



E-News



The General Conference of the New Church

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paul.crone@generalconference.org.uk

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Rise and Shine Radio Show

Revd Jack Dunion broadcasts his own online radio show every Sunday at 9am on Lomond Radio (formerly River Radio):
<https://lomondradio.co.uk/shows/rise-and-shine>

The link below allows you to catchup Rise & Shine programs:
www.mixcloud.com/RevJack/



Online Bible Study

Revd Becky Jarratt is again leading an Online Bible Study session on Tuesday 14th January from 7.30 to 8.45pm. It will be looking at another passage from the Epistle of James, how it fits in with Swedenborgian teaching and their relevance in our lives today. There will be plenty of scope for questions and discussions in breakout groups.

If you are planning to attend, please contact Jan Millar at jan.millar@generalconference.org.uk and you will be sent the appropriate link. If you are interested in attending future meetings, but are not

available on Tuesdays, please let Jan know as alternative meetings may be arranged to accommodate those who are interested but not available on this date.

Jan Millar, CAM co-ordinator

Online Film Club Invitation - Wednesday 22nd



Join us for an online film club!

Enjoy watching The Hunchback of Notre Dame in advance, then come together to discuss the lessons to be learnt from it – led by Lynne Griffiths!

Starting at 7pm we'll have a short introduction, before being split into small groups for discussion, and then maybe a fun quiz at the end! Aimed at those aged 13+, but all are welcome to participate. The film can be found on Disney+ to stream or Apple TV to rent.

If you wish to join but are unable to access the film please contact the YPC at YPC@generalconference.org.uk Sign up for the evening of discussion using the following link: <https://forms.gle/6Tfw2262RtqeYHER7>

Proxy Votes at the AGM

For some years now, since the Companies Act 2006, Conference Members have had the legal right to appoint a Proxy to attend General Meetings on their behalf. Intimation of this facility has been given in the Preliminary Notice of the AGM, usually circulated in late January.

The Council has become aware of certain anomalies which arise with this introduction of Proxies. In particular Proxy Voting does not sit comfortably with our Articles of Association. In order to resolve these anomalies, we have on several occasions needed to turn to the Conference solicitor for legal advice. Because of the complexities involved in applying the requirements of the Companies Acts to a religious charity, the solicitor has

had further consultations with other colleagues. We have now received their considered legal opinion and, basing our decision on that opinion, we are able to announce the terms on which Proxy Voting will operate within the General Conference as from the 2025 AGM.

The Conference's Articles of Association make it quite clear that, of those attending General Meetings, only Voting Members have the right to speak and vote (Article 9). The Conference solicitor has therefore advised that, whilst all Members have the right to appoint a Proxy to attend General Meetings, **only the Proxies of Voting Members are entitled to speak and vote**. Members ought not to assume that because their name appears on the Central Membership Register, or on the Register of a Conference Society, they are automatically Voting Members. This is not the case and, in order to avoid confusion, Article 9 clearly lists all the categories of Voting Members as follows:

All Ministers recognised by the Conference;

Honorary Life Members;

Lay Members of the Council;

Any Member if appointed as a Representative by a Society (see Rule B5) or as an additional Society Member (see Article 9{h});

Representatives of Groups in connection with Conference (see Rule B6) and Area Councils (see Rule B7).

In addition, a maximum of twenty-five Members (who are not members of any Society or Group) may be appointed as Voting Members.

Any Member who wishes to appoint a Proxy, with the right to speak and vote on their behalf at a General Meeting, must therefore themselves first meet the requirements of a Voting Member in one of the categories above. Once appointed as a Voting Member they may then apply for a Proxy Vote rather than attend the meeting in person. Whilst Company Law permits any competent adult to act as a Proxy, it is clearly preferable for a Proxy to be someone with a working knowledge of the General Conference who also subscribes to our Pledge of Commitment. For this reason, it is strongly recommended that anyone appointed as a Proxy should be a current Member of The General Conference of the New Church in Great Britain.

Proxy Application Forms will be circulated to all Members along with the Preliminary Notice of the AGM in late January. The forms can also be downloaded from the Conference website or obtained by post from the Company Secretary. As all Voting Members must sign the Conference Roll before being eligible to speak and vote (Rule C1), those who wish to appoint a Proxy will be asked to sign the Conference Pledge of Commitment on the Application Form. The Companies Act requires that all applications for the appointment of a Proxy must be in the hands of the Company Secretary not later than 48 hours before the commencement of the AGM. However, because the closing date for Conference bookings

is approximately two months before the meeting, we strongly advise that applications for a Proxy vote should be in the hands of the Company Secretary by the end of May.

The appointment of a Proxy may be terminated by the Voting Member in writing no later than 48 hours prior to the meeting (or adjourned meeting). On receipt of a valid termination of a Proxy's appointment the Voting Member will be re-instated with the right to speak and vote in person.

