

Summer 2016

ECHO ECHO

Newsletter of the
Washington Church of the New Jerusalem

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Dear Friends,

OKAY, now it really is summer and the usual summer things are afoot: gardening, vacation trips, summer camps, and recreation in general. If you haven't already made plans to attend a church

camp this summer, one of the best is only a few hours away in the Laurel Mountains just east of Pittsburgh.

Once called Peterkin, now Jacobs Creek, this is an all ages family camp that is really more like a resort than a camp. Accommodations are “motel” style in a lovely shaded park with indoor and outdoor facilities, including a swimming pool. The program is built around doctrinal presentations and discussion, and includes plenty of fun recreational activities. This year’s camp runs from Sunday to Wednesday, July 24th – 27th, our own Brian Smith will be on staff, among others, and *space is still available*.

Full details are at <http://jacobscreekcamp.alotspace.com/>.

About Summer Holidays:

Perhaps you all know the teachings about the benefactions, obligations and diversions of charity? These are explained in two main places in the Writings, TCR 425-434 and the Doctrine of Charity 184-196. In both places the readings are preceded by a general definition of charity, most simply in TCR 422 where we read, “Charity itself is to act justly and faithfully in the office, business and employment in which one is engaged, and towards those with whom he has any dealings.”

Benefactions, then, “are all the good things which a person who is in charity does, in freedom, outside the scope of his occupation.” These include “giving to the poor and relieving the needy – but with prudence!”

Obligations, also called duties, fall into three categories, public, domestic and private, and include the payment of tithes and taxes, the responsibilities of marriage, and the fulfillment of any other personal commitments.

Finally, *recreations*, or *diversions* “are various enjoyments and pleasures of the senses, useful for recreating the mind.” These include all sorts of social interactions, concerts, plays, reading, walking, singing, dancing, even games of dice or physical work if it serves to divert attention from the stresses of one’s occupation. We’re talking about *vacations* here, folks, and the point is that they are not just pleasant but *necessary* (see Charity 191).

One thing the doctrines note, though, is that a person in true charity does none of this stuff for its own sake, but only to be refreshed for the regular work of life. AND he (or she) will do it all in the sphere of the church and its teachings (TCR 434). This is what we used to call “distinctive New Church social life,” a social life that is rooted in the truths of the heavenly doctrines.



So, what are YOU up to this summer? Hope you are going to get a break? Hope you are going get away someplace? Good for you! Go and relax so you can come back refreshed, with new energy and a new perspective on your work. Remember, *it's part of your religion to do this!*

Meanwhile...

Don't forget that the church still has its bills to pay all summer! There's no need to be concerned about this, though, if you sign up for automatic monthly donations through our e-giving site, at www.e-giving.org/washingtonchurch. The best way to do this is to designate a certain amount that will be deducted from your bank account – the same way many of us do for our mortgages, utilities and other routine expenses. That way you'll never miss a donation and the amount will be in your budget.

All the instructions are on the website, but if you need help Bonnie can send you a detailed list that walks you through it. Then you can go away knowing that it will all be taken care of while you are on vacation, and everyone will benefit.

June 19th Banquet:

Finally I'd like to thank Richard Glenn once again for coming from the Bryn Athyn College to address us last month on the topic of Young Adults in the Church. In a thought provoking presentation based on the results of a survey of young adults associated with the church Richard reminded us of some typical characteristics of “Millennials” and gave us a lot of encouragement about how we can engage, connect with and empower them to be more involved in the church. (Incidentally, this nicely coincided with the recent election of two new young adult members, Kira Zuber

and Ben Glenn, to our church board of trustees.) He also counseled patience, as young adults work hard to find their way through years of costly education and get started in their careers.

We had a good crowd for the banquet, which was delightful in its own right, and the address stimulated a lot of useful discussion.

Have a great summer, everyone!



Sermon Topics for July & August, 2016

As we have done for several years now, we will not publish detailed listings of our sermon topics during the summer but will instead try to sustain a **general theme** that will be both inspirational and informative.

