



The Manual

February 2024

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About Our Church

Pastors

Rev. Kevin Baxter Rev. Colin Leitch

Church Officers

President	Stephen Dyson ('24)
Vice President	Janet Forbes ('24)
Secretary/Clerk	Patricia Blakeney ('25)
Treasurer	Thomas Peebles ('23)

Governors	Diane Beverly ('24)
	Carlton Doctor ('25)
	Debbie Hammer ('25)
	LiKam Lie ('24)
	<i>Vacant ('25)</i>

Staff

Bookkeeper	Don Vashaw
Church Administrator	Alex Ferraro
Director of Finance	Sue McQuarrie
Director of Music	Andrew Mattfeld
Receptionist	Mary Guarino

Who We Aspire to Be

The Boston Society of the New Jerusalem is a progressive Christian presence in the City of Boston, a reflection of the Swedenborgian theology of service and mission through our commitment to education, social justice, and human rights.

We seek to make a difference in the lives of strangers and seekers through our compassion and acceptance by inviting all who share our common values to be members of our community.

We attempt to be a “rock” of stability and support in an uncertain world — a tranquil and peaceful “home away from home” for all people, where a person is missed when absent, and where one can find comfort, healing, and normalcy when things are not going well.

We worship the Lord Jesus Christ according to His Holy Word and the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. In following those teachings, this Church shall maintain free and open worship of the Divine and shall honor the good in all religions that seek to foster a positive regard for all humanity, recognizing unity and diversity.

❖ ❖ ❖ Kevin's Corner ❖ ❖ ❖



We all like to think that we are rational people. We believe we make considered choices based on solid facts. This might not be as true as we think.

My recent reading has been a book that looks at this idea in light of the divisive nature of our society at present: "The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion" by Jonathan Haidt. Where I am in the book, Haidt is laying the foundation for a concept of people as emotional beings first, who use rationality as a bridge or justification for their inner motives — though there is also a dynamic relationship between our emotional self and our rational self that can effect change. The book also talks about the way our perception of what's good and true is driven by emotional desires for our selves, our families, and communities.

This is not actually far from what Swedenborg talks about. Our will or volition (what we love) is our primary moving factor. The truth or the intelligence is used as clothing of the spirit of what we love. Swedenborg talks about the difficulty of changing the will without a crisis or cathartic change that makes us emotionally shift. In fact, his writings talk about the reality that the more we try to justify our actions, the more likely it is that we are doing something that isn't proper.

The message of the Lord is one of care and love. This notion extends even to our enemies. The more I read and meditate on the Lord's message, the harder and harder it is for me to understand the world we live in. I have friends on both ends of the political spectrum who are good people and seek to live a life of charity and faith, and yet they are diametrically opposed to each other. Whether you are right or left, hell has won when our door is closed to our neighbor.

Listen more than speak. Seek unity in spirit more than division. Do not hold onto anger against those who do not agree with you. See your opinion and work in the light of humility and the possibility that you are wrong. These are many of the lessons we read about in the Gospels and in the Epistles. Now certainly, if a heart is hardened, one can find other messages there as well, so we must find a way to remain vigilant.

What would it take for us to seek the context or the deeper truths people hold before we demonize them? What if we listened with compassion about the identity and fears we each had instead of rationalizations and justifications? The "why" matters; it brings understanding.

Blessings,
Kevin Baxter

Board of Governors Update

At its January meeting, the Board of Governors approved a proposal from TriMark to replace the kitchen freezer, and put in a convection oven and a hot food serving counter, voted to extend the church's casual labor contract with Jesse Nichols, and approved an offer from California Closets to install bookshelves in the renovated library.

As always, full minutes of all Board of Governors meetings are available in the office.

Respectfully submitted,
Alex Ferraro

Reminder: Winter Members Meeting

As a reminder, the winter members meeting of the Boston Society of the New Jerusalem will be held on **Sunday, February 25, at 1 p.m.** in the sanctuary at Church on the Hill

Meeting business will include:

- Reports from committees and leadership
- Elections for unexpired seats on the Board of Governors and other committees
- 2024 budget modifications for Mission Committee
- Annual Report to the shareholders of the BostonView Corporation
- Voting on the church's shares for the election of directors to the BostonView Corporation

The annual shareholder's meeting for the BostonView Corporation will immediately follow the members meeting.

