

VOICE

THE NEW CHURCH

OF FLORIDA

Volume 21, Number 1

6/2021

Rules of Life

Diligently to read and meditate on the Word of God:

To be content under the Dispensation of God's Providence:

To observe a propriety of behavior; and to keep the conscience clear:

To obey what is ordered: to attend faithfully to one's office and other duties; and in addition, to make one's self useful to society in general.

Emanuel Swedenborg

The New Church Voice of Florida is published by the New Church at Boynton Beach: Rev. Alan Cowley (Pastor), Bianca Rendel (Editor).
Email: ncvoicefl@newchurchboyntonbeach.org | Phone: 561.736.9235

A Walk on the Beach



As people walk along our South Florida beaches they are hardly aware of the history of the sand slipping through their toes. Every grain having and having had a life of its own. Some of the most ancient and smallest grains of sand were formed from millions of years worth of organic material slowly settling to the ocean floor. Algae and corals were given the perfect conditions to grow and flourish. As these particles settled, layer upon layer, they compacted to form the bedrock of carbonate sediment still carrying some of the marks of its organic formation. More recent life forms add daily to the innumerable tiny pieces of matter composing our shores. Countless varieties of shellfish, imbued by God with the

miraculous ability to create their own hard protective exoskeletons, with mathematical precision and artful beauty. Have you ever looked at a closeup picture of sand? Hundreds of minuscule gems are packed in every square inch!

So why are we talking about sand and the geological and ecological processes which went into forming the beach beneath our feet? Well, I am always fascinated by parts of the Lord's Word which seem to have little to no importance, and as I was reading the last words of Moses to the Children of Israel before they entered the Promised Land, I started wondering what we could possibly glean from a blessing such as this:

And of Zebulun he said: "Rejoice, Zebulun, in your going out, and Issachar in your tents! They shall call the peoples to the mountain; there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness; For they shall partake of the abundance of the seas and of treasures hidden in the sand."

(Deuteronomy 33:18-19)

This is a statement in the Lord's Word which probably carries very little meaning to the average reader. It seems beautiful and hopeful, but the specific meaning is almost lost in the language of a different time. At one time these words would have inspired great confidence and excitement in serving the Lord and His Kingdom. To start anew, with fresh perspective, while remaining deeply rooted in the remains of ancestral influences. But just as the individual grains of sand are not seen for their beauty without tools for closer inspection, so too can the deeper beauty of a specific Scripture be unknowable without the magnifying glass of the *Heavenly Doctrine*.

"Zebulun" we are told represents those who are conjoined to the Lord by love. (*cf. Apocalypse Explained 447*)

Those who will inhabit the highest heaven; in spirit while in this world, and in their life hereafter. These do rejoice in their "going out" with the Lord's love implanted in their hearts to care for His creation and serve the neighbor from mutual love. That is to serve the neighbor knowing that the reward is in the doing. Which brings us to "Issachar" who represents the mindset of mutual love and altruism. (*cf. Arcana Coelestia 6388*) Loving ones' neighbor is their form of worship... their "tents" so to speak.

Once upon a time people intuitively understood the allegory of nature and its connection to the Divine. It is a hidden language; a means of communication through an internal perception of the inner workings of God's creation. In this language the mountains rise up toward the heavens in adoration of the Lord, and so they signify love to the Lord. Zebulun and Issachar are the beneficiaries of this blessing because they represent the qualities that a church must display and live in order to fulfill its mission to "call the peoples to the mountain". We must have real love to the Lord and a desire to be one with Him, and we must love our neighbor as our selves.



This blessing is not a huge truth bomb. Jesus said it a little more plainly when He said that upon these two things “hang all the law and the prophets” (*Matthew 22:40*). But let’s check out the gift that is being given to those represented by Zebulun and Issachar. ***“They shall partake of the abundance of the seas and of the treasures hidden in the sand”*** (*Deuteronomy 33:19*).

“The abundance of the seas” speaks to the knowledge we gain from the Lord’s Word, and the ***“treasures hidden in the sand”*** speaks to all of the individual contributions of love and experience passed down from generation to generation. Each and every one having its place on the shore of church ready reflect the Sun’s rays as it rises every morning upon the gaze of all who wish to see it.

