

September 2016

ECHO ECHO

Newsletter of the
Washington Church of the New Jerusalem

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Dear Friends,

We are beginning a new school year at the church with a lot of new hope and new ideas. In addition to all the usual things, like the first days of school, the “Back to School” night for parents, and the first committee meetings of the year, one special event this month

is the program on Friday night, the 23rd, following a prepared supper at the church. On this evening you will hear the truly wonderful and inspiring story of our “new” friend, the Rev. Dr. Bernita Babb, who will tell you about her discovery of the New Church and what it has meant to her to learn and apply the doctrines in her life. I’ll introduce this presentation with a brief review of key talking points on “How to Explain the New Church to Newcomers.”

Come and get to know Rev. Babb and see why she is so impressed with these teachings and what the New Church has meant to her after a lifetime in the Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal and Reformed Christian Churches.



Then, on the 30th and through that weekend all of our high school young people are invited to travel to Kempton, PA (about a three hour drive) to participate in a special program for teens from at least four other congregations. This is not just for WNCs students but

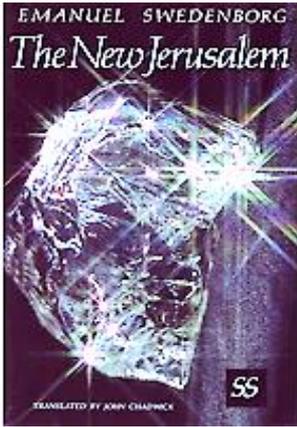
any New Church oriented high schoolers in the area. See the flier on the church bulletin board for more details.

The Men’s Retreat in October

Currently we have 16 men signed up for this event and we could take one or two more. Please note, *we are NOW collecting the balance of \$135 each needed to pay for the rental house for the weekend.* We’ll discuss food later. Please pay Mike, thanks!

Doctrinal Study

This fall a small group of church members will begin a new study of the book, *The New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine*. We will meet roughly every two weeks on Wednesday mornings at the Gladish home and we will follow a syllabus that will take us through 20 sessions from September 7th until June 7th. Each session will cover from 7 to 17 pages at the most, with supplemental notes I will prepare for each reading.



This is a fundamental book of all the basic doctrines that should lead to a lot of interesting discussion and application. But here's the thing: not many people can gather midweek in the daytime, and even if you could your travel might be prohibitive. *So I am offering this same course to anyone who wants it*, and you can read along at home, join the group by telephone if that appeals to you, answer questions by e-mail if that appeals, or just know that you are part of a group

reviewing these teachings together.

It has been years now since we have been able to meet regularly for “society” doctrinal classes. Yet there is something powerful about reading and discussing the same doctrines together as a congregation. For one thing this builds bonds of mutual appreciation and understanding of specific topics. For another it helps to establish a unifying connection of our members with the heavens. But simplest of all it allows us to address various congregational issues in the clear light of the doctrines, and develop a way of thinking about these things that is in keeping with those doctrines.

If this interests you, let me know and I will provide you with the course outline and reading schedule along with the introductory chapter of notes so you can get a feeling for how it will go. If you need a book I have some second-hand copies available. If you want a new copy I can tell you where to get it. Let's do this, and see how it can impact our lives.

Mike Gladish

Pastor's Council September 20th at 8:00 PM

This year's Council – which is a sort of “focus group” to test ideas and get input of all kinds for leadership of the congregation – consists of ten members, an equal number of men and women from a variety of age groups and other demographics. They are: -

Mary Cooper
Marie Kazeem
Lincoln Smith

Cynthia Harvey
John Kern
Stewart Smith
Patrick Sweeney

Carina Heinrichs
Kim Maxwell
Joseph Sprinkle

I have told these folks that they are NOT responsible for calling you this year to get your opinions on the issues, but I do hope that YOU will contact one of them if you would like to be heard on any particular church concern.

