

May 2020

ECHO ECHO

Newsletter of the Washington Church of the New Jerusalem

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## From the Pastor

Lately, one of my favorite questions has been, “What’s the first thing you want to do when they ‘blow the All Clear’ and end social distancing?” I’ve had a lot of answers from different people.

Many say they want to hug an older relative, or play with a grand-child. Some who have had to avoid stores because of their health

or age have said they want to shop for themselves again. Others talk about sites they'd visit, favorite restaurants they'd go to, or parties they'd throw. One family wants to travel to another country to see relatives once that's safe again.

I've heard from teens who want to go out and hang with their squad, kids who want to go to the zoo, sports fans who want to go to a game (or even just to sit and watch a live game on television again), and moms who want to take their kids to a playground.

I know several people--myself included--who have "get a haircut" at the top of the list. My wife wants to play hockey again, and that's pretty high on my list as well. Even just skating on a rink would be nice at this point for me.

And there are also people who have delayed eye doctor appointments, vacations, and visits to relatives they worry they may not see again. And more than one person has said to me they want to go back to church.

And this got me thinking about the story of the end of The Flood, a symbolic story about a time of spiritual struggle for the church.

When Noah, representing the church, finally emerged from the



shelter of the ark and onto dry ground, his first act was to build an altar to the Lord and offer burnt offerings as a sign of worship. This is what I would like to do as a church community, once we can responsibly, safely and legally congregate again.

I don't know when it will happen, but when it does, let's plan for a special service to celebrate. Someone suggested we buy pizza for everyone and have lunch and a party after worship. Inspired by the "burnt offerings" theme, I think maybe a serious barbecue might be in order. We'll have to see.

Mac Frazier, 2020-04-23



## E-Giving: Just a Gentle Reminder

Folks, since we can't "come" to church during the pandemic, and sending donations by mail is tedious, we thought this might be a good time to walk you through our online donation process.

Of course it goes without saying that *any* donations at this time may be problematic, and we certainly understand that. But if you have the means and would like to take advantage of this very simple, secure and easy process, here's how.

Simply open up the WNC website at [www.TheWNC.org](http://www.TheWNC.org), and scroll down to the lower right-hand corner of the home page where you will see an invitation to DONATE. There is a link, just below, to a 2-minute tutorial that explains the simple steps needed to register to make a donation.

Now, back to the original DONATE button. You can make a donation right there without further ado, but to make it easy for the treasurer to track for tax purposes we suggest you use the "donor portal" (in blue just below the "Go" button). Once in the donor portal you can *register an account*. Simply click the "sign in" button and then click "register." Once registered you can choose to make your donation ONE TIME, or RECURRING, and if you choose the latter, be assured that you can change it at any time going forward. Finally, at the end you will see a "submit" button. Click that and you're finished, and you will almost instantly receive an email confirmation of your gift.

Again, we appreciate that you may not be in a position to contribute during this social and economic crisis, but if you *are* able to do so, we invite you to consider this convenient option.

Meanwhile, let us take this moment also to thank you for your ongoing care and support of the church in *any* of the ways that you do this: attending groups and classes on-line, calling to support one another, and generously helping with a host of community uses.

May the Lord keep you safe and well.

Jean, Bob and Mike.

## *From the Principal,*

I don't have many updates from our empty school building, but I can let you know that WNCs continues to operate. Our teachers, parents and students have been making great efforts to continue through the spring term; all of them working very hard.

The teachers have had to adapt new technological solutions for delivering their curriculum from a distance, while aiming for the fine balance of maintaining as much of the program as possible without overwhelming the families. We reduced some of the content, and made some portions optional but the bulk of the core offerings are still underway.

Our parents have had to balance their work life while also acting as home-schooling support – which includes guiding, motivating and organizing their children.

The students are adapting to wide open schedules, which still include plenty of work which needs to be handed in on time, without the aid of teachers and bells to organize their time.

