



E-News



The General Conference of the New Church

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/

Send Us Your News

If you have any news that you would like to share in a future issue of E-News, please send it via email to:
paul.crone@generalconference.org.uk

Share E-News

Feel free to print and share this publication.

Sign up!

Sign up for E-News and E-Read 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 here:
www.generalconference.org.uk/resources/home-worship/

Donations

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

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

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:
www.mixcloud.com/RevJack/



Want a short time to pray together with other New Church people?

Some time ago the Ministers and Conference Council members joined to pray together once a month for the future of the New Church.

Now a 20-minute prayer time led by Rev. Gillian Gordon before the zoom service once a month will be open to all. There will be a short welcome and quote from the Bible then it is time for anyone who wishes

to pray about anything in their hearts and minds to do so. But there is no pressure for anyone to say anything at all as it is meant as an opportunity to be with others sharing fellowship with the Lord together. All prayers will be confidential and would be from 3.00 to 3.20 to allow time to go over to the zoom service.

Details about how to join in will be advertised soon and the first prayer time will start at 3.00 until 3.20 before the 22nd March service.

The late John Cunningham – an Appreciation

Revd Bruce Jarvis writes:



John was one of four sons born to Marjorie and Harold Smith – Geoffrey, Donald, and twins Peter and John. John's twin died earlier in 2025, and for a short time John was the only survivor of the four Cunningham brothers. Born in 1933, John grew up in the shadow of the impending WW2. The Smith family lived in Southend-on-Sea, but decided to evacuate to the village of Walton-in-Trent, near Burton-on-Trent. Father Harold died suddenly aged only 40, leaving Marjorie to manage life with her four sons. Life included occasional visits to Derby New Church, 15 miles away, where friendships were established. The family returned home to Southend in 1945. In 1950, Harold Smith's branch of the family decided to change their surname to Cunningham, which was a family name. In 1954 Marjorie married Harold

Morley of Derby New Church. Alas, Harold died in 1958. The boys were all becoming independent, and Marjorie gradually became involved in Church life beyond Southend. Some readers may well remember her serving as housekeeper and cook for a number of the Holiday Centres organised by the British New Church Federation.

In his younger years, John became a leading member of the Federation (the national organisation linking together youth groups run in our local churches), and served it for many years. Like his older brothers, John developed his financial skills, and these made him an excellent long-term Treasurer of the Federation through the 1960s and 70s. He was also for many years a key member of the Holiday Centre Committee organising these annual holidays.

Out in the world, he was employed by the Commercial Union Insurance Company, and he remained with them throughout his career, specialising in claims, and worked on beyond



normal retirement age. He was generous in using his expertise and time to advise friends how best to deal with tricky insurance matters. He was a Fellow of the Chartered Insurance Institute.

John's service to the New Church found many outlets. Succeeding his brother Geoffrey, he became Treasurer of the New Church College in 1973, and served on their Council until 1982. His love for the New Church and its Teachings meant that he had a special place in his heart for the Swedenborg Society. He served on their Council for many years, as Chairman for a while, and then as President. He was a man of

many parts with a very practical side to him, so in his retirement years he would regularly travel to London from his home in Hadleigh, Suffolk, often carrying lengths of timber and a bag of tools to carry out repairs around the premises. He wasn't bothered by strange looks from fellow travellers on the Underground! A course in upholstery gave him the skills to restore the original Sadgrove oak ladderback chairs in the Hall, along with other odd jobs around the premises.

Similarly, he had a great love for the Church's Centre at Purley Chase. Over many years he travelled to Purley, often staying for several days, to carry out maintenance work. One of his early projects was to plant a small orchard to the side of the House, which, alas, had to be sacrificed when the Centre was extended. Another significant contribution was to plant a hedge along the otherwise unmarked eastern boundary of the Centre, which has matured beautifully over the years, and very definitely indicates the extent of our property. He acquired the skill to layer the hedge as it grew taller by taking a hedgelaying course.

