

January 2012

ECHO

Newsletter of the
Washington Church of the New Jerusalem

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www.theWNC.org

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Dear Friends,

New Year, New Beginnings; you've heard (or read) it all before. The trouble with New Year's Resolutions is that when radical changes are proposed without the proper preparation they are pretty hard to sustain.

In contrast, thoughtful preparation, including a plan with disciplined steps in a calculated process can yield amazing results.

The heavenly doctrines are very clear about the process of regeneration. No one is really changed in a moment, but by a gradual and progressive shift from one way of living to another. For example, we read,

“Regeneration, which brings the new will and the new understanding into being, does not take place in a single instant. Rather, it is taking place from earliest childhood through to the final phase of life, and after that forever in the next life; and it is accomplished by Divine means that are countless and beyond description” (AC 5354:3).

Still, our progress may be marked by distinct steps or stages often compared to the growth of a tree. Thus,

“Like a tree, a person who is being born again begins from a seed, which is why in the Word 'seed' means truth obtained from good. Also, like a tree, he brings forth leaves, then blossoms, and finally fruit; for he brings forth the kind of things that belong to intelligence, which again in the Word are meant by 'leaves', then the kind of things that belong to wisdom, which are meant by 'blossoms', and finally the kind of things that are matters of life, namely forms of the good of love and charity expressed in action, which in the Word are meant by 'fruits'. Such is the representative likeness that exists between a fruitful tree and a person who is being regenerated, *a likeness so great that one may learn from a tree about regeneration*, provided that something is known first of all about spiritual good and truth” (AC 5115:2; see also NJHD 173-186, esp. 186).

In this passage we see the progression from knowledge through what we might call thoughtful analysis (wisdom) to well considered action. And we might add that the doctrines warn us about trying to do too much at once, lest we set ourselves up for failure. The principle of overcoming our spiritual enemies “little by little”

... “lest the land become desolate” (Exodus 23:29-30) is critical for the preservation of our freedom and our sense of identity. In short, “One thing at a time.”

But what IS that “one thing”? Years ago I took a seminar that emphasized goal setting and the presenter made a big point that we should always have SMART goals, that is, goals that are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time bound. OK, I just looked this up again on the Internet and found an even SMARTER acronym, the last two letters standing for Evaluate and Re-evaluate – in case what you’re doing isn’t working. In this vein 12 Steppers have a relevant saying: “The definition of insanity is to keep doing the same thing over and over, expecting different results.”

One thing we should NOT be doing in the New Year is beating ourselves up for not being able to achieve unrealistic goals in a timely manner. Rather, let’s get serious about our resolutions, really think through what it will take to get them done, and ask the Lord for practical help in a step-by-step program designed for success.

In short, work SMART: be specific about what you will do, plan carefully how you will measure your progress, make sure what you are planning is achievable, that every step is relevant, and that you can do this within a limited time or series of times. “Then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success” (Joshua 1:8).

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

Dear Friends,

Along with Ryan and Michael I'd like to thank everyone for the generous "foldable" Christmas gift that was presented to us on the night of the Tableaux. Not only has it given me the opportunity to buy some special things this Christmas but the gift is a nice affirmation for the work we try to do for all of you throughout the year. For all this and for your friendship we are truly grateful.

In addition I'd like to thank all the teachers, students and other members who gave Ginny and me other special gifts, from loaves of delicious bread to Starbucks gift cards and much more. It was all greatly appreciated. - Mike

From the Assistant Pastor

Have you made a New Year's resolution? Well, here's some food for thought: "it is not so difficult to live the life of heaven as some believe" (HH 533). There's power in this simple truth especially if we apply it to our daily living. If you see that a particular desire, thought, or act is wrong how may you handle this? The answer, given in HH 533, is to think that the wrong should not be done because doing so would be contrary to the Lord's commandments. But thinking is only part of the solution. A person must also *refrain* from *wishing* anything wrong and *resist doing* what is wrong. Then gradually over time something quite remarkable will occur. First, "if a man accustoms himself so to think [that wrong should not be done] and from so doing establishes a habit of so thinking, he is gradually conjoined to heaven" (HH 533). And secondly, "the higher regions of his mind are opened" so that he then "sees whatever is dishonest and unjust" (HH 533). So, have you made a New Year's resolution? My suggestion is that we allow the Lord to open our eyes to see the right way to live. We can ask Him for inspiration and strength to turn away from everything that is hurtful. We're all family and friends. Therefore, I'd like to encourage us to support one another in our commitment to living the life of heaven throughout this year ahead.

Michael

Thank you!

