

Summer 2009

# ECHO

Newsletter of the  
Washington Church of the New Jerusalem

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Dear Friends,

As your incoming pastor I'd like first of all to thank you again for your invitation to serve here, for your warm welcome, and for all the excellent communication so far in preparation for our move. Ginny and I will leave Dawson Creek on July 14<sup>th</sup> and arrive to unload our moving van on Friday, July 24<sup>th</sup>. I expect to preach for you on Sunday, July 26<sup>th</sup> and again on the middle three Sundays of August

Now there's an interesting word – preach. It's often used in a critical or disparaging sense, and the negative connotations of the word are

such that many modern ministers avoid it as much as possible, preferring to “deliver a message” rather than “preach a sermon.” But its roots are really quite benign; it simply means to proclaim or declare. In fact the Writings for the New Church include two Latin words that are translated “preach,” and the one most commonly used is based on the term for an assembly of people or a public meeting, *before which someone speaks*.

I like preaching, and I hope you can enjoy listening to someone preach, especially when the message being delivered is from the Word. But really, what’s the point? Why would you come and listen to me or anyone else “preach” when you can go to the Word for yourselves and learn all that you need to know in order to live well and prepare for heaven?

One answer is painfully simple: I get paid to study the Word and you don’t. Therefore I have an advantage (one that YOU provide for me) in that I am specially trained and can take more time than you can, as needed, to consider the context of the teachings, their meaning, the implications, and so on. In that respect I’m no different than a plumber or an architect: I’m a specialist. And like most specialists I have no authority to tell you what to do, *but I can tell you what the code requires*. Besides, if you didn’t come to church would you really spend that time reading the Word instead?

Which brings me to the main point. “It is a law of the Divine Providence that a person should be led and taught by the Lord from heaven through the Word, *and through doctrine and preaching* from the Word...” (DP 154 & 172). The preaching does not detract from your personal encounter with the Lord, but enhances it, provided it is from the Word. Then again, there are 5 distinct things that the Lord tells us we gain from the exercise of formal worship:

1. internal things are aroused, or stimulated
2. that natural discipline makes us receptive of internal things
3. we learn, not just facts but concepts of truth from the Word
4. we are thus prepared to receive celestial things, and
5. states of holiness are conferred on us – whether we know it or not! (AC 1618).

We often hear these days that “a sermon shouldn’t be a class.” Fair enough. It should inspire and motivate a person to live according to the Word. But here’s something else to think about. A sermon, if it is done well, can serve to enhance our personal reading and reflection by

pointing out things we might not have noticed, which in turn can help us see new things *for ourselves*, enriching our whole experience of life and our sense of the Lord's intimate presence.

These are just some of the things I hope to be able to offer you in the months and years to come. In addition I have a raft of dreams and ideas about things we could do together for our mutual spiritual growth and for our usefulness to the community around Acton Park. Mindful also of my own need to keep learning and growing I am looking forward to working with all of you in the Washington New Church Society, to make the most of YOUR insights and talents as we work toward the growth of this congregation in "the way, the truth and the life."

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Gladish". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

New e-mail addresses for Mike & Ginny Gladish, effective immediately:

Personal: [mdgladish@gmail.com](mailto:mdgladish@gmail.com)  
[ginnygladish@gmail.com](mailto:ginnygladish@gmail.com)

Pastoral: [mike.gladish@washnewchurch.org](mailto:mike.gladish@washnewchurch.org)

### **Gentlemen of the WCNJ,**

Something I have often thought would be stimulating and fun is a book study group for men, in which we take secular or non-New Church books on a variety of themes, and read and discuss them in the light of the New Church. Specifically I am thinking of a breakfast meeting at a local restaurant early Saturday morning, or alternatively some sort of "continental breakfast" at the church on Saturday or Sunday before services.

I would be interested to hear from any men of the congregation, from high school age and up, who might be interested in trying this, beginning sometime in September. The idea is that we would read on our own between (biweekly?) meetings and discuss when we get together. Members would take turns presenting sections of reading to the others.

Recently I received notice from Amazon of a new book that presents a rational argument for God -- this no doubt in response to the many books of the last few years trashing the idea of God and religion. The book is called "The reason for God," by Timothy Keller, and from the reviews on Amazon it looks pretty interesting and discussible. But there are lots of others we could

consider, touching on technology, economics, history or philosophy, just to suggest a few themes.

