

December 2023

ECHO ECHO

Newsletter of the Washington Church of the New Jerusalem

www.theWNC.org • 301-464-5602

Pastor: Rev. Glenn (Mac) Frazier
11801 Chantilly Lane; Mitchellville, MD 20721
Mac.frazier@gmail.com

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Asst. Pastor, Principal: Rev. Brian D. Smith  
11503 Chantilly Lane  
Mitchellville, MD 20721-2126  
Brian.smith@washnewchurch.org

WCNJ Inc. Treasurer

Mr. Brent Hyatt

[bhhyatt@verizon.net](mailto:bhhyatt@verizon.net)

WCNJ Inc. Co-Treasurer

Mr. Chuck Quintero

[c.quintero@alum.mit.edu](mailto:c.quintero@alum.mit.edu)

WCNJ Inc. Investment Treasurer

WCNJ Inc. Secretary

Sharon Croft

[croft.cooper@verizon.net](mailto:croft.cooper@verizon.net)

Echo Editor

Bonnie Cowley

[Bonnie.cowley@washnewchurch.org](mailto:Bonnie.cowley@washnewchurch.org)

Echo News Notes Editor

George Cooper

[cooperpatents@verizon.net](mailto:cooperpatents@verizon.net)

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## From the Pastor

The Christmas Season is upon us. This can be a terribly busy time. There is a lot that we have to do to prepare for Christmas: shopping, decorating, baking, more shopping... It's easy to get caught up in it all so that we lose sight of what it's all about. Getting married can be very similar. It's far too easy to become so focused on

the material aspects of preparing for a wedding that we forget that what really counts isn't the wedding but the marriage.

For some, the Christmas holidays can also be painful. Because it is a time of celebration, people going through hard times often feel their troubles magnified by contrast. Because it is a time when friends and family gather together, those who have lost loved ones or who are feeling disconnected can feel especially lonely.

For many, though, Christmas is a time of real happiness. We are reminded of the joys of past celebrations, of the Christmases of our childhoods. We see it in our own children and grandchildren, and their excitement as advent calendars are opened and lists are made.

Regardless of our state in life, though, the Lord is reaching out to each one of us individually. He does this continually, throughout the year, at every moment of every day of our lives. It seems to me, though, that He makes special use of holidays to do this work. He really does use the “magic in the air” and the “Christmas spirit” to connect with people.

*One of the significant ways He connects with people is by means of other people. By means of us.*

One of the significant ways He connects with people is by means of other people. By means of us. If you're having a good Christmas season this year, use some of that positive energy to reach out to someone else who may be having a hard time with things. Donate food. Buy a present to donate to charity. Call up an old acquaintance and ask how they're doing. Give someone an unexpected hug. Make an extra effort to smile at strangers.

I have found in the past that when I myself am not having a good Christmas season, when I am not feeling the Christmas spirit, that reaching out like this, taking a break from the physical preparations and from my own troubles and just doing something nice for someone else as a Christmas present—essentially, by acting like I'm in a Christmas mood—I can often find my way back to the Lord and receive what He's offering.

So, I hope you all have a wonderful Christmas season this year, and I invite you to have fun making it a nice one for everyone else, as well.

Rev. Glenn “Mac” Frazier, Pastor  
Washington New Church, 2023-11-28

*From the Board of Trustees*

The Board met on November 14, 2023. Monthly reports were presented by the Pastor, Principal, and Treasurer, and discussed. Substantial conversation focused on the 5-year strategic plan for the Church and School. The Pastors are leading and participating in many discussions and meetings to prepare for the January 19 Society meeting, where visions and options will be laid out to the membership related to the 5-year outlook for growth, with opportunity for input and feedback. We hope you will all plan to join us.

The Board continues to focus each month on outreach and community building, as well as contributions and fundraising. Additional volunteer support is needed to help plan events and help with communications. If interested in contributing to these uses, please see the Pastors or any member of the Board.



The next meeting will be a joint Trustees – School Board meeting on December 5. ~ Sharon Cooper, Secretary, WCNJ, Inc.



**Christmas centerpieces**, with fresh greens, candle, ribbon bow and other decorations, will be available after Dec 1, for your decorating or gift-giving. To order, please fill out an order form, and place it in the basket in the church lobby or call Mary Cooper at 301 390- 6292.

Small arrangements (6-8") are \$15; large (10-12") \$25; large with glass chimney are \$30. If paying by check, please make it out to WCNJ, but give it to me, so I can keep track.

