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ALL TIMES U.S. CENTRAL TIME

If you prefer to join via a link, find it on our web site on the day of the event, at <https://www.SwedLib.org>

Zoom: *The Parables* with Rev. Robert McCluskey

With many such parables he spoke the Word to them, as they were able to hear it; he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything to his disciples.

—Mark 4:34

In this two part course, we will take a close look at parables. Parables lie very much at the center of the Gospels, but can be found throughout the Hebrew Scriptures as well. We all know about parables – or do we? Outwardly, they seem to refer to a series of mundane and familiar objects and events: to vineyards and fields, to householders and stewards, to sheep, coins and spendthrift sons, to oil, water and wine, to seeds and sowers and soil, and many other things. For the most part, the literal sense of parables appear to be both memorable and entertaining – and in some cases, a bit threatening. We know what they say, but what do they mean?

September 3, 6 PM: Part 1

September 17, 6 PM: Part 2

Rev. Robert McCluskey holds a B.A. and M.A. in philosophy, with a focus on Greek philosophy, modern idealism, existentialism, and hermeneutics.

He is a graduate of the Swedenborg School of Religion and was ordained into the Swedenborgian Church of North America in 1984. He has pastored churches in Portland ME and NYC, and served on the denomination's Social Justice Committee, and as a representative to the National Council of Churches for 18 years.



Zoom: *The Divine Cobbler: Jakob Böhme*

with Dell J. Rose

Starting Thursday, July 23, 6 PM CST

Continuing July 30, August 6, 13, and 20

Jakob Böhme, the “Divine Shoe Cobbler,” stands as one of the most enigmatic figures in Western mysticism. His visionary theology fused Christian, alchemical, and Neoplatonic thought, shaping later esoteric traditions. This discussion explores Böhme’s central ideas—divine emanation, the interplay of light and darkness, and the mystical transformation of the soul. Examining his works, we trace his enduring influence on theology and philosophy.

July 30: *The Aurora Part I*

Jakob Böhme’s *Aurora* (1612) marks the genesis of his mystical thought, blending Christian theology with alchemical and Neoplatonic influences. This discussion explores the foundational themes of divine emanation, cosmic struggle, and spiritual regeneration within *Aurora*. Examining its symbolic structure and esoteric vocabulary, we trace Böhme’s vision of creation, human will, and the interplay between light and darkness in the divine order.

August 6: *The Aurora Part II*

Continuing the exploration of Jakob Böhme’s *Aurora*, this discussion delves into its deeper mystical structure and theological implications. We analyze Böhme’s vision of divine manifestation, the dynamic interplay of wrath and love, and the soul’s path to regeneration. Through close examination of his imagery and symbolism, we trace how *Aurora* lays the groundwork for his later esoteric writings and influence.

August 13: *The Aurora Part III*

Discussion continues on the text.

August 20: *Jakob Böhme, Swedenborg, and the Search for Universal Wholeness.*

This final discussion brings Jakob Böhme into conversation with Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772), tracing how both visionaries sought a theology vast enough to encompass the whole of creation rather than the solitary soul alone. For Böhme, the material world emerges as the outward signature



of an inner divine life, the visible unfolding of the Ungrund into nature; for Swedenborg, the doctrine of correspondences reveals every created thing as the embodiment of a spiritual reality, the cosmos itself ordered as a Grand Man mirroring the Divine.

Examining their parallel systems, we explore how each understood matter not a fall from spirit but as the manifestation of the Lord’s love and wisdom. In drawing the series to a close, we consider their shared longing for universal wholeness—a vision in which heaven and earth, light and darkness, and body and soul are reconciled within the life of God.

For this series we will be using the translation provided by Andrew Weeks; copies available.

Böhme, Jacob. *Aurora* (Morgen Röte im auffgang, 1612) and *Fundamental Report* (Gründlicher Bericht, *Mysterium Pansophicum*, 1620): Translation, Introduction, Commentary. Translated by Andrew Weeks. Aries Book Series 16. Leiden: Brill, 2013.



Dell J. Rose develops and hosts programs for the Swedenborg Library in Chicago. Dell holds the position of Swedenborg Doctoral Fellow with the Swedenborg Society in the United Kingdom, and he is a doctoral candidate at the Centre for the History of Hermetic Philosophy and Related Currents at the Universities van Amsterdam. His research focuses on the intersection of Western esotericism and political reform, particularly with Swedenborgianism in 19th century Britain.

The Twelve Gates: A Journey To The Heart of The Swedenborgian Tradition

with Dell J. Rose

The Twelve Gates is an immersive introduction to Swedenborgian spirituality, inviting students to journey through Emanuel Swedenborg's visionary theology as a pilgrim bound for the New Jerusalem. Weaving together biblical exegesis, theological reflection, and the imaginative world of medieval pilgrimage, the course uses the metaphor of "gates" to structure a sustained exploration of prophecy, the human self, the Word, heaven and hell, judgment, charity, and salvation.

