

September 2018

ECHO
ECHO

Newsletter of the
Washington Church of the New Jerusalem

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Dear Friends,

Welcome back to the routine – *or rather to a year full of new developments and change* for the Washington New Church.

As you know, the committee to counsel the bishop about a new head pastor continues to labor away, currently evaluating surveys from all interested members, and of course, we will also get a new

bishop next summer. Meanwhile new study groups begin on the 12th and the 19th, and the third annual Men's Retreat will take place on the weekend of November 2nd – 4th, later than first advertised. Other events are also listed on the enclosed calendar. And by the time you read this a new school year will have already resumed.

So as we jump back in I have a few thoughts about church services in particular.

About Going to Church

It has become popular among many in our culture today – including many in the church – to think that public worship services are unimportant compared to other ways of honoring the Lord, such as private reading, meditation, community service, and of course personal regeneration!

And certainly a life of charity is better than a life of piety. It is also true that the latter *without the former* is a sham. But that public worship *is actually very important* can be seen in a number of clear teachings. For example,

“While a person is in the world however he ought certainly to participate in external worship as well;”
AC 1618

A person is worshipping all the time if love and charity abide in him, external worship being only the outward expression of it.... *While a person is in the world however he ought certainly to participate in external worship as well;* for it is by external worship that [1] internal things are aroused, and by means of external worship [2] external things are kept holy so as to enable internal to flow in. Furthermore [3] a person is endowed with knowledges (concepts) by this means, and [4] is made ready to receive celestial things, and [5] also has states of holiness conferred on him, though he is not conscious of this” (AC 1618).

In this reference I have *added* the numbers in brackets to highlight the 5 specific uses accomplished in worship. And I might also add that among the *insights* we may gain is the feeling of discomfort we may feel in going through the motions. This is *not* necessarily

a bad thing, as it calls our attention to issues we may need to address in ourselves.

There are as you know three levels of meaning in the third of the Ten Commandments, which is that we should “Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy.” In explaining these levels of meaning the Lord begins by reminding us that everything about it in the Old Testament is symbolic of His Divine work of redemption, but that when He Himself came into the world “that day became [1] a day of instruction in Divine things, and thus also [2] a day of rest from labors, and [3] of meditation on such matters as pertain to salvation and eternal life; and also [4] a day for the exercise of love towards the neighbor” (TCR 301).

Again, in this passage I have *added* the numbers in brackets to highlight the uses involved in worship. And I would submit that even though rest and recreation are important, one does not really get instruction in Divine things apart from reading, meditation and worship. In short, if you wonder about the efficacy of worship services for connecting with God, as a pastor I have to ask, what *else* are you doing on a Sunday morning?

In Defense of Sermons

Sermons in particular have taken a bad rap lately for any number of reasons. They are, after all, monologues, no matter how inspiring they may be, and sometimes (I know) the messages can feel like lectures – and who needs a lecture on your day off!

But people listen to TED talks and other inspirational monologues all the time. And when a sermon is well put together and well-presented it can play an important role in our spiritual lives. For one thing, you learn stuff you didn’t know or hadn’t considered in quite that same way before. In addition you are challenged but in a non-threatening way, in a sphere of mutually supportive members, to take some new initiatives in your spiritual life that can enrich your outlook and improve your quality of life.

Of course any sermon should inspire questions and discussion, but a good sermon as a starting point can *inform* that discussion and make it more productive – even if it’s just in your own head!

It is the fourth law of Divine Providence, we read, that “the Lord teaches people through the Word *and through doctrine and preaching from the Word*, and thus directly from Himself alone” (DP 171). Note the old translations say that we “*should be led*” this way, but the force of the Latin original is not that it should be so, but that it *is* so. And the reason is precisely because a sermon drawn from the Word is not a discussion; it is a presentation that leaves us in freedom to think for ourselves in response. So the Lord can lead us in this way *through our affections*, which is another principle of His Divine Providence.

The Church Community

Having noted some of the internal reasons to come to church, let’s not forget the power of the group coming together to worship. Sometimes we just need the encouragement of being with others who share our convictions and yes, challenge us in the supportive environment of love and charity to persevere in the work of our regeneration. We don’t have to agree with everyone in the room about how to do this, but the sphere of commitment is important, and the knowledge that others are “in it” with us is reassuring.

