



New Church Canadian

A Bi-Monthly Newsletter of General Church in Canada

Issue 223

The First State of the World of Spirits also known as the State of Exteriors

Part 1 of a 3 part series on the World of Spirits

By Rev. James P. Cooper

While the Old Testament is essentially silent on the subject of the life to come, the New Testament records that the Lord Himself taught many parables about heaven. He used simple terms familiar to the farmers, shepherds, and merchants of that time. He taught that while life on earth was the time of growth, nevertheless everyone must eventually face the harvest. Then the good things would be put up in barns to be used, and the bad and useless things would be burned in the ovens. A simple concept for a simple people, but it met their needs. And in its simplicity, it reminds us that each of us must also face the time of harvest, and find out whether we are the useful grain that is to be put up in barns, or the destructive tares that are to be burned.



During the years following His life on earth the leaders of the Christian Church took those beautiful, simple ideas that Jesus taught and turned them into complex and confusing doctrines. These teachings took away the peace and the comfort that Jesus had brought to earth, because the Church could derive more power and profit from fear and guilt than from comfort and hope. But now the Lord has come again in the spiritual sense of the Word to open and reveal the secrets of heaven, to restore the sense of peace and comfort. Our subject for this article, and

(Continued on page 2)

In This Issue:

The First State of the World of Spirits.....1

News from the Regional Pastor.....5

Maple Leaf Academy.....7

General Church Job Postings.....8

The Least of These.....10

Contacts.....11

Colouring Page.....12



(Continued from page 1)

the two which will follow it, is the orderly process that the Lord has provided for us to make our transition from this world to the next.

We have all been created for heaven, not the world of nature. Just as the human body is prepared for life in the natural world by life in the mother's womb, so the human soul is prepared for life in the spiritual world by a period of gestation in the natural world. Natural birth requires labour and pain, but once born, no one wishes to return to the simple but unconscious life of the fetus. Spiritual birth also requires labour and pain, but once we have passed through the process and see for ourselves what spiritual life is like, we will have no desire to leave the reality of heaven to return to this world of illusion and fantasy.

Before we go any further in this treatment we will take a moment to define several important terms while recognizing that they are not always used consistently. One must always pay attention to context. First of all, we find that the most common usage of the term in the language of the New Church "spiritual world" is to describe the whole spiritual universe which includes heaven, the world of spirits, and hell. Occasionally, "spiritual world" is used to refer to heaven only, but it is usually obvious from the context.

"The World of Spirits," however, is a much more specific term. It is almost always used to refer to that part of the spiritual world which lies between heaven and hell and which is the place where all people go first when their natural bodies die. In character and appearance it is very much like this world.

The word "spirit" is also a very general term. Its most general meaning is to refer to anyone living anywhere in the spiritual world. It is most frequently used to refer to someone who is still living in the world of spirits and has not yet chosen to move on to heaven or hell. A "good spirit" is someone who, if not already an angel in heaven, is nearly there. Similarly, an "evil spirit" is someone who, if not already in hell, has clearly shown his ruling love to be evil.

Finally, an "angel" is a particular kind of spirit, specifically a spirit who has been through all the states of introduction and has chosen heaven. An angel is a person who, with their conjugal partner, has been completely prepared for and accepted into a heavenly society which will be their home to eternity.



With these terms in mind, let us return to the consideration of what happens to a person whose natural body has died, and who is in the process of awakening into eternal, spiritual life. Just as a newborn baby in this world needs special care and attention, the same is true of the heaven-born spirit and so the same kind of angels that are present with infants are the ones who sit with new spirits as they gently awaken. These angels hold the new spirits in a peaceful state and lead them to think about eternal things. Eventually, though, they become aware of the angels and questions about what's going on begin to form in their mind. No doubt there is some surprise when they discover that they are

not dead after all! When they sense that this is happening, the celestial angels know that their work is done so they withdraw and make way for the angels from the spiritual heaven to draw near. They arrive as they awaken enough to open their eyes and begin to look around. They are there to answer questions about this new life. Eventually the new spirits become curious about their surroundings and want to go out and explore so the spiritual angels move away. They are then replaced by angels from the natural heaven who show the new spirits around. Finally, when they are ready, they are led to the places of instruction in the world of spirits where they will remain for a time.