Voting Members who appoint a Proxy are strongly advised to give instructions as to how their chosen Proxy must vote on each issue. In order to facilitate this a "Voting Instructions" form will be sent to the Proxy applicant by the Company Secretary along with the Proof Reports and Balance Sheet not less than three weeks before the AGM. With regard to every matter to come before the meeting the applicant may choose one of the following options:

- 1) In Favour
- 2) Against
- 3) Abstain.

Once completed, copies of the "Voting Instructions" form should be sent to the appointed Proxy and the Company Secretary to arrive no later than 48 hours before the meeting.

No-one who exercises the right to vote in General Meetings may remain anonymous and all Voting Members have their names recorded and published in the Conference Yearbook. Only in secret ballots is anonymity respected. These requirements apply also to those who choose to appoint a Proxy to speak and vote on their behalf. In addressing the meeting, a Proxy should inform the Chairperson of the name of the person on whose behalf they are speaking.

In order to embody the provisions for Proxy Voting in our constitution, resolutions will be submitted by the Council to the 2025 AGM proposing further additions to the Articles of Association and Rules.

The Council is fully aware that these arrangements add further complications to our already labyrinthine constitution. Resolving all the issues involved has required much patience as well as careful attention to detail. Our thanks must go to the Conference Solicitor whose speedy responses to our many enquiries have been invaluable. We believe that these arrangements for Proxy Voting are compliant with the requirements of Company Law whilst, at the same time, upholding the long held religious objects of The General Conference of the New Church.

(Prepared by the Constitution Revision Group on behalf of the Conference Council)

Margaret L Cowie, Chairperson
Natalie Welch, Company Secretary

Angel Quotes Request

Margaret Presland and Carolyn Kennion Write:

I hope that, over the Christmas period, you have enjoyed once again the Bible passages about the Lord's birth on earth. As the story is recounted in the first two chapters of Luke and Matthew, angels feature in most of the events described. The Angel Gabriel is named as the one foretelling the birth of John to Zechariah and the birth of Jesus to Mary. Unnamed angels give the good news to Joseph and the shepherds, and later on an angel instructs Joseph on how to keep the baby Jesus safe from Herod. It may also have been an angel who warned the magi in a dream not to return to Herod.



Of course angels also appear in many other Bible stories. Perhaps one of the best known is that of Jacob's dream, with angels ascending and descending a stairway from heaven to earth. You may recall the stories of Balaam and the angel, or of Abram's three angelic visitors announcing that Sarai would give birth to a son in her old age. The Book of Revelation contains several very striking descriptions of angels. In many Bible stories angels announce news or protect people from danger.

In addition to the Bible we are very blessed to have Swedenborg's descriptions and explanations about angels which contain so much information about their origin, purpose, nature, appearances and uses etc.

We wonder if you have one or more favourite passages from the Writings about angels that you would like to share with others? Or is there a particular Bible story with angels that is especially meaningful for you?

If so, please let us know so that they can be included in the Festival Of Angels later this year.

Margaret Presland and Carolyn Kennion contact details are in the Conference Directory or email angelsfestival@generalconference.org.uk

The Church of the New Jerusalem, Snodland, Kent. UK

Mr Jeremy Hayes writes:

The 151st Annual Session of the General Conference of the New Church [was] held in Snodland between 23rd & 26th June 1958. I am myself a "New-Churchman" as we were taught to call ourselves (rather than "Swedenborgian"!) while attending church & Sunday School sessions between 1957-1963 (age 5-11) & I was baptised there, with my elder brother Jon (we were aged 7 & 11 respectively) on 17th May 1959. The church closed in the late 1980's but I'm still here as are my grandchildren (the 7th generation, so to be).

A number of Facebook groups cover Snodland & one, "Old Photos of Snodland" received an interesting post a couple of days ago. It was from a John Moxon who for 17 years has owned a German vintage car called a "VW Karmann Ghia Coupe" & he has discovered that a couple, the Rev Othmar Tobisch & his wife, Margrit, used the car to tour Europe in June 1958, culminating in a visit to Snodland & attendance of the 151st Conference being held there. The Rev Tobisch is reported as saying that the car caused a great deal of interest wherever it went & Mr Moxon wonders if there were any photographs taken of it during the 151st Conference. So, we'd be grateful if you could take a look for us but only, of course, at your absolute convenience.

Many thanks, Jerry Hayes.

PS: I think I remember another Conference being held in Snodland in 1963 which coincided with the opening of our new Sunday School Hall. The church is now a house & the hall a nursery. A couple of Christmas Eve's ago the present owner tolled the bell - it still works!

To contact Jerry Hayes, please email paul.crone@generalconference.org.uk

Upcoming Events

Thursday 9 th January	Online Discussion-Environmental Ethics
Tuesday 14 th	Online Bible Study
Sunday 19 th January	NCYA Children's Day
Wednesday 22 nd January	Film Club
24-26 th January	Seaburn Dene Working Party
Saturday 1 st February	Walk & Talk at Fountains Abbey
20 th -23 rd February	Febru-rally for 13-18 year olds Wellspring House
Saturday 26 th April	Daytrip to Flamingo Land Theme Park
Full details	www.generalconference.org.uk/new-church-events/