

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:

The Ivyland New Church, just up the road from Bryn Athyn, just celebrated the 25th anniversary of their building. When the Rev. Bob Jungé founded the congregation, they used rented facilities for several years before finding a building. The building they found was a pole barn which they transformed with extensive volunteer labor into a lovely and useful church building.

At the celebration all the previous and current pastors spoke, or had messages read. Humorous facts were presented in between (did you know that Ivyland was named for the poison ivy covering the area? Or that there have been more than 1,200 baptisms into the New Church performed in the church building?), and then all gathered for a wonderful grilled meal under a tent. It was a delightful occasion illustrating the congregation's warmth and spirit – and their ability to get things done!

One of my pleasures as Executive Bishop is to serve as Chancellor of the Academy. It is amazing to see everything happening there – at the [Academy of the New Church Secondary Schools](#), [Bryn Athyn College](#), [Glencairn Museum](#) and [Cairnwood Estate](#). I strongly encourage you to look at their websites where many photos and videos are posted of their amazing events and what they are doing for the development of the New Church in this world.

Sincerely,

Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith

brian.keith@newchurch.org

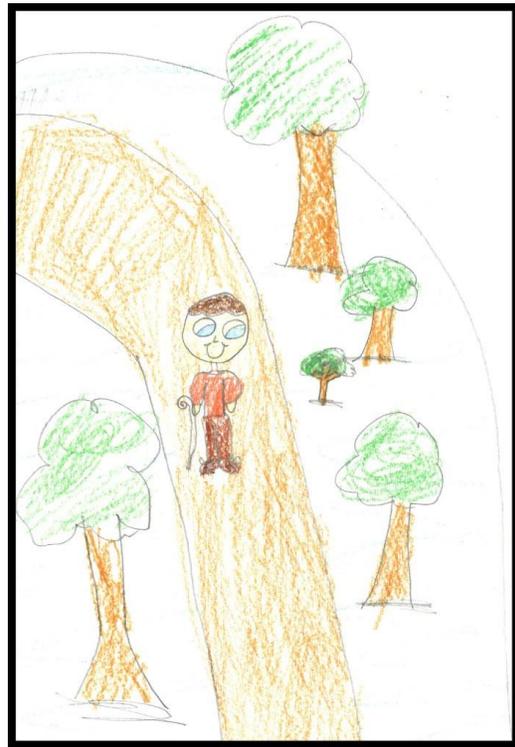


Subscribe to the New Church Vineyard Website

Keep up to date about great new resources on New Church Vineyard by [subscribing](#) to our email list! With this free service you will be notified by email a few times a month about new highlights and other special features.

New Church Vineyard *Highlights* focus on a spiritual topic or a story from the Word. They provide food for thought and links to readings, projects and activities for various age groups in a similar way to how collections were presented on the original New Church Vineyard site. The *Highlight* shown here, “My Light and My Salvation”, explores the power of the Lord’s Word to lead us to heaven. See the growing list of *Highlights* [here](#).

We have just started asking families to create and photograph pictures of certain projects and activities for us to feature on our homepage. For example, there is a project called “Picture Someone Who Is in Heaven.” It asks, “Do you have a grandparent, aunt or uncle, or friend who is in the spiritual world? Talk about what this person might be doing there. How would he or she be useful to others? What do you think this person is enjoying for recreation? Now draw a picture of him or her in heaven.” Here is a picture called “Grandpa in Heaven” that Erelah, age 8, drew to illustrate the project on our homepage.



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FaithBuilder for Teens

General Church Education has developed a series of new easy-preparation video-based lessons for teens. FaithBuilder offers a total of 120 lessons for ages 12-16, suitable for Sunday schools, families and classrooms. Lessons include New Church background, warm-ups, video links, varied discussion questions and more. Lessons take 20-30 minutes. Years 1, 2, and 4 explore core New Church ideas such as the Lord, Divine providence, marriage and eternal life. Year 3 is an in-depth study of the Gospel of John. Festival lessons for Christmas, Easter, New Church Day and Swedenborg's birthday are included. Each lesson stands alone. All lessons are available for free download at www.newchurchvineyard.org.