We wish to thank everyone in the Washington society for the wonderful gifts you've given us during the Christmas season. We appreciate your generous outpouring of love toward us not only during Christmas but throughout the entire year. Your kindness has warmed our hearts and put a great big smile upon our face! Michael, Janet, Jonathan

Dear friends,

Daniela and I would like to thank everyone for the many good wishes and support we have received, especially during the Christmas season. The gifts were great and were much appreciated! We will enjoy serving Mitchellville as long as we are here!

Ryan and Daniela

Sermon TOPICS for January

Please note all Sunday morning services begin at 11:00 am

Jan. 1st ~ A new year, a fresh start. “Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain” (John 12:24). ~ MEF

Jan. 8th ~ Informal Family Service: The Lord, the LIGHT of the world: Today we will be working with light and color to illustrate the beauty and wonder of the Lord’s truth as it affects our lives. A projector and screen may be involved. ~ MDG

Jan. 8th, at 8:00 PM ~ Evening (Vespers) Holy Supper: this is a brief, peaceful and reflective service featuring just a few simple hymns, lessons, a short talk and the sacrament. - MEF

Jan. 15th ~ Time to Move. Abraham was unable to comfort the rich man because a great gulf separated them (Luke 16: 26). If the Lord seems distant we are the ones who must move. ~ MEF

Jan. 22nd ~ Baptism by Fire. Truth is an important ingredient for our reformation, since we are told to wash ourselves. But there won't be much progress if we lack one essential ingredient. ~ RMS

Jan. 29th ~ Swedenborg, the Spirit of Truth & the Second Coming of the Lord: as we will be recognizing Swedenborg’s birthday this weekend we need to be clear about his role in the establishment of the New Church, and for this purpose we will compare John 1:8-9 with John 16:12-13 & TCR 779. ~ MDG

Doctrinal Classes & Special Events in January

Fri, the 6th 7:00 pm Friday Supper (prepared)

8:00 pm Doctrinal Class: Vessels, we are all "vessels." What does this unique term really imply about us? In some ways it means we are like boxes or containers, but there is much more to it than that. ~ RMS

Fri, the 20th 7:30 pm Desert & Coffee

8:00 pm Doctrinal Class: The Influence of Spirits and the Curious Concept of the "as-of-self." In other words, where do our thoughts and feelings come from, and how is it that we make them our own (or not)? ~ MDG

Sat, the 21st 8:30 am ~ Men's breakfast book discussion at T.J. Elliott's Restaurant in Bowie – discussing the Rev. Douglas Taylor's new book, "The Hidden Levels of the Mind." All men, high school and up, are welcome!

Sat, the 28th 7:00 pm ~ Swedenborg Birthday Banquet, with a special guest speaker TEAM of Michael & Jane Hogan addressing issues of Swedenborg's relevance in the history of social and religious thought. You won't want to miss this dynamic and stimulating event **See Page 10** of this ECHO for more information about the topic and the speakers.

Journey Program – SHIFT

Time to sign up for the Journey program! From February 5 to March 18 we will participate in the Journey program. The title of this program is Shift (Small Changes, Big Difference). The Shift program is based upon the Old Testament character, Jacob. We will review his life as he deals with deception, frustration, and struggle. The program provides an opportunity for spiritual development that comes about when we are willing to change. This 7 week program will guide us through how we may experience a change in awareness, perspective, focus, expectations, motivation, confidence, and finally a change of heart.

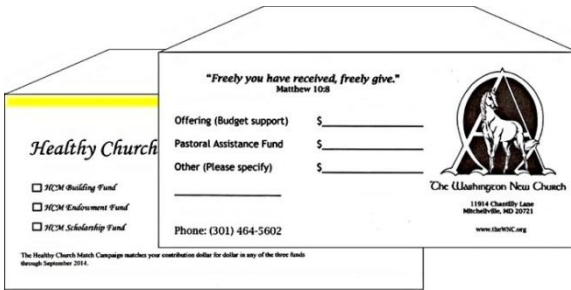
Registration forms will be available for you to sign up for the program. We will need group hosts and each group will need a small group leader. The cost of the Journey workbook is \$19.99. So start signing up now! If you have questions you may contact me here at the church (301) 464-5602 or by email at assistant-wcnj@comcast.net Thanks! Michael
(See P. 11 for other ways to participate in SHIFT.)

CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES

This calendar year we are (with the Board’s support) trying out an envelope system for contributions that will be new to most of you, although it is used by many churches worldwide. It is of course entirely voluntary, but if you will agree to try it you may find it really helpful. Here’s how it works.