Is anybody game to try this? E-mail me at [mdgladish@gmail.com](mailto:mdgladish@gmail.com) or corner me when we arrive in Mitchellville on the 24th. ~ Mike Gladish ~

### **From the Assistant**

Summer vacation has finally arrived! My hope is that everyone has opportunity to share more time with family and friends. Perhaps traveling is on the agenda. Or maybe relaxing at home and reading a good book appeals to some of us. Whatever activity helps you rejuvenate, I hope that you are thoroughly refreshed.

It is important to our physical well being to engage in fun activities. Parts of the hierarchy of humans needs identified by psychologists and social scientists include food, clothing, and shelter. Indeed, these provide for the maintenance of the human body. But the Heavenly Doctrines say that there are “forms of use for sustaining the body relate [also] to its... recreation and enjoyment” (DLW 331). We all need this time of summer vacation so that our bodies can become recharged.

While recreation and enjoyment sustains the body, the Heavenly Doctrines also speak in terms of “useful diversions.” They are described as things like “social interaction with others, banquets, feasts, entertainments” that are “useful diversions for the recreation of the mind” (Charity 181). Summer vacation provides opportunities for many such things. But the important thing is how these diversions facilitate the salvation of our souls.

“These forms of use can be described in their range and scope in the same terms as forms of use to the body, as for example, in terms of nourishment, clothing, lodging, recreation and enjoyment, protection, and the preservation of condition, provided one applies them to the soul - its nourishment to goods of love, its clothing to truths of wisdom, its lodging to heaven, its recreation and enjoyment to felicity of life and heavenly joy, its protection to evils assailing, and the preservation of its condition to eternal life” (DLW 333).

The nourishment of our body is important so long as we realize its correspondence to the nourishment of our soul with the Lord’s goods and truths. Adequate shelter to protect our bodies is essential to human survival. Yet we must keep in mind that our real home is the Lord’s heavenly kingdom. Summer vacation is useful but the delights of vacation can serve a use to help us appreciate the joys of heaven. Finally, summer vacation with all its activities of recreation serves a use of helping us recharge so that eventually we can return to our uses, revived and ready to continue our march forward.

As we enjoy our vacations, I would encourage each and every one of us to keep the Lord at the center of all that we do. Useful diversions serve to facilitate the salvation of our souls. As long as we keep all things in proper perspective we can continue serving the Lord and our neighbors. When we are physically and mentally rested we make ourselves more open to allow the Lord to nurture our souls.

### **From the School**

School's out for summer, but there's a lot going on at WNCS. The Kindergarten expansion is going forward with actual construction starting in the near future. We still have openings for new Junior K and Kindergarten students (4 & 5 year-olds) so pick up some fliers from the secretary's office and talk to your friends while sitting by the pool.

Reports and informational mailings will be coming to parents during the summer months. We are grateful for all the support we received from so many throughout the last year. Thank you all so much! Next year... WNCS's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!

### **Letter from the Pastor of the Kiisi Kenya Society and School:**

(This year WNCS held a read-a-thon which raised funds to purchase Bibles for our sister school in Kenya. Several hundred dollars were raised allowing us to purchase one Swahili Bible which we sent to them with the rest of the funds to use at their discretion. Her is an e-mail from Kenya)

*Dear Rev. Michael Ferrell, teachers, and school children,*

*It is really amazing to have this nice morning Kenyan time to say hello to you all from here in Kisii Kenya. I hope that this e-mail finds you all doing fine there at the Washington Church of the New Jerusalem and the Washington New Church School.*

*Kindly pass our humble greetings and thanks to all those who helped you to get us a Kiswahili Bible which I received from the post office yesterday evening. It is really what we all wanted to help us continue to spread the Lord's Divine Word to many in our Kiswahili language here, as this is the main language for us to reach many tribes here in Kisii Kenya, and even to Tanzania, and Uganda where we have our New Church friends under my leadership.*

*I really understand that the main theme of this year 2009, has been the Lord's Divine Word, which also made you to think of the New Church here in Kisii Kenya. The Lord has got a good purpose for you.*

*Really this is very special for the RIOUNDE NEW CHURCH SCHOOL, because the Lord's divine Word will remain in many*

*people, children, and even to all teachers here in Kisii Kenya. This is because this Word will remain in peoples minds, heart and it will lead many souls to eternal life.*

*It is very much true that the Lord's Divine Word will make us all join our hearts together, day after day.*