(Continued on page 3)

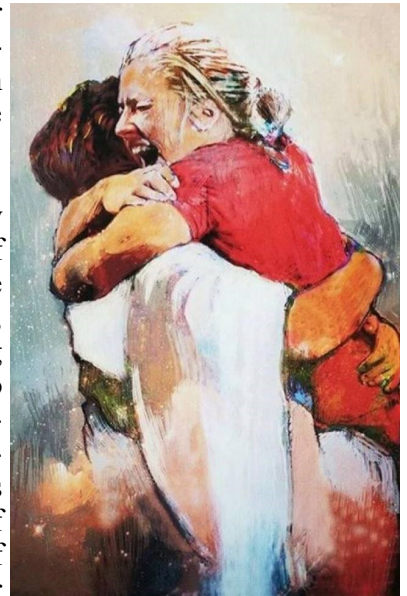
Once the new spirits are fully conscious and comfortable with their new surroundings and the way things work, the Lord then leads them through a process that gradually reveals the true nature of their character and then uses that information to prepare them to enter their eternal home. This takes place in three stages. The first is the state of externals. Then comes the state of internals. Finally, for those going to heaven, comes a period of instruction and preparation. Like every good rule, this one too has exceptions, as we see from the following teaching from *Heaven and Hell*:

“There are some who are immediately after death taken up into heaven or cast into hell. ...Those who have been so regenerated and prepared that they need simply to cast off natural impurities with the body are at once taken up by the angels into heaven. ...Others are cast immediately into hell. ...But all these are few in comparison with those who are retained in the world of spirits, and are there prepared in accordance with Divine order for heaven or for hell” (HH 491).

As far as the new spirits are concerned, and as far as they can tell from the testimony of their senses, the World of Spirits is just like their previous life in the natural world. There are several reasons for this. One is that by creating a sphere so like the natural world, it reduces the shock to the new spirits and allows them to return to their own way of life, to return to their own genuine character. They would not be able to do this if they sensed that they were in an alien or artificial environment. After all, we are all on our best behaviour when away from home, in some place where we don't know the customary way that people do things. Another reason is that the Lord wishes everyone to feel welcomed, comfortable, and at peace. We all know how pleasant it is to find familiar things when we travel to far away places. The same principle applies in the World of Spirits. However, it is a different world. And, the new spirits do remember what they were told during their states of resuscitation and think about them from time to time. But soon the testimony of the senses distracts them from such thoughts, and they return to a life according to the belief that they still live in the natural world.

Their natural life continues into their spiritual life. The death of the natural body is merely a transition from one mode of life to another. The doctrine testifies that one of the most important features of this state is that of meeting with friends and family that have gone on before. We are told that new spirits are immediately recognized by friends who have gone before, both by their face and by their sphere of life, and this introduces one of the more unusual aspects of heavenly life to the new spirit. Time and space seem to be as they were in his former life, but yet they are somehow changed. Specifically, whenever they think about anyone who is also in the spiritual world, that person becomes present as if they had been sent for, or called. So, as they think in turn about each of their friends from the world that have died, they appear! The doctrines tell us that these meetings are joyful for both parties.

These meetings are especially meaningful for husbands and wives. They meet, congratulate each other, and resume their life together. The length of time they remain together depends on the state of their marriage. If they were friends and partners in the world, they continue so to eternity. If, however, they cannot find delight with each other, they eventually separate, each going to their own place in the spiritual world. Even so, they are not allowed to separate during this first state, for it is only a state of externals, and the externals are only an appearance. It would be a tragedy if people who were internally suited to each other separated because of merely external problems when those very external characteristics are about to be shed in favour of new externals which correspond to their true interior qualities. So, even if there is anger, hatred, or even actual combat, couples remain together throughout the state of externals.



