

April 2020

ECHO ECHO

Newsletter of the Washington Church of the New Jerusalem

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## From the Pastor

Well, March got kinda crazy at the end there, didn't it? And April is looking to be unusual as well, to say the least. As I write this, we just got another alert from the Governor of Maryland, this time upgrading things to a full-blown Stay at Home Order. Not surprisingly, this has put a damper on our activities as a church, and adds

layers of extra challenge to our goals of helping people find meaning, purpose and connection.

But we're making it happen. I have been extremely impressed by all the efforts I've seen from staff, faculty, volunteers and individual church members and school parents to find alternative means of worshipping together, learning from the Lord's Word together, educating children, and lovingly caring for and serving one another. Keep up the hard and creative work! We are getting through this, and we are doing it **together**.

We have begun having regular Sunday worship services via YouTube video at our regular time of 11:00 a.m. We are starting to use Zoom for online gatherings of church people, for religious, social, and business purposes. Our teachers are using a collection of various online tools combined with the judicious use of physical packets of materials to continue to teach their students. And everyone is washing their hands and disinfecting surfaces a whole lot more than they used to.

To that end, please see the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) list beginning on the next page as well as on our website and our Facebook page. It contains everything you need to know to connect to our online worship services, as well as helpful information about other stuff as well. We will be updating it as things develop (literally, as I was writing this article I had to stop and go change it because of new information that came in from the state government), so the version sent out in the *Echo* may over time become inaccurate. So look to our website as the definitive source for the absolute latest information. And when in doubt, please reach out to myself, Brian, or Bonnie, and one of us should be able to help.

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*Please show everyone around you a little extra love and forgiveness. These are stressful times.*

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All that technical stuff aside, I have a request to all of you: please show everyone around you a little extra love and forgiveness. These are stressful times. The rules keep changing about things we

all used to take for granted, and everyone is suddenly experiencing unexpected additional burdens in the areas of physical, mental, social and financial health. This will occasionally cause people to lose their temper. To say dumb things. To make simple mistakes. To be unusually frustrated. As you care for your own needs, please be sensitive to the fact that everyone around you is doing the same thing, and we all are going to need extra measures of mercy, grace, forgiveness and love. Like I said, we're getting through this; let's do it with as much wisdom as we can, so that we can all maintain our spiritual health as well.

Rev. Mac Frazier, Pastor  
2020-03-30



## **Frequently Asked Questions about Washington New Church and School during the COVID-19 Outbreak** (Last updated: 3/31/2020)

*For current updates go to:* <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1TBLJq83HnejvRidYGez-qx1dv1pkT7xklQ8jm0F8g8/edit?usp=sharing>

### 0. Contents

1. General Questions
2. Church-Specific Questions
3. School-Specific Questions

### 1. General Questions

- 1.1. Where can I find the most up-to-date information about the Washington New Church and School online?

A regularly updated version of this Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) list, along with other information about our organization can be found in the following places:

- **The church's website** - <https://WashingtonNewChurch.org/>

- **The church's Facebook page** - <https://www.facebook.com/WashingtonNewChurch/>
- **The school's website** - <http://wncSchool.org/>
- **The school's Facebook page** - <https://www.facebook.com/Washington-New-Church-School-824297264293899/>

## 1.2. Is your building open?

**No.** In accordance with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and from our parent denomination the General Church of the New Jerusalem, and in cooperation with executive orders issued by the Governor of the State of Maryland, the facilities Washington New Church and School are closed to the public. The one exception, in accordance with the latest Governor's latest Executive Order, is that our vestibule is open from time to time for the purpose of distributing educational materials to our students.

## 1.3. Are you still operating?

**Yes.** Although our facilities are closed, we are continuing to perform our primary uses as a church and school, just by alternative means.

## 1.4. When will you reopen?

**We wish we knew, but right now we don't, other than it likely won't be sooner than April 27th.** We continue to monitor Federal, State and Local authorities, and will update when we know more.

