

March 2018

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,

As we enter the Easter season (Easter being April 1<sup>st</sup> this year) it may be useful to remember that many Christians are in the midst of what is called LENT. This is a 40 day period, not counting Sundays, beginning with Ash Wednesday, which was February 14<sup>th</sup>

this year, during which adherents give up certain pleasures as a form of self-discipline or penance in recognition of Christ's suffering. The period ends on what is called Maundy Thursday, the day of the Lord's Last Supper, the evening before His crucifixion.

We don't observe this tradition in the New Church, but there's certainly nothing wrong with it, and we can respect the people who believe it is important. In fact, it wouldn't hurt any of us to practice some special self-examination and self-discipline in the time leading up to the Easter Holy Supper, which we will commemorate on Friday, the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Is there something in particular – some habit or attitude – that we need to give up but that we have been reluctant to address? What better time could there be to get on with it? Among other things the anticipation of the sacrament and all the other events of Easter may help strengthen our resolve as we prepare. Besides, this is or could be one of those times referred to in *The True Christian Religion* where we read,

“If real repentance is practiced from time to time, *especially when one prepares oneself to partake of the Holy Supper*, and if one thereafter refrains from one or two sins one caught oneself committing, this is enough to start the process of making it real. Anyone at that point is on his way to heaven, for that is when a person begins to become spiritual instead of natural, and to be born anew under the Lord's guidance.” (TCR 530:e).

And by the way, hoping it helps, you will notice that most of the sermons listed for this month touch in some way on issues that could be useful in the process of self-examination, repentance and beginning a new life.

Don't forget, too, that there will be a special society supper followed by a *doctrinal class on Friday, the 23<sup>rd</sup>*, about the events of Easter and the process of the Lord's glorification.

### Visiting Dignitaries

We have the distinct honor to welcome **Mr. Brian Blair**, *President of the Bryn Athyn College*, as a guest speaker for a special event on

*Saturday night, March 17<sup>th</sup>*. Mr. Blair will bring us up to speed on the current state of the College, recent developments and future plans. He will also answer any questions you may have about the College. Whether you are an alumni, a patron, a concerned parent or a prospective student of the College, we hope you will make a special point of attending this event. *See more on p. 14.*

Looking ahead to April, we have the good fortune to welcome a visiting pastor who comes originally from the Ivory Coast. Currently assigned to assist the pastor in Boulder, Colorado, *the Rev. Jean Atta* has graciously agreed to come and speak to our students about the New Church in Africa, *and to preach for us on Sunday, April 9<sup>th</sup>*. You won't want to miss that special weekend.

Then *over the weekend of April 21<sup>st</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>*, we will be favored with a visit by *Bishop Brian Keith* when he will be able – among other things – to answer questions related to the unfolding conversation about the selection of a candidate to become your new head pastor in 2019 – *and also preach for you on Sunday, the 22<sup>nd</sup>*.

### An Alternative Evening Worship Service

Some months ago I circulated a proposal to a handful of members that we consider a new alternative worship service, possibly to be held on a Saturday or Sunday night. On Sunday, Feb. 25<sup>th</sup> we had our first meeting to consider this, and it went well.

We talked about the essentials of worship, and what format might work best especially for young adults. There was good energy in the room and we generated a lot of good ideas. Now we want to continue the discussion and welcome any who would like to join us as we refine the suggestions and develop a clear plan for an initial service in April – perhaps April 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM.

We'll meet again before we start, this time on *Thursday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 pm*. Please let me know if you are interested so I can update you if the time changes.

Best wishes,



Pastor's Council on **Wednesday**, March 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM

Once again our Council members for this year are:

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

Please contact them if you have ideas or opinions you would like represented in church planning. Meanwhile here are the things I have in mind:

- Your response to the announcement in this ECHO about my retirement at the end of June, 2019. What if anything should we be doing as a congregation to prepare for this change?
- An update on who has been nominated so far to become our next executive bishop, with a quick review of the process and timing of his (and his assistant's) election.
- Continuation about planning for the future of our high school, including *why* this remains an important focus of our church work if we can possibly manage it.
- Proposal for a completely new and different “alternative” worship service geared to young adults and offered once a month on Sunday evenings.
- A new idea for finishing the big white wall in the church LOBBY.

Unfortunately we were not able to meet in January as planned, and there's only one more meeting before summer, so I'm hoping for good representation – and a good discussion at this meeting.

- MDG



## From the Principal

During February, WNCS hosted two students (K and 4<sup>th</sup>) visiting from England for the day and also said goodbye to our Brazilian exchange student Thais Amaral (10<sup>th</sup>) (visiting Didi Trimble) who was a delightful addition for the month she participated in the classroom.