In 1974 John married Susan (née Ayre) and they settled in Hadleigh, Suffolk. Sadly, the marriage did not last, but John maintained a loving relationship with his daughter Carolyn. Her three children, and lately the next generation, have given John great delight. On his side of the family, his brothers and their families also meant a great deal to him. Beyond family, there was no limit to his friendships, scattered around the country and abroad, particularly in Australia where he made annual visits over several years and attended the Church's summer camps. Many of us have heard our phones ring in the evening, and there was John's voice telling us of his latest ventures. His generosity has been hinted at, and this has shown up especially in recent years when he undertook to sponsor a medical student from Kashmir – Prakash. Their affectionate relationship has continued after Prakash completed his medical training, and entered general practice. John was truly delighted with Prakash's achievements.

John was both a promoter of New Church Teachings and an ecumenist. He was never shy about telling people of his Swedenborgian background and religious faith. His favourite

quotation from the Writings was the famous extract from the Doctrine of Life 1: *All religion has relation to life, and the life of religion is to do good*. But he never rammed it down anyone's throat, and believed that people of good intentions and sincerity would be welcomed by the Lord. He formed many connections in Hadleigh, and was a familiar sight, when he could no longer drive, pushing his wheelbarrow loaded with tools and materials to take on repair jobs at local churches. Again, he took a course to gain the knowledge needed to rebuild and re-point the wall round the churchyard. When Brightlingsea New Church closed, he found a happy home with the people at the United Reformed Church in Hadleigh, where he gave a talk on his religious faith, and at the Parish Church.

He was crossing a road a few months ago coming back from one of his projects when a motorist clipped his heel and sent John tumbling to the ground. This put him out of action for quite a long time, and included several weeks in hospital. He never quite recovered his full *joie de vivre*, and required help with daily life. A short illness put him back in hospital where he slipped out of this natural world on December 16th at the age of 92 years.

All who have known John will feel a sense of loss of a warm, kindly, generous human being. But we can be sure that John will have responded enthusiastically to the Lord's call, and will be enjoying the company of many friends, old and new. The Lord's words to the disciples, recorded in Matthew 25, surely apply to a man who has indeed sought to serve his Lord and Master.

*"Well done, good and faithful servant!
You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much.
Enter into the joy of your master."*

Festival of Angels video and discussion on Zoom

Sunday 1st February 3.30pm - Festival of Angels video and discussion on Zoom.

If you wish to join the session but are not on the list for Zoom services please email:
onlineworship@generalconference.org.uk

Mr Alan Bowie

We need to report that another long-standing member of the General Conference has recently passed into the spiritual world. Mr. Alan Bowie of the Paisley Society passed on the evening of the 14th January. Alan had been residing in Ashdene Court Care Home in Crieff for the past few years suffering from the progressive neurodegenerative disorder we know as Parkinson's.

Alan's funeral service will take place at Perth Crematorium on Crieff Road on Friday 6th Feb. at 1.30pm. The family will then receive guests at the Huntingtower Hotel, also on Crieff Road, after the service.

Upcoming Events

26 th January	<u>Meet The Minister</u>
1 st February	<u>Festival of Angels video</u>
9 th February	<u>An Introduction To Logopraxis</u>
23 rd February	<u>Meet The Minister</u>
25 th January	<u>Zoom service of worship – Revd Lynne Griffiths</u>
8 th February	<u>Zoom service of worship – Revd Becky Jarratt</u>
22 nd February	<u>Zoom service of worship – Revd Brian Talbot</u>
14 th March 10am-4pm	<u>Adventure into Lower Earth – Wellspring House</u>
26 th March	<u>Meet The Minister</u>
27-29 th March	<u>Declutter & Discover - Purley Chase</u>
7-10 th April	<u>13-18 Easter Rally - West End Outdoor Centre</u>
24 th April	<u>Meet The Minister</u>
18 th April 10am-4pm	<u>Angels - Discovering the gifts they bring -Wellspring</u>
9 th May 10am-4pm	<u>Sex & Gender Workshop - Wellspring House</u>

Full details www.generalconference.org.uk/new-church-events/