BostonView Update

The BostonView Corporation is looking forward to the annual shareholders meeting, which will follow the winter members meeting of the Boston Society of the New Jerusalem. Not much has happened since our meeting in December. Closing the year and finalizing things take a good amount of attention.

The board engaged BA Inc. to audit the financial statements for 2022 and 2023. This should bring us up-to-date with the church's request for an annual audit instead of a review, and should make the audit of the church's financials progress quicker. While expenses have gone up, the revenue has increased at a faster rate, so things are good. The annual report to the shareholder will go over the larger numbers.

Management presented an update of completed and ongoing projects. With the new fob project done, management has a better ability to update our entry system and link it to our management software. The new water bubbler system is taking longer to implement, but we are excited to see its progress. The greatest holdup is the water to the foyer of the apartment building. Management believes we should

do a lobby refresh and add the water to the refresh so a more modern and unified look is developed.

The board was informed there is an issue with the building's boiler. This will be an expensive and larger project; however, we do hope it fits into the budget, which is designed to handle such emergencies. We will be told more about the issues at the next meeting.

The elevators seem to be working well at present. There are still some residual trust issues with Embree Elevator, as it seems like down elevators are a frequent occurrence.

The only real decision made at the January meeting was to move the meeting time up two hours. The BostonView meetings will now be held at 2:00 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month. We invite any member of the shareholding company (the church) to attend in the parlor.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Baxter
Secretary, BostonView Corporation

Director Announcement

Looking for a great way to be of service to the church? Consider running for a seat on the BostonView Board of Directors! There are two two-year terms up for election at the annual shareholders meeting in February (following the winter members meeting). The two sitting directors (Deborah Hammer and James Fenton, treasurer) are eligible for re-election.

BostonView

The BostonView Corporation is the steward of the primary asset of the Boston Society of the New Jerusalem. As such, it is committed to high standards of professionalism and dedication to the building, residents and management partners, which will ensure a great community and a vital future. The sole shareholder, the church, is the building's largest tenant, taking up a floor and a half of the building. This tenant, as a nonprofit semi-public entity, has needs beyond that of normal tenants.

The Board

The BostonView Board of Directors is a volunteer board. It is in the unique position of providing oversight and counsel to a skilled management company which is charged with the smooth day-to-day operations, upkeep, and rental of an 18-story high-rise with a submerged parking garage. Our meetings average about an hour and meet once a month.

Directors

Our nominating process aims to actively recruit individuals whose commitment, skills, life experience, background, perspective or other characteristics will serve the organization and its needs. An ideal board member should possess the desire and ability to independently research or gain knowledge about areas they might not currently possess understanding.

- Ideal candidates must be: 18 years of age, and able to attend meetings and properly digest the meeting materials. Email, basic computer skills, spoken and written communication skills, professional acumen, and a background check are a must!
- We look for people who have some experience in a relevant professional setting of business, finance, construction, building management, rentals, and the like. Previous board experience and a unique perspective would also be a bonus!

Please contact a director if you are interested in more information or to be nominated!

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Baxter
Secretary, BostonView Corporation

Announcement of the Annual Shareholder Meeting

BostonView Corporation

February 25, 2024

Following the Winter Members Meeting

Agenda

Call to order (President)

Director’s Report (Secretary)

Financial Report

Director Elections

Questions

Adjournment

Nominations:

James Fenton | Two-Year Term

James Fenton has served a two-year term as treasurer for BostonView. He is a managing partner at PCM Payments. He is experienced in business relations and has a demonstrated history of working in the financial services industry, and his skills include business relationship management, payroll, merchant services, strategic planning, and more.

Deborah Hammer | Two-Year Term

Deborah Hammer has served a two-year term as a director for BostonView. She is a long time member of the Boston Society of the New Jerusalem. Her father and son were property managers of 122 Bowdoin street, which has given her years observation of residential management.

At the Winter Members Meeting, the membership of the Boston Society of the New Jerusalem directed the secretary of the Boston Society of the New Jerusalem to cast the church’s shares to elect Patricia Blakeney, Stephen Dyson, and Ora Damon to the three two-year terms as Directors for the BostonView Corporation.

Officers:

President: Patricia Blakeney

Secretary: Kevin Baxter

Treasurer: James Fenton

Management: Charlesgate

Directors:

Patricia Blakeney (2025)⁽²⁾

Ora Damon (2025)⁽¹⁾

Stephen Dyson (2025)⁽¹⁾

James Fenton (2024)⁽¹⁾

Deborah Hammer (2024)⁽¹⁾

From the Organ Bench



And thus the corner has been turned, dear reader, and the Christmas trees are down, the lights put away, and Messiah score securely back on the shelf until next year.