No beach is the same. Not even the same beach is the same from one day to the next. Every grain of sand has likely shifted one way or another - they have been polished just a little bit more. But the sun which rises upon them is one, and every visible grain of sand composes, in part, a picture of tomorrow’s sunrise, for these grains reflect the light from the one source.

What a blessing it is to be a receiver of the Lord in His second coming; to explore the beauty of the Lord’s Word in its countless spiritual meanings; to zoom in, so to speak, on all the details of Scripture, and so, to grow closer to the Lord and our neighbor through it.

Blessings and Happy New Church Day!

~ Rev. Alan Cowley



THE NEW CHURCH AT BOYNTON BEACH

Kids Corner

The children planting flower pots for New Church Day and a bittersweet moment: Saying good bye to Pastor Alan with personal letters written by each child.



The following address was given by the Rev. Alan Cowley at his last Annual Meeting as Pastor of The New Church at Boynton Beach. May 23rd, 2021

Dear Friends,

As this is a business meeting, and we have planned a farewell get-together for June 13th, I will hold most of my personal comments and appreciations for that occasion. But I do want to begin by simply saying thank you for inviting me to pastor this church for the past five years. It really has been a delight to serve you and to worship with you. I believe that this church has taken some really major steps toward a successful generational transition, and in so doing has grown in more ways than our Covid-deflated attendance numbers could possibly show. This will be the main focus of this, my final pastor's report to you.

1. The major areas of internal growth I have seen over the last five years.
2. Possible ways to approach the going forward from here.

I should also note, in more than a passing way, how much I believe I have been able to grow as a pastor and as a person, in no small part because of all of you, and because of this church community. So for all that we might

make out of what I might have to say this morning about the state of this church and its future, the peace I feel in taking on a new pastorate elsewhere, my willingness to take this call, is from knowing that it is all of you who are the watchful and caring stewards that the Lord has chosen. So please let my overarching sentiment be, "Be strong and of good courage... for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go!" (*Joshua 1:9*).

Upon reflection, my thoughts are first led to our many wonderful friends who have graduated from The New Church at Boynton Beach to some even more heavenly society. At this time I would like to ask for us to observe a few moments of silence, to bring each of them to mind, and to think about how their love and affection for this church still lives on, and remember that we are told that this church on earth will grow in relation to the growth of the New Heaven now being formed by the Lord in His providence. (*cf. Apocalypse Revealed 547*) We are told in Writings that "the church on earth is formed by the Lord through heaven, in order that heaven and the church may be in harmony and affiliated." (*Apocalypse Revealed 879*)

The connection we have with the members and friends of this church who have now passed into this new heaven, their continued influence, is

pictured in the Lord's Word in what the apostle John saw "descending out of heaven from God". So let us pause and think about all of the wonderful work our friends may be doing, VERY much behind the scenes, from a new heavenly enlightenment and zest. And remember that our highest priority as a church is to serve the Lord by helping to prepare His people to become angels of heaven. (Pause)... And as we consider the heavenly work that our friends are doing, let us also bring to mind these words from the Lord's prayer, "As in heaven, so upon the earth."

On earth the church does face significant challenges. The clash of modern culture and traditional religious views seems to be at an all time high.... Or, maybe it just appears to be that way for every generation. We can always look outside of ourselves and find reasons for why the growth of the church on earth is slow. We should remember, though, that the Lord tells us that the church will, in its beginning, be among few while the falsities from the previous church are being removed. At the same time, that is no cause for complacency, and so we must always be at the ready, like the five virgins who had their lamps filled to the brim with oil awaiting the arrival of the Bridegroom, the Husband of the church. (*cf. Matthew 25:1-13*)

Sure, there are many challenges that the church is facing from the outside. But the real challenges that people face as individuals, and that we face together as a church, are on the inside. After five years of leading this group, it would be unwise and unkind for me to forgo this opportunity to tell you how I view this church, its strengths, and its challenges. An opportunity like this really only comes about when there is a transition of leadership. Because in this instance, I am somewhat more free to speak my mind without fear of repercussion; and all of you are in more freedom to listen to, act upon, or completely ignore my subjective observations.

The biggest challenge that I think The New Church at Boynton Beach is facing right now, (other than our individual and group work in repentance and regeneration), is the difficulty of transitioning the forms of worship from generation to generation. This should be nothing new to hear. It is a relatively external problem to have. One that is very fixable, and one that we have already done a great deal of work on.