Sometime in late January the church will receive at least 70 boxes of specially printed, dollar size envelopes, one box for each willing

participant, and everyone will be invited to take a box home. In it you will find some 64 envelopes, one for each Sunday of the year, dated as such, one each for Thanksgiving and



Christmas, and an extra one per month in a different color for special contributions. Every envelope in a given box will have the same number printed in one corner, and this number will be used to identify the “owner” of that box, so contributions can be made without having to write your name on the envelopes. They can then be mailed to the church, placed in the offertory bowl on Sundays, or simply left in the treasurer’s mail box at the school.

On the regular Sunday envelopes you will be able to check a box to signify whether this is a general contribution, a special contribution to the Pastoral Assistance Fund, or something else of your

choice. On the extra envelope for each month you will be invited to contribute something extra to the Healthy Church Match campaign – to the Building Fund, to the School Endowment Fund, or to the School Scholarship Fund. And remember, every dollar given in one of these extra envelopes will be matched, effectively doubling the value of each gift.

One advantage of this system is that it provides weekly reminders to help all of us follow through on our commitments to the church.

Another advantage is that we can put either cash or checks in the envelopes and still get the tax recognition we need since the envelope numbers will identify the donors.

It has often been said that regularity is the key to success in church giving, whether the amount given is large or small. This envelope system encourages that regularity in a completely private, non-threatening way. Try it, won't you? Get a box from Wynne Hyatt, Wystan Simons or Bonnie Cowley at your first opportunity and see how it can work for you – *and* for the church.

From WNCS

Happy New Year to all our WNCS friends near and far. Our school year will begin on Tuesday, January 3, 2012, NOT on Monday as the original calendar says. January is a great month for concentrated learning and time spent indoors reading all those new books received for Christ-mas or maybe just the user's manuals for the new video games.



This month the 3rd & 7th grades will be taking the annual Cognitive Abilities tests during the second week back to assess areas of aptitude and growth. The high school will have exam week following the Martin Luther King, Jr. Monday 16th holiday. That will bring us to the end of the first semester on the 20th which is a no uniform day. The following Monday we will hand out our Promptness Awards to those students who have arrived on time every day.

WNCS is working to promote punctuality for all and it's never "too late" to get to school on time.

This month, in association with our theme of LOVE, we will focus on loving the TRUTH of the WORD. One activity will be celebrating the birthday of Emanuel Swedenborg (Jan. 29th) with the students' luncheon and outing on Friday the 27th. Having this school focus is an opportunity to acknowledge the deeper truths contained in the Word that are the basis for our philosophy and curriculum at WNCS.

Coming right up in February will be our annual Open House – Feb. 15, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. There are lots of things you can do to help us with this important event for WNCS: distribute fliers, invite friends, help spruce up the building, write a testimonial, most importantly, plan to ATTEND. As always your support is truly needed and appreciated.

From the Board of Trustees:

Notes from the BoT Meeting on Dec 6, 2011

1. The Board heard special reports from Edward Simons on investments and Acton Park finances; from John Croft for the School Board's tuition planning committee; and from Wystan Simons on fundraising.
2. After regular reports from the Pastor, Principal, and committees, the Board discussed budget planning for the coming year, as a preliminary budget will be due to the General Church in February.

Several special BoT meetings were held in the past month to discuss the school governance structure, including meetings with the Governance Subcommittee, School Board, and Faculty.

The next BoT meeting will be on January 10, 2012 at 8:00pm at the Church. This will be a joint meeting with the School Board and the special topic will be governance. Please contact Board Chair Greg Baltz if you have an item to include on the agenda.

The winter meeting of the Washington Society will be held on February 3, 2012.

CHURCH BANQUET

Saturday, January 28th, at 7:00 pm

Come a little early for a glass of wine and visiting!

Each year at the end of January we commemorate the birthdate of Emanuel Swedenborg, one of the world's greatest thinkers and the author of over 60 philosophical and religious books, many of which we believe constitute the Second Coming of the Lord.

This year we are pleased to announce an exceptional dinner and program featuring the husband and wife TEAM of Dr. Jane Hogan, professor at the Bryn Athyn College of the New Church and a world recognized Swedenborg scholar, along with her husband, Michael Hogan, a major contributor to the recent publication, "The World Transformed," a collection of essays about the practical implications of the Last Judgment in the spiritual world, described by Swedenborg in the 1757.



The Hogans are both gifted speakers and are preparing a dynamic presentation that will appeal to church members, newcomers and enquirers alike. Jane will begin with an introduction to the man, Swedenborg, his genius and his back-

ground, and Michael will continue with a discussion of the real, tangible and far-reaching effects of the revelation he presented to the world in the 18th century.

