

January 2023

# ECHO ECHO

## Newsletter of the Washington Church of the New Jerusalem

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## From the Pastor

In the New Church we are quite happy to point out that “now it is permitted to enter with understanding into the mysteries of faith.” But it is important to remember that we are not *required* to fully understand before we “enter in”. There are still mysteries, at the very least for each of us as individuals. Consider this statement in *Secrets of Heaven*:

“Let the Holy Supper also serve to illustrate the matter.



Scarcely any know that the bread there means the Lord's love towards the entire human race and man's reciprocation of that love, and that the wine means charity. Even so, those who receive the bread and wine in a holy manner are joined by means of them to heaven and to the Lord; and through the angels...different forms of the good of love and charity flow in. From this one may see that when a person is governed by good, external truth is joined to internal truth, without their knowing it." (n. 6789:3)

In other words, taking Holy Supper has a powerful impact on you, whether you properly understand it or not. The one requirement is that you approach it "in a holy manner". It can certainly be more meaningful for the person who does know about correspondences, but the only *requirement* is approaching the sacrament with respect and reverence for the Lord.

I regularly come across adults who have never participated in Holy Supper, and it makes me sad. If you know someone who has yet to try it, please let them know that it is an experience they should not miss out on. *All* are "invited to the marriage supper of the lamb".

Rev. Glenn "Mac" Frazier, Pastor  
Washington New Church, 2022-12-24

## **Contribution envelopes**

This year we plan on discontinuing the contribution envelopes. As it turns out less than 8 people use them regularly and the cost to keep ordering them every year is too much.

For someone who uses the envelopes every week, I find this sad, but I understand that it is costly and eats into contributions. The last several years of having weekly envelopes to remind me of my regular contribution has really helped me develop a good habit. However, to continue with envelopes I plan on solving that by buying a box of envelopes and dating them so I can keep up the habit.

I also happen to have a dozen blank boxes from the envelope company here at the school that people can request. ~ Bonnie

Another good way to never forget your contribution is to set up a regular withdrawal using our e-giving website: <http://giving.ncsser-vices.org/dl/?uid=ncs-2818>. You can set it up by either having the contribution taken out of your credit card or as an ACH debit. **Remember** the company does charge the church a fee for this convenience. If you are feeling generous, check the box to add the fee to your contribution.

Lastly, don't forget to include a cost-of-living increase in your contribution, the cost of doing business has gone up for the church and school as well as for the rest of us.

### **Christmas Centerpieces**

Many thanks to all who purchased, helped make, donated materials and extra dollars for, - the Christmas centerpieces this year! We sold 36 arrangements, and you helped add \$840 to the Washington New Church operating fund!

If you do not particularly wish to keep materials like containers, glass chimneys, and other non-perishables, we would be very happy to have them donated back for next year's effort.

Happy New Year and THANK YOU again!

Mary Cooper

### **Tableaux thanks from the Tableaux Director**

I just wanted to say a big thank you to everyone for the effort you put in to making the tableaux happen. I had so many people come up to me after the service saying how much they loved it. It is usually directors that get to hear all that stuff, so I wanted to make sure you all know what it meant to people and how much it meant to me to have such a reliable, hardworking, positive group of people on this committee!

Thanks to – Mac Frazier - pastoral director, Ariel Martin - music director, Janine Smith – casting, Bonnie Cowley/Carl Martin- stage and lighting, Bill Kunkle – light controls construction, Mary Cooper, Gillian Frazier, and Sharon Kunkle – Costumes, Yolanda Magana, and Gillian Frazier - potluck directors, Pat Sweeney -

Sound manager, Carole Waelchli - piano for family sing, plus many other helpers for these people.

I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas! ~ Candy Quintero



***A letter to the Tableaux directors and support staff:***

I don't even know where to begin! I have been to quite a few Bryn Athyn Tableaux and have always loved them. I have been to every one of our Washington Tableaux and have always been moved. But this year's Tableaux were hands down the most moving of all! The music, staging, script, etc. just blew Phil and me away as well as our visiting grands from California! This is the first time in my life where I had tears streaming down my face for the sheer beauty and power of presentation of our Lord's birth.

Kudos to you all in your ability to weave in our community through our school into the production. I loved the cast – wisemen and angels, and my word, the solo of Emma Shaheed singing was just incredible! I am speechless (well, not really) just incredibly grateful that I was able to see and hear this! Ariel Martin, you have brought us up to new levels. How you are able to integrate the school children and parents into our worship service through music is an inspiration. We are so blessed to have you here!

