

December 2017

ECHO ECHO

Newsletter of the
Washington Church of the New Jerusalem

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Dear Friends,

As we prepare to enjoy a Christmas tableaux prepared and performed by the children this year we can look forward to the special sphere of innocence they always bring to it. At the same time it is

pretty important that we understand how deep and profound the events of the Advent really were.

For example, we know from the doctrines that whereas the Lord was born into a state of pure infinite love, His understanding was constrained and limited at first for the purpose of exposing Himself to the falsities and evils of the world *so that He could confront these in Himself*, overcome them by Himself, and glorify His whole Humanity¹.

Further, although the story of the Lord's birth involves historical characters, both good and evil, we know that each one of these represents some characteristic in ourselves that forms part of the narrative of our own spiritual lives. Joseph, for example, the Lord's surrogate father, represents our faculty of understanding, struggling as it does with the magnitude and gravity of the incarnation, and the virgin, Mary, the Lord's mother, represents the pure, innocent affection for truth that is so essential to our own conception of the Lord's love and wisdom. Herod, the wise men, angels, shepherds, and even the specific places that are mentioned in the story all have specific meanings in our lives.

These are among the principles *and applications* that we hope to bring out in the Christmas class that will be offered at the church on Friday night, December 8th, just two nights before the tableaux.

Many other events related to the Advent are also on the calendar, and at least a few of them are scheduled a little differently than in the past, so please do consult the calendar and note all the times and dates for this year's activities.

Information – Available and Requested

Many copies of the Pastor's report on what we have been doing to promote the church, and of the treasurer's report on our financial

¹ This distinction is represented in the bread and wine of the holy supper, in that the bread is made without yeast, which corresponds to falsity, but the wine is a product of fermentation with yeast, corresponding to the combats of temptation the Lord experienced as He purified the truth in His mind – and in the heavens!

situation are “left over” and available for any who would like to pick them up from the bookcase in the lobby.

Also, as mentioned in the last Echo all pastors of the General Church have been tasked with soliciting broad counsel from among our members as to *the particular skills and qualities you feel are most needed in our next executive bishop*. The ministers will announce all their nominees in March and one of these will be affirmed in June by both the clergy and the board of directors (which he chairs). We would be grateful therefore if you would give this your best thought and communicate your ideas to Mike, Michael or Brian or to any member of the pastor’s council sometime during the Christmas season.

If you would like to see a *job description* written by the current bishop, the Rev. Brian Keith, we can provide that for you, but bear in mind that it is subject to change with the changing perceptions and needs of the church. In fact YOUR input on that might be very useful, too.

The Museum of the Bible

Much in the news these days – and not without controversy – is this new and in many ways interactive museum only three blocks from the U.S. capitol. Just opened, it features scenes and artifacts from Bible times, live “interpreters” and many other things calculated to inspire respect not only for the great truths communicated in it but its influence on civilization as we know it.



If anyone wants to go as a church group and check it out, I would be delighted to help organize the trip. Just let me know of your interest. Otherwise, if you do go on your own, please consider writing a review of your visit for the ECHO. In fact, it would be fun to see a string of your articles about it each month in the New Year!

Meanwhile, have a wonderful Advent season!

Sermon Topics for December, 2017

the 3rd: **“Thy Kingdom Come. Thy Will be Done.”** This third petition in the Lord’s Prayer relates particularly well to the Lord’s Coming and His own work to make it possible. Note Holy Supper will be offered after the sermon. – MG

the 10th: NO Morning Service. **Come to the children’s Tableaux at 7:00 PM in the sanctuary.** Generous refreshments and visiting will be encouraged after the service instead of the traditional hymn sing.

the 17th: **Flight to Egypt.** Why did the Lord’s birth have to be immediately followed by fleeing and exile in Egypt? What can we learn about how the Lord carefully protects, and cultivates His presence with us. - BDS

the 24th: NO Morning Service. **Come to the candle-lit evening family service at 7:00 PM** to learn and celebrate something new about the Lord’s birth into the world. – MG

the 25th: A typically low attendance at this Christmas Day morning family service provides a lovely, intimate atmosphere for reflection on the blessings of the Advent. – MG

the 31st: **“Our Father who art in the Heavens…”** Our idea of God is the most important thing in our lives, so let’s begin the New Year reflecting on the deep meaning and implications of this first phrase in the Lord’s Prayer. – MG

