

December 2021

# ECHO ECHO

## Newsletter of the Washington Church of the New Jerusalem

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## From the Pastor

Christmas is my absolute favorite time of year. I love how it can bring the best out of people. I love how it encourages strangers to do random acts of kindness for one another. I love that it is a time when people feel encouraged to reach out and help those in need. And I love the joy and delight little children experience in response

to the decorations, the presents, the music, and the special magic of it all.

And yes, it can be “over-commercialized”. When we focus too much on the gifts we receive (or don’t receive), it becomes something sour. And the almost manic pressure surrounding shopping for Christmas and Christmas-related events can get obnoxious.



And I also want to acknowledge that for people who have recently lost a loved one, Christmas time can be a hard season. It is easy, in the midst of others’ joy, to have one’s awareness of who is missing be brought into even sharper contrast.

But for all of the pressure and stress and complication that attends this time of year, it is still my favorite. I’m not immune to the negative aspects of the season, but I always come through it with joy. I credit this primarily to the power of the letter of the Word to move me and remind me and humble me and give me hope.

Give the reading of the Word of the Lord a place of special privilege in your holiday schedule. Pick one of the Gospels that has a portion of the Christmas story in it—Matthew or Luke—and read it through on your own. Or just choose any of the four Gospels and dedicate yourself to reading it start to finish over a set period of time. Or participate in our Friday night online Christmas Reading group. However, you do it, make Christmas time a time for reading about the Lord Jesus Christ. It will bring amazing focus to how you experience the season.

I hope you have a merry Christmas, full of love, joy, and peace!

Glenn “Mac” Frazier, Pastor  
Washington New Church, 2021-11-30

## **School Report**

WNCS is enjoying the Christmas season! Our normal schedule is supplemented by decorating, parties and a performance. Our religion classes, recitations and chapels turn to focus on the Lord’s birth. Teachers and students look forward to our two-week break.

In November we had a great turn-out of school families and church members to help clean up and fix up the campus. One of the projects was electrical repairs on each of our light poles, which means that hanging our beautiful Christmas lights this year will be much simpler when we can count on working outlets.

We are pleased to welcome a new kindergarten student to the class. Mrs. Q was complaining that she wasn't working hard enough, so we thought transitioning a new student into the classroom would keep her occupied. 😊

Apparently COVID-19 continues to hum along in the background. Most people I talk to seem a wee bit sick of the whole routine by now. However, we continue with our safety protocols, while trying to stay focussed on our reasons for being together. We have had an occasional positive test result but, so far, none that have spread through the school community. When issues do come up, we have friendly and helpful county health department representatives who have been easy to reach while being sympathetic and professional.

The School Board and Board of Trustees have been working on our two scholarship funds: the Waelchli Fund and the Scholarship Fund. Both have grown over the years, and we want to ensure that they can continue to be used effectively to support students at WNCS. At present, WNCS subsidizes all tuitions by about a match of 100% and this total cost is still far beyond the scope of the scholarship funds.

Principal, Brian Smith

***From the Board of Trustees:***

The BoT met on November 9. The Pastor discussed general status of the WCNJ and his planning for an outdoor Christmas Tableaux this year. The Treasurer team is still transitioning to a new reporting format, and the Investment Committee is looking for new members and will be ramping up in the new year for discussions with the account manager. Several Board members attended the General Church Treasurers meetings in early November and reported on those discussions and presentations. The Board discussed opportunities for fundraising and marketing (and the need

for a committee head!), and strategies for grant requests. The principal reported on the status of School activities, staffing and tuition. The December BoT meeting will be a joint meeting with the School Board on December 7.

~ Sharon Cooper, Secretary, WCNJ Inc.



## December Holidays at-a-Glance

Fri. Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup> at 8:00pm ~ **Christmas Readings Group** ~

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89219889890>

Sat. Dec. 4<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm ~ **TAG Christmas Sing** ~ *at the fire circle*

Fri. Dec. 10<sup>th</sup> at 8:00pm ~ **Christmas Readings Group** ~

Thu. Dec. 16<sup>th</sup> at 4:00pm ~ **Memorial for Barry Stillman** ~

Thu. Dec. 16<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm ~ **WNCS Christmas Program** ~

Fri. Dec. 17<sup>th</sup> ~ **WNCS Closes at Noon for Christmas Break** ~

Sat. Dec. 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm ~ **Christmas Tableaux** ~

