



The Country Courier

News from The Sower's Chapel

May 2021

THE VIRTUE OF PATIENCE

The country is slowly starting to emerge from challenges of the last year or so. There is light at the end of the tunnel. However, it is impossible right now to know when we will fully emerge from all of this.

Patience is therefore a virtue. We need to be patient with the conditions around us that we are unable to control, and more importantly, we need to be patient with each other. Every person is dealing with today's reality in the best way they know how.

When it comes to patience, we find the Lord speaking to the apostle John on the Isle of Patmos and praising the congregation of the fledgling church of Ephesus:

To the angel of the church of Ephesus write: "These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil" (Revelation 2:1, 2)

We find the Lord also praising the virtue of patience later in Revelation chapter 13, with the concept of, "the patience of the faith of the saints." (Revelation 13:10)

It can be hard to wait out a difficult situation. Yet the Lord tells us that this is often what we must do. He also teaches us that when He speaks of patience in His Word, He is not just referring to enduring through some unpleasant natural experience. The inner meaning of these references is the need to hang in there through the trials of spiritual temptations. He says:

Patience symbolizes endurance in temptations or trials, and an examination then of a person's character in respect to his or her living in accordance with the Lord's commandments and to that person's faith in the Lord. (Apocalypse Revealed 593)

Spiritual 'patience' is therefore the process of personal transformation. None of us becomes angelic overnight. Our shortcomings might stay with us even though we wish they were gone. Still, while we might not be seeing much obvious progress, the Lord is working within us, creating the circumstances in which that problem will one day disappear.

Few if any of us have reached the end of that journey. This means that there will be things about others that irritate us, with the same being true in reverse. We all need to be as patient as we can with each other.

We are all being reformed by the Lord, little by little and step by step until we become the angel that He intends for us to be. Until then our flaws will often show. It is vital that we give each other space to grow. Finding fault or getting annoyed is never helpful to the other person or to us. Instead, we should strive with the Lord's help to exercise "the patience of the faith of the saints."

- Garry

MAY MEETINGS

Tuesdays 11:00 am - John Discussion at Church

Tuesdays & Thursdays 9:00 am - Pastor at church

Tuesday, May 4, 7:00 pm - Pastor's Council

Tuesday, May 11, 7:00 pm - Board of Trustees

SUMMARY OF THE 4/20/21 ANNUAL MEETING

A quorum was achieved with 12 members attending. Garry opened with a passage from Heavenly Secrets, and the minutes for last year's annual meeting and the September special meeting were read and accepted.

Garry gave his Pastor's Report for his first year here. We survived COVID intact. We need to build on our strengths in an effort to engage our community. He suggested we have a society luncheon monthly. Several people looked forward to our returning to our "pre-COVID" form with choir, Bible School, kids singing, Memorial Day and so on. The question of masks (to wear or not to wear) was raised and Garry felt this would come down to individual choice.

Church news included the fact that Pittsburgh would be getting a new pastor July 1. Until we can support a pastor full-time, 25% of Garry's time and salary will be directed by the General Church.

Dan reported on his philosophy as to the taking of minutes. This "secretary's report" is specified in the bylaws.

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100 Iron Bridge Rd. • Sarver PA 16055

Rev. Garry Walsh, Pastor • (301) 741-6397

E-mail: Rev.Garry.Walsh@gmail.com

[Web page: www.sowerschapel.org](http://www.sowerschapel.org)

Miriam Heilman, Editor • e-mail: miriam.heilman@gmail.com

Bill reported, as treasurer, that our basket for the first four months has been strong. Garry expressed his gratitude. The rent situation is settled with two tenants and steady rent revenues. The gas lease for the year so far has been a big help although it will fluctuate according to market. The pastors salary/benefit amounts to, on average, \$6,732/month. Bill stated that an expense-based budget of \$115,000 was reasonable, projecting a revenue of \$125,000 for the year. The sum of our accounts (checking, special and money market) as of 4/13/21 was \$77,807.89 and the Morgan Stanley account as of 1/1/21 was \$26,263.74. The report was accepted.

The nominating committee presented the following slate for the new board: Rachel Gruver for member at large for 3 years (Ben Brown retiring, thanks to Ben for his service); Glenn for his 2nd 3 year term, Bill K for treasurer for 1 year and Dan for secretary for 1 year. The slate was approved.

Various committees reported: Alfred on the Buildings: There are some small things still to accomplish e.g. a railing at the manse; straighten up the swing and look for replacement next year; repair or replace outside ballasts; the Board has been discussing replacing the carpet and linoleum in the social area of the church. Jim on Grounds: Mowing is lined up and going well. We still need to take down large trees next the church; he's in touch with Jarve. Trish on Sunday School: We have an adequate number of teachers. Laurel has introduced a nice program for older kids.