(Continued from page 3)

Another characteristic of this state is that new spirits are surprised to find themselves in a body. For most people in the world, the only source of information about heaven and hell is what they have read from the Word, or what they have been taught in church. A careful study of the Old Testament will reveal that there is virtually no teaching about the nature of the spiritual world (other than that strange passage where the witch of Endor raises Samuel's spirit at Saul's request). And while there are quite a few parables about heaven in the New Testament, most of them are limited to presenting the idea that there is a life after death where the good are rewarded and the evil punished in unspecified ways. So, as they become aware of the reality of the spiritual world, they become eager to know more about heaven and hell.

At first they converse with their friends about it, then they are taken from place to place and shown around. Swedenborg reports from his conversations with spirits newly arrived from the world, that many of the people in his time were indignant at how poorly they had been prepared for eternal life through their own ignorance and the lack of instruction from the church. The big question that soon comes to each of them is whether or not they are worthy to enter heaven.

Most arrive believing that they are worthy of heaven because they lived a moral life in the world – at least in externals. However, they don't realize that anyone can live an externally civil and moral life. In this first state, where people are still allowed to present themselves as they wish to be seen, it is hard to tell the good spirits from those that are evil because all kinds of people are capable of living a moral life in the world: All people, no matter how black their hearts, are able to live under governments and subject themselves to the requirements of civil law. The good and the evil can acquire a reputation for honesty and justice, they both can receive favour and be raised to honours, and they can both acquire great wealth, so none of these things can be used to judge between the good and the evil during their first state in the World of Spirits.

There is a way that they can be distinguished, though. People who are evil at heart are eager to talk about external things about people and events, but pay little attention at all when the topic turns to internal or spiritual things. They are willing to listen to conversations about the goods and truths of the church, but it is obvious that they do not enjoy it.

A second way of determining the difference between good and evil spirits is that when left to themselves they turn themselves to face specific directions in the World of Spirits and follow the paths that lead in those directions. By observing their paths it is possible to know the kind of love that leads them. (See HH 496)

This first state of man after death continues with some for days, with some for months, and with some for a year; but seldom with anyone beyond a year; for a shorter or longer time with each one differently in accordance with the agreement or disagreement of his interiors with his exteriors (HH 498).



In conclusion, we can say that the first state of a new spirit in the world of spirits is one of introduction and welcome. It is provided so that each person who enters the spiritual world will have a chance to get their bearings, become accustomed to the fact that they are no longer in their natural body, and that they have awakened into eternal life. They are kept in surroundings that are as familiar as possible, and encouraged to wander around and learn all that they desire for as long as they need. But eventually the spirits are ready to move on, they yearn to find their true spiritual home where they will be surrounded by people who think and act the way they do.

When this happens, they are ready to enter into the next state, the state of interiors.

NEWS FROM THE REGIONAL PASTOR / GCIC EVP

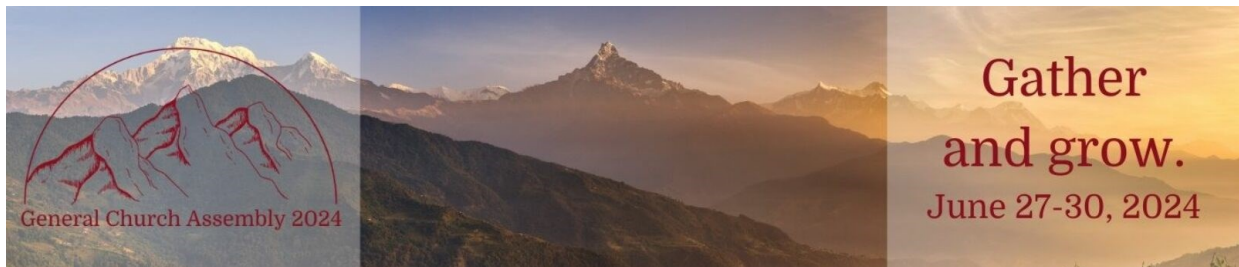
by Rev. James Cooper

The 2024 summer has been a busy one! Jon & Elaine Lee have departed Olivet Church to his new assignment as the Pastor of the Morningstar Chapel near Atlanta, Georgia. Justin & Denali Schorran have departed Carmel Church to his new assignment as the Pastor of the New Church society in Boynton Beach, Florida. We wish all of these good people safe travels, and thanks for their years of service to the people of Canada.

