

DNC - July 2026

DERBY SOCIETY of the NEW CHURCH NEWSLETTER



Hello again.

I wonder how you have been coping with this exceptionally hot weather. I'm sure many of you have struggled to stay cool and to sleep. I think most of us aren't made for such intense heat.

Lord Jesus Christ, our Heavenly Father,
We have seen the strength and intensity of the
sun lately, which reminds us of the strength and
intensity of your love for us.

We ask that we are always able to feel your
loving care over us each and
every day. For yours is the love that never fails,
the wisdom that never errs,
and the power that brings every rolling heart
home.
Amen



Unripe Fruit

When I was a lad, at this time of the year, I joined friends in games of cricket. The 'pitch' had football played on it in the winter months so the cricket ball could shoot along the floor or bounce up into your face. One of our group went and scrumped apples from a nearby orchard. The apples were small and sour and served only our thirst at best. Later in life, the thief became a policeman!

The soft fruits like strawberries, raspberries, blackcurrants and the like have been ripe for picking for a couple of weeks. The hard fruits like apples and pears are still ripening.

All fruits correspond to good deeds in life. When we start to try to 'love our neighbours as ourselves', we don't find it easy. It can often interfere with pleasing ourselves.

Certainly, when I started in medical practice, I found myself dealing with people whose attitudes I didn't like. Yet, I realised that they were entitled to my best attention as much as the people that I did like.

This, it seems to me, is the difference between unripe and ripe fruit. Even my friend, the scrumper, must have seen this in the end!

By Geoffrey



When the Lord Opens a Door Within

A friend recently shared something that has stayed with me.

Soon after his seventy-sixth birthday, he awoke early one morning with what he could only describe as a profound revelation. Looking back over more than sixty years, he suddenly saw a connection that had never occurred to him before.

As a boy, he had moved from a happy, loving primary school into a secondary school that he found deeply frightening. Teachers shouted. The slipper and the cane were never far away. Whenever an angry voice demanded, “Who did that?”, his immediate, silent response was always the same: It wasn’t me! It wasn’t me!

He kept his fear entirely to himself.

Soon afterwards he was admitted to hospital for a routine tonsil operation. Today it would probably mean a day or two in hospital, but in the early 1960s it meant almost a week in hospital followed by several weeks recuperating at home. For nearly a month he did not have to return to the school that terrified him.

As he reflected on this memory, another thought came with remarkable clarity. Somewhere, deep beyond his conscious awareness, he seemed to have learned a simple lesson: when life becomes too overwhelming, illness provides an escape.

He believes that this hidden pattern influenced his response to adversity throughout much of his adult life, contributing to repeated periods of serious illness. Whether or not we would explain every aspect in quite the same way is perhaps less important than the question his experience raises.

Why did he see this only now?

Swedenborg offers a perspective that I find deeply hopeful. He teaches that regeneration is not simply about becoming more knowledgeable or more outwardly religious. It is the Lord’s lifelong work of opening our interiors, gently bringing our outward life into harmony with the heavenly life He is creating within us.

Much of what we acquire during life is not our true self. Fears, assumptions and habitual ways of responding to life can become so familiar that we mistake them for who we really are. Yet Swedenborg teaches that the Lord patiently works to distinguish what merely clings to us from what genuinely belongs to us. He never forces this process. He reveals only what we are ready to recognise and freely lay aside.

Seen in that light, my friend’s early morning revelation becomes something much more than an interesting psychological insight. It may itself be evidence that regeneration has quietly reached another stage.

After more than sixty years, the Lord allowed him to see a hidden pattern that had long worked below the level of consciousness. Once brought into the light, it no longer needs to govern from the shadows. It can be acknowledged, reflected upon and entrusted to the Lord.

Swedenborg tells us that angels are not made by acquiring extraordinary gifts. They become angels because, little by little, everything that is opposed to heavenly love is recognised and relinquished. The more this happens, the more transparent a person becomes to the Lord's life.

Perhaps that is why genuinely spiritual people often seem increasingly simple as they grow older. There is less pretence, less self-protection and less armour. They become easier to know because they are becoming more truly themselves.

Those who know my friend will recognise this. Throughout his life he has quietly devoted himself to helping others. Yet I cannot help wondering whether this new insight will make that ministry even deeper. As hidden burdens lose their hold, the qualities that heaven has been quietly forming within him - patience, compassion, gentleness and genuine presence - are able to shine with greater freedom.

Perhaps this is one of the Lord's quietest miracles. He does not merely show us something about ourselves. He shows us ourselves so that we may become more fully the person He has always intended us to be.

And as that happens, we not only find greater freedom ourselves. We become more able to bring something of heaven into the lives of those around us.

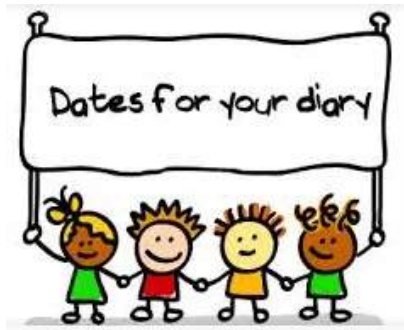
By an anonymous contributor





Derby Weekend

This will be held on 2nd - 4th October for Derby Weekend at Purley Chase. Please book through the [Purley Chase website](#)



July

12th - Service led by Nigel Sutton

Flowers - Penny

Refreshments - Jane and Chris

26th - Service led by David Haseler

August

9th - Service led by Liz

23rd - Service led by Rev David Gaffney

Do let us know if you have something you would like to share in the next issue.

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