

# ROSEVILLE NEW CHURCH

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## APRIL 2025

"The Lord's resurrection on the third day...means that He rises daily, and even moment by moment, in the minds of those who are being regenerated."

*(Secrets of Heaven 2405)*

## Directory

Society Minister

Rev. Howard Thompson

### Officers

Secretary

Graham Hall

Treasurer

Joel Duckworth

Church Officer

Debra Barratt Thompson

### **Sunday Service -**

**The Roseville New Church** holds a **twice-monthly service** of worship the **1st and 3rd Sunday at 10:00am**. The first Sunday of each month includes an opportunity to partake of the Holy Supper.

### **Sunday Social Hour -**

After every service we have tea and coffee, an opportunity to meet socially, sometimes more formally.

### **Calendar - Included**

### **The Swedenborg Centre -**

The Centre is generously supported by the Sydney Society of the New Church and provides an independent and relaxing place to meet and discuss a personal approach to finding spiritual meaning. The Centre has a wide range of study materials, Swedenborg's works, and books by supporting authors. The Centre and its director Joe Vandermeer can be reached on phone (02) 9416 2812 or email [info@swedenborg.com.au](mailto:info@swedenborg.com.au) Opening hours are Monday to Friday 9.30am to 4.30pm. More events details at [www.swedenborg.com.au](http://www.swedenborg.com.au) The Centre can also be used to answer enquiries about the New Church, its literature and its teachings.

**In the Holy Supper, the bread means the Lord's love, and the wine means His wisdom—both given for the nourishment of our souls. When love and wisdom are joined together within us, we are conjoined with the Lord. This is what is symbolised by receiving the bread and wine together.**

**—Paraphrased from Apocalypse Explained #617**

# Roseville New Church Newsletter

Issued by the Sydney Society of the New Church Established in 1875  
4 Shirley Road, Roseville, N.S.W. 2069  
Church Office phone: (02) 9416 7026  
Minister's e-mail : [revhathompson@gmail.com](mailto:revhathompson@gmail.com)  
On Facebook – Roseville New Church

## **April 2025** **In This Issue**

- From Exodus to Eucharist: An Easter Reflection.
- Swedenborg Centre News.
- Loving the Good Within.
- NCIA Retreat 2026.

## **Spiritual Shorts**

Our minister, Rev. Howard Thompson, posts a weekly video on his YouTube channel, Spiritual Shorts. The channel is currently undergoing its third evolution. In addition to the weekly 5-minute summary of Sunday's message, we are now weekly posting a short 1-minute message and a longer video exploring Heaven and Hell. If you haven't already, take a look.



Spiritual Shorts YouTube Channel:  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCsrICJGeGmrnXVawn\\_Y7UQA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCsrICJGeGmrnXVawn_Y7UQA)



## From Exodus to Eucharist: An Easter Reflection

As Easter approaches, we are drawn into the sacred heart of our Christian faith: the Lord's death and resurrection. But before the cross, before the empty tomb, there was a meal—a meal filled with ancient meaning and eternal transformation. On the night before He gave His life for the world, Jesus gathered with His disciples to celebrate the Jewish Passover. Yet during that meal, something changed. Something eternal began.

The **Passover meal**, instituted in Exodus, was the defining ritual of Jewish identity—a commemoration of Israel's liberation from slavery in Egypt. But Swedenborg reveals a deeper, spiritual meaning: the Passover was not just a remembrance of deliverance past—it was a **symbol of the Lord's ongoing work to free every human soul from spiritual bondage**. While this deeper meaning had been largely lost or rejected by the religious leadership of the time, Swedenborg teaches that a faithful remnant always remained—those few within the tradition who still sensed and lived this inner truth. Their quiet devotion preserved the sacred essence of the ritual even as the broader church had turned toward externals. It is to this faithful remnant,



and to the deeper spiritual church within, that the Lord's transformation of the Passover was directed.

And in the upper room, Jesus transformed that sacred meal into what we now call the **Holy Supper**, or **Eucharist**. What changed? What continued? And what does it mean for us this Easter?

