



**WELCOME**

TO THE

**WASHINGTON  
SOCIETY**

OF THE

**NEW CHURCH**

[www.theWNC.org](http://www.theWNC.org)

# Welcome to the Washington New Church

*Dear Friend,*

*Thank you for joining us today! I hope you had an enjoyable visit with us and will return for many more visits – for worship, classes, school or social activities.*

*All of our events and programs are open to everyone; you do not have to be a member to participate.\**

*Please note, the teachings of this church are based on the Bible (which we call “the Word”) as understood in the light of revelations given through Emanuel Swedenborg. Nothing would please us more than to introduce you to these wonderful teachings, which touch on all aspects of spiritual life and show how to resolve all of the difficulties in the literal sense of the Scriptures.*

*Please read on to learn more about this and when you have questions please feel free to ask any of us for help.*



*Rev. Michael Gladish, pastor*

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*\* Membership is only required for voting, and for holding office on the church's boards and certain committees*

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## About the Teachings of The New Church

Enclosed in this packet is an introductory pamphlet on what we believe and how we try to live. In the social hall you will find many similar pamphlets on specific topics, such as the true nature of the Lord, the spiritual sense of the Word, marriage, providence, and life after death. Please help yourself.

In addition you will find lots of information on our website at [www.theWNC.org](http://www.theWNC.org). One particular item you may appreciate under the “about us” tab is a simplified chart comparing traditional Christianity with our teachings. Or if you prefer a more eclectic view just Google Swedenborg on your computer, or go directly to the Wikipedia entry about him.

In general there are several concepts that distinguish us from other churches:

1. We teach that God is ONE, in essence and in person, and that the Lord Jesus Christ is that God in His own Divine Humanity.
2. We teach that the Word of God is holy because it has a symbolic spiritual sense throughout, and that the real meaning of every story is contained in that spiritual sense – which relates to our loves and thoughts.
3. We believe that salvation (spiritual health) is the result of a process of co-operation with the Lord, just as natural health is the result of living well.
4. We believe that true marriage is a spiritual bond that can last forever, and that married partners who truly love each other will continue as such in the next life.
5. We have more detailed teachings about life after death than any Christian church in the history of the world.

**Administrative Secretary & Pastors**

When you call or come to the church you will be greeted by our very versatile **secretary, Mrs. Bonnie Cowley.**

Bonnie can answer almost all your questions about the church or the school and can also set up appointments to address any of your needs. In addition she is our newsletter editor, our webmaster, our volunteer coordinator, and a part time teacher in the school. And if that's not enough she is a public notary. We love her dearly and so will you!



**Our senior pastor is the Rev. Michael Gladish.**

Mike came to us in 2009 following pastorates in Australia, California and Canada. His experience with church schools and his concern for the health and growth of this congregation were two of the qualities that appealed to us in calling him. Mike loves to share the teachings of the New Church with others and his affection for them is contagious. He is also our school principal, teaches in the school and serves the international church as a regional pastor for the south-east district of the United States.

**Our assistant pastor is the Rev. Michael E. Ferrell,** who

came into the ministry for his third career after serving in the US Army (active & reserves) for 32 years, and as an attorney at law in Washington state for 16 years. He and his wife, Janet, came to us in June of 2005. Michael's special love is teaching (Scripture Studies) in the school. He also loves to share the teachings of the New Church with enquirers (he himself found the church as an



adult). In addition Michael travels each month to several US location that do not have a resident pastor of their own.

## Principal “Uses” of the Washington New Church

### Worship

We worship the Lord together on Sundays at 11:00 am. Services include five or six hymns, many of which can be sung in four-part harmony, readings from Scripture and “the Writings” of Swedenborg, an illustrated children’s talk, adult sermon, prayers and blessings. *All are welcome.*



After the children’s talk the children are invited to attend our Sunday School, which is divided into classes of compatible age groups meeting in the school wing of the building. If you have any questions about this, just ask an usher.

Once a month (usually on the second Sunday of the month) we have an alternative, shorter, less formal worship service for families, also at 11:00 am. For this we meet in the social hall to allow for greater flexibility, and the music is generally led by guitars and other special instruments.