With Lent fast approaching, the choir and I have been starting our preparations for Holy Week and Easter (I know, I know... don't let's get ahead of ourselves). What's important to remember is that our wonderful choir puts in so many hours of preparation to make our Easter observances ones to remember. We are looking forward to presenting uplifting and inspiring musical events and selections for you this year. We again have our brass ensemble joining us for both concert performances, as well as Festival Worship. The choir is very much looking forward to having you, our beloved congregation, come along for the ride. More about our musical selections as we get closer.

It is with a full heart and an overwhelming sense of gratitude that we bid farewell to Juan Suarez. A rock within our bass section for the last three years, Juan has decided to leave us in pursuit of more freelance work. His contributions to the choir, our concert series, and our church as a whole are forever going to be appreciated, and we will miss

him but wish him nothing but the best in his future endeavors.

Looking ahead to concerts and events coming up quickly, in February we have the New England Guitar Ensemble joining us, directed by Robert Bekkers. They will present a diverse program of music both composed for guitar ensemble or specially arranged. A light reception will follow so you can meet and greet the performers.

We are also looking forward to inviting Dawn Pierce back with her accompanist Maria Rabbia sometime soon. Her program of solo repertoire for Mezzo Soprano last year was a great success and I for one am looking forward to playing her love interest from the audience again.

With appreciation and excitement, the Choir of the New Jerusalem and I are very much looking forward to the next few months, dear reader. We hope you are too.

Respectfully submitted,
ADM.

G/BL Committee to Host "A Journey of Discovery" Workshop

Following the success of the first workshop, titled "Under Construction," the Governance/Bylaws Committee is pleased to invite all members of our church to its second workshop for the 2023-24 church season.

This workshop, which will focus on self and community discovery and discipline will include a focus segment using "SWOT," which is a strategic planning and management technique used to identify a person's or organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

All participants will be encouraged to ask and answer questions. This process will help guide us all in making better decisions by beginning to understand our individual and group roles within our church community.

The workshop will be held on Saturday, March 2, 2024, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Lunch will be served.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Hadley

Mission Committee Report

Happy Lunar New Year! Gung hay fat choy! It is the Year of the Dragon. February 14 is both Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day this year.

In 2023, our church (via the Mission Committee and Board of Governors) allocated \$10,000 to iHelp to help build schools in Columbia. On the next pages are photos and an excerpt from a report that iHelp sent to us.

On February 21, the Emerald Necklace Conservancy will join us to deliver a presentation on their environmental work in Boston, following our monthly community lunch.

On March 20, Habitat for Humanity, will give a talk on their program, which our members are directly involved with. Tentatively, our church will take part in three builds this year, currently scheduled for April 27, May 11 and September 14 (all Saturdays). Mark your calendars and volunteer!

Our next Mission Committee meeting is scheduled for February 4 at 12:45 p.m. at the church (and on Zoom). See you there.

Respectfully submitted,
Likam Lie



Wayuu Project Updates

Dear Church on the Hill Boston,

I wish to extend my sincere gratitude once again for your incredible support toward our Wayuu Project. I'm thrilled to share some quick updates on our progress. This past week, we journeyed to the Wayúu Kalouyachon Community in La Guajira, where we provided food aid, contributed to ongoing activities, and observed the advancements in constructing the two schools while immersing ourselves in the community's essence.

Your generous donation has been instrumental in enabling the construction of two vital schools, shaping the educational landscape for the children and future generations within the community. Upon our arrival, we were warmly welcomed with traditional dances and heartfelt handwritten thank-you cards from the community members, expressing their profound gratitude to the members of your church community who made this initiative possible. I've collected several of these tokens of appreciation, which I'll be mailing back upon my return to the States.

Significant strides have been made in the development of these schools. One is nearly complete, featuring the frame, roof, and partial siding. It awaits the rest of the siding, the concrete foundation with tile flooring, while the other school has its frame erected and is steadily progressing. The stick-like material seen on the roof and siding of one school is dried cactus, a traditional building material cherished for its ability to provide shade and maintain a cool environment in the sun. It's a luxury material they reserve only for school construction due to its expense. Enclosed is a picture of their dilapidated previous school, lacking the foundation or flooring that your generous support has facilitated for the new ones.