Of course this means that Carmel Church is adjusting to a reduction in pastoral services. Olivet had already dropped down to a single pastor operation – but Todd Beiswenger, the incoming pastor, can't get here until late December, so I will be filling in as Acting Pastor at Olivet until then. Lou Synnestvedt, while resident in Kempton, PA, will be making regular visits to Olivet Church, and Michael Cowley will add visits to Carmel Church, the Oak Arbor Society in Michigan, and the Buccleuch Society in Johannesburg to his schedule of visits to Alberta and B.C.

Council of the Clergy and General Assembly in Bryn Athyn.

Even with this reduction of pastor-power in Canada, we have been moving ahead with a number of fun summer programs thanks to a lot of lay involvement. It all started with the Council of the Clergy and General Assembly in Bryn Athyn.



960 people from all over the world attended the Assembly, and it was a joyous occasion with many highlights. Rev. Mac Frazier, Pastor of the Washington Society, responded to the Assembly with these words (quoted with permission).

“I went to Bryn Athyn mildly pessimistic about both the Clergy Meetings and the Assembly, if I'm being frank. I went out of a sense of professional obligation, but somewhat reluctantly. But then the [clergy] meetings were pleasant....

“And then the Assembly. Wow. I got a lot more out of some of the workshops than I'd anticipated I would. And all the worship services were delightful and enlightening and just what I needed. Yes, the full cathedral singing verse 3 of Jerusalem the Golden a Capella was incredibly moving, and the Lord's Prayer in Swahili shared by an impromptu choir of one day volunteers was especially beautiful! The Vespers and Holy Supper and morning worships were also good.

“But maybe above all that for me was the tone of the crowds as I moved from event to event. So many people so happy to greet one another as New Church brothers and sisters was a little overwhelming at times—in a good way. Given all the tensions there have been, it was truly wonderful to be reminded that we can be united in charity as a church.

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

“And the fact that this took over 200 volunteers, and those volunteers all seemed to be joyously giving, right down to the corps of young men driving shuttles non stop each day. It was a logistical triumph for the organizers, but more it was a testament to a spirit of love of use and love for the Lord's church to see all these people freely giving to make this huge event happen.

“And speaking of young volunteers--the range of ages was good to see. As I said in the final discussion session of the regular clergy meetings, I have serious fears about the future of the General Church. But seeing so many younger people enthusiastically participating in so many ways boosted my hopes for the future. As some of y'all know, my brother Scott and his wife Nicole host a regular open brunch at their house for people who go to church on Sunday in Bryn Athyn. This most recent Sunday being the conclusion of the Assembly, their brunch crowd hit record numbers, with many new faces that aren't normally there. And it was delightful to see all these visitors there. But what really struck me, as I looked out over the sea of happy people with their beignets, bacon and coffee, was that I was seeing the future of the church. SO MANY college students and young adults, gathered in a feast of charity, talking about the church (and other things of course), forming a community of shared love for the Lord and the neighbour...my heart burst.

“We've got some serious challenges to deal with. But as Pete Buss, Sr., demonstrated in his workshop, the Lord is right here, down here with us, holding each of our hands and walking with us. He is not far, and He is doing good things in and through the people who are His church.

“Thank you, Bryn Athyn staff and volunteers, and thank you presenters from all around the world, for an uplifting and useful gathering of the church. And thank you, Lord. I know I needed this, and believe many, many others did, as well.”