We have done a great deal more than just changing the format of the service in an effort to accommodate to a younger more modern audience. We have done more than experiment with different styles of worship music.

We have done more than making our worship service more interactive. We have done some really good brainstorming and shifting in how we want to invite and welcome newcomers. We have really begun to look more outside of ourselves for opportunities and people to serve. We have stretched and exercised our creativity to share the beauty of the Lord's story untainted by the false doctrines prevalent in our world. We have begun to lift the edge of the basket, that the Lord's light may shine and touch this small part of South Florida. It may not feel like we have made great strides, but we really have.

If you get a moment, take a look through our Facebook page and look for patterns. Look for names of the many new people, in our local area, who are regularly engaged with content from this church, and from the Lord's Word and the Heavenly Doctrines. Any day now, one or more of these folks, who have been listening, watching, and reading, could walk through those doors. Are we ready to receive them? Is there oil in our lamps today? Right now is a very good time to check our oil, to make sure we don't break down before we reach our destination.

But, let's zoom back out to the general issue that I brought up about generational transitions. Though this

is a relatively external problem, it can, does, and has, caused deeper issues in the church that we should both be aware of and work hard to change. We might want to consider how the fear of losing what we like in worship plays a big role in holding on to traditions, styles of music, and certain formalities of worship. While to some extent it is on the younger generations to respect and even appreciate what came before, it is also incumbent upon each generation to allow, even encourage, the following ones to find their own meaningful ways of connecting to the Lord and learning from Him. To return to the Lord's Word and the Heavenly Doctrine for themselves to confirm, change, develop, and update our liturgics and ritual to suit their needs and affections. In this way they too can be moved to adoration and gratitude in their own unique forms of expression. Each generation needs to make the church its own, otherwise it will slip into more and more superficial forms of worship where the meaning of the forms is lost.

When our "New Church" ritual was established and formalized, it was known that we were, for the most part, borrowing forms of worship from the previous Christian churches. Our starting point was the ritual, rites, and sacraments, of the previous church, informed and purified by our understanding of the Heavenly

Doctrine. It was also mentioned in Pendleton's "Notes on Ritual" that in time the church ought to generationally go back to the Word and the Heavenly Doctrine to develop new forms more appropriate to the New Church and the needs of the time. Sadly, as with many church issues, the traditions of men came to be viewed as on par with Divine revelation... unchangeable and rigid. It is not that those rituals were wrong, they were just the product of a different era.

In the past five years, this church has stretched its boundaries and comfort zones in many ways, and we have begun some of the work of redeveloping ritual from the Word. And though we may not all be happy about all of the changes, we have been willing to try some new things. And I hope that after experiencing many of these changes, we may have found some of the new ways enjoyable, perhaps even preferable.

We should add that one of the more difficult aspects of generational transitions is the way each generation perceives the others. I have heard many times over, the sentiment that, "There just doesn't seem to be the same kind of dedication to the church in younger generations." That is a fair point. It would be great to see some of our younger folks take a little more

initiative, and to get more involved, to take on church leadership roles. Which brings me to something else I hear pretty regularly from some of our younger people, who have often said, "I would love to be more involved, but I don't really want to do it in the way they say I have to".

The challenge and beauty of a multi-generational church is that it needs to choose how to balance its focus on current needs in upholding tradition, with enough external flexibility to ensure a future where the Lord's church is still alive and thriving in people's hearts and minds. This is a challenge because everyone has their own preferences and delights to compromise for each other. The beauty of it is in the wonderful variety of ways we can worship the Lord from the heart, and when we can see the life of the Lord vivified and active in another person: When we come to feel the "joy of another as joy in oneself." (*Divine, Love and Wisdom 47*)

Again, I believe that we have made great strides as a congregation in this department, though the work remains unfinished. The next step as I see it, will be for those in our younger generations to take more initiative, increase their willingness and commitment to their vision of the future of the New Church at Boynton Beach. It would then be the role of

our older generations to encourage those efforts, and watchfully, lovingly, pass on their wisdom gained through experience and learning from the Lord. The reigns must be handed over peacefully and effectively. This is no small feat, but I really do believe, with all of my heart, that this group has the tools and the people to succeed.

You have hired me these past five years to pastor you: To study the Lord's Word, and to study you, and to do my best to lead you by means of the Lord's truth to the goodness of life. And I would like to close with the Lord's words reminding us that, "The Kingdom of God is at hand!"

