

February 2019

ECHO

ECHO

Newsletter of the Washington Church of the New Jerusalem

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Dear Friends,

As your committee continues its work of interviewing candidates for “my” job I’d like to call attention once again to the challenge of church growth, or perhaps I should say church decline, in the hope

that you will give some serious thought to any ways that you could support a new pastor in church growth opportunities.

For a long time our church was plagued by the idea that numbers didn't matter; that it is only the quality of membership that counts. Then we went through a period of fixation on numerical growth – until we found that we were not having much success, despite our efforts. Now we are facing the worst predicament of all, namely, apathy, and the fact that it has become more fashionable especially for young people to declare themselves agnostic than to affiliate with any church, not just here but all over Europe and America.

...the church exists to serve vital uses in people's lives, and the more members we have the better we can serve those uses. The real challenge is what to do about it.

I could write a lengthy doctrinal paper on why church growth is important, including why we should not shy away from setting real goals for growth. After all, the church exists to serve vital uses in people's lives, and the more members we have the better we can serve those uses. But the real challenge is what to do about it.

Here are some suggestions:

- Invite a friend or colleague to a church service or a study group. Sit with them. Invite them to lunch afterwards. Topics are announced every month in the Echo.
- Share a book or pamphlet with anybody you know. We have some first class, non-threatening literature readily available for your use.
- Start a service group based at the church and invite friends and neighbors to help out. Start each meeting with prayer.
- Put one of our magnetic decals on your car. The more people see 'em, the more they'll think about us. And no, they won't damage the paint on your car.

- Go to our website, www.theWNC.org, and look for the tab that says, “Testimonials.” Write one and submit it to Bonnie for uploading.
- Look for opportunities to drop little nuggets of NC teaching into casual conversations – nothing preachy, just observations based on how meaningful these ideas are to you.
- Visit other churches. Compare and contrast. See what is working in our culture and why, and ask yourself, “What could WE do better?”

These are just a few thoughts for starters. A new pastor will undoubtedly come with new ideas. The question is, “What kind of church growth initiatives are YOU prepared to support?”

The “Search” Continues

As this issue of the Echo is coming out during our second candidate’s visit you need only to be reminded that our third visitor, the Rev. Jared Buss, will be coming on the weekend of February 8th – 10th. Soon after that your committee will make a recommendation to the bishop and you will be invited to consider and vote on that nomination. This will require a special society meeting, which in turn requires a 7 day notice to all members (either in print or by electronic mail), so please watch your in-box for that notice. With any “luck” we will know who our next pastor will be by the end of February or the first week of March.



Holy Supper on the 17th

Please note that this will be offered again on the third Sunday, in connection with a sermon on hope. If you would like to be well prepared for this important way of connecting with the Lord please give some thought to the summary of teachings about it in the *New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine*, no’s 210 – 222, which include a virtual compendium of passages also in the *Arcana Coelestia* on the significance of this sacrament. Or see the chapter on it in the *True Christian Religion*, beginning at no. 698.

And here's a thought for you to consider. We have never run out of bread or wine when offering the sacrament. It is quite acceptable to take a significant portion from the plate or the cup; indeed the elements are intended to be savored and enjoyed as a way of expressing our appreciation of the Lord's love and wisdom. While a humble state may suggest a modest portion, the truth is we don't want to limit the Lord's influence on us by being too hesitant. I'll be sure to provide an extra cake of bread on the 17th.

Money Matters

Do you know why the government gives tax relief for donations to churches? It's because churches are recognized as making a significant contribution to the welfare of the nation. In some cases they do naturally charitable work, but in every case they help to motivate people to live selflessly and with integrity. In our case, specifically, we aspire to help people know and love the Lord in His Second Coming, which pretty much covers everything because it leads to "all of the above."

You may or may not benefit directly from a tax deduction for your church donations, but the whole country benefits when the church thrives. Seriously. It does. Directly and indirectly.

Unfortunately we are not all missionaries; we are not all comfortable sharing our faith personally. But we can all contribute to this work by making regular weekly or monthly donations to support those who are, and who make it their *business* to share – through preaching, teaching, organizing, advertising, and all sorts of work on the Internet and social media.

There are two essential uses of the church: mutual support in the faith, and sharing it. To date most of the church's resources have been spent on the former and there hasn't been much left over to do the latter. We can change that if we want to. In other words, if we had the money we could do a LOT more for other people.