On the positive front, we have given all students uniform free days for the rest of the year!

More seriously, we have offered some flexibility (and minor reductions) in tuition payment schedules for families who need it.

Many, likely a large majority of American students, are not currently engaged with school at this point. Our large public school systems report low-attendance and participation rates in their attempted online school programs. Many are also quite restricted by what they can offer and require, given that they cannot guarantee that all students have equal access. By contrast, we are extremely



blessed. Our teachers are doing their best to make a clear and manageable program available to the families and the families are showing up and fighting their way through the logistical challenges in an admirable fashion.

In our faculty meetings, we have begun laying out schedules and plans for next year with the hope and expectation that school will resume as normal. Based on information available in June, we will also develop alternatives and contingency plans as necessary. We now have only one month till graduation. We will be looking for appropriate ways to honor and congratulate our graduates and their families, even if we are not allowed large gatherings by early June.

## Usefulness = Happiness



*“When we give cheerfully and accept gratefully, everyone is blessed.*

*~ Maya Angelou*

This past Sunday our pastor Mac Frazier gave the 2<sup>nd</sup> of his three part series on Happiness. The primary point he made was how important useful service is to our happiness.

Needless to say, many of us right now feel unable to perform useful service except to our family or those living within our homes. He posed the question, “What are some ways a church community, whether as a group or as individuals, can usefully serve others during this economic and health crisis we are in, without the ability to physically gather together in one place?” Looking at the news these days you see stories of groups, some small family groups and some larger religious and civic groups finding ways to be of service to their community.

What about us? Can we form small social distancing or virtual groups to reach out? Of course we can. But Mac was not posing the question so that he or the Trustees or secretary would put something into action. He was seeing small groups and individuals already reaching out and encouraging more of the same. Delightfully, we do have some church folk who are finding ways to be of service – like Amanda Hyatt, Ginny Gladish and Nancy Alford who are making masks for individuals and hospitals or Bill Kunkle

making face shields and distributing them. Also, Sarah Smith, Emily Martin and Janna Zuber shopping for those who can't. I'm sure there are more. This is not only useful service to others but also an antidote to the loneliness, boredom and unhappiness many are feeling.

Mac also reminded us that doing our daily work *is* useful service. I am a big fan of Swedenborg's Rules of life and this is one of my favorites – "... to attend faithfully to one's office and other duties; and in addition, to make one's self useful to society in general." I sat down one day to make a list of the people associated with our little society that not only 'attend faithfully' to their work but put themselves at risk doing so, (which is also "laying down one's life for one's friends"). The list is long. Yet at the risk of missing someone I would still like to share my list and maybe you can share with me those I missed.

***My (maybe not so complete) list of WCNJ/WNCS "essential workers"***. Heather Radcliffe, Paige Sweeney, Mary Ellen Kern, Amanda Zuber (all of whom are nurses), Shannon Warwzeniak (EMT), Ryan & wife Libby Allen (EMTs), Alan Trimble (EMT), Janet Ferrell (Lab tech at Andrews AFB Hospital), Marie Kazeem (Dept. head Washington Hosp. Ctr.), Aaron Smith & Ed Sprinkle (Police officers), Ed Simons, Jeannette Roscoe (Safety Suppliers), Nancy Cole (Supermarket Assoc.), Jim Needer (Pharmacy worker). WNCS School Parents: Chanel Arinze, Macoline Nchunganyi, Micheline Makutchang, Ed-didah Othieno, & Emme Morfaw (all nurses), Crystal Wingfield - (Social Services), Kristal Gardiner (Doctor).

***Our deepest thanks to all of you, your spouses and families for your service!***

Lastly some of us are laid off or not able to work, some unable to do much more than stay home to reduce contagion. Remember, the Lord has a use and a plan for all of us. Just keep in mind that ***"Also highly contagious is - kindness, patience, love, enthusiasm, and a positive attitude. Don't wait to catch it from others. Be the carrier."*** ~ Anonymous

~ Hang in there all! ~ Bonnie Cowley

**Just in...** Do you have skills and are looking for some volunteer work? Here is a website that is a clearing house for skilled volunteers looking to help nonprofits. Everything from grant writing to app development for salmon/trout conservation.