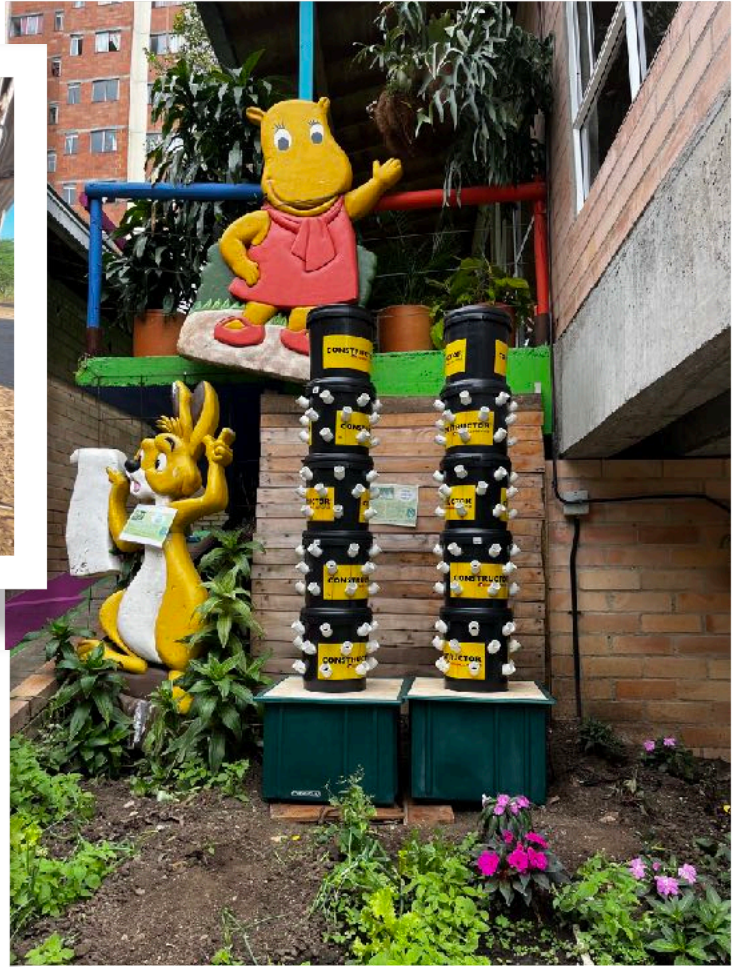
During our time in the community, we delved deeper into their needs. They showcased their agriculture section, cultivating Yucca, beans, and watermelon. The enclosed picture illustrates only $\frac{1}{5}$ of their field actively producing food, as water pressure limitations hinder their ability to irrigate the remaining area. This hurdle has them in need of either a water pump or a taller water tower. Furthermore, they emphasized the profound water scarcity they endure during September, October, and January. The small lake/pond depicted in one of the images and videos of children playing serves as their sole water source during those months, in addition to serving as a place for bathing and sustaining animals outside of those months.

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In closing, I wholeheartedly thank the Church on the Hill Boston for your unwavering support and generosity toward our Wayuu project. Your contribution has set in motion an impactful and enduring change within the Wayuu community. As the project nears completion, we'll continue to share updates and photographs. May your kindness echo through the hearts of countless others, granting them a Christmas as unforgettable as the one you've helped create for many in Colombia.

Warm regards,

Quinn J Simpson | iHelp Nonprofit



Where Are the Stars? by Janet Forbes

As a child — and perhaps as an adult — did you enjoy watching the stars? There was something magical about looking up at the sky on a clear night and seeing the moon in various stages surrounded by countless twinkling stars. We learned that even the nearest star was many lightyears away. Perhaps we looked through a telescope that enabled us to more clearly see these heavenly bodies. Perhaps in science class we learned the meaning of lightyears and orbits, and to name the planets by memory. Imagine if we could no longer see the stars or moon.

My friend's great grandchildren and their friends haven't seen the stars or moon since October 7. They live in Northern Israel, and they have spent each night since October 7 in a bomb shelter, hoping to be safe from danger. At first, they were fascinated that there was a place underground with beds and water, lit by lanterns. From an early age, they had been taken there every day for their naps. They later learned this was so that, if danger came, there would be a familiar and safe place to go. Usually, their fathers didn't join them. Most of the men stayed aboveground to ensure that the occupants of the shelter were safe.

