

# New Church Canadian

A Bi-Monthly Newsletter of General Church in Canada

Issue 220

## Being a New Church Champion

By Rev. Michael Cowley

How goes the battle? Battles need champions. Courageous leaders inspire their comrades. They set an example for others. They follow their inner vision and light. Their passion to achieve victory is driven by their loves, perhaps for “God and Country.” Or perhaps they fight for their church, or tribe, or neighbors. Some may fight for their marriage or their children, and grandchildren. Many fight for Truth, Freedom, Justice or Reconciliation. Many are the “unsung heroes” whom we never know.



So many champions and heroes are mentioned throughout the stories of the Old and New Testaments. The Word of the Second Coming, with its focus less on personalities and more on principles names very few. When Old or New Testament champions like Joseph, David, Saul, Samuel and Jesus are spoken of in the Heavenly Doctrines we learn of their representative, not personal qualities. Each denotes a Divine Heroic attribute.

Does this mean that people of the New Church should not have their personal favourites? Or that heroes, idols and champions are fine for kids, but mature spiritual practices leave such childish things behind?

For many in the New Church the New Year and January in particular remind us of Swedenborg because his birthday is at the end of the month. Through the years special events and banquets have been given in his honour. He is revered as the first hero or champion in the New Church. And for very good reasons.

*(Continued on page 2)*

### In This Issue:

Being a New Church Champion.....	1
A Peek Inside Swedenborg’s Garden.....	5
Maple Leaf Academy.....	7
<b>Letter from the Bishop.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Letter from the Assistant Pastor.....</b>	<b>8</b>
Message from the Regional Pastor... ..	9
Contacts.....	11
Colouring Page.....	12



(Continued from page 1)

## Swedenborg's Battles

Emanuel Swedenborg had to fight for the New Church as well as for his own life and that of other New Church adherents. Because of the strong political grip the mainline religious leaders held over the spiritual discourse of his native land, Swedenborg had to travel to more spiritually and politically free countries to publish the Word of the Second Coming.



Though he was a man from a Noble family in Sweden (which may have saved him from incarceration), and although a well respected leading citizen, civil servant, politician and scientist with decades of positive contributions and peer reviews, Swedenborg and several “Swedenborgians” were eventually put on trial for heresy. Several early Swedish New Church members were removed from their official positions for adhering to and championing the Doctrines of the New Church. These heroes openly challenged the “official narrative” of the government and its church.

People conspired to have Swedenborg arrested and declared insane. The plot was to summon him before a court of justice, find him guilty and declare his writings to be a danger to the health of society. When Swedenborg heard of this conspiracy he “became very sorrowful and, ...going straightway into his garden, fell upon his knees and in tears prayed to the Lord, asking Him what he should do. He received the comforting assurance that no evil would befall him—as was the case; for his enemies did not dare to carry out their persecution when they considered that he was the head of a family and related to other influential families both in the House of Nobles and in the House of the Clergy.” It seems being one of the elite aristocrats had tangible benefits.

## Other Early New Church Champions: Beyer, Rosen and Schmidt

Along with Swedenborg, there were several other champions of the New Church in those early days. The best known are two highly placed university professors, Drs. Beyer and Rosén who were persecuted and slandered for their beliefs. They were removed from their university positions and church government consistory memberships. Losing one’s reputation and job based on conscientious adherence to the New Church doctrines was an early champion’s battle wound in the war to bring the Holy City down from God to live in the minds and hearts of people on earth.

## Weaponizing Medical Diagnosis Against New Church Heroes

Lesser well known was Rev. Sven Schmidt, a pastor from Swedenborg’s home diocese, who began following and preaching New Church doctrine years before the Gothenburg trials of Beyer and Rosén. He lost his pastorate for not rescinding his beliefs. **He is noted as the first person to publicly declare that the Writings of Swedenborg were the Word.** “The testimony courageously given by Pastor Schmidt constitutes the first recorded public statement that the Writings of Swedenborg are the Word of God equally as are the Old and New Testaments; and being made while Swedenborg was still on earth engaged in publishing his Writings, though Pastor Schmidt had never met him, the utterance gives the stronger testimony that it was founded on an inner conviction of the Divine truth of his Writings.”