CAMPS

And if that wasn't enough, here's a list of the Canadian retreats and camps that are scheduled for this summer:

Moonshine Lake Provincial Park weekend in Alberta for members from Dawson Creek and Grande Prairie.

Olivet Church Bible Camp for children in Toronto.

Maple Camp for teens and young adults in Ontario. Finished. See picture to right and review below.

Living Waters Family Camp in Ontario. Finished

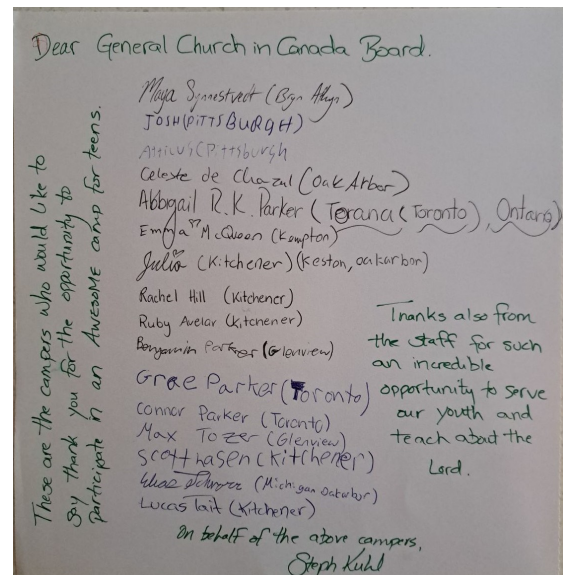
Cascadia Retreat in Washington State for people in the Vancouver area.

Something for everyone! Enjoy the rest of your summer.

Rev. James Cooper

Mobile: 416-508-0758
Rev.James.Cooper@gmail.com

Home: 416-236-0841
31 Dalegrove Cres., Toronto, ON M9B 6A5





A New Church Camp for Teens

Held at the Ecology Retreat Centre in Mono, Ontario

Maple Leaf Academy 2024 was blessed with a week of beautiful weather as warm as the atmosphere of the camp itself. Teenage campers came from the New Church societies in Toronto, Kitchener, Oak Arbor, Glenview, Pittsburgh, and Kempton, while staff members came from across Ontario, Pennsylvania and from Glenview, Illinois. Campers got to explore the theme of **HOPE** through talks and worship services, and there was lots of time for fun and bonding!

Hope can be about working toward a goal, or about trusting in the Lord and following him while waiting. Sessions touched on hope in the face of hopelessness, building community and giving back during tough times, moving through our own and others' grief, how the Lord has good reasons for not letting us know what the future will look like, not giving in to the hopeless labels evil spirits may like us to use on ourselves, how life experience can affect our hopes but setting goals from a perspective involving eternal life be empowering, and many more big ideas. Experiential evening worship services (shaloms) delved into stories from the Word including the miracle at the pool of Bethesda, the Children of Israel leaving Egypt and wandering in the wilderness, Elijah hearing the Lord in the still small voice, and others, with plenty of wisdom added from the Heavenly Doctrines.



The camp experience also involved hiking, art, games, camp traditions, lots of swimming in both the pool and the pond, and we even invented a new sport! We were fueled by the delicious food provided by the Ecology Retreat Centre and were grateful for the pleasant accommodations and natural setting. The campers left knowing each other and themselves a bit better, and very *hopefully* looking forward to attending next year! If you know any teens who will be finishing any year of high school this year, we hope you will encourage them to attend this transformative camp that connects youth to the church across the continent.

Dates for Next Year: July 5-11, 2025

For More Information, please visit the updated maplecamp.com, or contact:

Stephanie Kuhl, Camp Director, regarding any questions, at

gcic.mapleleafcamp@gmail.com.

Maple has been serving New Church youth since 1969; it is sponsored by the General Church in Canada and staffed by experienced volunteers.