We also taught our curriculum on personal safety throughout the school, targeted to each age level. It is neither fun nor easy to strike the right balance of preparing and sheltering our students to safely navigate the world they live in. However, the task does ask our teachers to do careful work on an area of one of our core values; that is preserving, protecting and strengthening the God-given innocence in each of the children. The New Church idea of innocence is more than just limiting exposure to harm and evil. Rather, it is the fundamentally important human quality of proper, open relationship to the Lord. Viewing our task in this context means reminding us that innocence is a quality which can be cultivated and grow over time, not merely lost or given up. This is why the Washington New Church School exists.



Toward the end of February we took the whole school for our first trip to visit the National Museum of African American History and Culture. There was much more to cover than we had time to see, but now all of the teachers have a sense of the place and how it could fit into their curricula. Perhaps my favorite section was the one on musicians and musical influence. Black Americans have heavily influenced, if not originated, every bit of American music and dance culture. It was awesome to experience it in a large, interactive set of exhibits.

Many of you will have heard that Amy Dwyer/Glenn has announced that she will move after this year of teaching. She has done a wonderful job in the 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> grade during her three years here and revitalized our youth program this year. She will be sorely missed by students, faculty and parents. But we still wish her well in her next endeavors.

Anne Ball has agreed to replace Amy in the grade 3/4 (a group she has taught in the past). We're grateful to have an experienced and well known teacher stepping into the role, but here again, we must say goodbye to Anne as a full-time high school teacher. She has poured her heart (and time) into this role, developing new courses each year. She feels somewhat wistful to be leaving behind this focus on older kids; we hope we will be able to continue to draw on some of her strengths working with that age group.

This loss of full-time staff person creates an opportunity to dovetail with our planning and the launch of a shift in our high school program. We have solicited financial support from the Glencairn Foundation (and others) and our committee has been actively interviewing and comparing the strengths and possibilities which different candidates may bring to this nascent program.



In March I would like to draw your attention especially to the school Open House on March 20<sup>th</sup>. Until our school classrooms are at capacity we have a compelling opportunity to serve more people. Each new student in the school means a richer and fuller social experience, more dollars supporting the health

of the organization and another opportunity to build connections with an area family around the careful raising of a child. I warmly encourage your participation in this event. Your referrals and presence at the evening are an invaluable support to the Washington New Church School.

A handwritten signature in black ink.

## Sermon Topics for March, 2018

**the 4<sup>th</sup>:** “Forgive Us Our Debts....” Continuing with our occasional series on the Lord’s Prayer, this is offered in conjunction with and to help set the stage for **the holy supper**, also to be offered toward the conclusion of the service. ~ MDG

**the 11<sup>th</sup>:** **Isaac and Rebekah.** Gen 24. On its surface, this story is about the search for a bride. Abraham sends his servant to look for a suitable woman. However it is chock full of fascinating and quirky details, each of which contained layers of meaning and depth for our spiritual lives.. ~ BDS

**the 18<sup>th</sup>:** **The Son of God.** "God so love the world that He gave His only begotten Son." As we enter the Easter season we ask, who and what is this Son of God? The sermon will explore how we can understand this "mystery" and the Gospel the Lord said should be preached about Him. ~ MEF

**the 25<sup>th</sup>:** “**Palm Sunday:**” Remember, this is a “regular” service but with a palm procession, then a children’s talk and Sunday School as usual, followed by an adult sermon. It’s a commemoration of the events that took place when the Lord entered Jerusalem just before His crucifixion, and this year we will focus on *what happened in the Temple* ~ MDG

**the 30<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 PM:** “Good Friday” evening Holy Supper.

**April 1<sup>st</sup>:** **EASTER SUNDAY.** Beginning with a floral offering commemorating the new life of the Lord’s resurrection we’ll continue with an abbreviated *family service* for all ages *focusing on the awesome power of the Lord’s love.* ~ MDG

**Monday Evening Heaven & Hell Class:** Just a reminder that a reading group meets every other Monday evening at George and Mary Cooper’s studying Heaven and Hell currently.

New members are always welcome... Classes for this month are – Monday, March 12 and Monday, March 26 at 8:00pm.

~ Michael Ferrell

## Money Matters

Expecting a tax refund this month? We have a suggestion! Why not consider giving a portion of it to help support the church? Unless you are counting on it to pay some bills or obligations you could think of this as a painless opportunity to contribute a little extra to one of the most important causes on the planet.



Of course not everybody *gets* a tax refund, but if you do it's kind of like found money and so it's easy to be generous with it.

In fact, with interest rates on savings as low as they have been some people actually plan their deductions to provide for a tax refund specifically to use for charitable donations.

Give it some thought in these next few months, won't you? Your Trustees and committees will continue to use their very best judgment in the use of this and all church income. Thanks!

