March 2026

ECHO

Newsletter of the
Washington Church of the New Jerusalem

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From the Pastor

If you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday. And the LORD will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a
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watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail. And your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to dwell in. (Isaiah 58:10-12)

A church can quietly start believing its main job is to keep itself going, pay the bills, maintain the building, preserve the traditions, run Sunday smoothly. None of that is wrong. But if that becomes the center, we end up protecting the shell while forgetting the life inside it.

The real question is simpler, and more demanding: Are we becoming a place where the Lord's kingdom actually takes shape in human lives?

One way to see the answer is to look at what people are starving for—not on the surface, but underneath. In a world that's more connected than ever, people feel isolated. In a world full of information, people feel confused. In a world full of options, people feel aimless. Beneath a thousand different stories, hunger often comes down to three spiritual needs:

> *Are we becoming a place where the Lord's kingdom actually takes shape in human lives?*

Connection

People don't just need to be around other people. They need to belong. To be known. To have someone notice if they're missing. To have relationships that carry weight—relationships where you can be honest, where you can be helped, and where you can help.

Loneliness is not only a social problem; it's a spiritual one. When a person is cut off, it gets harder to hope, harder to repent, harder to keep going. And the enemy of real community isn't usually outright hostility, it's polite distance. We can be friendly without being connected.

So, one of the first church questions is: Are we building a community where love can actually land? Not just "we're nice people,"

but real connection: shared life, shared burdens, shared joy, shared service.

Meaning

Connection alone isn't enough. A tight-knit group can still drift into confusion. People need light for the mind—truth that helps them make sense of life, of the Lord, of themselves.

We live in an age that is loud and persuasive without being wise. It's easy to be flooded with opinions, anxieties, and half-truths and you still feel like you don't know what's real, what's good, or what kind of person you're becoming.

The church has something distinctive to offer here—but only if we offer it clearly: the Word, and the way the Lord uses it to teach, to expose what's false, to steady what's shaky, to call us to repentance without crushing us, and to give us a path forward.

So, another church question is: Are we actually giving people light—truth that helps them see life more clearly? Not just inspiration, not just "a good message," but real spiritual understanding that can shape daily life.

Purpose

And then there's purpose: the deep need to be useful. Not merely busy. Not merely entertained. Not merely comfortable. Useful.

Most people discover sooner or later that you can fill your life with pleasant things and still feel hollow. Comfort has its place. Rest has its place. But a life that never moves beyond consuming pleasant experiences starts to feel thin.

The heavenly doctrines describe a divine pattern: love, wisdom, and use. Love is the warmth that connects. Wisdom is the light that shows what's true. Use is where love and wisdom become real in action—something done for the sake of others and for the sake of the Lord's kingdom.

So, a church should be a place where usefulness isn't reserved for the "usual few," and where serving isn't framed as guilt or pressure, but as life—because it is life.

That leads to a very practical question: Are we giving people real ways to be useful that fit their gifts, their season of life, and their capacity? If someone can't find a meaningful place to contribute, they'll eventually feel like a consumer. Maybe a grateful consumer—but still a consumer. And that doesn't satisfy for long.

The Goal of Our Church

Here's the point: these three need to hang together.

Connection without meaning becomes shallow. Meaning without purpose becomes sterile. Purpose without connection becomes lonely duty. But when love, wisdom, and use start working together, something begins to feel like the Lord's kingdom: warmth, light, and life.

Isaiah paints the picture in a way that still startles me. When the Lord's people live in a way that actually lifts burdens and brings help, then light rises in darkness. Then a community becomes like a watered garden—alive, nourishing, resilient. That's not the image of a club protecting its comforts. That's a living church.

And the encouraging part is this does not require us to be large, wealthy, trendy, or impressive.

It requires us to be intentional. Measuring success the right way. To ask, regularly and honestly: Are people finding connection here? Are they finding meaning here? Are they finding purpose here?

The hopeful truth is that we're not being asked to generate this life out of our own energy. The Lord is the source. Our part is to turn toward Him, keep learning from His Word, and keep choosing uses that express love.

