

January 2024

ECHO ECHO

Newsletter of the Washington Church of the New Jerusalem

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## From the Pastor

Happy New Year, friends. I hope your December was one full of peace, family, and the presence of the Lord. For myself, I made the terrible decision to get quite ill just before Christmas, and today, as I write this, I am still not feeling one hundred percent. But despite that, I have to say that I have enjoyed Christmas this year. The tableaux were a delight to be a part of, Brian's Christmas Eve

service was deeply meaningful to me, and on top of that, I've had all four of my kids home for several weeks.

But now the calendars are turning and its time to look forward to the new year to come. Many people take this time of year to renew their vision for their lives, to commit to important changes, as well as to reflect on how they did in the previous year. So, it's appropriate that this January we will be meeting together to discuss a renewed vision for the Washington New Church School.

As I have talked about with you all over the past many months, our school started with a particular vision and mission in mind, but over time circumstances changed. And with those changes came changes in the focus and mission of the school. What started out as primarily a mechanism for educating the children of New Church families in a sphere and under a curriculum informed by the Heavenly Doctrines over time opened up into what we have today: a New Church school, but whose students are primarily from families outside of our church society.

And this is fine. In fact, it's more than fine. As I will lay out in more detail at our Society Meeting on January 19th, there are very good reasons for a church society such as ours to spend energy, treasure, and focus on providing a New Church education to children in general, under certain circumstances.

At the same time, there is no compelling mandate that a New Church society operate a school, nor that such schools should serve families beyond the church's membership. The doctrines do not demand it, and in fact many New Church societies do not have schools, and that's fine, too.

We have a school. What's more, I am proposing that we continue to have a school, but with a new, clearer vision that is more in line with where we are today. But it's up to you. I am asking everyone to come to the Society Meeting on January 19th so that everyone, as a society, can affirm (or not) the new vision and direction for the school. Because it is *your* school. We are not a school; we are a church that operates a school. You are the church. Please come and hear what we plan to do with the school and let us know if you

agree with the plan, because without your enthusiastic support, there is little point to us continuing on. The church and the school must go hand in hand.

Now, what you hear on January 19th will likely not be very surprising. The vision comes from conversations Brian and I have been having with faculty, staff, various boards, and committees, and also with you. I believe that where we are going is in line with what you all want, but it's important to come together to affirm it.

And speaking of which, there are still some individuals we have not heard from. So let me repeat my invitation to each of you personally: I want to hear from you. Nothing is off the table. Tell me what you think about our school, its future, and what we should be doing. I am happy to talk online via zoom, over email or text, on the phone or in person. Just let me know.

And please come to the January 19th meeting where I will present my vision for the school, and where Brian and I will lay out some of the decisions we are looking at regarding the school's structure and its programs. You can ask questions, offer additional suggestions, and let us know what you think. If we get a sense from all of you that we are on the right track, then the next step is to put together a formal plan to be presented at the annual Society Meeting on May 17.

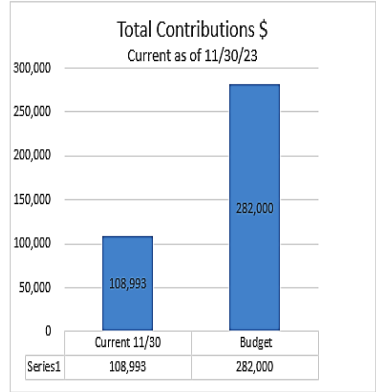
I hope to see you there!

Rev. Glenn "Mac" Frazier, Pastor  
Washington New Church, 2023-12-28

*From the Board of Trustees:*

The Trustees held a joint meeting with the School Board on December 5, primarily to discuss operations and strategies for the Washington New Church School. The Board approved the recommended tuition for the next school year and discussed at length goals and challenges for the future of the school. The upcoming Society Winter Meeting on January 19 will dive into these topics, and we encourage all members and friends to attend and engage in the conversation.

The Treasurer provided the financial report for the end of November. As evident in the graph below, we are on track, but still have a way to go to match our contributions budget for the fiscal year that ends on June 30. Every dollar or donation of your time helps! Thank you for all you continue to give.

