

Summer 2022

# ECHO

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## Newsletter of the Washington Church of the New Jerusalem

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## From the Pastor

*Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart  
be acceptable in your sight,  
O Jehovah, my rock and my redeemer. (Psalm 19:14)*

Last week (as I write at the end of June), the Council of the Clergy of the General Church gathered in Bryn Athyn, PA to discuss

doctrine and the church. This was the first real meeting of the full international Council since the pandemic broke out several years ago, although there have been smaller regional meetings here and there in the past couple of years. At this year's meeting, there were two major areas of focus for the discussions: the doctrines surrounding the subject of married love (especially as it relates to LGBT concerns), and the processes by which the clergy govern and conduct themselves as a body with regard to what is called "the doctrine of the church".

These meetings were important. And complicated. And exhausting. And useful. And they were part of a much larger process that is still unfolding. It would be strange for me to just say nothing about them. But it is also difficult, right now, to give you a full, clear, succinct report of their proceedings in the space of one newsletter article. And there are ongoing processes within the clergy and within the church that take time, and that I can neither speak for, nor do I wish to undercut them by running out ahead of them.

So, with a certain sense of holy fear and humility, let me just give you a short narrative of my personal experience of these meetings. Nothing I say is "official", or binding, or definitive. Rather, these are the impressions of one somewhat worn-out human being's perception of some of what went down last week. As the summer rolls on, I will have more I can say about it all, but for now, here are my first impressions.

Several papers were presented to the clergy on the topics of married love, sexuality, and gender. Some of these papers were exceptionally long and complicated, as one might expect given the complexities of the subject matter. The doctrines presented in them were discussed on the floor of the meeting, in online

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and good."*

discussion groups, in small groups, in quick gatherings during breaks, and over meals throughout the week. It is my impression that every single priest—every single one of them—engaged with the topic with two goals in mind: lovingly helping people connect with the Lord, and obediently turning to the Word as the supreme authority over what is true and good.

Sometimes the temptation arises to characterize priests into opposing camps: truth-focused vs. good-focused, wise vs. loving, pastoral vs. doctrinal, affectional vs. intellectual. And while every person, at any given moment, is likely to be emphasizing one or the other half of each of these pairs, the oversimplification of this division does a horrible disservice to everyone involved. There were no priests who habitually ignore the Word. There were no priests who just hate certain people. Those are both ideas that hell would delight in putting to use in our destruction.

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And I'm not saying hate isn't a real danger in the world, or that false teaching can't ever happen anywhere. But the proceedings I witnessed were not that. I saw dozens and dozens of priests from all over the world united in the desire to go to the Word, to submit to the Lord's teaching, and to love the neighbor that is in every person. But there were

sometimes disagreements over how to understand some of what the Word says. And there are real challenges when what the Word says can feel like "hard sayings". And all this is happening in an environment that is supercharged by the surrounding context of American politics right now. Plus, there is a lot of hurt all around. So, it's complicated, and emotions can run high.

So, we spent a lot of time looking in fine detail about what the Word says about marriage, about sex, and about ideals vs. permitted accommodations. And while there are disagreements, it

is my impression that the doctrinal points where we all fundamentally agree are far more common than the areas where we differ. And where those differences are most radical, it seems to me to usually come down to a very small minority of dissenters. Where the differences are more nuanced, the split gets closer to fifty-fifty. But overall, the splits are rarer than the areas of agreement. I think.

And that raises a separate problem. How does one know what a group of people thinks? How do you measure consensus? A principle in the “Order and Organization of the General Church” (a sort of evolving charter that is not doctrine, but nevertheless is seen by many as an important guidance to our proceedings) is that we, as a clergy, do not “vote on doctrine”. So, we historically have been extremely hesitant to do anything that even approaches the appearance of determining doctrine by vote.

And yet, we have clear teachings in the Word that a priest is to teach, not their *personal* understanding of doctrine, but “the doctrine of their church”. So how does one determine what that doctrine is when things get complicated? This is a vital question for a priest trying to do their job justly and faithfully.

