

December 2016

# ECHO ECHO

Newsletter of the  
Washington Church of the New Jerusalem

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Dear Friends,

One of the beautiful and sobering teachings of the New Church is that God – the Lord – is *always* blessing us, *always* loving and

providing for us, and that He *never* abandons us. Sometimes, however, *we* abandon *Him*, and *that* is what separates us from Him. Does the Lord then give up on us? No! The whole Word from beginning to end is about Him taking more and more extreme measures to get our attention so that we can re-connect with Him.

Isaiah spoke of this in chapter 59 of his prophecy where he said,

“Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you” (vv. 1-2).

In response to this we read,

“Then the Lord saw and it displeased Him that there was no judgment. He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor; therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him; and His own justice, it sustained Him” (vv. 15-16, see also TCR #84-85).

This in a nutshell is the story of Christmas. When there was no longer any man, that is, any person on earth with the love and integrity to reconcile the world to Himself the Lord took on His own natural Humanity and did that work Himself. He reconciled earthly and heavenly things within Himself by completely subordinating the natural to the spiritual and so glorifying His Humanity.

Of course this did not relieve anyone of personal responsibility. It was *not a vicarious* atonement for our sins. But in restoring order through His own spiritual and natural efforts He clearly demonstrated what we need to know and do to re-connect and He cleared the way for a dynamic new influx of love and wisdom from the heavens to support our efforts.

Sure, there are places in the Word where it looks as if He sent someone else – a Son of God separate from Himself. But in many other places He is crystal clear that He Himself is the Savior, as for example in Isaiah **9**, verse 6, or **43**, verses 3, 10 and 11, or in the New Testament, John **10:30** and **14:9** and 11.

*“Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear.”*

“His own arm” is His own Humanity, an extension of Himself down into the world to redeem and save by teaching and inspiring us in unmistakable ways to think and do the right thing and so to receive the love

and wisdom that are and always were constantly pouring forth from Him down through the heavens.

This is what we celebrate at Christmas time. We celebrate it in our hymns, our lessons, our tableaux, our decorating, our crèche sets, our parties and our gift exchanges. We celebrate it in common with other Christians and in a uniquely, distinctively New Church way, knowing as few other Christians do just exactly what was involved in His Coming. For a review see AC #2034 and #6371-73.

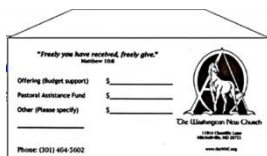
### Holy Supper on December 4<sup>th</sup>.

Apologies for the late notice, but this sacrament will be offered on the first Sunday in December as part of our focus on the Lord in His Divine Humanity and our effort to connect with Him. It will be a busy weekend (see page 5) but perhaps it will be a welcome respite in the midst of that activity, and a good time to reflect as you prepare for Christmas.

With all good wishes,

*Nike Gladish*

### **Contribution Envelopes:**



We will have a new set of contribution envelopes by the beginning of 2017. Each box comes with a numbered envelope for each Sunday, extra envelopes for Christmas and Thanksgiving and a monthly “special contribution” envelope perfect for those “designated” contributions.

## From the Principal:

I have three things I want to mention from the school this month.

The teachers did a magnificent job of organizing the students during the two days prior to Thanksgiving break. We call these days, “project days” and it’s an opportunity for stepping outside of the regular curriculum to work as a whole school on projects and learning. This year’s theme was built around food and it included volunteering work in the Forest Garden and working together to prepare a Thanksgiving feast to share with parents and friends. The students seemed happy and well behaved and both the food and its presentation were extremely well done. Many of the parents managed to attend and I saw a great sense of community, connection, and pride on the part of the students – for a job well done and the opportunity to share something with the community.



I’m also very grateful for the contributions of Saul Fisher and Scott Daum in helping our parents and teachers develop more skills in the area of discipline. They combined theological/theoretical framework with very practical, every-day skills. I wish there had been a better parent turn-out for the evening presentation, as I’m convinced that most of our parents would have felt encouraged and equipped. But the session with the teachers was quiet valuable. They felt very supported and inspired by the several hours of afternoon meetings. The presentation galvanized some changes in approach and communication among the faculty which is already showing positive results in the school.

I want to acknowledge the value of our points of connection between the church and school families. A few of the school families

will occasionally attend church – which is an invaluable opportunity for them to get more insight into the New Church principles which guide our school. We’ve also had parents continuing to contribute volunteer hours in a range of different ways, most recently, spending the better part of a day moving and setting up the new playground area. Finally, our parents occasionally find the opportunity to attend chapel. Particularly, the kindergarten chapel in Candy’s room is a perfect picture of the strength and value which the whole school seeks to serve –gentle, age-appropriate introduction to the stories of the Word and the Lord’s love for everyone.



