



Established  
1818

# CHURCH on the HILL

## **Re: Exonerated: The Boston Church of the New Jerusalem, Inc. Church on the Hill (Swedenborgian) Boston, Massachusetts**

Rev. G. Steven Ellis,  
Senior Pastor  
140 Bowdoin Street, Beacon Hill  
Boston, MA 02108

To Whom this May Concern,

Blessed is he whose help is God, whose hope is in the Lord his God, the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them—the Lord, who remains faithful forever.

*Psalm 146:5-6*

Peace has in it confidence in the Lord—that He governs all things, and provides all things, and leads to a good end.

*Swedenborg*

I, Reverend G. Steven Ellis, minister of the Boston Society of the New Jerusalem, Inc. for 23 years, on behalf of the Boston Society of the New Jerusalem, Inc. ("Church"), wish to report to you that the Church has prevailed in the unfortunate civil litigation that was brought against the Church and two of its members by the General

Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America, Inc. ("General Convention"), The Massachusetts Association of the New Jerusalem, and George Chapin, a disgruntled Church member.

On December 7, 2004, the State Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts dismissed all of these plaintiffs' claims against the Church and the remaining defendants, finding that their claims were as a matter of law without any merit. We are extremely pleased with the end of this litigation. The Church has been blessed in its belief in, and I will quote Swedenborg himself, "the spirit of free inquiry, freedom with responsibility, and the dignity and worth of people."

The General Convention, and other plaintiffs had made reckless, unfounded and hurtful allegations against me, my

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ABOUT OUR CHURCH



## The Church on the Hill The Boston Society of the New Jerusalem, Incorporated

**The Church on the Hill - also known as The Boston Society of the New Jerusalem, Incorporated** was organized as the Boston Society of the New Jerusalem on August, 15, 1818, and incorporated in the City of Boston under the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts on February 10, 1823.

The church is an independent organization for the observance of Swedenborgian teachings and the value inherent in those teachings. The church has no formal affiliation with any other Swedenborgian organizations.

The purpose of the church shall be to establish and maintain the public worship of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the Holy Word, and the teachings revealed in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. In following those teachings, the church shall maintain free and open worship of the Divine, and being independent, non-denominational, and interreligious, shall honor the good in all religions that seek to foster a positive regard for all humanity.

The church, through its directed wisdom and Divine guidance, shall foster stewardship, within the Doctrine of Uses, of the spiritual and physical assets which Divine Providence and labor and the work of God have made possible.

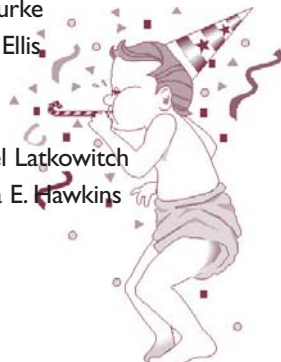
For more information, or to reach our church office, please call **1-617-523-4575**.

### CHURCH OFFICIALS:

- Senior Pastor . . . . . The Reverend G. Steven Ellis
- Associate Pastor . . . . . The Reverend Dr. J. Ted Klein
- President . . . . . Maria MacKenzie
- Vice President . . . . . Juliet Cunningham
- Secretary . . . . . Tina Burm
- Treasurer . . . . . John Burke
- Trustee Chair . . . . . Rex B. Ellis

### EMERITUS:

- President Emeritus . . . . Michael Latkowitz
- Secretary Emeritus . . . . Thelma E. Hawkins



## Special Recognition of Anna Brown for her contributions to the newsletter

Anna has given three months of devoted hard work helping to improve and upgrade our Newsletter. She has done editing for the Harvard Crimson and newspapers at both Vassar College and Tufts University. She has done writing at both Tufts and Boston University using the required standards of the manual of the MLA (Modern Language Association), which is the recognized standard source for literacy accuracy across the United States. From the entire community, we thank you for your expertise and selflessness.



## In Our Prayers

Our love and prayers are extended to Terry and Joanna Rager at the passing of their son, **Anthony Rager**, 34, on Wednesday, December 1, 2004. A memorial service was held at the Gospel Tabernacle, Russelville, Kentucky with The Reverend Craig Jackson officiating. The Rager's are good friends of our pastor and his family in Kentucky.

