

SEPTEMBER 2017

ECHO  
ECHO

Newsletter of the  
Washington Church of the New Jerusalem

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Dear Friends,

Welcome back to a new school year full of useful and interesting things at the church. Apart from all our usual board and committee meetings (see page 8) you can look forward to a general doctrinal class on Friday, the 22<sup>nd</sup>, and a “Welcome Back” school picnic on

Sunday, the 24<sup>th</sup>. Plus, Rev. Bernita and I are planning on “team teaching” a new class on the Old Testament Prophets, reviewing the literal and spiritual senses in their historical context, so watch for that around the end of the month.

### Holy Supper on September 10<sup>th</sup>

A long time has passed since our last formal holy supper service; so it is now on the calendar for September 10<sup>th</sup> in the regular Sunday service. But please note, this sacrament can be provided to anyone at any time in a private service at the church or in your home. So please do not be shy about asking for this if you have a desire for it. The next public one will be on Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### Family Services

Although the 10<sup>th</sup> is a “second Sunday” we will NOT be having a scaled back family service that day, but a regular service with a children’s talk followed by the Holy Supper. Family services will be on the agenda for the Pastor’s Council on Tuesday, the 19<sup>th</sup>.

### Some Notes on our “Regular” Church Ritual

As we get underway this fall I’d like to call your attention first of all to some possible changes in our worship ritual. As you know, the ritual we use today was developed over a century ago based on a careful study of the Word and principles of worship outlined in the doctrines of the New Church. One of those principles is the importance of humility in worship, and so *all of our services* were designed to begin with acknowledgments of our weakness and sin, and with prayers for help to overcome these problems.

But there is another principle that may apply with equal force and integrity, and that is the importance of thankfulness and praise.

This is something I have been thinking about for a long time, and I am determined to TRY to provide at least *some* of our services with praise as the initial focus, especially in our responsive sentences and prayers. To that end I will be providing a special printed order of service for **Sunday, September 17<sup>th</sup>**, and will ask the ushers to be sure everyone gets a copy on the way in to worship.

Pastor's Council will meet on the Tuesday following that service and I will ask there for feedback and discussion about this. Your input is wanted and needed for this meeting, so if you can make it to church that Sunday please do, and speak to a council member afterward about your experience with it.

If all goes well I will have as many as 5 of these new offices for us to use, and will also print some of the traditional offices in the same format, so everyone can have a copy every Sunday, avoiding any confusion about what PAGE we're following at any time.

### Why this is Important

Naturally, you may wonder why we should make these changes, especially since it will involve extra work and a little extra cost every Sunday. I have several concerns. First, along with ministers throughout the church I have found that for many of our members, especially young adults, the traditional ritual is "heavy" and uninspiring. They would like something more uplifting as the gateway into worship. To that point, most of us are all too painfully aware of our shortcomings, so when we start with praise it can help turn our focus to the Lord and His love and power, effectively taking our minds off our concerns as we invite Him into our lives.

Second, it is no small thing that most of our newcomers are accustomed to a more joyful approach to worship. Our original liturgy was in fact designed to stir the affections of people accustomed to worship in the "old church," even as it introduced them to the new. But that was 140 years ago. Now if we want to do the same thing, that is, follow the same principle, we need to focus more on praise – at least in the beginning. There will always be elements of humility and repentance in our services, but those elements don't always have to be up front.

Finally, we have been making small changes in our service for ... *decades* (not just since I've been here). In fact congregations all over the church have been making adjustments in the ritual (mostly simplifying) without much reference to the offices at all. Here we are suggesting we continue with the familiar format, just change

the tone. But ANY change can make it hard to find and keep your place, which is why I'm proposing printed programs every Sunday.

To sum up, I ask that you bear with me and try this new approach, which *could be* a positive move in a good direction *for everyone*.

Welcome New Members, the Oreagba Family

On August 5<sup>th</sup> in a small, private ceremony Kenny and Bola Oreagba and their two daughters, Fay and Abi, were baptized into the faith of the New Church. Abi has been a student here for two years and the women especially have been attending services with us for several months. They have appreciated every sermon, as well as the in-depth introductions given personally by the pastor.