(Mark 1:15)

The future of the New Church at Boynton Beach is "at hand". It is within our grasp. We know that the Lord foresees every difficulty, and provides for everything that is good. *(cf. Arcana Coelestia 1755, 6951, 10441)*

He is the One who has built up this church, and provided abundantly for it. He is the One who has maintained its fellowship, and its waxing and waning, always looking for the next opportunity to show us the way to become His church more and more, and to show us the joy of being His ministers and servants, to those both inside and outside of our membership rolls.

"Only be strong and very courageous. Do not be afraid or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." *(Joshua 1:9)*

"Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them." *(Luke 12:35-37)*

~ Rev. Alan Cowley



THE NEW CHURCH AT BOYNTON BEACH

Highlights



Welcome to Boynton Beach
Pastor Lou!

Pastor Lou will be arriving in the first days of July and his first sermon will be July 4th 2021 at 10 am.

(there will be no service in Boynton Beach on June 27th. You can go to <https://newchurch.org/get-involved/find-online-services/livestream/> to join an online-service)

Affection is an attraction...
Love is a full commitment...

Affection is liking...
Love is devotion...

Affection is favorable interest...
Love is interior dedication...

Like/Don't Like? Send us your thoughts or comments.
To: voice.florida@yahoo.com



Jacksonville

Please contact the church for Service Dates.
Carole Hanson
jaxbchcjh@aol.com | (904) 438-9740



Tampa Bay

Please contact the church for Service Dates.
Craig Bostock:
cnbostock@aol.com | (727) 366-4354



Lake Helen

Please contact the church for Service Dates.
Brent and Lynne Morris:
bmorris14@cfl.rr.com | (386) 212-9909

Florida New Church Directory

Outgoing Pastor Rev. Alan Cowley	(561) 736-9235
Incoming Pastor Louis Synnestevedt	(561) 736-9235
Rev. Dan Heinrichs [NCBB Retired]	(561) 735-9994
Rev. Michael Gladish [SE Dist.]	(301) 464-5602
Rev. Peter Buss Jr. [Executive Bishop]	(267) 502-4918

Please



Dear Readers,

The New Church Voice of Florida is produced by volunteers and paid for through donations. If you like the work we do and would like to contribute to its continued production, please send a donation to: **The New Church Voice of Florida**

**C/O The New Church at Boynton Beach
10621 El Clair Ranch Road
Boynton Beach, FL 33437-4203**

Thank
You!



By Martin Klein

TIME TO SAY GOODBYE...

We are both very grateful to have had Alan and Susan with us. We wish them well in their new opportunity and are sure Alan will be very successful. They will both be missed.

~ **Dean and Rachel Boyce**

It was really pleasant having you two here. I have been so disappointed that I could not attend church due to Covid-19. I wish you well in Michigan.

~ **Jan Mains**

I'm sorry you two are leaving and we'll miss you terribly, but I know you'll enjoy your new challenge with the Detroit Society and the school.

~ **Lucy Childs**

Alan and Susan, it's been great working with you in Boynton Beach and we are looking forward to working with you still in Oak Arbor.

~ **Andrew & Lindsey Martz**

Thank you, Alan for your dedication and service to our society for the last 5 years. You have been invaluable to all of us, and especially to our family. Bob and I are grateful that the Lord sent you to

us, when we needed you here most, and gave you the wisdom to help, to guide, and to care. We have appreciated your thoughtful, inspiring sermons, as well as your friendship, your advice, your musical ability (in church and around the campfires), your humor, and your insight. Although we will greatly miss you here, we are happy for you and for our friends in Oak Arbor, and we send you our love and well wishes as you enter this new adventure. We hope to stay in touch, and to spend time with you and your wonderful wife, Sue, in the future. May the Lord be with you both.

~ **Love, Bob and Janina and family**

Your service here was a providential Godsend that helped to invigorate us with brighter attitudes. Your promotion to higher uses is also a Godsend, we know, but a hard one for us in saying goodbye. Fare you well and congratulations!

~ **Martin & Pat Klein**

Alan and Susan, we'd like to thank both of you for the wonderful times we've had with you. You gave so much to Boynton Beach during your stay and we feel privileged to have been a part of these years.