Whereas Rosen and Beyer met and knew Swedenborg, and so a personal relationship was involved in their connection with the Word of the New Church, Schmidt had only read the Writings, and based on his inner conviction of their Truth became a champion for their teachings. In 1771 Rev. Sven Schmidt was deprived of his office, declared insane and imprisoned because he insisted on teaching the Swedenborgian tenets. He

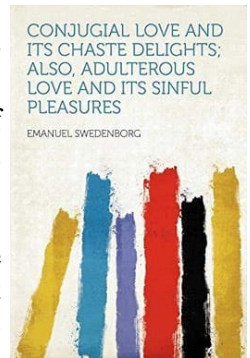
(Continued on page 3)

*(Continued from page 2)*

was released but returned to champion the New Church and gather followers of its teachings. In 1778 Schmidt was again imprisoned for insanity and remained incarcerated for 26 years till the end of his life, dying in 1805. The enemies of the Truth, those described as Dragonists, managed to convince the church leaders that such a sacrifice was for the general welfare of the people. Schmidt must be crazy to continue spreading these harmful ideas, preaching these teachings! So they declared him mentally ill, insane and shut him up by shutting him away.

## Censored and Silenced

When we consider the champions in the Word, we look both at natural history and politics as well as spiritual accounts from the other world. The persecutions Swedenborg experienced are more fully explained in the pages of the Word of the Second Coming. The Gothenburg trials focus especially on the publication of *Apocalypse Revealed*, *Brief Exposition and Conjugal Love*. These books were confiscated and condemned, and Swedenborg knew from the Lord that this persecution would take place.



The same persecution in the natural world had its origins in the spiritual world. The "male child" born of the Woman Clothed with the Sun seen in the Heavens was in fact the New Word given through the books written by Swedenborg and championed by the early New Church followers. War broke out in both worlds.

The Rev. DONALD ROSE gives a fascinating account of the attacks in both worlds in three articles in *New Church Life* 2006 titled:

### "UNCOVERING A CONSPIRACY TO KEEP PEOPLE FROM READING THE WRITINGS:

A well known symbol of the New Church is the woman clothed with the sun in Revelation chapter twelve. The woman is in danger, as is her offspring, threatened by the dragon. The following is a specific application of this vision, a phenomenon in the natural world.

It has been disclosed that a conspiracy against the Writings took place in the spiritual world and also in the natural world. First, there was an effort in the spiritual world to keep the books from being written.

Strange as it sounds, when Swedenborg undertook to write certain books of the Writings, evil spirits surrounded him trying their hardest to prevent the writing from taking place. "This strange circumstance it is permitted me to relate, because of a truth it so happened" (*Apocalypse Revealed* 543). Being unable to "extinguish" them, they endeavored to prevent their being read or received.

The conspiracy took form in the natural world in specific efforts by certain individuals. In the year 1758, Swedenborg sent the books to many influential people. There were men who made calculated efforts to see that they would not be read.

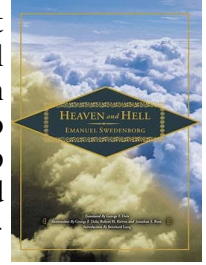
How can you prevent people from reading books? You can misrepresent them and make them seem not worth reading. You can scoff at them. But a key device is to keep them out of the public eye. The conspiracy is largely a conspiracy of silence. And so we read in *Apocalypse Revealed* number 716, that some "persuaded as many as they could not to read them," and they brought it about that they would not even be mentioned in the books of religious catalogues.

By "them" in this instance specific books of the Writings are meant including *Heaven and Hell*. Swedenborg recorded that the conspiracy was successful. So successful that "nothing is now heard of them" (*Spiritual Dairy* 6098).

*(Continued on page 4)*

(Continued from page 3)

Nothing was heard of them! Meetings had taken place where plans were hatched against the books. A mastermind was a Bishop. That same bishop later confessed in the spiritual world. He "described in what manner he especially scoffed at the five works, on Heaven and Hell, and the rest, which I (Swedenborg) had made a present to all [the Bishops], and to all the Reformed Lords in Parliament, by abuse and misrepresentation, and at last put a stop to the reading of it - together with the rest - until they utterly rejected them. He also related what he had said to them, and something that others had said, and various discussions respecting them" (Spiritual Diary 6101).