### **A Seat at the Table: Entering the Passover**

If you've never attended a Passover Seder, you may not even be aware of what or how the Lord and His disciples were celebrating on that night we now call the Last Supper. So let me invite you in. Let me invite you into a Jewish home—warm with candlelight, fragrant with spices and roasted lamb, and filled with the sounds of sacred songs passed down through generations.

The table is set with simple beauty. Plates are arranged with care; matzah is stacked; wine is poured. There's a quiet anticipation in the room—not somber, but serious. This is not an ordinary meal. This is a meal of memory and meaning. The Lord reclines at the table—not as a guest, but as the Host. And you're invited to listen in.

A child at the table asks, “Why is this night different from all other nights?” And from that question unfolds a sacred telling—the story of Exodus, the night God passed over the homes of the Israelites and led them out of slavery. But in this moment, something deeper is happening. Beneath the surface of the story, Swedenborg shows us the spiritual journey of every soul seeking freedom.

First, the **lamb** is brought to the table—a male, a “son of a year,” whole and unblemished. Its presence is both solemn and sacred. Inwardly, this lamb represents **innocence**—the



pure, trusting heart we are all called to rediscover. It is the innocence of those who long to live in love and do what is right simply because it is good.

Then there is the **unleavened bread**, crisp and flat, made without yeast. It crackles as it's broken and passed from hand to hand. This bread is more than food—it is **truth untainted by ego or pride**. It represents sincerity, the simplicity of mind that comes when we let go of falsities and embrace what is real and eternal.



On the plate, too, are the **bitter herbs**. They sting the tongue, bringing tears to the eyes. No one savours them, but no one skips them either. They remind each person at the table of the **bitterness of bondage**—not just physical slavery, but the internal slavery of selfishness, addiction, despair. And yet, in Swedenborg's reading, even these bitter herbs are a gift. They signify **temptation and struggle**—experiences that, though painful, refine the soul and teach us the strength of faith.

The lamb is not boiled. It is **roasted with fire**. Why? Because this meal is not meant to be soft or easy. The fire



represents **the purifying power of love itself**—a fire that burns away what is false and hardens what is true. This is not a love that simply comforts—it is a love that transforms.

And above the door, just before the meal,

the **blood of the lamb** has been placed. Not as decoration, but as a mark of protection. It is a spiritual boundary, a sign that says: “This home is set apart. Here dwells the truth of innocence.” For Swedenborg, this blood signifies **divine truth joined to love**, shielding the soul from harm and leading it safely through the darkness.

One final instruction is given: **nothing of the meal is to be left until morning**. Nothing wasted. Nothing half-hearted. The Lord is asking for a **full commitment of the soul**—a willingness to take in the good and truth of heaven completely, and to leave no room for the decay of hesitation.



And notice this too: the meal is eaten **together**, not alone. Families and neighbours gather as one. The bones of the lamb are not broken, because unity must not be fractured. This is the image of **heavenly community**, where each soul is joined in love and truth, nourished by what is eternal.

As the meal progresses, you begin to sense something more than tradition at work. This is not just a remembrance of the past. It is a living picture of the **spiritual journey each of us must take**—from the Egypt of our fears and attachments, through the wilderness of temptation and trial, into the Promised Land of inner peace and freedom.

This is the meal Jesus shared with His disciples. And on this night—knowing the cross was near—He looked at the bread, the wine, the lamb, and gave them new meaning. Not to replace the old, **but to fulfil it, to complete the picture**.



But that's a story we'll step into next.

## A New Covenant, A Living Meal



And now the scene begins to shift.

The meal is still underway—the lamb on the table, the wine poured, the bread already broken once in memory of the Exodus. But as the night deepens, so does the meaning. Something changes—not suddenly, but like the soft turning of the earth before sunrise.

Jesus, still reclining at the table, takes **bread** into His hands. Bread that had always symbolised haste and deliverance. Bread that reminded them of a journey from slavery into freedom.