From the Principal

Thanks to the many folks from the school and church communities who came out to support the coffee house hosted by the 7th and 8th grade classroom! Many people provided light-hearted fun and entertainment. Also, thanks to some very generous bidding on auctioned baked goods we raised over \$1,200 – half of which goes directly to the support of field trips.



In November we also hosted 4 visiting senior teachers from the General Church Education system. Each of our visitors spent 2 days in a classroom to offer observations, feedback and support for our WNCS teachers. This continues to be a valuable point of contact and encouragement for our staff.



Also in November, we the church and school held a fall work party. I want to express my deep gratitude to all the people who showed up to help maintain and improve our facilities. Special thanks needs to go to Bonnie Cowley and Erik Genzlinger for planning out and overseeing the various projects, also to Aubrey Cowley who over-

saw the installation of rock-drainage fields at the back of the building. This is the first stage of plans designed to make the inner corner of the building (which connects with the field) inviting and beautiful so that the whole space can be better used for picnics, games and gardening.

The boards and faculty continue to meet and plan for different scenarios related to our high school programs. This year, and next (2018/19) are years with low anticipated enrollment, before we come to another larger group of students. We never know who else may apply, but we do need to have plans in place both for these lean years and for larger years to come. One scenario under active consideration is adjusting to an alternative program structure where more of the classes are purchased online and/or from local home-schooling cooperatives. This allows for some more flexibility and creativity in the type of program that each student can pursue. For those students who don't go on to the Academy of the New Church, this approach also allows the possibility that we could see students all the way through 12th grade graduation.

In December the school students look forward to participating in the Tableau worship service on December 10th. Along with our

whole-school Christmas party, this will keep us all busy until we break for the Christmas holidays.

Several of you have taken the opportunity to send me short emails about ideas on your mind or responses to the programs at the school. Please keep those communications coming!

Brian Smith (brian.smith@washnewchurch.org)

Money Matters

As the end of the fiscal year draws to a close you are all no doubt being bombarded with solicitations by various charities anxious to have you remember them. In that context we have just one thing to add and that is the fervent request that you remember what the New Church offers that no other institution can.

Based on entirely new ideas about the Lord, spiritual life, faith and providence, what the New Church provides is unique and we be-

We support **best** the things for which we sacrifice and in which we fully invest.

lieve critical for the spiritual health and future of all people! True, the teachings of the church may not be consciously received by many, but the fact that they are *available* and represented by a real group of dedicated believers is crucial to the influx and communication of life from the Lord to this whole world.

Can we do a better job of sharing these life-giving revelations? Yes, of course, but it takes time and money. Can we do a better job of *living* according to what they teach? Yes, that, too. But here's a fundamental human fact: we support **best** the things for which we sacrifice and in which we fully invest.

Can you give a little extra to the church this year? If so you have our commitment that we will use it as effectively as we can – with your help – to do the work that no other organization can do, to provide a firm intellectual and rational foundation for the kingdom of heaven in this world.

~ Mike Gladish, Pastor, & Brent Hyatt, treasurer

From the Board of Trustees:

The Board met on November 14, 2017, and the Fall Society Meeting was held on Friday, November 17. Topics of discussion at both meetings included budget and investment status, reports from the General Church Board and Treasurer's meetings, and future vision and plans for the Washington New Church High School, led by Principal Brian Smith. Rev. Smith presented ideas for expanding to a four year High School program, and laid out multiple options that he is researching. Members and friends of the Washington Church community are asked to provide suggestions and feedback to the Principal, Pastor, or members of the Church and School Boards, to help determine a path forward for our High School.