Fri. Dec. 24<sup>th</sup> at 8:00pm ~ **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service** ~

Sat. Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> at 11:00am ~ **Christmas Day Service** ~

Fri. Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> at 8:00pm ~ **New Year's Eve Party at Q's TBD**

## Notes and Announcements

*These last two years, I have felt like we were surrounded by chariots of fire, - both in heaven and here on earth*

*Nothing, I tell you, NOTHING, beats the love and power of a church congregation!*

*~ Forever Grateful, Erin (and Barry, in absentia)*

**CD for Sale:** Rev. Michael E. Ferrell had produced and recorded for sale a cd of 8 worship songs. A cd is a nice gift for Christmas, birthdays, or other occasions. Supplies are limited. Part of the proceeds will benefit the Church and School. Contact MEF at [michael.ferrell@washnewchurch.org](mailto:michael.ferrell@washnewchurch.org)

**Kempton Translation of the WORD:** As Christmas is on its way, the Heavenly Doctrine Publishing Foundation would like to let you

know that we have copies of the Kempton translation of the Word for sale. These can be purchased, and mailed to anyone you wish, on the Kempton Project website, at [thesacredscripture.org/the-Word](http://thesacredscripture.org/the-Word). On this website you can use your credit card or your PayPal account and choose between a cloth or leather binding. No postage is necessary if you pick up the book in Bryn Athyn or Kempton.

**Quintero New Year's Eve party – TBD:** We are going to get a little closer to the date before deciding whether to go back to the usual NYE party. Stay tuned!

**Candle-and- greens Christmas table arrangements** will again be offered for your decorating or gift giving pleasure, starting Dec 1. All proceeds go to the Washington New Church operating fund.



Prices still start at \$10-\$15 for small sizes (6-8" diameter); \$20 for larger (10-12"); \$25 for large with a glass chimney. All have one candle (red or white), natural, red and/or gold or silver accents, and a ribbon bow. Colors are your choice. Special sizes, colors, or contents can be arranged.

To order, please fill out an order form found at the church, and deposit it in the basket in the lobby. Or call Mary Cooper at 301 390-6292. Your finished pieces may be picked up at the church, or at my home.

If you wish to pay by check, please make it out to WCNJ (Washington Church of the New Jerusalem), but please give or send all payments to me, so I can track them.

Thank you, and Happy Holidays! ~ Mary Cooper

## NEWS OF NOVEMBER:



It has been an up and down autumn, warm one day and freezing the next, with a lot of wind and a little rain here and there. To top everything off, we enjoyed a final weekend of family and friends getting together again – carefully! – after what seemed like forever, to remember and to give thanks for the good things that have

happened in our lives despite the external noises of war and famine and disease that beat upon our conscience. We hope and trust that you all had a satisfactory – even happy! – Thanksgiving Day of feasting and toasting and celebration of not only the external joys of life but also of the more lasting joys provided by mutual friendship and charity.

### ***SAD NEWS:***

Early the morning of November 24th, **Barry Alan Stillman** made his final transition from this world into heaven. He was 64 years old. Barry fought valiantly for 2 years against liver cancer and will now be at peace. He is survived by his wife **Erin Junge Stillman** who noted how grateful she has been for the continued love and support from all her friends and family during this difficult time. Our condolences to Erin. A memorial service will be held at the Church on Thursday, December 16<sup>th</sup> at 4:00PM.

Our condolences also to the family of the **Rev. Dandridge Pendleton**, who passed away on November 1<sup>st</sup> at the age of 94. Dan was the first resident Pastor of the Washington Circle, now Society, from about 1956 to 1958. He served both Washington and the Baltimore Circle, which worshiped in the very old Arbutus Church.

Our thoughts and prayers are with **Dorothy Radcliffe** and family as they wait to hear news concerning Dorothy's sister Sylvia, who, due to a fall resulting in several serious brain hemorrhages, has been put on the 'do not resuscitate' list. She has been seen by nephew Matt, a physician, and has been visited by Lou Synnesvedt.

### ***SOME OTHER NEWS, NOTED:***

#### ***Happenings:***

As an introduction to November, Halloween was celebrated in the school by a well-attended party on Friday, October 29th, but we don't know who was there because everybody was masked. The 1st and 2nd graders disguised themselves and the school had to guess who's who, while the High Schoolers put on a show called

the Shadow Knows. High Schoolers apparently had all the answers. Lots of games and spooky relay races magically appeared, but fortunately nobody was excessively frightened. However, since the previous year's school party there was at least one person who allegedly grew-some.

