stephen Thomas	2005
Recognised as a Lay Pastor	2009
Kittie Methuen-Jones	2006
Jean Mrozek	2006
Nigel Sutton	2006
Helen Newton	2007
David Haseler	2007
Gwendolen Rowe	2013

Accredited Worship Leaders

Derrick Pearce	1999
Mary Brigg	2000
Enid Nicholls	2000
Diane Lewin	2002
Jonathan Armitage	2003
George Hunt	2003
Janet Benson	2003
Dorothy Margison	2004
Howard Turner	2004
Linda Wells	2006

Grant Brackley	2006
David Brooks	2006
Michael Hindley	2006
David Sharrock	2008
Tonia Jarvis	2012
Susan Wilson	2012
Liz Regan	2013
John Harris	2014
Philippa Peacock	2014

Lay Preachers recognised for service in Mauritius

	Authorized
Jacques Danjoux	1991
Clifford Phanjoo	1991
Evelyne Eynaud	2005
Yves Radhanauth	2005

3 CELEBRANTS

The following are the Authorised Celebrants for the Sacraments and Ceremonies recognised by the Conference:

- Mr Pat Johnson - Holy Supper and Funerals.
- Mr Alan Misson - Baptism, Holy Supper and Funerals.
- Mrs Mary Burnley - Holy Supper and Funerals.
- Mrs Anne Clarkson - Holy Supper.
- Mr Maurice Garnett - Holy Supper.
- Mr Phillip Brooks - Holy Supper and Funerals.
- Mr Stephen Russell-Lacy - Holy Supper and Funerals.
- Mr David Sharrock - Holy Supper and Funerals.
- Mr David Friend - Holy Supper.
- Mr Trevor Millar - Baptism, Holy Supper and Funerals.
- Dr Geoffrey Bentley - Baptism, Holy Supper and Funerals.
- Mr Michael Clubb - Baptism, Holy Supper and Funerals.
- Mr Peter Wilson - Holy Supper and Funerals.
- Mrs Thelma Wilson - Baptism, Holy Supper and Funerals.
- Mrs Madeleine Taylor - Baptism, Holy Supper and Funerals.
- Miss Gwendolen Rowe - Holy Supper.

Mrs Kathryn Brooks - Funerals.
Mrs Pauline Grimshaw - Baptism, Holy Supper, Funerals and Marriages.
Mrs Jean Mrozek - Funerals.
Mrs Marion Curry - Holy Supper and Funerals.
Mr Stephen Thomas - Holy Supper and Funerals.
Mr David Brooks - Funerals.
Mr Alan Bowie - Holy Supper.
Mr Nigel Sutton - Baptism and Holy Supper.
Mr Gordon Kuphal - Holy Supper.
Mrs Liz Regan – Holy Supper

LAND AND BUILDINGS HELD IN TRUST BY CONFERENCE

Insurance of buildings (excluding contents)

B Conference Block Policy
M AMP

+ Index Linked
Held in trust for the Embsay Fund

Conference maintains with Ecclesiastical a combined insurance policy for employers, public and products liability on the properties listed below and also for other Societies and associated institutions

In London and the South of England

Bournemouth. Church and rooms at Tuckton Road, Southbourne BH6 3HT	B	£1,246,898	+
House at 101 Tuckton Road, Southbourne BH6 3HT	B	£227,601	+
Brightlingsea. Church and rooms at Queen Street .CO7 0PH	B	£884,594	+
Greenhill. Church and rooms at 177 Leicester Road, New Barnet EN5 5EB	B	£1,390,166	+
Kensington. Church and rooms at 5 Pembridge Villas, London, W11 3EN	B	£2,204,053	+
Southend-on-Sea. Church and rooms at Sutton Road SS2 5HX	B	£494,341	+
West Wickham. Church and rooms at High Street BR4 0LZ	B	£442,546	+
General Conference. House at 18 Pollard Road, Whetstone, London N20 0UB Freehold.	B	£705,098	+
Bungalow at 80 Broadway, Southbourne Bournemouth BH6 4EQ. Freehold.	B	£253,808	+
House at 6 Atwater Court, Faversham Road, Lenham, Kent. Leasehold.			Insured by freeholder

In the Midlands and West

Derby. Church and rooms at Horwood Avenue DE23 6AN	B	£951,381	+
House at 409A Burton Road, Derby DE23 6AN	B	£168,510	+

General Conference.