The next meeting of the Board will be on Tuesday December 12 at 7:30pm. Sharon Croft Cooper – WCNJ Secretary



From the Theta Alpha Guild: 'Tis the Season of Abundance with TAG: For those of us who love serving the church and school community, Thanksgiving to New Years can feel like a bit of a marathon. Or perhaps a 5k we committed to that

arrived too suddenly?

At our November planning meeting, we read about the Lord's abundance -- good measure pressed down, shaken together, running over. In all of our plans and productivity this season, the Lord will be the source of inspiration, generosity, and unfailing love. There will be time and energy for what really matters!

Our gratitude runs over to all of YOU for making the recent bake sale and raffle a success. Our annual Christmas Centerpieces are in production as we go to print. Mary Cooper's team will take orders through December 15; proceeds go to the WCNJ Operating Fund. Looking for ways to share your abundant time and energy? The Tableaux are coming up on December 10! Consult the 2017 Holiday sign-up sheet in the lobby (going up this week) or the TAG meeting minutes (emailed November 15) to find the best fit. Many thanks! ~ Becca Smith, TAG President

Dear Friends,

At dark times in our lives, the Lord finds a way to use His angels on earth to spread His love. My recent accident changed my life in many meaningful ways. From that dark moment, I became the beneficiary of so many acts of extraordinary kindness - cards, gifts, well-wishes and neighbors doing what I could not. This heart-felt unvarnished kindness was stunning, awe inspiring, so loving and selfless, and so confirming of how those around us do good without any thought of self or benefit. Through it all, I had Janna, who piloted my way through my challenges.

My deepest thanks for giving me so much. From darkness came light and love.

Phil Zuber

Christmas Sing

Theta Alpha welcomes everyone high school and up to a Christmas sing hosted at Brian and Janine Smith's house.

Saturday December 2nd - 7:30pm

Picture this: pleasant social time, yummy treats and drinks, and Christmas hymn singing. As the first Christmas event for the church, what a special, intimate, low-key way to begin the holiday season and start to think about the Lord being born into our lives!

If you feel like bringing a sweet treat, fruit, cheese, crackers etc. please contact Janine ([240-334-8454](tel:240-334-8454) or janinegracesmith@gmail.com)

Note: There will not be a speaker this year. Hope to see you there! ~ Janine Smith

Special Church Events in December

Saturday night, Dec. 2nd, starting at 7:30 pm: hymn sing with refreshments (no speaker) at Brian and Janine Smith's house, at 11503 Chantilly Lane (in Enterprise Estates). See p. 8

Sunday morning, the 3rd, starting at 11:00 am: a regular service with holy supper toward the end of the service.

Friday night, Dec. 8th, starting at 7:00 pm: Potluck Supper and, at 8:00 pm, a Christmas Class at the church (not the 15th as originally proposed); this *could* also include some hymn singing. Your opinions about this are welcome.

Sunday night, the 10th, starting at 7:00 pm: the TABLEAUX by the children; no carol sing this night but maybe a short performance by the SMURFS band, and plenty of refreshments for socializing afterwards.

Thursday night, the 14th, starting at 5:00pm: Youth Group Christmas Party, *and at 6:00pm* Movie Night for all – see p.11.

Saturday night, the 16th: Johns' annual Christmas party @ their home, see p. 12.

Sunday morning, the 17th, at 11:00 am: regular service, BDS preaching.

Sunday night, the 24th, at 7:00 pm, a candlelight Christmas Eve service for the whole family.

Monday morning, the 25th at 11:00 am, an intimate Christmas Day service for the whole family.

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Remember, two Sunday morning services will be cancelled this month – one for the Tableaux on the 10th and one for Christmas Eve on the 24th.

Sunday night, the 31st, starting at 8:00pm – Quintero's New Years Eve open house @ their home. See p. 16.

Sign Up Before You Shop Online!



We recently received our

yearly check for GoodSearch/GoodShop. Almost \$100 - not bad for easy money. It could be even more if all of you who shop on line (especially at Christmas time) go through **GoodShop**. There are so many stores now that participate in this fundraiser; even stores you think would not be on the GoodShop list are there. Go to: <https://www.goodsearch.com/give> and register following instructions to pick the Washington New Church and School... then **SHOP!** Better yet, download the Washington New Church GoodSearch toolbar. Once you have that, it alerts you to any store online that donates and has coupons. Support our cause when you search or shop online!

