

May 2025

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

~~~~~

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

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

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)

**Donate, go to:** <https://giving.myamplify.io/app/giving/ncs-2818>

## From the Pastor

It's that magical time of year again: the birds are singing, the sun is shining, and somewhere out there, a grown man is staring into the depths of a Restaurant Depot meat locker like it's about to reveal the secrets of the universe.

Yes, barbecue season is here. (And yes, this is yet another article by your pastor about barbecue. You knew what you were getting when you called me, so it's too late to complain now.)

This is the season when I drag my faithful old Weber Smokey Mountain out of semi-retirement—my beloved, barrel-shaped companion that looks like R2-D2's bigger, more poorly maintained cousin. Together, we embark on a noble quest: to transform briskets, ribs, and pork butts into something worthy of communal praise. Or at least worthy of second helpings.

If you've never smoked meat, let me explain it's mostly waiting. There's trimming and rubbing and heating and spritzing, but 90% of the job is just watching numbers slowly change while pretending you're doing something complicated. From the outside, it looks like I'm just standing around drinking espresso in my backyard at 4:00 a.m., because I am.

But inside, I'm wrestling with deep questions like, "Is it time to wrap?" and "Why does everyone think barbecue is about hickory or mesquite when white oak is the true secret of central Texas barbecue?" and "Why am I up at four in the morning yet again?"

Because food—  
especially shared  
food—does  
something holy.  
It brings people  
together.

Why go through all this trouble? Because food—especially shared food—does something holy. It brings people together. It opens conversations. It comforts. It builds community in the simplest, most primal way: here, eat this, I made it for you. We all need to eat, so when we help one another in this potentially mundane task, it elevates the experience to something more. Especially if you've got a really good bark on the meat.

That's why I'm excited about our upcoming Community Barbecue on May 3rd—a chance for school parents, alumni, church members, and neighbors to hang out, laugh, eat, and maybe argue about which sauce is best. (The technically correct answer is "good barbecue doesn't need sauce", but I will admit I do enjoy it anyway.)

And yes, I'll be smoking some meat. Ya'll are encouraged to bring some food as well, but you can come knowing that I (and also the amazing Candy, whose food is always a delight) will be providing smoked meats, and others will bring burgers and dogs.

Then, on June 19th, we'll celebrate New Church Day the way we did last year. But this year you're invited to enjoy smoked meat with another barbecue on June 19<sup>th</sup> – (this time with the addition of a Blood dDrive). Because if the founding of a new spiritual era isn't a reason to fire up the pit, I don't know what is and then a special New Church Day service on Sunday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>.



So come join us. Bring your appetite, your folding chair, and your best “mmm” noises. The smoke will rise, the meat will rest, and the community will feast.

Because in a world that's often too fast and too frantic, slowing down for food and fellowship might just be one of the most spiritual things we can do.

Rev. Mac “Salt and Pepper Are All the Rub a Brisket Needs” Frazier, Pitmaster (also Pastor)  
Washington New Church, 2025.04.25

## From the Principal

We have about a month more of school! By the time of publication, Grades 5-8 will have performed the “Ballad of the Bremen Band”, Erin and team will have put on the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Plant Sale, and we are looking forward to the May 3<sup>rd</sup>, BBQ, which brings together current and past school families, church members, volleyball players and random cousins visiting from Djibouti. All are welcome, please come out with a folding chair and some food or drink to share.

*Marketing Progress.* We have enjoyed a steady flow of visits to our website, school tours and a few applications this spring. It is

early yet to assess final results, but it is encouraging to have this level of interest in the spring (rather than late summer when the teachers are preparing their classrooms).

We have enjoyed the support of at least 13 marketing captains, each giving focused attention to different parts of the WNCS marketing puzzle. I would like to thank all these helpers for increasing community awareness of WNCS!

**Social Media.** You can read the report from the social media team in this Echo, written by John Croft. I would like to also encourage you to consider sponsoring a month of online advertising (\$25-\$100/month) which will allow us to run ads throughout the year to bring new awareness to our school. Not only do these ads generate tours, but the increased traffic to our website also helps it to perform better in searches for local schools.

**Signage.** Bonnie Cowley has led the way on refreshed signage (thanks also to Safeware's continued financial and professional support on sign production). We have new street banners for the Enterprise/Chantilly intersection, and we have signs ordered to replace our faded driveway sign and to guide visitors down Chantilly Lane.

**Core Brand statements and "Elevator Pitch."** Lincoln Smith collaborated with teachers to cultivate and practice our short, clear and compelling storytelling about what WNCS has to offer.

**Programs and Events.** Brenna Sweeney and Anne Ball have worked on tracking and organizing a) the community events that WNCS hosts and b) that are held locally where WNCS can have a presence. As a recent example, Janine Smith hosted a very popular school Ping Pong Tournament.