Originally introduced to the school by Marie Kazeem, the family has been increasingly supportive each year, and though all had been baptized into the Christian faith before, they all recognize the significance of the new baptism into the New Christian faith. They live in Glendale, not far from the Glenn Dale Elementary School. Please be sure to introduce yourselves to this new family and make them feel as welcome as you can.

This family, by the way, brings the number of new adult members introduced to the church through our school to 7, and the number of children to 11, for a total of 18 in just the last 4 years.



**Pastor's Council for Tuesday, Sept. 19<sup>th</sup>**

This year there will be 10 regular members of the council who will represent all segments of the society: men, women, married, single, older and younger, in Acton Park and not. Here is the list in alphabetical order:

Mary Cooper	Amy D Glenn	Cynthia Harvey
Aubrey Hernandez	Kim Maxwell	Curt Moore
John Kern	Joe Sprinkle	Lincoln Smith
	Patrick Sweeney	

Once again, I am NOT asking these people to contact you before meetings but I encourage YOU to contact them if you have ideas or opinions you would like represented in church planning.

In addition, I will invite one or two guests to attend every meeting so others can get in on the action, or represent special uses. This month, for example, Janine Smith will attend to explain about our NEW Sunday School program.

Primary topics for this meeting include the following, along with others submitted by any member of the congregation (you?): -

- A new format for the “offices” we use to introduce our services (see page 2 of this Echo);
- Another discussion of the “family services” – which seem to be past their “use by” date;
- Implications for Sunday School and a new plan for how to handle that – including a new Sunday youth group;
- The changing demographics of our congregation: youth growing up and leaving, seniors retiring, traveling and moving to the other world, and most middle-age couples busy with two jobs: what does the future look like for us and how can we best prepare for it?
- Thinking about our newcomers and new school parents: what more can we do to make them feel really welcome?
- A few calendar items to note in the next few months.

### **Money Matters**

Having written for the last year on some of the reasons and ways to contribute to the church, this month we want simply to *THANK all of you for your generous support!*

With your help we were able to raise over \$38,000 more in member contributions than we budgeted, so even though we were a little below budget in some other income categories, and we spent more than we expected on salaries and maintenance issues, we still ended the fiscal year with a surplus of over \$18,000. This is the first time this has happened since 2012, and it was done despite a

decline in weekly attendance AND a \$13,000 decline in subsidies from the General Church *each year since then*.

This is nothing short of amazing, and you are all to be congratulated on a very impressive effort to restore financial stability and independence to this congregation.

Of course we will face even greater challenges this coming year, but we are also delighted to see new people attending services almost every week, and even though our school enrollment numbers may be low for the new year we are confident that those who do enroll will be “good” for their tuition commitments. So with a continued focus on high quality programming and a welcoming atmosphere we believe we will continue to see growth in membership and support. So, everyone, keep up the good work!

Please come and hear the full reports at the society meeting now scheduled for Friday night, October 6<sup>th</sup>.

*And thank you! Thank you ALL for your devotion to this church.*

- Mike Gladish, Pastor, & Brent Hyatt, treasurer

### **From the Sunday School Head**

A committee has been meeting over the summer to put fresh energy into organizing a Sunday school program for this year. I am heading the committee, so talk to me if you have questions or want to help. Thanks to Sharon Cooper for her years of helping to organize! We will kick off the year with a pizza party right after Sunday School on the 17th of Sept, and then two weeks later will do a 7 week Journey Program on "Forgiveness." There are 3 main changes from last year: 1. We are organizing some fun events to pump energy into the program (see above), 2. We are making an effort to invite school kids and parents to participate. We will send home invitations for the parents and go into the classrooms some Fridays to invite the students in person. 3. We are following a scheduled curriculum which may or may not line up with the sermons so that teachers can think ahead, and so that students can have a sense of continuity in learning from the Word. We are looking forward to a great year of Sunday School!