But now, in a voice rich with intimacy and authority, He says,

“This is my body, given for you.”

And everything turns.

No longer is this just the bread of their ancestors—it becomes **His very presence**. The nourishment of **Divine Goodness**. Not simply a sign of what God once did, but an offering of **what the Lord is still doing**—right now, in them, through Him. As Swedenborg teaches, this bread is the Lord's **Divine Love made visible**, made edible, made real.

Then He lifts the cup—filled with red wine, the colour of sacrifice, of covenant, of life.

“This cup is the new covenant in my blood, poured out for many.”

Again, everything shifts.

Wine had always been a symbol of joy, of celebration. But now it carries the mystery of **Divine Truth**, flowing not just into the mouth, but into the soul. It is His **wisdom**, His **faithfulness**, His **truth joined to love**—the essence of the Lord reaching out to meet human hearts.

This isn't performance. It's invitation.

In the warm, flickering light of that upper room, Jesus is gently replacing the memory of deliverance from Egypt with a **living meal of spiritual deliverance** for every soul. The story is no longer just about what happened long ago. Now it is about **what is happening right now**—in you, in me, in anyone who dares to say yes to love.

And what is He offering? Not just food and drink. Not ritual. Not religion.

He is offering **Himself**.

### **The Meal of Transformation**

Swedenborg describes this moment as a **transformation**, not an erasure. The Holy Supper is not a rejection of the Passover—it is its **fulfilment**. The symbols remain, but their meaning unfolds. The lamb becomes the Lord. The bread becomes His body. The wine becomes His truth. And the act of eating becomes a **sacred reception of His life into our own**.

This is more than memorial. It is **communion**—a mystical union, a spiritual infusion.

To eat the bread and drink the wine is to say with your whole being,

“Lord, I receive Your love into my heart. I receive Your truth into my mind. Come live within me.”

And when we do this—intentionally, reverently—we are not just remembering a meal. We are entering into the **living presence of the Risen Lord**, receiving His spirit into our own, and being drawn into the **new covenant** He offers to all who will have Him.

## A Universal Table

There is one more transformation worth noticing.

The Passover was for the people of Israel—an act of identity and tradition. But the Holy Supper... **this is for the world**. For all nations. All people. It is the Lord’s open table, transcending borders, history, ethnicity, and ritual.

The Lamb of God who took away the sin of the world now invites all of humanity into His house. Every time we share this meal in sincerity, we are sitting down at that same upper room table. We are dining not on memories, but on **mercy**.

This is a **meal of redemption**, yes—but it is also a **meal of transformation**.





The Holy Supper is not magic. It doesn't work apart from our hearts. But when we come with **hunger**—not just for food, but for truth, for love, for newness—then we are fed.

### **And So, We Come**

This Easter, as we prepare to remember the cross and the empty tomb, may we also remember the **table**.

The table where old symbols found new life.

The table where God's love became bread.

The table where sorrow was met with promise.

The table where the Passover became the path into Paradise.

The Lord is still inviting. Still knocking. Still saying,

“Come and dine. Come and live. Come and be one with Me.”

Let us come.

Let us eat.

Let us be made new.

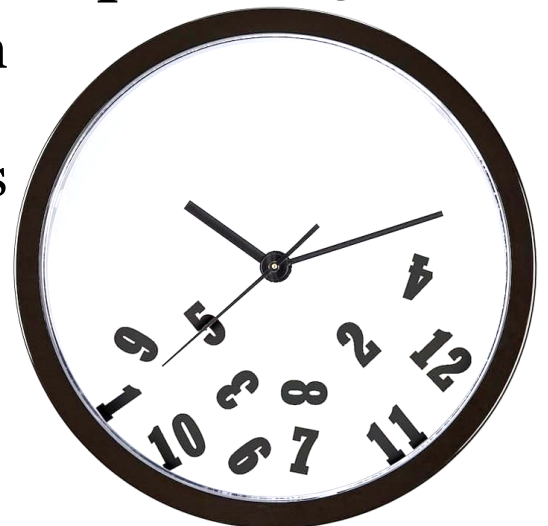
Wishing you a blessed and joyful Easter,