We are also praying for the family of **Joyce Ellis Josey**, 58. May her children, Tina and Terri find comfort in knowing that she is with our almighty father.

To our dismay, we have learned that a recent visitor of our church has just passed away. **Matt**, may he rest in peace, was a very good friend of Tammy and Phillip Brodrick. Please remember all of them in your prayers.

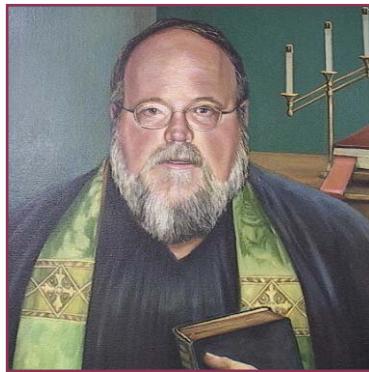
*The newsletter received a wonderful letter from Tammy that we regretfully cannot print in its entirety at this time. Tammy and Phillip are in the middle of purchasing a new home and are quite busy. We will publish their letter in the upcoming February newsletter!*

*continued from front page ...*

**Re: Exonerated: The Boston Church of the New Jerusalem, Inc.  
Church on the Hill (Swedenborgian)  
Boston, Massachusetts**

ministry and others at the Church. I am heartened that the court has rejected the General Convention's claims and affirmed the rights of the Church to govern itself. I regret that the General Convention pursued this meritless lawsuit, which cost the Church enormously in attorney's fees, heartache, and other collateral damage. It was the General Convention's ill-advised and wrongful attempt to govern the Church and to remove me as pastor of the Church that precipitated our disaffiliation from the General Convention. I hope that in time there can be healing amongst us, knowing as Jesus said in Matthew 12:25 that "every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand."

The General Convention began its lawsuit in March 2004 in federal court in Massachusetts. After expedited discovery, the court threw the case out, finding that there was no basis for the claims. The case was then transferred to state court for resolution of the remaining state law claims. After receiving written and oral argument, the state court also found that the General Convention and other plaintiffs' claims were without merit. Specifically, the state court rejected the plaintiffs' claim of fraud, racketeering, and wrongful and deceptive practices. The state court also rejected their claims that the General Convention has any right to govern the Church or to control the disposition of its assets. The Church and the other defendants give thanks



*Reverend G. Steven Ellis  
(Painted portrait by Patrick Anderson)*

that we were ably represented by the lay firm of Todd & Weld LLP in Boston. If you have any questions about the legal aspects of this case, you may contact Nicholas Carter, Esq. directly.

At the Church of the Hill, we are the inheritors and custodians of a great mission. We have been called upon—and we are answering. Ultimately, our worth and value to society will be judged on how we are to others—how much we care for one another. Sadly, we have had to suffer attacks and malicious accusations. Some of these accusations have been intensely personal. Nonetheless, we stuck together and in the words of the great emancipator himself, Abraham Lincoln, appealed to the "better angel of our nature," in persevering towards the rightful victory. In many ways, we are the better for it, having met the test, and passed.

On behalf of our historic and venerable Church, we feel exonerated. We have not been deterred during this painful year in our mission to grow the Church, and continue to be a viable channel of blessing and outreach into our beloved community of Boston, as we have striven to be for nearly two hundred years. We are full of hope for a bright future in which the Church will continue to be a dynamic witness to the building of God's Kingdom here on Earth.

Let our rejoicing be in God who has kept us alive, sustained us and brought us to this moment.

The Reverend G. Steven Ellis, Senior Pastor

The Reverend Dr. Ted Klein, Associate Pastor

*"Every smallest amount of a person's life involves a series of consequences extending to eternity, each moment being a new beginning to those that follow it."*

*(Arcana Coelestia, no 3854)*

*Emanuel Swedenborg*

# Living in Hope

*A Message by Rev. Dr. Ted Klein, Associate Pastor*

Consider the role of hope in your life. Maybe hope helps you live through and move on from a hard situation. Maybe hope helps you be enthused about the way blessings and opportunities to serve are entering your life. With hope, we can find ways of moving forward, responding to others and being of service.



An example is having hope in a situation where a person asks us a question and then resists our answer. Perhaps later the person will have a change of heart. Perhaps later we will find a whole new way of responding to the person. We can pray, and, with hope, be alert to opportunities in talking to the person again.