When the clergy was a much smaller body, it was somewhat possible for everyone in the council to get a “read” of the room through conversation, to find out what was generally accepted as the standard doctrine everyone could agree on for the time being. But today, our membership is in the triple digits. There’s no way for each person to talk to each other person over the course of four and a half days to really know what everyone thinks.

So, I say this is my “impression” of things, but I don’t really know. And this touches the other subject of the week: how do we operate as a clergy? As a result of discussions, we’ve embarked on the design of a process that hopefully will help us not so much *determine* the doctrine of the church, but to *discover* it. But it’s going to take some time to get it working right. So, stay tuned.

I know that some would like to have more certainty about what (and how) the church teaches on the subject of sexuality. I understand that. It's a subject that touches a lot of lives. This was shown in a petition that was sent to the Bishops, Board and Council that week, and in two friendly demonstrations carried out during the meetings. It was demonstrated in the hundreds of letters of support sent to us priests. And, of course, the married love of "one man with one wife is the precious jewel of human life and the repository of Christian religion." (Conjugal Love 457)

*I encourage anyone who wants to reach out to me in person, to talk one on one, to do so.*

This is important stuff. Responses to the proceedings will start at the office of the bishop, and I don't want to speak out of turn. And as I said, things are still in development. Brian and I look forward to offering a more detailed follow up to last week's meetings at some point in the future. In the meantime, I encourage anyone who wants to reach out to me in person, to talk one on one, to do so. I would be happy to answer any questions, and to hear any thoughts or concerns you may have around this subject.

*"My friend, as you approach the Word, go to the God of the Word and enter the sheepfold of the church through the Door. Then you will be enlightened. Then, as if you were on a mountain top, you will see the earlier tracks and mistaken turns in the dark forest at the foot of the mountain - not only those of many other people, but also your own." (True Christian Religion 177:4)*

Rev. Glenn "Mac" Frazier  
Pastor, Washington New Church - 2022-6-30

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

The Annual Society Meeting was held in person at the Church on June 10, 2022. After opening worship and a moment of silence for those we have lost, a quorum was verified with 28 members present. A full package of reports had been provided to members in

advance, but brief updates were provided by Pastor Mac Frazier and Assistant Pastor/Principal Brian Smith. Elections for Board of Trustees and School Board were held. The following members were elected to a three-year term on the School Board: Gillian Frazier (incumbent) and Jenny Smith (replacing retiring member Brad Johns). The following members were elected to a three-year term on the Board of Trustees: Craig Cooper (incumbent), David Glenn (replacing retiring member John Kern), and Lincoln Smith (incumbent). Board of Trustees Officers will be elected at the next regular board meeting in September. The proposed budget for fiscal year 2023 was presented by Treasurer Brent Hyatt, and after discussion and on motion, it was approved unanimously.

Respectfully, Sharon Cooper, WCNJ, Inc. Secretary

***You are invited to spend The Fourth of July picnic celebrating our independence***

**Where:** Erin Stillman's  
3208 Lottsford Vista Road  
Mitchellville, MD 20721

**When:** 4:00 -10:00pm

*~ Flag ceremony at 5:00pm ~*

**Provided** - meat, sodas and water.

**What should I bring?** - Whatever else you want for food (sides), towels, blankets and chairs.

Additional games. I have volleyball, Bocci and a slip and slide.

**Invite friends!**

***"Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD"***

~ Erin (and Barry in absentia)



## Announcements

**Summer's Here!** It is time to get out of the house – be with friends again. Play games and socialize in-person!

**Volleyball** – 6:20 PM Mondays and Wednesdays at the soccer field.



Twice a week a dedicated bunch ranging from rising 7<sup>th</sup> graders on up meet at the soccer field to play volleyball. This group has been meeting for a few years now, primarily young adult men and women and now includes some friends met at the Glendale Recreation Center during indoor winter volleyball.

Don't play volleyball? Come anyway, bring a folding chair or blanket to sit in the shade and cheer on your friends, meet some new people or get reacquainted with some of our young adults.

**Fire Circle** – 8:30pm every Wednesday next to the parking lot at the church. Fire circle began in the dead of winter as a way to cope with the pandemic and still socialize. This has become quite popular with a varying and eclectic group of all ages, high school on up. Bring your own beverages a guitar if you wish. Hope to see you there!