OUTREACH

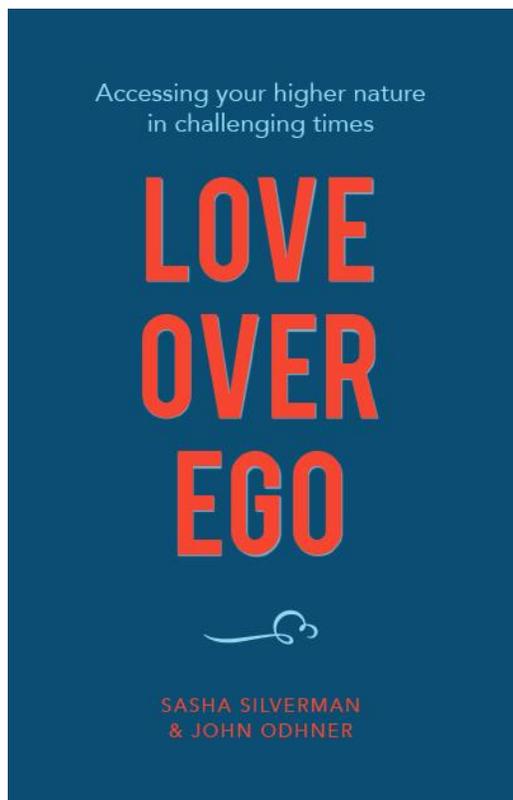
Connecting with Newcomers

Newchurch.org continues to increase its reach by more than 30% compared to 2016. For example, 2017 had a total of 297,461 users compared to 214,155 in 2016. New Church Outreach has the amazing opportunity to serve a large group of people introducing many to the teachings of the New Church. Rob Andrews and John Odhner primarily manage the website. They continue to have conversations with readers who write-in. The most common topics surround forgiveness, loss of a loved one, anxiety and grief. Here is one of many connections that have been made in recent months:

“...I’m so happy that I stumbled across the website. It was truly an act of God. I guess all there is left to do is just continue to have faith, believe, and trust in God, even if I still suffer physically. Just like you said, the answer to my healing from God might not be now but later on, until then I will thank him in advance and continue to be grateful that I’ve lived to see another sunrise and sunset. Thank you for taking the time to respond. You didn’t have to do it but I’m glad you did. I was always told there are angels among us. Bless you.”

Excerpt from *New Church Life*, [March/April 2018 issue](#).

***Love Over Ego* / 2018 Journey Program**



Love Over Ego follows the Biblical story of Daniel from his early days as a child captive in Babylon, to becoming one of the most respected leaders of the nation. As Daniel and his friends boldly face the powerful Babylonian rulers, we glimpse ways that vanity, manipulation and the desire to control never hold up to the grounding power of confidence, love and true self-worth.

The story offers a rich narrative for exploring questions such as: how do we find our identity? On what qualities do we base true self-esteem? What is the difference between arrogance and genuine confidence?

For times when we find ourselves getting lost in a self-focused mindset, *Love Over Ego* challenges us to remember what matters most. We invite you to join us in this program, as we practice letting genuine love take priority in our lives.

Coming soon--This book will be available to order on www.newchristianresources.org.

Meet a Minister | Bishop Selection Process

In this edition of "meet a minister" you will meet not one, but six ministers. This coming June (2018) the members of the Council of the Clergy will nominate a person to serve as the next Executive Bishop of the General Church. The following are the nominees for Executive Bishop, in alphabetical order:

- Erik Buss, Assistant Pastor of Bryn Athyn Church
- Peter Buss, Jr., Assistant to the Bishop
- Glenn "Mac" Frazier, Associate Pastor of Glenview New Church
- Bradley Heinrichs, Head Pastor of Carmel New Church & School, EVP of General Church in Canada
- David Lindrooth, Director of General Church Outreach
- Derrick Lumsden, Pastor of Sower's Chapel in Sarver, Pennsylvania

[Click here](#) to learn about the bishop selection process and to learn more about the nominees.

New Church Spotlight | Bryn Athyn Church

The **Bryn Athyn Church congregation** began offering **Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University** class three years ago. This life-changing program teaches families and individuals how to handle their money through Biblical, common sense principles and small group accountability. As they work on a total money makeover, the average family pays off \$5,300 in debt and saves \$2,700 in the first 91 days after beginning FPU and is completely out of debt, except for the mortgage, in 18 to 24 months.

As people walk through FPU together, marriages are healed as couples get on the same page about money, parents learn how to teach their children about money, singles are kept accountable to responsible money management, and relationships within the church grow. If you would like to learn more about leading or joining a group, contact diana.mergen@brynathynchurch.org or visit daveramsey.com/fpu.



Gifts from Your Will or Trust

Here is a way you can help the church by using assets from your estate. Have you considered the General Church or your local congregation in your will?

Leave a gift that will enable the church to continue its work for years to come through a charitable bequest.

To learn more, reach out to Mark Wyncoll, Planned Giving Coordinator, at (267) 502-2423 or mark.wyncoll@newchurch.org



General Church Membership

Anyone is invited to participate in the worship and the life of the New Church. To become a member of the General Church, you must be 1) baptized into the faith of the New Church; 2) subscribe to the principles and purposes of the General Church; and 3) be at least 20 years of age.

[Become a Member](#)

[Find a New Church congregation near you.](#)

Not near a New Church congregation?

[Join a live-streamed worship service.](#)

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If our newsletter is worthy, please share with others.



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Thank you!