Once every 6 weeks or so, we offer communion with home-made unleavened bread and real wine. Communion is sometimes at the close of a regular service, and sometimes in a special evening service. We understand this to be a symbolic ritual representing our desire to partake of the Lord’s Divine love (the bread) and wisdom (the wine) and really incorporate them into our lives. This communion is open to all who sincerely wish to be so conjoined with Him.



There are other, special festival services throughout the year, including Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter and in June what we call “New Church Day.” For information about these spe-

cial events please call the church or consult the monthly newsletter and calendar – and come early, it can get crowded!

## Communication

***Have you seen our Website?*** [www.theWNC.org](http://www.theWNC.org) is our window to the world and features lots of useful information, including the “Echo”, the “Whisper”, and digital copies of our pastors’ sermons. Check it out!

***The ECHO*** is our monthly church newsletter including, as a pull-out, the monthly calendar of events and duty rosters for our volunteers. In this publication you will find pastoral messages from our ministers, *a complete listing of sermon and class topics for the month*, announcements and explanations of monthly events, and church news of all kinds.

In addition, on Sunday mornings we always print a weekly update to *The ECHO*, called ***The Whisper***. You may be handed one of these by an usher on your way out of a worship service, or you can pick one up in the social hall.

And, of course, we have our church school – a full time elementary and high school program for JK through grade 10.

The school also has its own weekly newsletter called the WNC ***E-News***, published electronically every Thursday during the school year. You can read more about the school in its own section of this booklet – beginning on page 10.

## Adult Instruction

The Washington New Church is pleased to offer a variety of learning and discussion opportunities each month during the school year. One popular forum is the occasional Friday or Saturday dinner when we gather at the church at 6:30 or 7:00 pm for a meal followed by a class or lecture at about 8:00 pm. Cost for the meal is nominal and all (high school age and up) are most welcome to attend both dinner and the talk.

Sometimes the meals are pot-luck; sometimes they are prepared by volunteer teams of women or men in the church kitchen. Either way they provide excellent opportunities to mix and get to know one another. The presentations by the ministers or special guests, take about an hour and cover a wide range of issues relating church teachings to daily life.



In addition there are several home-based study groups that cater to special interests. One currently meets over lunch on Sundays after worship. Another meets every other week on a Wednesday evening, usually to discuss Scripture readings or one of the doctrinal books written by Swedenborg. Still another meets every second Monday night to discuss the whole broad theology of the church, and yet another meets every other Wednesday morning usually to discuss a specific book or set of teachings of the church.

Finally, from time to time special newcomer classes are held, specifically organized to answer basic questions about our beliefs. Check the current *ECHO* for all the current listings.

Please note, that the pastors are also happy to schedule private visits or consultations any time on request.

### **Groups & Committees**

As in any church a lot is done in small groups and committees. We have an all-volunteer board of trustees for legal and financial matters, a pastor's council for policy and programming issues, a facilities committee for long-range planning and building improvements, an outreach committee for advertising and promotions, a school board, a hospitality committee, and various other ad-hoc committees as required.





There's a women's auxiliary, called *Theta Alpha Guild*, a chancel guild, an usher's group, and even a sort of ad hoc social committee, not to mention all the men and women who help with fund raising events and church maintenance.

Many of these groups meet monthly, and new members are always welcome. Again, getting involved on this level is an excellent way to meet and get to know others.

## Membership

Although all are welcome to participate in the events and programs of the Washington New Church there are several steps to actual voting membership. Baptism into the distinctive faith of the New Church is the first step, signifying a commitment to the teachings that are the basis of all we do. Baptism may be done in a public or private ceremony, and does not involve total immersion. We are pleased to offer baptism to both adults and children.



The next step is to become a member of the world-wide General Church of the New Jerusalem, our parent body. By doing this a person becomes eligible to join any local congregation, such as the Washington New Church, but remains a member of the general body no matter where he or she may live.



Finally, by signing the local roll book a person becomes eligible to vote and hold office on any level of the congregation's boards or committees. There is no public ceremony for this, but we are thrilled to have new members join us and we welcome all who live within the Washington area to consider doing so.