*We have received the special gift that you have sent to us here and we will be using this gift always during our children's service, here at our school every Friday as from 8:00 am to 9:35 am.*

*With love from, New Church School children, teachers, orphans, and my family members.*

*Rev. Khalid Obiri Rangi*

### **Announcements**

**Women's Weekend Retreat** – scheduled for September 26, 27, and 28<sup>th</sup>, at the Brock/Simons house on Lake Fairview, PA. Theme: "Behold I make all things new!" Speaker TBA. Escape for a weekend with church friends from Bryn Athyn, Kempton, Boston, and home. Registration is limited. Deadline: September 12<sup>th</sup>. Cost: \$30 and a food contribution. Contact Heather Radcliffe, Wytan Simons, or Deena Odhner for more information.

**Apartment available in Acton Park** - this summer, as soon as July. One bedroom, laundry, two separate entrances, off street parking, garden vegetable plot free compost. Asking \$950 month. Call the Simonses 301-464-8653.

**Laurel Family Camps** warmly invite campers of all ages to enjoy a week of community and spiritual growth. Our theme this year is "Faith and Experience," with presentations by New Church ministers and lay people, spiritual growth groups, programs for teens and children, morning worship and vespers, rustic woodland setting. **Week 1:** July 26<sup>th</sup> to August 1<sup>st</sup>. **Week 2:** August 2<sup>nd</sup> to August 8<sup>th</sup>. For more information visit [www.laurelcamp.org](http://www.laurelcamp.org)

**Jacob's Creek Family Camp: \*\*July 30- August 2\*\*** Theme: Prayer Ministers: Brad Heinrichs, Stephen Cole, Matthew Genzlinger, Dan Heinrichs. Comfortable accommodations in the Laurel Mountains of western Pennsylvania. Enjoy a spiritual retreat with all ages. Registration materials at: [www.geocities.com/jcfamilycamp/index.html](http://www.geocities.com/jcfamilycamp/index.html). Or contact Blake and Paul Messman 610-954-5173, bpmessman@verizon.net

### **WNCS Commencement 2009**

*(Every year one of our parents of the eighth grade graduates talks to us at commencement. The following is a transcript of the speech given by Richard*

*Glenn's Father, David. Following this speech are transcripts of our tenth grade graduates speeches.)*

### **David Glenn's Speech**

Good morning students, faculty, friends, and especially the graduates of the eighth and tenth grades and their proud families,

A speaker often begins by telling a story. But today I want to talk to you about stories. Have you ever thought how essential stories are to our lives. Many enjoy reading fiction, stories about imaginary characters or make-believe places. Others like to read histories about various nations and peoples, still others prefer biographies on notable figures, political leaders, scientists, or perhaps their favorite sports star. Of course there are many other forms besides reading which depend heavily on stories: television shows, movies, plays (such as the wonderful production of *Where's Charley*, which the school put on a couple of nights ago), and even many of the video and computer games people play, or the songs they listen to or sing. The current events we follow, whether in the newspaper, on television, radio or the Internet, and even our day-to-day conversations rely on stories. Stories give us pleasure, and they instruct us about our world and ourselves.

Now all of you students have heard, read, and even written stories. Your teachers and your parents have worked with you to help you learn how to write a successful story. More than that, they have striven to help shape the story of your lives. For, indeed, each of our lives is a story. To create a piece of fiction, or write an informative historical study, a person must be taught the necessary knowledges and skills, and then practice them. The same is true about our lives. But how do we know how to make our life story a success? Where do we acquire those knowledges?

The answers to those questions are to be found in a special set of stories we have yet to discuss--the most important stories given to mankind. These are, of course, the stories of the Word. The Lord, in His wisdom, chose stories to be the vehicle to teach us His truths, truths about Himself, His creation, His heavenly kingdom, and the way of life that will lead us to that kingdom. The stories in the Word have the power to inspire and enlighten us, to challenge our selfish desires and unkind thoughts, to comfort us and bring us joy, and to cause us to reflect on where we are, and where we want to be. And like an everlasting fountain of water, we can return to them time and again to be refreshed. Consider the Christmas story. How many times have we heard or read of the angel's miraculous appearance to the shepherds—for the older among us certainly hundreds of times. Yet we still are moved by the angel's message of "good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people", and find new meaning for our lives in its simple, yet profound narrative.