## 1.5. What about yoga classes, Forested events, or other third-party uses of the facilities?

**Any events or gatherings that were scheduled to take place inside the church building over the next two weeks (at least) will have to be postponed.** Please contact the individual organizer of the event in question for more details.

- 1.6. Where can I find more information from sources other than the Washington New Church and School?

For further information on the COVID-19 pandemic, see the following:

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention COVID-19 Information](#)
- [Governor Hogan's Latest Executive Order](#)
- [Prince Georges County COVID-19 Information](#)

## 2. Church-Specific Questions

- 2.1. How does Sunday worship work?

**We are live streaming video of our worship service over YouTube every Sunday at 11:00 a.m. Eastern Time.** Shortly after every live streamed service concludes, an archive of the service is posted for viewing at any time convenient to your schedule. Find our worship streams and videos at our channel at [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCywS2hlWXA3Pwdho5QYt\\_tA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCywS2hlWXA3Pwdho5QYt_tA). And while you are there, consider subscribing to the channel so you can find it again quickly.

- 2.2. What about small groups, doctrinal classes, and meetings?

**For the most part, we are using the Zoom Meetings and Chat platform to conduct online video gatherings for most of our small groups and meetings.** However, it is up to the individual group leaders to decide what works best for their group, so please contact the leader of the group you have questions about for more information. To install the free Zoom software on your PC or smartphone, go to <https://zoom.us/support/download> and for helpful information on how to use Zoom, go to <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362193-How-Do-I-Join-A-Meeting-> .

- 2.3. What other spiritual and religious resources are available while everyone is practicing social distancing?

Here is a brief list of online content and activities provided by Washington New Church and other associated New Church individuals and groups:

- **An audio podcast** of past sermons and lectures at Washington New Church:  
<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/washington-new-church-sermoncast/id1500434843> (website),  
<https://pqr.apple.com/id1500434843> (RSS feed)
- **A weekly email** update on events and news from our Pastor:  
Sign up at <http://eepurl.com/gWtqKL>
- **A weekly online Zoom gathering** for Washington New Church members interested in connecting with one another. Invitation links to these gatherings are sent out in the pastor's weekly email--see above.
- **Our pastor's YouTube channel**, with thoughtful videos to help you meet life's challenges:  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1Y2jtxYx-evvWRQojzdIphw>
- **An audio archive of New Church sermons, classes and lectures** from across the world:  
<https://newchurchaudio.org/>
- **The Grand Human Project** is hosting numerous online groups and gatherings:  
<https://grandhumanproject.org/>
- **An ongoing updated list of online New Church worship services** from around the world:  
<https://newchurch.org/get-involved/find-online-services/livestream/>

### 3. School-Specific Questions

- 3.1. How should I pick up and drop off materials for my student?

**All materials should be picked up and dropped off in our front entrance.** The vestibule area just inside our main entrance will be open 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. M - F. Parents can enter the vestibule

during these times, but all other doors will be locked. Teachers will notify parents of any packets or work to be picked up. Our teachers take care to prepare packets in a safe manner and the vestibule is cleaned and sanitized daily. Gloves, disinfecting wipes and disposable gloves are available in the vestibule for parent use. When leaving the area, you can help us keep the space safe by taking a wipe and wiping down the door handles.

- 3.2. Is it really legal to pick up materials in person, now that we are under a Stay at Home order?

**As of the latest Executive Order from the Governor of Maryland, yes.** Order Number 20-03-30-01 states that

*“All persons living in the State of Maryland are hereby ordered, effective as of 8:00 p.m. on March 30, 2020, to stay in their homes or places of residences (“Homes”) except: to conduct or participate in Essential Activities...”* (II.a.1),

...and includes in the list of Essential Activities,

*“Traveling to and from an educational institution for purposes of receiving meals or **instructional materials** for distance learning....”* (II.b.4)

- 3.3. Who do I call if I cannot reach my child’s teacher?

**Call our secretary at 301-518-3628.** Bonnie will try to help you to resolve your issue or reach a teacher who can.

- 3.4. Is my child still getting an education?