-Janine Smith

## Men's Retreat in November

**GUYS! It's ON!** You are all invited to the *second* annual men's church retreat planned for the Washington Society. Now definitely scheduled for Friday evening until Sunday afternoon, November 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>, this is going to be fun, relaxing, stimulating, energizing, and spiritually rewarding, not to mention a great way to get to know one another better and just enjoy each other's company.

We will meet at THIS lovely estate on the Chesapeake Bay, a fully-furnished eight-bedroom six-bath waterfront family-friendly house tucked away in a lush pine forest. The vacation home is on a very private cove with **2 acres of waterfront property** and a large private dock and 3 boat slips. Easy access by car, or by boat from the Bay. Check out the kitchen area! – And a typical bedroom, though there are some private rooms, too.



You can see all the details at <https://www.vrbo.com/13070>



The theme is still under consideration, but will definitely involve discussion of issues that are especially relevant to men, in light of the Word and New Church teachings. And it will include input from everyone in the form of brief presentations, comments, cooking, and more. Stay tuned for more details but sign up now, even if you're only tentative!

There are separate beds for 16, and with a couple of air beds we could handle 18, but note, it's **first come first served** and at this point MONEY TALKS. I need a \$60 deposit to hold your place. Call or email me, Mike Gladish, **today** to reserve your place! And if you want to help plan the event, please also speak up! **301-461-3521**.

## Church Events in September

### Mondays:

Please see the announcement on p.10-11

### Tuesdays:

**the 5<sup>th</sup>**, the WNC School board meets at 7:30 pm.

**the 12<sup>th</sup>**, the WNC Board of Trustees meets at 7:30 pm.

**the 19<sup>th</sup>**, the WNC Pastor's Council meets at 7:30 pm.

### Wednesdays:

**the 6<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup>**, a new MORNING study group will begin at the Gladish house at 10:00 am to read and discuss the book, Heaven & Hell. New members are most welcome! 20 classes in all are projected, meeting roughly every other week.

**the 27<sup>th</sup>, at 8:00 pm** another new study group will begin, hosted at the church by Rev. Bernita and Pastor Mike together discussing the history and spiritual meaning of the PROPHETS of the Old Testament. 18 classes in all are projected into June, meeting roughly every other Wednesday night. All are welcome and we would love to know who's interested, please!

### Thursday,

**the 21<sup>st</sup>**, the Acton Park Board meets at 7:30 pm.

### Friday,

**the 22<sup>nd</sup>**, a church supper at 7:00 pm will be followed at 8:00 by a general doctrinal class on church ritual: why we do what we do, and why we might do things differently.

### The Society Semi-Annual Meeting

...has now been scheduled for **Friday evening, October 6<sup>th</sup>**. At this meeting you will hear, among other things, how we did financially at the end of our fiscal year, and current thinking about all our church and school uses. Please plan to attend!

## From the Principal

Welcome to school year 2017/18!

There were some lonely, quiet days in the building this summer but those are now behind us as teachers hum around the building cleaning, labeling, printing and preparing for new and returning students.

Our theme this year is *Community*, centered on Matthew 18.20, “Where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”

Our connection to who we are with and around can make a dull situation delightful or a beautiful moment terrible. Learning how to build and be part of dynamic, enriching and functional groups is something we keep learning over our lifetime. As our culture continues to get more and more immersed in our devices and the internet, learning the skills of human connection might be more important than ever. And yet the basics of good community will still come back to some awareness of “gathering in the Lord’s name,” that is building our interactions on the qualities of the Lord.

The *Parent Service Program* continues to be a practical effort to gather and involve people (new and old) so that we can share in a sense of ownership and contribution to the church and school. In addition to facilitating parent volunteerism, we continue to explore opportunities to facilitate fun and support for our parent community. Jazzmone Coby has joined Becca Smith (both WNCs parents) in leading the Parent Service Program this year.

The Heavenly Doctrines teach “variety perfects” that is, the more members of a group working together, the more whole, powerful and beautiful that group can be. We’ve had slow enrollment this summer which has left us with lower numbers than we hoped. Please remember that word of mouth referrals are some of the best support that you can offer to the school community.

