



E-News



The General Conference of the New Church

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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/



Youth and Family

Revd Lynne Griffiths writes:

The Youth and family team is always trying new ways to connect and reach out to young people and young adults and if your young person was at May Family Weekend you may have seen a copy of the new newssheet "Roundup". Roundup details activities and events held by the Youth and Family Team, information that may be helpful to young people about other resources, chosen verses from the Word and information about New Church beliefs. It is aimed at young people of secondary school age and

upwards. Our next copy will be compiled at the end of the Summer and will feature feedback from the 2 summer camps as well as the usual information mentioned above. We intend to have roundup available online but would also like to email copies directly to young people and young adults where possible. If you would like your young person or you yourself are a young adult, then please email us advising you would like copies sent electronically and we will add you to the mailing list. Emails should be sent to

youth.family@generalconference.org.uk

A 'Thank You'

Lynda Habgood writes:

To the folks at Conference who signed a lovely Get Well card for me, very many thanks for your kindness. I appreciated the card very much, and also the lovely Memorial Notices for my late Husband Garth.

With my thanks and blessings,

Lynda Habgood.

The Scarecrows are Coming!

Carolyn Kennion writes:

Kearsley Sunday School have started preparations for their display at the local Scarecrow Festival which will be held over the weekend of 19th and 20th September.

As you can see it involves a washing machine box and LOTS of green paint! Can you guess which Bible story we will be showing?

Find out by visiting the festival - we would love to see you.
Or look out for photos in Enews.





Impressions of the 2026 Annual Meeting of the General Conference

Karin Baynes writes:

This is the first time I've attended this useful event, and I did so in my capacity as a trained spiritual caregiver. I was invited to share my experience of the national gathering, and I feel I can do so from a warm reflective space. After the busyness and business of the AGM, I found it helpful to consider the effect of our programme as a whole experience. I really enjoyed it!

As a member of both the General Church and General Conference in the UK, I'm keen on fostering relations and collaboration between us. I was heartened to discover that both organisations seem more receptive to new ways of moving forward, following individual periods of change and consolidation. The overwhelming support for Purley Chase in the AGM indicative vote on non-church buildings, may help secure a much-loved base for our growing Swedenborgian family. I certainly hope so!

What really stood out for me was the opportunity created by the *Brave Spaces* initiative, to discuss challenging spiritual and business priorities in small groups. Church leadership created safe spaces with communication guidelines and then facilitated the discussions. This kind of approach is effective and I welcome it. I found the 'Ministers Panel' session gentle and enlightening too. Thank you to those who put personal spiritual questions to the supportive team. It felt as though participants in these settings were comfortable to be vulnerable.

It was interesting to see how the ministry built on the key church aims in their talks, and how they invited and welcomed audience feedback. I loved the variety of worship styles to

choose from, both traditional and more embodied. As always, the music and singing in our New Church family is uplifting – even when the songs are not familiar to me! Children are welcomed and encouraged to join in, both spiritually and personally. Their opinions and those of young adults were a joy.

The business day proceeded in an orderly and timely fashion, with relevant information posted on the notice board beforehand. Changes to the Articles and Rules were approved by members and a new look Council was duly elected. A full house with continuity as well as first-time servers, with Barry Friend as Chair. Congratulations to you all as active custodians of the General Conference over the coming period. A clear presentation on safeguarding reminded us that we all need to be vigilant.

I'd personally like to thank our attending employees from outside of the New Church who are part of our spiritual family now. Their professional mind sets and caring attention to detail are such an asset to our inward and outward facing vision. As a newcomer to our UK communities myself, I'm aware of the time and commitment it takes to integrate into our historically established environments. You are so welcome and thank you!

Finally, I took every opportunity to enjoy a one-to-one conversation with many of you. Like Purley, The Hayes lends itself to quiet spaces, and the programme breaks allowed room to breathe. The All-Age Social, activities for children, football church and free time for all family members, helped to create our own special sphere amidst a larger Chinese Christian community – everyone was having fun! I hope to get the opportunity to engage more fully with *Journey into Lower Earth* at Wellspring House.

Thank you to Barry and the dedicated team who made this AGM a memorable one. Great to put some names to faces and connect with those I usually see on Zoom. I'd love to come again. Inspired by how people present their personal interests and ministries, I feel encouraged to speak up too! May we continue to look upwards to the Lord, to guide our inner spiritual journeys and outer work. Always holding in high regard, Swedenborg's Writings and our doctrinal teachings.