**Yes.** There is no question that suddenly moving everything to home-based distance learning is not ideal. It puts large demands on parents and requires students and teachers to adapt quickly to unideal circumstances. However, the structure of ongoing expectations and engagement with content over a variety of media will support each student in continuing to develop in core academic areas. The possible alternative of 5.5 months out of school raises serious concerns about developmental time lost for the students; a phenomena known as “summer brain drain” which shows a pattern of academic regression for students if they are not kept engaged with academic and enrichment activities.

3.5. Is my child required to participate in distance learning?

**Short answer: yes.** These are strange circumstances; the education of millions of American students has been disrupted. The public system in our county is lagging, even as it attempts to offer distance learning on a large scale. It seems likely that many allowances will be made for the irregular school year, however, the expectation and requirement that children participate in school remains. WNCs is committed to offering the best distance-education program we can during this period of disruption. Our goal and expectation is still to prepare every student possible for advancement to the next grade, and to do that we need full, active participation in the program set by the teachers.

3.6. What if we lack the resources at home (technological or available adult supervision)?

**PLEASE communicate with your home room teacher if you are struggling to meet an expectation at home.** This situation places a significant burden on parents. We recognize this and aim to be responsive and supportive of the needs that arise. We will work to adapt the expectation to the reality of the support available at home and, where possible, provide technological resources.

## From the Principal

It is difficult to know where to begin communication during these weird and increasingly difficult times. Perhaps I should start with an area of admiration and appreciation.

Our teachers, are working longer, rather than shorter hours at the moment. We enjoyed a one-week reprieve for Spring Break, before ramping up a distance learning program for all the students. In this our school is actually ahead of the public systems around us which don't expect to be up to speed for a couple more weeks. For us, this has required learning





new tools for live interaction as well as documents exchange and coordination. It has required lots of communication with all the families, to help them through the new tools and expectations. Most of all it has required patience and a human touch, reaching out to the students individually, helping them to still feel connected to their teachers and work.

On a similar note, I am very grateful for all the work that parents have invested in managing and facilitating their children's education at home. Some of the parents are out of work, and starting to struggle financially as a result, and some are called into high-stress medical jobs. None of them were planning to switch to home-based education. Hat's off to them for their efforts, their positive attitudes and affirmations of the work the teachers are doing.

Fully online education is not balanced or complete education. This obviously wasn't our plan. However, we believe that with focus and hard work, the students can continue to learn core material, and progress through their current academic year. Being completely off school for 5.5 months till next fall is not a good option, as it would exacerbate the risk of "summer brain-drain" demonstrated in educational research.

Our small organization depends on tuition income, charitable donations and endowment payout. All three of these sources is threatened by these difficult economic conditions so we do expect some hard years in front of us. The boards and administration will be doing the best we can to be prudent in our responses, but our intention is to keep our people employed through the crisis.

We have created a single FAQ document (*see p.3*) for the church and school to address current procedures and issues arising from the virus. This document will be updated on an ongoing basis. It is available from both the church and school websites and our school Facebook page.

One aspect of this crisis that strikes us as unusual, is that many people are left *less* busy than they would like to be and at the same time there are very limited opportunities to help each other out. The increase in connection calls and video conferences is one

bright side, to an otherwise isolating experience. Watching the teachers make individual phone and video connections with each of the families leaves me grateful for the small and personal nature of our school.



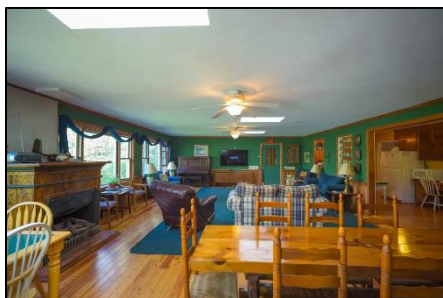
## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Fall Men's Retreat:** Plans are already underway for our next church men's fall weekend retreat - to be held on November 6th -