Is a New York-based for-profit organization which makes skill-based connections between professional volunteers and other non-profits go to - [catchafire.org](http://catchafire.org). (Founded in 2009 by Rachael Chong, a former investment banker with UBS. [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catchafire))

## **Services, Social and Classes**

**Sunday Worship – 11:00am:** Washington New Church streaming service link - [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCywS2hlWXA3Pwdho5QYt\\_tA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCywS2hlWXA3Pwdho5QYt_tA)

### **Tuesday Night Zoom Reading Group, Tue. May 7 & 14**

**7:30pm:** Continuing with the Last Judgment from P. 28 - . New members welcome! A zoom link will be sent out the day of the meeting so email us if you want to join.

**Arcana Reading Group:** In the biweekly Arcana Class (now reviewing Genesis, chapter 9) Mike has been producing written commentary on all the readings, and circulating these for the members to read at home and discuss by email. The next sessions will be May 13th and 27<sup>th</sup> a 10am. We'll finish volume 1 on June 10th. If anyone not currently in the group would like to subscribe to these notes Mike would be happy to include you in the distribution.

**Weekly email update from Pastor Mac:** To receive weekly emails, links and up to date info subscribe at: <http://ee-purl.com/gWtqKL>

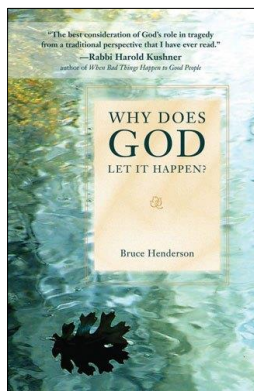
**Wednesday Evening Zoom Social:** Looking for connection? at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday nights Mac opens up a [Zoom conference](#) for anyone who wants to connect with fellow church members and talk about whatever. Here is the invite link (save it, since it is the same link each week):

<https://zoom.us/j/282010285>

or dial in by phone: +1 301 715 8592

Meeting ID: 282 010 285

## WHY DOES GOD LET IT HAPPEN?



There are a lot of unknowns right now, but one known we do have is the Lord's revelation in the Writings. Bruce Henderson has written a wonderful book based on this revelation, which I have found very useful in dealing with the current coronavirus pandemic. It is "Why Does God Let It Happen". If you haven't read this book recently, please do. I think you will find it very helpful in dealing with our present situation. And to make it easier for you to do that, just go

to <https://swedenborg.com/product/god-let-happen/> and you can download the book for free, or get 50% off by entering the code: WDGLTH50 (now through June 30, 2020). Thanks to the Swedenborg Foundation for this great offer! Please share this information with all of your family and friends, both in and out of the church. Thanks Jamie Uber, General Church Board Member.

**Possible Correspondences in the coronavirus pandemic:** Pastor Mike has written a 6 page article on this subject. If anyone would like a copy just email Mike – [mdgladish@gmail.com](mailto:mdgladish@gmail.com).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Dumped the Land Line:** The Gladishes have disconnected their land line (301-464-2410) and are no longer checking for messages there. Please use their cell phone numbers.

**Wanted:** We are overhauling our websites and need some folks willing to methodically page through the WCNJ and WNCs websites to find broken links, outdated information, missing information or just plain bad spelling or grammar. Church site: [www.thewnc.org](http://www.thewnc.org), School site: [www.wncschool.org](http://www.wncschool.org). Please send any corrections to [bonnie.cowley@washnewchurch.org](mailto:bonnie.cowley@washnewchurch.org).