**The fall work party** was a huge success. Thanks to all the rakes, clippers, wheelbarrows, leaf blowers and kids that showed up attached to enthusiastic volunteers who renewed the grounds and gardens. Also, thanks to the many who worked on plumbing, electrical outlets,



lights, HVAC filters, drywall repair and other indoor and outdoor duties. Despite having to change the date three times, about 25 or 30 people showed up to help keep our building in

good condition. You did good!

**Souper Sundays** have started again; another good reason to attend church in person. Longish lines quickly dissolve the assorted soups and breads, producing a well-fed society both internally and externally. Thanks, Pastors and Theta Alpha and all other contributors. We look forward to a well-fed winter.

***About to be Missing Persons:***

A whole bunch of people showed up at the Johns home one evening in mid-November. Since they were all there, and there was lots of venison chili as well as a warm fire in the outdoor firepit, it was decided to have a party, and **Brad and Kathy** turned it into a farewell for **Matt and Sara Smith**, who are leaving in early December for a new home in Kempton, PA. Previously they were hard to miss; now they are just missed.

**Matt and Sara** send their thanks to Brad and Kathy for hosting such an awesome goodbye party for them. After months of planning and packing, on December 2<sup>nd</sup> they will be out the door to their new home. Sara writes: “We wish to send a truly fond farewell to all our dear friends and neighbors - we will miss you all!! Matt has been in the area since before the birth of the Washington Society (in Acton Park), and we’ve been here as a couple for 37 wonderful years. With love and gratitude, Matt and Sara Smith.”

### *Travelogue:*

**Bill & Sharon Kunkle** enjoyed a weekend trip to Pittsburgh recently, to attend an engagement party for niece Madison Fisher and her fiancé. They stayed with Jamie & Julie Uber and got a bonus visit with **John & Becca (Uber) Kunkle** (from BA) who decided a double-parents visit was too good to pass up! After Sunday service in the beautiful Pittsburgh New Church sanctuary, they visited with Pittsburgh’s Pastor **Jared** and wife **Justine Buss** who are settling well into their new home and send greetings to their many friends in the Washington society!

**Bill and Dorothy Radcliffe** spent a wonderful Thanksgiving with all of **David** and **Laura's** families at the Kirkwood house. Their celebrations didn't stop there as **Charles and Angela** and family came and went as their schedules allowed and Angela cooked some of great meals which were celebrated with David's family.

**Amy Odhner** travelled to Wilmington, North Carolina to join the family, which includes **Jerry and Deena Odhner and the Civitello Family** - Joe, Eva, Nic -now 14, Maddy - now 12, and Tommy - now 8. They were joined by the **McGuire Family** from Virginia -Brian, Becky, Abby and Meggy. Twelve peopled partied outside on the two-tabled deck at the Civitello's house. Wonderful friends and wonderful family and wonderful weather. Much to be thankful for, including a Birthday for Amy the following day.

### **Visitations:**

Thanksgiving weekend brought large numbers of visitors to our Society, apparently too many to list, since we don’t have a list. The



visitors and the local Society members joined to produce a record attendance at the Thanksgiving service - well, a pandemic record, certainly - and a great feeling of friendship and joy, and relief.

We do know that if we had a list, it would include **John and Becca Kunkle**, who joined the Kunkles in Maryland for Thanksgiving Day, after which they all drove to Bryn Athyn for the annual Lee family “Basela Lechla” cookie-making party, which this year included relatives from Ohio, as well as Sharon’s sister **Dinah Rose**, visiting from Woodstock, GA.

And we heard that the list would have included the **Cowley/Roscoe group**, which had a multitude (literally) of visitors for Thanksgiving. The Cowley part included Will & Berith Cowley and 4 children and a dog, Charles & Angela Radcliffe w/their 3 children, Spencer's friend Christine and a dog. The Roscoe part included Janice Roscoe, Abigail Roscoe, Amanda, Nora, Renee & friend Robbie. And a grand time was had by all.

It was great to see **Lyle Kingdon** back in town visiting too.

And since we didn’t have that aforementioned list, a lot of names (and the attached people) have been missed, but we trust that they all had a great Thanksgiving.