Holy Supper in the Next Few Months

Finally, it’s been a long time since we commemorated the Lord’s Last Supper. Looking to the near future we have scheduled three opportunities to participate in this sacrament as a whole congregation: September 9th, October 28th and December 9th. In addition, you are welcome at any time to request a personal or family administration of the sacrament if you have any special needs. Any of the pastors would be more than happy to discuss this with you and to serve you – at the church or in your home, here in Mitchellville or anywhere in Maryland or Virginia.

May this new year bring you all many blessings, and may the Lord make them all as obvious as possible to you every day!



Pastor's Council for the 2018-19 School Year

I would like to try something different for this year's meetings of the Pastor's Council. The change is inspired by the fact that some members of the Council inevitably have conflicts on meeting nights and so attendance can vary a lot. In any case as this is my last year as your head pastor this seems like a good way to include fresh perspectives as we look to the future.

Here's the plan. In addition to the eight members (mostly men) who remain on the council I would like to invite ANY MEMBERS of the congregation to join us for what I'll call "open meetings" this year.

In this way anyone who is curious about these meetings or who want to express any opinions or concerns can come and join in the discussions, but without any need to commit for a particular term of service. You may come once, or regularly, it'll be up to you.

Here's a list of possible topics for our first meeting, on Tuesday, September 18th, at 7:30 PM: -

- Report on the kids' summer camp held here from June through August.
- Status of the church school: disappointing enrollment this year, new advertising initiatives and plans for the new high school.
- Church attendance: does it matter? *What can you say that might encourage a new pastor about our declining numbers?*
- Church social life: why it's important and what we can do about it. Bring your best ideas.
- Bishop Buss's upcoming visit to the WNC from November 9th – 11th. Anything special you'd like to do with him?
- Other: what's on YOUR mind?

Church Events in September, 2018

Tues, the 4th, at 7:30 PM the WNC School Board meets to begin a new year of oversight of our school uses.

Mon, the 10th & 24th, the *evening* Heaven and Hell study group will resume after the summer hiatus, meeting at the Cooper home at 8:00 PM under Rev. Ferrell's leadership.

Tues, the 11th, at 7:30 PM the Board of Trustees meets to begin its new year of overseeing church business.

Wed, the 12th & 26th, the first of a **new series of morning classes on *the Book of Revelation*** meets at the Gladish home at 10:00 AM. This class will meet every two weeks and rely on selected readings from *Apocalypse Explained & Apocalypse Revealed* to inform discussion. A syllabus is available on request, and new members of the group are always welcome.

Fri, the 14th, at 7:00 PM there will be a prepared church supper followed around 8 PM by a doctrinal class on some of the special words we use in the New Church – or words with special meanings, like CONJUGIAL, COGNITIONS, PROPRIUM, REMAINS, CELESTIAL, SPIRITUAL, SCIENTIFICS, ULTIMATES, and so on. Some of these words can be really misleading, so we need to be careful about how – or even whether – we use them!

Tues, the 18th, at 7:00 PM is “**Back to School Night**” for all new and continuing parents of WNCS students.

Wed, the 19th at 7:30 PM a new series of **FOUR newcomers'** classes will begin at the church and meet about every two weeks until November 7th. This is especially for new school parents but will be perfect also for any other church enquirers.

PLEASE NOTE, the third annual **Church Men's Retreat** **HAS BEEN POSTPONED** and will now be held on the first weekend of **November, the 2nd – the 4th**. If you couldn't make it in September, please consider signing up for the new dates!

From the Principal



Welcome to the Washington New Church School's 48th year of operation!

This year, we're focused on the many different types and forms of *Respect*. (I'm sure Ar-etha Franklin's iconic song will be played a couple times). Our primary recitation is from Psalm 25, "Show me Your ways, O LORD; teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You *are* the God of my salvation; on You I wait all the day" (Psalm 25.4-5). In our school setting, academic respect is of particularly importance; and this is founded on respect for the True Authority in all learning.