A list of tasks and volunteers (past and present) was circulated. We can see from it that the Society enjoys broad-based support. It also may serve as a guide for anyone who might wish to step up. The list will be put in the Courier (see page 3). We need to consider a work day sometime soon.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

— Dan Heilman, Secretary

GATHERING LEAVES UK - MOVED TO 2022

In an effort to welcome as many overseas visitors to Gathering Leaves as possible, the international retreat for Swedenborgian/New Church women has been moved forward once again, to 2022. Gathering Leaves at Purley Chase Centre in the UK will be Friday 26th to Monday 29th August 2022. The generous financial aid programme is expected to be offered as originally planned. Please contact alison.southcombe@purleychasecentre.org.uk to move your existing booking ahead to 2022, or to make a new booking.

POSITION OPEN:

GENERAL CHURCH ASSISTANT CONTROLLER

The General Church of the New Jerusalem (GNC) exists to provide for the worship of the Lord Jesus Christ, the spreading of the truths of the New Church throughout the world, the promotion of a useful life of service to others, and the treatment of others with care and wisdom. Its headquarters are in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, and it oversees dozens of congregations and elementary schools throughout the world. The General Church also works closely with sister organizations, the Academy of the New Church (ANC) and Bryn Athyn College (BAC) to advance and deliver religious education and programs at all levels, from pre-school through college.

The General Church is currently seeking an Assistant Controller who will reporting to Controller of the General Church and supervise Accounting Staff.

The Assistant Controller will be responsible for performing regular accounting functions for the General Church and supporting the Controller in the monthly and year-end closing. The ideal candidate will have experience reviewing and creating routine bank activity, completing account reconciliations, and following posting procedures for Revenue, Cash Receipts, Accounts Receivable, and Accounts Payable. Additionally, this function will have responsibilities for importing payroll related costs to assure the accuracy of costs and allocations.

This position will work closely with the Controller in the preparation of timely and accurate financial information. Creating journal entries, schedules, reviewing account analysis and account activity for accuracy and completeness. The Assistant Controller will be an integral part of working with external auditors through the annual audit.

Requirements include a bachelor's degree in accounting (preferred) or related business/finance field and a minimum of 5 years working in accounting or related field. Must have proficiency in computer applications; Microsoft Office Suite, Blackbaud Financial Edge (preferred). Attention to detail and accuracy is essential. Strong maturity and judgement in handling confidential information is a must.

Interested candidates should send a resume referencing position title to:

Karen Stoeller, Director of Human Resources

Email: Karen.Stoeller@anc-gc.org

Please reference the Assistant Controller position title in your correspondence.

The ANC and GC are equal opportunity employers.

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

Sower's Chapel succeeds largely due to the wonderful efforts of our team of volunteers. Much of this work goes unnoticed. However, if you have been volunteering, please know how appreciated your contributions have been. We could not function without you.

It would be ideal if everyone had at least one regular project that they were involved in. There are important things to be gained from finding ways to be useful. The New Church work *Secrets of Heaven 7038* talks about usefulness and how we serve the Lord through being useful, and how the love of useful service allows a person to be elevated into heaven where joy is found in serving the Lord and serving others.

The following chart lists our volunteers and the activities that they are involved in. It is probably an incomplete or slightly inaccurate list. This is because, as said before, many of our volunteer tasks get done out of sight and roles change over the years without records keeping track.

Please take a look at this list. This is a good chance to review the volunteer roles. We all need to be helping to keep The Sower's Chapel vibrant. And, if there is some task on the list that interests you, please let our pastor Garry know. If you are listed as being connected with a task that you no longer do or would like to stop doing, that is good to know also. Ultimately, a big part of the success of our congregation comes down to volunteerism.

Pastor, Board President: Rev. Garry Walsh

Treasurer: Bill Kronen Sr.

Secretary: Dan Heilman

Board of Trustees: Glenn Heilman, Chair
Alfred Brown
Emily Fennell
Rachel Gruver
Bill Kronen Jr.
Jim Lindsay Sr.

Building Maintenance: Alfred Brown

Grounds Maintenance: Jim Lindsay Sr., Coordinator
Alfred Brown
Jonny Hardt
Dan Heilman
Jim Lindsay Jr.
Al & Travis Lindsay

Music: Sally Parenti, Coordinator
Michelle Hardt
Anne Lindsay

Chancel Flowers etc.: Carol Kronen

Nursery: Emily Fennell
Rachel Gruver
Miriam Heilman
Carol Kronen
Theresa Poe

Sunday School: Trish Lindsay, Coordinator
Mary Lindsay
Laurel Walsh
Michelle Hardt
Maureen Rodgers
Lauren Miller
Travis Lindsay

Special Events: Zarah Blair, Coordinator

Building Cleaning: Zarah & Ken Blair

Sunday Refreshments: Zarah Blair
Marlene Brown
Theresa Poe

Ushers: Alfred Brown
Ben Brown
Russ Poe
Dan Heilman
Jim Lindsay
Travis Lindsay
Paul Shutters
Mike Brown

Sign: Bill Kronen Sr.
Dan Heilman

Courier, Calendar & Weekly Emails: Miriam Heilman

Sunday Bulletin: Bill Kronen Sr.

Live Streaming & Sound System: Travis Lindsay

Ronald McDonald House: Kate Kronen
Rachel Gruver

Memorial Day: Al Lindsay
Michelle Hardt
Kate Kronen

Golf Outing: Steve Rogers
Travis Lindsay
Michelle Hardt

