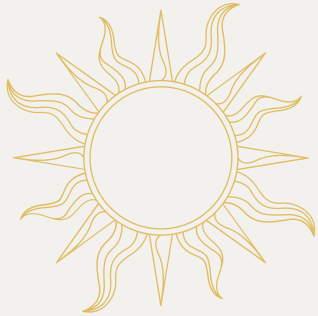




New Church

MAY 2023

BISHOP'S NEWSLETTER



"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,

The term “repentance” seems to evoke a negative reaction in many people today. When they hear their church telling them that repentance is necessary, they often view it as something unpleasant, gloomy, and onerous – a practice designed to make people feel bad about themselves and to be riddled with guilt! However, in the New Church, we should be able to move beyond these misconceptions about repentance and come to see that it is a process the Lord gives us so that we can be free and experience genuine joy. As the Lord said, **“There will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance”** (Luke 15:7).

New Church doctrine offers an encouraging reframing of what repentance is and why we need to do it. We’re told that *“repentance is the first essential of the church, and that so far as a person repents his sins are put away, and so far as they are put away, they are forgiven”* (TCR 510). The reason repentance is considered the first essential of the church is because the evils of our heredity to which we are prone and have chosen to engage in, not only block the Lord’s entrance into our lives, but they also keep us trapped in harmful behaviors and enslaved by selfish desires. The hells would like nothing more than for us to stay prisoners to our evils, so they do everything in their power to convince us that we don’t need to change.

However, repentance is the process which can FREE us from the grasp of our hellish tendencies and chosen evils that are in opposition to the Lord’s Word. In the Lord’s mercy He has made the process easy to learn. In its most concise form, it is only four steps: *“Examining oneself, recognizing and acknowledging one’s sins, praying to the Lord, and beginning a new life”* (TCR 528).

One thing that ties us all together as human beings and as a church is that we are all sinners who need to repent! The evils that we struggle with and fight against may be different, but the commonality that we share is the need to change. Repentance is the tool the Lord provides to free us from the misery of hell and enable us to experience the joy of heaven. And so, the Lord assures us: **“As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent”** (Revelation 3:19).

With affection,

Brad

Assistant Bishop

brad.heinrichs@newchurch.org

You are invited to read Brad's full article in [New Church Life](#), pg 497.

CONNECT TO SCRIPTURE

That the church is according to its doctrine, and that the doctrine is from the Word, is known. But still it is not doctrine which establishes the church, but the wholeness and purity of the doctrine, consequently the understanding of the Word.

(TCR 245)

These words reflect the admonition at the end of the Apocalypse (22:18,19) to not add or take away words from the book. This means “that nothing is to be added or taken away, which destroys the truths of doctrine in this book now opened by the Lord.” (AR 957:3)

“The teachings of the New Church are all essentials, in each of which there is heaven and the church,” (BE 97) Therefore it is a necessity to have the Doctrine in its wholeness and purity to truly understand the Word, for this is what establishes the Church in its general form.

We are blessed to have today what the Lord promised His apostles in the Gospel of John (16:12,13). The Spirit of Truth has indeed come to guide us into all truth. This truth is found in its purity and wholeness in all that Swedenborg received and wrote from the Lord (TCR 799). “What came from the Lord was written; what came from angels was not.” (AE 1183)

What a joy
it is to have
in one’s
hands...“the
genuine
truths
drawn out
of the Word
from the
mouth of
the Lord”
(Inv. 38).

In a letter to the King of Sweden, Swedenborg refers to the memorable relation (CL 532) listing all the wonderful new teachings the Lord has revealed: the internal sense of the Word, the correspondences in the sacraments, the Earths in the Universe, and many more. Swedenborg then testifies: “This is the whole truth and a reality, without the least fallacy.”

What a joy it is to have in one’s hands the arcana of heaven, angelic wisdom, the spiritual sense, “genuine truths drawn out of the Word from the mouth of the Lord” (Inv. 38). What a gift it is to be able to trust every word and phrase with a simple affirmative spirit of genuine faith, to understand the heavens and the world around us, and apply this to our life, our marriage, our children, our country, our schools, our science, art and literature, our everything.

~ Rev. Andy Heilman

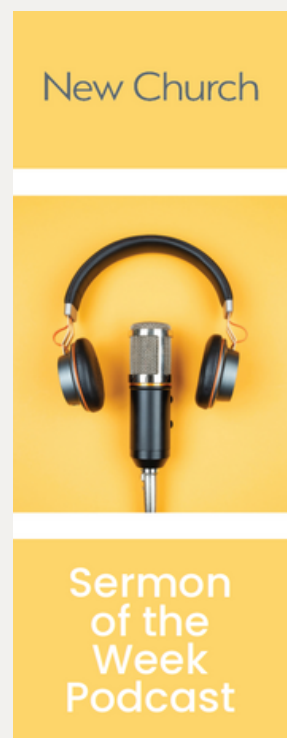


I (Andy, pictured left with wife, Carrie) was a boy on Park Lane in Glenview, then a student in Bryn Athyn and Chicago, but life truly began when I met Carrie Friesen from Dawson Creek at the start of theological school. Soon after our marriage we moved to Brazil, where I was pastor for 5 years. Then, after 7 years at the Academy, we moved to Kempton where our sixth child was born. We have been in Kempton now for 33 years, and each year has been more full of wonder and joy than the year before – serving the Kempton society and school, visiting and zooming into Brazil, working with the Heavenly Doctrine Publishing Foundation, and fully enjoying our children and grandchildren.