I would like to end by highlighting four key fall events:

1. Aug 30<sup>th</sup>, 8am. **School Opening. NOTE** – school closes at **noon!**
2. Sept 4<sup>th</sup> **Labor Day Holiday.** (No school)

3. Sept 14<sup>th</sup>, 7pm. **Back To School Evening.** (Learn more about the school programs and meet other parents)
4. Sept 24<sup>th</sup>, 12:30pm. **Harvest Community Picnic.** (School Community building event. Potluck picnic, games)

Brian Smith (brian.smith@washnewchurch.org)

### **Sermon Topics for September, 2017**

**the 3<sup>rd</sup>:** **What's Growing On Your Tree?** Remember as you're living the life of heaven the Lord said "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad." Based upon a part of AC 5470 the theme of the Children's talk is "A Sign From Heaven." ~ MEF

**the 10<sup>th</sup>:** **Please note:** Holy Supper today, so this will NOT be an informal or family service, but a "regular" service with a children's talk. Pastor's Council will discuss the future (if any) of the family service at its meeting this month. The theme of this service will be on our "**Associate Spirits**," those invisible influences that bring us life from the Lord. ~ MDG

**the 17<sup>th</sup>:** **Continuation on the Spiritual World**, specifically on the whole organic, human form of that world and how it relates to events and circumstances in this world. ~ MDG

**the 24<sup>th</sup>:** **Conclusion of the series on the Spiritual World**, on how we "wake up" in the life after death, and what is meant by the "reward" of heaven and the "punishment" of hell. ~ MDG

Hello Friends – about Monday nights...

I began serving uses with this Society in July 2005. At that time there was a study group (already in its 3rd or 4th year) meeting every other Monday at the Cooper's residence. Over the years our group has continued meeting on a consistent basis. Thus far we have completed our reading and discussion of no fewer than 16 volumes of the Heavenly Doctrines!

You are cordially invited to join our discussion group. At 8:00 pm at the Cooper's on Monday, September 3, we will begin our study of Heaven and Its Wonders and Hell from Things Heard and Seen. The numbers for discussion are HH 1-40. So, please read ahead. FYI - we begin promptly at 8:00 pm and finish at 9:00 pm. If for some reason you cannot join us on September 3, you may join at any time. We are an open group.

Cheers. Michael F.

### **Women's Outing for October**

Gather for love. *Together Live Revolution!* October 12th, DC \$80 a ticket. Glennon Doyle Melton, bestselling author of *Carry on Warrior, the Power of Embracing Your Messy Beautiful Life* (2013), and *Love Warrior* (2016) has organized this countrywide tour -- a powerhouse of women speakers, planning to make an impact on the world for good. Check it out online. A group of NC women are talking about attending this event. Want to join us? Contact Sharon Cooper soon. [301-814-2490](tel:301-814-2490)

### **Women's Respite Weekend**

Coming this February 9th to 11<sup>th</sup> is a chance for some much-needed respite for the hard working women of the church. I found a *beautiful* home on Saddle Beach, Eastern Shore Maryland. It's about 10 minutes from Cambridge, with its shops and activities. The house is recently built, on a secluded property on a tributary of Chesapeake Bay – Fishing Creek (near the Little Choptank River Sanctuary) the property has wooden walkways and a beach. Owner provides bikes. It has six bedrooms and 12 beds, plus a futon and a sleeper sofa. Twenty women are permitted. The total cost would be \$100 per person assuming at least 12 woman sign up. If more than 12 sign up the cost will drop. We plan on doing fundraising for scholarships and to make the event more affordable.

So far nine women of all ages have are in! It should be a lovely time. Check out the property for yourself at [vrbo.com](http://vrbo.com) #219957. Email Wzystan at [lovinchickens@gmail.com](mailto:lovinchickens@gmail.com) to register, or to be on the planning committee! or to help with some fundraising.

Deadline September 20th. I will need your commitment and money upfront hold the house.