Karin Baynes

Karin Baynes is a trained & supervised spiritual director with the Bath & Wells Diocese of the Church of England. She's a Logopraxis practitioner and a SOLCe tutor on the topic of spiritual rebirth. Contact details: karinbaynes@outlook.com

Richard Cawood

The Conference Council would like to advise that Richard Cawood has tendered his resignation as Marketing and Media Coordinator. His employment will conclude on Thursday 20 August 2026, and he will be taking leave for the remainder of his notice period.

We thank Richard for his work during his time with us and wish him all the best for the future.

The Council is currently working on securing support to handle any unfinished marketing and media matters. Additionally, we have agreed with the web developers that they will continue moving forward with the website project.

Mrs. Pamela Ryder

The Conference Council wish to announce that the funeral of the late Mrs. Pamela Ryder will take place on Friday, 11th September 2026, at Chester Crematorium, Blacon Avenue, Blacon, Chester, CH1 5BB, at 12:00 noon. The service will be led by the Revd. Christine Bank. All members and friends are warmly invited to attend.

Following the service, attendees are invited to gather at Upton-by-Chester Golf Club, Upton Lane, Upton, Chester, CH2 1EE

Please feel free to circulate this information to anybody who you think would like to know but who may not see this announcement.



Same-sex marriage within General Conference of the New Church

The Committee of Ministers is pleased to announce the result of the recent confidential ballot of church members on the question:

Should there be provision within The General Conference of the New Church for same-sex couples to be married?

Of the **310 ballot papers** sent to members, **146 were returned**, with **142 valid votes**.

The result was:

YES – 104 votes (73%)

NO – 30 votes (21%)

NO OPINION – 8 votes (6%)

The Committee of Ministers met on 10 August to consider the result. The outcome will now be presented to **Conference Council for consideration and ratification at its meeting on 8 September 2026**.

The Committee of Ministers has also begun work on the practical arrangements that would be required for the provision of same-sex marriage within General Conference. This includes considering legal and practical requirements, as well as the process for Ministers and licensed marriage celebrants who at this time, feel called to conduct same-sex marriages. Further work will take place over the coming months as we prayerfully consider how these arrangements can be put into practice.

We are grateful to everyone who participated in the consultation and ballot and for the thoughtful and prayerful way in which members have engaged with this important matter.

We ask for your continued prayers as we move forward together with wisdom, charity and respect for the different perspectives held within our church.

**With every blessing,
The Committee of Ministers**

Assistant Manager at Purley Chase Centre

The Conference Council is delighted to announce that Sarah Chetwynd has been appointed as the new Assistant Manager of the Purley Chase Centre. Sarah officially started her employment with us on Monday 10th August 2026. She brings a wealth of enthusiasm and capability to the role and we are thrilled to welcome her to our team.

As Assistant Manager, Sarah will be supporting the Manager, Amanda Phillips, at the Centre, assisting with day-to-day operations, supporting our community, and helping to drive forward the vital mission and values of the Purley Chase Centre.

Over the coming weeks, Sarah will be completing her initial induction and training while working alongside Amanda to support the day-to-day running of the Centre.

Please join us in giving Sarah a very warm New Church welcome and supporting both her and Amanda as this new management team settles in.

We are greatly excited for this next chapter at the Purley Chase Centre with Sarah on board and we look forward to the positive impact she will bring to the community.



Hi I'm Sarah the new assistant manager I have worked in the hospitality industry for over 30 years from pot wash to head chef to assistant manager I'm so excited to join Purley and make it an awesome place to come.

Upcoming Events

23 rd August	<u>Online Service led by Revd Lynn Griffiths</u>
29 th August	<u>Divine Sex - Wellspring House</u>
4 th -6 th September	<u>New Forest Family Bunkhouse Weekend</u>
4 th -6 th September	<u>Swedenborg Weekend - Purley Chase</u>
13 th September	<u>Online Service led by Revd Brian Talbot</u>
19 th September	<u>Where am I headed after I die? - Wellspring House</u>
19-20 th September	<u>Kearsley Scarecrow Festival</u>
2 nd -4 th October	<u>Derby Weekend - Purley Chase</u>
5 th October	<u>Autumn Fellowship - Purley Chase</u>
9 th October	<u>A Space Apart - Purley Chase</u>
30 th October	<u>November Family Weekend - Purley Chase</u>
31 st October	<u>Divine Providence - Wellspring House</u>
14 th November	<u>Voyage of Discovery - Wellspring House</u>
12 th December	<u>Angels – Discovering the gifts they bring - Wellspring House</u>

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