Please remember to consider the church in your monthly budget. And if you have particular ideas about what you think might work

best for the growth of this congregation, PLEASE, let's talk! We look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you!

~ Mike Gladish, Pastor & Brent Hyatt, treasurer

PS. **The 2019 contribution envelope are finally IN** get yours in the church lobby – or ask the secretary to mail your box to you.

Sermon Topics for February, 2019

the 3rd: FEAR. In these times of uncertainty – for the church, for our country, and for ourselves, what do we need to know about fear, where it comes from and how to deal with it? How is fear related to anger – and courage? Come and see. ~ MDG

the 10th: Guest Preacher, the Rev. Jared Buss from Toronto, preaching. On his theme, “Close enough to Catch Us,” he writes, “It’s often said that the Lord will never give us more than we can handle. And yet, sometimes we still feel totally overwhelmed, just like Peter, who tried to walk on water but found himself sinking. This sermon will look at what the Lord is doing when we feel this way.”

the 17th: HOPE. In these times of fear and uncertainty – for the church, our country, and ourselves, what can we learn from the Lord about hope, and how we can keep hope alive? This service will conclude with the holy supper at the end. ~ MDG

the 24th: “Magical Life” How do we think about the workings of Providence in the world and in our lives? Is life full of patterns and underlying “magic?” We’ll compare our modern worldviews with what we’re told about the ancient church and how they understood the world around them. ~ **BDS**

Church Events in February, 2019

Tues, the 5th, at 7:30 PM the WNC School Board has its regular monthly meeting at the church.

Fri, the 8th at 7:30 PM there will be a **special doctrinal class** at the church **presented by visiting pastor, Jared Buss**. On his topic, "From the Mouth of the Lord," he writes, "The Word of the Lord can be understood as everything that the visible God, the Lord Jesus Christ, speaks to us. In this class we'll take a look at what this implies, and how it's true of the Heavenly Doctrines as well as the Old and New Testaments." This will be followed by refreshments (no supper beforehand) and social visiting.

Wed, the 13th, at 7:30 PM note that the **Church Board of Trustees** meeting has been moved from its regular Tuesday to Wednesday this month and will feature a report from the investment committee and a special focus on next year's budget.

2 Wednesdays, the 13th and 27th, the *morning classes on the Book of Revelation* continue at the Gladish home at 10 AM to review chapters 15 & 16.

Mon, the 18th, at 8:00 PM a new study group will start at the home of George & Mary Cooper to read and discuss *The New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine*. The first reading is from the preface thru no. 27 on "good and truth." All are welcome, and copies of the book are available from the pastor for free.

On the weekend of the 22nd – 24th, all being well another **women's respite weekend** will be held at a large home on the eastern shore. Please see Wystan Simons for all the details.

AND VERY POSSIBLY BY FRIDAY, MARCH 1ST YOU WILL BE INVITED TO A SPECIAL SOCIETY MEETING TO VOTE ON CALLING YOUR NEXT PASTOR. Watch for a specific announcement toward the end of the month.

From the Principal

January took us past the half-way point of the school year. The month also included (or will include) our Emanuel Swedenborg banquet and skating outing and for some, the *Cognitive Abilities Test*. Hosting visiting pastors in January and February has been a fun bonus for the students. They appreciate a novel presenter for chapel and were quite engaged after chapel as Rev. Mac Frazier spoke with them about the finer points of Texas barbeque and Rev. Mark Allais talked with them about his native South Africa. The Rev. Jared Buss will be visiting in 2 weeks.

I want to share a couple thoughts on what goes into religious education in a New Church classroom. On paper, we have all the students working through a series of curricula taken directly from different parts of the Word, organized systematically, K through 12 and in each case, accommodated by the teacher to the age and prior knowledge of the students. Of course, there are bumps in the road, but we work really hard at this.”

In January, Mike and I have each substituted in the 7/8th grade classroom as Rev. Ferrell continues with his recovery. It happens that this is the section of the curriculum that asks us to bring in some teachings about the love in marriage. What a great opportunity! This love is the precious jewel of human life, it’s the container for the true Christian religion and, as the highest of loves gifted to us from the Lord it holds the promise of the greatest delights and happiness that He can offer us. This is an area where the New Church has many important principles which we long to impart to the students. It also happens to touch on some of the most sensitive and controversial topics.