**Boynton Beach Retreat, Florida:** Jan.29 – Feb. 2, 2018.

Three speakers are now lined up to speak at its coming retreat - **The Rt. Rev. Tom Kline** will give four lectures: 1. The Nature of Spiritual Substance, 2. being a Bishop (his travels throughout the world), 3. Church Leadership and 4. **Surprise!**

**Chara Daum's** work has involved the very beginnings of the church embodied in the Writings, and the very latest efforts to disseminate those works to the world. She will talk about her work on *The New Century Edition of the Works of Emanuel Swedenborg*, her involvement with the *Spirit and Life Bible Study*, and being part of the *Off The Left Eye* team on the "Swedenborg and Life" show.

The **Rev. Barry Halterman's** presentation, titled **One God, Many Religions. Why?** Will examine the core teachings of the major World Religions, seeing how the Lord adapts His teachings to meet the unique needs of people from various cultures. The series will look for the universal truths the Lord has spread across all major religions and how they fit with New Church teachings.

Cost of the retreat: \$235 per person if you pay by October 15. Contact Bob Brickman, Director – 561-278-6037, BBRetreat@newchurchboyntonbeach.org.

### **Totality** by *Chuck Quintero*

I was asked to write a short blurb to tell people a little bit about what it's like to see a total solar eclipse. On one hand, it looks exactly like all the photos you've ever seen of one, but in person, it's something completely different. As everyone knows, the sky gets darker, the birds and insects think its twilight and start to become more active, and the temperature drops quite a bit... Those descriptions simply don't do justice to what it's actually like being there, and I'll try to explain why.

I think the difference is the difference between intellectually knowing something, and experiencing it emotionally. Intellectually, as thinking human beings, we have a sense of the size and power of the sun. We know that the eclipse is much more than just twilight coming on. We know, intellectually, that an object the size of the Eastern half of the US, just moved in front of an object 1.4 million km in diameter, and blocked out the view of its surface. We know, intellectually, that the sun outputs so much power that even from 150 million km away, it heats our whole world. We know, intellectually, that the sun occasionally burps coronal mass ejections into space, and those reach out to the edges of the solar system in a matter of weeks. We even have satellite systems that monitor the propagation of those waves through the solar system. Click: [https://science.gsfc.nasa.gov/674/swx\\_services/swx\\_services\\_list\\_alert.html](https://science.gsfc.nasa.gov/674/swx_services/swx_services_list_alert.html) to get a sense of how powerful these things are. Ok, that's interesting, but the graphics are intellectual.

Then you observe a “live” one. You see it, and it's visceral. At some subconscious level, we connect the dots. We see the white streamers from the sun's surface, and the corona glow touches our retinas. That's the solar wind! Its glowing light is right there. You're looking at it with your naked eyes, and its 150 million kilometers away, and it's flying outward from the sun's surface at 400 km/s (1 million mph). Goodness gracious!



I ended up taking 500 photographs of the eclipse. I set my camera to 3 frames per second, and just held down the shutter. The 3 attached photos are the start of totality, the middle, and the end. The 1<sup>st</sup> and last shots show the famous Baily's beads, or diamond ring effect. What's striking to us, as human beings is that the edge of the moon is rough. You can actually see mountains and valleys

when you zoom in. You can see on the lower right, where there's a large basin, and the sun is starting to peak out there earlier than it should. It's crazy, in a way to see a "ridge line" that's 11,000 km long (the circumference of the moon), with peaks and valleys that are only a couple of km, but you are. And you're seeing it on an object that's 384,000 km away. It's mind blowing. It really is one thing to know that we sent the LRO (Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter) to the moon to measure the height of the mountains and valleys with lasers, and it's another thing to see the heights of those mountains and valleys manifest as bright spots as the sun comes from behind it.

[https://svs.gsfc.nasa.gov/vis/a010000/a012400/a012458/limb.0660\\_1280x720.jpg](https://svs.gsfc.nasa.gov/vis/a010000/a012400/a012458/limb.0660_1280x720.jpg)

**The year 2024 will be the next total eclipse. Go!**

## Summer News!

Notes from the editor: Well, that's it folks—another summer has come to an end. The days are shortening and the summer rush is over. I've decided that I have to start looking forward to Christmas now that summer is ending, so, everyone, get prepared for early Christmas music. ☺

### *Community News!*

**The Moore family** went to the 43<sup>rd</sup> Hawkes Family Reunion in Richmond, Virginia. Wanda wrote in, "It was a fun-filled weekend; activities included picnic at Deep Run Park, family paint party on Saturday and Sunday breakfast/program at the Richmond Marriott. The 2017 reunion was bittersweet as it was dedicated to my Great Uncle who passed away in 2016 at the age of 102. Uncle Alvin was the last living descendant and we all shared our memories of him and the importance of the reunions. Great time was had by all!"