The course is suitable for seekers who desire more than an introduction yet less than formal theological training. Its aim is not merely to present Swedenborg's ideas, but to accompany participants as they discern what it might mean, here and now, to live as citizens of the heavenly city.

In Summer 2026 we will continue *Twelve Gates*. Videos of previous presentations may be found on the Swedenborg Library Chicago's Youtube channel (search Swedenborg Library Chicago within Youtube.com to locate them.)

Please join us; your opinions will be essential to helping us establish this curriculum, and to help future souls join in their own procession to the Holy City.

Sundays @
3:30–4:30 PM CST
July 12 & 26;
August 9, 23;
September 13 & 27,
2026

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Qoheleth Among the Philosophers: A Critical Reading of Ecclesiastes, with Dell J. Rose

Zoom: Thursday, September 10, 6 PM

The Frame and the Cosmos (Ecclesiastes 1:1–4:16)

This session covers the superscription, the opening poem on nature's ceaseless cycles (1:4–11), the royal "experiment" in wisdom, pleasure, and wealth (1:12–2:26), the famous catalogue of times (3:1–8), and reflections on toil, oppression, and companionship. We open the higher-critical questions of authorship, dating, and persona and ask whether the rhythms of "a time to be born and a time to die" and "nothing new under the sun" represent a Hebrew sage's independent observation or a genuine resonance with Stoic cosmology.

Zoom: Thursday, September 24, 6 PM

Death, Joy, and the Final Word (Ecclesiastes 9:1–12:14)

The final movement confronts mortality directly: death as the common fate of wise and fool (9:1–12), the role of time and chance, prudent action amid uncertainty (9:13–11:6), the call to rejoice in youth and "remember your creator," the allegory of aging and dying (11:7–12:8), and the editorial epilogue (12:9–14). Here the Epicurean parallels are sharpest — the counsel to eat your bread with joy, the claim that "the dead know nothing," the absence of reward beyond the grave. We weigh whether Qoheleth's carpe diem is genuinely Epicurean ataraxia or something more anxious, and we use higher criticism to ask who added the pious closing frame and why.

Dell J. Rose develops and hosts programs for the Swedenborg Library in Chicago (see reverse panel.)



Founded in Chicago in 1877, the Swedenborg Library offers programs on spiritual topics and has on loan the works of 18th Century Swedish scientist and theologian Emanuel Swedenborg. Unlike the Christianity of his day, Swedenborg's theology emphasized an ecumenical, i.e. inclusive view of heaven. The Swedenborg Library is open Wednesdays and Fridays from 1-5 p.m., and by appointment.

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Swedenborg
LIBRARY

SUMMER 2026

Join our free Zoom programs:

WEDNESDAY, JULY 1 WILLAM BRUCE LECTURES IN NYC:

Time: 4 PM EST/ 3PM CST Zoom in the Library Hybrid:
Swedenborg & Abolitionism with Dr. Vincent Roy di Piazza & Carl Wennerlind Sulzburger Parlor, Barnard College, Columbia Univ.

THURSDAY, JULY 9: 6 PM CST Zoom. Wrap up to our *Book of Job* series, with Dell Rose.

SUNDAY, JULY 12: 3:30 PM CST Zoom. *Twelve Gates Study with Dell Rose.*

THURSDAY, JULY 23: 6–7:30 PM CST: Zoom: *Jakob Böhme: The Divine Shoe Cobbler*, with Dell Rose, Swedenborg Library

SUNDAY, JULY 26: 3:30 –5 PM CST: Zoom: *Twelve Gates Study.*

THURSDAY, JULY 30: 6 PM CST: Zoom: *Jakob Böhme: The Aurora*, with Dell Rose.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 6: 6 –7:30 PM CST: Zoom: *Jakob Böhme: The Aurora II with Dell Rose.*

SUNDAY, AUGUST 9: 3:30 PM CST Zoom. *Twelve Gates Study.*

THURSDAY, AUGUST 13: 6 PM CST: Zoom: *Jakob Böhme: The Aurora III*, with Dell Rose, Swedenborg Library

THURSDAY, AUGUST 20: 6:00 –7:30 PM CST: Zoom: *Jakob Böhme, Swedenborg and the Search for Universal Wholeness*

SUNDAY, AUGUST 23: 3:30 PM CST: Zoom: 12 Gates Study.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3: 6 PM CST: Zoom: The Parables Part 1 with Rev. Robert McCluskey

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10: 6 PM CST: Zoom: *Ecclesiastes, Part 1* with Dell Rose.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13: 3:30 –5 PM CST: Zoom: *12 Gates Swedenborg Study* with Dell Rose.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17: 6 PM CST: Zoom: *The Parables, Part 2* with Rev. Robert McCluskey.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24: 6 PM CST: Zoom: *Ecclesiastes, Part 2* with Dell Rose.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27: 3:30 PM Central: Zoom: *12 Gates Study* with Dell Rose.