Over the summer we did some more networking with other small, Christian private schools. In addition to tight budgets, another common experience is struggling enrollment. I haven't yet heard a strong theory for why, but many of the schools I've visited report difficulty with enrollment even as all of us continue to hear strong complaints about the public school alternatives. We have to think over these trends and refine our marketing approaches even as we continue to focus on providing the quality of education and school sphere which is our reason for existing. This summer has been challenging on the enrollment front, even as we continue to slowly improve our marketing team and techniques.

Part of our interest in talking with leaders of other schools, stems from our exploration of models and programs which might serve our developing four-year high school. Since the beginning of our high school, we have had three years with 0 students, this year being the third. We're using this time (and generous grants from the General Church in Canada and the Glencairn Foundation) to put together an exciting four-year offering, which will be more affordable and flexible than ever. The affordability is necessary. The flexibility is what excites us. We're eager to help students and families individually plan and implement their total high school experience, not merely fulfill state high school requirements.

Our faculty study this year will be based mostly on Matthew 25 which explores the different needs (and loves) of our spiritual neighbor. For teachers our primary category of the neighbor is sitting in small chairs in front of us. We'll read and discuss about ways to reach different types of students using a spiritual lens of service to the neighbor. We may also have Greg Henderson, Principal of the Bryn Athyn New Church School visit us to offer a program he's developed. And in the spring, the faculty will join other teams in Bryn Athyn, PA for further teacher-support and improvement related programs.

Finally, I would like to recommend an article to parents, grandparents and teachers on technology use and children. Search on Medium.com for "[Tech Industry War on Kids](#)." The writing style of the author is actually a little weak and many of the hand-wringing concerns will be familiar to anyone who has been paying attention over the last 15 years. However, changing technology use and its impact on childhood development is of such magnitude that I think we must continue to watch closely and take very deliberate actions in response. One thing in particular that this article highlights is the powerful and intentional design built into apps, phones, computer games etc. aimed specifically at capturing as much of our attention as possible. If we don't think about some of these larger design elements, it may be more difficult to find adequate responses, limits and guides for the specific games and programs our children are involved in.



Money Matters

Briefly this time, we just ask you to remember that money does matter in the provision for church uses, especially in this age of increasingly limited volunteer support.

We all want the church to "be there for us" but we don't want it to be a burden on our available time. We also want it to be here for others who have yet to discover the beautiful teachings and support it offers, but again, we don't have the time or skill to do much

about that. So it is necessary more frequently than ever to pay for the maintenance and other services that make all this possible.

Please remember the church in your weekly or monthly budget. There's no other organization or institution on earth that can do what the church does to keep us connected with the Lord and the spiritual world. Thanks again!

~ Mike Gladish, Pastor, & Brent Hyatt, treasurer

Sermon Topics for September, 2018

the 2nd: It's a Miracle! Really? What *is* a miracle, anyway, and how does it work? Examples from Scripture and real life will illustrate this sermon as we explore what the heavenly doctrine has to say about these phenomena. ~ MDG

the 9th: The Meaning, Use and Nature of Temptations: we all have them, but why? And what can we do to ease the burden and gain the benefits of them? Note **the Holy Supper will be offered in conjunction with this service.** ~ MDG

the 16th: Fearfully and Wonderfully Made. We are described as "wonderfully made" in Psalm 139 but then again, in Isaiah we are called a 'wicked nation,' 'laden with iniquity,' in which we find nothing sound from head to foot. (Isa. 1). How do we reconcile these descriptions? How do we hold the necessity of repentance in our own daily living? ~ BDS

the 23rd: The Divinity of the Lord: We are taught that God is *Divinely* Human, and that we are created in "His" image and likeness. So where is the feminine in this Divine? ~ MDG

the 30th: The Humanity of the Lord: The Divinity of the Lord is presented in the single Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, a perfect Human male referred to as "the Son of God." Why is that and what can we make of it? Come and see. ~ MDG

From the Oak Arbor New Church

The Oak Arbor New Church in Rochester Hills, Michigan has nine new premium ½ acre vacant residential lots available for sale for a discounted price to New Church members. Development of the Oak Arbor community started in the 1980s and we are now in the last phase of creating a beautiful subdivision with single family residential homes and condominiums. Oak Arbor is a diverse development consisting of approximately 50% New Church families and our church building, located within the subdivision, is a hub of activity for both Church and community events.