## DECEMBER EVENTS

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- Dec. 6 – Christmas Reading Group – Zoom – 7:00pm  
Dec. 10 – Sunday Worship – 11:00am  
Dec. 13 - Christmas Reading Group – Zoom – 7:00pm  
Dec. 17 – Christmas Tableaux 5:00pm (No morning service)  
    Christmas Potluck - *following immediately* ★  
Dec. 19 – WNCS Christmas Party – 10:30am  
Dec. 19 - Jan 7 – WNCS Closed for Christmas Holiday -  
    WNCS Closes at Noon for Christmas Break  
Dec. 22 – Christmas Party at Fraziers’ – Music, food – bring a  
    dessert if you are able to come. – 7:30pm  
Dec. 24 – No morning service, but please join us for our  
    - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service – 7pm  
Dec. 25 – Christmas Morning Worship – 11:00am  
Dec. 31 – Quintero’s New Year’s Eve Open House, College  
    age and up. Bring drinks and snacks to share – 8:00pm

***Tableaux Potluck is for the entire family! ★ “Perfect Potluck” Signup***

<https://www.perfectpotluck.com/meals.php?t=TQXH5250>

*To The Washington Society,*

*We wanted to take this time to say a heartfelt thank you to all those who worked so hard at reconstructing the front steps leading up to the home of Didi Trimble. It was a huge undertaking, and the results are amazing! So many people showed up to help and quickly took the steps, which were in much need of repair, and transformed them into a safe, clean, and sturdy walkway. Thank you, Bonnie Cowley, for spearheading the project and to all the volunteers and those who made donations for the materials. We cannot express our gratitude enough of such efforts.*

*~ Thank you from The Trimble Family*

**Christmas Reading Group:** On Monday, December 6th at 7:00 p.m., We are hosting the first of two Wednesday Night Online Christmas Reading groups. These will be casual online get togethers that should last between an hour and ninety minutes, where we read a portion of the Christmas story together, discuss it, and also enjoy spending time checking in with one another and helping one another mentally and spiritually prepare for Christmas. The zoom link for participating is:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89219889890?pwd=Z1ppUFA-veVR5R2pWWDARdGMwNFFPZz09>

## **From the School: *Project Days***

The Washington New Church School works hard at using “hands-on” learning with our students. It is a way to teach them that learning is for use and by using what we know it also anchors that knowledge with affection. Every year we try to set aside some time to do a schoolwide project. This year, just before Thanksgiving, we decided to focus on the year’s theme and design the projects to reflect that theme. This year’s theme is **innocence**.

Though we all know that babies and small children reflect innocence we wanted our students to more clearly understand that the real meaning of innocence is **the willingness to be led by the Lord**. From helpless infants, throughout our lives, and on to old age, whenever we strive to follow the Lord, we are in the sphere of innocence.



some of their expertise about babies. This was a very precious

We were fortunate to begin our project day with real babies. Four of our WNCS moms have relatively new babies and each took a turn visiting a group of students and sharing with the students

beginning to our day, giving us a living representation of innocence. After the babies, the students were divided into 4 groups of mixed ages grades JK – 8. Each group had a topic and a project.

**Group #1** led by Candy Quintero and Bonnie Cowley, learned about sheep and all the many uses of the animal. They especially learned why sheep represent innocence and the many times the Word uses sheep to illustrate that willingness to be led. After a time of learning the group made a pastoral scene of shepherds in a field, out of needle felted wool. The mural was topped with a quote from Psalm 100.

**Group #2** - Ariel Martin and Erin Stillman led an engaging series of activities to learn about dogs and how they love to be led. Students were able to practice safely approaching, petting, and even walking our visiting dogs (Mac's dog Henry, Laura Cooper's two dogs – Bella & Macallan and Kathy Johns' dog Jumbie). Kathy Johns led a discussion about the many uses dogs provide to people, and how their innocence and love of working drives that use. The program culminated in a fun training exercise where students trained their "dog" (another student) to run an obstacle course involving zigzags, a teeter-totter, and jumping through hoops - all without any talking! The students did a great job, and even competed for the best time: the winner completed the course in 18 seconds!

**Group #3** – Led by Carina Heinrichs and Jordan Kinsey focused on baby chicks. This group focused on the development of chicks. They watched some fun videos of chicken embryo development, and then made candle holders with chick embryo pictures on them! It was kind of like candling chicken eggs to see if there was an embryo inside. The kids had fun and the older kids were such a big help with their younger school-mates!