**Pamphlet and Postcard distribution.** Sharon Kunkle, Gillian Frazier and Michael Ferrell have done hero's work knocking on the doors of local childcare and related businesses. They are making personal contact, sharing postcards and keeping notes about where we should make a habit of returning.

**Website Development.** Ariel Martin continues to refine and improve the new school website launched by Kim Maxwell and

Bonnie Cowley, while Jana Sprinkle is preparing for a similar refresh and move to the new platform for our Church website.

There are further helpers not named above, and the opportunity for more. Our goal is to keep deliberate, forward motion and to develop and improve systems as we go.

As much as possible, we want to build a community effort, where there are light and interesting ways for anyone to be involved. For example, we welcome community members helping at our WNCS table at **Bowie Fest on June 7**. Let me know if you would like to be involved! [Brian.smith@washnewchurch.org](mailto:Brian.smith@washnewchurch.org); 301 850 3029

### **Theta Alpha Guild Spring Meeting and Elections!**

Come join us for the final TAG meeting of the year. We will vote on our Bylaws revisions, work on plans for our 2025-26 season and elect the officers who will lead us in those uses.

We look forward to seeing you at 7:30 on Monday, May 12!

Lauralyn & Sharon - TAG co-presidents 2024/25

### **JACOB'S CREEK FAMILY RETREAT**

This year's Jacob's Creek Family Retreat will be held July 24-27, 2025, in Western Pennsylvania with the theme: Faith – An Internal Acknowledgment of Truth.



Retreat Pastor, the Rev. Matthew L. Genzlinger

*More details on the lobby bulletin*

*board or contact:*

[matthewgenzlinger@gmail.com](mailto:matthewgenzlinger@gmail.com)

[james.g.uber@gmail.com](mailto:james.g.uber@gmail.com)

[Julie.Uber@gmail.com](mailto:Julie.Uber@gmail.com)

## Using Social Media to Increase Community Awareness of WNCs *By John Croft*

Starting in March, Jana Sprinkle organized a small group of church volunteers to develop and launch a social media campaign on the Instagram platform to make the presence and unique offerings of our school known to the surrounding communities. The ultimate goal of the campaign is to increase enrollment at the school. The Instagram effort is part of a broader marketing plan that includes upgrades to the WNCs website and postings to Facebook, YouTube and other community outreach media, including NextDoor. Currently we have 516 followers on Facebook, and teachers Ariel Martin and Erin Stillman post pictures or other media nearly every school day. This new effort is meant to boost our presence on Instagram, where we currently have only eight followers. These efforts are supported by the WNCs teachers who regularly upload pictures from their classrooms. As a side note, if you are a social media user, please follow the WNCs page at “Washington New Church School” on Facebook and on Instagram at “wncschool.”



Jana recruited Anders Croft, John Croft and Ariel Martin as members of the Instagram subcommittee, and we held weekly meetings in March and April to develop the “Insta” campaign in coordination with school principal Brian Smith. We developed an Instagram Communications Plan that includes our goals and standard operating procedures for the way we will post information. The campaign includes sending the daily Facebook postings to Instagram as well and creating monthly paid advertisements that will send messages to all Facebook and Instagram users in a selected geographic area and age group.

WNCs in March created an advertisement for Facebook that featured a whole-school picture and a brief description of who we are. The focus was to increase visits to the WNCs website. The ad ran for one week (March 20-27) and generated 9,221 views and 251 visits to our website from Facebook users in an eight-mile radius of WNCs ranging in age from 24 to 65+. The cost for the campaign was \$98, paid for by the school and the church.

# Loss of Community

By Bonnie Cowley

I have been reading about how we in the United States are losing community. With all the opportunities we have to communicate in this digital age it does not seem to help us have community. From my experience as the church and school secretary I find that even when I try to communicate with people by many different platforms, much of what I communicate falls flat or does not get through at all. We are all bombarded with digital communications that consist of shorter and shorter messages in order that some information may get through the massive background of noise. Short statements have less and less information and even emojis are so common now the beautiful message of a heart or smiley face have lost their meaning. A thumbs up only means you read the message... not what you really think (and you would even have to search to find out whose thumb it is.)

This loss of community makes me incredibly sad. To quote one the articles I read: “This loss of community has serious implications. More specifically, the erosion of social capital—a natural byproduct of communities—has weakened some of America’s oldest civic organizations, like the church, political parties, and community groups of all types.” – *Chayenne Polimedio*

But all is not lost, because I am not the only one seeking meaningful community. Today (April 26<sup>th</sup>) at the Washington New Church and School, community (with a capital C) was on display at our annual Plant Sale!