**Marcus Moore** returned to school at Virginia State for his junior year—his parents say that he is once again a Resident Assistant for the school year. His classes are already underway—they started on August 14<sup>th</sup>!

**Anne and Steve Ball** are happy to announce that **Justin** proposed to his girlfriend, **Nicola Glover**, this summer! He and Nicola attended the big family reunion to share the news with everyone in person. They're planning to get married next summer, both in Denmark with Nicola's family and in Bryn Athyn. Exciting things are coming for the Ball family!

Speaking of exciting news, three WNCs alumni graduated from ANC this past June (*all with honors!*)—**Astri Hernandez, Oskar Simons, and Lauren Ball**! So proud! Way to make all your teachers proud. 😊

**Anders Croft** headed off to start off his college life this summer—Sharon said that he “joined an intrepid group of Salisbury University incoming freshmen, staff, and upperclassmen for a 12-day sojourn to Algonquin Park in Canada, for canoeing, camping and bonding. His family met him on Aug 23-24 back at SU to move him in to his Residence Hall.”

**Sharon and John Croft** had an epic adventure of an eclipse viewing party—Sharon said, “While Anders was jaunting around Canada, John Croft flew Sharon and Ivan to Triple Tree Aerodrome, a large airport and campground in Woodruff, SC, to view the total eclipse, along with another intrepid group of pilots and campers. A total eclipse should be on everyone's bucket list. Make your plans for 2024!”

I received some lovely news about a baptism this August: “On



August 5<sup>th</sup> in a small, private ceremony **Kenny and Bola Oreagba** and their two daughters, **Fay and Abi**, were baptized into the faith of the New Church. Abi has been a student here for two years and is now going into the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Welcome Oreagbas!”

**Mike and Ginny** report that they had a delightful (if hot and humid) reunion of all 5 of Mike's siblings and almost all their spouses

the first week of July in Hilton Head, SC. Beaches, bicycling, and home-brewed beverages were among the treats, with members attending from Australia, Arizona, New York, Florida, PA and here.

**Deena and Jerry** have settled nicely into their new home in North Carolina, says daughter Amy who wrote in to say that she visited them in their new house. She said, "It's a beautiful one story house on a little lake. Deena and Jerry enjoy sitting on the dock with a glass of wine and recover from visiting the grandkids (ages 3, 8, and 10.) They love being near Eva and her family as well as being close to the ocean." During their visit, Amy and Jerry drove to South Carolina to view the eclipse. Amy said that they "enjoyed taking pictures of the eclipse with their cell phone (with their NASA-approved sunglasses as filters, of course.) If you're ever in the Wilmington area, the Odnerns would love to visit with you!"

**Wystan Simons** wrote in to share a tidbit from one of her bridal shower games this summer—there were some beautiful bridal showers and celebrations this summer! Wystan said she left out the ending of one of her games, so she wrote this:

"After a bridal shower this month the hostess discovered that she had forgotten to read out the answers to a party game questionnaire! See if you can guess WHO ---

Cannot eat chamomile without an allergic reaction?

Spent a childhood in England?

Feels pretty near heaven when eating Lobster with butter?

Whose worst cleaning experience ever was SO bad that she was gifted a Longaberger basket as a thank you afterward?

Just hates to eat chickpeas?

Whose very favorite model car is a Dodge Viper?"

**Marlee Faryn Simons**, born just 30 minutes into August 24th, just squeezes into this month's news notes - but then she's a tiny little thing, 4lbs4oz! Marlee is the brand new daughter of **Scott and Meg Simons** of Denver, CO, and granddaughter for Edward and Wystan.

That's all the news I have for this month! Until next time, folks.