Finally, to the graduates, congratulations! You have begun to take greater responsibility for writing your own story. This will only increase in the coming

years. Remember, if you let the Lord's Word be your guide, that story will surely have a happy ending.

### **Derek Hyatt's Speech**

Welcome to the graduation of the best class ever. I hope you enjoy my speech... because, tell you the truth, I'm not quite sure that I am going to have fun reading it. I have always had mixed feelings about this speech. I have been nervous about it since 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, but I also have been looking forward to being one of those "big kids" who are graduating. But... now that I'm up here, I'm not so sure that I want to be a "big kid." But at 6 foot 2, its hard being anything else.

Well, enough of that, the truth is... I'm here, and I have no choice but to go on with my speech. The thing that I love about WNCs the most is the teachers. I think that they are the best teachers I will ever have. Not only are the teachers great, but my classmates help a **ton!!** I mean, whenever I fall behind in stuff I can ask them questions and they always help me out. Another thing that I love about WNCs, is that everyone knows each other, I'm sure if I went to a public schools, I wouldn't even know the Kindergartners existed, let alone their names.

Wow... kindergarten... that was a long time ago. I don't remember much about kindergarten, but the kindergarten years were the good old days. No homework, school only goes 'till noon. I remember that... it was wonderful. The only bad part was that we didn't get nap time. I was special, I got 2 years of that utopia, because I took 2 years of kindergarten. The first year, I was a good little boy... only 1 black check. The second year, I don't know what happened to me. I remember that I got like 7 black checks. I only remember the reason for one of them... I stole 2 of Andy Chapin's lucky pennies that he found during break. I had to tell my parents what I did, that was so bad, I think that that was the worse thing I did in Kindergarten.

1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade was also fun. No worries, no homework over the weekend. I remember that in first grade John Kunkle and I made a Pokémon story, and we plagiarized so badly, that Mrs. Maxwell told us that we couldn't write stories about TV shows any more. The games that we played in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade were so awesome. We would get in from break and just sit down, and we played games! At school.

In 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade, life is still fun, but I seem to remember it being slightly more academic than 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>. I love doing the reports on the dinosaurs and the planet reports; and my favorite, the endangered animal report. Those reports were awesome; I had so much fun with them. But the best thing ever was on Friday afternoons, in Lit class the teacher would read to us.

It's only in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade that you learn that Lit usually means you have to read for yourself. 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades are where I learned that life's not fair, and I just had to deal with it. That fact is quiet true, and I knew it, but that didn't mean I had to like it. I remember when Ben Glenn tried to scare me by telling me how horrible 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade was... but it wasn't that bad. I really

liked doing the country and state notebooks, you learn a lot, and as long as you turn stuff in on time, you had fun. But the best thing in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades was the country fair. The main reason was that I loved the food; it's the best part of the whole thing, but I also enjoyed showing people what I had learned.

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade were not to long ago. I loved coming in, in the morning, and just hanging out with my peeps. It was great, we got to socialize, and learn. Mrs. Johns has a way of stealth teaching. You are learning, but you don't really know it. In my mind, I was just having fun. Like the fact that the word "nuculur" really bugs Mrs. Johns AND my mom; that grammar is spelled **g-r-a-m-m-e-r**; and that diagramming sentences is actually kinda fun. I would have to say that my favorite time of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades was the Civil War Field Trip. It was awesome... until John Kunkle and Laird Frazier decided to start jumping over the beds, insisting that that we wouldn't get in trouble. Then John had to go and hit the radiator on the other side of the bed... and woke up the chaperones. Lets just say that the chaperones were not happy... those were bad times.

9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade were obviously my most recent years at WNCS, and they have been the best I can remember. In 10<sup>th</sup> grade, you are at the top of the school, people look up to you. But you also have the responsibility to "set a good example," which is important... but not always very fun. You learn a lot in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade, and tell you the truth, it wasn't too boring. Mrs. Waelchli is one of the best teachers I'll ever know. You never are left wondering what's going on in her classes. It also helps that she teaches my favorite subjects, math and science.

Let's just say that my class may be awesome, but they are awesome in a really weird way. Like the time that I tried to teach math class while Mrs. Waelchli was off printing something out. "Alrighty then class, today we will be learning about numbers." And the couple times when Kathleen managed to get a "kick me" sign onto Bronwyn's back, and Bronwyn didn't even realize until lunch when Mrs. Johns found it.