~ **Bob & Naomi Smith**

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to be a Sunday school teacher and for teaching me the true meaning of the Bible so that I was able to give that information to the children. And, thanks for all the help you have given us for all the years you have been here. We love you and will miss you both.

~ **Ellen & Edward Kolb**

Dear Alan and Sue,
Thank you so much for your years of service to the New Church at Boynton Beach. It has been a pleasure to have you here as our pastor, and we appreciate your work in keeping our society going during the months of pandemic disruption. We wish continued success in your new pastoral duties in Oak Arbor. Blessings to both of you in all your future life,

~ **Peggy and Forrest Dristy**

Good luck! I know you're sorry to leave Florida but you'll love Michigan – no more hurricanes to worry about! Take care, and I wish you well.

~ **Sylvia Kloc**

Alan & Susan, Best wishes, hugs, and love from the Glenn & Amezcua families. Sorry to see you go but happy for you and your new opportunities. Mike's looking forward to our next round of golf wherever it may be.

~ **The Glenn-Amezcua Families**

We never say, "Goodbye", just, "See you later!" We hope you will always remember that you have supportive friends here, doesn't matter where you are. Best wishes for your new endeavor. See you later!

~ **Scott and Amy Martz**

Wishing you the best of everything in your exciting new adventure. We will miss you and we thank you for your five years here.

~ **Love, Sonja Snoep & Family**

Alan, Barbara and I happily first met you at the Michael Church in London, and then you came to Boynton Beach where you and I became good golf partners. We have always enjoyed your company and direction in the Bible Study Classes. We wish you and Susan every success and a good life in your new posting.

~ **Tony & Barbara Pearson**

I'd like to add my appreciation for Alan's work in the Boynton Beach church. He has been a pleasure to work with administratively, and has certainly done a marvelous job for the members there and for the community.

"Well done, good and faithful servant."
(Matt. 25:21)

~ **Mike Gladish**

I wish to thank you and your wife for all the wonderful services and for welcoming me to the church. I am Wishing you the very best in Michigan.

~ **Martha Slaughter**

We congratulate the Oak Arbor Society on their next pastor. But we are not happy to lose Alan and Sue. In their short five-year stay in our society they have accomplished a great deal. In addition they have become good friends of ours along the way. We will definitely miss them but hope to see them some time in our part of Michigan. Our very best wishes. . .

~ **Gail and Bob Brickman**

Alan, your very forward-looking leadership has served this society well for the present as well as preparing us for the future, and Boynton Beach is a better society because of your time with us. Keep in touch.

~ Ron Horvath

Our best wishes on this new journey to the beautiful Oak Arbor Society.

~ John & Grace Young

Dear Alan and Sue, It's been so wonderful to have you here! Alan your warmth, humor, and approachability as a pastor and friend has been so meaningful to us - to be able to bring up spiritual questions and topics and muse over them together. Our kids love you and say they will especially miss your hugs and your voice when you preach. Making music and pageants has been a heart full of remains we will cherish! We know you will continue to bless the church in Michigan together with your teamwork, passion, and dedication just as you both have done here with us. Warm wishes for a smooth settling in up north.

~ Lots of love, Rachel, Devon, Julian (10), Ella (8), Shiloh (5), and Baeley too

I greatly enjoyed your True Christianity classes at Lucy Childs' before the pandemic, and I really appreciated your singing and guitar skills, Alan. I wish you both well in this career move.


~ Doris Millam

You both will be greatly missed. I love your sermons, Alan, and all the good ideas that you brought to this society.

~ Peggy Braun

Alan, thank you so much for being an amazing boss, listener, friend and entertainer (for Mia and Ben) for the past two+ years! Thank you for making me feel appreciated from the very first day of work until now. Thank you for making work fun and for helping me getting through Ben and Mia's first surgery back in August 2019 and other obstacles. I could have not asked for a better person to work for and I know that my family and I will miss you and Susan a lot! Susan, thank you for being a great and true friend! You guys are AMAZING and we wish you nothing but the best for your new chapter! We will visit, that's a promise... or a threat, either way...

~ Bianca, Mia, Ben and Mark Rendel



Safe Travels To You Both!
You will be missed!

The New Church Voice of Florida
C/O The New Church at Boynton Beach
10621 El Clair Ranch Road
Boynton Beach, FL 33437 -4203