

October 2017

# ECHO ECHO

Newsletter of the  
Washington Church of the New Jerusalem

[www.theWNC.org](http://www.theWNC.org) • 301-464-5602

Pastor: Rev. Michael D. Gladish  
11910 Chantilly Lane; Mitchellville, MD 20721  
mdgladish@gmail.com  
~~~~~

Assistant Pastor: Rev. Michael E. Ferrell  
4210 Canyonview Drive; Upper Marlboro, MD 20772  
Michael.ferrell@washnewchurch.org  
~~~~~

Principal: Rev. Brian D. Smith  
11503 Chantilly Lane  
Mitchellville, MD 20721-2126  
Brian.smith@washnewchurch.org

WCNJ Inc. Treasurer

Mr. Brent Hyatt  
[bhhyatt@verizon.net](mailto:bhhyatt@verizon.net)

WCNJ Inc. Co-Treasurer

Mr. Wynne S. Hyatt  
[wynneshyatt@aol.com](mailto:wynneshyatt@aol.com)

WCNJ Inc. Investment Treasurer

Mr. Edward Simons  
[simons@safewareinc.com](mailto:simons@safewareinc.com)

WCNJ Inc. Secretary

Sharon Croft  
[croft.cooper@verizon.net](mailto:croft.cooper@verizon.net)

Echo Editor

Bonnie Cowley  
[Bonnie.cowley@washnewchurch.org](mailto:Bonnie.cowley@washnewchurch.org)

Echo News Notes Editor

Hanna Hyatt  
[hannaihyatt@gmail.com](mailto:hannaihyatt@gmail.com)

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Dear Friends,

What a joy it was on Sunday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, to have 14 people who are new to our congregation in the pews. 14 out of a total of 73 in church that day = nearly 20% of the congregation, which is just amazing. And that did not include several who are also new

who didn't make it that day. How nice, too, that this was the first trial of a new order of service with a more detailed explanation of things and with some new, more cheerful responsive readings!

Where are all these people coming from? Well, the majority are connected to the school. But a few have found us on their own in their search for deeper meaning, and a few have come by referral. It also helps that that particular Sunday was the kick-off of a whole new Sunday School and Youth program, including a pizza party afterward. If this new energy is an indication of what lies ahead for us, I expect this will be a very good year at the church.

### New Worship Bulletins

Last month I said that the Pastor's Council would be discussing a plan for new, more detailed pew bulletins incorporating new "offices" that we can follow right in the bulletins. At the meeting I presented 5 examples, including one we actually used on September 17<sup>th</sup>. I explained the whys and wherefores and after a brief discussion all the members voiced their support for the new plan.

I also explained this in the society doctrinal class on September 22<sup>nd</sup>, used another on September 24<sup>th</sup>, and will continue using the new orders throughout October. I sincerely hope you appreciate and enjoy this change, which is also being made to benefit our increasing flow of visitors.

### Family Services

Also at the PC meeting I explained why all three of us ministers find the once-popular, monthly "family services" so challenging, and they agreed with me that the congregation does not seem to need or value this as much as it once did. Therefore we have made the decision to discontinue these and – except for festival services like Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter – offer a "regular" service with a children's talk followed by an adult sermon every Sunday. This, combined with a newly invigorated Sunday School and Youth Group program, will provide consistency in what you can expect as well as *a better message for all age groups every week.*

## Greeters & Welcomers

One other thing the Pastor's Council wanted me to share with you is that they see a real need for all of us to be especially sensitive toward the new people who are starting to worship with us, to make a special point of engaging with them and making them feel welcome. Each of us has something to offer, even if we have to move a little outside of our "comfort zone" to do so.



Not sure if they're newcomers or not? Just introduce yourself and say, "I'm sorry, I don't recall if we've met..." and don't forget, if you run out of things to say you can always ask what they liked or found different about our services. This works

even if they come from another New Church society, since we all do things a little differently from one another.

### Reminder about the Society Semi-Annual Meeting

Please see the notice on p. 7 about this meeting, as well as Principal Smith's report on one of the topics to be presented – concerning the school.

The date is Friday, October 6<sup>th</sup>, at 8:00 pm, preceded by a prepared dinner (not a potluck as previously listed) at 7:00 pm.

It is too late for us to pre-circulate anything for this meeting, but you will hear all the usual reports and be invited to contribute in any way that you feel will be helpful. Members and non-members are welcome to attend, but of course only members can vote.

And finally...

