



# E-NEWS



## The General Conference of the New Church **News**

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### Maryse Emile: 30 October 1944 - 19th February 2019

Bruce Jarvis writes:

With the transition in February of Maryse Emile into the spiritual world, the New Jerusalem Church in Mauritius has “lost” another leading member and lifelong supporter. Her mother Danielle was the daughter of the Revd Cornelius Béchérel, an early Minister of the Church in Mauritius, who wrote the history of those pioneer years.

Maryse was born into the Emile clan. Henri and Danielle Emile had a family of nine children, one of whom died in infancy. Henri became a devoted member of the society and was a lay preacher. For a short period of time the family lived in a cottage in the grounds of the Port Louis New Jerusalem Church where Henri officiated and Danielle was the organist.

Maryse and a good number of her New Church contemporaries were greatly influenced by the ministry of the Revd Christopher Hasler, who served there from 1953 to 1960. Christopher’s energy and vitality, combined with his knowledge and love of the Scriptures and the Heavenly Doctrines, his weekly classes for young people and adult members and puppet shows, inspired a whole generation.

Maryse married and had a family of seven children. She was deeply affected by the tragic death of her youngest son in a road accident at the age of sixteen. Sadly the marriage did not last, and after the divorce she reverted

to her Emile family name. Her children have produced many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. After a period away from her church, she was glad to resume a close association with her “family”, and to serve her Lord in whatever way she could.



For several years Maryse was Secretary of the Church, and then from 2004 served for some eleven years as its President. When I went out there for a pastoral assignment in 2005 Maryse (and some others) gave me stalwart support. Nothing was too much trouble. She took considerable responsibility afterwards for the project to renovate and upgrade the Curepipe Church, which was rededicated in 2007. It was due in no small way to Maryse that the rededication service with an attendance of around 100 was organised in just six weeks after my return to the island.

On my second and third visits, Maryse continued that support with her customary wide smile, travelling by bus from her home, rain or shine, and enabling many things to happen quickly in the circumstances and in the limited time I was there. She was devoted to the New Jerusalem Church, working tirelessly for it, and nothing was too much trouble for her.

Now, after a period of declining health, she has left us, and entered the realm where the Lord provides an environment in which we can flourish as never before. The Lord bless you, Maryse. We thank you for your dedication and unstinting service.

Que la grâce de notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ soit avec vous tous. Amen.

## What's Happening on the Council?

David Haseler, Trustee, reports on the March meeting on behalf of the Council:

We arrived at Purley on a damp March morning, disappointed to find we had missed the best of the snowdrops but delighted to find a welcoming lunch.

Following his approval by both the Ministry and the Council, we were pleased to welcome Paul Morgan as an ordination student. Paul and his wife Muriel started coming to services at Purley a few years ago and have become regular attendees at the monthly service and other events.



Lee Differ will complete his course at the New Church College this Autumn. Prior to his ordination at Conference 2020, he will be carrying out an agreed programme of work within Conference and is investigating the possibility of studying for an external Master's degree in religion and philosophy.

The Council was pleased to learn that there are likely to be two nominations for Trustees (Council members) but the Council still lacks a Vice-Chair; we hope a nomination will be forthcoming.

Though we are sad to have lost two more Societies, Kensington and Greenhill, both churches have now been sold for a total of £7.2 million. This money will be invested and our overall income will be boosted bringing us into the black for the next few years, but a budget projection has shown we will again be in deficit by 2026. Sally Field, the Company Accountant, emphasised the need to develop new income streams in order to improve our long term financial stability.

The only church in Scotland at Paisley is also being sold for £170,000 with completion due in April.

We were pleased to confirm Rachel Gilsean as Manager of Purley Chase following her probationary period. Is it only 11 months since she joined us at Purley?

The Council agreed to give some financial support to the Gathering Leaves Assembly to be held at Purley in Summer 2020. The Assembly is a biennial meeting of women of all New Church denominations and we are pleased to welcome them back to the UK.

Health and Safety throughout Conference is the responsibility of the Council and we are grateful to Wilf Woodhouse for his work in ensuring that our Societies comply with all relevant legislation such as asbestos, legionnaires' disease, electrical regulations et cetera. He has recently identified that all our buildings, if already fitted with lightning conductors, should be subject to an inspection every 11 months by a qualified person. He will be contacting the relevant people about this.

The need for a future strategy was discussed. David Haseler pointed out that our objective as a charity was; '... disseminating the ... doctrines' and he asked whether there should be a new outreach team with this responsibility and whether there should be a regular agenda item for outreach. He suggested that, in the past, Societies and Ministers led on outreach, and that the Council ought to take on this responsibility in view of the reduction in numbers. After an interesting discussion, the feeling was that the role of the Council was to support growth and development rather than to initiate it. There were green shoots in the church and the Council reaffirmed its policy to support financially and morally new ideas that were brought forward by members. As an offshoot of this discussion, it was agreed that the Conference website should be refocused to help people searching for information about Swedenborg rather than as just a site to get organisational information.

These are the major items that were decided at the meeting but please don't think that we do little work. There were also 24 other matters discussed, some routine, some minor items and some matters of information. If you would like to find out more, why don't you read the whole minutes on <https://www.generalconference.org.uk/resources/council-minutes/>

We now look forward to our next meeting in May surrounded by the carpets of bluebells in the grounds.

## **You have got to be in it to win it!**

Carolyn Kennion writes:

Some people are already sure of getting a prize by entering the NCYA exhibition on the theme of 'Faith'. Have you sent in your entries yet? Please make sure that they reach Pauline Grimshaw by April 30th at the latest.

REMEMBER all entrants receive a small prize and all entries will be displayed at the NCYA AGM day in June at Kearsley and at Conference in July at Swanwick. Last year we were delighted to receive Seaburn Dene's own creative interpretation of the theme, so if you prefer to use your imagination to create a piece of work about 'Faith' rather than the sheets provided, that is great. Entries from adults as well as children are welcome.