**NO MORE BOXES, PLEASE:** Simonsons are all full on BOXES at this point. Many, MANY thanks! but no more deliveries (*exception: the rare 4ft by 4 or 5ft by any height box - good for packing large artwork*)

**ANNUAL YARD SALE POSTPONED:** It's unfortunate that all this extra quarantine spring cleaning will not benefit our church yard sale this May. The thrifts are closed, auctions shut down and you don't know what to do with your donations. Box it up, bag it up and if you can, store it for our next GIANT sale. Hopefully we can hold a sale this fall. Yard salers will be so anxious to get out and see what they have been missing. If you can't store it, shoot an email to me and I'll see what I can do to take it off your hands. Decent stuff only - no old TVs or beat up furniture, please.

Thank you, Kathy Johns [kcjswim@aol.com](mailto:kcjswim@aol.com)

**WNCS 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION:** We still have this event on the calendar for Sept. 11-13, 2020. An email questionnaire will be coming your way shortly. If we have to cancel, or postpone, we'll make a decision this summer and let you know ASAP.

## Cancelled camps

**ANC Summer Camps:** April 8, 2020 - The ANC Admin Team has decided to use an abundance of caution and cancel all ANC summer camps for the 2020 season. We all are sad about the necessity of this decision. We know that our camps are much-anticipated rites of passage for many students. Please contact your respective camp director about refunds.

**Glencairn Museum Medieval Summer Camp** has been canceled for 2020. Families who have already registered and paid for camp this year will be contacted directly by Glencairn staff to receive a refund of camp fees. Summer camp at Glencairn next year will be Medieval Camp, and if a child in your society missed out this year, we would love to have them join us in 2021!

Thank you for your help! Please feel free to call or email us with any questions.

**2020 Jacobs Creek Family Retreat CANCELLED:** The bad news is that due to the coronavirus pandemic, we have decided that we must cancel our 2020 Jacobs Creek Family Retreat (JCFR) in July. We will very much miss seeing everyone this summer. July just won't be the same without Jacobs Creek!

The good news is that we already have our dates for next year. Our 2021 Jacobs Creek Family Retreat is now scheduled for July 25-28, 2021. Please put these dates on your calendar and plan to join us for a fantastic time.

If you have already sent in your registration and deposit, please contact me directly about what to do with it, since I have not yet deposited your checks. If you have any questions about this cancellation or JCFR, please call Jamie Uber at 412-782-2710 or email him at "[james.g.uber@gmail.com](mailto:james.g.uber@gmail.com)".

Laurelville, where we hold our retreat each year, is really suffering. For information on how to help the retreat center email [James.g.uber@gmail.com](mailto:James.g.uber@gmail.com).

**NOT CANCELLED???** **Gathering Leaves**, the international retreat for Swedenborgian/New Church women, at the Purley Chase Centre, in Warwickshire, England was previously scheduled for late August. Here is an update from Rev. Alison Southcombe about Gathering Leaves 2020:

"As the collective Gathering Leaves Committee, we have decided to make a final decision and announcement about whether to proceed with Gathering Leaves at the end of May. This may be somewhat optimistic, but we should be better able to see how measures have worked to impact the Covid-19 situation at that time with a fervent hope that we may be able to proceed with our Gathering Leaves event at the end of August as planned.



treat Centre near Mono, Ontario.

***Also still not Cancelled: June 25 - July 1, 2020:*** If you are completing eighth grade or any year of high school, you can join us on at the Ecology Re-

## News Notes

### Solitary notes in contemplation of a world gone crazy

Not only has this nasty virus thing shut down our workplaces and our play places, it has also taken away our personal contacts with real people who are not mere pixels of light on a screen or mysteriously quiet, unsmiling masked creatures skittishly avoiding you wherever you go. The roads are empty (making speed limits seemingly irrelevant), the malls echo with silence, and people are left to wonder how they will ever recover their retirement funds. So you sit in the basement listening to the rain while busily going through old file cabinets to see if there is anything you dare throw away. And then the Echo arrives, and all is well with the world again.

