



GENERAL CHURCH NEWS AND UPDATES | FALL 2019

The mission of the General Church is to help people live a heavenly life through the teachings of the Lord God Jesus Christ in His Second Coming.

Updates from the Bishop:

I share with you an update on the **General Church Retreat 2020** set to take place in Bryn Athyn from June 18-21, 2020. Many, but not all of you, will recall General Church Assemblies of the past, the last one taking place in 2011. I warmly invite you to attend, and here are four reasons to consider it.

- It's historic. It's the 250th anniversary of the sending out of the 12 disciples to proclaim the Lord's second coming—well worth celebrating as an international General Church community. This is a great way to reconnect with your faith, and to be reminded of what it is all about.
- It's a retreat. People attend a retreat to step away from normal life to gain a sense of rejuvenation. At this event you will have the opportunity to experience interactive presentations that stimulate your mind and revitalize your faith; to connect with people of all ages that you've known or will meet; to participate in art workshops, nature walks and service opportunities.
- It's global. We hope to share perspectives on the General Church around the world. Often the likes of me travel to church locations to see what's going on. This Retreat is an opportunity to bring delegates from those places together so that all of us can gain a greater sense of the global General Church.
- It's for people of all ages. An excellent children's program will be offered, anchored by the Bryn Athyn Cathedral Camp and the Glencairn Museum's Medieval Camp. Parents already travel into town for these popular offerings. This year you can participate in programs for yourself while your kids enjoy theirs.

We are inviting people to offer sessions to Retreat attendees. All of the above can be true when people like you offer something from your studies or background for the benefit of others. Please see www.qcretreat2020.org to submit a proposal. We'd love to hear from you.

Wishing you well.

Rt. Rev. Peter Buss, Jr.
peter.buss.jr@newchurch.org



The new Episcopal Office team (left to right): Rt. Rev. Bradley Heinrichs, Rt. Rev. Peter Buss and Rt. Rev. David Lindrooth.



GENERAL CHURCH EDUCATION

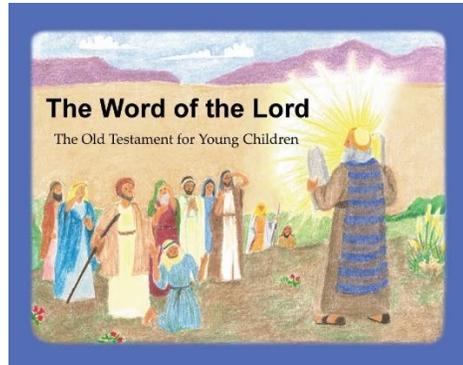
New Publication | Children's Old Testament

General Church Education's mission is to support New Church education in homes, schools, and Sunday schools. A key use of New Church education is introducing children and young

people to the Lord and the things of spiritual life. Our goal is to assist people in becoming loving, wise and useful human beings who choose the path that leads to heaven.

A spiritual foundation begins at home. General Church Education had the opportunity to enhance the materials available by publishing a children's Old Testament of 56 stories, simplified by Carol Buss and illustrated by Dianna Synnestvedt.

Do you know someone who would like to receive a copy of this book? Books are available for purchase for \$25 at the [New Church Bookstore](#). For information, call 215-947-0266, Ext. 4922 or email bookstore@bacathedral.org.



OUTREACH

Grand Human Project - Outreach has been working with a social engagement platform to help reach the thousands of people interested in engaging in Swedenborgian community, many of whom have no New Church society nearby. The new website will not only serve as a hub for spiritual seekers, but will equip people to form and support their own in-person communities, grounded in New Church principles. Our initial prototype for testing to roll out Fall 2019.

General Church Outreach received a significant grant to support this effort from the **Glencairn Foundation**.

Spiritable Podcast –Outreach has launched and continued to produce their podcast, "Spiritable," with 22 published episodes, amassing more than 27,000 views.

New Upcoming Communication | Episcopal Newsletter

As a part of an enhanced communications effort within the General Church Central Offices, we are re-purposing an **Episcopal Newsletter**. This is a chance for the episcopal office and others to share information about happenings within the General Church, and to intentionally build a sense of shared direction for our church. The first newsletter will come out in November or early December.