Howard

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### **Swedenborg Centre News—April 2025**

Wow! Another year has already begun and Easter is almost upon us again. Time just seems to fly, but where does it all go, what's it all for? Time enables us to be stretched out in the world of space. Time gives us the opportunity to exist for many years,



to enjoy myriads of experiences, to suffer, to think and to feel, to learn from actions, and learn about consequences, learn patterns, gradually discover meaning and purpose. We live in external time and space so extensively that we cannot help for all our thinking to gravitate to it and including space and time in all notions, even in our thoughts, considering thoughts as if they are external realities. Yet when we sleep and dream, we are constantly experiencing a psychological space, in which we find ourselves moving around, going over mountains, going along roads, flying, doing all sorts of things - but we are not in physical space, we don't get out of bed and float around, but are moving inside ourselves. Each night when we dream it's a different kind of scene that we come across. In the dream it's real scenery, it is real for us, and is something that is phenomenal, and experiential; we are really in some sort of place, but it is really a psychological space. Sometimes the scenery is pleasant and at other times it is most unpleasant, which demonstrates to us that there must be within us some bad places and some good places. We have to take notice of what these dreams are telling us because they are a faithful representation of our psychological country. They are describing something about our internal geography and the quality of the places that are there; and we have to become more accustomed to that internal space because it is the only dimension in which we can grow.

Swedenborg reminds us that in order to think spiritually, we must learn to think without regard for space and time, person or place. This is of course very challenging for us because to think of inner things by relating them to the

external world is such a habitual custom for us. Spiritual development requires transcending the constraints of space-time thinking and perceiving reality in non-temporal terms. It is just like the Israelites' journey out of bondage, crossing the Red Sea of psychological struggles into an unfamiliar inner wilderness. True understanding of reality lies beyond time, in the realm of eternal, non-spatial principles such as love, beauty, and truth, which exist without shape or temporal limits. By cultivating inner awareness and a higher state of being, we can begin to escape the limitations of linear time and enter a more profound, spiritual perception of existence.

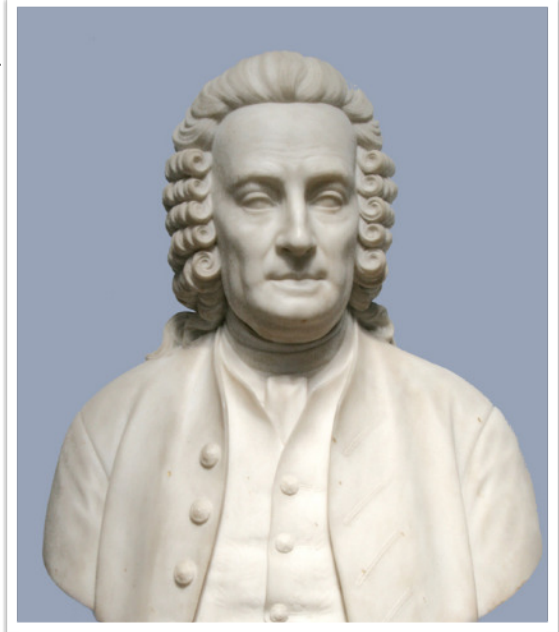
It is importance for us to engage in self-exploration, confronting our inner limitations, and developing a strong inner being through will, understanding, and knowledge. We need a sacred inner space (a temenos, a sacred enclosure) where higher wisdom can be received and cultivated, with which we can be guided toward higher consciousness and connection with our Real I (the heavenly proprium, a new will), which is our true spiritual essence. This kind of self-development is an active, disciplined journey requiring intentional effort, inner struggle, and alignment with divine principles.

**Joe**

The events over the next month are as follows (see website at [www.swedenborg.com.au](http://www.swedenborg.com.au) for news, latest event details, and Zoom links).