WNCS has taught me some important lessons. Like try your hardest in school, and in the play. It's a lot more fun that way. Also... helping people. Being the only guy in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade means that I help out a lot. And, tell you the truth, I like it when people ask me for help, its fulfilling to be able to help out the teachers and your fellow classmates.

Another thing that WNCS has taught me is that you should give everything a try and try your hardest to have fun with it. In 7<sup>th</sup> grade, I was terrified of doing the play. I didn't want to have anything to do with it. It is the same way with the speech, I really didn't want to come up here and talk to the whole society. But if you try hard to have fun with it... and just relax, then you will have a ton of fun being in the play and you'll have a ton of fun reading your speech as well.

### **Erika Hyatt's Speech**

"Marriage, Marriage is what brings us, together, today."

Good morning everyone, you may be confused, because, last time I checked this was a graduation, not a marriage. However this is a quote from a very special movie (the Princess Bride) that I will be comparing it to school life and my time here at WNCS.

Now in the movie the story starts out with a sick kid playing an ancient video game, but we shall skip that part and go right to the story. In the beginning it starts out with the maiden, Buttercup, and the farm boy, Wesley. They fall in love and are very happy. This is like kindergarten, you are finally a big kid and get to go to school. You've heard your siblings complain about school, but what's not to love, its all fun and games. Although you do have to pay attention, and trust me its not enough just to remember a big red dragon with lots of heads from worship, you'll get in trouble if you don't remember more.

Next in our story Wesley leaves to go find a future for himself and Buttercup, but he is killed by the dread pirate Roberts. Buttercup is then found by a prince who wants to marry her and she starts a new life. This is moving from carefree kindergarten to first and second grade, which is real school where you actually have to do some work. Although, this makes it sound like first and second grade was bad, which it wasn't. For example there are some really fun things that you can only do as a first or second grader; like making an igloo out of sugar cubes and saying that you won't eat it, writing awesome stories while sitting anywhere in the room, eating "seal blubber," having nomad and Native American feasts, and playing in an igloo made out of milk cartons.

Back to our story, Buttercup meets new people when she is kidnapped by three guys named Vizzini, Fezzik, and Inigo Montoya. In school we met new people when we got new classmates. In the story Inigo has long hair; Derek really really wanted long red hair when he grew up. It's just amazing the similarities between the two.

OK, next a man in black is following the kidnappers and Buttercup. They all reach a cliff, climb up it, and at the top Inigo and the man in black have a sword fight. This relates to third and fourth grade when we studied the medieval ages. We built castles, had a feast, and made shields and swords. The man in black wins and then goes on to fight Fezzik, a giant, in a battle of strength. These battles can relate to the reports that we wrote in third and fourth grades, my first one came when we were studying the planets but there were ten of us and only nine planets, so I got to do the moon. I remember crying to my mom because I didn't think I could get it done in time. It was probably only about three pages of my big handwriting, nothing compared to the typed 15 pages we do now. Those were the good old days.

After defeating the giant, the man in black moves on to the only man left, Vizzini. The two battle each other in a game of wits. Buttercup is freed from her kidnapper only to be taken by the man in black. This is the State then Country notebooks in fifth and sixth grades. They were fun, but a lot of work and very stressful. But it all ended well when we had our colonial and country

fairs and got to eat food. This is when Buttercup finds out who the man in black really is, but I won't tell you. Seriously, if you haven't already seen this movie you must see it at least once before you die.

Now, Buttercup and the mystery man, who is still wearing black, run off into the fire swamp to get away from her prince who is following them. In the fire swamp they face fire, quicksand, and R.O.U.S.'s, Rodents of Unusual Size. This is compared to the war portfolios in seventh and eighth grades. Each one was an interesting adventure in itself and they all had good endings. In seventh and eighth grade we did not just have exciting life threatening adventures; we also had some adventures that were just plain fun. We went on a Civil War field trip, where we got to go swimming in the hotel's pool, and frolicked in fields. We got to get lunch from D&S on some school days, and we played games to help us learn.

Finally Buttercup and the man in black made it through the fire swamp and are safe. This was like eight grade graduation; we had finally made it, No More Spelling Tests! But it didn't last, just as they make it out of the swamp, Buttercup's prince captures them. This resembles school because, yes we graduated eighth grade, but we only moved across the hall and now spelling was disguised, in the form of a different language.