Congratulations to all three couples getting married this month – Joe and Kira on the 7<sup>th</sup>, Kathleen and Kenan and also Chris and Lyle on the 13<sup>th</sup> – all private weddings and all off-site. Best wishes also to those attending "Charter Day," our school alumni weekend in Bryn Athyn on the 20<sup>th</sup>, and hey, don't forget about the "Scholastic Book Fair" at the school October 27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>.

*Mike Gladish*

## Church Events in October

### Mondays:

**the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>** the *evening* Heaven and Hell study group will meet at the Cooper home at 8:00 pm with Rev. Ferrell.

### Tuesday:

**the 3<sup>rd</sup>**, the WNC School board will hold a **joint meeting** with the Church Trustees at 7:30 pm. (There will be **no** separate BoT meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup>.)

### Wednesdays:

**the 4<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>**, the *morning* Heaven and Hell study group will meet at the Gladish house at 10:00 am, following a syllabus of readings available on request. People who are not able to join in person, but who wish to follow along can subscribe to the biweekly study notes by email.

**the 11<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 pm** the new study group discussing the history and spiritual meaning of the **PROPHETS** of the Old Testament will meet at the church. All are welcome!

### Fridays:

**the 6<sup>th</sup>**, a prepared supper (this is a change) at 7:00 pm will be followed at 8:00 by the semi-annual congregational meeting – to hear reports and discuss the issues facing our church.

**The 27<sup>th</sup>**, starting in the afternoon our annual **Scholastic Book Fair** will kick off for the whole weekend, raising funds and offering great reading selections for kids of all ages. Be sure to check it out in the supper room Friday, Saturday or Sunday.

There are, by the way, **THREE** private weddings for church folk this month – one on the 7<sup>th</sup> and two on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Best wishes to all these young people pledging their lives to each other!

## From the Principal

As we say goodbye to September I have a couple October events to highlight as well as a couple reports from this past month here at WNCS.

We had Our Back to School night on Sept 14<sup>th</sup>. As usual, this was an energizing event for me because it is an opportunity to spend time together as a school community getting to know each other and focusing on the hopes and big goals for the year -- before we get pulled into more of the day-to-day details. On Sunday, the 24<sup>th</sup> we ran our second social school picnic. The simple purpose of these picnics is to get families together, play some games and share food. These events are a great opportunity to invite extended families, grandparents and friends to enjoy being a part of the school community. (In a positive spill-over from these school-focused events, church participation on Sept 17 Sunday School opening kids program was bolstered by visitors, adding significantly to the usual attendance).

Also in September our high school and Lincoln's Forested operation are taking the next step in program tie-in, where a unit of the biology course will be taught out in the forest garden. This type of



hands-on engagement in “green” science is attractive for many families and an exciting development for us.

October comes with a lot of movement – weddings, jury duties, anticipated babies, and teacher-support visits. This

year our senior teachers (Mrs. Q and Mrs. Maxwell) are supporting three teachers in Bryn Athyn and Glenview, while four of our teachers are receiving support visits here (me included). These vis-

its mean a lot for the system; both in keeping us connected with our sister schools and in helping re-energize our teaching staff.

Also of note is our October 6<sup>th</sup> society meeting. One of the topics under discussion will be our high school program. This year happens to be a year of low enrollment in the school generally, which has created a pronounced financial deficit that brings a sense of urgency and focus to our planning for the next several years. Already, the faculty, School Board and Board of Trustees have devoted meeting and planning time to consider different scenarios and possibilities. We have continued to consider creative, low-cost approaches to a flexible 4 year program and recently have also started conversations with other General Church schools to explore possibilities for electronically sharing courses. This offers the triple possibility of building more connection between students around North America, drawing on instructors teaching in their favorite and strongest subject area and sharing resources (i.e. reducing costs). There remain many moving parts, which make the planning complicated, but our administration and joint boards will provide a framework for our October 6<sup>th</sup> meeting, in which we will be seeking comment and input from the membership.

Brian Smith (brian.smith@washnewchurch.org)

## **Board of Trustees Notes**

The Board of Trustees met on Sept. 12. The following was reported and discussed:

1. The Treasurer reported that we finished the last Fiscal Year with a surplus, due to strong contributions at the end of the year. However, we are projecting a large deficit in the current year, due to increased expenses and lower than expected school enrollment.
2. The Principal reported on School enrollment, marketing, and future outlook, especially for the High School.
3. The Board is still one member short, as is the School Board. (Since the meeting we have found a volunteer for the BoT, now we just need one more for the school board.)

4. The Building chair reported on ongoing maintenance and repair activities around the building, including multiple roof leaks and repairs.

