

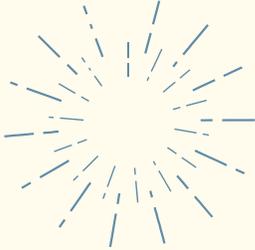


New Church

OCTOBER 2022

BISHOP'S NEWSLETTER

General Church vision and community



"Divine Providence is present within the smallest details of all, and people in the stream of providence are being carried along constantly towards happier things, whatever appearance the means may present."

Arcana Coelestia 8478

Friends,

I find it helpful to consider why the church exists and why the Lord invites us to participate. The purpose of the church stems from the Lord's greatest intention for all humans: that we are prepared by Him for the life of heaven. The church is a community that is intended to reflect heaven on earth – or at least as much as possible given that we as people are flawed, imperfect and not very practiced at being angelic! Still, it is a place where people should be able to enjoy something of the life of heaven. By extension, it is a community that can share the goodness of that life with others.

For the community to reflect heaven, we as participants need to learn how to interact with each other like angels. Living like an angel requires some knowledge of what heaven is like - it requires that we know what angels like to do and why they choose to do what they do. This is where the Word comes in. The Word is the source of information from the Lord about how to live like an angel. You could say it is an instruction manual (of sorts) on how to be an angel. The Word also provides contrast on the unfortunate consequences of what life can be like when reject that information in favor of living for ourselves and our own materialistic purposes. Since heaven is a higher dimension than our worldly plane, the information about heavenly life needs to come to us from a heavenly source (New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrines #107).

Heaven is an environment of indescribable happiness, true peace, and deep love. The New Church can reflect that. The origin of that happiness is the love that constantly streams from the Lord, and truth is the body that surrounds that Love like its soul. Truth is therefore the form that the Lord's goodness takes allowing us to see and experience it. Why is this important? Because the Lord's life flowing into heaven is what makes heaven "heaven". It is also what makes the church alive. The purpose we are invited to embrace in the church is to engage with the Lord, reaching for His truths and seeking to understand how they teach us to share heaven with others. The New Church is therefore a community that is unique in its heavenly origin. All are invited to participate in the life offered through the truths of heaven, and we hope to walk alongside each of you on the path towards the Lord's heavenly peace.

Warm regards,

David

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CONNECT TO SCRIPTURE

Everyone has his own particular life... everyone has his own identity. This is clearly apparent from people's faces. No one's face is exactly like that of another, nor can it be to eternity. That is because no two minds are alike, and the mind begets the face; for the face is an image of the mind, and the mind draws its origin and form from the person's life.

Conjugal Love 524

Yes, all life comes from the Lord alone, and no we cannot live at all without Him. However, there is great importance in receiving this life from the Lord and living it as if it were our own. The number from Conjugal Love goes on to say that all of heaven is made up due to the infinite variety of each individual angel's identity as to their souls and minds. Heaven would be dispersed if it weren't so. Angels acknowledge more than anyone else on earth that their lives are not theirs, yet because of that acknowledgement they get to experience the highest sense of identity and feel their lives distinctly as their own more than anyone else on earth.

On that note one of the best ways you can contribute to the establishment of the Church on earth is by being the best version of yourself that you can be; your soul and your life is your identity. You can't have that without feeling and acting like your life comes from you. A relationship with the Lord isn't possible without us feeling like our lives are ours, but also not possible without internally acknowledging that all life is from the Lord. He has given you everything it takes to be your best.

Everything we need to know about being the best we can be is in the Word where the Lord says things like "wash yourselves, make yourselves clean," and "seek good and not evil, that you may live," and "I have come so that they may have life, and have it in abundance." So may you continue to turn to the Lord and hear Him, let Him bless you and the world by being your truest self.

~ Rev. Ryan Sandstrom, Pastor, Ivyland New Church (pictured below)

I have been the pastor at Ivyland New Church for 10 years now and I am happy to continue serving this "great little" community. The people here are very dedicated to the mission of our church and we look forward to hopefully seeing some growth from the greater community. If you're ever in town near us we'd love to see you! Much has changed for me personally in the past few years which has renewed and strengthened my hope in conjugal love and divine providence. We should be so blessed to have such clear and comforting teachings in the Heavenly Doctrine!

My kids are racing through school with one already in her second year of college, another on his way to high school graduation, and two others steadily working their way up. Aside from church and family I love to spend time making pencil drawings. I find it is a satisfying way to "recreate" some of the Lord's finest creations!



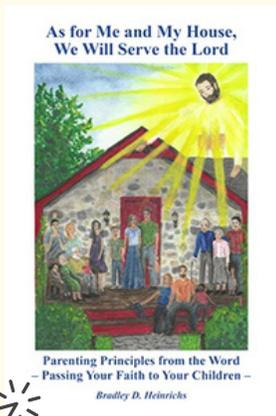
OFFICE OF OUTREACH

Connect with New Church thought via interviews, reflections, and tools for spiritual growth on our YouTube channel. Videos this year tally nearly 2 million views, and counting - please [subscribe, like, and share](#) to help our videos reach more people!



OFFICE OF EDUCATION | GCED

2022-2023 School Year: More than 700 students have begun the school year across North American and South African General Church schools. The Central Office faculty support this year will include 44 classroom visits and observations by senior teachers and other GCED staff.



Preparing for Thanksgiving: The holiday season approaches - consider enjoying one of the many seasonal activities on New Church Vineyard with family as we celebrate Thanksgiving. [Visit the site](#) to explore options for all ages including [family activities](#) and those [tailored to young children](#).

GCED Publication: Assistant Bishop Brad Heinrichs has released a new book on New Church parenting, *As For Me And My House, We Will Serve The Lord* (pictured left.) Heinrichs' collection of short essays on twenty guiding principles from the Word supports parents and caregivers in their efforts to inspire faith early in life. [Digital](#) and [print copies](#) are both available.



WHAT WE'RE CHEERING FOR | SOCIETY NEWS

- The Bryn Athyn Society announced plans for a **new elementary school and society complex** last fall. After a successful capital campaign, the Building Committee has reported that design development is nearly complete, and construction is expected to begin during the summer of 2023.
- General Church members and staff are grateful to the following teachers who retired at the end of the 2021-2022 school year, each after many years of dedicated service to their students:
 - Bryn Athyn Church School: **Debbie Cook, Cara Dibb, Liz Switzer, & Eric Carswell**
 - Washington New Church School: **Kim Maxwell**
- The General Church School System has welcomed 8 new teachers to our classrooms this fall:
 - Bryn Athyn Church School: **Anna Blair, Rachel Elphick, Monica Gruber, Ivan Maddock**
 - Washington New Church School: **Jordan Brunne, Tabitha Judson** (new to full-time)
 - Carmel New Church School: **Mary Cassels**
 - Glenview New Church School: **Emily Pietrasiak** (new to full-time)
- **New Church Career Network** was founded with the goal of connecting New Church people to opportunities for usefulness through their occupation. [Click here to get involved or learn more](#) about how NCCN facilitates **networking, mentorship, job connections, and community building**.