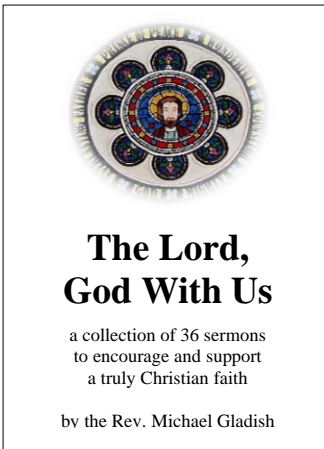


Finally, I would like to recognize the recent passing of Wynne S. Hyatt.

Wynne was on the Board and/or serving as the Society Treasurer or co-Treasurer for as long as I can remember. If he wasn't Treasurer, he was helping out behind the scenes. He was always there and always had the needs of the Society in mind, with his quiet authority and firm grasp of all financial details. I'm certain I speak for the full Board when I say that his service is deeply appreciated, and he will be missed.

Sharon Cooper

Secretary, WCNJ, Inc.



**New Book Published and for Sale:**

It has been nearly 80 years since a book about the doctrine of the Lord has been published in the General Church. That drought has now broken with a new collection of sermons by the Rev. Mike Gladish, titled, “The Lord, God With Us.” 275 pages in a white paperback, it is selling for \$20 at the Cathedral bookstore and on the NewChurchBooks.com website, or directly from Mike via

[MDGladish@gmail.com](mailto:MDGladish@gmail.com). See the

current NCL, page 483, for more information.

## Spring Plant Sale:

Your gardens may be mulched and frozen for the next few months but before you know it, we will be getting ready to have our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Plant Sale to benefit the playground.

We had a great 1<sup>st</sup> year last year with lots of donations of help and plants. It also turned out to be a wonderful community activity for us, our school families, and our surrounding neighbors.



If you would like to help, whether planting seedlings, donating pots and soil, running concessions, cashiering or so many other ways you can volunteer, contact Erin Stillman – [barryanderin@verizon.net](mailto:barryanderin@verizon.net) or text: 301-801-3905.

## Centerpiece Sales:



Many thanks to all who purchased, helped make, and donated materials for the Christmas Centerpieces this year. We sold 28 pieces, and you helped add about \$700 to the church operating fund.

As always, 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

## *Home Cooked Meal and a Meeting*

*Please come and enjoy a delicious, cooked meal.*



*~ Friday, January 19<sup>th</sup> at 7pm ~  
Followed by a one topic Society  
Meeting, at 8pm.*

***“The Future of our School”***

*Please RSVP to Bonnie Cowley –  
(text: 301-518-3628, or [bonnie.cowley@washnewchurch.org](mailto:bonnie.cowley@washnewchurch.org)) so  
we know how many to plan for.*

## Year's End Notes

“The surest sign that intelligent life exists elsewhere in the universe is that none of them has tried to contact us.” [Calvin – Vol. 3, p. 198 of “Calvin & Hobbes”]

As we contemplate the beginning of the new year, after due celebration of the magical “123123’ day (otherwise known as 12/31/23) and the resulting fall of the Times Square iconic ball, we can only hope that we have learned from our past mistakes and that we can look forward to at least a little improvement in our lives. The chaos that surrounds us might continue, since “some people” insist on proving that Calvin was right, but surely, we can find a way to capture a bit of internal peacefulness. Here’s a clue: read the Writings. But...“The problem with people is that they are only human.” [Hobbes, Vol 2 p 175]

### **Christmas Time:**

As usual, the celebrations of the Lord’s birth began with the **students at WNCS** holding a “Decoration Day” in which groups of students took turns making cookies, snowflakes (only of the paper kind unfortunately), popcorn chains, tree decorations and the like, and then putting up the decorations around the church building for all to enjoy. The older students were entrusted with the task of disentangling the lights for the outside lamp posts, and then installing them. The beautiful results are the school’s gift to the Society, for which we are grateful – and impressed!