We’re told that men and women are completely distinguishable from each other and also designed to be completely complementary to each other. While no two couples are the same, human marriages all are intended to reflect the spiritual marriage of love and wisdom which flows from the Lord. Not surprisingly, we can find ample evidence of differences between men and women at psychological and physical levels, differences in interests, tendencies,

strengths etc. which can make for a beautifully balanced partnership.

But we're in an age where anything smacking of traditional gender norms or marriage has been thrown up for question and for individual interpretation. Which means that we have a challenge and a great opportunity in the classroom. We have to adjust the tone and approach, while helping the students clearly see, and hopefully appreciate, the beautiful teachings of the church. We're well aware of the cultural wash of changing, pressing views they are receiving and will receive and so we believe it is all the more important to share a religious perspective on what human marriage and sexuality can be, so that the students aren't left merely with the latest trend in secular thought. We definitely don't do it perfectly, but it is a great privilege to work with the students to find the right language and examples which help them make sense of the teachings the Lord has given us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'B. B.', written in a cursive style.

January Report of Pastor Search Committee

In mid-January the Search Committee entertained and interviewed two of the three candidates for the position of Pastor of the WNC Society. Rev. Mac Frazier was first, and after spending the day at the school was able to deliver a well-attended Friday evening doctrinal class. He then spent three hours on Saturday morning meeting with the committee to discuss his background and his views on pastoral duties as well as the opportunities and challenges of our Society. After an evening social gathering with committee and Board members and spouses, he presided over the Sunday morning Church service before heading back to Glenview.

At the end of January, Rev. Mark Allais and his wife Karen visited the Society for 6 days of meetings, school visits, tours of the area, and social events before returning to their home in Johannesburg, South Africa. Since it is now summer season there, their visit to cold and windy Washington (and colder Kitchener, Ontario) was a bit of a shock, but appeared to be managed well by both of them.

Mark spent Thursday and Friday at the school, delivered the address at the Swedenborg Birthday banquet on Friday evening, interviewed the Committee on Saturday morning, and presided over the Sunday morning Church service. They returned to South Africa on Tuesday.

The Committee has one more candidate to interview, and then will meet in mid-February to work on its recommendations to Bishop Keith. Please feel free to communicate your thoughts about this process to any committee member.

George Cooper, Chair - for the Committee

Library Report January 2018 to January 2019

The non-fiction section of the School Library has long been in need of judiciously discarding some of our books. Together with Ivy Radcliffe's help, I went through some 2000 volumes and discarded 869. The criteria for discard were as follows: condition of book, whether the information was current, how often it was taken out and whether the information was useful to our students.

The books that might be sold were boxed up and left behind the Public Library where they would be sorted. The others we placed in the large bins for discarded books.

Amanda Hyatt has been working almost every school day to attack the momentous task of digitizing the library card catalog. Her report is as follows.

"We are about midway through the process of digitizing the library card catalog. Digitizing the catalog means that for each book, the information one would find in the catalog, is entered into a data base via library management software. If additional information is available online, such as a book summary or subjects, this information is also entered. The software then assigns each book an ID and a scan-able barcode. Barcode labels are printed and applied to each book. Once the digitization is complete teachers and students will be able to search the catalog from any work station in the school for which access has been granted. They will also be given

library cards, and will then check books out electronically using a barcode scanner."

I am grateful for the continued help of Mary Cooper, Jean Allen and Amanda Hyatt who continue to do Thursdays in spite of her other commitment.

~ Dorothy Radcliffe, Librarian

From the Theta Alpha Guild,



Lots of planning took place at the January Theta Alpha Guild (TAG) meeting. But first we acknowledged all the wonderful people who helped make this past holiday season special. The Tableaux were mentioned as a very powerful event with thanks to Mike for his direction.

Speaking of Mike, we are planning a great retirement party to take place in June. If you would like to be part of a planning committee or have ideas for a venue, roast, etc. please contact Bonnie.