~ Mike Gladish, Pastor, & Brent Hyatt, treasurer

THANKS! **many, many thanks** to all our friends in the Washington Society for the warm wishes and the support of all kinds that bolstered our family, all last fall into winter, while Wystan was receiving treatment for breast cancer. She reports that treatment is complete; apart from taking Tamoxifen for 5 years, she is moving on. Especial thanks to Amanda Hyatt and Jane Simons, who set up and supervised that support!!



XOXOXO – the Simons family

## **Church Events in March, 2018**

**Saturday, the 3<sup>rd</sup>, starting at 8:00 PM** the annual Dessert & Hors d'oeuvres Contest will be held at Brent and Amanda Hyatt's house. Enter a favorite recipe and win a prize, or just come and enjoy the great food and company.

**Sunday, the 4<sup>th</sup>,** the Annual Meeting of the Acton Park Corporation will be held in the supper room after worship. The meeting will include a summary report of the year's business and the election of two new officers for 3 year terms.

**Mondays, the 12<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>,** the *evening* Heaven and Hell study group meets at the Cooper home at 8:00 PM with Rev. Ferrell.

**Tuesday, the 13<sup>th</sup>,** the Board of Trustees will meet at 7:30.

**Wednesdays, the 7<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>,** the Prophets Survey Course continues at the church with the pastor & Rev. Bernita.

**Wednesdays, the 14<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>,** the *morning* Heaven & Hell study group meets at the Gladish home at 11:00 AM.

**Saturday, the 17<sup>th</sup>** the president of the Bryn Athyn College, Brian Blair will be here to give a presentation on the College starting at 8:00 pm. Desert and drinks will be provided. There may also be an open house the same evening after the event. See p. 14 for details

**Friday, the 23<sup>rd</sup> beginning at 7:00 PM** there will be a special society supper and class on the events of the Easter season.

**Saturdays all month except the 31<sup>st</sup>** two Yoga classes meet at 1:30 and 2:30, and **on the 17<sup>th</sup>** the Guild of Bowie Artists has its regular workshop from 9:30 'til about 2 PM.

## Women's Respite Weekend

by Wystan Simons

“Never mind the February drear and rain, *fifteen women* enjoyed a cozy, jolly, and respite-full weekend sharing a lovely house looking out over the Chesapeake from February 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>. **Gray Glenn** came from Kempton PA to be our Saturday speaker, bringing a warmth and spiritual presence to our weekend. Baby Alder Smith brought his own special sphere – probably the world's most peaceful infant.



The location was close enough that those who couldn't make a whole weekend came for part. Women brought supplies for a musical performance, yoga mornings, a spa evening, a water color project, essential

oil sampling, and for the many delicious snacks and meals which were shared – including shrimp locally prepped! Those of us who could not bear to leave yet Sunday lingered in St. Michael's for a final conversation and cuppa at the Blue Crab Coffee House, before departing into the pouring rain. Basically, it was an awesome time, I could have stayed on happily for a week. Let's do it again!

Want to be involved in planning for Women's Respite Weekend 2019? Great! Contact Wystan Simons – cell 301-237-1283.”

## Announcements

**Work Wanted:** Need some painting or drywall done around your house? Looking to tile a kitchen or bath but don't think you can do it yourself? And with spring coming is you landscape in need of a wakeup call? Aubrey and Avi Hernandez can help. Call or text Aubrey at 301-379-3469 to get an estimate.

**Pittsburgh Full-Time Teaching Positions 2018–2019:** Pittsburgh New Church School is accepting applications for 2 full-time teaching positions for the 2018–19 school year. The successful applicants will be responsible to cover or assist in the teaching of core courses in the elementary grades five days a week.

**Pittsburgh Full-Time Admissions Director 2018–2019:** Pittsburgh New Church School is accepting applications for a full time admissions director for the 2018–19 school year. The successful applicant will be responsible for student recruitment, aiding families through the admission process, and general marketing and promotion of the school.

More information is available from the office or on the church bulletin board. Or contact: Rev. Calvin Odhner at [principal@pittsburghnewchurchschool.org](mailto:principal@pittsburghnewchurchschool.org) or call [412-731-0122](tel:412-731-0122). The application deadline is March 15, 2018

**Essay Contest from the Theta Alpha International:** All High School Sophomore (or 15-16 year old) girls world-wide are eligible to enter this Laws of Life essay contest. This essay is an opportunity to write about what YOU think is important in life. This is your chance to be heard – to write from the heart about one, or more, of your personal laws of life. Details are available from the office or on the church bulletin board.

## NEWS NOTES

To start off the news notes, we send **Condolences to** all the family and friends of **Charles Edward (Chuck) Doering**, who passed peacefully into the spiritual world on Friday morning, February 23rd, after a hard battle with pancreatic cancer. He was 74. The obituary in the Baltimore Sun is not 100% accurate but it certainly

gives a nice overview of his life, and includes a great photo. Check it out at: <http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/obituaries/bs-md-ob-charles-doering-20180227-story.html>. Arrangements for a public memorial service have yet to be made and may take some time. Chuck's wife, Melissa, and their two children continue to operate their restaurant and bar at Fells Point called Penny Black, 1800 Thames St. Baltimore 21321

Janna Zuber, Charles Doering's younger sister, writes, "It is comforting to know he will be greeted by his first son Gregory and many of his family and friends. He will be missed here."