I will now skip some parts of the story, partly because I don't want to give them away, and partly because they don't resemble high school. We will skip to the part with Miracle Max. Two of the friends, Fezzik and Inigo, have happily rejoined each other's company. This is like in high school when we get back many of the teachers we had in earlier years. The two men then bring a dead man to Miracle Max in hopes that he can revive the man. We are hoping that our teachers can fill our heads with something before we must leave this school for good. Miracle Max is a man who knows things that others don't, this is because in high school you have the hardest classes, like learning a new language, and taking Algebra. But just like the encounter with Miracle Max they are interesting and very fun.

This is where I will leave the movie even though there is more to it. I have two reasons for this. First, because I don't want to give away anymore of this awesome movie. Second, because my school years are still not over and therefore my story is not yet over. However I do want to say one last thing, although I haven't lived all of my life, I am certain that many my favorite memories will always be from my time here at WNCS.

### **Bronwyn Simons' Speech**

I have been writing this speech for sixteen years. Okay, maybe I'm exaggerating. I've been writing this speech for ten years, ever since I watched my beloved baby-sitter Jessica Lee give her graduation speech. I bawled through the whole thing; hopefully I can hold up better today. In any case, this moment has been imagined, re-imagined, feared, anticipated, and expected for a long time.

Well, here I am. Eleven years of school, hundreds of reports, a couple of backpacks, and a stuffed brain have all added up to this moment. It's monumental. Colossal! But now that it's upon me, it doesn't feel very important. Don't get me wrong; I like the tradition of graduation speeches. But this isn't the cutoff mark I thought it would be. No one is saying, "This is the end.," because it isn't really the end at all. I'm not going to disappear forever; in fact, I'll be hanging around all summer.

Maybe this feeling is denial. I love my family and my school. Perhaps I don't want to admit that I'm going away. Or maybe the reality just hasn't sunk in yet. But the most likely explanation is that I'm ready. Going to Bryn Athyn feels like a progression of what I've already been doing my whole life; it feels natural. This doesn't mean that I'm not nervous about what's to come, but I have the security of being prepared.

In spite of stray doubts, the truth is that I have been preparing for this step away from home my whole life. I'm not talking about seeing all of the WNCS graduates leaving before me, or realizing that everything we are taught has some link to Bryn Athyn curriculum. This preparation is subtle and slow. It's the steady growing of self-confidence, nurtured by a caring environment at home and here at school. It's the lessons you learn when you have to deal with the same twenty people day in and day out for nine months a year—lessons on when to push someone and when to give them space, how to give your help, how to express yourself to others.

Although I'm prepared, there are still many things about my life at WNCS that I'm going to miss. There are the little things, like listening to our English teacher read a cow poem in her cow voice to get us ready for the highly intellectual year ahead. I'll miss the spot of cork board near the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade classroom that will forever hold the smell of 'Sensual Amber' lotion, and I'll miss playing "Who's Line Is It Anyway?" in French class.

One thing that I won't have to miss is my class. I get to take *them* with me. This is a good thing, because over the past decade, these three crazy people have become very close to me. In a new home, they will be a safety net and a security blanket.

We weren't always this close. I can remember a few years of snubbing early on. First I would rather read than hang out with my friends, and then in art Derek painted a snow boarder in *the middle* of the beautiful tree Kathleen and I painted. Then Kathleen put a "kick me" sign on my back and—oh wait. That was pretty recent, wasn't it?

Anyway, it's hard to stay distant from your only three classmates, especially in our case. We have been grouped together for most of our lives, in a tiny class, in a tiny school, in a tiny neighborhood. In spite of small quarrels and misunderstandings, we have grown into a tightly knit group of friends. And I want you to know that even if I don't always show it, I'm really glad that I ended up with you guys.

Although I can take my class with me to Bryn Athyn, I can't take my family. I can take our memories, however. Memories of watching Dad laugh so

hard he cried, or seeing my mom hunching over her garden in her bathing suit in the rain by the chicken coop she designed and built herself. I have the memories of dancing and singing “Mama Mia!” songs with Freya on the camping trip, and also dancing with Oskar while we were “cleaning up the kitchen”. I have all the little moments when I’ve experienced glimpses of Owen’s true personality.

I’m selfish, because although it’s fine for me to leave my family and experience new things, I don’t want them to grow and have fun while I’m not there to experience it with them. I don’t want to stop being part of the family because I’m going away. I know that it’s silly to worry about losing touch but it’s a real feeling.