### *Let's start with some happy news:*



April 9<sup>th</sup> was a good day, for it was then that **Mike and Liz Lewis** were blessed with a beautiful baby girl. Payton Jane Lewis was 6 lbs. 8 oz. Big sister Harper is thrilled, and grandparents Amy and David are overjoyed.

Also, on that very same day, now-older friend **Jerry Odhner** celebrated his birthday, although his happened a while ago. **Amy Odhner** reports that she helped celebrate her Dad's day thanks to Facebook's Portal device. She also reports that Jerry and Deena are doing great! They're close to their grandkids so they're happy ("they" being both sides of the grand equation).

Welcome home to **Didi Trimble**, back from an extended trip to Brazil to visit family and friends. She was able to see lots of relatives and even got to the beach – in 100 degree temperatures – before it was closed down. She managed an adventuresome trip home in the midst of the viral uproar in airline travel, and even got her suitcase to make the trip.

### *Then there is sad news:*

Our condolences to Kathy and Brad Johns on the passing of Kathy's dad. **Geoffrey Cooper** passed peacefully into the spiritual world on Friday, April 17. He was 95 years old. He proudly served his country as a GI in WWII, served the greater community and loved the New Church. In years past he was a frequent visitor to our Society. A preliminary Memorial Remembrance by the Rev. Tom Rose can be watched on YouTube at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CZfqUubhQNY>

A funeral service to celebrate his life will be held in the Bryn Athyn Cathedral when friends and families can again join together.

We also were saddened to hear that **Matthew Lane Brannon** suddenly passed into the spiritual world on Friday the 24th of April from a kayaking accident. His family is holding a private internment service, but is going to wait until Matthew's many friends will be able to come together in person to hold a memorial celebration of his life. In Matthew's 32 years he touched the heart of so many, and will continue to inspire for years to come. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his parents Mike and Martha Brannon and the rest of their family.



And to add to the list of friends and relatives who have moved on to a much better place, word was just received that **Bob Reinke** passed away on April 3, 2020 from pneumonia. Bob, wife Alice and 3 children: Jason, Kate and Josh were active with our congregation back when Lawson Smith was our pastor, and Jason attended school here for 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Bob was a former marathon runner, some years running multiple marathons throughout the country, before he was diagnosed with Parkinson's. Wife Alice gave up her education career to care for him. Our hearts and thoughts are with the Reinke family at this time. A happy thought is to imagine Bob finally able to put on his shoes and take off!

## *And there is “making-the-best-of-things” news:*

It is great to see so many people out walking around **Acton Park**



and enjoying the beautiful trails of Acton Park these days! A quarantine full of fresh air goes a long way toward relieving anxiety and restoring one's hope. Note that the woods are being beaten back around the farmer's crop in the upper field, at the end of Sondberg Lane. Feel free to walk with clippers and help chop back at the invasives! This is a great place to walk or run in the sun! (If

we ever get some sun).

And here's a loud cheer for the care and thoroughness (and hard work!) of the **WNCS teachers** and their support staff (also known as Bonnie Cowley) for keeping the school on track while their students are not in the station. Bonnie reports that even though the building is nearly empty and the lights are mostly off, she is amazed at the work and projects that come and go... not to mention the Zoom classes going on daily. If you ever get a chance you should ask Candy Quintero for one of her morning worship videos or for Uncle Kunkle's kindergarten reading videos.

**Ginny Gladish, Amanda Hyatt, Nancy Alford and Pam Cooper** (among others) have been busy making cloth face masks for family, friends and neighbors to use during the pandemic. (Nancy donates the masks she makes to AAMC and Ginny has donated a bunch to her physician's office.) And **Bill Kunkle** made a bunch of plastic face shields which he passed around to members of the community. Nice work, people!