Bungalow at 215 Coventry Road, Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV10 7AX Freehold.	B	£491,053	+
Purley Chase Centre, Atherstone. Freehold.	B	£5,531,468	+

In North Lancashire

Accrington. Church at Hargreaves Street BB5 2BB	B	£654,563	+
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Burnley. Church and rooms at Briercliffe Road BB10 1XH	B	£379,500	+
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General Conference.

House at 5 Whittycroft Drive, Barrowford, Nelson BB9 6AS Freehold. #	B	£201,626	+
House at 126 Mercer Crescent, Haslingden, Rossendale BB4 4DH Jointly owned freehold.	B	£191,562	+
House at 6 Dunkirk Avenue, Fulwood, Preston PR2 3RY Jointly owned freehold.	B	£220,992	+

In North-West (Manchester) and Cheshire

Chester. Church and rooms at Brook Lane, Newton CH2 2BT	B	£405,712	+
House at 51 Woodlands Drive, Newton CH2 3QQ	B	£141,424	+

Kearsley. Church and rooms at Bolton Road BL4 9DD	B	£1,315,048	+
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Radcliffe. Church and rooms at Stand Lane.	B	£1,439,036	+
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General Conference.

House at Church Street, Kearsley BL4 9DD Freehold.	B	£266,008	+
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In Yorkshire and the North-East

Bradford. Church and rooms at Ashfield Avenue,
Frizinghall BD18 3AL B £584,431 +

Dalton. Church and rooms at Grove Place,
Dalton, Huddersfield HD5 9LH B £1,095,224 +
Flats at 111 and 113 Long Lane,
Dalton, Huddersfield HD5 9LL B £794,611 +

Keighley. Church and rooms at Braithwaite Road,
Braithwaite BD22 6PX B £517,500 +

Seaburn Dene. Church and rooms at Shields Road,
Seaburn Dene, Sunderland SR6 8ND B £475,491 +

General Conference.

House at 22 Wimborne Drive, Keighley.
Jointly owned freehold. # B £345,000
Kildwick New Church Centre, Main Road,
Kildwick. Freehold. # B £700,414 +

In Scotland

Paisley. Church and rooms at 17 George Street,
with library and creche contiguous PA1 2LB. B £2,702,500 +

New Zealand

59a Balmain Road, Birkenhead, Auckland, 1310 M NZ\$395,864
(Conference share 86.7647%)

Property of the New Church College

25 Radcliffe New Road, Radcliffe, Manchester. B £592,222 +

+ Index Linked

Held in trust for the Embsay Fund

LIST OF SOCIETIES IN CONNECTION WITH THE GENERAL CONFERENCE
(For addresses and telephone numbers see Address List)

City, Town, etc.	Situation of Church	Minister or Lay Leader	Treasurer	Secretary
Accrington	Hargreaves Street Accrington BB5 2BB		Mr.D.H.Sharrock	Mrs.A. Walton (Treasurer is email contact)
Bournemouth	Tuckton Road, Southbourne BH6 3HT	Rev.C.Curry	Mrs.J.Pike	Mrs.L.Pierpoint
Bradford and Saltaire	Ashfield Avenue, Shipley W Yorks BD18 3AL	Contact Secretary	Ms.P.Blomfield	Mrs.J.Millar
Chester	Dicksons Drive Newton Park Chester CH2 2BN		Mr.R.Pulsford	Mrs A Langan
Dalton, Huddersfield	Grove Place, Dalton Huddersfield HD5 9LH	Mr T Millar	Mr.R.Jessop	Mrs J Mrozek
Derby	Horwood Avenue Derby DE23 6AN	Mrs.C.Sutton	Mr.N.K.Sutton	Mrs R.F.Delderfield

LIST OF SOCIETIES IN CONNECTION WITH THE GENERAL CONFERENCE
(For addresses and telephone numbers see Address List)

