

New Church of Concord Beginning of Year Report

September 2010

Let Your Light Give Brightness

"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Neither do they burn a lamp, and put it under the bushel, but on the lampstand, and it gives brightness to all who are in the house. So let your light give brightness before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in the heavens." (Matthew 5:14-16)



Our theme this year is "Let your light give brightness." There are many reasons why we might feel timid or hesitant at times to share the teachings of the New Church: We don't feel like we can explain them very well; we don't want others to feel like we're being arrogant; we feel embarrassed that perhaps these teachings will come across as too ethereal or intellectual; what if people simply think we're crazy or reject the teachings that we hold so dear? All of these thoughts and emotions are tactics that the hells use to try to make sure we don't share the teachings of the New Church with others. The hells would much prefer that we keep this light under a bushel. Part of the goal of this year's theme is to help us get beyond these hellish fears. The doctrines of the New Church are so needed in the world today. They have the power to heal people, to bring joy and meaning to their lives, and

most importantly they have the power to introduce people to a more living relationship with the Lord Himself. "Letting your light give brightness" is about getting beyond our fears, and instead proclaiming the good news of the Lord's Second Advent with clarity, confidence, and joy.

Besides becoming better at actively sharing the doctrines of the New Church with others, there is another more personal lesson in this theme. All doctrine leads to what is good. All teachings are meant to show us how to better love the Lord and our neighbor. Because of this, "letting your light give brightness" is about using the teachings of the Lord's Word to actually live a life of love and charity. Your light is not truly "bright" if you are not doing this.

Even from the perspective of sharing New Church doctrine with others, this second message is an important one. "Letting your light give brightness" is much more than just sharing doctrines with other people on an intellectual level. It's about demonstrating through the life you live the GOOD affect those doctrines can have on you. Notice in the passage above that it is not just a city that cannot be hidden; it is a city "set on a mountain"! "Mountains" represent love or the goodness of life. Sharing ideas alone is not going to bring true brightness to the world. It is when you both share the doctrines themselves AND allow them to affect your own life that you will be "letting your light give brightness".

"This was said to the disciples, by whom the church which is in truths from good is meant...That it is not the truth unless it is from good is signified by 'a city that is set on a mountain cannot be hid,' 'a city on a mountain' meaning truth from good." (Apocalypse Explained 405)

Join us on Sunday, September 12th, at 10:30am to celebrate the beginning of the fall season:

- * Opening worship service on this year's theme - "Let Your Light Give Brightness"
- * First Sunday school of the year for children.
- * See friends and family.
- * Join us at Laird and Freya's after church for swimming and lunch. Bring your own lunch. Drinks, condiments, and a hot grill will be provided.

Come and Get a Spiritual Drink!

We're offering a variety of opportunities for spiritual study and reflection this year. Giving people the opportunity to Worship the Lord and study His Word in the light of the Writings is what our church is all about. Please view our calendar at www.newchurchconcord.org for specific information about specific days and times for our classes and events, or contact the Pastor. We hope you can join us for some of the following spiritual sustenance:

Book of Revelation, Wednesdays, 7:30pm: Our Wednesday evening class is continuing to read through the book of Revelation. Because this book is such an important one for the New Church we want to give as many people as possible the opportunity to join us. You can attend classes in person and/or be involved online where you can get readings and be involved in an online discussion. We begin on Wednesday, September 22nd, and meet every other week. Contact the Pastor for more information about online involvement.



Friday Morning Class, 9:30am: Join us as we continue our way through the *Arcana Caelestia*. This book of the Writings explains the spiritual meaning of the stories in Genesis and Exodus. This class has a lot of time for discussion and questions. First class is on September 17th.

Monthly Doctrinal Classes: This year we will be alternating our monthly classes between Friday and Saturday nights. We will also be alternating between having potluck dinners and potluck desserts. Check out the church calendar for dates and times. These classes touch on a variety of doctrinal topics and also look at how New Church teachings relate to current events.



Young Adults, Wednesdays, 7:00pm: Young adults ages 18 - 35 meet every other Wednesday at different people's homes for dinner and to talk about a variety of topics. This year we will be working our way through the minor prophets. If you're a young adult or know of one in the area that might like to know more about this group let the Pastor know.

Other: Keep an eye out for other classes and "spiritual drink" opportunities throughout the year, including a spiritual growth Journey program in the Spring of 2011.

Worship and Sunday School

We meet every Sunday at 10:30am for worship. Our services include a talk for child followed by a sermon for adults. We also offer a variety of Sunday school classes for various ages:

Level 1 Lambs: ages 3 - 7 (weekly during adult sermon)

Level 2 Samuels: ages 8 - 12 (weekly during adult sermon)

Level 3 Isaacs: ages 13 - 18 (every other Sunday at 9:30am)

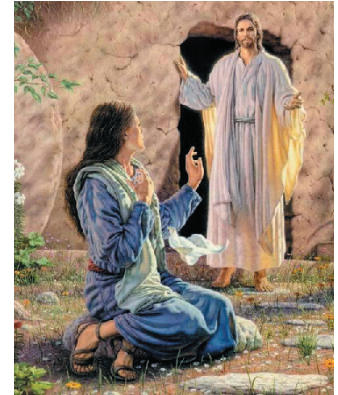
Level 4 Disciples: adults (contact Pastor for more information)

Society Announcements

“Come and See” Services - Invite a Friend to Church

When you share the New Church and it's teachings with a person you are giving them an incredible gift. You are helping to introduce them into a new and living relationship with the Lord! This year we will be working to help people feel more comfortable talking about the New Church and inviting people to various classes and events at the New Church of Concord. To help with this we will be having a monthly “Come and See” service. These services won't be vastly different from our current services but there will be some changes:

- * The hymns will be well known to other Christians.
- * The sermon will be more addressed to people unfamiliar with New Church ideas.
- * The topic will be chosen with visitors in mind.
- * There will be time for questions and discussion after the service.