The day began with an overcast sky, light drizzle and the ever-present threat of a thunderstorm that could wash out our event. The church & school members who were running the sale arrived early to set up canopies, post signs and labels, organize the food and fire up the grill. Despite the dismal forecast the spirit of optimism was palpable and the tables of lovingly grown vegetables and plants glistened with the light rain, looking their greenest, and flowers their boldest.

I wish I could have recorded the various conversations between all the people working at the cashier table, the concession stand, or at the plant tables... lots of sharing & laughter that people rarely make time to have. Their children came to help too... carrying plants, putting up signs, offering umbrellas and watching the littler ones.



Then the shoppers arrived. They weren't just shoppers but our neighbors, many in no hurry to leave. Visiting with each other, visiting with us. This included old friends who once had children in our school. Instead of the small 3<sup>rd</sup> grader that was with his mom, there stood a 6-foot boy now in high school. I also overheard someone say, "Your daughter is away at college? I remember when she was in 1<sup>st</sup> grade!"

It is hard to truly express the sphere of friendliness, helpfulness, cheerfulness and COMMUNITY!

If you missed the Plant Sale and long for a little community... then you won't want to miss our **Annual Community Church and School BBQ – Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> at 4:00pm** (just bring a folding chair and a favorite dish to share and come experience community!



## **May Your News Be Good:**

“Do not put off till tomorrow what can be put off till the day after tomorrow just as well.” (Mark Twain) Advice for a chilly, rainy day in April? But then the grass grew two more inches, and mowing became harder, and that turned out to be bad advice. So, have we learned our lesson? Probably not, and procrastination rules – just in time for May, when a lounge chair in the afternoon sunshine is a perfect antidote to actually doing stuff we’d rather not do. The last frost is gone, the gardens are mulched, and it is time to start planning summer vacations (which we should have done two months ago).

## **Good Stuff:**

The annual Spring work party at the church started off with a mixed message: threatening rain enhanced by a marvelous pancake breakfast (accompanied by eggs and sausages and endless coffee). But by the time food and conversation was done the weather had decided to cooperate, and the outdoor work began, with all kinds of good stuff getting done to gardens and other needy components. Lots of people and kids made for a cheerful and productive morning. Thanks, everybody!

## **Did You Notice?**

“T’was the 18<sup>th</sup> of April in ’75; Hardly a man is still alive who remembers that famous day and year, And the midnight ride of Paul Revere.” Mr. Longfellow remembered. Did you? It has been 250 years since the start of the American revolution, but that seems to be fading from our memories – not even one firework. Be of good cheer, though – there will be more 250<sup>th</sup> anniversaries to come, and those will produce fireworks.

## **Happy Easter:**

We hope you all had an enjoyable Easter week. For the kids the joy seemed to peak in the hunting party after church, with eggs galore hidden around the church property offering prizes for the sharp of eye and quickness of feet. Thank you, Derek & Hanna Hyatt! The less spry found their joy in the stimulating Easter service that preceded the gathering of earthly prizes.

## **Welcome:**

To Diana Hyatt, who has returned from her sojourn in Denver to take up residence in our town... and to the many visitors who arrived in time to partake of Easter festivities.

## **Admission:**



The News notes editor and spouse admit that at this writing they are enjoying a week of R&R at a small cabin in the woods at Deep Creek Lake, with the (un?) fortunate result of a shortened version of this edition of said

notes. In order to fill some space, the editorial “we” will speculate about what might have happened while we were gone. For example, there would be the annual Plant Sale, hosted by the Washington New Church from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 26th, in the church parking lot. This is not only a useful fund raiser for the church and school but is also a great opportunity to get together and interact with neighbors. We trust this was the usual success and wish we had been there. In addition, there would have been the long-awaited but postponed school play, held at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, and put on by the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. We hope you all enjoyed it!

## **Don’t Forget:**

Many things will be happening in May, so be sure to attend so there will be even more news in our future. See you at the May 3<sup>rd</sup> BBQ!

**Mark Your Calendars**  
**June 19<sup>th</sup> Blood Drive • 10am – 4pm**



### *May Anniversaries*

*“Conjugal love is a spiritual love particular to human beings because they are born to become spiritual.”*

*~ Emanuel Swedenborg, CL 48*



*May 9<sup>th</sup> ~ James & (Missy) Cooper ~ 27 yrs.*

*May 20<sup>th</sup> Craig & Laura Cooper ~ 19 yr.*

*May 22<sup>nd</sup> ~ Alan & Ranata Trimble ~ 21yrs.*

*May 22<sup>nd</sup> ~ Stewart & Patti Smith ~ 49 yrs.*