This summer's theme will be "Our Connection to Heaven," and will include such issues as our associate spirits, our gift of revelation about heaven, the importance of the Word as a medium of connection with heaven, and much more. Your suggestions are welcome.

We begin, however, on July 3rd with the topic of patriotism and will examine the best and worst forms of it as revealed by the Lord in the heavenly doctrines.

From the BoT:

1. The Board of Trustees met on June 15, 2016. New members were welcomed, and Board Officers were elected as follow:
 - a. Chair – Steve Ball
 - b. Vice-Chair – Kathy Johns
 - c. Secretary – Sharon Cooper
 - d. Treasurer – Brent Hyatt
 - e. School Board Liaison – Kira Zuber

2. Contributions and fundraising continue to be an important topic, as we are anticipating a substantial deficit for FY16.
3. Lincoln Smith provided updates to the playground relocation and improvement, and the Board approved proposed plans, pending confirmation of existing funds allocated for the building renovation.
4. The Board will reconvene in September. Please contact any member of the Board with concerns, questions, or comments.

Greetings!

A monthly note about welcoming people at church

Check out the Competition!

How do folks at other churches welcome visitors? How does that feel? What are their services like?

Knowing the answers to these questions can help us in the New Church understand what a typical visitor might be expecting when he or she attends here for the first time. Not that we should copy others, but we should try to understand their perspective.

So, once again, I remind you that summer is a great time to do this if you happen to be on vacation anyway, or you could take a friend and do it as a social, recreational exercise right near home. Either way, I would love to hear about your experiences, and what you learn. - MDG

Thank You!

At the end of the school year the faculty and staff of the Washington New Church School were each presented with a lovely card that enclosed a note of appreciation as well as a cash gift.

Though we do love what we do here we also really appreciate the thoughtful recognition from the congregation.

Thanks! – WNCS Teachers and Staff

Special Events in July, 2016

Please see the calendar insert for routine events and listings of various summer camps and all three pastors' holiday times.

Key volunteers are unavailable this year so there will be NO official commemoration of US Independence Day on the 4th this year in Acton Park. Instead we encourage everyone to participate in "outside" community events or maybe spend some time on the national mall. Of course you are welcome to use Acton Park or the church grounds for your own family events.

Here at the WNC we are still hoping to host a STEM summer camp for 5th & 6th graders from the 18th to the 22nd, and on Saturday, the 30th, for those who care about Acton Park we have scheduled a work party to clear trails, repair bridges, and do other chores that will keep our park in good condition. (See p.8)

Floor polishing throughout the building will take place from the 25th to the 29th, so remember, you *may* not be able to access specific rooms during that time.

Are We on the Right Track?

An editorial

"We are allowed to see divine providence from behind but not face to face, and when we are in a spiritual state, not in a materialistic state. Seeing divine providence from behind but not face to face is seeing it after the fact but not before; and seeing it when we are in a spiritual state and not in a materialistic state is seeing it from heaven and not from this world." ~ Emanuel Swedenborg, DP 187

The end of a church and school year is always a time to look back at the year's successes, accomplishments and failures and ascertain whether or not we are moving in a direction consistent with our mission and goals so we can plan for the future. Looking at the quote above, however, it occurs to me that the important thing about looking at divine providence from behind is how we look at

the past. Are we looking at it from the world or from heaven? Are we looking at the past from a materialistic state or from a spiritual state?

This is a hard question to ask ourselves since it is very hard to know what our “state” is at any given time. But we can try to look for the good. However, many of us mostly see the scary stuff: our rapidly changing school, our financial deficit, disappearing volunteers and smaller attendance at church functions.

Perhaps, with an affirmative attitude – from a less materialistic view – we will be able to see the good and get a glimpse of the Lord’s leading.

As for the church congregation... there has been a lot of change, not just change in our facilities but change in our music and services, change in our attitudes towards newcomers and the addition of new members and congregants. Yes, we are a bit smaller than we were several years ago, but change is hard and I like to think that the Lord is guiding us gently through these changes and preparing us to grow in ways we never imagined.