Topics for the September 20th meeting – in addition to any that YOU may suggest – are as follows: -

- A full discussion of the monthly family services. Did you know that attendance on those Sundays is lower than average – for adults and children? Is it time to rethink this?
- Brief discussion of fall plans and the 3 ministers' teaching, preaching and travel schedules.
- Rationale and practical matters related to moving the school playground to the area just beyond the old main entrance to the church, near the remote parking lot.
- Recorded music for church services – including hymns?! The simple truth is that we have to start experimenting with this now, before we have a crisis. Our two organists can't continue forever....
- The future of our high school. It's complicated, but changing demographics in the school suggest the need for new resolve – or new ideas.
- The Open Word in the sanctuary: can we just leave it open all the time now, please? – Even at the end of our services?

From the Principal

“Reverence, worship and praise to the Lord ...bring us into a state where something divine can flow in and be felt. This is because by these activities we are removing that focus on self which prevents the Divine inflow and acceptance. [By these activities our heart is softened and humbled]” *Divine Love and Wisdom* 335

Welcome to a new school year! Welcome especially to the folks who are brand new to the Washington New Church School community! I encourage all of you who are returning students and families to make a special effort to connect with and to include the newer folks.

Our school theme this year (and recitation book) is built around the question phrased in Micah 6: “what does the Lord require of you?”

Let’s aspire to an invigorating answer to this question. Each school year is a new opportunity to set and develop patterns. Let’s use this opportunity to extend respect to the all those we deal with.

Respect begins with respect to the Lord. Respect to the Lord is often called “reverence” or “praise.” A full and rich respect to the Lord softens us and allows us to also respect those around us because it frees us to let go of the brittle pride and fears which spur us to negative behavior.

In a similar way, attitudes and behaviors of respect to those around us seem to go along with respectful attitudes and behaviors to ourselves.

Each summer we distribute handbooks which outline procedures and policies which are meant to draw lines around the various situations which can arise at a school. But our goal isn’t just to memorize and blindly follow a list of rules. Our goal is to delight in our school environment and make it a thriving setting where mutual respect is assumed. What an opportunity each one of us has to show respect and love to the other students, families, community members and teachers. And what a difference this can make when a whole community aspires to these goals.

As the prophet Micah writes, “what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy and to humble yourself to walk with God?” These are simple, attainable attitudes and actions which give the Lord an opportunity to bless us deeply.



Mondays Study Group: Our by-weekly discussion group has decided to study The Four Doctrines (the Lord; Holy Scripture; Life;

and Faith). We meet at 8:00 pm every other Monday at George and Mary Cooper's. You are welcome to join us. We meet on Monday, August 29 to discuss Divine Providence 322 - 330. We expect to finish DP very soon. Contact me if you have any questions. Rev. Michael E. Ferrell. [\(301\) 464-5602](tel:3014645602).
Michael.ferrell@washnewchurch.org.

Sermon Topics for September, 2016

4th: **Heaven!** Last in our summer series on our connection to heaven, this one will be on what it's really like there, including what angels DO all day and why it's so great! – MDG

11th: **FAMILY SERVICE: Nourishment:** how the Lord prepares us for our spiritual work. The 1st lesson will be from 1 Kings 17 about how Elijah was fed (by ravens & by a widow) during a famine in Israel. Other lessons will address our need to *hide, learn, wait, and patiently trust in the Lord*. ~ MDG

18th: The New Church Places great emphasis on *living the life of religion* in contrast to just knowing or expressing belief in theology. We'll be exploring practical ways to apply each of the Ten Commandments and the life blessings which are promised with this practice. ~ BDS

25th: **Nourishment, part 2: the HOLY SUPPER.** The focus today will be on “the upper room” and on the symbolism of breaking of bread together. The children's lesson will recall the many feasts of the Old Testament, esp. in Levit. 23. *Holy Supper will be offered at the end of the service.* ~ MDG

Oct. 2nd: **Getting Personal,** the power of sharing real life experiences of religious insights and struggles. How can we do this without calling undue attention to ourselves, and why should we try, anyway? See more in the October Echo. ~MDG

Sunday School Teachers needed!

We will have 2 Sunday School classes this coming year - Junior (age 4 - 4th) and Senior (5th - 8th). I am always in need of teacher volunteers. If you are willing to help out a few times this coming year, please send me an email or a text, and let me know what age group you prefer. We need your help!

