



The Glendale New Church  
845 Congress Ave. Glendale, OH 45246 513-772-1478

# The Precursor

February 2012

## Our Mission:

The Glendale New Church connects heaven to earth by worshiping the Lord God Jesus Christ; discovering eternal truths in His Word; promoting spiritual awareness; and fostering community

## Announcements

### Ladies Night Out!

The men will provide an excellent dinner and entertainment for all the ladies! Saturday, February 18. Appetizers and wine at 5:30.

### Living Courageously

Two small groups will be starting in early February as we continue to fulfill our strategic plan!

### Cincinnati Harper's Robin

Come listen to not one, but several harps playing Celtic music. Freewill offering. Saturday, February 11, 2-3:30PM

## FROM THE WORD

As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began talking about him to the crowds. "What kind of man did you go into the wilderness to see? Was he a weak reed, swayed by every breath of wind? Or were you expecting to see a man dressed in expensive clothes? No, people with expensive clothes live in palaces. Were you looking for a prophet? Yes, and he is more than a prophet. John is the man to whom the Scriptures refer when they say, 'Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, and he will prepare your way before you.' I tell you the truth, of all who have ever lived, none is greater than John the Baptist. Yet even the least person in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he is! And from the time John the Baptist began preaching until now, the Kingdom of Heaven has been forcefully advancing, and violent people are attacking it. For before John came, all the prophets and the law of Moses looked forward to this present time. And if you are willing to accept what I say, he is Elijah, the one the prophets said would come. Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand! Matthew 11:7-15 (NLT)

"The extended community that is known as 'the church' consists of all the people who have the church within them. The church takes hold in us when we are regenerated, and we are all regenerated when we abstain from things that are evil and sinful and run away from them as we would run if we saw hordes of hellish spirits pursuing us with flaming torches, intending to attack us and throw us onto a bonfire.

"As we go through the early stages of our lives, there are many things that prepare us for the church and introduce us into it; but acts of repentance are the things that actually produce the church within us. Acts of repentance include any and all actions that result in our not willing, and consequently not doing, evil things that are sins against God.

"Before repentance, we stand outside regeneration. In that condition, if any thought of eternal salvation somehow makes its way into us, we at first turn toward it but soon turn away. That thought does not penetrate us any farther than the outer areas where we have ideas; it then goes out into our spoken words and perhaps into a few gestures that go along with those words. When the thought of eternal salvation penetrates our will, however, then it is truly inside us. The will is the real self, because it is where our love dwells; our thoughts are outside us, unless they come from our will, in which case our will and our thought act as one, and together make us who we are. From these points it follows that in order for repentance to be genuine and effective within us, it has to be done both by our will and by thinking that comes from our will. It cannot be done by thought alone. Therefore it has to be a matter of actions, and not of words alone." True Christianity n.510

## FROM THE PASTOR

After the men left to report back to John, Jesus then gives a wonderful speech telling in no uncertain terms just who John is, and how great John has been, even though his life is now ending. I enjoy hearing irony in Jesus' voice! (It is all the more powerful an image that He is neither sarcastic nor belittling. I strive to match His speaking craft!)

Jesus reminds them just who and what John was: a real prophet, living in the wilderness with no nice clothes or food. A man of very strong principles, who stuck by them, even though it meant persecution by the authorities he criticized. He had nothing to lose (but his own sense of purpose in life!). He was nobody's lackey. Nor was he a hired spokesman, parroting the politically correct spin. In fact, Jesus points out, John was more important than any of the previous prophets because he didn't just predict the Messiah's coming, he announced that it had happened! John initiated the endgame of the epic story of humanity's return to integrity with the divine by exhorting people to turn around. And he initiated Jesus' universe-changing ministry by baptizing Him.

One way to hear what Jesus asks those around Him is: "Are any of you like spoiled brats who are never happy, no matter what your parents do? Are any of you sophisticated thinkers, making up some theological justification for your disbelief? Have you noticed how hypocritical your position is? Well, real wisdom will show itself in the end."