Then came the Tableaux. Many thanks to the **WNCS** for the joyous performance on December 17<sup>th</sup>. It was nicely done, under the direction of **Ariel Martin** and numerous helpers, with the

school kids doing all the singing (by both individuals and groups), musical accompaniments, and acting. That was a lot of effort, and it was well appreciated by the large audience, which included more than a few proud parents. The show was followed by a congenial, delicious, and bountiful potluck supper for all. Thanks to those who provided both the pots and the luck. And thanks to those who volunteered for the task of cleaning up afterward!

Regrettably, “**Pastor Mac**” **Frazier** (along with several others, it might be added) came down with a respiratory plague just before Christmas that took away his voice and caused the cancellation not only of the annual Society Christmas social gathering but also the Church’s Christmas Day service. Get well soon, y’all.

But sad as the cancellations were, they did not take away from the traditionally beautiful and inspiring Christmas Eve candlelight service. Our thanks to the decorative people who garnished the nave with greens and reds and trees and candles, to the organist (**Carole Waelchli**), and to **Rev. Brian Smith** who led the service.

The festivities brought many visitors to the Society – almost too many to mention. Welcome, all, and come see us again!

But we can mention that **Phil and Janna Zuber** had all their East Coast family come to their new home to celebrate Christmas together, including son Grayson who came from Bryn Athyn for a few days to fill their home with his beautiful guitar music. Their celebration was all the better because they were able to settle on the sale of their prior home just before Christmas.

### **Congratulations:**

To **Ruth Hyatt** on her baptism on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. And kudos to her parents, **Derek, and Hanna Hyatt**, for taking on the delightful task of instructing a 3-year-old (and beyond) the truths of the Word. It is a formidable job ahead of them – although they are getting a three-year head start – but the rewards are great. And it seems likely that they also will do a bit of learning along the way. And just think of all the things Ruthie will be able to teach her older siblings, **Hugo, and Lila**.

To **Kira Zuber Jenkins**, who was made a partner in the Baltimore city law firm of Goodell Devrie Leech and Dann law firm, where she specializes in medical defense.

And to **Phil Zuber**, who, as of this writing, is officially - really and truly - stepping out of his legal practice and law firm, Sasscer, Clagget and Bucher at the end of 2023. He worked at this firm, which is the oldest law firm in Prince George's County, for close to 50 years defending malpractice cases. Phil will continue as a legal advisor to the Bryn Athyn Academy for 1 more year. He and wife **Janna** are looking forward to taking advantage of living beside the beautiful Quiet Waters Park, being hands-on grands to those close by, traveling and having an open canvas for them to paint together.

### **Condolences:**

We are saddened to note that our former Pastor, the **Rev. Daniel Heinrichs**, passed away in December. Dan, who was grandfather of **Carina Heinrichs**, was an enthusiastic and much-loved leader of our Society for many years before moving off to the sunny confines of the Boynton Beach Society in Florida. His tenure here enabled the WNCS to tutor a number of his children, including our present Bishop Brad Heinrichs, for a few years. Dan served as Pastor in many Church Societies in his long career and will be missed.

Our condolences also go out to **Phil and Janna (Doering) Zuber** and the Zuber and Doering families on the loss of **Charles ("Chuck") Doering**, Janna's nephew, who passed away in December after a long illness. Chuck attended WNCS for many years and later lived in this area before moving to Florida.

### **Other News:**

You might have noticed some 1 – 4<sup>th</sup> graders doing some rhythmic hopping around recently. Don't be surprised, for they are just practicing a Philippines folk dance designed to protect rice plants. You will notice that there are no Tinikling birds around eating rice, so their dancing seems to be effective. Thanks, kids!



**Also:**

We noticed that an Urgent Care facility recently opened nearby, in the Safeway shopping mall next to the gas station. We hope that nobody needs to use it, but close might be good.

**And Finally, Words for the New Year:**

A new year brings new opportunities to learn about and to do the things that can lead to a better life. But, as Hobbes (see above) wisely observed, “The problem with new experiences is that they are rarely the ones you choose.” So, take care. And make good news for the next Echo.

