

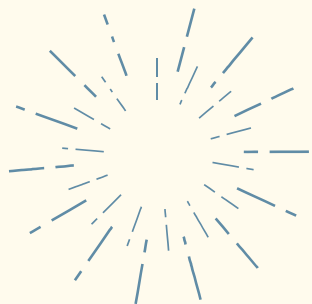


New Church

FEBRUARY 2022

BISHOP'S NEWSLETTER

Your connection to General Church vision and community



"...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

From the Desk of the Bishop



Friends,

Making life choices with intention and focus is something that most of us strive for. If we are being honest, our successes are intermittent. Sometimes we feel on top of life, reaching for our goals, and feeling a sense of fulfillment along the way. Other times we are struggling from one stressful task to the next or feeling unmotivated in important areas of our lives.

The Church is here to consistently invite us to consider this dynamic in spiritual terms. The Lord gave us a powerful example while in the world. At age twelve in the Temple, when Mary and Joseph found Him after a three-day search, He said, "Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" (Luke 2:49). His ministry was completely focused on teaching and healing, on glorifying His Human and thereby providing a path to heaven for all.

In our small ways, each of us is called to be about our Heavenly Father's business. We can recall times when we felt close to the Lord and the purpose He wants us to embrace. You may have noticed as you move through life a connection between your spiritual devotions of praying and reflecting on the Lord's teachings, and the energy you have to live in service to others. The Church is here to nourish these intentions. We aim for our organization to be a catalyst for all of us to choose a life of spiritual purpose, creating a vibrant and growing spiritual home to the extent that that is our collective focus.

I would love to hear your response to this calling of the Lord's Word. Please feel free to comment [here](#), and especially to share a story of how you see your journey of living with spiritual purpose.

With affection,
Peter

Click to listen to Bishop Buss's



sermon on spiritual purpose.

"Standing for Marriage in Today's World"

special note from Bishop Buss:

The above heading is the title of an article that was released as part of the *New Church Life* January/February 2022 issue. I encourage you to read it, which you can do [here](#). It focuses first on the beautiful vision of marriage that we are all called to reach for, and then strives to respectfully tackle issues arising within the LGBTQ identity spectrum. My prayer is that it can serve as a reference point for the current view of the Bishop's Office, as well as a resource for people to consider their own processing of relevant passages in the Word.

I wish to underscore that nothing in this article is meant to define who can or cannot participate in the Church. We all need access to the Lord in worship, we can all benefit from exploring His Word together, and we are all called to put our faith into practice in ways that the Church can support. Please reach out through [this form](#) if you have comments or questions that you would like to offer.

CONNECTING TO SCRIPTURE

[Jesus] said to them, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth."

Mark 1:38

The sole purpose for which people are born is that they may perform a use to the community they are in, and to their neighbor while they live in the world, and in the next life may perform a use in accord with the Lord's gracious purposes.

Arcana Coelestia 1103.2

Suggested reading: [Mark 30-29](#); [Arcana Coelestia 1103](#)

We hope this section offers you a moment to explore linked readings in the Word and the Writings. Do you have a favorite connection between passages of the Word and the Writings? Let us know [here!](#)

OFFICE OF OUTREACH

- Earlier this month, European clergy gathered in Stockholm to brainstorm **online engagement strategy** across Europe and the United Kingdom. The goal is to build New Church community without relying on geographic proximity to a church building, and gather more people interested in deepening their faith than ever before. The discussions targeted outreach programs that invite newcomers to participate in both online and in-person communities (as part the **New Church Groups** effort, formerly the Grand Human Project.)
- Outreach has also launched a **new video series**, crafted to deliver New Church insights in two minutes or less. [Click here to watch](#) a short on faith and doubt - and don't forget to **share and follow** on [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), and [TikTok](#) to stay on top of new shorts!

OFFICE OF EDUCATION | GCED

- General Church Education's Scott Daum has been working on a series of **New Church Teacher Competency** videos for use in professional development with teachers. His latest, using materials from Professor Bruce Glenn and Bishop Willard Pendleton, called **How Do I Build a New Church Course or Unit?**, looks at how to develop and impart a New Church worldview in curriculum development. [Watch the video](#) to learn more.
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WHAT WE'RE CHEERING FOR | SOCIETY NEWS

- The [Daily Readings Calendar](#) for 2022, kindly compiled by Bishop Brian Keith, is now available on [New Christian Bible Study](#). Every day of the year has associated readings from the Word and from the Writings, including links to read online at your convenience.
 - The **Stockholm New Church** now offers an online course on the book "The Doctrine of Life." So far, 75 Swedes have enrolled in the program (offered in Swedish,) a remarkable number for such a secular country.
 - **Congratulations** to this year's three graduates from the Bryn Athyn College Theological School, who will be placed in the following locations, pending successful completion of their studies and ordination:
 - Steven Gunther will move with his wife, Aaliya, and family to serve as Assistant to the Pastor in the Oak Arbor Church in Rochester, Michigan.
 - Calvin Heinrichs will move with his wife, Liza, and family to serve as Assistant to the Pastor in New Church Westville, South Africa.
 - HyunJin Yang will move with his wife, Young Hee, to serve in an assistant role within the Church in South Korea. He will be based out of Seoul.
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GRATITUDE TO OUR READERS

We appreciate your readership and feedback! We'd like to thank one reader who offered the following response to a previous edition:

"As I sit here and watch the sun rise in the East, I am reminded of how the Lord tells us to let His Light shine through us (Matt 5:16). As the Bishop mentioned in his [video](#), this is one of the ways to live a Heavenly Life, by our actions and words to those around us."

We love hearing from you - contact us [here](#) with what you'd like to see more of and how we can continue to connect our members to the General Church and each other.

Wishing you peaceful days ahead.

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