 You shop. Amazon gives.

Another company that gives us a portion of their proceeds when you shop is AmazonSmile. Here is how it works:

Go to AmazonSmile.com - Click on "Supporting" in the upper left hand side. Select Washington Church of the New Jerusalem. Do your Amazon shopping on the AmazonSmile website, or if you come across something in Amazon.com, add it to your cart, open up AmazonSmile, and it will have automatically transferred.



PLANET GREEN RECYCLE: We also raise money (and help the planet) by recycling ink cartridges. Just drop off your empty cartridges in my office (no laser cartridges please).

And if any of you have other easy ways to raise funds, please share with us and we will get the word out! ~ Bonnie

The WNCS Youth Group has been back up and running this year! We have already had several meetings, election of positions and some fun events! We started with a casual informational meeting for students and parents to get everyone interested and excited about the Youth Group. With many fun ideas for events,



we have already had a Halloween Party, a Board Game Night, a meeting to put together promotional materials for the school, a Flier Drive in Enterprise Estates and a small campfire to celebrate the season of fall!

Coming up soon on our calendar are two more events. Our Youth Group Christmas Party will be at 5pm on December 14th, followed at 6pm by our WNCS Youth Group Christmas Movie Fundraiser. **The fundraiser is open to all school families and congregational mem-**

bers! We will be showing "Elf" and selling snacks and drinks! We hope to see you there!"

2018 Echo Directory: I am in the process of updating the church directory. I have sent all of you (whom I have email for) a PDF copy of the 2017 Directory and a request for changes or corrections.

Please take the time to look the old directory over and check to see if it is accurate – names, numbers, emails etc. Then check the other places in the directory for additions or corrections – Congregation children, their birth dates, our church committees, our School and our boards.

THEN let me know of any changes, and if you are not in the directory and wish to be, please also let me know. Thanks!

Bonnie – bonnie.cowley@washnewchurch.org

New Book by Derek Elphick: Many of us know how important it is to spend time on a regular basis focusing on our spiritual lives and reading Scripture. Yet, committing actual time is difficult. General Church Outreach has published a new book entitled Daily Bread: 365 Readings & Inspirations for Living Well written and compiled by Derek Elphick, senior pastor at Oak Arbor Church in Oak Arbor, MI.

Available to purchase at www.NewChristianResources.org for \$19.99. This book makes a wonderful gift!



You are Warmly Invited to the
Johns Christmas Open House

Saturday, December 16th

Anytime from 7pm on

Feel free to bring a friend!

3110F Enterprise Road, Mitchellville, MD

301-464-5990

Men's Retreat, Nov. 3-5, 2017

The second annual men's retreat at "Fishing Cove," near Cambridge, MD, was another great success. Our theme this year was the doctrine and life of charity, including everything from the definition of the word to the way we actually do it, and the challenges we face in trying to do it right. 12 men participated this year, including 3 who came for the first time, and just like last year the spirit of fellowship and shared understanding grew throughout the



weekend as we worshiped, sang, cooked, played, pondered, discussed and just hung out together. We were blessed with good weather despite the November dates, and the venue gets better each year with renovations and a nice working relationship with the owner. We now

feel sure we can accommodate up to 16 reasonably comfortably, and so look forward to another great group next year – maybe in late September this time. Thanks to everyone who helped out – cooking, playing music for worship and just really getting into it!



~ MDG



Community news: the holidays are upon us

Notes (and news) from the editor:

I'm not sure about anyone else, but this holiday season snuck up on me. So my favorite time of the year is here and I feel unprepared! The news has been coming in over Thanksgiving weekend, and people did a lot of adventuring over the holiday. We went to western PA to visit my half of the family, and Hugo got so much attention and so much love that he was confused when we got back and it was just the same old three of us. ;)

On to more news! Keep up the good news hunting, friends.