**Group #4** – Was led by Anne Ball, Sharon Kunkle and Carole Waelchli – This group looked at the physical and mental changes and the progression of innocence in Human Development as a person passes through the stages of life (infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and old age.) They invited individuals or

married couples as representatives of the first, third, sixth and ninth decades to be interviewed by the students from a prepared set of questions. The students took notes and constructed posters illustrating the changes mentioned above, and the progression of innocence as the individual passes from the innocence of ignorance in the first decade of life to the innocence of wisdom in the ninth. It was a fascinating experience, enjoyed by all, regardless of age!

After the morning projects and a pizza lunch the students took some time in appropriate age groups to talk about what they each can do to protect their own innocence. A particularly useful exercise in this media flooded world.

The students were then released to prepare a special tea for some of the church and school elderly (most of which were octogenarians or older). At 2pm the tables were all set with flowers, tea, and cookies. Our nine elders arrived and were seated at different tables mixed with our students. The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades had developed some very good questions that were written down on slips of paper for the children to engage with the elders – questions like – “What advice could you give us on being better people?”, or “Can you tell us about a lesson

that you learned when you were our age?”. At first everyone seemed a bit uncomfortable but as I walked around the rooms taking photos, I was amazed at how well behaved the students were, how



willing the elders were to answer their questions (also adding interesting anecdotes), and how quickly more natural conversations evolved. The sphere of innocence was palpable.

WNCS would like to thank the babies and their moms, the dogs, and owners, those who helped demonstrate human development

and especially our elders, George & Mary Cooper, Bill & Dorothy Radcliffe, Nancy Alford, Didi Trimble, Hong Le (Raymonds grandmother), Carole Waelchli and Michael Ferrell.

~ Bonnie Cowley

## Some News

“The trouble with people is that they are only human.”

Hobbes (Vol. 2 )

For those of you who have forgotten, Hobbes is a tiger – a very observant one for being imaginary - but it seems to be true that sometimes being only human is a bit of a challenge, for humanity tends to come with a lot of baggage. The celebrations of December will provide us with many opportunities to practice up on our forgiveness skills, fortunately, and if we are lucky, we will be able to find enough goodness in people to allow some hope for eventual peace on earth. We wish you a joyous Christmas.

## **Doing Good:**

A large number of volunteers showed up on Saturday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, to tear out and rebuild the long set of stairs leading from the street up to **Didi Trimble's** front door. It was hard work, but it was well planned, all the materials were on hand, it was a beautiful autumn day, and everyone enjoyed helping and enjoyed the community spirit as well. We won't try to mention the 15 or so people who helped for fear of missing someone... but you know who you are. Thanks to everyone for your willingness to help and special thanks to **Bonnie and Dave Cowley** for leading the parade.

## **Condolences:**

Wynne Sumner Hyatt passed peacefully into the spiritual world on Thursday, November 16<sup>th</sup> at the age of 89.93 years. His memorial service will be held on December 9<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m.

at the Washington New Church in Mitchellville, Maryland, and all are welcome. This service will be live streamed

at: <https://www.youtube.com/@WashingtonNewChurch/streams>



## **A Remembrance:**

It was the mid-1960's when Wynne and Marge Hyatt and their growing family arrived in our Society, bringing their steadfast and enthusiastic energy to the support of the Society's adventurous growth in the Mitchellville wilderness. Marge was in the middle of things as Society secretary for many years, and Wynne was the quiet one who was always there when a job needed doing, especially if it involved finances. He was there for the establishment of Acton Park, for the founding of the school, and for the planning and construction of two additions to the original church building. He was there for the day-to-day management of budgets, and served on Society and Acton Park boards for years, helped with investments and generally helped to keep Society finances in order. But more importantly, he supported the church wholeheartedly by his steady presence and active participation not only in social activities but in doctrinal matters, for he was a knowledgeable student of the Writings. Thank you, Wynne, for your dedication to our Church. You were a true friend and a true pillar of the Church; you will be missed not only by your family but by the entire Society.



## **News That Hasn't Happened:**

This is not a secret, so pass the word out to everybody you know: the school will be presenting the Christmas Tableaux on Sunday, December 17, at 5:00 PM. They have done it before, so we are looking forward to it.

Also – it is time to start thinking about your fabulous “centerpiece” Christmas decorations, which are now on sale, with proceeds benefitting the Church's operating fund. Order forms are available online or at the Church, as spelled out in the Official Notice in this version of the Echo.