OFFICE OF OUTREACH

The **Sermon of the Week** podcast features audio recordings from New Church ministers around the world in digital format. The podcast has over 7,000 downloads so far. Come and hear why it's getting so much positive feedback! New curated episodes appear every Saturday. Listen wherever you are:

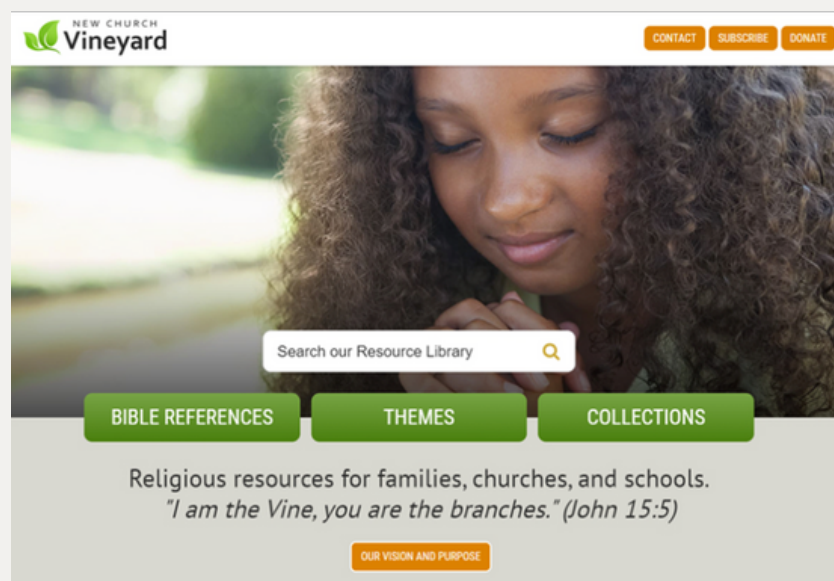
[Spotify](#)  [Apple Podcasts](#)  [Google Podcasts](#) 



Don't forget to subscribe to GC Outreach's **Daily Inspirations** email series, which delivers bitesize wisdom from the Writings to your inbox once a day. Subscribe [here!](#)

OFFICE OF EDUCATION | GCED

GCED is excited to announce an **update to our [New Church Vineyard website!](#)** The new interface offers a more visual, streamlined experience for users and a wealth of new materials.



Visit to:

- See our new [Collections](#) section and access our premium programs
- Browse resources on key spiritual [Themes](#)
- [Subscribe to our highlight emails](#) to learn about resources for all ages
- [Contact us](#) to let us know what you think!

[Celebrate New Church Day!](#)

Click above to find readings by Dan Goodenough and Patrick Rose, projects such as a woman clothed with the sun representation or a sun cake, and other ideas to help you celebrate the birthday of our church.

WHAT WE'RE CHEERING FOR | SOCIETY NEWS

- Bishop Buss made a trip to South Korea in April and was able to personally extend congratulations and **gratitude to Rev. Yang, Gyu Dae** of South Korea on his retirement from active ministry after **40 years of faithful service**. A celebratory dinner (pictured right) was arranged for him and his wife, Mrs. Eun, Suk Hee. Rev. Yang served most recently as Pastor of the Seoul New Church and as National Pastor for South Korea.



- General Church would like to thank the following individuals, as their service comes to an end, for their participation on the General Church Board:
 - **Kay Alden** (Bryn Athyn, PA), **Stephen Ball** (Mitchellville, MD), **Jake Brown** (Huntingdon Valley, PA), **Ian Carswell** (Claremont, NH), **Axel Coulibaly** (Monrovia, Liberia), **Gustav Fornander** (Stockholm, Sweden), and **Mary Jane Junge** (Bryn Athyn, PA).
- The 2023 General Church Corporation Meeting will be held on **June 24th at 3pm** at Pendleton Hall (2965 College Drive, Bryn Athyn, PA) and online. If you are a member who would like to attend virtually, please reach out to memberservices@newchurch.org for online access.



- Our fiscal year ends June 30th. We'd love your support to help with the work of the General Church; please click left to **invest in your church community**.

- Choose from **over a dozen church services** that stream every Sunday, available to you wherever you are. Find [streamed services here](#), or [browse archived sermons and talks](#) ready for your listening at any time.