If we do that—steadily, humbly, together—the Lord will do what He always does: bring light into obscurity, bring life into dry places, and grow something real right where we are.

Rev. Glenn "Mac" Frazier, Pastor
Washington New Church, 2026.02.27

From the Board of Trustees:

The Board met for its regular monthly meeting on February 10. Bill Kunkle and Eric Genzlinger attended to discuss their report on the building and facility maintenance activities, summarizing extensive renovation and repair work that they have accomplished, and informing the Board about upcoming needed repairs and potential costs. Future discussions on funding for capital replacement and maintenance will continue. The Board is deeply grateful for the extensive time and attention that Bill and Eric are contributing toward maintaining our facilities.

The principal discussed ongoing staffing matters for the upcoming school year. George Cooper provided a brief report on Investments, noting that we have done well in 2025.

The Board began the process of establishing a Nominating Committee to seek nominees for Board of Trustees and School Board positions for the next year. If you are interested in serving on one of these Boards, please speak to the Pastor. The next meeting will be joint with the School Board on March 3, 2026.

Respectfully,

Sharon Cooper ~ Secretary, WCNJ, Inc.

Acton Park Corporation Meeting

Notice is hereby formally given that the Annual Meeting of the Acton Park Corporation will take place on **Sunday, March 22nd, 2026, at 12:30 pm** in the meeting room of the Washington New Church. If you are a member of the Corporation, please attend. If you are not a member of the AP Corporation, please sign up by letting our Secretary, Andrew Cooper, know you want to join.

We need to elect three members to the corporation. We will update on the Solar Farm. We will hear the good news about our budget due largely to the rental of property to the solar farm. We hope to hear from the Corporation about the future of Acton Park. The proposed agenda is as follows:

Agenda

1. Open Meeting
    a. Quorum - Andrew Cooper
2. Approval of the Minutes of the last Annual Meeting - Andrew Cooper
3. Treasurer's Report - Stephen Ball
4. Report of the nominating committee - James Roscoe
    a. Vote for the Nominees
    b. James Roscoe three-year term
    c. Bonnie Cowley three-year term
    d. Gretchen Sprinkle three-year term
5. President's Report, including the Solar Farm update - James Roscoe
6. Plan for the future of Acton Park - David Radcliffe
7. Close of meeting - James Roscoe
8. Brief meeting of the newly elected Acton Park Board to elect officers and set next meeting.

James Roscoe, President Acton Park Board of Directors.

A Truly Musical Opportunity: I will be teaching the Hallelujah Chorus and one other piece to a volunteer choir to perform on Easter Sunday (Apr 5th).

Would you like to join? We will practice Sunday afternoons starting this Sunday (Mar 1st). I could especially use more tenors and basses! Email me (ariel.genzlingermartin@gmail.com) to sign up by Thursday, Mar 6th, and invite anyone else you can think of!

~ Ariel Martin

Church & School Lost and Found

Personal items get left in the pews, on the tables and benches, from school and church.

Who's walking around without their glasses and keys?

The lost and found is usually posted on the bulletin board in the Lobby.

Plant Sale – Saturday, April 25th.

Mark April 25th on your calendar and plan to attend. Be ready to purchase many of your spring garden favorites – vegetables, houseplants and landscape plants! Don't miss the opportunity to be part of a fun, beneficial, community event.

Now is the time to plan for your spring garden, and to sign-up to help make this the best Plant Sale ever!

Special Ordering: Would you like some hosta? Do you see a hanging basket of impatiens in your future? Let us know if you would like us to get something specific for you. We have access to special prices at a couple of nurseries. This year we will be offering seeds for you to direct plant as well. You can request a packet of 15 bean seeds for example.

Volunteer: All sorts of jobs are needed:

Take-home work
Do now projects
Right before the sale
On sale day

Also please keep in mind that this is a great way for high school students to get their volunteer hours. The more people that sign up, the more fun it is for everyone, and the less work.

Please contact Bonnie or Erin or stop through the front office and look at the signup sheet.

Donate Matching Funds: It is a year when we can't ask for matching money, so if the playground project is a special favorite of yours, consider offering some matching money.

