



E-Read



The General Conference of the New Church **Articles and Letters**

About Us

To find out more about The General Conference of the New Church, including the locations of our Churches, visit our web site at:
www.generalconference.org.uk

Contributions

If you would like to contribute a letter or article to future issues of E-Read, please send it via email to:
paul.crone@generalconference.org.uk

Please note that publication is at the discretion of our spiritual leadership.

Share E-Read

Feel free to print and share this publication.

Sign up

Sign up for E-Read and E-News email notifications at:
www.generalconference.org.uk/signup/

Local News

View local Church newsletters at:
www.generalconference.org.uk/resources/newsletters/

Home Worship

To download the latest Home Worship material please visit:
www.generalconference.org.uk/resources/home-worship/

To subscribe via email, please sign up:
www.generalconference.org.uk/hwsignup

Donations

E-Read and E-News are provided completely free of charge.

If you would like to donate to support this ongoing resource, please do so here:

<https://www.generalconference.org.uk/resources/donations>

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:
<https://www.mixcloud.com/RevJack/>



Husbandry and The New Church

Revd David Gaffney writes:

The question I ask—and would invite you to reflect upon—is this: How do practices such as woodcraft, husbandry, the use of natural materials for tooling where possible, and organic small holdings serve the principles of the New Church? While I realise that materialistic interests and entrenched societal habits have enormous inertia, here are a few thoughts about how such approaches to life may serve New Church principles in several significant—and deeply

spiritual—ways. Note that, while the spiritual rationale is primary, these practices are also likely to benefit our environment in ways that reflect the harmonious correspondences between spiritual and natural order ([Divine Providence 322](#)).

Stewardship and Divine Order

The New Church teaches that all of nature is created according to divine order and that it sustains life through correspondences—natural things representing spiritual realities ([Heaven and Hell 108](#); [Divine Love and Wisdom 322](#)). Carefully tending the land and using materials respectfully honour this order and acknowledge the Lord as the source of all good. Practicing stewardship through woodcraft and husbandry is an example of the responsibility given to humanity to wisely care for creation—protecting and managing it as an expression of spiritual stewardship ([Arcana Coelestia 776, 217](#)).

Usefulness and Service (Charity in Action)

At the heart of New Church thought is usefulness, or serving others with love. Small-scale husbandry and woodcraft provide tangible goods—food, shelter, tools, furnishings—enhancing the wellbeing of families and communities. The care taken in using organic, sustainable, or local materials demonstrates charity by minimising harm and sharing resources equitably, which are essential forms of neighbourly love ([The Doctrine of Life for the New Jerusalem 11](#); [Heaven and Hell 112](#)).

Living Simply and Moderately

Modest living, moderation, and gratitude are frequently emphasised in New Church teachings ([True Christian Religion 444](#)). Making and mending with natural materials rather than relying on excess, wasteful, or artificial goods reflects the spiritual discipline of contentment, humility, and reflectiveness. Such practices foster receptivity to spiritual blessing and help guard against distraction by materialism.

External Works Reflecting Inner Spiritual Life

According to New Church doctrine, all actions in the natural world, when done from a good motive, can be acts of worship ([Arcana Coelestia 3934](#)). Woodcraft, husbandry, and making tools from natural materials take on spiritual significance when done for useful purposes and with gratitude to the Lord. These outward activities become vessels for spiritual good, as they reflect the inward union—sometimes described as the "marriage of love and wisdom," meaning the harmony of true intention (love) and right understanding (wisdom) ([Heaven and Hell 370](#)).

Correspondence Between Nature and Spiritual Life

In New Church thought, working with wood, soil, animals, and useful tools corresponds to cultivating spiritual life within us: trees represent affections and truths ([Arcana Coelestia 2722](#)); fields symbolise the mind's capacity for goodness and truth ([Arcana Coelestia 913](#)); and husbandry corresponds to the process of preparing, sowing, and harvesting, which spiritually signifies repentance, regeneration, and growth.

Community and Continuity of Goodness

These practical crafts are often undertaken within the context of families or communities, reminiscent of the church's most ancient forms ([Arcana Coelestia 471](#)). They build bonds of cooperation, humble appreciation, and a shared commitment to the Lord's uses, nurturing both social charity and the ongoing preservation of goodness. The church itself is described as a communion or society of those in good and truth ([Heaven and Hell 41](#)), so working together in service reflects this internal nature of the church.

Summary:

Woodcraft, husbandry, and the use of natural materials in small organic holdings express New Church principles through modelling stewardship of creation, usefulness, charity, moderation, and the outer reflection of the inner spiritual life. By honouring divine order in nature and meeting real needs through responsible, sustainable practices, these activities correspond with and support the deeper work of spiritual regeneration and the establishment of heaven on earth ([Divine Providence 322](#); [Arcana Coelestia 776, 217](#)).

Rev. D. Gaffney, August '25