Wanda Moore wrote in to share tales of Thanksgiving celebrations, along with a sweet family tradition. "The Moore Family hosted the Hobbs Family Thanksgiving this year. This was very significant in that all of the Hobbs family from Texas flew in, the New Jersey Hobbs family drove down and all of the Maryland/Virginia Hobbs family joined the Moore's. Wanda and her two brothers had made a promise to each other when their Mom passed away in 2011 that the family would come together for Thanksgiving at least every five years. Though 6 years had passed since the last family gathering (due to two new births in the family) a wonderful feast was prepared. Wanda's oldest brother from Texas gathered everyone around to bless the food and offered traveling prayer as each family group left full and happy to return home. The family plans to continue this tradition and looks forward to Thanksgiving 2022!"

(Is it just me, or does 2022 sound much, much farther away than five years??)

Mike and Ginny Gladish wrote in separately to say -

"We were pleased to have our, **Dar**, visiting from Ontario, and our daughter, **Anika**, her husband, **Dain**, and the whole **Kester family**

here for Thanksgiving. Dain amazed us as always with his culinary skills and Dar helped install the new Christmas lights outside the manse. We all played games, laughed a lot, and walked, and generally caught up with each other's lives. There's nothing like a good family fix!

“A few weeks before that, we were also pleased to be able to host **Christopher Dunn** and his wife, **Ashley**, for a visit to the church and school as part of his training for the ministry. The couple impressed everyone they met and Chris helped out for several days in the school while he was here. He is in his second year of theological school.

“And right in the middle we had a special, short visit from our son, **Brett**, an aerospace engineer from Phoenix, who dropped in on the way home from Wallops Island after his company's launch of the latest Antares Rocket, successfully resupplying the International Space Station. Busy month for the Gladishes.”

Dorothy Radcliffe wrote in to share news of their Thanksgiving: “Bill and I spent a delightful Thanksgiving with the visit of **Charles and Angela** and daughters, **Rachael and Vivian**. They spent the dinner and festivities with Roscoe's while we joined other members of our family with daughter Laura and her family.”

Bonnie adds, “And what a crowd the **Roscoe's** had! Their daughters **Renée** and **Nora** came home (most likely to help) since, along with many local friends and family, Thanksgiving dinner hosted 40+ people including James' mother **Janice**, sister **Abigail** and brother **Will**, much of the Cowley clan (all of the **Hernandezes**, and **Martin-Attiliises**) and a much welcome visit from **Will, Berith, Liam, Arraugh, Camlin & Maisey Cowley** and Charles, Angela, Rachael & Vivian Radcliffe all from BA. Dinner, afternoon walk, skits and card playing into the night topped off a great Thanksgiving!”

(Late report) Anne and Steve “Grandma and Grandpa” Ball have grandchild news to share! “**Weston Layne Maple** arrived on October 7 (8 pounds, 14 ounces, 21 inches), officially making Anne and Steve Ball grandparents. Parents Emily and Frankie are

still beaming and somewhat sleep-deprived, weeks later. Auntie Lauren is over the moon. Everyone else in the family is also thrilled and happy.”

(*Even later*) Thanks to **Eric Genzlinger** two of the amp and volume controls for the church’s wireless microphones have been relocated for easy access in the lobby and the supper room. One is by the door into the church office, the other just to the right inside the glass supper room doors. To turn them ON press the round center button.

Also, we hear there is a special zoning hearing scheduled before the County Hearing Examiner on December 13 at 9:30 AM in the County Administration Building to consider a **major development** on the vacant property just north of Hwy 50 on the east side of Enterprise Road. The application includes the construction of highway off ramps that could severely impact our community. For more information please contact George Cooper or Steve Ball.

That’s all folks! Until next time. May you listen to lots of lovely Christmas tunes from now until the next Echo time.



by Celebrating at the Quintero’s
Annual New Year’s Eve Party

Sunday, December 31st
Open House from 8:00pm

College age and up – bring
munchies or drinks to share – Hot tub will be open.

11907 Chantilly Lane, Mitchellville, MD 20721

301-356-7018