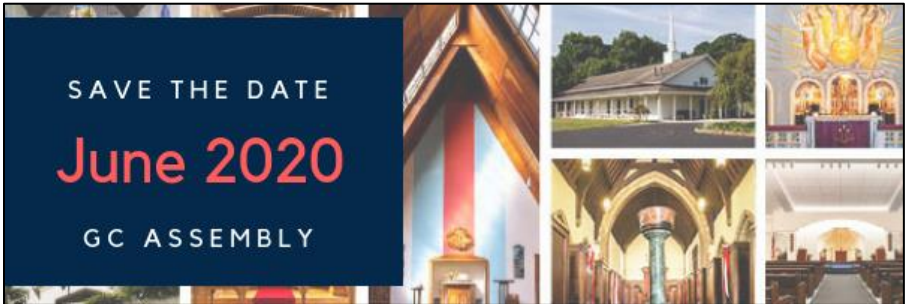
There are many things TAG does that you may not be aware of. This past Christmas TAG gave the society the beautiful pots and plants in the lobby and some more spoons for our kitchen. Some of the things TAG *will* be doing this spring include: Care packages for students in BA (donation box now at church), We Care Cards, Teacher Luncheon and COFFEE!, Sunshine for any society friend that needs a boost (please let us know if you know someone), TAG support of \$200 to the Healthy Church Match, and many more behind the scenes uses.

TAG could use your help with several upcoming things. We have talked about spearheading a SERVICE PROJECT this spring in place of our annual banquet. If you are interested in heading up a project or can recommend a good project, please contact Kathy Johns. The annual WNCSS Open House will be on March 19. We could use help with marketing, cleaning, prepping supplies, or refreshments – contact Bonnie.

Anne Ball, Kathy Johns & Wytan Simons – TAG Exec.

Announcements

Help Wanted: Owen Simons and his parents are looking for a "gym mentor" 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m., any day Monday through Saturdays. The Simonses use Planet Fitness, Bowie hilltop plaza. Were you looking for a motivator to get you to the gym in the new year? This way you can earn some money and get yourself to the gym for your workout! Email Owen: owensimons93@gmail.com.



June 18 – 21 in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

<https://mailchi.mp/a4665944f16d/save-the-date-general-church-assembly>



“CHILI” Sunday: Sunday, February 3rd (Super Bowl Sunday) TAG will be selling Chili – several varieties. Contact Bonnie – bonnie.cowley@washnewchurch.org and place your order. Then pick up after church Sunday the 4th. Or come see what we have

and buy after church.

2019 Echo Subscriptions: Make sure you stay informed about society events and services. Be stimulated by articles from our Pastors. Be entertained by our News Notes Editor. And *always* know when you are “On Duty”. Just send back the slip of paper included in this “Echo” along with your \$15 to: The Washington New Church, 11914 Chantilly Lane, Mitchellville, MD 20721.

Mark Your Calendars

For the
**Annual Dessert & hors
d'oeuvres Contest**
Saturday, Feb. 9th
8:00pm
at the home of
Brent &
Amanda Hyatt



SE District Scholarship Fund: Southeastern District Scholarship Funds are available to anyone who lives in the SE district who would like assistance with paying for education at the Academy High School, the Bryn Athyn College or the Theological School.



Note - these grants are also now available for students attending the **WNCS high school**.

Applications should include the names of the students, their home address, the names of the parents if they are applying on behalf of their children and the school that they hope to attend. Applications are due no later than April 30, 2019, for those hoping to attend in the 2019/2020 school year. Please send your application to: Attn.: SE District Scholarship Fund - Washington Church of the New Jerusalem, 11914 Chantilly Lane, Mitchellville, Md. 20721.

Levi Cowley Scholarship Fund: Levi Cowley Scholarship Funds are available to graduates of the Washington New Church School who would like assistance with paying for education or books at any school of higher education (college).

Applications should include the names of the students, their home address, the names of the parents if they are applying on behalf of

their children and the school that they plan to attend. Applications are due no later than April 30, 2019, for those hoping to attend in 2019/2020. Please send your application to:

Washington Church of the New Jerusalem, Attn.: Levi Cowley Scholarship Fund; 11914 Chantilly Lane, Mitchellville, Md. 20721.

Women's Respite Weekend: We are still on for the weekend of Feb 22-24th though we did not come up with enough women going to afford the big house that we had last year. But kindness of Pat and Susie Crawford, we have a lovely BEACH HOUSE, on Fenwick Island.