As I listen to Jesus Christ, and, over some time, begin to turn myself around and practice His instructions, I am forced to confront the ideas I have believed and the attitudes I have loved in the past. John is telling me to turn to others' ideas and desires to prepare for happiness. For what has happened is that the wise words of those old prophets (for me, my parents, teachers, elders, ministers, heroes, etc.) have become hackneyed in my mind. Instead of really hearing their wisdom, I have invented all manner of interpretations that favor *my* way of thinking and feeling. Now, being a person of faith, I have listened to the Lord speaking in His Word. But, because I have overlaid those old predictions with ideas that I have invented to satisfy my own selfish and worldly needs, I begin to expect something quite different from what the Lord meant when He originally spoke to me through those wise elders. For instance, religious teachers told me that a new Law would come into my life, providing order and freedom. After adding my own expectations, now I expect a very fine Ruler to appear in my life, all decked out in the proper regalia, attracting my affirmative attention, telling me precisely what to do. And so I expect to very easily step into His world and discover my own peace and joy!

But then, when I actually do the initial work of listening

to the Lord, and as I begin to practice what He actually says, I quickly hear the Lord saying (through John who is introducing this correct understanding!) that I have to do some very hard work on my self! What? Turn from my ways? I have to stop doing things I really have come to depend upon for my personal joy! John and Jesus tell me: Repent!

Like the Pharisees who came to check out what was happening at the Jordan to upset people so, I think of all the things I have done and said, and I begin to justify them. This is a typical human reaction because the Lord created humans to freely act on what makes us feel good. This allows us to actually, on our own, as if of ourselves, love the Lord. Because I have reached adulthood, I am able to see the big picture – my spiritual life – and so I am capable of believing genuine truths that determine my thinking, my desires, and my acting.

The first, and maybe hardest, part of repentance is this first step: calling what I believe false, and labeling what I love evil. I am motivated to do this when the "John the Baptists" in my life step up and reveal to me information that I really already had at hand: that my current life's miseries and trials are the result of the false ideas and selfish and worldly loves I have added to the traditional beliefs and motives handed down to me by my elders.

It is a wonderful miracle that initiates and supports this beginning process. For the Lord steps in, into my heart and mind, every time I stop and simply consider that maybe I am wrong and that I have to turn around. The initiation of the work of repentance, listening to the John the Baptist – the Word – and so acknowledging my sin, invites Jesus Christ to step in and wash me of the filth that I have acquired through my sinning.

The task before us is to find a reliable source of information that will reveal to us the actual situation, and which will effectively invite us to change, and give us the strategies to do our part. We have to be looking for the right idea, good and true ideas (and not our own fantasies!). This source exists as the Lord's Word. However, it can appear rough, sound like haranguing, and so, well, old (unsophisticated, harking back to an earlier era). I have to put aside my judgments about the truth. I have to quiet my cynical self so that I am open to His truth and love. And I have to humble myself to the big picture. Jesus Christ will then be there, in my heart.

Clark Echols, MDiv, PC

513 284 1236

[www.clarkechols.com](http://www.clarkechols.com)

Mindfulness, Cognitive Therapy, Spiritual Development

Note: If you know of an organization that could use our space for their meeting, retreat or workshop, please let Clark know!

# February 2012

January 2012							February 2012							March 2012							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4									1	2	3
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
29	30	31					26	27	28	29				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 11:00 AM Lay Led Worship	30	31	1 9:30 AM Yoga 10:00 AM Bible study 6:00 PM Yoga	2	3	4
5 11:00 AM Worship, Pastor Echols preaching	6	7 9:30 AM Yoga	8 9:30 AM Yoga 6:00 PM Yoga	9	10	11 11:00 AM Homeopathy Mtg 2:00 PM Robin's Harp Concert
12 11:00 AM Lay Led Worship	13 7:00 PM Spiritual Growth Group	14 9:30 AM Yoga	15 9:30 AM Yoga 6:00 PM Yoga	16 7:00 PM Private event	17	18 5:30 PM Ladies Night Out
19 11:00 AM Worship, Pastor Echols preaching	20 7:00 PM Spiritual Growth Group	21 9:30 AM Yoga 5:30 PM Pilates 6:30 PM True Movement	22 Midwest Clergy at Oak Arbor 9:30 AM Yoga 6:00 PM Yoga	23	24	25
26 11:00 AM Lay Led Worship	27 7:00 PM Spiritual Growth Group	28 9:30 AM Yoga 5:30 PM Pilates 6:30 PM True Movement	29 9:30 AM Yoga 6:00 PM Yoga	1	2	3