### **Greetings!**

*A monthly note about welcoming people at church*

### **Christmas Visitors**

Most people return to the churches of their childhood for the major festivals, but there are always some who are new to the area or who are ready to try something different, who join us for these events and services. For these people we can’t stress enough how important it is to be sensitive and discreet about what we say to them and what we ask of them. For example, these are probably NOT good times to ask about their marital status or their family lineage! On the other hand, one of the things we most often forget in our curiosity about the *other* person is to introduce ourselves and maybe say something brief about ourselves. This can be a genuine courtesy and open doors to further conversation.

We can also ask anyone – newcomer or not – how they discovered the church or what led them to it. Then if we see a link to anyone else in the room we can offer to introduce that person as well, and so help build a network of friendship and common interests.

– MDG

## Money Matters

### A Friendly Focus on Finances

Last month we promised to address the issue of contributing to support specific church uses that mean the most to you. So as we approach the end of this calendar year, here are some reflections and opportunities.

Just as our paychecks come to us as in recognition of the uses we perform, so our contributions to the church go out in recognition of the uses it performs, which all have to do with spiritual life. We elect our board members to facilitate spending decisions based on a broad congregational consensus about those uses. Still, there is a place for designated contributions. In fact, this church already has a number of special funds dedicated exclusively to specific uses.

Just for example, there are four different scholarship funds related to our school, the Waelchli Fund, the Levi Cowley Fund, the Scholarship Endowment Fund and the Pastoral Assistance Fund (which serves as well to support church members in crisis). In addition, from time to time we also ask for special donations to support new or existing uses with limited cost implications.

So if YOU have a particular use that you feel strongly about, and that supports the *general consensus* about our uses, you should feel free and *welcome* to propose a special donation for that purpose. In the end, however, we ask that you bear in mind the priority of meeting our regularly budgeted expense commitments – roughly 85% of which is for the salaries of our professional staff. That cost will rise significantly next year as we bear the full responsibility for our new principal's salary AND as we continue to reduce our dependence on our General Church subsidy by another \$13,000. Hopefully, growing school enrollment will add to our income but even so the net impact of all this could put us \$40,000 behind – a lot of new money for a small group to raise in one year!

If you have any questions about your giving options, or about any aspect of the church budget *please* do not hesitate to ask. If one of us can't answer your questions the other will – and very gladly!

- Mike Gladish, Pastor, & Brent Hyatt, Treasurer

## **Sermon Topics for December, 2016**

**4<sup>th</sup>: 11:00 AM Holy Supper service.** As an introduction we will explore the importance of our sensory experience in our communication and conjunction with the Lord. The children's talk will be about what we see in pictures of the Lord, and will include various examples to illustrate. ~ MDG

**11<sup>th</sup>: 11:00 AM FAMILY SERVICE: John the Baptist.** It is said of John that he would go before the Lord in the spirit of Elijah; he would make ready a people prepared for the Lord. Our theme will address why John must come first. ~ MEF

**18<sup>th</sup>: 7:00 PM TABLEAUX – NO MORNING SERVICE!** This year's tableaux will focus particularly on the reasons **why God “assumed the Human”** and was born into the world. ~ MDG will direct and/but will need *all the help he can get*, so please *don't hesitate to volunteer with whatever you can do*, whether acting, costuming, sets, lighting, make-up or scenery!

**24<sup>th</sup>: 7:00 PM CHRISTMAS EVE –** This special candle-lit festival service is for the whole family (and yes, we will turn off the furnace fans this year, so the candles can burn freely). The focus here will be on the contrast between good and evil in the Christmas story, and how miraculous it all was. ~ MDG

**25<sup>th</sup>: 11:00 AM CHRISTMAS DAY – a Sunday this year!** The focus for this additional family service will be on the joy of the shepherds and the gifts of the wise men in the story. How can we feel that same joy and offer those same gifts to the Lord in our lives today as we celebrate His birth? ~ MDG

**Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>: 11:00 AM New Year's Day!** So what's the big deal, it's just another day, right? - Except that the whole world is watching, so maybe we can work together and support one another in our efforts! Details closer to the date. ~ MDG

### **Special Events in December, 2016**

**Fri, the 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:30 PM** the first full class in the series on the Acts and Epistles will be led by Dr. Babb at the church. Please read as much as you can in Acts for this evening.