***Other things:***

WNCS students, staff and parents held an afternoon **walk-a-thon** on the nature trail on a sunny but chilly Tuesday afternoon in late November (OK – it was on the 23<sup>rd</sup>) to raise money for the **Farm Link Project** [a not-for-profit organization that helps get farm produce that would otherwise be thrown away, to food banks; see [farmlinkproject.org](http://farmlinkproject.org)].



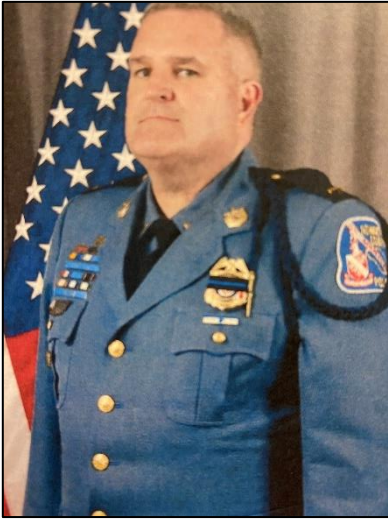
A walking circuit of approximately 1 mile was created on the lovely woodland trail on Church and Acton Park property. Parents, grandparents, neighbors, and friends pledged \$\$\$ for each lap (one time around the circuit) that a student completed to raise money for this worthy cause. All happily and noisily survived an afternoon of no classes while doing good.

We were sorry to see **Kai Smith** swinging around on a set of crutches. Seems he was investigating the law of physics that says that immovable objects are in fact immovable. He found, however, that it is best not to test that law by means of a swift kick. Foot loses every time, was his conclusion. He gets a walking cast soon. Kai's timing for this experiment was unfortunate and unintended, for he was in the process of running MANY laps at the walk-a-thon [he had a lot of pledges!]. He ran his first lap under 10 minutes but sadly went down halfway through his 2nd lap.

If you noticed another person on crutches on Thanksgiving Day it was **Dixie Hernandez** who is recovering from having been caught as an innocent bystander in some crossfire in her Baltimore neighborhood. She and six other people were shot, Dixie in several places (a few serious wounds were in her thigh, nicking the femoral artery, which required surgery). Thankfully she is recovering. Get well soon, Dixie.

Congratulations to **Ryan Cooper** on his selection to the Anne Arundel All-County high school soccer team and an honorable mention on the Maryland state team.

**Jana and Edward Sprinkle** are thrilled to announce Edward's retirement from the Howard County Police Department. After 32+ years (and three years in the U.S. Army) Edward is finally taking a well-earned break. His career began as an MP in the Army, stationed in Germany. Then, in 1989, he began his career with Howard County as a Patrol Officer. He advanced to Police Officer First Class in 1994, then Corporal in 1998, Sergeant in 2002, and Lieutenant in 2009. He chose varied assignments throughout his career to give him wide-ranging experience. These included K-9, CIB/Property Crimes, Tactical Flight Officer, CIB/Violent Crimes,



Civil Disturbance Unit/Emergency Services Unit, Communications, and finally Office of the Chief. He received many awards during his career and served Howard County well. Much appreciated were his years spent supporting Bear Trax, a summer camp for at-risk youth. He was also heavily involved in the toy drives for children at Christmas. They are both looking forward to years of volunteer service in other areas. Edward is already volunteering for Howard

County Animal Control and has plans to serve the elderly as well. Jana says she can't express how happy she is to have him home doing safe things.

Acton Park is showing signs of age: a third house has had a new roof installed in the past few months. Will there be more?

### ***Predicting the Future:***

We predict that the annual **TAG Christmas sing** will be held outdoors this year. (Covid sure has changed the way we do things.) Singing will be accomplished by the fire circle near the parking lot on Saturday, December 4<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm. **Ariel Martin** has kindly agreed to play guitar and/or give us notes, so it will be an informal affair with no talk beforehand. If you would like to come sing Christmas songs, please feel free to bundle up and join everyone! All ages welcome! Masks are optional – flashlights are not.

We also foresee that many people will find their Christmas season greatly enhanced by having one of **Mary Cooper's** candle and greenery table centerpieces as part of their holiday decorations. We predict that such people will locate the announcement of their availability by a careful reading of this issue of the Echo and/or by finding an order form at a convenient location. Try one – you will like it. And all proceeds support the Church.

As a grand finale, we predict that you all will have a happy, or even joyous Christmas, and we hope that this prediction will be fulfilled for each and every one of you.



*“Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His Star in the East and have come to worship Him.” Matthew 2:2*

*Merry Christmas!*