Don't forget the Wednesday evening discussion group meeting online for a study of the Christmas story. Try it! Guaranteed you will like it. (See p. 4)

### **Thanksgiving Fun:**

The **Wawrzeniaks** and their Mimi (**Jean Allen**) celebrated Thanksgiving early by taking a trip to National Harbor where they rode the Ferris Wheel and went to see the Titanic exhibit narrated by our own **Brad Hyland (Johns)**. Fun for all!

Speaking of whom: **Brad & Kathy Johns** enjoyed Thanksgiving over 3 days. Kathy reports that they spent "Thanksgiving Day by ourselves, so we could travel I 95 with less traffic to Philly on Friday with **Alaina**. We spent Saturday morning at the annual Cooper Breakfast cooked outside over a wood fire at Tyler State Park. This is a Cooper tradition that has been going on since the 1970s. Last time we went we were newly married - 40 years ago! Then we headed back to Philly via Peddler's Village to have a Thanksgiving dinner with the **Johnses**. Lots of fun family time for us!"

**Yolanda Magana** reports that the **Wallace** family traveled to California to spend Thanksgiving week with family. She reports that the visit was fantastic! And the weather was wonderful. They were able to go to the beach and spend time outdoors without a sweater. Lol. Also, they celebrated grandmas 77th birthday (Yolandas mom). It was a much-needed family trip.

Rather than travel, the **Cowley-Roscoe clans** once again gathered at the home of **James and Jeanette Roscoe** to celebrate family (from near and far) with a grand Thanksgiving meal and a day of conviviality.

### **News that Counts:**

Congratulations to **Eva Smith**, who was recognized by the Red Cross, in early November, for donating over 5 gallons of raw blood. She has gotten to the point where she can fill a 500ml bag (pint) in just over 2 minutes. In addition to the 5 gallons of blood, she has donated 20 units of plasma and 20 units of platelets. It is a three hour sit for each platelet donation. Her plasma and platelet donations are another 4 gallons or more of fluid on top of the 5

gallons of blood. That is an incredible feat. She is now a full-fledged Red Cross volunteer and works at donation sites on weekends. Although many locations pay for these critical supplies, she only donates to the Red Cross which is all volunteer. Eva cites cancer patient's needs, and the fact that blood is the most direct and a 100% donation to someone in need, as her primary motivations.

### **More News:**

Congratulations to Kira Zuber, who was made a partner in her Baltimore law firm, Goodell, DeVries, Leech and Dann. Like her dad, her specialty is medical defense.

**Amy Odhner** visited family in North Carolina over the Veterans Day weekend which included brunch with her nephew, Tommy. She also enjoyed the weekend with **Jerry and Deena** as well as **Eva** and her family.



**Janna Zuber** did not let the house move stop her from orchestrating an annual art retreat in early November. It was held in Orkney Springs, Virginia, at Shrine Mont, which is a wonderful Presbyterian-affiliated retreat center in the VA mountains. She believes this was their 8th year going there and is always a creative and fun time. All meals were provided, so they just got to paint in a wonderful big studio (or outside) all day long. This year there were 17 artists, including a few spouses. Always too short, but a shot in the arm for all that made it. She also reports that their well-loved and cherished home on Progress Lane has a contract on it and if all goes well will settle on Dec 21. Janna's take from her realtors is that the prospective new owners love it. And she and Phil are loving being just 8 minutes away from their grands! They welcome friends to pop in and visit if in the Annapolis area.



**“Brad Hyland”** reports that he is still having fun with new and returning customers every month! He is the new voice of "Charlie" for Star-Kist tuna, and has voiced for digital spots, hoping this will move to broadcast TV!

## School Events:

The school held a tea ceremony for some of the elders of the Society just before the Thanksgiving break. The purpose was to discover the secrets of innocence (or ageing) in exchange for freshly baked chocolate chip cookies. The Seniors were pushovers. And greatly enjoyed the opportunity to talk to the students about more than the recent Maryland football games.



### *December Anniversaries*

*“The blessings of conjugal love are innocence, peace, tranquility, inmost friendship, full trust and a mutual desire of mind and heart to do the other every good.”*

*Emmanuel Swedenborg, CL 180*



*Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> ~ George & Mary Cooper ~ 65 yrs.*

*Dec. 19<sup>th</sup> ~ Brad & Kathy Johns ~ 42 yrs.*

*Dec. 23<sup>rd</sup> ~ Avi & Aubrey Hernandez ~ 18 yrs.*

*Dec. 30<sup>th</sup> ~ (Joel) & Didi Trimble ~ 60 yrs.*