NOTE, **the second class in this series will be on Fri, the 16<sup>th</sup>**, and will focus on the Epistle to the Romans.

**Sat, the 3<sup>rd</sup>, at 7:30 PM** the annual **Christmas sing** with a talk by Rev. Brian Smith and potluck refreshments will be held as usual at the Zubers' house on Progress Lane.

**Tues, the 6<sup>th</sup>, the WNC School Board meets at 7:30 PM.**

**Fri, the 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM** there is a church supper followed at around 8 PM by a society class on **what the Lord actually accomplished by coming into the world.** ~ with Pastor Mike

**Tues, the 13<sup>th</sup> at 7:30** there is a joint meeting of the Church's Board of directors and the School Board.

**Wed, the 14<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM** the NJHD study group meets at the Gladish's to review passage no's 108-122 on Faith.

**Thurs, the 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM the WNCS invites you all** to its annual Christmas program. *School will close for the holidays on Friday, the 16<sup>th</sup>, at noon.*

**Sat, the 17<sup>th</sup>, from 7 PM on...** The 17<sup>th</sup> annual **John's Christmas Open House** at 3110F Enterprise Road, Mitchellville, ½ mile south of the church. ALL are welcome. See p. 9 for more.

**Work Wanted:** Aubrey Hernandez is looking for more work. She is very versatile and is willing to tackle almost anything.

Her specialties are - **landscaping** – designing, planting, hardscape as well as cleanup. **House cleaning** - deep cleaning, organizing and weekly or monthly cleaning, she can also help decorate or set-up for your parties or events for the holidays. Call/text to: 301-379-3469 or email: baubs84@gmail.com.



## TAG report

Many thanks to all who have helped with recent TAG events, such as the bake sale, and contributing to the raffle basket, as well as signing up for other assistance at various Holiday events. There is still room for more helpers, and anyone who is willing to lend a hand would be most welcome! We still need greens for the WNCS Christmas decorating day on Dec. 5; anyone who would like to help with making greens-and-candle centerpieces to sell at church as a fundraiser is asked to contact Wylan or Mary. We are set up at Mary's house to start production very soon. We look forward to a busy and happy Christmas season.

*Note*, the TAG Basket Raffle has been extended one week to December 11! Have you seen the goodies this year? Total value well over \$100. Tickets \$1 or 6 for \$5. Help support the women's volunteer group which dedicates all our funds to WNCS and church community activities.



## News Notes



"I heard a bird sing in the dark of December  
A magical thing and sweet to remember.  
'We are nearer to Spring than we were in September,'  
I heard a bird sing in the dark of December."  
- *Oliver Herford*

Our loving thoughts are with **Curt Moore** on the passing of his sister early in November, following a battle with cancer, and also with **Wanda Moore** on the recent passing of her 103 year old uncle. Curt says that, for balance, a new niece was also born into their family this month, so the Lord's purpose of a heaven from the human race continues to be fulfilled.

**Bill Kingdon** has been making good progress following his surgery and is now residing at the Hebrew Home Nursing and Rehab facility in Rockville. The address is 6121 Montrose Road, Rockville, MD 20852. His telephone number is (301)881-0300. He is aware and able to speak a little now. Visiting hours are anytime

**Christiana Kern** recently was given a new position is as an Asylum Officer under the Refugee, Asylum & International Operations Directorate at U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services at DHS. When I asked her about that, she said, "I'll now be working on humanitarian immigration for the government, mainly making determinations on claims for asylum in the United States that are based on a fear of persecution if the immigrant were to return to his or her home country. I've still got several months of training in front of me, but I'm looking forward to hopefully having a meaningful impact on the lives of immigrants and maintaining both the diverse

spirit and security of our nation.” Good for you, Christiana! I like thinking of you doing that good work that is so important for our country and many hurting people.

From **Bill Radcliffe**: “Kudos to **Jana Sprinkle** for clocking 11 minute miles through the Jug Bay Run for Wildlife 5K (3.1 mi) at the Patuxent River Park on November 5th. With her own time of 33min 36secs she can now urge her students to pick up their pace during PE runs around the parking lot. Eleven minutes after Janna's finish Bill Radcliffe came shuffling across the finish line in his worst 5K time ever, but he was grateful just to be out there running at all.” P.S. from Jana: “Bill, you are too kind. I don't think you were "shuffling" at all, and I know for a fact that you passed many people by!” Well I say you both are amazing!