Tickets are \$8 for adults and \$4 for students if reserved before January 23rd (\$10 and \$5 respectively at the door)

See Sharon Kunkle sharon@wlk.name or Bonnie Cowley bonnie.cowley@washnewchurch.org to reserve a ticket

Next TAG Meeting: I hope that you can join us at Ginny Gladi-sh's house for the next Theta Alpha Guild meeting, **January 18th at 8pm**. Ginny and Mike live right beside the church drive-way. Come and find out who we have for a speaker at our banquet in March! It's going to be good. See you then.

Wystan Simons – Theta Alpha Guild President

Thursday Coffee has a new time. If you would like a chance to get in touch with some other women on a Thursday afternoon, please come by Wystan and Edward Simons's house (11910 Progress Lane, Mitchellville) and sit in a sunny window for tea or coffee and watch the chickens. Coffee is **now 1 to 3pm every Thursday**. Children are welcome. Men are welcome. If you would like to be on the Thursday Coffee email list and you currently are not, please let me know. (wegsimons@gmail.com)



Experience A Meaningful, Transformational Community Online.

New Church Journey Unveils an Online Small-Group Ministry.

Starting this February, New Church Journey will be offering online small groups to coincide with the launch of their current Journey program, Shift - Small Changes - Big Difference.

Want to sign up to participate in a small group during the Shift program?

Visit. <http://www.newchurch.org/activities/online-small-groups>
or browse to see what other group content is available.

Are you ready to lead an online group?

Sign up for our Online Small Group Leader training.

The first course will be offered on Wednesday January 18th, at 9:15 pm EST.

(All online small group leaders will be asked to participate in a training course.)

“I recently participated in an online small group, and had an incredible experience. In a very short time it became one of my favorite hours of the week. Thanks to the internet and webcams, small groups are no longer limited by geography.”

Aren't Online Small Groups Complicated?

Contrary to what you may think, online groups aren't all that different from in-person small groups. Once you sign up for a group, your group leader will contact you to help get you set-up on Google+ (all you need is a microphone, webcam, high speed internet, and computer). After that, you will meet with your group for 60-90 minutes during the scheduled time, and enjoy getting to know each other and studying the Word from the comfort of your own home

Who Might Benefit from an Online Small Group?

Since you participate from your own home, there is no need to find a sitter for your kids or struggle with commuting in bad weather. If you're feeling ill, lack transportation or are otherwise stuck at home, no worries! Online small groups are also great for college-students who keep irregular study hours, and can even accommodate for international time-zone differences.

Contact Michelle Chapin at michelle.chapin@newchurch.org if you have questions about this exciting program.

Note: See P. 6 for information about our local participation in SHIFT.

**Tis the month after Christmas, our members and friends
Are reading their "Echos" from covers to ends.
And after they read all the business with care,
They turn to the NEWS NOTES to see who is there.**

Transition and Loss:

Our sympathy and love are with **Michael Ferrell**, who reports, "My brother, Stephen, called me on the afternoon of Thursday, December 15 to inform me that one of our older brothers, James, had passed way that morning. James Ferrell was born on October 14, 1940. Janet and I travelled to Louisville, KY for James' memorial service. James is now reunited in the spiritual world with our brother Charles, our sister Harvetta, and our mom and dad. I now have four living brothers (Porter Jr., George, Thomas, and Stephen) and one sister, Julia Elaine. While this has been a very difficult time, I know and believe that in His Providence the Lord

brings all things to a good end. Thank you all for your prayers and words of encouragement.” Michael & Janet

On Friday, December 16th, Betsy McCorkel joined her sister, Isabel Kingdon in the spiritual world. Our sympathy and love go to **Bill, Lyle and Liam Kingdom** at this time of loss. Bill and Lyle both spent Christmas with remaining brother “uncle Torque” and family and will be traveling back to Richmond, VA for aunt Betsy’s memorial service.

Also this month, just before her 94th birthday, Doreen Cooper (a much loved aunt of **Kathy Johns and Ginny Gladish**) passed peacefully into the spiritual world. Kathy and Ginny both went to Bryn Athyn to be at her interment in the Bryn Athyn Cemetery and then to share memories and good food with other family at a lovely gathering in a cousin’s home. A memorial service will be held for Doreen on January 4th.

Mike Gladish has spent the better part of the week after Christmas in Bryn Athyn as his 86 year old mother; Endrede Gladish’s health has deteriorated rapidly. Our thoughts are with Mike and his family as they tend to their mom’s hopefully peaceful transition.