***Did you know*** that you don't actually have to sing "Happy Birthday" every time you brush your teeth (hard to do) or wash your hands (easier)? Ginny points out that there are also some short "church" songs that work for timing purposes as well making you feel good. For example, try one of these: Obey My Voice; He

Has Shown You; Come Bless the Lord; This Is the Day; I Love You Lord; Humbly Lord We Ask Thy Blessing (one verse not too fast); Love Divine All Loves Excelling (1 verse); as well as others that will help cheer up these excruciatingly long days of doing almost nothing. Although they are a little longer than the recommended 20 seconds, you can just sing them a little faster – or include drying after washing (or before, if you'd rather).

And speaking of almost nothing: some of you might recognize these long days of having nothing special to do as closely resembling retirement.

But not everyone just sits around watching TV. **Erin and Barry Stillman** point out that there are some who are managing to use this time to do really useful stuff (see above). They are not alone when they express their gratitude in particular to the young adults who have been willing to grocery shop and run errands for those of us in that "extra vulnerable" category. There are many who are doing such labors of love, but their special thanks go out to **Sarah Smith and Emily Martin**, who put on a mask and stood in line for them. Erin is reminded of the James Taylor song about the lighthouse, "You come halfway 'round the world just to stay away from



me." True, these folks didn't come halfway round the world, but they certainly did go that extra mile! Much appreciation from all of us who have benefited from their care, but Erin and Barry most especially send their thanks.

We also send a note of thanks to **David and Timmy Radcliffe** for their work in creating a new trail from the tractor shed area to the newest "bridge" trail near the school playground.

### *And in other news:*

**Nancy Alford** has discovered that she's loving staying in. There aren't enough hours in the day to get to quilting and genealogy, although she is finding the time to make masks for the Anne Arundel Medical Center. She has also been doing a lot of weeding, but like others of us she is a fair-weather person so is not able to get out as much as she would like. (One advantage of all the recent cold windy rain is that there will be plenty of weeds to work on when the sun does finally get here.) Nancy reports also that happily Sonny bought everything in bulk and the freezers are full, so she is in good shape on that score.

The **Simonses** are up to their ears in boxes at this point, so many, MANY thanks to those who helped add to their supply! But they have enough.

In further news from the Simons household: over this period of isolation, they have discovered a wonderful song-writing teacher in Boulder who works with folks who type to communicate (those with non-speaking autism). **Owen** has co-written two songs with this guy, on Zoom. Dad Edward supports him in this. Owen also belongs to a Book Club, and has art classes in sculpture now, via Zoom. Wystan has created a support group for moms of those in the Book Club, so is getting and receiving support from other women across all America and Canada, twice a month. Edward has discovered the joys of working from his home office, going like crazy trying to support those getting and trying to fill the enormous orders for safety equipment coming in to Safeware 7 days a week. Owen has a great deal of anxiety all the time, and Covid-19 is scary for him. Edward and Wystan report that they feel chill about it. (Lucky them!) They have had lots of fun helping to clean up and reclaim the cemetery under **Eugene Cole's** direction, as a regular part of their Sunday afternoon.

### *Finally:*

How come you didn't see your big news here? You did all that inventive and fun stuff and we didn't report it? Well, just tell us



about it! It is really easy – phone and email numbers are at the front of every Echo. We would really like to hear from you.

Stay safe, and we will all get through this sooner than you think.

And don't forget to send in your regular (daily, weekly or monthly) contributions to the Church; they are really needed now.



### *May Anniversaries*

*“Conjugal love comes to those who look to the Lord and love the truths of His church, and do the good things it teaches.”*

*Emanuel Swedenborg, CL 458*

~ ~ ~

*May 9<sup>th</sup> ~ James & Missy Cooper ~ 22 yrs.*

*May 22<sup>nd</sup> ~ Alan & Renata Trimble ~ 16 yrs.*

*May 22<sup>nd</sup> ~ Stewart & Patti Smith ~ 44 yrs.*

~ ~ ~