These service will be advertised in various ways. But we are mostly hoping that these services will give you the opportunity to feel more comfortable inviting someone to church. We'll make sure you even have the topic well ahead of time so you can share that as well. When Nathaniel asked Philip if anything good could come out of Nazareth, Philip said to him, “Come and see!” (John 1:46) These services are an opportunity to invite those who are not yet familiar with the New Church to “Come and see” the beautiful teachings that the Lord has now made known to us. Join us and invite a friend to join us on **Sunday, October 3rd**, for our first “Come and see!” service.

Church choirs and other musical talents

Inga as always is looking for volunteers to join the children's and adult choirs. In addition, she would like to have more people offering their musical talents as preludes, interludes or postludes. Please contact her directly at inga@juilliardalumni if you are interested in any of these activities.



*“It is Divine Truth going forth from the Lord that has all power.”
(Heaven and Hell 137)*

Teen Retreat Weekend

I must say that we really do have a fantastic group of teens! We had a great weekend up in Vermont this summer. There was singing around the camp fire, hiking, swimming, great food, a labyrinth, projects, and great discussions, all around our theme: “The POWER of the Word”. Thank you so much to Joan and Chris for opening their home and refrigerator to us; to Rob and Jane for heading up the weekend; to Brynna and Isaac for coming along as chaperones and good mentors for our kids; and to the teens themselves. It was a memorable weekend of fun, getting to know each other better, and most importantly learning from the Lord's Word.

Get Involved - Have Fun and Serve Your Church

Here are a few events to look forward to in the coming year. Do any of these look like things that you might enjoy helping out with? Mark your calendars and contact Matthew if something peaks your interest! Visit our website for a full calendar of this year's events.

Fall Clean Up	Saturday, November 13th, 9am
Community Christmas Sing	Sunday, December 5th, 2pm
Children's Christmas Party	Saturday afternoon, December 11th.
Christmas Tableaux & Potluck	Sunday, December 19th, 4:30pm
Swedenborg's Birthday Event	Saturday evening, January 29th
Children's Swedenborg Birthday Event	Sunday, January 30th
Journey Program: PAUSE	January 30th - March 6th
Easter Tableaux	Sunday, April 17th
June 19th Service and Events	Sunday, June 19th

Swedenborg Center Series: Integrating Science and Spirituality Winter/Spring 2011

Blogging: We will soon be launching our own blog. We sure to check it out and contribute.

Outreach Material: Help us created new pamphlets, handouts, and other literature that will help us better share the New Church with others.

Gardening: We can always use help keeping our gardens up.

Healthy Church Match (HCM) - A Wonderful Opportunity to Give!

Earlier this year our Society applied and was accepted as a participant in the General Church Healthy Match program, along with six other societies. This program is designed to help societies raise capital to fulfill the goals of their respective strategic plans. The goals of our plan are focused on raising capital in three areas; outreach, paying off our loans to the General Church and refurbishing our chancel and front windows. The total matching grant available to us is \$130,000 and we have four years to raise this amount.

The HCM works as follows: For every dollar that we raise in the name of the New Church of Concord the General Church will match it. This past May the Glencairn Foundation announced that between now and year end (December 31, 2010) they will also match whatever Concord raises -up to \$45,000. So for every dollar you contribute to Concord's HCM program Concord will receive a total of three dollars toward our capital goals.

It is very important to note that these HCM contributions should be over and above your contributions to Concord's annual fund, because if we fund our capital projects but fail to meet our day to day budget items such as utilities and salaries -we will be going in reverse.

To make a contribution to the HCM send a check to:

Wayne Parker
General Church Development Office
Box 708
Bryn Athyn PA 19009

Please note on the contribution that it is for the New Church of Concord HCM. If you have any questions please contact Laird Pendleton. Also it would be helpful in our planning if you notify Laird that you plan to contribute to the HCM. Many thanks!

Community Corner

Engagement

I'm very happy to announce the engagement of Chris David and Kristen Novak. They are planning a wedding in the summer of 2011. We wish them all the best as they prepare for their marriage.

"Regarded from its origin and correspondence, Conjugal Love is celestial, spiritual, holy, pure, and clean, above every other love which is with the angels of heaven and with the people of the Church." (Conjugal Love 71)

From Sylvia

As some of you may know, I will be living in Bryn Athyn over the coming year. I was asked to step in and teach many of Kristin King's classes, as she has had to step up to the office of President of the College. It's hard to leave you and my home, yet this is such a grand opportunity to be useful to my favorite college, the very school that changed my life when I went there as a Freshman.

Holland and I will maintain our home in Sutton. Holland will continue to work in Massachusetts and to commute on weekends (weather and energy permitting). I, in turn, will be living on campus in a very nice suite (in a brand new dormitory). And I shall try to come up North at least once a month. This shift in our lives will be challenging, no doubt, but also quite wonderful. I didn't want to leave without saying good-bye. I still consider myself a member of the church in Concord and will make contributions accordingly. So dear Treasurer, don't forget me when you ask for pledges this year! I wish you all a great end of summer!

Love, Sylvia

Jared Simons Heads to the Academy

Jared has chosen to spend his Junior year of high school at the Academy of the New Church, In Bryn Athyn, PA. We will miss his presence in the congregation but wish him all the best in the coming year. We look forward to seeing him when he comes home to visit!