A Washington New Church Society Fall Meeting will be held on October 6. Usual business will be addressed, including a discussion on the future outlook for the WNCS High School, with some creative ideas to address near-term anticipated low enrollment. We encourage all members and interested friends to attend.

Sharon Croft, BoT Secretary

### Sermon Topics for October, 2017

**the 1<sup>st</sup>: The Church as Heaven on Earth?** How could this be, given that we are all “works in progress”? It depends on how you define “church” and what you expect in heaven. Come and see how it could and should really work. ~ MDG

**the 8<sup>th</sup>: Unforgiving Servant.** Far better to learn from the bad choices of others than making all the mistakes ourselves. We’ll explore how the Lord uses a counter example in Matthew 18 to illustrate forgiveness. ~ BDS

**the 15<sup>th</sup>: Feeling Lost? What can you do?** Three parables in Luke 15 give us help: the lost sheep, the lost coin and the lost (or prodigal) son. Come for the teaching; leave encouraged, and with some new perspective. ~ MDG

**the 22<sup>nd</sup>: Shame and blame:** Why do we do this to each other? What’s the point? Does the Lord ever shame anyone? It’s an important question, and the answer may not be obvious. Let’s see what the Word teaches us about it. ~ MDG

**the 29<sup>th</sup>: Sin and Sickness:** what is the real connection between the two? And how can *our* faith help others when they can’t help themselves? This sermon will be drawn from the miracle in Mark 2 and several other stories. ~ MDG

## Money Matters

Through the course of the last school year we wrote monthly about the use and various means of contributing to the church. Your response was almost overwhelming and we ended the year in a much better position than we had expected.

Among other things we are seeing an increasing number of visitors at church services, and we also have some brand new contributors. So we are beginning this year on a high note.

Now we are facing some new challenges, not only with a (hopefully temporary) slump in school enrollments but more importantly some new salary obligations for our staff. And – this is important! – even if we closed one or more grades of the school we still have the full responsibility for our new assistant pastor’s salary for the first time this fiscal year.

So at this time we are asking you (all of our members and friends) seriously to consider offering another modest increase, or perhaps a new regular scheduled contribution through the envelope system or the e-giving platform. It’s easy, and we continue to believe that if you schedule this in the same way that you schedule your utility payments you will be surprised how much you can give over time.

The school continues to be our main use to the community and *our main draw for new members!*

Of course if it weren’t for the school this church would have no financial problems. *But the school continues to be our main use to the community and our main draw for new members!* So the board and the pastors are collaborating this year to do more effective advertising and promotion of the school, and explore more cost effective ways of offering specific courses. You will hear more about this at our society meeting on October 6<sup>th</sup>.

Meanwhile if you are willing to adjust your monthly giving to support these new challenges we ask you please to visit the website, <https://giving.ncsservices.org/dl/?uid=ncs-2818> and follow the prompts.

~ Mike Gladish, Pastor, & Brent Hyatt, treasurer

## **New E-giving Platform**

NCS services, the company that manages the e-giving has changed their computer platform which has some changes that could be very helpful.

However, since they just completed the set up this week we are finding a few glitches in the system. We are in the process of trying to get the support we need to work out these problems before you have to login to the new system.

If you already use e-giving for contributions, tuition and aftercare you need to login as before except with your **e-mail** as your username and the same password you have used before. If for some reason the password does not work you can have it reset. This too may not work at first. Try several times... even try again the next day. I have found that as they work the kinks out my access gets easier.

The new link is: <https://giving.ncsservices.org/dl/?uid=ncs-2818>. It is also on the homepage of our website.

If you have set up regular automatic payments this should still be happening. The treasurer has looked at the donor details and all seems well on that front.

Finally, if you are having trouble please feel free to give me a call. I am in the process of trying to get a "hot line" to their company to be sure everything goes smoothly.

~ Bonnie Cowley

### **From the Sunday School**

Sunday School Opportunity! On Oct 1st we will start a five week program for the Sunday School. The General Church creates the material for this program which they call the "Journey Program". Congregations all over the church participate in sermons, small groups, and Sunday school lessons all based on the same readings and materials.

This year the theme is Forgiveness. Our Sunday School will use the lessons and projects to create a fun series of Sunday School lessons all tied together. We hope it will inspire parents to send their kids for this series of Sundays. All are welcome! We would love to see your kids there! - Janine Smith

## A *NEW* New CHURCH VINEYARD!



After a year and a half effort, General Church Education is pleased to announce the launch of a *new* New Church Vineyard website. More than 5000

resources for religious education and inspiration are now searchable by topic, Biblical reference, age level, activity type and several other filters. Look for stories from the Word, videos, Sunday school lessons and more.