There is an article about **Lincoln Smith** and the Forest Garden in National Geographic (at least online), published October 16<sup>th</sup>. The link to the online article is <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/people-and-culture/food/the-plate/2016/october/forest-garden-feast-features-gluten-free-acorn-bread/>. It's a great article. Why not check it out? Congratulations, Lincoln! It's awesome to have such a famous and useful neighbor!

**Wystan Simons** reports: “The Women's Gathering on Saturday November 12th was a warm and cozy event, attended by some old friends and new friends. The women attending watched a couple TED talks in which the subject of human happiness was looked at from two different perspectives, enjoyed a bountiful shared lunch, and each enjoyed creating a harvest candle. Those women who spent the night took in a free concert of East Indian music and an Ethiopian dinner Saturday night, and listened to a talk by Jonathan Rose via internet on Sunday morning. Speaking only for myself, I drove away Sunday afternoon feeling refreshed and supported. I look forward to the next opportunity to take advantage of what DC has to offer us for a cultural girl's weekend away!”

**Lincoln Smith** very thoughtfully came up with a useful way for people to work off their big Thanksgiving feasts! He headed up a work party to move and re-assemble the playground equipment on November 25<sup>th</sup>. Many helpers came out and put in a long day. We really appreciate your work! Thank you **Andrae Herring, David Ferragut and (his son) Ben, Jerry Joseph, Eugene Cole, Keith Ward, Tim and Charlotte Radcliffe, Marcus Moore, Paul Kaz-eem, Jared Hyatt, Joe Sprinkle, Justin Ball, Carl Martin, Anders and Ivan Croft, Sophie Hyatt, Brad Johns, Steve Ball, Barry Stillman, and of course Lincoln!** We also appreciate **Mike Gladish and Aubrey Hernandez** for working on the bricks beside the front entrance, and **Lisa Martin, Toni Federici, Marie Kazeem and Bonnie Cowley** who provided food for all the workers! Thank you, thank you, and thank you!



**Paige and Pat Sweeney and family** celebrated their Thanksgiving weekend by having **Leah and Nick Rose and family** join them. Leah is Paige's sister and this has become a much anticipated annual treat for both families.

“**Kathleen Smith** and fiancé **Kenan Smith** headed to Maryland for Thanksgiving. **Savanna** did not join her family this year because she is off having fun in Sweden! Her boyfriend, **Graham Lermite**, is a professional hockey player there so this was the perfect time to visit. After the holiday, **Matt and Sara** will be helping Savanna drive out to southern Illinois where she is taking up residence with her oldest brother **Joram Smith** and his family. **Joram and his wife Katelyn** who are both captains in the Air Force were recently transferred from Washington State out to Scott Air Force Base in the St. Louis area. Savanna will be the nanny for her nephew and is very excited about it.” *Sara Smith reporting*

**Dorothy and Bill Radcliffe** enjoyed Thanksgiving with their daughter **Laura Gurney** at her home in Bethesda. Meanwhile, the rest of us enjoyed seeing **Charles and Angela Radcliffe and their family**, who were here to enjoy Thanksgiving at the **Roscoe's** yearly celebration. Dorothy said it was great not to have to cook!

**Edward, Wystan, and Owen Simons** met up with family in the Poconos for their every other year Simons family Thanksgiving! It was FUN! It was LOUD! It snowed! Lots of great conversations were the highlight – it was wonderful to catch up with everyone. And, it was good to drive back into Maryland again on Sunday. East, west, home is best.

**Mike and Ginny Gladish** enjoyed a lovely relaxed visit with their son, **Dar** from Ontario, Canada for a whole week over Thanksgiving!

Last, but certainly not least, it was lovely to see all the visitors at our Thanksgiving service!

## December Anniversaries

*“The blessings of conjugal love are innocence, peace, tranquility, inmost friendship, full trust and a mutual desire of mind and heart to do the other every good.”*

*Emanuel Swedenborg ~ CL 180*



*Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> ~ George & Mary Cooper ~ 58 yrs.*

*Dec. 19<sup>th</sup> ~ Brad & Kathy Johns ~ 35 yrs.*

*Dec. 23<sup>rd</sup> ~ Avi & Aubrey Hernandez ~ 11 yrs.*

*Dec. 23<sup>rd</sup> ~ (Allan) & Dolores Soderberg ~ 66 yrs.*

*Dec. 27<sup>th</sup> ~ Jerry & Deena Odhner ~ 46 yrs.*

*Dec. 30<sup>th</sup> ~ Joel & Didi Trimble ~ 53 yrs.*







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