After October 7, as time went on, the youngest began asking, "Where are the stars?" They were used to going for walks after sunset and looking up and learning about the stars. Now, they were told that it wasn't safe to look at the stars. These little ones are very bright, and their next question was, "Why? Will the stars hurt us? Will the stars drop bombs on us?"

Their great-grandmother Rachael told me these questions made her weep. She grew up in a European country, afraid that someone would find out she was Jewish and put her on a train to a concentration camp, as happened to many of her family and friends. Now, these little ones are afraid of the stars. How very tragic that they now equate a lovely starry sky with fear, unrest, pain and suffering.

Sadly, there are countless people of all ages in many parts of the world who daily experience these emotions. They cry out, "Why me? Why my family?" Unless one has personally experienced a similar situation, it's hard to imagine what life is like when one must sleep underground at night never knowing if their home will be standing in the morning.

What in the world can we do from thousands of miles away? If we are able, there are many legitimate organizations that are collecting monetary donations. We also can pray constantly that 2024 will bring peace to all who suffer, those both near and far. I believe we each have a responsibility to treat others with respect and kindness. The saying about lighting one candle rather than cursing the darkness has been attributed to many, but these wise words can be applied to you and me. Ultimate positive goals can begin with each of us, wherever we are.

Respectively submitted,
Janet Forbes

An Unpleasant Question by Pastor Colin

In 1950, Walter Brown, owner of the Boston Celtics, desperate for success, hired a brash young coach. Bypassing Bob Cousy, the new coach drafted Chuck Cooper, the first Black player drafted by an NBA team. In 1964, he started five African Americans in a game, a rebuke to the quotas for blacks that had existed in the NBA. In 1966, he named Bill Russell coach of the Celtics, the first African American head coach in the four major American professional sports.

Red Auerbach was Jewish.

Julius Rosenwald funded in whole or in part 2,000 primary and secondary schools for Black children and 20 Black Colleges. Rabbi Joachim Prinz spoke immediately before Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech. Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel frequently marched with King, notably at Selma. Stanley Levison raised money for the Civil Rights Movement and wrote speeches for King. Abel Meeropol wrote "Strange Fruit", the Billie Holiday song about lynching.

Dr. King spoke at a convention of the American Jewish Congress in 1958:

"My people were brought to America in chains. Your people were driven here to escape the chains fashioned for them in Europe. Our unity is born of our common struggle for centuries, not only to rid ourselves of bondage, but to make oppression of any people by others an impossibility."

Those born after World War II were confronted with two dreadful injustices: the Holocaust and Jim Crow (Native Americans were still being vilified in John Ford films). Both challenged the young mind to understand that human beings are capable of anything. Jews and Blacks were routinely excluded in the United States in those days. Quotas existed at Ivy League colleges. Liberal education at a place like Harvard could include Blacks and Jews in the curriculum but less frequently in the dormitories.

Times have changed, whether or not to the proper extent can be debated. As in many areas of American life, the percentage of white males at Harvard has decreased markedly. Acceptance and opportunities have been

distributed more widely. For those more recently included, one can imagine the importance to them and their families and friends. As observers, might we celebrate some variation of American freedom, democracy, ability, ambition? The success of others need not threaten our sense of place and security.

Leaders within the Harvard community, elected by alumni of Harvard, chose Claudine Gay to be President of Harvard. Was she absolutely the right choice? Was she more qualified than anyone else? Were the Corporators well placed to choose President Gay?

Well, a process was followed by people who knew Harvard as well as anyone and they reached a decision. Harvard chose their president. Could the institution follow their lead? Could the leadership of Harvard stick to their guns?

No. Unfortunately, no. Outside forces overturned Harvard's decision.

Politicians and financiers rushed to take credit for Gay's resignation. Bill Ackman, according to the Wall Street Journal, "mounted a mutiny of donors, calling on them to help drive Harvard president, Claudine Gay, from her job." "I am personally aware of more than a billion dollars of terminated donations from a small group of Harvard's most generous Jewish and non-Jewish alumni," Ackman wrote.

Mr. Ackman seems unembarrassed by his role in this sorry affair. He counts himself an "absolutely loyal alum [of Harvard] in all respects." All respects? Really?

Did Jewish money drive Claudine Gay out as president of Harvard? That question will haunt Harvard and higher education for a long, long time.