Therapist Megan Jaster is still willing to make a presentation on Dr Mastgutova's groundbreaking therapy using infant reflexes to heal PTSD. Hillie Bryntesson is still on the bubble about presenting on our topic of "the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

Amy Odhner is our treasurer, and we are still looking for someone to organize our meals and clean up. Email Wytan for more details! (lovinchickens@gmail.com).

Printed News That Fits

Travel News: Lincoln and Brian Smith joined Nathaniel Brock for a weekend in January in Vermont. Isn't Vermont north of here? In January? Word on the street... because of all the snow in Vermont their flight back to DC was cancelled so they drove home... how many hours was that?

Moving News: Joe Sprinkle has moved to New York City; Joe and Kira (Zuber) Jenkins forgot to tell us they had moved to a new address in Annapolis 7 or 8 months ago, and Beata Kinsey now has a Waldorf address, so update your GPS before visiting.

New Addresses:

Joseph & Kira Jenkins 1 Skippers Court Annapolis, MD 21403	Beata Kinsey 1742 Temi Drive Waldorf, MD 20601	Joe Sprinkle 16-12 Centre Street Flushing NY 11385
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Student News: As part of his studies at Salisbury University, **Anders Croft** took a two-week course called Coral Reef Biology during his winter break in January. The nice part was that the course was given in Roatan, Honduras, an island in the Caribbean Sea. He spent several hours every day scuba diving and exploring the wonders of the underwater world, plus classroom work concerning reef monitoring and restoration methods, endangered sea turtle conservation, and the danger our underwater ecosystems are in.

Speaking of Honduras: **Aubrey Hernandez with Astri, Cindy (& her friend Zack), Ariela, Hailey & Elias** spent two weeks visiting Avi's relatives in Honduras. They got to do a bit of traveling around the area of Tocoa, Honduras, visited a state park for several days near the Caribbean coast - hiking up a jungle mountain, experiencing monsoon rain and swimming in mountain rivers. They saw animals in the wild that they had never seen out of a zoo. Got



to ride down country roads in the back of a pickup truck (like we used to as kids). Though the younger ones' Spanish is limited, they learned to communicate with their Honduran family, and most important, they were able to spend time with their paternal grandmother (now 82) and spend lots of time with uncle, aunts and cousins that the younger 3 children had never met – invaluable!

More Caribbean Travel: Phil Zuber's law firm kindly decided to do a work retreat in Punta Cana this year. So Phil & Janna have been enjoying the sunshine, water and warmth and getting their batteries recharged! And since Kira is an associate at SCB she and Joseph are there as well! Double the fun to have family as well.



Best wishes for quick recovery: Michael Ferrell is still continuing his cancer treatments at home. It turns out that the "easier" part of his treatment was misnamed; there is nothing easy about it. Come back soon Michael.

And more of the same: Regrettably, Martha Brannon is undergoing cancer treatments once again. Get well soonest, Martha.

Weather News: A joyful shower of the new baby type was held for Kristen (Maxwell) Mix at the end of January. A good time was had by all.

Welcoming News: Rev. Glenn “Mac” Frazier visited us for a long weekend in mid-January as part of the difficult process of selecting a new pastor for the Society starting in July. Mac is currently Assistant Pastor in the Emmanuel Church of Glenview, Illinois, and agreed to be a candidate for the position. We enjoyed meeting him and hearing his Friday evening Doctrinal Class as well as his Church Service on Sunday. He also spent time visiting the school and enthralled the students with his tales of his Bar-B-Q prowess, among other things scholastic. Thank you for visiting us, Mark.

Unwelcome News: The long partial shutdown of the Federal Government has severely impacted a number of our members and friends. We wish them all speedy recovery. Just in! They are back to work! (At least for a few weeks☺.)

More Welcoming News: Rev. Mark Allais and his wife Karen visited the Society for several days at the end of January as another candidate for the pastoral job here in Mitchellville. Mark is currently pastor of the Buccleuch Society in Johannesburg, South Africa, and also agreed to be a candidate. He delivered the address at the Swedenborg Birthday banquet on Friday evening and presided at the Sunday Church service. He and Karen also visited the school and spent time touring the area. And our thanks to both Mark and Karen for visiting us.



February Anniversaries

*“Love truly conjugal is from the Lord alone,
and exists with those who join good and truth
from the Lord.”*



Feb. 12th ~ John & Mary Ellen Kern ~ 42 yrs.