**Daily Reading Pod Cast:** Would you like to start your morning listening to passages from the Word? “All the Year Round” is a podcast that features a daily reading from the Sacred Scripture and the Heavenly Doctrine of the New Church. Search for “All the Year Round” at: [alltheyearround.buzzsprout.com](http://alltheyearround.buzzsprout.com), or by searching on your favorite podcast app.

Hope you find it useful!

All the best, Rev. Coleman Glenn - [coleman.glenn@gmail.com](mailto:coleman.glenn@gmail.com)

## News Notes:

Did you notice that the days are getting shorter? That's the trouble with summer – as soon as you start planning all the things you are going to do on your vacation there is less time in which to do it. And then the back-to-school sales start and its autumn and you are raking leaves again. So, enjoy July and August while you can. Happy vacation time, everybody!

### **Belated Congratulations:**

To **Anne and Steve Ball**, who celebrated their combined 120<sup>th</sup> birthday anniversary at the end of May. They don't look a day over 29. Again.

### **Regular ConGradulations:**



Once again, the WNCS graduated a bunch of talented 8<sup>th</sup> graders and sent them out into the world of middle and/or high schools. The graduates were: **Jovan Makutchang, Serah Oladapo, Gabrielle Rhone and Kai Smith** - all not only graduated with honors but also each received the Teacher Appreciation Award. Jovan's Dad - **Louis Fouejieu** - gave an excellent 8th grade parent speech, talking about the 3 things he loves about WNCS. First was the fact that WNCS is community, not competitive; the students get to shine in their own way on their own merits. Second, he praised its substance over flashiness. And third, he emphasized the schools teaching of faith over fear.

At the graduation ceremony, **Marcellus Smith** (4th grade) and **Bryson Thompson** (3rd grade) each received the Levi D. Cowley Sportsmanship Award.



WNCS had no High School grads, but both **Sophie Hyatt** (a graduating Sophomore) and **Sohaila Smith** (a graduating Junior) will be leaving White Horse Academy studies and are transferring to ANC next fall. They celebrated their accomplishment by collaborating on a "sort of" speech by having an "Exit" interview with the principal and "fully" answering a dozen questions.

It only took her 29 years, but **Kim Maxwell** also graduated from WNCS. At the graduation ceremony she received the gifts of the coveted White Horse Pendant and a standing ovation from parents



and students. Some people called it retirement, but Kim is not really the retiring sort, so we look forward to her continuing her education. Thanks, Kim, for your many years of work in helping to establish and maintain excellence in our school.

The evening before graduation, the 5<sup>th</sup> grade through high school students presented the play "Did Someone Say Murder?" The entertaining presentation by the fantastic character actors was well received by the enthusiastic audience.



### **Special Congratulations:**

**Carole Waelchli** attended granddaughter Isabel's eighth-grade graduation from the Bryn Athyn Elementary School, the first she had ever attended, and will never forget their beautiful rose ceremony. Last fall, when the new kindergarten class entered, the newly minted eighth graders presented each of them with a rose. At the graduation ceremony, the kindergartners returned the favor and gave each of the graduates a rose. For Carole, that rose symbolizes the promise inherent in New Church Education and its fulfillment in the lives of the participants - lives waiting to be lived under The Lord's care with love, understanding, and friendship.

### **Welcome!**

To **Jordan Brunne**, our newest addition to the teaching staff at the WNCS. She has moved into her apartment and is preparing to move into the shoes left behind by Kim. We look forward to having her with us.



### **Celebration:**

A good crowd and a beautiful, sunny day made for a great celebration of New Church Day at the Church on June 19<sup>th</sup>. The prospects of bounteous BBQ meats prepared by Pastor Mac and a variety pack of sides prepared by everybody, together with an afternoon of volleyball accompanied by good conversations and good friends, all on Father's Day, produced a day to be remembered. Let's do that again!

### **A Festival Occurred:**

**Lincoln Smith** entertained a large crowd of gourmets at his Forest Garden, and successfully fed them things that gourmets like. A good time was had by all.