8th in a brand new sweet venue, near Luray, VA. Surely this pandemic problem will be well under control by then, and in the meantime it is something to which we can all look forward. Here are a couple of pictures to whet your appetite. This will be

near the peak of fall colors in the Shenandoah Valley, so despite the longer drive from Bowie it should be a fabulous weekend. Mark your calendars!! ~ Mike



**SE District Scholarship Fund:** Southeastern District Scholarship



Funds are available to anyone who lives in the SE district who would like assistance 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 April 30, 2020, for those hoping to attend in the 2020/2021 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 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 April 30, 2020, for those hoping to attend in 2020/2021. Please send your application to:

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

### **Virtual Groups and Online Classes**

**Washington New Church Sunday Worship:** 11:00am

Sundays [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCywS2hlWXA3Pwdho5QYt\\_tA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCywS2hlWXA3Pwdho5QYt_tA).

**Coopers Evening Reading Group:** Tuesdays @ 7:30pm via Zoom – Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/404719688>

**Wednesday Arcana Morning Group:** Wednesday @ 10am notes and discussion via email – contact [mdglad-ish@gmail.com](mailto:mdglad-ish@gmail.com).

**Wednesday Night Zoom Group for social connection:** 7:00pm -<https://zoom.us/j/265756685>

## MORE ABOUT TITHING



In March, in the article on tax relief we mentioned the principle of the tithe, that is, of giving 10% of one's income to the church, and we noted that while the New Church does not insist on a **literal** 10%, the tithe represents ALL, and is an acknowledgment of the fact that **everything** we have is from the Lord. The number therefore

represents ALL that we are able to give back for the support of the church. And yes, we are **commanded** to give that amount.

The question we are left to answer, then, is how we can know whether we are giving all that we can, *especially in this season of a health pandemic*, or whether we are keeping too much for ourselves. Obviously, in keeping with the laws of Providence, no one can determine that for us; we have to figure it out for ourselves. But there are some questions we can ask ourselves in the process, for example,

1. How much "stuff" do we really need?
2. To what extent do our wealth and comfort insulate us from an awareness of our **spiritual** needs **or those of others?**
3. Realistically, what can we afford to sacrifice for others who are more needy, or for the church in its present predicament?
4. And finally, how much faith do we have that the Lord will provide for us if we put Him first in our budgets?

It is important to know that our giving is not for nothing. Every dollar that is contributed has the potential to help someone – possibly many people – grow closer to the Lord and heaven.

In Malachi 3:10 we read, "'Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this,' says the Lord of hosts, ***'If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it.'***"

Thanks again for your thoughtful consideration.

Jean, Bob and Mike.

# Hope

## *An editorial*

Hope, trust, confidence, faith—these are all things we are grasping for these days. I don't know how many times I have seen articles on the internet trying to help people with COVID-19 anxiety, worry and despair. Go for a run, make a gratitude list, get enough sleep, drink a lot of water, meditate, or simply live for today.

These can be very helpful in dealing with temporary anxiety or despair, but honestly many of us are beginning to feel the strain, losing patience with our family, friends or just simply the situation. Another month or more? We wonder how long we can last—emotionally, physically or financially. I have been fortunate to have a pretty even disposition and a Pollyanna outlook on life. Like any God given talent mine has served me well through some very difficult times. But good gracious, times like these (that seem to have no end in sight) can strain the most trusting of us.

Yet, there is something about this pandemic—the universality of it, the realization that no one has been unaffected—that has changed how I look at struggle. The times in my life that have been difficult had periods of feeling isolated from everyone else. Several months after I lost my son it felt as if everyone was going on with their lives accept me and I felt alone in my grieving. But we are all in *this* together. The truth is, even with our individual struggles we have *always* been in this together. The Lord is ever present with us directly but also indirectly by the uses we perform for one another, “where two or three are gathered together.”

This world-wide event has leveled the playing field. Race, creed, economic status even politics have taken a back seat. And remarkably, people of all walks of life are rising to the call and being there for one another. Maybe all some people can do is just stay home and socially distance themselves, yet even that is huge. If you watch the news (and I do my best to watch only once a day) you can find story after story of some of the most thoughtful, selfless kindnesses done for others not to mention the heroism of our first responders and medical personnel.