Thanks ~ Sharon - croft.cooper@verizon.net or [301-256-6515](tel:301-256-6515).

Women's Gathering in November:

This November 11-13, Friday to Sunday, some women of the Washington society will be coming together for a moment of calm and camaraderie before the holiday season begins. Five women so far have rented two rooms at The River Inn, in DC in historic Foggy Bottom. These rooms (each a suite, with living, dining, and kitchenette) create a possibility for an afternoon and or evening gathering on Saturday for anyone interested in a "day escape." If you are interested in joining for the day on Saturday, **or** for the night on Friday **and/or** Saturday, please do contact Wystan! (Text-301-237-1283).

Unfortunately our speaker planned for the Saturday morning has had to cancel - we will miss her! Wystan will be looking for a new speaker or program for lunchtime Saturday. But not looking too hard, because the area is full of possibilities. For example, we could go kayaking on Rock Creek or the Potomac, biking the monuments or Rock Creek Park trails (bike rental near hotel), wandering the Lincoln Monument (15 minutes' walk), reading/napping peacefully in the hotel suite living room with a view of the Potomac, catching a free 6pm concert at the Kennedy Center (5 minutes' walk), or visiting around the fireplace in the hotel bar. After supper out or in we might catch a play at the tiny Kreeger Theater Saturday evening, (\$35-45) if the group is interested. So - there will be plenty to do!

Each suite allows six people to sleep there, so for those interested there are 6 spaces left at \$25 per night, BYO air mattress (we can also request a roll away). A sleeper sofa spot in one room is still

available for \$90 per night for Friday and Saturday nights. Private rooms may also still be available (in DC things rent up fast!) Parking is available at a price, so carpooling is wise, but The River Inn is just a 5 minute walk from the Foggy Bottom Metro stop. (Wystan will be monitoring the Metro track repair situation)

This is a new experiment for the WNC women, quite different than our usual Retreat, and inspired by the men's weekend this fall. Your feedback is always welcome! Other kinds of gatherings and retreats will be planned during the year, depending on interest. Many thanks to the leadership of our TAG president Becca, for prodding me to make this one happen.

XO - Wystan Simons (301-237-1283) ~ TAG Vice President

Testimonial
by the Pastor

Sometimes personal stories can inspire us more than abstract or conceptual presentations. It is with that in mind that I offer this personal testimony on a sensitive topic, and invite YOU to consider writing other testimonials on any topics relating to your life in the New Church.

My story here is about contributing to the church – financially and as a volunteer. Married and raising 5 children on what was for the most part a single, modest income, I never had much to contribute financially to the church – until the kids grew up. In fact, for several years I depended on financial support from my parents just to provide for the family. But I still remember the Rev. Harold Cranch making the point that if every time I got a raise I would give 10% of it to the church, over time my contribution would grow until it approached 10% of the total.

I started the ministry in 1973 at \$8,250 a year. Today I am paid over 10 times that much, so you can see how that might work.

I also remember Harold saying that young adults who have limited incomes can make their contribution by just showing up and supporting worship services and classes. Even the cost of a baby-sitter for church events can be considered a contribution to this effect.

In my case through all the years when I couldn't give much money I also figured that at least some of the time I committed to my ministry was volunteer time.

Now, however, we can give more freely, and it is a source of great satisfaction to me that this is possible. I won't say how much we give but I am mindful still of Harold's advice. And by the way, there's nothing magic about 10% except that correspondentially it represents all, that is, a full commitment.

Looking to the future

More recently Ginny and I have, with the help of a local attorney, updated our wills. And we decided that one way we could extend our commitment, and make up for what we couldn't give in those earlier years, would be to leave a legacy from our estate. We still don't have a lot to give, but we own a home and we have some savings. So what we decided to do was divide the potential inheritance six ways instead of five, so each of the children gets a share and the "extra" share goes to the church.