For questions, more information or to sign up to help contact Bonnie or Erin

“Souper” Sundays Winter of 2025/2026

I would like to thank everyone for making this season’s “Souper” Sundays an enormous success. I especially want to thank the many makers and bakers who come through every “Souper” Sunday for delicious soup and bread. But I also need to thank the buyers, I hope you enjoyed your soup and bread!

Fall of 2025 – brought in $636.

Winter of 2026 – brought in $634.

For a total of.....**$1270**

Which is split, half for TAG and half for WCNJ = $635 each!

Do I need to bring anything? Yes – 2 choices: Bring a dish to enter in the contest we will all share and judge <u>or</u> just bring something to share (food and/or drink).

Are there prizes? *Maybe*, mostly bragging rights!

News it is:

As February opened "Snowcrete" still ruled, with the temperature remaining below freezing for days, and windchills hanging around single digits or below. The icy crust remained at 4 inches, and it was almost impossible to break through (except when you weren't expecting it), much less remove. It was bright and shiny to look at, but enough is enough, as in 17 days in a row of below-average temperatures. It was so bad that the school kids started building an igloo ... just in case it was needed.

Celebrations:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed with certain unalienable Rights…." While we were contemplating the unusual weather pattern in February, Presidents' Day sort of slipped by, so this is a belated reminder of why we shouldn't forget it. When was the last time you read the Declaration of Independence? Try it. You might like it.

Visitation:

We welcomed **Rev. Erik Buss** for a weekend of meetings, and although those went along normally, somehow things went a bit awry, and we didn't get to hear from him on Sunday. It turns out that back spasms interrupt the flow of thoughts, and Rev. Buss found it necessary to give us a rain check for that part of his visit. ("Wait 'til next time" seemed to be the promise.) He did get a chance to meet with members of the Board of Trustees and the Pastor's Council, as well as with our resident Pastors, which was a good thing and will hold us over for a year.

Other Items:

Three weeks after the advent of Snowcrete it was almost all gone; then we were visited by another bunch of snow. But this one was more like what we usually get, managing only a meager inch or so – just enough to close the schools – so we survived that one. No igloos needed, but we are now ready for garden time.

This has been a bad winter for fire pit meetings. But we can begin to think those will soon return.

Phil and Janna Zuber did a whirlwind trip to Petaluma CA, which is in the beautiful Napa Valley area. They were hoping to catch one last visit with Janna's sister **Karen** and husband **Dr. Stephen DeLue**, both of whom have been battling cancer. Alas, Steve passed peacefully away the night before they arrived. But they were able to partake in a lovely in home service for family and friends, conducted by Steve's rabbi and joined by Dr. **Devin Zuber**, an ordained minister in the Convention church. Many good stories and memories were shared, and lots of good sister time for Janna and Karen.

The **Kunkles** enjoyed a mid-winter break, traveling to Captiva Island, Florida in February to celebrate Bill's cousin's 25th wedding anniversary. They report that 70 degrees and sunny still beats 10 degrees and sunny!

Rumor has it that although the Solar Farm is still in the about-to-happen stage, that stage is getting shorter, with a possible construction start in March. Seeing is believing.

School News:

The fabled Ping Pong tournament is occurring as we speak, so the results are not available. Hence the short News Notes. Wait 'til next time for results.

March ANC Summer Camp: July 6-11, in Bryn Athyn, PA

March Anniversaries

"It is instinctive in a wife's love to unite her husband's will to her own, for in this way a wife becomes one who belongs to her husband, and the husband one who belongs to his wife. Thus, the two become one person."
Emanuel Swedenborg – CL 196

*Mar. 12th ~ **Bill & Dorothy Radcliffe** ~ 66 yrs.*

*Mar. 15th ~ **John & Jean Allen** ~ 57 yrs.*

*Mar. 30th ~ **Aaron & Eva Smith** ~ 30 yrs.*

Work Party Sat. March 21st.
8:00am - Pancake Breakfast
Accompanied children welcome.

9:00am – Lots of work!
All abilities Fix-it, cleaning, filter replacement, etc.
Community work & fun!