As Mac has said several times in his blogs and services, “we will get through this.” And the silver lining might just be that we get through this to a better, more loving world. Sounds pretty hopeful to me. ~ Bonnie Cowley

***Speaking of thoughtful kindness, Sarah Smith (daughter of Aaron and Eva) sent this letter to be shared with you:***

*I hope this finds you well! I am reaching out to you to propose an idea and offer that I have for the Washington Society and for any others who church members know who may be interested as well. At the end of February I finished school at Bryn Athyn College and due to the upsetting outbreak of the virus I am finding myself at home feeling like I have a little too much time on my hands, but also like I should be more useful in some way. I have applied to deliver groceries for various rideshare/delivery companies, however, I feel it would be even better to offer these services to members of the society.*

*I would be offering the delivery of essentials from places like Safeway, Giant, CVS, Walgreens, Target, Home Depot, etc. My idea would be to use a card to purchase any goods and would then provide the receipt at delivery and would accept cash or check. I would be willing to provide this service free of charge, but would greatly appreciate any tip that a customer would feel is suitable! (;*

*I also know that Emily and Carl Martin are willing to make this a (temporary) consistent service! We can begin Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup>. Just call or text me and I will try to set something up between the three of.*

*P.S. I forgot to mention that if people are in need of Wine and Spirits I can also provide that as a service as I am of age!*

*\*here's to our friends\* (;*

*Best, Sarah Smith - [sarahasmith6@gmail.com](mailto:sarahasmith6@gmail.com), (443)223-8446*

## News Notes about Staying at Home

The only news this month is that nothing is allowed to happen. In this case, no news is not good news.

It turns out that pandemics are not just anecdotes found in dusty history books; they really do happen, and they are just as devastating now as they were in the “good old days.” We will get through this – we really have no other choice – but we will be different in many ways. Hopefully being wiser and kinder.

### *Travel Bans:*

**Amanda Roscoe** is home from her overseas adventure working under the auspices of the State Department on a Fulbright Scholarship teaching in Malaysia. She was to be there until November, but was sent home a little more than a week ago and put on strict quarantine for 14 days. So the Cowleys loaned her their pop-up trailer and helped set it up in the Roscoe's driveway - complete with heat, electricity and water. (Now that the Cowleys know the trailer works, maybe they will venture out on their own). Amanda is well and should be free to join her parents April 5<sup>th</sup>.

All General Church pastoral travel to all areas of the world has been temporarily cancelled, keeping **Mike**, among others, at home for the duration. So Mike won't be traveling to South Africa as planned, and is instead sitting at home reading books about it.

It turns out that spring break traveling didn't always go as planned. For example, **Sharon and John Croft** took Anders and Ivan to Florida to visit the Everglades and the beaches of Key West. The first part was great, since wilderness protects against social contact; however, Key West was another story. It thrives on social contact, but was completely shut down, so they came back two days early – into quarantine for 14 days. This quarantine place is getting crowded.

**Candy and Chuck's** trip to Myrtle Beach was also cut short.

**Didi Trimble** is visiting family and friends in Brazil; however, it seems that covid-19 knows where that is, so we wish her well and a safe journey home when travel restrictions are eased.

We also hear from **Sara Smith that Joram** (who was deployed in the Middle East) returned to the US just in time!! Glad you are back with your family.

### ***Local Travel – unbanned***

**The Glenn's and Lewis's** have moved into their new digs at 112A Hastings Lane, Pasadena Maryland 21122. They were helped by a group of friends whom they thank with all their hearts. Since moving they, like most people, have mostly stayed put.

### ***School Bans:***

As mandated by the State of Pennsylvania, the **Academy schools** were all closed, sending students home to figure out how to use social media instead of social contact to complete their studies for the year. As of this writing, two cases of the covid-19 virus have been confirmed on that campus, a student and a staff member.