Those discussions took place in the natural world, but it was in the spiritual world that they came out. We read elsewhere of various plots in the natural world that came to light in the other world, fulfilling the saying, "What you have spoken in the dark shall be heard in the light" (Luke 12:2, 3; Heaven and Hell 462). The plots we are speaking of here, however, relate directly to the suppression of the knowledge of the books of the Writings."

## Cancel Culture Then and Now

As Rev. Rose points out, the battles those like Swedenborg, Schmidt, Beyer and Rosén faced involved numerous tactics. Smear campaigns, false testimony, vindictive slander, misinformation, censorship and medical misdiagnosis for political gain. A conspiracy of silence is also at work. We see the same attacks take place today against the Word of the New Church and those who follow the Light of New Church teachings. Our hope for the new year is to see more champions and heroes among the membership of the New Church. But the hells have not given up their conspiracy campaigns and smear tactics against the teaching and the followers of the New Church Word. We are inspired by the dedication the early champions displayed, and the sacrifices they made.

## Stay True



How goes the battle for you? Do you remain silent when injustice takes place around you? Do you dare not bring up Conjugal Love, or freedom and rationality if it would challenge the current narrative? Are you afraid of being pushed aside for professing your genuine beliefs about God, the Second Coming, true marriage, Heaven and Hell, free speech and open dialogue? Is it challenging to be a champion for a cause which so few people see or believe in? Your mental health may be questioned, or you may lose your job or reputation for your New Church convictions, but that may be the cost in 2024 for true New Church Champions and Heroes.

***Know, however, that you are not alone and your spiritual journey has many fellow travellers. The conspiracy of the hells involves creating feelings of isolation. It involves slipping in thoughts like "no one else feels or thinks this way" or "I shouldn't bother others with my little problems."***

***Don't let the hells convince you that there is no help or support. That is what this New Church is for, and is worth fighting for.***

***Creating a loving community of like minded spiritual helpers is the coming of the Holy City onto the earth. It is a City of Hope and Restoration.***

***Be a champion for the New Church by sharpening your convictions and dedication to its teachings, and when battle weary be refreshed and restored at church or in fellowship with your New Church comrades.***

(Note, quotes other than Don Rose from NCL are from Sigstedt "The Swedenborg Epic")

# A Peek Inside Swedenborg's Garden

By Morgan Beard



January 29 is Emanuel Swedenborg's birthday, and we thought we'd celebrate by taking a closer look at one of his favorite places: his garden.

In 1743, Swedenborg bought some property on Hornsgatan Street in the Södermalm district of Stockholm in his native Sweden. The time period was a significant one for him personally: during the two years that followed, as he traveled through Europe, he went through a spiritual crisis that led to an inner awakening. By the time he returned home to Sweden and moved into his new property in 1745, he had begun what biographers often call his theological phase: he began recording his spiritual experiences and composing books based on his new understanding.

(Swedenborg's Summer House, now at Skansen | Photo by [Jordqubbe](#))

The bulk of the property was taken up by Swedenborg's garden. At the west end, farthest from the main house, was a small summer house where Swedenborg went to write.

The following description of Swedenborg's garden is taken from *Gardens of Heaven and Earth* by Kristin King:

