

# A New Church Day Pageant

*Note: This pageant is narrated by a minister or teacher while people silently portray what is being described. Musical interludes provide transition time for the next scene. You can do the full pageant or choose portions of it.*

## **Scene One: Swedenborg the Revelator**

*Prelude Music - 2:35 min.*

Emanuel Swedenborg was a man chosen by the Lord and prepared by Him, to give a new Revelation to angels and people. This new Revelation is the Word of the Lord's second advent. On the title page of one of the books of this new Word, Swedenborg wrote, "Emanuel Swedenborg, servant of the Lord Jesus Christ." So Emanuel Swedenborg was the Lord's servant and the books that he wrote, he wrote at the Lord's command.

*Music - 40 secs.*

When Emanuel Swedenborg was fifty-seven years old, the Lord opened his spiritual eyes and introduced him into the spiritual world. There he saw the wonders of heaven. He was shown what happens to people when they leave this world and enter into the World of Spirits. He was also shown the sad lot of those in hell who have lived evil and selfish lives here on earth. The Lord also opened his understanding so that he could know and understand the inner meaning of the Word of the Old and New Testaments. All these things which the Lord revealed to Emanuel Swedenborg, He commanded him to write down.

*Music - 1 min.*

Emanuel Swedenborg received his inspiration to write this new revelation from the Lord while he was reading the Lord's Word. In one of the new books, called *The True Christian Religion*, we read: "That the Lord manifested Himself before me, His servant, and sent me to this office, that He afterward opened the eyes of my spirit and thus introduced me into the spiritual world and granted me to see the heavens and the hells, and to talk with angels and spirits, and this now continuously for several years, I affirm in truth; as also that from the first day of that call I have not received anything whatever pertaining to the doctrines of that church from any angel, but from the Lord alone while I have read the Word" (*TCR 779*).

*Music 2:15*

## **Scene Two: Swedenborg Sees a Temple**

Once when he was in the spirit and thinking deeply about the things of wisdom, Emanuel Swedenborg had a desire to see the Temple of Wisdom. He had seen it once before and he asked some angels how he could find it again. They told him to follow the light, for a bright light went forth from the temple, and the nearer one got to it the brighter it shone. He was also told by the angels that not everyone could see the Temple of Wisdom. If a person believed that he was very wise, or if he believed that the wisdom that he had was his own, then he could not see the temple. But if he was humble and believed that people receive wisdom from the Lord, why then he could see the temple. So Swedenborg followed the light and he came to a steep path leading upward to the top of a high hill. When he reached the top he saw a great and magnificent gate, and, passing through the gate, he saw a beautiful garden with a variety of trees arranged in a wonderful order.

There were palm trees, laurels, olive and fig trees. There were also lovely vines growing. Leading from the gate was a winding avenue with a border of palm and laurel trees leading to the Temple of Wisdom. The Temple was magnificent: square and very tall with a high arched roof of transparent jasper. The foundations of the temple were of precious stones. The steps leading up to the entrance were of white polished alabaster, and the door was of pearl. The walls of this temple were of clear transparent crystal, and inside, the temple was beautifully lit. In the temple there was an altar upon which was the open Word, and from this a beautiful flamey light went forth.

The temple represented the New Church and the light within it represented the light of wisdom from the understanding of the Word which has now been opened by the Lord by revealing its inner meaning. Above the door was an inscription which said NUNC LICET, which means that now, in the New Church, it is permitted to enter with understanding into the mysteries of faith, because the true meaning of the Word has been revealed by the Lord in the Word of His second advent.

*Music 1:20 + 1 min.*

### **Scene Three: Sending Forth the Disciples on the Nineteenth Day of June**

The new Word which the Lord has given through His servant Emanuel Swedenborg, which we usually refer to as “The Writings” consists of many books and was given over a period of twenty-five years. The first part of this Word is called the *Arcana Coelestia*, and in it the Lord reveals the inner meaning of the books of Genesis and Exodus. Other books of the new Word include the *Divine Providence*, which teaches how the Lord gently leads people in freedom toward eternal happiness in heaven; *Heaven and Hell*, which tells us about life after death; *Conjugal Love*, which teaches us about the wonderful happiness that can come to people through true marriage; and *Divine Love and Wisdom*, which reveals the wonderful laws of order in the Lord’s created universe. These are just a few of the books of the new Word. There are too many to mention them all here, but the final book was the *True Christian Religion*. This was finished on the nineteenth day of June in the year 1770.

*Music 25 secs.*

When the Lord was still on earth after His resurrection almost two thousand years ago, He called together His disciples and said, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matt. 28:18-20). They were sent forth by the Lord to establish the first Christian Church. Now, once again, at the time of His second advent, when His Word was complete and all was in readiness, the Lord called His former disciples together to establish the New Christian Church—The Church of the New Jerusalem. So we read in the *True Christian Religion*, the last book of the New Word, “After this work was finished the Lord called together His twelve disciples who followed Him in the world; and the next day He sent them all forth throughout the whole spiritual world to preach the Gospel that the Lord God Jesus Christ reigns, whose kingdom shall be for ages and ages.... This took place on the nineteenth day of June 1770” (*TCR* 791).

*Music 45 secs.*

#### **Scene Four: The Holy City New Jerusalem**

In the Word of the Old Testament, especially in the Prophets, we often read of the “City of Zion” and of “Jerusalem”. Whenever we read about these cities, the Lord’s church is meant. For example, we read in Isaiah: “And it shall come to pass that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy—everyone who is recorded among the living in Jerusalem” (Isa. 4: 3). “For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem” (Isa. 2:3). This is a prophecy of the Lord’s coming, and by the city of Zion and Jerusalem are meant the church which the Lord will establish at His coming. Also in the prophecies of the Old Testament we often read of Israel being the Lord’s bride and wife. Here again, the Lord is teaching about His church, and so we find that frequently in the Word the Lord’s church is represented both as a city and as a bride and wife.

*Music—20 sec.*

In the Book of Revelation which is a prophecy of the Lord’s second coming, we read: “Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband....Then one of the seven angels...came to me and talked with me, saying, “Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife. And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal ” (Rev. 21:2,9-11).

John saw the New Church first as a city and then as a bride. He saw it first as a city because a city represents the doctrine of the New Church which must first be learned. He afterwards saw it as a bride—a beautiful bride—because this represents the conjunction of the church with the Lord through a life according to the truth of doctrine from the Word (AR 881).

*Music 1:14 (45 secs.)*