- Weekly **Swedenborg Readings** take place at **10am each Wednesday**. Explore the work on Regeneration with us.

- **15th April: study the Word with Rev Howard Thompson.** Note: We'll have one class this month. We will trial a new format and discuss how attendees would like to proceed in future classes.
- **Dr Groves Readings** will be at **noon & 7pm on Fridays.** Current topics are from the work "Spiritual Foundations."
- **Dr Maurice Nicoll** (reading "Psychological Commentaries...") will be held on the first and third **Thursdays** of each month, namely **October 3<sup>rd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>** and **November 7<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>**, always at **2pm.**
- **10am** monthly on the first and third **Saturday, 5th and 19th April**, join **Swedenborg Saturday discussion** on any topic you would like to bring, or simply join in whatever other bring to the table.



Swedenborg

**P.S. a sign recently found outside the Swedenborg Centre indicating the angels above are helping out:**



## **Loving the Good Within**

We've all been there. Maybe it's a neighbour whose political views make your blood boil. Or a friend who's slowly unraveling because of a drinking problem. Maybe it's that coworker who never seems to have a filter and says the rudest things at the worst times. Or perhaps it's an acquaintance who casually talks about cheating on their spouse, as if it were no big deal.

These moments test us. They make us want to recoil, to judge, or to shut down. And yet, according to Emanuel Swedenborg, these are the very moments when our spiritual calling becomes clearest—not to condone harmful behaviour, but to love the good within every person.

Swedenborg teaches something radical and deeply hopeful: every human being carries the potential for reform and spiritual growth. No one is born evil. Each of us, regardless of how lost we may appear, holds within us a spark of the Divine.

This means that our love should not be based on appearances or even actions alone. Instead, we are called to see beneath the surface—to love not the person as they appear, but the good that can live within them. In *The Doctrine of Charity*, Swedenborg writes, “To love the neighbour is not to love the person, but the good that is in the person.” (Charity 50)

This idea doesn't mean we excuse harm or turn a blind eye to injustice. True charity includes discernment and boundaries. But it also includes compassion, humility, and hope.



## Practicing Spiritual Charity

So how do we live this out in our daily lives? Here are some Swedenborgian principles that help us see—and love—the good within others:

1. **Separate Actions from the Person:** It's important to distinguish between someone's behaviour and their deeper spiritual potential. While actions may be harmful, we can hold hope for a person's ability to change and grow.
2. **Practice Compassion and Empathy:** People often act from places of pain, fear, or confusion. Empathy doesn't mean excusing wrongdoing, but it helps us remain open-hearted and spiritually grounded.
3. **Focus on Positive Qualities:** Even in those who struggle, there are often glimpses of goodness—kindness shown to a child, a moment of honesty, a desire to do better. Seeing these moments helps cultivate love over judgment.
4. **Pray for Guidance and Goodwill:** Ask the Lord to help you see others with divine eyes. Prayer opens our hearts and aligns our perception with heaven's love.
5. **Set Boundaries:** While Loving from a Distance Loving someone doesn't mean staying close to harm. Healthy distance can be an expression of both wisdom and love, especially when paired with goodwill and hope.
6. **Promote Justice with Mercy:** True love for others includes a desire for their reform. Justice and mercy are not opposites—they are partners. Calling others toward accountability, while maintaining love, reflects the Lord's balance of truth and compassion.



## The Lord Shows Us

Let me offer a biblical example that shines a light on this Swedenborgian principle.

In the Gospel of Mark (2:1-12), we read the remarkable story of the friends who lowered a paralysed man through the roof to bring him before the Lord. It's one of the most vivid scenes in Scripture—friends literally tearing through barriers to bring someone to healing.

But here's what's often missed: the Lord forgave the man's sins first. He didn't heal his body right away. He saw deeper—He saw the man's heart, and perhaps even more movingly, He saw the love and faith of his friends.