And the school?... I am lucky to have the pleasure of taking new families on tours through the school and to see the school from new eyes on a regular basis. I get to show them the busy classrooms, the lovely art – art that depicts not only earthly natural wonders but also stories from the Word. I get to talk to them about our philosophy and yes, our church, and they get to see the smiling, multicultural faces of the children in our care. Most visitors come away being delighted by what they see and they are only seeing the surface.

“The mission of the Washington New Church School is to provide spiritual, moral and academic instruction so that the whole child is educated... Our Lord’s Word is the framework we use to achieve this, and the New Church teachings drawn from His Word are integrated into every aspect of school life.” *This is still a living mission of the school, its supporters, staff and teachers.*

Yes, we have fewer and fewer native church children in our school and this leaves the burden of support on our members and support-

ers who may no longer have children in the school. But I invite any of you (even if you don't have children in the school) to come for a tour during a regular school day. See for yourself the sweet children we have been charged with. See for yourself what your physical and emotional support and yes, dollars, are doing.

We can't know exactly where the Lord is leading us but we can look back at where He has led us; we can look for the good and be grateful for His leading.

Bonnie Cowley

Acton Park Work Party

Clean up Day - Saturday, July 30th

10:00am - 2:00pm

- Come on out with shovel and clippers in hand -

Wystan Simons is organizing this on behalf of Acton Park Board



Afterwards enjoy a dunk in Simonses' pool to cool off!

Local Business Tip: Need to mail a package but tired of UPS store prices? I would highly recommend Parcel Express - behind Hilltop Plaza shopping center in Bowie (down from The Cakery). His prices are always better than UPS store in Bowie. Just thought I would share information about a good business. - Janna Zuber

SUMMER



Hair gets lighter, Skin gets darker. Water gets warmer. Nights get longer. Music gets louder. Life gets better.
~Two rays of sunshine~



On Friday, June 17th, **Curt Moore, Jr. (CJ)** graduated from Kennedy Krieger High School. CJ has been attending Kennedy Krieger schools for the past 10 plus years and they have been very instrumental in his growth & development. CJ also received Honorable Discharge from the Central Maryland Young Marine unit, and that's not all! He won a Michael Cardin Scholarship this year and will use the funds to take a series of videography classes to obtain a Certificate. He was awarded the Bernard Ceo Leadership Award (named after a former KK high school staff member that was killed in Iraq). He is the highest ranked Young Marine at Kennedy Krieger High School. He has received the President's Volunteer Service Silver Award for 189 community service hours (Young Marines). Mom and Dad are very proud of CJ and all of his accomplishments. Wow, CJ, we're all really impressed! Well done, and congratulations!



Congratulations to our own **Cindy Hernandez** who graduated with a 4.0 GPA from RICA of Baltimore on June 3, 2016. Cindy gave the valedictory speech, received some special honors, performed a duet and was part of a hand-bell choir at the ceremony. We are all very proud of your hard work, Cindy!



WNCS had its own list of graduates: Graduating from 8th grade – **Siri Du-bois, Carl Martin, Ladun Ogbara** and **Charlotte Radcliffe** (with honors!).

Our tenth grade graduates were: **Paul Kazeem, Emily Martin** and **Timothy**

Radcliffe. All three 10th grade students gave their traditional speeches at graduation. A separate booklet has been published with these speeches as well as the 8th grade parent address and remarks by the principal – Brian Smith. A few hard copies have been printed and are available at the church or by request. An electronic version is available on our website www.theWNC.org or upon request to the secretary – bonnie.cowley@washnewchurch.org



Lauren Ball, Astri Hernandez and **Oskar Simons** were all named on the Third Term Honor Roll at ANC in Bryn Athyn. Congratulations on your hard work; we're proud of you!

Also from ANC, Kyle Cole graduated from the high school there. Not sure what his future plans are but his mom Nancy says he's taking a "Gap year" like the president's daughter ☺.

Sara Smith spent the better part of a week in the Bryn Athyn area helping out while daughter **Savanna** was recovering from having her tonsils out. Her surgeon said they were some of the largest he had ever seen in his many years of practice. Hey, Savanna, if you're going to do something, do it well. Way to go! Hopefully you also had the fastest recovery he had ever seen, too, and are feeling much better now.