General Church Job Posting



HUMAN RESOURCES

Supporting The Academy of the
New Church and The General
Church of the New Jerusalem

Ministry and Education Recruiter

The General Church of the New Jerusalem (GC) exists to provide for the worship of the Lord Jesus Christ in His second coming, 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 collaborates closely with its sister organizations, the Academy of the New Church Secondary Schools, and Bryn Athyn College to advance and deliver New Church education and programs at all levels, from pre-school through college, undergraduate and graduate degrees.

We are currently seeking a Ministry and Education Recruiter to oversee all aspects of growing the talent pool of ministers and teachers throughout the General Church congregations.

Position Overview

Reporting to the Director Human Resources and taking direction from the Dean of the Theological School and the Coordinator of New Church Schools, the Ministry and Education Recruiter will expand existing channels and create new pipelines for identifying and fostering relationships with potential ministers and teachers, maintain relationships with relevant programs, including Bryn Athyn College and its Divinity programs, to promote careers in New Church education and the ministry within the GC. This role has the option to be performed remotely, but with the expectation of regular in-person meetings and attendance at certain events.

Specific responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Designing and implementing an overall recruitment strategy for developing a pipeline of talent for current and future teaching and clergy positions
- Sourcing and recruiting candidates both into the education programs as students, as well as qualified individuals in fulfilling employment needs
- Developing and coordinating recruiting events at GC conferences and in GC congregations
- Developing recruitment and marketing materials
- Helping to establish a culture of promoting teaching and ministry careers within the church.
- Providing candidates with explanation of benefits and opportunities available at the General Church
- Connecting potential candidates with people already in the field
- Interviewing, screening, and evaluating potential candidates
- Conducting phone, in-person, and virtual interviews
- Placing qualified candidates in the teacher or minister development pipeline
- Working with the Dean of Theological School and with GC Principals, in collaboration with GC Education, to assess needs, give counsel regarding candidates, communicate regarding potential future candidates, etc., and to host candidates within school classrooms, to determine a possible fit
- Tracking candidates through the recruitment and placement process
- Serving as the primary point of contact for candidates, coordinating with others in the recruitment process
- Supporting the hiring managers in onboarding new candidates
- Developing recruitment metrics to track and evaluate recruiting programs

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 8)

Required Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in related field or equivalent experience
- Exceptional communication skills; written, oral and listening
- Solid knowledge and understanding of New Church concepts and New Church Education, and a willingness to promote them
- Strong interpersonal skills; able to build relationships and connections
- Self-driven; comfortable working independently and in a team environment
- Good project management and resource management skills

Desired Additional Qualifications

- Previous experience in recruiting is preferred
- Comfort in speaking and interacting with wide variety of individuals
- Creative and strategic thinking and problem solving

To Apply:

Interested candidates should send a resume and cover letter outlining how they meet the specific requirements of the position to Karen Stoeller, Director of HR, at karen.stoeller@anc-gc.org by **August 15, 2024**.

Address the cover letter to:

Karen Day Stoeller
Director of Human Resources
General Church and Academy of the New Church
1100 Cathedral Drive
PO Box 813
Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

karen.stoeller@anc-gc.org



Bryn Athyn College of the New Church Presidential Search

Bryn Athyn College is seeking applicants for the position of President. The President is the chief executive officer of the school, reporting directly to the Board of Trustees, and has responsibility for and oversight of all campus administration, faculty, and students. In addition to leading the institution in the development of a financially sustainable vision, the President of Bryn Athyn College is responsible for:

- Leading the school toward the achievement of its mission
- Developing and implementing a strategic plan
- Leading the institution's fundraising efforts
- Establishing and managing the College's annual operating budget
- Working collaboratively with key stakeholders, including the Board of Trustees, Academy Corporation, Chancellor, administrators, Faculty Council, students, and the Alumni Association

Currently reporting to the President are the Dean of the Theological School, the Dean of Academics, the Dean of Faculty, the Dean of Student Life, the Chief Financial Officer, the Director of Admissions, and the Director of Institutional Advancement. Bryn Athyn College offers undergraduate majors in Biology,

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

Business, Early Childhood and Special Education, English and Communications, Human Society, Interdisciplinary, Mathematics, Psychology, and Religion. The institution also offers a Master of Divinity and the Master of Arts in Religious Studies.