Now for more upbeat news:

On December 4th – December 9th of this year, **Curt Moore and his son, Curt Moore, Jr. (CJ)** had the experience of a lifetime. CJ’s Central Maryland Young Marines (CMYM) was invited to participate in the 70th anniversary events of the attack on Pearl Harbor. After several months of fundraising, five Young Marines, four Young Marines staff and Mr. Moore flew out of Reagan National Airport the morning of December 4th headed for Honolulu, Hawaii. The CMYM participated in the wreath laying services at Pearl Harbor along with the parade on December 7th. The Central Maryland Young Marines Unit at Kennedy Krieger High School is

the only unit in the nation that is composed solely of students with special needs and is based in a special education school. CJ and his fellow Young Marines will always remember this experience of a lifetime and the fact that he shared this experience with his Dad. We are delighted for you both!

Congratulations to **Doctor Lisa Bond**, who was recently awarded a PhD in Clinical Biochemistry from the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom. She completed her postgraduate study in three years, with full funding from the Winston Churchill Foundation of the United States and the U.S. National Institutes of Health.

Our friend Deena Odhner reports: “**Eva (Odhner) and Joe Civitello** are stationed in Anchorage Alaska for three years. Joe left on December 12th for a ten months tour in Afghanistan. Nic, who was a sheep in his pre-school tableaux, which was web-cammed from the church sanctuary to the world, got to say hi to his dad all the way in Afghanistan. We saw the show -- and saw Eva and Maddy in the audiences' fifth row.”

This month **Bill and Dorothy Radcliffe's** whole family celebrated (however belatedly) Doc's 80th birthday (he is 81) and the couple's 60th anniversary (61 years now) at Brent and Laura Gurney's home in Bethesda. This was the first time they could get the entire family together! It was a lovely party, complete with a photographic history of their lives. Congratulations, you two!

Derek Hyatt, Erika Hyatt, Bronwyn Simons and Jessica Hyatt are on the Dean's List at the Bryn Athyn College. **Richard Glenn and Joe Sprinkle** are on the Honor Roll at ANC. We are all proud of you guys! Way to go!

More good news... We all know what a trial it is to run small business in this economy. **Safeware, Ed Simons's company**, had an unexpected and welcome Christmas present five days before the

25th when FDNY bought a pile of expensive equipment! Congratulations also to **Rick Bond** who handles that account. This is very happy news for the Simons family.

Our recently casted trio has all shed their casts for Christmas. We just hope **John Allen, Rachel Field and Jonathan Sprinkle** will be somewhat cautious with their newly healed limbs as they celebrate the holidays.

Somewhat delayed congratulations also to **Kathleen Smith**, who ran in and completed the full Philadelphia Marathon (that's 26.2 miles!) at the end of November. Way to go Kathleen!!

And now, a running commentary on recent events:

We have **WNCS to thank for the magnificent decorations** around the building, both outside and in. Thank you, students and teachers. You have helped to make our holidays very festive.

On Sunday, Dec. 4th, Janna and Phil Zuber hosted the annual **The-ta Alpha Christmas Party** in their warm and lovely home. Delicious food and drinks flowed out of their newly renovated kitchen. Our speaker, **Ryan Sandstrom**, both amused and educated us with his “enlightened” talk. And singing the carols touched our hearts with love and awe at the wonderful gift of His birth.

Johns’ Annual Christmas Party on Saturday, Dec. 17th was, as always, a treat for all who attended. I hear that the young people were well represented, as well as everyone from Brad’s Barber Shop! Thank you Brad and Kathy for this special treat.

On the afternoon of Sunday, Dec. 18th, at the home of Jeannette Roscoe, Jeannette, Lisa Martin and Bonnie Cowley put on a lovely **Baby Shower Brunch for Angela Radcliffe**. The occasion was well attended and everyone had a great time admiring all that cute tiny stuff!

That very evening, we were treated to our **Christmas Tableaux**, this year put on by the WNCS staff and students. Thank you, Sharon Kunkle for directing this beautifully innocent program. Thank you, Erin Stillman for organizing all the costumes, and everyone else who helped in the background. And thank you students for touching our hearts with your angelic singing. We had a great crowd for the Tableaux, 201 altogether, counting the cast of 50 children and helpers, and many of the students' parents and other relatives.

On the evening of Thursday, Dec. 22nd, Cathlin Hendricks and Michelle Bond hosted a **Cocktail Bridal Shower for Jessica Hyatt and Owen Frasier** at the home of Brent and Amanda Hyatt. Of course all who attended had a great time!



HAPPY NEW YEAR