When you are ready, just contact either pastor or the church secretary and we will set all the arrangements in motion. If you'd like to see the details of what you're getting into you

may of course review the church's by-laws, but most importantly you may wish to consider one of our newcomers' or inquirers' classes.

## **Our School**

The Washington New Church School (WNCS) began with a



small kindergarten meeting in a private home and has grown to full capacity with around 50 students from Junior Kindergarten through tenth grade.

We are just about to begin a major building and renovation project so we can expand our programs and welcome more students from the surrounding community.

Our approach to education is based on the belief that parents and teachers work together for the success of the whole child. We integrate national standards into a spiritually based curriculum. The school is focused and strong because of the underlying New Church religious foundation that is part of all we do. Students learn to think in a secure, hands-on, challenging school environment that covers all aspects of a child's healthy development.

For more general information about WNCS, a school brochure is included in this packet. You may want to visit our website at [www.theWNC.org](http://www.theWNC.org) to get an overview of programs and contact information. We welcome you to take a tour and visit classrooms to see us in action. Applications for an upcoming year in grades one through nine are open until April 30<sup>th</sup> and for J-K and Kindergarten until August 1<sup>st</sup>. We also keep a waiting list. Any family with an interest in New Church education is welcome to apply.

## **A Brief History of the Washington New Church**

The roots of this congregation go all the way back to 1846 when it was officially called “The Washington Society of the New Jerusalem Church.” By 1908 most of its members had affiliated with a new organization called “The General Church of the New Jerusalem” based in Philadelphia, and services were being held in the District in members’ homes. The first visiting pastor to begin regularly serving the group was the Rev. Alfred Acton. That was in 1910. He continued to serve the congregation from Philadelphia until 1952.

At that point the church obtained its



first resident pastor, the Rev. Dandridge Pendleton, who served here for 6 years and helped to consolidate the group’s resources with a view to owning their own building and property. Mr. Pendleton was followed

by the Rev. Frederick Schnarr, who led the congregation through an unprecedented era of growth and development. In 1959 they purchased a church at 2800 Douglas St. NE in the District where they continued to worship until December, 1964. Then, realizing that the potential for further development there was limited, they bought approximately 10 acres of land at our present location and began to plan a new building with the vision of a distinctive church community surrounding it. This building, including the present sanctuary and original classrooms, was dedicated in November, 1965 (when most of the surrounding area was farmland and you could still ride a bicycle down the middle of Enterprise Rd.)

Between 1965 and 1968, with the help of generous church friends, nearly 28 more acres of land were purchased including two houses adjacent to the church. And in January, 1972 another 57 acres were added to the development so that alto-

gether approximately 100 acres was dedicated to the church community project.

Rev. Schnarr stayed until the summer of 1977, when he was called to other work, but during his time not only was the church community established but the school began to grow and flourish. Since that time there have been four other pastors, now including Rev. Gladish, and a succession of assistant pastors, many of whom had their first assignments and early mentoring in the ministry here.

Present (official) membership of the congregation is about 100 adults, of whom 39 live in the community. But only a small portion of the land has been developed so far, and a new subdivision is in the works now, with twelve half acre lots ready for immediate sale. Ask to see a large aerial view of the project if you are interested.

### **Acton Park**

In order to do the community development described above it was necessary for the church members to establish a separate legal entity to conduct the required business. This was done in May of 1964 with the incorporation of Acton Park, named for the Rev. Alfred Acton mentioned above. It is this corporation that is currently offering new lots for sale.

Any member of the Washington New Church is eligible to become a member of the AP Corporation and to serve on its board of directors. The pastor is, *ex officio*, president, and a copy of the bylaws is available from him or from the church secretary. However you do not need to join the corporation to purchase a lot or own a home in the community.

### **Finding Your Way**

#### **In our Church & School Rooms**

On the next page of this brochure you will find a map of the floor plan of our present facility. This will help you find your way around on your next visit.