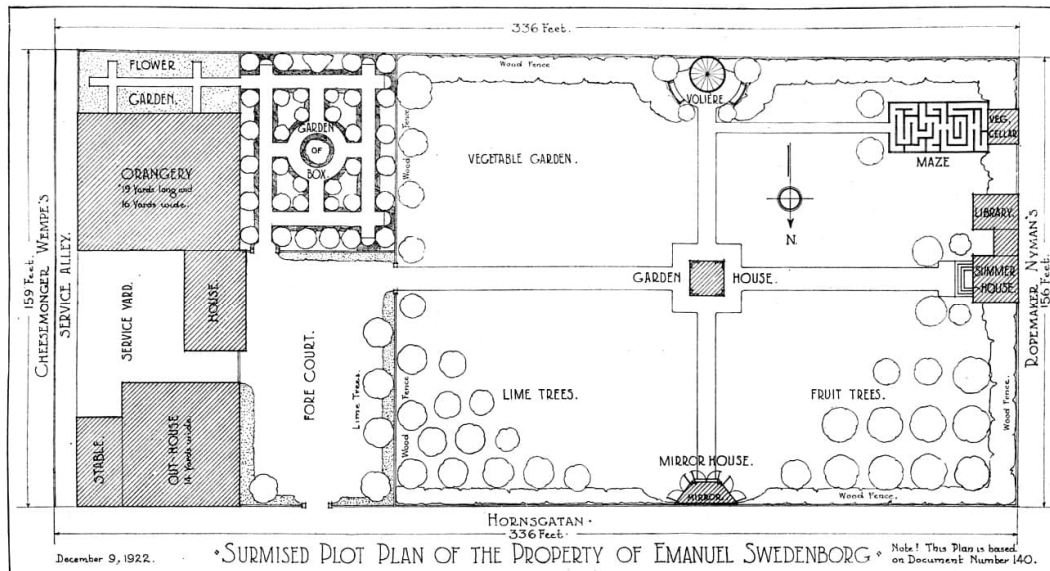
*One of the few records we have of the plants in Swedenborg's own garden comes from a 1752 almanac in which Swedenborg wrote notes in the margins indicating which pages of the Arcana Coelestia had been sent to the printer and, on the reverse side, a record of plants in his greenhouse: from artichokes and lemons to alliums and roses. . . . Even far-off America shoulders its way into the picture. Elsewhere Swedenborg mentions the American colonies only in passing or in reference to their inaccessibility, yet the final garden notation in his 1752 almanac lists "American seeds" growing in his garden: mulberry, melons, buttonwood, beech, dogwood, and an unidentified "pod-bearing tree."*

*Swedenborg's garden is both a powerful metaphor and solid ground. Most eighteenth-century gardens kept by scientists were used for study and experimentation. Swedenborg certainly studied and admired the plants in his garden, but his garden also blossomed with many other uses. He walked in it for the sheer pleasure of communion with nature, taking visitors along with him. He wrote theology in the garden, in a summer house situated at the west end of his property facing the garden, and he also worked the garden itself. One might expect an eighteenth-century aristocrat to delegate gardening to servants, but Swedenborg seems to have relished the physical labor and contact with the plants and earth, and he was happy to share the harvest. He was a generous landlord, allowing his gardener's family to profit from the fruits of the garden. . . . He shared the garden with visitors and children, building fanciful structures, such as mazes and mirrored gardens, to appeal to the imagination of the young, or the young at heart. He meditated in and on his garden, visiting it at various times of the day. . . .*

*Continued on page 6)*

(Continued from page 5)

Swedenborg's modest garden plot of just over an acre held plants from all over the world, and a variety of structures, pathways and beds. In addition to vegetables, fruit trees, poplar and cypress, there were arrays of flowers: tulips, hyacinths, carnations, sweet peas, larkspur, violets, scabiosa, sweet william, Canterbury bells, catmint, chalcidonia, spurrey, lilies, sunflowers, and roses of many varieties. There were stone paths and a tall enclosing fence, an ornate gate and an orchard, a kitchen garden, bird house, summer house, garden house, library, maze and a mirror creating the illusion of a double garden. The garden was laid out along formal lines, but with eccentricities and flourishes, all nicely reflecting Swedenborg's own mind—open but protected, useful and abundant with life.



SWEDENBORG'S PROPERTY IN STOCKHOLM.—DRAWING BY HAROLD T. CARSWELL.

### And, a note from the Editor:

Cyriel Ljungberg Odhner writes in *New Church Life* 43.2 (February 1923): 65–72

Such a pleasant picture of the philosopher (Swedenborg) is given in his introduction to the *Worship and Love of God*, that we cannot resist giving it here as the closing thought:

“Walking once alone in a pleasant grove, for the sake of composing my thoughts, and observing that the trees were shedding their foliage, and that the falling leaves were flying in all directions—for autumn at that time took its turn in the revolution of the year, and dispersed the decorations of summer—from being sad I became serious, because I recollected the gratifications which that grove, from the beginning of spring even to this season, had communicated, and so often diffused throughout my whole mind. But on seeing this change of scene, I began to revolve on the vicissitudes of times; and it occurred to me whether all things relating to time do not also pass through similar vicissitudes, that is, whether this is not the case not only with forests, but also with our lives and ages; for it is evident that they, in like manner, commencing from a kind of spring and blossom, and passing through their summer, sink rapidly into their old age, the image of autumn.”