There are images from nature and its cycles and from human life cycles that can help give form to our hopes. Among these wonderful images are: dawn; light coming into darkness; the coming of spring; a storm ending and the sun emerging with heat and light; a new birth; the growth of a tree; the growth of a child. In human life, we can think of beginnings in relationships, families, and communities.

Necessary for living in hope is trusting in God's provision while seeking to do our part. Think about trying out a new program in the church. Maybe we feel anxious about how it will go. Yet we can seek to do the best we can, trusting God's guidance and how we can learn from whatever happens.

Sometimes our hopes need to change. An example is finishing a challenging project and hoping for praise and recognition

without thinking much about responding to needs of others and being of service...Maybe the hoped for recognition doesn't come, and that helps us to see what matters most is being of service and making a difference for good.

Sometimes a person can stay hopeful, resisting both false hopes and discouragement while embracing realistic hopes. For example, a person in looking for a job can seek to concentrate on his or her part—leaving the rest up to others and to God's provision. The person can hope in looking for a good match between a possible job and what the person could bring for serving others.

Along with situations that are part of our lives directly, we can think of the world beyond us. We can live in hope in situations that may sometimes seem beyond hope, such as the situation in Iraq, the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, and parts of the world turn by famine. We can hope for, and perhaps even find ways to work for, people gaining some understanding and willingness to seek cooperation even in most difficult situations. We can hope for an expected path to open even when all paths seem blocked.

A hopeful attitude does not mean denying or minimizing things that are difficult or even terrible. Yet it does involve a trust in there being ways to "go on," whatever the situation may be. With hope goes a willingness to keep looking and keep trying, knowing others are involved to and God's provision is always lovingly and wisely at work.

## Prayer

*God, we turn to you for help in how we live in hope. If we feel that there is no hope in a situation, help us to remain open for hope. If we seem to be trying and failing, help us to keep trying with a willingness to change, be guided by you, and listen and respond to others. If our dreams seem to be coming into reality, help us to find ways to bring them into the greatest possible service. Be present and guide our hopes. Amen.*

## Believe! Believe! Believe!

My eighty-eight year old mother-in-law, who stands all of four feet ten inches and weighs eighty pounds, has a habit of carrying an old supermarket sack with her whenever we go anywhere. This is in addition to her large handbag. So on her birthday, I decided it would be a lot better if she had a small tote bag in which to carry her extra stuff. Somehow the days got away from me and I found myself running from store to store on her birthday looking for what I thought would be an easy to find purchase. To my dismay, I discovered that small tote bags are almost nonexistent!

My last stop was a local bookstore as I had an appointment and

knew that if I didn't find a tote bag there, I would have to abandon the whole idea. After searching through the store and seeing no tote bags, I started for the door when a book caught my eye entitled *Small Miracles*. I grabbed the book and got in line at the cashier's. After he rung up the sale, you can imagine my astonishment when he pulled out a small tote bag from behind the counter and announced that it was free with the purchase of the book! The message on the bag? "I believe in Small Miracles."

*-Kathleen Rosenau, from the book *Small Miracles of Love and Friendship*. Guidepost Books.*

# Ed MacKenzie Speaks

Friday was a happy day—a very happy day. It was the day on which the good people of this Church and our good Reverend Steve Ellis were rewarded. We were rewarded with the decision by the Commonwealth that we long knew was the right decision, the just decision. We thank our legal team for so effectively advocating on the side of what is right. We thank the government officials who closely reviewed and evaluated the facts presented to them. We thank these same officials for researching and doing a thorough job in working to understand who we are and what we are about.



For more than a year now we have toiled together as a team—a united congregation—in battling freedom. We have battled for independence. We have struggled together to secure the right to operate our own house of worship. A house of God that is more inclusive than in the past. A house of God that is more welcome and hospitable to people of different religious traditions.

We have struggled together to build a house of God inspired and guided by the teachings and philosophy of Emanuel Swedenborg.

Sadly, we have had to suffer attacks and malicious accusations. Some of these attacks have been intensely personal. But we stuck together and, in the words of the great emancipator himself, Abraham Lincoln, appealed to the "better angels of our nature." We appealed to the better angels of our nature as we persevered and won the victory that is so rightfully ours. In staying true to the better angels of our nature we must agree on this: That we will not hold grudges, and that we will forgive as God instructs us to forgive.