Luckily, we have cell phones, web cams, e-mail, letters, Morse code, and Indian smoke signals to aid with communication. I’m sure we’ll be able to share our experiences *somehow*.

One last group that I’ve neglected to mention is the teachers. I want to give you all a big thank you for all of the tantrums, moody days, and stubbornness that you put up with to get me through school. I hope you feel that it was worth it—this is your moment too. I didn’t get to this podium alone—it was all of you too. You’ve given me an amazing experience here, and for that I am very grateful.

But I wasn’t always so appreciative. Three short years ago, I stormed up to my mom and told her, “When I give my graduation speech, I’m going to offend a lot of people, because I can’t wait to get out of here!” I don’t feel the same way about leaving now that I’m here.

At the time, I imagined standing up here and telling the congregation exactly that... but things have changed since then. I’ve grown to appreciate the strengths of our community and our school, like our durability and our ingenuity, which have kept us going through thick and thin. I’m proud of us and what we have made this school into. I’m proud to call this place my home. I’m excited for the years ahead, and I hope that you are, too. Everything that I see around me is growing and changing, and I’m so happy that I get to be a part of it. Although I’m leaving for a little while, I’ll be back before you know it. I couldn’t possibly stay away.

Thank you.

### **Kathleen Smith's speech**

Good morning teachers, students, friends, and family. I just want you to know that I am very nervous, so don’t be frightened if I suddenly squeak or something. I struggled over what to write my speech about for a long time, and then when I had to write it I still couldn’t decide. So, I thought about what my experience has been like at the Washington New Church School, and came up with... *Veni, Vidi, Vici*.

For those of you who need translation, this means: I came, I saw, I conquered, and I think that this statement fits my time here at WNCS almost perfectly. Now, this doesn’t mean that I think of WNCS as an enemy, or at least not *all* the time.

When I first came to WNCS I was little. I knew not what I was getting into, or rather what my parents were getting me into, which was a whole bunch-o school work.

Each year that I would move up into another classroom was pretty scary. I never knew what to expect, or how I would survive. But each year I moved up, I learned something new. But then after the second year, when I finally conquered all my fears from that classroom, I would have to move on. But that is probably what will happen throughout most of my life, and I'm just being prepared.

In kindergarten we all learned that you shouldn't open your mouth and shout out, "Mrs. Hyatt! Can I go to the bathroom?!" Not that we didn't know that already.

During the four years of my life when I was in Mrs. Allen's and Mr. Roscoe's rooms, I learned a Lot about, explorers, not forgetting schoolwork, and murder in the dark.

Mrs. Johns' room was one full of grammar, talking, prizes, and I think we definitely conquered the art of getting Mrs. Johns to inspire us with candy.

And now I am up to what has been my homeroom for the last two years. Going into high school was a little scary, but not for long. It's pretty hard to be scared when you have one of the nicest teachers in the world. I learned that math and science are not my favorite subjects, but I've lived through them so far. All those grades, all those lessons I've learned, better help me later in life.

Now back to my theme, I **came** into this school. I **saw** everything around me and what I was going to be learning, and what I needed to do. It was a difficult journey at times, but I've made it.

And I have now completely **conquered** this school. I also know I definitely conquered the teachers with my wonderful personality, and they know I would never do anything devious to my fellow classmates whom I love so very much.

But this speech is not about my wonderfulness, though maybe it should be. It's really about how we were able to come to WNCS and experience everything that we did. To be able to come to a small school and get to know everybody when other people don't even know some of their classmates is pretty amazing. Going to a small school might have lots of disadvantages, but it sure has its good side too. Like being able to have time with the teachers if you want, and all getting to sit at one, or two, lunch tables with your entire class, and we can even run home if we forget something in the 15 minutes between the 8 o'clock and late bells.

I think I forget to fully appreciate all that we have sometimes. Like Mrs. Sprinkle: who wouldn't want a teacher that threatens to strangle you?! But really, I do often forget how lucky I am, or was, to be able to come to WNCS where I know everyone and they know me, and we joke and put notes on each others... backs... and we don't have to worry about crazy people! Oh

wait, Derek killed that. But anyway, we just have to listen to the teachers and learn! Haha.

But now I have to refer back to something I said earlier. About my parents getting me into all of this. Even though I might have complained just a bit before about school, and our school may not be perfect, it is still the best place they could have possibly sent me. I get to be with my friends and nice teachers, and most importantly learn about the church.