A New Church Camp for Teens  
Held at the Ecology Retreat Centre in Mono, Ontario

*Save the Date for Maple!*

*We look forward to welcoming campers  
Friday, July 5 – Thursday, July 11, 2024.*

This will be a week of friendship building, laughter, restorative relaxation, and spiritual growth for teens who will have just completed any year of high school.

*Our theme this year is HOPE.*

*"You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in Your Word."*

*Psalm 119:114*



Want to register or get more information? Please visit the updated [maplecamp.com](http://maplecamp.com) or contact:

**Stephanie Kuhl, Camp Director**, regarding any questions at [gcic.mapleleafcamp@gmail.com](mailto: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.

After GCIC contributions, regular camper fee is **\$300**, with discounts for early bird registration (before May 1) or for "junior staff" (returning campers finishing high school). A deposit of at least **\$50** (\$5 non-refundable) is required with registration and full payment is due by **June 16**.



The Rt. Rev. Bradley D. Heinrichs, Assistant Bishop  
General Church of the New Jerusalem



New Church

January 19, 2024

Dear Members and Friends of the General Church in Canada,

I write to let you know that Justin Schorran has accepted a call to become the pastor for the New Church at Boynton Beach, with an anticipated start date of July 1, 2024, though this could vary slightly due to the nature of an international move. This has not been an easy decision for him or his wife Denali because of the great affection they have developed for each one of you that they have met in the Great White North.

Justin has poured his heart and soul into serving Canada over the last three years, as is evident from the many duties he has taken on trying to contribute to the health of the various New Church congregations throughout Canada. Please see the attached letter from Justin where he expresses his appreciation to the people of the Carmel New Church and throughout Canada.

At this point, we do not have the details worked out as to how we will provide the best support we can to Canada, but I want to assure you that we will work with Jim to do the very best that we can. I want to close by acknowledging that this kind of change can sometimes cause anxiety and worry. However, I would like to share this teaching which I find provides comfort by pointing out that the Lord is present in even the smallest details: “the real truth is, that the Divine providence is in the most minute particulars of nature, and in the most minute particulars of human prudence, and that it is from these that it is universal” (Divine Providence 201).

I hope you will find a time to wish Justin and Denali well, and if you have any further questions, feel free to email me at [brad.heinrichs@newchurch.org](mailto:brad.heinrichs@newchurch.org) or give me a call at work 267- 502-4944, or on my cell at 215-870-0591. Let us trust that the Lord truly is in charge of His New Church and will lead to an end that is good for Canada and leave you with a sense of confidence and peace in His guidance.

Sincerely,

Rt. Rev. Bradley D. Heinrichs  
Assistant Bishop of the General Church of the New Jerusalem

P.O. Box 743, 1100 Cathedral Road, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009-0743 U.S.A. Phone: 267-502-4944 |  
Fax: 267-502-4912 | email: [brad.heinrichs@newchurch.org](mailto:brad.heinrichs@newchurch.org)



**CARMEL NEW CHURCH**

Dear Friends,

Denali and I would like to take this time to thank the Carmel New Church for being part of the first chapter in serving the church together. We are also very grateful for the continuous support in our personal lives as we begin our family. We value the love, wisdom and many friendships that have grown

*(Continued on page 9)*



(Continued from page 8)

in our time with you all and now that these years we spent together have set the groundwork for many more blessings to come.

I have also really enjoyed visiting and serving the people of the broader church in Canada. It has been wonderful to visit the places where the church is, and especially to meet the great variety of people. It has been encouraging to see how the Lord reaches and works with people of all walks of life.

We look forward to the future in Boynton Beach with joy and excitement, but by no means was this an easy decision to make. There is so much that we have come to love about Canada and the church throughout. It is hard to start saying goodbye, but we can be comforted knowing that the church is not ours, it is the Lord's. He is guiding each and every one of us into the way of peace.