In our case we have directed most of our support to the Washington New Church School *Scholarship Fund*. We believe every church should be self-supporting based on active, living contributors who are invested in the work and the decisions of the congregation. But there is no private school in the world that can live off tuition alone and still serve those of limited means. Our church's future is intimately tied to the fortunes of the school, and as costs increase we see a growing need for legacy support to keep the doors open, especially for families of limited means.

We considered giving to the WNCs general endowment fund, but decided to focus our limited support on the families themselves. Meanwhile, we also designated a small amount to the Academy in recognition of the support we received when we attended there.

Why didn't we leave anything to the General Church? Well, of course the General Church is important, but the situation at present is that IT supports our congregation with various direct and indirect subsidies, so we figured that by helping the WNC pay its own bills, we are helping the General Church. In the long run, too, if

our congregation can become truly self-supporting it will be able to allocate funds out of its budget to help pay for the administrative support we get from the GC – as it should do!

So that's my story in a nutshell. One final note: when we made our pledge to the Healthy Church Match program, mainly for our building renovations, the timing was right and we took a big step up in our donations to do so. Our intention is that when this pledge is fulfilled we will be accustomed to that new level of giving and will redirect the "extra" amount to our local church budget.

If anybody has any questions about all this I would be glad to discuss it further, or perhaps refer you to others who can help.



Greetings!

A monthly note about welcoming people at church

Invite Someone to Church!

With the start of a new school year we have a wonderful opportunity to welcome new school parents to our worship services.

All of these people – and there are several new every year – have received basic instruction in New Church teachings, and an invitation to attend worship with us. Now what many of them need is a follow-up from regular members like YOU who take a personal interest in welcoming them.

You can meet these people at school opening, Back to School night, or any day at pick-up time after school. Once you get to know someone a little you can even pick a sermon topic that may especially interest the family – as shown in the ECHO. There's nothing like a personal invitation and personal support during a service for establishing a positive relationship with the church.

Special Events in September, 2016

Wed, Aug. 31st School starts for WNCS at 8:00, with opening chapel at 8:22. All are welcome to attend.

Tues, the 6th the School Board has its first meeting of the new year at the church at 7:30. *Parents are invited for the first part of this and every meeting.*

Wed, the 7th the first morning study group for the season will meet at the Gladish home at 10:00 AM to begin a review of un-edited hardcover edition of *The New Jerusalem & its Heavenly Doctrine*. New members are most welcome, and good, used copies of the book are available from the pastor.

Mon, the 12th & the 26th the regular evening study group continues with Rev. Ferrell at the Coopers' house at 8:00 PM.

Tues, the 13th the Board of Trustees has its first meeting of the season at the church at 7:30 PM.

Thurs, the 15th is Back to School Night for all the parents of WNCS students, with a brief presentations and a sort of open house to get everyone oriented to the new classrooms, etc.

Tues, the 20th the Pastor's Council meets for the first time this season. Please see the agenda on page 4 of this ECHO. Make your voice heard by speaking to a council member about this.

Wed, the 21st the second meeting of the new morning NJHD study group will meet the Gladish's at 10:00 AM.

Fri, the 23rd there is a church supper at 7:00 pm followed by a *special presentation* by the Rev. Dr. Bernita Babb at 8:00 pm. See the write-up on page 2 of this ECHO.

Fri, the 30th is the start of a multi-society high school student weekend program in Kempton, PA. Details will be circulated to all local church HS students and their parents.

Summer Mosque Visit Report

On a Friday evening in August, I attended dinner and the sunset prayer at the Prince George's Muslim Association (PGMA) mosque on Lanham Severn Road. PGMA Imam Ahmad Azaari and several members of his congregation visited the Washington New Church in July 2011, and I recognized several faces.

Friends at the 7th Day Adventist church (Seabrook Church) on Good Luck Road had invited me to join their interfaith event. The Muslim congregation provided a delicious dinner (complete with cupcakes) and organized discussions both before and after the prayer. There were many memorable moments, but one of the conversations in particular stuck with me.

After the formal program, a group of about five Christians stood around one of the mosque leaders asking about sharia law. Jameel Johnson was raised Baptist but accepted Islam as a young man because the Islamic idea of God's oneness made more sense to him. Once Jameel saw a group of protesters demanding that sharia law be prohibited in the United States. Jameel went over to them and simply asked them what sharia was. They answered that it was about cutting off hands. He asked them some more questions and finally one of the protesters said, "You know what, I don't know."