I don't know how or who managed to light up the ceilings with the stars and universe, but it had us all enchanted, including our almost 2-year-old grandson. It was award winning on so many levels! I just had to write to say thank you all!

With much appreciation, Janna Zuber

## TAG Corner

The ladies of the Theta Alpha Guild were very busy this past Christmas! Janna Zuber and her husband Phil put on the TAG program and sing. Thanks, Zuber, for being willing to host this prep for Christmas tradition. There was a lot of support for the tableaux and Yolanda Magana (and family) expertly organized the Sing potluck afterwards. Thanks to Mary Cooper and crew the chancel was gorgeous for Christmas.

TAG presented the church and school with an outdoor bench which we hope will be a good place for watching kids at the playground, resting, and visiting.

But TAG cannot rest on its laurels; so please join us for the January TAG meeting – **Monday, January 30<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm** to plan the spring including the TAG annual banquet currently set for March 25<sup>th</sup>... who to cook? Whom to invite to speak? [If you have some ideas please come to the meeting or contact our TAG president – Carina Heinrichs].

### *Souper Sunday*

The schedule for “Souper” Sunday in the new year is January 22, February 12 - “Chili” Sunday [Chili and cornbread/muffins to purchase for Super Bowl Sunday], and February 26<sup>th</sup>.

*(Note from one of our makers...Erin Stilman has been trying out new Souper Sunday recipes and would like to know if the Mexican one was any good. If you don't let me know, you might have to eat more, so speak up! I still have COVID effected taste and smell, so everything tastes somewhat boring to me. I am looking at a corn chowder or butternut for next time.*

### Variety Perfects

*(Editorial by Bonnie Cowley)*

I was watering my office plants this morning and suddenly noticed the variety I have in just a dozen plants... sure they all have leaves and most of them are green but that is where it ends. Of the plants that are blooming now, I have 2 Christmas cactuses - one is

blooming pinkish flowers and the other a redder variety. I have a plant with tiny peach-colored flowers and one with even smaller delicate blue blossoms. What joy these few plants give me! So how much more joy could I have if my office were a greenhouse with hundreds of plants. (I can dream can't I).

It is by the variety of the plants and flowers around us that give us not only such pleasure but also the varied nutrients we need to live. What if all the plants in the world were pine trees. Even at Christmas it would get pretty boring and I'm not even sure we can eat pinecones. The writings of Emanuel Swedenborg talk a great deal about variety and how the variety within a whole perfect the whole.

“Every whole exists from various parts, since a whole without constituents is not anything; it has no form, and therefore no quality. But when a whole exists from various parts, and the various parts are in a perfect form, in which each attaches itself like a congenial friend to another in series, then the quality is perfect.” HH 56

This is true of nearly everything... our bodies would not work if it weren't for the numerous diverse systems [circulatory, nervous, muscular etc.] working together in harmony. This is true of a community where everyone brings talents and perspectives that differ yet contribute to the whole.

This year's school program took advantage of the diverse talents of our staff ... most particularly the talents of our music teacher. I am already brought to tears by the sweet Kindergarteners singing “How far is it to Bethlehem”, but when the 5<sup>th</sup> grade through high school chorus sang *Betelehemu* a song from Nigeria with Yoruba lyrics. I was captivated, and the added drum accompaniment by one of our WNCS parents – Lincois Anderson and our pastor Mac Frazier completed a sense of the power and joy of the youthful voices.

The tableaux (see more details on P. 4) was also fortified by many of our school parents and children the variety of which added greatly to the program's music and sphere. We are truly fortunate

to be able to share these special events with our neighbors and to have them add variety and depth to these long-standing traditions.

A video was taken of the Tableaux, and you can watch it at:

<https://youtu.be/Nh-F5AommCE>

## **Happy News Year:**

Can you believe it? A whole year has passed since we last held a January. If you are brave enough to think about those 12 months, it is very likely that you will be able to recall some really good times and one or two things that you did to make those around you better off than they would have been. The trick now is to figure out what those things were and how they happened so you can repeat them and make the world a better place.

Bad puns don't count.

## **Thought for the Day:**

Now here's a nasty Quirk: If you don't want to work you have to work to earn enough money so that you don't have to work. (Apolgies to Ogden Nash)

## **Decorating Days:**

As they have done every year (for a really long time) the school took an afternoon off from the ordinary to create decorations and decorate the building as a gift to the society. The children make cookies, learn how to make stars and thread popcorn, decorate a tree, and make snowflakes. As you might imagine, teaching kindergarteners how to fold paper and then make the cuts without ending up with many pieces instead of one lacy snowflake is tough! Students also string lights outdoors so the building has a welcoming Christmas feel. It seems like a lot of play, but a great deal is learned... and a lot of fun is had too! Thanks, kids – and teachers.