Welcome New Board of Directors

Please welcome the newest members of the General Church Board of Directors:

Darren Bau-Madsen, Colorado

Allen Bedford, Minnesota

Jesse Cole, Illinois

Charlotte Gyllenhaal, Indiana

James Uber, Pennsylvania

John Walko, Pennsylvania

Meet a Minister | Rev. Todd Beiswenger

I think God has a sense of humor. Before joining the ministry my wife and I were living outside Philadelphia, but we wanted to move somewhere south, where it was warmer. We were thinking somewhere in the Carolinas, or maybe even Arizona... but then God sent me to Theological School which had us wondering if we'd ever get to a warmer climate. God said, "You want south, I'll send you so far south that if you go much farther south you're going to start going north again!" Yes, He sent us to Sydney, Australia - which incidentally

has a similar climate to Charleston, South Carolina - where we've been for the past 7.5 years. I've learned a lot, including how to play a funny game called cricket, but also that God's plans for me are better than my plans for myself. We've had a great experience here.

That's not to say that it hasn't been without challenges. But I find that these challenges really mostly revolve around unimportant things, and that what the Lord is trying to say to me is, "All I care about is whether or not you turn out to be a good person. This other stuff doesn't matter." So while He hasn't given me some things, He did give me a great place to live. I think in the future, my prayers will be intentionally vague so I can look forward to seeing what funny replies I get.



New Church Spotlight | The New Church in Australia

The First Fleet was the 11 ships that departed from Portsmouth, England, on 13 May 1787 to found the penal colony that became the first European settlement in Australia. Travelling from England, they arrived in Botany Bay (Sydney) over the period of 18 to 20 January 1788, taking 250 to 252 days from departure to final arrival. What many do not realize is that there actually was a set of the Writings on this voyage. As a result, the teachings for the

New Church have been in Australia as long as western civilization has been here.

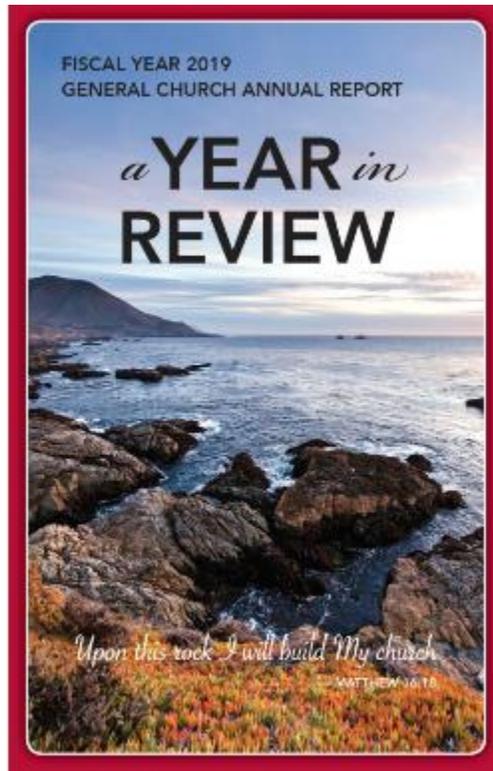
Since then the teachings have further spread around the country, with New Church congregations in Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney. These are run by the “New Church in Australia,” but the GC has congregations in Perth and Sydney as well. The NCIA and the GC work cooperatively where possible, including a national camp/retreat that is held every year in January. Part of the fun is that the site changes nearly every year, so it’s a new experience and chance to see a different part of the country. We get visitors to our retreat from all around Australia and the world! We’d encourage you to come and join us! Check us out at www.newchurch.net.au



Healthy Church Match

The **Healthy Church Match** campaign reached its final year. The program began in 2009 providing a dollar-for-dollar match to assist any General Church congregation with local fund-raising initiatives. The General Church, through this match program, helped congregations meet their targets at an accelerated rate, resulting in greater autonomy with five congregations eliminating their operating grants from the GC. The **General Church matched \$10,035,131** of contributions from more than **700 donors**.

General Church Annual Report FY19



Click here to [read](#) the fiscal year 2019 highlights.

AmazonSmile

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