Where are the sensibilities of men like Red and Martin and Meeropol and the rabbis when we need them most? Students, we all remember, are prone to be shrill, adamant, coarse, and wrong. Alumni, we would hope, might be more mature.

God bless you.

Pastor Colin

February Birthdays

Adeline Rotondo
Rev. Colin Leitch
Kathryn Pruiett

VISITS, CARDS, AND PRAYERS

Please take a moment to call, send a card, or visit those in our community who are not able to be with us!

If you would like assistance arranging a visit, contact the pastoral care pastor or office.

Bill Davis

Cambridge Rehab Nursing
8 Dana St.
Cambridge, MA 02138

Andrea Martin

Webster Park Healthcare
#200 B1
56 Webster St.
Rockland, MA 02370

Dorothy Ann Klein

Hebrew Rehab Center
1200 Centre Street
Berger, Fl. 1, Rm. 129 South
Roslindale, MA 02131

William Wen Li Yen

South Cove Manor
288 Washington St.
Quincy, MA 02169

William "Martin" Coor

Tewksbury Hospital
365 East St.
Tewksbury, MA 01876

Irene Legeros

Neville Center
640 Concord Ave., 3rd fl.
Cambridge, MA 02138

CALENDAR

Administrative Hours: Monday to Friday, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

February Events

3 rd	Swedenborg birthday party	11:30 a.m.
4 th	Church Discovery Group	10 a.m.
11 th	New England Guitar Orchestra	3 p.m.
	Super Bowl party	6 p.m.
13 th	Shrove Tuesday breakfast	10 a.m.
14 th	Ash Wednesday service	12 p.m.
17 th	Bowling	2 p.m.
18 th	Board of Governors meeting	12:45 p.m.
19 th	<i>Presidents Day (church closed)</i>	
20 th	Music Committee meeting	4:30 p.m.
21 st	Community lunch	12 p.m.
	Missions presentation	1 p.m.
	BostonView meeting	2 p.m.
25 th	Winter members meeting	12:45 p.m.

March Events

2 nd	Journey of Discovery workshop	11 a.m.
3 rd	Church Discovery Group	10 a.m.
16 th	Bowling	2 p.m.
17 th	Board of Governors meeting	12:45 p.m.
20 th	Community lunch	12 p.m.
	Missions presentation	1 p.m.
	BostonView meeting	2 p.m.
24 th	Palm Sunday	11 a.m.
28 th	Maundy Thursday	
	Musical offering	5 p.m.
	Dinner	6 p.m.
29 th	Good Friday Tenebrae service	7 p.m.
31 st	Easter Sunday	11 a.m.

Weekly Events

Worship

11:00 Sundays

Alcoholics Anonymous

12:00 Weekdays

Purls on the Hill

10:00 Mondays

Zoom Prayer Time

11:00 Mondays

Pastors' Coffee

10:00 Tuesdays

Board Games

2:00 Tuesdays

Spirituality & Scripture Class

12:00 Wednesdays

Tai Chi

1:30 Thursdays

Regular Committee Meetings

Mission: first Sunday of each month at 12:45 p.m.

Music: third Monday of each month at 4:30 p.m.

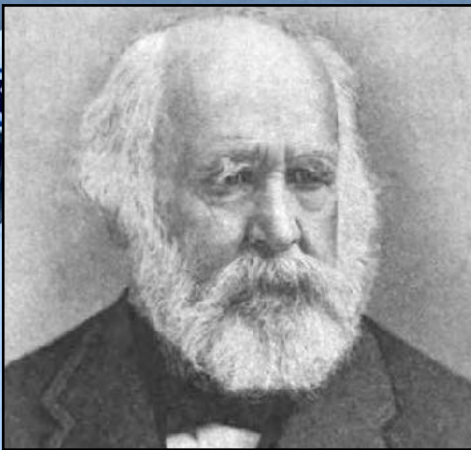
(The February Music Committee meeting will take place on the following Tuesday due to the holiday)



Boston Society of the New Jerusalem
Church on the Hill (Swedenborgian)

140 Bowdoin Street
Boston, MA 02108-2799

200 Years of Celebration
1818-2018



Theophilus Parsons (1797-1882)
Dane Professor of Law at Harvard
Law School, scholar of Swedenborg,
and member of the Boston Society of
the New Jerusalem.

“None who live in this age can wholly escape the influence of
the age; and that influence tends powerfully to close the mind
against spiritual truth, and to bar the heart against the
entrance of spiritual life.” Theophilus Parsons

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