You know, as I reflect upon what we have gone through together, I think of the wisdom of a chinese proverb. The proverb says, "The gem cannot be polished without friction, nor men perfected without trials." Now all of us are a long way from perfection. But no doubt, our recent trials have made us stronger and better able to do God's work.

Now let us not squander our reward and our blessing. Let us begin immediately to strengthen and improve our congregation so that we can better serve our Lord.

Thank you and God bless,  
EMACK  
December, 2004



*A tree does not arrive at maturity in a single day, but it grows first from its seed, afterwards from its root, and then from its shoot, from which the stem is formed. From this proceed branches and their leaves, and lastly flowers and fruit. Nor does a crop of barley reach the harvest stage in one day. A house is not built in a day, much less the stature of wisdom, nor is the church established and effected in a day. No progression to an end is possible unless it has a beginning from which it starts.*

*(True Christian Religion, no. 586)  
Emanuel Swedenborg*

## SCHEDULE OF SWEDENBORG CLASSES

*Rev. Dr. Ted Klein, Associate Pastor*  
Regular Meeting Time: *Third Sunday of the Month, 10:00 AM.*

### 2004-2005 Church Year (in Progress) SWEDENBORGIAN CONCEPTS AND...

- Jan. 2005 - Religious Differences
- Feb. 2005 - Black History
- Mar. 2005 - Women's History
- April 2005 - Care for the Earth
- May 2005 - War and Peace

### 2005-2006 Church Year UNDERSTANDING SWEDENBORGIAN CONCEPTS

- Oct. 2005 - God as Creator
- Nov. 2005 - God's Providence
- Dec. 2005 - Human Freedom of Choice
- Jan. 2006 - Good and Evil
- Feb. 2006 - Uses
- Mar. 2006 - A life of Charity
- April 2006 - Rebirth
- May 2006 - Life after Death

### MASSACHUSETTS COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS



## Stollen Bread

Hopefully many of you had a chance to enjoy some of the delicious Stollen Bread the Church purchased from the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless. The Coalition has expressed their appreciation to the Reverend Ellis and our Church for our commitment to good works!



# Correspondence

Dear Reverend Steve,

A special thank you to the following people for their time spent helping me wrap gifts that were provided by members of our Church: Sandra, Rex, Patty, Mary, David, Rev. Steve, and Juliet. I know we made some people very happy including the Veterans, the Women's Shelter, and the Home for Little Wanderers. Doesn't it feel GREAT to help those in need? Another special thank you to all who gave the gift of giving.

Love you all,  
Maria MacKenzie

Hi Steve,

I just received the good news of the lawsuits, etc., and I wanted to share my best wished and congratulations!

Dennis  
Rev. Dennis Cerrotti, Friend of the Church

Dear Steve, Brenda and to all in your congregation,  
I am so happy and relieved for you. Justice does sometimes prevail. May the year(s) ahead be one of joy and reconciliation and renewed energy for you.

Many blessings to you,  
Janet  
Janet Seckel-Cerrotti Director, Match-Up Interfaith Volunteers

## VICTORY - TO GOD BE THE GLORY!

Dear Members and Friends,

*Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God My Savior, and My Hope is in you All Day Long. Psalm 25:4-5*

Perhaps you have already heard the good news, but just in case, please be advised that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts State Superior Court dismissed the lawsuit brought against our beloved Church with prejudice. This followed on the heels of the suit being dismissed with prejudice by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Federal Court earlier this year. Now, I want to thank each one of you who worked hard since the incipience of this unwarranted litigation brought wrongfully against our beloved Church by the General Convention, The Massachusetts Association, and George Chapin. You have worked hard and prayed diligently that good would prevail, and we believe that it most certainly has prevailed. Our "rejoicing" is in God, our joy and our salvation, and in knowing that we can move on towards productive and needed healing, reconciliation, and whatever awaits us in the unfolding of the Divine Providence. As a church, we have all suffered together, learned together and grown together with an intent to stick together in taking the road less traveled. Most of all I want to thank God, our Heavenly Parent, who has given us life, sustain us, and brought us to this moment!