Swedenborg teaches that every detail of this story holds

spiritual meaning. The man's paralysis wasn't just physical—it represented a spiritual condition. And his friends? They represent those of us who are willing to **look past external afflictions**



**and brokenness** to connect with the deeper good in someone. They carried him on a "bed"—a symbol of doctrinal truths and shared loves—and let him down, not into despair, but into his own interiors, **into the presence of the Lord.**

This is what we are called to do when a friend or loved one seems “paralysed” by harmful behaviour, addiction, or misguided choices. We can't heal them ourselves—but we can carry them with love and faith. We can lift away the

barriers and “let them down” before the Divine, trusting that the Lord sees their inner potential and can say, “Your sins are forgiven. Rise, take up your bed, and walk.”

Swedenborg reminds us that love isn’t just a feeling—it’s a way of seeing, a way of choosing, and a way of living. When we choose to look for the divine spark in others, we invite that spark to grow—not only in them, but in ourselves.

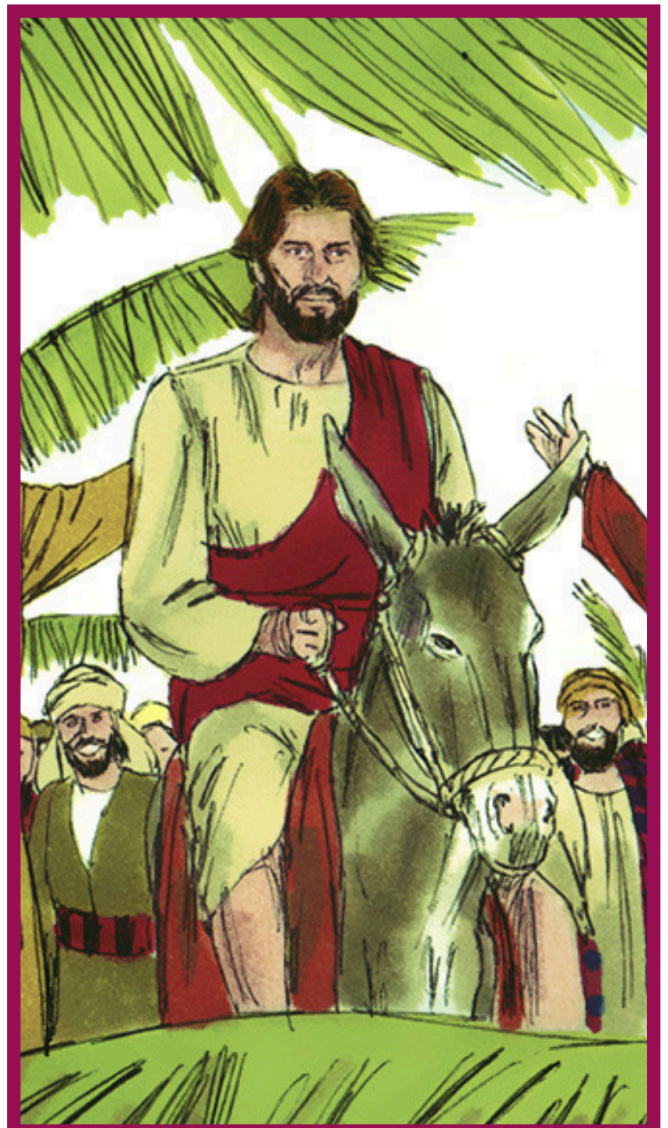
May you find the divine spark in everyone you meet. And better still, may you help them find the Divine spark within themselves.

Howard

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Some might wonder why the Lord did not simply impose His will on the people of Jerusalem when He entered “as a King.” Swedenborg explains: “The Lord does not compel a person to accept what flows in from Himself, but leads them in freedom; and so far as the person allows, He leads them by means of freedom to good.

(Arcana Coelestia #6472)





# NCIA Retreat 2026

Alexandra Park, Sunshine Coast, Queensland



**Expression of Interest  
NCIA Retreat 2026**

Please scan a QR code to register your interest or make a booking.

Bookings are not confirmed until a deposit is received.