Please reach out to us if you have any interest in our new lots. New Church members have the exclusive right to select lots before they are sold to the general public, marketing for which began on July 9, 2018. There is no expiration date on the New Church member pricing.

Thank you, Aaron de Chazal, Chairman, Oak Arbor Development
adechazal@sbcglobal.net

Summer News

With a new baby Lila in tow and a busy little Hugo, **Hanna Hyatt** needs a break from writing up the summer news. Hopefully she will be back on duty for the October Echo. That said I will begin with my news. ~ Bonnie Cowley

We have had our ups and downs this summer beginning with the loss of our 10 week old granddaughter in June, Margot Linea Cowley, daughter of Will and Berith Cowley. Thanks to all who sent cards and kind thoughts of support to us and to our entire family.

On a pleasant note, near the end of July Dave and I had the pleasure of having my dad John Alden (almost 93!) stay with us for a week). I feel so lucky to have had this special time with him.

Lastly, I was fortunate to be able to attend the 1st ever Bryn Athyn College Writers Retreat this summer. It was a 4 day long retreat (more like a workshop) that had no less than 6 different master classes taught by published authors! There was also much more (as well as some really good fun). ~Bonnie Cowley

Summertime Camp: One of the highlights - and challenges - for us this summer was our agreement to rent our facilities to a couple who ran a summer camp for kids - every week day from June 18th until August 24th. For those of us who were here working through the summer it was a wonderful experience. The couple, Jason and



Kathy Sumner, ran an excellent program for anywhere between 25 and 40 children of all ages from 4 years to young teens. Their discipline and supervision were well done and the wear-and tear on the building were minimal. Of course there were a few raucous days, but on balance it was great and provided 2 specific benefits to the church: **great exposure to the community and \$3,000 worth of income.**

On the down side there were some inconveniences and we had to make a bunch of adjustments to our regular summer routines. We will be looking at all these issues as we move forward. Meanwhile it was great to be able to serve this use for the community - which was one of the specific goals for our building and renovation project.

Nancy Alford shared this with us. “Over the July Fourth holiday I and my daughter Denise, John and Jean Allen and daughter Shannon traveled to Colorado Springs to attend a **memorial service for Major General Fred Fiedler**, husband of Barbara Allen Fiedler. The service was given by Bishop Peter Buss, Sr. in the beautiful chapel at the Air Force Academy. Fred was remembered for his many contributions to the military and for his service to the Church over a period of many years.

Dolores Soderberg tells us, “I wish I had more exciting news. All I have is that I have three son’s birthdays and three kid’s wedding anniversaries in one month this summer! - Cynthia & Royce Harvey's, 39 yrs. and two sons and their wives.” *Sounds exiting to me.*

Jean Allen shares, “**Camryn Peyton Collins** was born three weeks early on August 7, 2018 to Casey and Jency (Alford-Ray) Collins. It was a sure bet that she would come then as great-grandparents, Sonny and Nancy Alford were at Lake Wallenpaupack (as

well as great-great uncle John and aunt Jean Allen), and grandparents Bobby and Denise Ray were at Ocean City, MD with big sister Jency Collins. The Rays brought Jency home just before the birth, but then finished out their week in O.C. Prior to the birth Jency (10) had written “My days as an only child are coming to an end, cause Mom is due in August with my new best friend.” Camryn is the best baby – fusses a little when hungry and then sleeps until the next meal. That could change as she is just a week old now.”

I expected a lot of summer travel news but the following is all we got... maybe everyone had “staycations” this year. (NN Editor)



Bill & Sharon Kunkle enjoyed a week long no-drive visit to New York City for fun, recently. After a low stress train ride up, their week included touring the NY Public Library and Bryant Park, the Downton Abbey Exhibition, attending STOMP live, visiting the 9-11 Museum and memorial, Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island museum, Central Park and more, plus eating a lot of great meals and walking their feet off in the August heat. Needless to say, after spending time on the subway and in taxis in the city, their home seems much less crowded!