Jameel explained that sharia means the way or the path, and it encompasses everything that Muslims should do. They must be true to their word. They must not kill. "If I am at the checkout and the cashier gives me one penny too many, I have to return it, otherwise I would be taking what does not belong to me. She may not know or care, but I know it, and I know God knows it. That's sharia." The Christians in the group were nodding.

"According to the sharia," Jameel explained, "Muslims must follow the laws of the land they are living in. It would be against the sharia, for example, for a group of Muslims to get together in the United States and say only sharia applies here -- against the sharia to impose the sharia! We must follow U.S. laws. But in fact," he added, laughing, "many U.S. laws follow the same principles that sharia commands," so it's a moot point. He noted that contrary to

the stereotype of harsh sharia punishments, mercy is an important theme in sharia. "In the U.S. criminal code, the death penalty is the death penalty. Sharia, on the other hand, allows for mercy. The family of a murder victim could forgive the murderer and dispense with the death penalty if they wanted to."

People in ISIS, on the other hand, "do whatever they want and call it sharia. That's not sharia," Jameel said vehemently. He recalled the Taliban's brutality in Afghanistan. "Some of these people can't even read their own name, let alone the Qur'an. They think it's sharia because someone told them it was."

Of particular relevance to conservatives, Jameel recommended to the visitors that Muslims and Christians find ways to work together politically as people of faith to ensure that our society doesn't decay. He mentioned that his congregation had petitioned Maryland politicians in recent years against abortion, gay marriage, and gambling.

Although Muslims are individuals and do not all think the same, I regularly hear convictions like Jameel's.

As a WNCS parent once said to me in the context of race relations, we are more alike than we are different.

~ Becca Smith

NEWS NOTES

**"Try to remember the kind of September
When life was slow and oh so mellow
Try to remember the kind of September
When grass was green and grain so yellow
Try to remember the kind of September
When you were a young and a callow fellow
Try to remember and if you remember
Then follow--follow, oh-oh."**

- Try to Remember, Lyrics by Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt

Lynn (Maxwell) and Kevin Guthrie welcomed their first child into the world on June 30th. **Roric Calum Maxwell Guthrie** was

7 lbs 11oz and 22 inches long. Roric is **Kim Maxwell's** first grandson and third grandchild.

Our old friends **Keith and Monica Hyatt** also welcomed a new grandchild into the family. **Lachlan Owen Frazier** (weighing in at 7lbs 5 oz.) was born on July 7th to **Jessica (Hyatt) and Owen Frazier** of Bryn Athyn, PA.

Matt and Sara Smith became grandparents on July 16th when son **Joram** and his wife **Katelyn** (both AF Captains stationed in Spokane, WA) welcomed their first child, a son, named **Koen Dean Smith**. The baby weighed in at 8 lbs 5 oz. and he and his parents are all doing well.

*“The Lord upon you send His Blessing, Wisdom
with your years increase.*

*Make His face to shine upon you and forever give
you peace!”*

Lisa Bond married **Kasey Moritz** in Saginaw, MI on July 23, 2016. The ceremony was beautiful and was followed by a lovely reception on the Saginaw Valley State University campus, where Kasey attended college. **Michelle Kappert** was matron of honor, **Marybeth Bond** was a bridesmaid and sang during the ceremony, **Charlie and Mike Bond** and **Mike Kappert** were groomsmen, and **McKenna Kappert** was the flower girl. **Rick Bond** proudly escorted Lisa down the aisle to marry Kasey! It was a wonderful weekend celebrating the happy couple. May the Lord bless your marriage with much happiness, Lisa and Kasey!

The Matt Smith family enjoyed vacationing in Hazelhurst, WI. During their stay Sara's sister, **Lucinda Fuller** joined them for a few days during which time Sara and she knocked one item off their bucket lists by going zip lining. The sisters also did a 20 mile hike another day. Then all the Smith clan swung through Glenview to see Sara's mom and other relatives on the drive back east. Zip lining Sara?!? Wow!