Then it was the turn of several people of prime vintage to decorate the Nave for the Christmas Eve candlelight service and for the Christmas Day service. The Chancel was a gorgeous picture of greenery and red candles and poinsettias that made the services joyful and



memorable. Thanks, ladies for your inspiring work.

### **Celebrations:**

The annual Theta Alpha Guild Christmas program was renewed at the warm and welcoming home of **Phil and Janna Zuber**. An opening worship program led by **James Roscoe** was followed by enthusiastic and tuneful singing of favorite Christmas songs from the Liturgy. When joined with tasty snacks and drinks, this was a great start to the season. Thanks TAG, James, and Zuber.

The school kids dressed up in their finest for their annual evening Christmas program on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month to display their singing skills to parents, siblings, friends, and relatives. A lovely program. Thanks, performers.

The next morning, the last day before the Holiday vacation, the school celebrated Christmas for itself with a real, live (lively) party which began as soon as they could and lasted until school closed. Fun was had by all, and the teachers have a couple of weeks to recover.

The annual Tableaux was special this year and if you did, you shouldn't have (missed it, that is). The scenery was terrific in its simplicity, although difficult in its assembly, as were the costumes, and the singing and accompanying music were great. Who knew we were blessed with such talent? Thank you, all planners, and participants – who were too numerous to remember, much less name. The close-to-full house applaud you all.

Our traditional and well-attended Christmas Eve Candlelight service was beautiful and uplifting. It was a joy to see and visit with



everyone and to welcome the many visitors, both family and friends, in town for the festivities.



On December 27th, the **Sweeney and Cole families** gathered at **Pat and Paige's** home for the baptism of **Austin and Brenna's** daughter, **Reagan Allison Cole**. Pastor and family friend, **Rev. Michael Ferrell**, led the private ceremony and joined in the celebration dinner that followed. Paige's parents, **Bob and Kären Heinrichs**, were also in attendance, making the baptism all the more special as they are Reagan's only living great-grandparents. Reagan spent most of the service smiling at Rev. Ferrell, and sneezing when he

stated, "May the Lord bless you." It was a sweet and happy evening for all.

At this writing, the new year had not yet arrived, although it is predicted to be on time, so we can presume that the New Year's Eve party hosted by **Chuck and Candy Quintero** occurred more or less as planned, and that as a result it is reliably certain that you all have incurred a Happy New Year! No more waiting 'til next year – it is a done deal, as evidenced by the fact that school has resumed.

### **Irrelevant Observation:**

When thinking back on New Year's Eve, did you notice that mathematics still works? Yes, two pints still make one cavort. (As observed by Ogden Nash.) (Maybe bad puns do count.)

### **Relevant Observation:**



Recently caught on camera: a pretty big coyote in Acton Park. So a heads up: those who live in the A.P. area who might want to watch their pets, especially those of smaller (bite) size.

## **Traveling:**

This December turned out to be a really bad time for those who had planned to travel in or to large parts of the country during the weeks before or after Christmas, with record cold weather and record snowfall in many places. A good time to have been sitting by the fireside and listening to music while the wind howled outside. We trust you all managed to have a joyous Christmas in spite of the weather – or even because of it.

**Amy Odhner** was one of those who traveled – she drove to Wilmington, NC to visit her parents, **Deena and Jerry** and sister **Eva and family**. She reports that their parents are in good health, and that they enjoyed a fun Christmas with lots of presents for the kids and lots of hors d'oeuvres and cocktails for the adults. They all hope the Washington society has a healthy and happy new year!

Erin Stillman traveled to Kempton, PA, and reports that her dad, Rev, Bob Jungé is rehabbing from a bad bout with arthritis and hope to be coming home soon.

**Janna and Phil Zuber** reverse traveled. They stayed home, and report that they loved having their teenage granddaughter **Sophia and Catherine** do the traveling from Berkeley, CA to visit them while their parents attended a wedding in India. They are keeping their fingers crossed that Southwest Airlines is up and running smoothly for their return home on January 1. Janna says they had much good cousin and family connecting and grateful they could spend time here.

## **Blatant Advertising:**

“Kindred, Season Three” is a podcast that explores repairing and restoring our relationship with the ecosystem. It is hosted by sisters **Kate Coffin and Jenn (Coffin) Asplundh** (of Acton Park heritage and fame) and can be followed on major podcast platforms. For more information on “Kindred” go to [www.kindredpodcast.co](http://www.kindredpodcast.co).

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**Happy News Year to one and all.** And thank you for being newsworthy.