

Church on the Hill - Swedenborgian

The Boston Society of the New Jerusalem (Swedenborgian) 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 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 he or she is absent, and where one can find comfort, healing, and normalcy when things are not going well.

Boston Society of the New Jerusalem

1816-2018

Historical Sketch

The Boston Society of the New Jerusalem (BSNJ) traces its origin to 1784, when two of its founding members attended a lecture by James Glen on the teachings of 18th-century Swedish theologian Emanuel Swedenborg at the Green Dragon Tavern in Boston, Mass. In 1818, the 12 founding members agreed to transition from private to public meetings, and on 15 August 1818, the society was established. Thomas Worcester served as lay leader until he became pastor in 1821. The society was incorporated by the Massachusetts legislature in 1823.

The group worshipped in various places throughout Boston, including a hall on Pond Street (now Bedford Street), Boylston Hall, and Pantheon Hall. In 1844, the society grew too numerous, and a church was built at its present location on Bowdoin Street in Beacon Hill, giving the church its colloquial name, Church on the Hill.

The original Gothic-style building stood from its completion in 1845 to 1964, when the high cost of maintenance and declining membership resulted in the decision to tear down the

building and replace it with one that would generate more revenue. The new building would be 18 stories high and house 146 apartments. BostonView Corporation was established (in Delaware) to hold title to and manage this real estate. The church reopened on 18 September 1966. Rev. George McCurdy became the new pastor a year later.