Deena Odhner says she feels lucky to have family living at the beach. **Joe and Eva Odhner Civitello** and family live in Wilmington, NC. **Jerry and I** visited at the beginning of summer and

now at the end. It is such fun to see the grandkids grow and change.” Yes it is, and I imagine doing so on the beach is just the icing on the cake!

Wanda Moore reports: “Our family attended the 42th Hawkes Family Reunion in Reston, VA. This included a picnic and activities at Burke Lake Park on Saturday and a Sunday breakfast/program at the Sheraton Reston Hotel. A great time was had by all!! **Marcus** returned to Virginia State University and is a Resident Assistant (RA) for the 2016-2017 school year. Classes started on Monday, August 15th and we are all looking forward to a great sophomore year. **CJ** is working part-time for an agency in Lanham, MD and has registered to take a course in the Videography certificate program at Prince George’s Community College. His class will start on September 12th.” We hope your young men and all the other students we all love will have a happy and successful school year!

Mary Cooper shares: “The **George and Mary Cooper clan** (all except **the Andy family**), had a great get together at the Cooper cabin/camp in early August. With two small cabins, two camper trailers, seven adults, six kids and four large dogs, one small bathroom, a big outdoor fire pit for cooking on and roasting marshmallows, and Deep Creek Lake down the hill for swimming and boating, a good time was had by all. A trip to the local emergency room one night provided a little extra excitement. It turned out to be atrial fib in George’s heart, which was soon stabilized, and we were sent home with some medication, and carried on with the rest of the weekend. All seems to be well now.” We’re so sorry to hear about George’s heart excitement, but delighted to hear that it was so easily taken care of!

Bonnie Cowley reports: **Dave & I** spent a most enjoyable week this month at the Alden cabin at Lake Wallenpaupak in PA. Many of our children and grandchildren were able to join us: **Will & Berith Cowley** and their 4 children from Bryn Athyn came for two days; **Lisa Attiliis** with Emily and Carl Martin joined us for 3 of the days; and **Aubrey & Avi Hernandez** and their children came for the whole week. With spectacular weather, we fished, swam

and boated nearly every day. Add a campfire or card game each night and our enjoyment was complete!

A little birdie reports observing **Jean Allen and Bonnie Cowley** having a great time over coffee while both were at Lake Wallenpaupak! I guess life is too busy for them to get together here at home. 😊

Wystan Simons shared: “**Edward and Wystan Simons** celebrated their 25th anniversary this summer in two ways. First, they enjoyed a long-planned trip to Italy in July. After a lovely week wandering Venice together, they met up with **Oskar, Freya and Bronwyn** for a week in a villa with a garden full of lemon trees, in the hills overlooking Florence. (They recommend the villa Berni, run by the wonderful Berni family, to other travelers.) **Bronwyn** was already in Florence, since she spent the summer there as part of her art program at MICA. **Owen** meanwhile had his own adventures, at home in Maryland, with his cousins, **Tania Buss Alden and Shaun Buss**, who also managed the dogs, gardens, and chickens - bravo to them! Then in August, Edward and Wystan renewed their marriage vows in a small private service on August 14th. This was intended to be held out in Acton Park woods, but foiled by the gruesome heat and humidity, they stood up in their living room before the same man who married them the first time, **Rev Thomas Rose**. The room was full of flower arrangements of cream and orange and green, lighted candles, guitar strumming, and vocal music all provided by their kids, it was a very special service to get them started on their next 25 years together. It was a special summer, all the way around.” It does sound wonderful, Wystan. May you and Edward continue to feel the Lord’s many blessings in your marriage.

Oops, this just in: **Brent and Amanda Hyatt** and family very much enjoyed their yearly visit with **Cathlin** (their daughter) and **Dallas Hendricks**! It was nice for us all to see them!

Finally, I want to say (and I know that I speak for many others) that I will miss seeing the young people who have been here this summer! Have a great year at school, but always remember that you are missed! ~ Ginny – News Notes Editor