## Thursday 15th to Monday 19th January

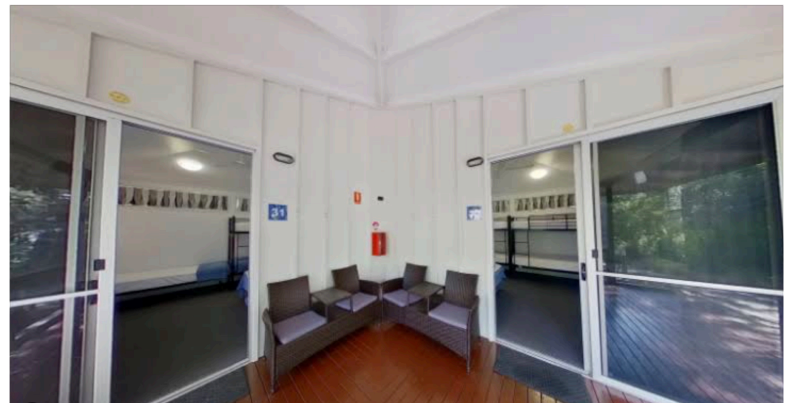
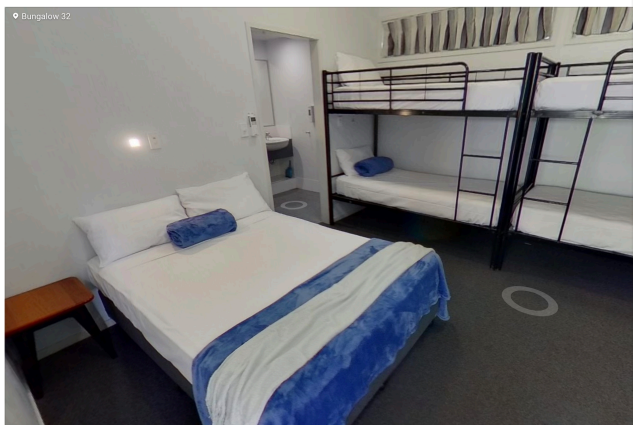
This retreat will be held from Thursday dinner to Monday 10.00am. Alexandra Park is located at Alexandra Headland within minutes walking distance to the beach.

The Bungalow accommodation is all air conditioned with ensuite bathroom, mini fridge, TV and a outside deck. Each room has a double bed, single bunk beds, or single bed and can sleep 5 or 6 people.

Twin share rooms (private room for two) are available but are limited so book in quickly.



**NCIA Retreat 2026  
Booking Form**



Example of bungalow rooms



**At the end of his struggles and trials [the Lord's human nature] united with his divine nature, so that it too became Jehovah. In heaven, then, people recognise no other Jehovah the Father than the Lord. Everything about the Lord is Jehovah.  
(Secrets of Heaven #1729)**



### **Minister's Contact Information and Office Hours**




**Rev. Howard A. Thompson**  
**Office Hours: 11:00 am - 4.00 pm**  
**Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday**

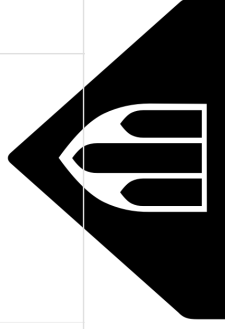
**Email: [revhathompson@gmail.com](mailto:revhathompson@gmail.com)**  
**Phone: 0432 357 475**

# April

2025

March							May						
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30	31												31

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	30	31	1	2	3	4
						
10.00am Service of Worship Including Holy Supper Rev. Howard A. Thompson	6	7	8	9	10	11
No Service	13	14	15	16	17	18
		RNC Committee 7:30pm	Bible Study 11.00		Good Friday Holy Supper 5:30pm	Swedenborg Saturday (Also the 5th)
Easter Sunday 10.00am Service of Worship Rev. Howard A. Thompson	20	21	22	23	24	25
						
	27	28	29	30	1	2
No Service						



# ROSEVILLE NEW CHURCH