From **Dorothy Radcliffe**: "While **Bill** was in New Hampshire attending a memorial service for his cousin, I took the opportunity to fall backwards off of a bosu ball at the gym resulting in a rather severe concussion and the services of EMT's and an ambulance to PG Hospital. While there, **David and Heather Radcliffe** and **Laura Gurney** took the job of overseeing my needs and keeping

me company.” Well, that was an adventure! I hope you never repeat it and are feeling like your old self again.

Jenny Smith is sporting a cast after surgery on her ankle to remove a loose plate. That should make you a bit more comfortable! Our friend **Bill Kingdon** has been receiving injections to his knees to cushion the bone-on-bone joint. We hope this helps you and brings you more freedom to get around! But there’s good news for Bill. His son **Liam Kingdon** has returned from Germany with his wife Dawn and 2 daughters. They will be staying with Bill while they find a house of their own. Welcome back Liam!

Speaking of healing, our friend **Mary Cooper** seems to be doing really well with her new hip. It’s great to see you up and around and moving easily, Mary!

Sara Smith was also able to fly out to Glenview (Illinois) and spend some special one on one time with her centenarian mother while other local relatives were out of town on vacation. Not many of us can say we’ve done that, Sara. You are blessed!

From **Deena Odhner**: “**Amy, Jerry and I** visited Wilmington, North Carolina where **Joe Civitello and Eva Odhner Civitello** moved after Joe retired from the ARMY. **Nic, Maddy and Tommy** who just turned 3 years old are delightful grandkids. The household includes 3 dogs, a rabbit and chickens-to-be. An easy after school activity is going to the ocean to swim and play in the surf - just 15 minutes away. It is a treat to have them so near --- as compared to Anchorage, Alaska.” Why don’t any of my kids live so close to a beach?

“Down, down,---down the rabbit hole with Alice. A large and enthusiastic audience happily suspended belief and followed her wild adventures in Wonderland. As if her encounters with the White Rabbit, “Oh my stars and whiskers!” or the Cheshire Cat, “Oh, we’re all mad here!” were not sufficient warning, the illogic of the Mad Tea Party (poor dormouse) and the sheer lunacy of the Lobster Quadrille (poor snail) should have come as no surprise to anyone. The cast, which doubled as the stage and lighting crew, under the excellent direction of **Mrs. Sprinkle**, did an outstanding job, aided and abetted by **Mrs. Stillman**’s guidance with props,

costumes, and scenery, and assistance from many others, both faculty and non. As the school's parting gift to the Society at the conclusion of the academic year, Alice in Wonderland said "Thank you!" from all of us here at WNCS. Please come back next year."

– **Carole Waelchli**

From **Becca Smith**: "I attended the screening in Bryn Athyn of the rough cut of **Ayisha Synnestvedt's** movie, *The Amazing Interlude*. It is a love story set in World War I Belgium and features familiar faces from Bryn Athyn and Kempton, PA and Mitchellville. Our very own **Justin Ball** is the lead man. The next version will be ready sometime this fall, and we are working on getting a screening here at the church after that."

New Church Day Celebrations: On Saturday, June 18th, we were treated to a delicious cold banquet on beautifully set and flowered tables. Following this feast, our own **Richard Glenn** (WNCS Alumni) made a special trip down from Bryn Athyn to speak to us about his generation (Millennials) and the church. Richard is a pleasure to listen to, and I found his talk very encouraging! Thank you so much Richard, and it was nice to see **Sonja Kistner** (Mike and Ginny's granddaughter) who came with Richard.

Our **New Church Day Service** focused on the revelation of the



Holy City New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, and featured impressive props some of which the children helped place and distribute. The Chancel Flowers by Erin Stillman were exquisitely beautiful! Following that there was

the annual distribution of gifts to the children and then a potluck picnic on our new field right next to the church. It was lovely (as always) to see our friends from Baltimore; the McCallister and Buick families!

If you have a chance, take a peek at the east end of our building (the old front door). **Brad Johns and Aubrey Hernandez** have been doing a lot of landscape gardening there and it looks really nice!