As stated in the institution's by-laws, the successful candidate will be a member of the General Church of the New Jerusalem. Thus the College seeks a candidate who loves both the New Church and liberal arts education. Professional experience in academia and a graduate degree are preferred, but the position is open to candidates with other backgrounds.

Applicants should submit a letter of interest and a curriculum vitae by **October 1, 2024**. The successful candidate is expected to assume her/his responsibilities by July of 2025.

Nominations, application materials, and inquiries should be addressed to:

Bryn Athyn College Presidential Search Committee
Attention:
Chancellor Peter Buss, Jr.
P.O. Box 743
Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

Peter.Buss.Jr@newchurch.org

Phone: 267-502-4918



THE LEAST OF THESE

By Coleman Glenn

Teach me to feed the hungry first,
To bring a cup for those who thirst,
To gather migrant strangers in,
To clothe exposed and naked skin,
To visit homes where sickness falls,
To go to those in prison walls.
In all these things I seek to do,
Lord, let me always act from You.



I long to feed on what is good,
To taste truth not yet understood;
I wander, needing to be taught,
My mind stripped bare of higher thought;
I sicken — sin constricts my heart;
I'm snared by the deceiver's art.
So may I in humility
Accept the aid that's offered me.

And You, Lord — do You hunger too,
And thirst to bless with good and true?
No room was made when You were born;
At death, Your clothes were snatched and
torn.

You felt the sickness of mankind,
Endured, then broke, the chains that bind,
Became the least to offer grace —
In lowliness we see Your face.

Coleman Glenn is chaplain and assistant professor of religion at Bryn Athyn College of the New Church. He lives in Huntingdon Valley with his wife Anne Grace and their three children. He can be contacted at coleman.glenn@gmail.com.



General Church in Canada



Administrative Office

Olivet Church, 279 Burnhamthorpe Rd.
Etobicoke, ON M9B 1Z6

Phone: 416-239-3054, Fax: 416239-4935

Rev. James P. Cooper
Executive V.P.
rev.james.cooper@gmail.com

Lee Horigan Administrator
Horigan@outlook.com



Carmel New Church and School
40 Chapel Hill Drive, Kitchener, ON N2R 1N2 Phone: 519-748-5802

Rev. Mark B. Allais, Pastor
pastor@carmelnewchurch.org

Stephanie Kuhl, Principal
Grades K - 8
stephkuhl@live.ca

Dawson Creek New Church
9013 - 8th Street, Dawson Creek, B.C. V1G 3N3 Telephone: 250-782-8035
www.facebook.com/DawsonCreekNewChurch

and
Grande Prairie & DeBolt Circle

Pastoral Contact: Rev. Michael Cowley
revmichaelcowley@gmail.com

Olivet New Church and School
279 Burnhamthorpe Road, Etobicoke, ON M9B 1Z6
Phone: 416-239-3054 Fax: 416-239-4935

Rev. James Cooper, Acting Pastor
pastor@olivetnewchurch.org

Emily Crampton, Principal
Preschool - 5
principal@olivetnewchurch.org

General Church in Canada Worship Services

Carmel New Church
Kitchener, ON



In Person and Online
10:00am
July & August

Dawson Creek New Church
Dawson Creek, BC



Olivet New Church
Etobicoke, ON

10:30am
In Person and Online



Editorial Deadline for the
SEPTEMBER—OCTOBER ISSUE is AUGUST 30, 2024

We always welcome your comments, letters and articles!

Please send submissions to Sandy Kuhl, Editor NCC
548-Unit 3, Evenstone Court,
Kitchener, ON N2R 0P3
Cell: 519-496-6939 Email: sandy.c.kuhl@gmail.com