Some fun **Zuber** updates from Jana: "We had a whirlwind, fun, family filled week when the **Devin Zuber** crew arrived from Berkeley to the East Coast over Valentines week. He wanted his girls, **Catherine** and **Sophia**, to get some solid one on one time with their great grandmother **Ruth Zuber** (90 years young) in Bryn Athyn for a few days, then all of our clan converged here in Acton Park for a 3 day marathon of fun and good times. Every bed in the house was filled and then some. Yes, Phil and Janna were very happy to host this family reunion!"

The Zubers also hosted a beautiful wedding shower for **Bryan Kunkle** and his fiancé, **Kristen Hein**. Janna said, "We had the pleasure of hosting a couple's bridal shower for them on Saturday, February 24. Which really turned into a meet and greet Kristin, and we only embarrassed her with 2 of our songs. A good time was had by all that were there, and of course wishing only the best for the soon to be newlyweds!"

Janna gave a bonus family update: "**Kira and Joseph Jenkins** are the brand new proud owners of a townhome in the Quiet Waters area of Annapolis!"

**Condolences to Brad Johns** on the passing of his mother **Beth Synnestvedt Johns**, February 9, 2018. She was 94 and leaves a legacy in New Church art education. If you'd like to make a donation in her name please send to the New Church Arts Fund established by Beth to support art education in all its forms. A service was held for her in Bryn Athyn on February 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Condolences to** all family, friends and former students of **Dr. Jane Williams-Hogan**, who passed to the other world on Monday February 12th after a battle with cancer. Jane was a world-class scholar on Swedenborg and had made many presentations to prestigious institutions over many years. A service was held for her in Bryn Athyn, PA on the 15<sup>th</sup> which many from Mitchellville attended. Her son, Michael Williams, is a member of our church in Baltimore.

**Edward, Wystan, Owen and Oskar Simons** headed to Denver, CO to see **Scott, Meg, and baby Marlee** for Oskar's spring break. Wystan wrote that "Oskar, a student in Bryn Athyn College's Building Arts Program, looks forward to trading his stone carving tools for some fun in the snow."

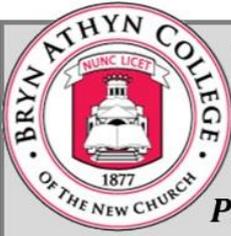
**Becca and Lincoln Smith** adventured all the way to Florida to watch the the SpaceX Falcon Heavy launch this month. Becca wrote up her notes on the (super cool looking— even for online viewing it was very impressive!) launch: "Wow!! That is one loud rocket, I mean three! The synchronized landing of the two boosters was awesome to see in person. The kids had a different kind of blast at the cousins' house. (We owe you, B&J!)"

Here is a photo of their adventure.



Until next month, friends! Hope your own news is going well at home. :)

Love from your news notes editor, Hanna Hyatt



**You are cordially invited to a  
Special presentation  
By Brian Blair,  
President of Bryn Athyn College  
Saturday, March 17<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 pm  
With refreshments beginning at 7:30 pm**

The event will include a 30 minute Power Point presentation on the following issues, with lots of time for discussion:

- Why students pick Bryn Athyn College
  - ◆ Current profile, experiences, student life
- New programs and fields of studies planned in the next 6 years
  - ◆ Undergraduate
  - ◆ Graduate
  - ◆ Life-long learners (adults and second career seekers)
- Planning for distance-learning via live-streaming
- Discussion on potential partnerships with New Church Societies
  - ◆ Remote classrooms, campuses
  - ◆ Student internships
  - ◆ Study abroad
- Plans to attract more students and scholars in Swedenborg's works and studies
- Questions and answers

In addition, Mr. Blair will be happy to meet with any parents, students or any sort of interest in the College during the afternoon before this event. Just contact the pastor or Brian directly at [Brian.Blair@brynathyn.edu](mailto:Brian.Blair@brynathyn.edu) to set this up in advance. See you there!!

And...there may be a brief open house after the event in Acton Park. Stay tuned.

## March Anniversaries

*“When friendship and mutual trust join together with the first love in marriage, conjugal love results.”*

*Emanuel Swedenborg, CL 162*



*March 12<sup>th</sup> ~ Bill & Dorothy Radcliffe ~ 58 yrs.*

*March 15<sup>th</sup> ~ John & Jean Allen ~ 49 yrs.*

*March 30<sup>th</sup> ~ Aaron & Eva Smith ~ 22 yrs.*