Swedenborg stated that *The human race is the basis on which heaven is founded*. We all know this, and so what better way is there for us to prepare ourselves for heaven, than to attend a New Church School. One that teaches us all about our churches truths and the how the Lord created us so that we can hopefully go to our eternal homes which he is preparing for us even now in the next world.

Thinking of how my dad had to go to 9, almost all public schools over a period of 12 years always helps me to appreciate the great gift we have of a New Church education. And I would like to thank my parents for sending me here to get the best education possible. You’ve sent me to a wonderful school that has prepared me for life and now, after all you’ve done for me, I’m gonna leave you.

And finally, since I know how sad you all are that I’m done my speech and leaving, here’s a poem that I have written especially for this occasion:

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|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>I came, I saw, I conquered all,<br/> Veni, Vidi, Vici.<br/> Through and through I’ve had a ball<br/> With all my friends, so freaky.<br/> I’ve learned a lot, in my time here<br/> And the teachers have been oh so<br/>     dear...<br/> And never fear, I shall return<br/> To this school... ’bout once a year<br/> To make sure that you all still love<br/>     me</p> | <p>So when you think of me up in BA,<br/> Please don’t be shy,<br/> And feel free to send some treats,<br/> But now it’s time to end this speech<br/> For I know you’re all sitting<br/> On uncomfortable seats.<br/> And thanks for being such a wonder-<br/>     ful society<br/> Tootles, Farewell, and Goodbyeity.</p> |
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### NEWS NOTES

*(Due to space constraints the news notes are very brief. There will, no doubt, be much news that is missed... here, however are some highlights)*

**ANC Graduates:** We are very proud of our Washington area graduates from the Academy Secondary schools on May 30th: **Emily Ball, Leah Cronlund, Karla Hyatt, Kristin Maxwell & Emily Quintero.** Congratulations!

**WNCS Graduates:** Saturday, June 6, WNCS graduated five eighth graders - **Justin Ball, Richard Glenn, Angel Horsey, Kristin Kinsey & Joe Sprinkle,** and four tenth graders - **Derek Hyatt, Erika Hyatt, Bronwyn Simons & Kathleen Smith.** Congratulations!

**Farewell to the Walshes:** A well attended party/picnic was held at the Simons home on June 13th to bid farewell and God speed to the Walsh family. It was a family affair with lots of great food off the grill (barB). Our choir sang them a song, Col. Smith and Michael Ferrell said a few words.

The Walshes were given a beautiful photo album of society families as well as Home Depot gift cards to help them with their new home in Arizona. The society sang "Here's to our friends" and "The Lord Upon You". The party gave an opportunity for us and our children to share some last minute time with our dear friends. A happy and also sad time for all. Best wishes, Garry, Laurel, Deanna, Ashley and Heather. You will be missed.

**Brief Visit:** David Radcliffe is back from Kabul Afghanistan for ten days... Enjoy Heather, Isaac, Timmy and Charlotte!

**Best Wishes also to -** Elizabeth Glenn. She has been accepted into a Prince George's County Public School fellows program which trains college graduates who did not major in education as teachers. She interviewed at Northwestern High School (near PG. Plaza) to be a special needs language arts teacher, and was offered-- and accepted-- the position on the spot.

**ANC Honor Roll:** Congratulations to **Leah Cronlund, Karla Hyatt & Emily Quintero** who made third term Achievement list and to **Emily Ball, Kristin Maxwell, Ethan Cooper & John Kunkle** who made honorable mention.

**A Hero in Our Midst:** Alan Trimble, a Paramedic with DC Fire and Rescue, was the first person on the scene of the tragic Metro accident this week. Rescue units were initially called to the Takoma Park Station but could not find the accident. Alan and his partner detoured on their way to the station and located the scene of the crash. As the first emergency responders on the scene, he radioed the location in to the dispatcher and rushed to the aid of the injured. Alan rescued a number of critically injured people from the horrific scene and set up the triage and treatment station for the wounded. He directed and organized the subsequent rescue efforts as the senior paramedic at the scene. When additional help arrived, Alan flew with some of the most critically injured patients to the trauma center and ensured that they were stable when turned over to the hospital staff. To Alan, our grateful thanks and admiration for his cool and professional response to the terrible tragedy - actions that undoubtedly saved lives.

***Echo Deadline For September Echo is: Aug. 24th***