### **Travel Time:**

The aforementioned vacation season hardly got started before people began heading for the woods, to the beaches, to foreign (benign) countries, and to hidden retreats unknown to others.

**Steve & Anne**, with son **Alex** and his wife **Kylie**, traveled to Maine to visit Steve's dad on Father's Day.

**Sharon & John Croft** and sons **Anders** and **Ivan** spent a week or more (one loses track of time at the beach) camping on the seashore at Assateague Island National Park, amongst the ponies, the sunshine, the waves, and the dunes full of sand. Lots of sand. They were joined there by **Dave & Christine Cooper** and by **James & Missy Cooper** + kids.

Due to a last-minute cancellation **Dave & Bonnie Cowley** were able to grab an early week vacation at the Alden Cabin in the Poconos - Valhalla. Not wanting to miss the opportunity to share this family legacy with children and grandchildren they welcomed daughter **Lisa** and family, daughter **Aubrey** and family, daughter in law **Berith** and her girls and various friends and cousins. There were lots of boating, fishing, swimming, and late-night games.



George & Mary Cooper spent 10 days in June at Deep Creek Lake, avoiding writing News Notes and mowing lawns while working on their wood chopping skills so they would have firewood in case it snowed.

### **Sad To Say:**

We probably missed a bunch of really interesting news, so to all of you who forgot to send us the memo: congratulations, best wishes

and the like for whatever event it was, and please remember to tell us about it for next time.

**Happy To Say:**

Have a happy July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration at **Erin Stillman's**, and enjoy summer to the fullest.

*Have a wonderful Summer!*



*Turn the page for July/August Duty Schedule....*

## Summer 2022 ~ DUTY ~ Summer 2022

|                       |                 |                             |          |                             |                 |  |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|-----------------|--|
| DUTY                  |                 |                             |          |                             |                 |  |
| <b>July 2022</b>      | 3               | 10                          | 17       | 24                          | 31              |  |
| Preacher*             | GMF             | GMF                         | GMF      | GMF                         | RBG*            |  |
| Chancel               | Sophie H        | Sohaila S                   | Mary C   | Adelaide S                  | Madison C       |  |
| ORGAN                 | Jenny S         | Carole W                    | Jenny S  | Carole W                    | Jenny S         |  |
| FLOWERS               | Janna Z         | Erin S                      | Mary C   | Janna Z                     | Laura C         |  |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Usher | Steve B         | Lincoln S                   | George C | Brian S                     | Elias H         |  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Usher | ----            | Marcellus                   | ----     | Kais                        | ----            |  |
| Video                 | Lincoln S       | Bill K                      | Carina H | Glenn F                     | Brian S         |  |
| Church Coffee         | <b>Bonnie C</b> | <i>(Please, Volunteer!)</i> | Anne B   | <i>(Please, Volunteer!)</i> | <b>Bonnie C</b> |  |
| Foodies               | ----            | Hanna H                     | ----     | Gillian F                   | Janine S        |  |

|                       |                             |           |                             |                 |     |  |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----|--|
| DUTY                  |                             |           |                             |                 |     |  |
| <b>August 2022</b>    | 7                           | 14        | 21                          | 28              |     |  |
| Preacher*             | BDS                         | GMF       | GMF                         | GMF             | GMF |  |
| Chancel               | Sophie H                    | Sohaila H | Mary C                      | Madison C       |     |  |
| ORGAN                 | Carole W                    | Jenny S   | Carole W                    | Jenny S         |     |  |
| FLOWERS               | Erin S                      | Mary C    | Janna Z                     | Laura C         |     |  |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Usher | Dave C                      | Steve B   | Elias H                     | George C        |     |  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Usher | ----                        | ----      | ----                        | ----            |     |  |
| Video                 | Lincoln S                   | Bill K    | Carina H                    | Glenn F         |     |  |
| Church Coffee         | <i>(Please, Volunteer!)</i> | Anne B    | <i>(Please, Volunteer!)</i> | <b>Bonnie C</b> |     |  |
| Foodies               | ----                        | Candy Q   | Amanda H                    | ----            |     |  |