*Baruch atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech ha-olam Shehecheyanu v'kiy'manu v'higianu laz'man hazeh.*

*Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God, the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them—the Lord, who remains faithful forever. Psalm 146:5-6*

Reverend G. Steven Ellis, Pastor Church on the Hill (Swedenborgian)

My Dear Reverend Ellis:

In June of 2003 I lost my dear 87 year old father to cancer. Three years previous, I had lost my beloved Mother. While both my Mother and Father had fulfilling and wholesome lives, the passing of them was a crushing blow to my brothers and sisters and me. At the time of my Father's passing, I subconsciously dissolved into what I can only term a "funk", unable to really do anything with my former dedication and enthusiasm.

One day last Fall, I happened to be going to an appointment at the State House when, walking by The Church on the Hill, I saw a notice posted on the small bulletin board outside the main door. The notice said to live for today and everyday we are on earth and do good deeds and serve the Lord by our actions. I must tell you that I consulted my priest after my Father's passing and he told me to wait for the day I was called so that I would see my loved ones again. Nothing about how I was to live the remainder of my life or somehow try to reason out my Mother and Father's passing. I am happy to tell you that the day I saw that notice was like a redeeming to my soul for it gave me the reasons why I must continue on with my life and do the good deeds and serve the Lord our God for the good of society and the good of my family. I now live every day to the fullest and strive to please the Lord by my actions and thoughts.

After discovering the Church on the Hill (I am sorry to say I must have passed the Church a thousand times over the past thirty years and did not notice), I made a very strong effort to find out the teachings and philosophy particularly as it pertained to the founder Emanuel Swedenborg. I have studied the writings of the founder from the books available in the front of the Church and have done research on the web sites concerned with the founder. I am amazed at the foresight Swedenborg had about our place in the world, especially his concerns about social justice and our responsibility to our fellow human being.

I am gratified to tell you I started going to the Church on the Hill on Sundays since early this year and have found it to be a wonderful and enlightening experience. The dedication and love of the Church members is very impressive. But, above all, I am most impressed with the dedication and service of the leaders, including yourself. I have come to know Mr. Ed MacKenzie and Tom Kennedy and these two individuals are outstanding yet humble servants of the Church on the Hill. I have had several discussions with Reverend Ted Klein and his advice and knowledge are most impressive. Finally, what has probably inspired me more than anything about the Church on the Hill is the service and strength you have given to your members in a time of crisis. I am almost sure that without your leadership the Church on the Hill would be facing a very uncertain future. Additionally, most people are not aware of the social contribution you and the Church on the Hill make towards serving our fellow man and helping the less fortunate.

Therefore, it is with a great deal of honor and much humbleness that I respectfully ask of you and the Board of Trustees to consider my application for membership to the Church on the Hill. I have tried to attend every Sunday service, done much research on the teachings and philosophy of the Church, attended Bible Classes as much as possible and tried to help out when asked. If accepted for membership, I promise to make myself available for whatever duties that the Church on the Hill may deem me worthy to fulfill. I believe and love Jesus Christ and try mightily everyday to please my Lord though I fail much too often.

I thank you so much for your kind consideration of my application and hope to help the Church on the Hill in a small way to continued success for its' members and the Lord Jesus.

Very kind regards,  
Robert von Wolfgang

# CHURCH ON THE HILL **Holiday Fair** DECEMBER 4, 2004





# January 2005

## EVENT CALENDAR

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
					1 NEW YEAR'S DAY	2
3	4	5	6 Epiphany	7 Orthodox Christmas	8	9 • Community Fellowship and Bible Study • Worship
10	11	12	13	14	15	16 • Ted's Discussion: Swedenborgian Concepts and... • Religious Differences Worship • Church Council and Trustees Meeting
17 Martin Luther King Jr. Day	18	19 Senior Luncheon	20 Mass Coalition for the Homeless American Inauguration Day	21	22	23 • Worship • 12:30pm - Winter Members Meeting
24	25	26	27	28	29	30 • Worship
31						



**Church on The Hill (Swedenborgian)**  
**The Boston Society of the New Jerusalem, Inc.**

140 Bowdoin Street, Beacon Hill  
 Boston, MA 02108-2799



“Everything can be improved.”  
 - Clarence W. Barron  
 In loving memory of former Church member