Visit: [www.newchurchvineyard.org](http://www.newchurchvineyard.org) to see what's available!

## From the Theta Alpha Guild

What's new with TAG, you ask? Over a hot cup of tea and some of Mary Cooper's brownies, eleven women got together on Wednesday evening 9/20 to plan this fall's activities in support of the Washington New Church and School. Two items deserve particular attention:



First, Jazzmone Coby is running the Scholastic Book Fair October 27-29. She is looking for a handful of volunteers to help set up, sell, and clean up. Book Fair hours will be Friday 10/27 3-5 pm, Saturday 10/28 10 am to 2 pm, and Sunday 10/29 12 - 1:30 pm. There may be a preview on

Thursday afternoon 3-5 pm for WNCS families and friends. Setup helpers are likely needed Thursday early afternoon, and cleanup helpers on Sunday at 1:30 pm. Contact Jazzmone at [mrsjc515@gmail.com](mailto:mrsjc515@gmail.com) if you would like to help.

Second, we are excited to present a Women's Respite Weekend, February 9-11, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland! This year the focus is on REST. Wzystan notes that the weekend will be "mellow. Not care-y share-y, although we do care!" We believe in making this fun for both extroverts and introverts. So grab a registration form at WCNJ, and consider joining us! Cost: \$100 (plus food, which we usually bring ourselves). The sooner you can commit, the sooner we secure the house. Stay tuned for a heart-themed fundraiser to help make the weekend accessible to all. Contact Wzystan at [lovinchickens@gmail.com](mailto:lovinchickens@gmail.com) for details.



What else is new? Check out Mary's forthcoming email with the TAG minutes!

## Community News!

Notes from the editor: Everyone is busy this month! I have some news to share myself— **Derek, Hugo and I** are excited to share this “moving” news with all of you. We are moving into the blue house in Acton Park next month! The old “Hyatt hill” house will be a Hyatt hill once more. We have started all the paperwork and we are planning to close on October 16<sup>th</sup>. We can't wait!

**Beata Kinsey** wrote in to be her “super proud mom” self and tell me about the big things coming for her kids. “**Kristin** has started her senior year at Towson University with a major in film. She will be working on some pretty significant film projects this year, and she already has an IMDB account! (For those who don't know what that is, go to [www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com) and do a search on Kristin Kinsey to see her film accomplishments to date!) **Matthew** was accepted as a transfer student and has begun his junior year at Morgan State University as an honors art major (illustration/graphic design). We are looking forward to seeing what he produces these next two years! **Micah** has just started his senior year of HS home schooling with concurrent enrollment at PG Community College

(with a strong science emphasis). **Jordan** has begun her junior year of HS also home schooling and is also concurrently enrolled at PG community college. She is also taking Korean this year in hopes of travelling to (South) Korea in the near future. Both Jordan (in 2 years) and Micah (this year) will graduate HS with a Missouri state high school diploma as well as at least a year or more of college credits under their belts. And mom couldn't be more excited and proud for each of them!!!” ☺

Our condolences go to **Kathy Johns** and family. Kathy wrote in to share: “**Wayne Hartley Cooper** passed into the spiritual world on September 5, 2017. He is the son of Geoffrey and Gaynell Cooper and younger brother of Kathy Johns. He was a resident at St. Joseph's Center in Scranton, PA for most of his life with a condition called tuberous sclerosis. If you would like to make a contribution in Wayne's memory, the family would appreciate donations to The New Church Challenge Box #277 Bryn Athyn, PA 19009 or St. Joseph's Center 2010 Adam's Ave. Scranton, PA 18509. A memorial service was held in the Bryn Athyn Cathedral on Sept. 24.”

Kathy also wrote in some exciting family news! “**Bradley Johns, Jr. (Bisty) and Christine Mongeon** were married in a small family ceremony at the historic (1741) Sacred Heart Chapel in Bowie, Maryland on September 29th. They will be living at 2733 Keystone Lane in Bowie. Brad and Kathy are thrilled to welcome Christine, Penny & Maddie (grand dogs) to the Johns family.”

**Dorothy and Bill** are adventuring to Atlanta next week to do some visiting. Dorothy says that they plan to visit “Bill's sister-in-law Laura Radcliffe who is in an assisted living home there. Her son Chris lives near-by so we will see him as well. To add to the fun we plan to get together with granddaughter Anna who is a senior at Emery and see one of her soccer games along with her mother Laura who is planning the trip.”

More adventures to come next month, as we head full steam toward beautiful fall weather and holidays!