Note that the classrooms are marked for Sunday school groups. During the weekday these rooms are assigned to other ages and classes based on space needs. Also, during the week please use what is called the “School Entry Bell Door”, the one with the red awning, as this is where our secretary can meet you, and where there is a doorbell in case you find the entrance locked.

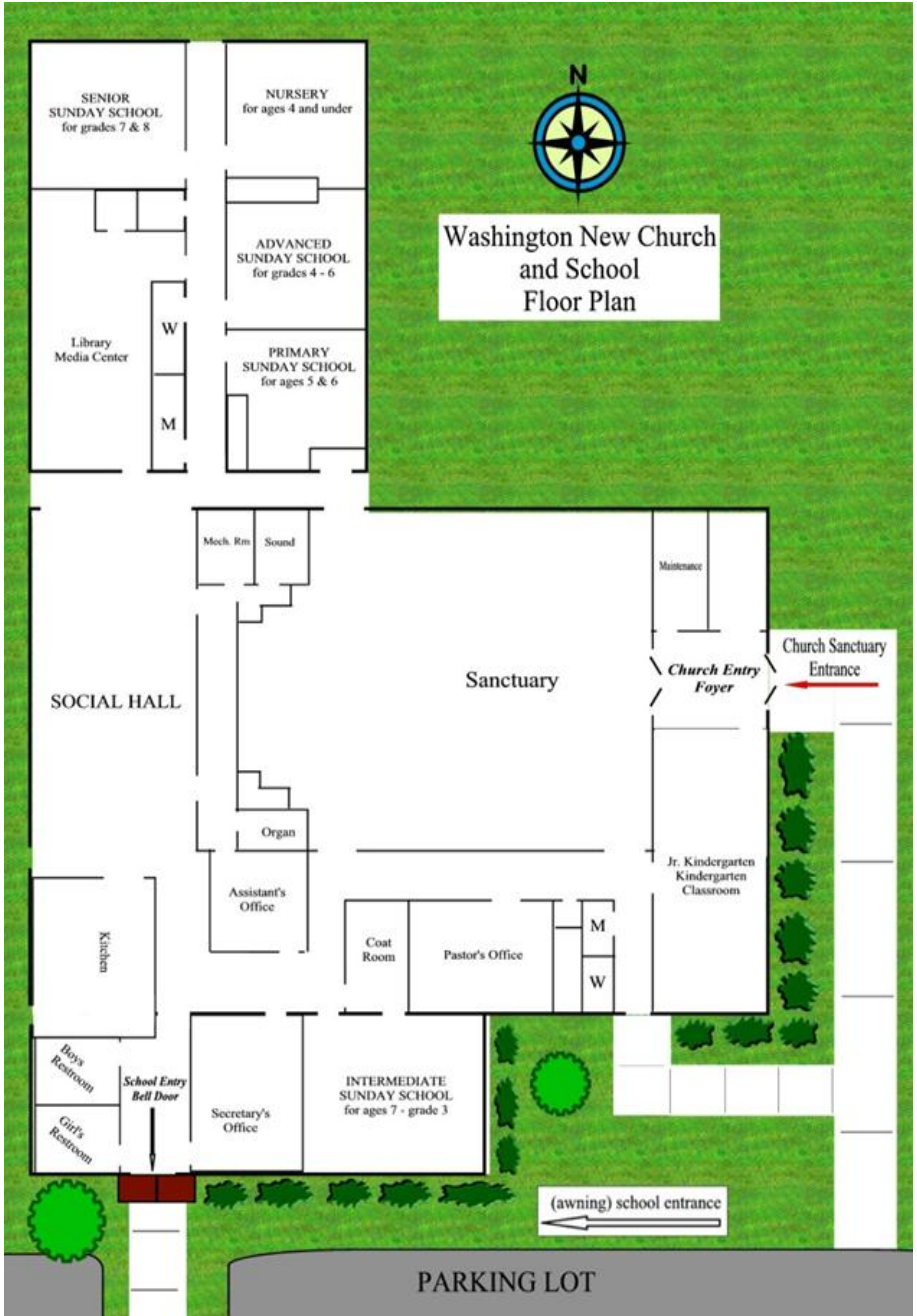
**CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE  
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