***For thus says the Lord, ... I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. (Jeremiah 29:10-13)***

With love,  
Justin, Denali and Keida



## NOTES FROM THE REGIONAL PASTOR / GCIC EVP

by Rev. James Cooper

### Winter Travel

As I write these notes, Canada is in the grip of a “polar vortex.” We’re used to it being snowy and cold, but sometimes it can get extreme and make travel difficult, if not impossible. It is our policy to pay a little extra for our tickets so that they can be easily cancelled or exchanged. If the weather is so bad in your area on the day of a planned visit that you are not willing to leave the house to come to church, please let us know so we can make other arrangements. There’s no point in battling our way across Canada when the local folks know better than to go outdoors.

### Scholarship Reminder

I’d like to remind everyone that the General Church in Canada has a generous scholarship fund available to assist students who are *bona fide* residents of Canada and who wish to attend the Academy of the New Church Secondary School, or the Bryn Athyn College of the New Church. Even if you are just considering the possibility, get in touch with me and let me tell you how we can help.

(Continued on page 10)

## Calendar

As we all know, the minute you write down something on the calendar something unplanned happens and adjustments have to be made. But, with that in mind, here are our travel plans for the next few months:

2024

February	11	Vancouver/Cascadia – Jim Cooper
	11	Dawson Creek/Grande Prairie – Justin Schorran
	25	Dawson Creek/Grande Prairie – Justin Schorran
March	10	Dawson Creek/Grande Prairie – Michael Cowley
	24	Dawson Creek/Grande Prairie – Michael Cowley (Palm Sunday)
April	7	Dawson Creek/Grande Prairie – Michael Cowley
	21	Dawson Creek/Grande Prairie – Michael Cowley
May	5	Dawson Creek/Grande Prairie – Michael Cowley
	12	Vancouver/Cascadia – Jim Cooper
	19	Dawson Creek/Grande Prairie – Michael Cowley

## Services

**Olivet Church is live AND online every Sunday at 10:30 am EST.**

 The YouTube address is: <https://www.youtube.com/@OlivetNewChurchVideo>



The Facebook address is: <https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=olivet%20new%20church>

**Carmel Church is also live AND online every Sunday at 11:00 am EST.**

 The YouTube address: <https://www.youtube.com/@CarmelNewChurch/streams>



The Facebook address: <https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=carmel%20new%20church>

Rev. James Cooper

Mobile: 416-508-0758;

Home: 416-236-0841;

Rev. James.Cooper@gmail.com 31 Dalegrove Cres., Toronto, ON M9B 6A5



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](mailto:rev.james.cooper@gmail.com)**

**Lee Horigan Administrator  
[Horigan@outlook.com](mailto: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](mailto:pastor@carmelnewchurch.org)

**Rev. Justin Schorran, Assistant to the Pastor**  
[asstpastor@carmelnewchurch.org](mailto:asstpastor@carmelnewchurch.org)

**Stephanie Kuhl, Principal**  
Grades K - 8  
[stephkuhl@live.ca](mailto:stephkuhl@live.ca)

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

**and**

**Grande Prairie & DeBolt Circle**

**Pastoral Contact: Rev. James Cooper**  
[rev.james.cooper@gmail.com](mailto:rev.james.cooper@gmail.com)

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

**Rev. Dr. Jong-Ui Lee, Interim Pastor**  
[assistant@olivetnewchurch.org](mailto:assistant@olivetnewchurch.org)

**John Treptow, Acting Principal**  
Preschool - 5  
[principal@olivetnewchurch.org](mailto:principal@olivetnewchurch.org)

**General Church in Canada Worship Services**

**Carmel New Church**  
Kitchener, ON



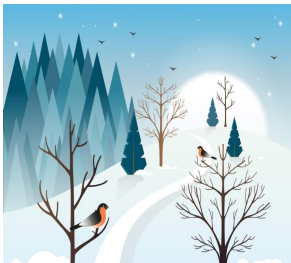
**In Person  
and  
Online**  
11.00am

**Dawson Creek New Church**  
Dawson Creek, BC



**Olivet New Church**  
Etobicoke, ON

10:30am  
In Person and Online

**Editorial Deadline for the MARCH — APRIL ISSUE**  
**MARCH 7, 2024**

*We always welcome your comments, letters and articles!*

**Please send submissions to Sandy Kuhl, Editor NCC**  
**8 Marshall Avenue, RR #1, Ayr, ON N0B 1E0**  
**Phone: 519-696-2070 Email: [sandy.c.kuhl@gmail.com](mailto:sandy.c.kuhl@gmail.com)**