As mandated by the State of Maryland, the **Washington New Church School** is closed. WNCS teachers are working hard to provide online classes for the school, especially now that classes may not be able to resume again before the end of the school year. This will be a real challenge for them, for the students, for the parents and for all other authorized personnel. It has been a busy time for the teachers, trying to set up home schooling for the students, and for Bonnie Cowley in her capacity as support for the school and church; she finds herself putting in some full days without gardening, organizing her Tupperware cabinet or going trailering with Dave. Actually, Dave, too, has been putting in full days since many of his contracts are in empty houses or outdoors. It turns out that he is one of those essential workers, for people still need plumbing and other home disasters fixed.

As mandated by everybody else, virtually all other schools and colleges and universities and related learning places are also closed down for an indeterminate time, causing undue stress amongst the populace. Our condolences to the high school and college and other students now home from far and wide and attending classes online or trying to figure out how to graduate and get on with their lives. Usually the end of classes is a time for congratulations and



joyful returns to a summer of jobs and vacations, rather than descent into that infamous place known as quarantine. This end-of-year will be memorable for a vastly different reason and will find its own place in the history books – without balloons or cigars or photos.

It was fortunate that the **WNCS play, Robin Hood**, was done early this year. It turned out to be the grand finale, as always, to the end of the season of regular classes! And it was a marvelous production, much thanks to Jana Sprinkle and her small army of aids.



### ***Meeting in-person Bans:***

Wednesday morning Arcana classes will continue remotely every other week, with extensive notes on the readings provided by Mike Gladish, and discussion via e-mail. New class members are always welcome; even though we are currently in the 8th chapter of Genesis (Volume 1 of the Arcana) it is not too late to join.

The biweekly Monday night class has been on hold, but it has restarted via Zoom. Our next meeting via Zoom will be Tuesday, April 7<sup>th</sup> t 7:00pm – Reading: 27 - 178, finishing up “Earths in the Universe”, then the class will take up “The Last Judgement”, a small book that can be found in the volume entitled “Miscellaneous Theological Works” or as a separate publication. Group members will receive an invitation link to join each class. You are welcome to join our group; contact Bonnie or Pastor Mac to find out how to join.

### ***Congratulations Are Welcome:***

So congratulations to Nathaniel Glenn and wife Desiree welcomed a beautiful little boy on March 12<sup>th</sup>. His name: Lorenzo Bruce Frias. The family is living in NYC and are all doing well.

### ***General (Church) News:***

We are glad to hear that former Pastor, Rev. Garry Walsh has accepted the position of pastor to the Sarver, PA congregation beginning this month. Meanwhile, Rev. Calvin Odhner has moved to Kempton as he transitions to a new assignment after finishing up in Pittsburgh in early March. The Pittsburgh pulpit will be filled by visiting ministers until new arrangements can be made.

Also church-wide, a recent report from the staff at "Off the Left Eye" announced that they have reached a new record of 1 million viewers in the first quarter of 2020. These YouTube videos explain basic (and advanced) concepts of New Church doctrine in simple, conversational terms. If you haven't tried it, do so. To view programs go to <https://www.youtube.com/user/offTheLeftEye>.

### ***Not News:***

Special prayers for all of our members (and everyone else) involved in the health care industry: - y'all take care, y'hear?

**Your regular contributions  
Are important, necessary**

*...and easy!*

Mail it, set up recurring contributions from your checking or set up in e-giving. One time or recurring contributions.

<http://giving.ncsservices.org/dl/?uid=ncs-2818>



*Thank you!*



### *April Anniversaries*

*“Through conjugal love, a person has peace, which is the inmost joy of the heart from a complete safety from the hells, and from protection from infestations of evil and falsity from there.”*

*~ Emanuel Swedenborg, AE 999*



*Apr. 13<sup>th</sup> ~ John & Sharon Croft ~ 23 yrs.*

*Apr. 16<sup>th</sup> ~ Pam & Andy Cooper ~ 30 yrs.*

*Apr. 20<sup>th</sup> ~ Curt & Wanda Moore ~ 29 yrs.*