City, Town, etc.	Situation of Church	Minister or Lay Leader	Treasurer	Secretary
Greenhill	177 Leicester Road, New Barnet, Herts., EN5 5EB	Contact Secretary	Mr.N.K.Sutton / Mr. T. Cook	Mr.J.Harris
Kearsley (07913 121119)	Bolton Road Kearsley Lancs BL4 9DD	Contact Mrs.P.A.Grimshaw	Mr.D.Ormes	Mrs.P A Grimshaw
Keighley	Braithwaite Road Braithwaite Village Keighley BD22 6PX	Rev.C.Bank	Mr.M.Pepper	Mrs.K.Higgins
Kensington (020 7229 9340)	5 Pembridge Villas Kensington London W11 3EN		Mrs.L.F.Wells	Mr.D.R.A.Friend
Paisley	17 George Street Paisley PA1 2LB	Rev.J Dunion	Mr.CA.Macpherson	Mrs.W.Laing
Radcliffe	Stand Lane Radcliffe Manchester M26		Mrs H Eastwood	Mrs.M.Burton
Seaburn Dene, Sunderland	Shields Road Seaburn Dene, Sunderland SR6 8ND	Rev.B.R.Jarvis*	Mr.G.Nicholls	Mr. W.Griffiths

LIST OF SOCIETIES IN CONNECTION WITH THE GENERAL CONFERENCE
(For addresses and telephone numbers see Address List)

City, Town, etc.	Situation of Church	Minister or Lay Leader	Treasurer	Secretary
West Wickham (07534 702887)	142 High Street, West Wickham Kent BR4 0LZ	Mr.A.C.Misson	Mr.C.V.Skinner	Mr. D.E.Brooks
Mauritius	Remono Street, Curepipe Road and 2 Rue Champ de Lort Port Louis		Mr.R.Sookeeah	Mr.C.Phanjoo
* Retired Minister				

LIST OF GROUPS IN CONNECTION WITH THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

For address and telephone number of Secretary, please see address section.

City, Town, etc.	Usual Meeting Place	Minister or Lay Leader	Secretary or Contact Name	Usual Day and Time of meeting
Stockport	Members' homes		Mr.J.D.Lomax	Usually fortnightly

**SECRETARIES AND TREASURERS OF
NEW CHURCH INSTITUTIONS AND CONFERENCE COMMITTEES**

	Secretary	Treasurer
Area Councils:-		
North-West (Manchester)	Mrs.P.A.Grimshaw	Mr.J.E.Ford
Scottish Association	Mrs.N.Laidlaw	Mrs.R.Johnstone
Yorkshire & North-East	Mrs.J.E.Millar	
Broadfield Benevolent Fund	Mrs.E.Cunningham	Mrs.E.Cunningham
New Church College	Mrs.C.Mahmood	Mr.R.J.Nicholls
Committee for Auxiliary Ministry	Mrs.J.E.Millar	
Examining Board (College Education Committee)	Leader of Studies	
Home Worship Scheme	Rev.C.A.Bank (Organiser)	
Honorary Life Members	Ms.J.Z.Brooks	
Jeggins Trustees	Mrs.D.Mullock	
Kildwick Committee	Mr.K.Sandiford	Mr.K.Sandiford
Library & Archives Committee	Mrs.M.Hawkins	
Marketing and Resources	Mr.S.Russell-Lacy	Mr.N.K.Sutton
Ministers' Committee	Rev.C.A.Bank	
New Church Children's Society	Mrs.S.Chesworth	Mr.D.Thomas
New Church Historical Society	Mrs.M.Hawkins (Convenor)	Mrs.P.A.Grimshaw (Sec/Treas)
New Church Youth Association	Miss G Rowe	Mrs.P.A.Grimshaw
Overseas Secretary	Rev.N.Ryder	
Purley Chase Centre	Mr.M.D.Haseler	Mrs.S.Field
Swedenborg Society	Ms.D.Prentice (Admin)	Mr.A.Morley
Yorkshire Missionary Association	Mrs.J.Millar	

AREA COUNCILS

These Councils comprise a Secretary, a Treasurer and as many Ministers and Lay Members as are deemed necessary.

The numbers in brackets after the names of the Societies denote the number of representatives which the Society is entitled to send to the Annual Meeting of the Conference.

An asterisk indicates that the property of the Society is in Conference Trust.

North-West (Manchester)

Secretary: Mrs.P.A.Grimshaw

Treasurer: Mr.J.E.Ford

*Chester (2); *Kearsley (2); *Radcliffe (1);

Scottish Association

Ministers: Rev.R.A.Gill, Rev.J.Dunion

Secretary: Mrs.N.Laidlaw

Treasurer: Mrs.R.Johnstone

*Paisley (2)

Yorkshire and North-East

Minister: Rev.C.Bank, Rev.B.Jarvis

Secretary: Mrs.J.E.Millar

Treasurer:

*Bradford and Saltaire (2); *Dalton (2); *Keighley (2); *Seaburn Dene (2)