Mike and Ginny Gladish had a special week with all of their children and grandchildren the first week of July at a fabulous ski chalet in Killington, VT. 18 adults (including two engaged couples) and 10 children (including some older teens) gathered from as far away as Calgary, Austin and Phoenix to enjoy a range of excellent activities in the mountains, and had a general blast reconnecting. As a special bonus one of the grandchildren was confirmed in the New Church in a lovely morning ceremony outdoors.

The Matt Smiths took a quick trip out to breakfast recently - to New Hampshire! Their favorite breakfast place ever is Polly's Pancakes in Sugarhill, NH, so off they went with that as their destination, on a four day trip that included a lot of pancakes. ;) They did throw in a couple other activities, such as looking for moose at night, and going up to the top of Mt Washington. A fun, quick trip!

Soon after the above, Sara helped Savanna haul all her stuff to Glenn Hall in Bryn Athyn. Nope, she isn't a student anymore- this time she will live there as an RA (while also doing a veterinary assistant course online).

And soon after that, the Smiths headed off on their annual trip to Hazelhurst, WI to enjoy the late summer there before fall sets in.



WNC Men's Retreat Postponed

New Dates: Nov. 2nd – 4th

Please be advised that the third annual Men's Retreat previously scheduled for September 21st – 23rd has been postponed to Nov. 2nd – 4th.

For those who could not make the September dates this means you have a new opportunity to sign up for this delightful program of worship, doctrinal discussion and good, old-fashioned recreation and camaraderie at a lovely, large Eastern Shore home. The cost for the accommodation is \$120, plus an amount to be determined for the food we will buy and cook for ourselves (all part of the fun) on the weekend.

Please write or call Mike at mdgladish@gmail.com or 301-461-3521 to reserve your spot or to learn more about the proposed program focusing mostly on the distinctive qualities of masculine wisdom and how we deal with temptations. Presently we have 10 people signed up (some tentatively) and we have room for 12 to 14, total. Don't miss out; make your reservation today!



Photo by Andy Sullivan

Marriage Moats

By Lori Odhner

This bench looks ridiculously long. But that is because of the perspective you see it from. If you were looking instead from a hot air balloon hovering overhead, it would seem short. If you and your six friends arrived after a five mile jaunt

and wanted to rest it would feel just right. Did the bench expand or contract, or did your impression wobble?

I notice that in my brief sojourn on this earth my sense of time vacillates. In high school, waiting for a boy to ask me out felt like an eternity. Twiddling my thumbs while John decided to propose took *aaaaages*. Now those pauses in the action feel like a blink. Less than a blink.

As a young mother the sleep deprivation slogged on and on and on. I have a few mental images of myself, dragging out of bed with a twin in each arm, plodding down stairs to face another day of diapers and nursing. Now I can scarcely remember what it *felt* like.

Once a woman told me about what a desert her marriage was, for years. She had trouble staying true to her commitment. But recently we talked and her sense of joy in her relationship completely eclipsed those emotions. She can recall it, but just barely. It is like a story she once heard.

I guess the reason God does not give up as easily as we tend to is because He has such a great view.

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways mine. As the heavens are above the earth so my ways are above yours." ~ Isaiah 55

Find us at: www.caringformarriage.org



September Anniversaries

“Marriage is most holy, not only from its origin in heaven from the Lord, but also from this, that it is the seminary of the human race and of the angelic heaven.” ~ Emanuel Swedenborg, AC 2733



Sept. 1 ~ Daric & Jamie Simons ~ 4 yrs.

Sept. 2nd ~ Edwin & Nancy Alford ~ 62 yrs.

Sept. 15th ~ Matt & Sara Smith ~ 34 yrs.

Sept. 19th ~ Steve & Anne Ball ~ 31 yrs.

Sept. 22nd ~ Bill & Sharon Kunkle ~ 34 yrs.

Sept. 26th ~ (Fred) & Carole Waelchli ~ 54 yrs.

Sept. 28th ~ Lachy & Kate Maxwell ~ 15 yrs.

Sept. 29th ~ Bradley & Christine Johns ~ 1 yr.