## *Volunteers*

February 2012

DATE	USHER	F & S	SUNDAY SCHOOL	LAY LEADER	GREETER
2/5		Jane	Pat	Max	Latta
2/12	Dion	Shirley	Jane		Blair
2/19		Pat	Pat	Don	Gladish
2/26	Don	Pat	Jane		Latta

March 2012

DATE	USHER	F & S	SUNDAY SCHOOL	LAY LEADER	GREETER
3/4		Jane	Jane	Max	Gladish
3/11	Dion	Shirley	Pat		Shirley
3/18		Dion	Jane	Dion	Latta
3/25	Max	Jane	Pat		Blair

*Please join us for worship  
Every Sunday at 11 AM*

Glendale New Church  
845 Congress Ave  
Glendale, OH 45246  
(513) 772-1478  
information@newchurch-cincy.org

**February 2012**

## SWEDENBORG COLLOQUIUM ON SPIRITUAL PRACTICE -- *March 31, 2012*

TO REGISTER and to RESERVE LUNCH:  
e-mail [SwedenborgColl@gmail.com](mailto:SwedenborgColl@gmail.com) or call 215-364-3460

*(Presenters, listed alphabetically)*

REV. SUSANNAH CURRIE – *Moderator*

DRS. ROBIN AND STEPHEN LARSEN -- *Partnership as  
Spiritual Practice*

**SANDRA AMRITA MCLANAHAN, MD -- *Health And  
Spirituality Through Yoga***

REV. DAVID MILLAR -- *Logopraxis: Engaging With Sacred Texts  
As The Basis For A Spiritual Practice*

PETER RHODES -- *God Doesn't Practice*

REV. FRANK ROSE -- *The Evolution Of My Spiritual Practices*

REV. DR. JONATHAN S. ROSE -- *Outer and Inner Spiritual  
Practice*

REV. JANE SIEBERT -- *Why Practice? "Seven Sacred Pauses –  
Living Mindfully Through The Hours Of The Day"*

REV. DR. RAY SILVERMAN -- *Joyous, And Free From Ego  
Concerns: The Art Of Being Adequate*

DEAN SLUYTER -- *Just Being: The Way of Natural Meditation*

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED but ADMISSION IS FREE. A buffet lunch can be purchased but must be reserved and pre-paid. Coffee, tea and water will be available all day. This is an all-day event, Philmont Country Club, Huntingdon Valley, PA.

The program will conclude with a BOOK-SIGNING SESSION. This will enable participants to purchase publications by the speakers, meet with them, and have their books signed.

*For more information please contact Doris Odhner Delaney at  
[swedenborgcoll@gmail.com](mailto:swedenborgcoll@gmail.com) or 215-364-3460*

### **New Church Young Singles Weekend**

A group of New Church young singles have been talking online and have come to the conclusion that it's about time we come together to do something fun. This March 9th-11th we will be coming together for a weekend of play in the snow, mental stimulation, good conversation, delicious food and spiritual inspiration.

Hope you will join us!

Place: The Glenn's Cabin at Lake Wallenpaupack

Time: Arrival between 5:30-6:30 Friday March 9 – Depart 1:00-2:00 Sunday March 11

Cost: \$40

Food: Dietary Options Available

Contact Ron Schnarr for info on rides from Bryn Athyn and other info at

[ronschnarr@yahoo.com](mailto:ronschnarr@yahoo.com), or visit our webpage at <http://ncbv.org/get-involved/new-church-young-singles-weekend>.

## **Have you had contact from the spiritual world?**

Tell us your story.

Dr. Erica G. Hyatt, Assistant Professor of Psychology at Bryn Athyn College, is looking to interview subjects for her upcoming book on near-death and spiritual experiences.

- Have you had a near-death experience?
- Have you been present when an individual passed into the spiritual world?
- Have you experienced a visit from the spiritual world?

If you are over 20 years old and you have experienced any of these, we want to hear your story! This is your opportunity to contribute to the growing interest in psychology and the spiritual world. We are hoping to collect many stories from people around the world.

To participate contact Dr. Erica:  
dr.ericahyatt@brynathyn.edu or 267-502-6081

## **Theta Alpha International 2012 Dues Reminder**

You may have missed the 2012 [membership](#) dues notice that was included in the October 2011 issue of *Theta Alpha Journal* (center page). [A subscription to the Journal is included in the cost of your membership.](#) To renew your membership, send US\$15.00 to P.O. Box 154, Bryn Athyn, PA, 19009, USA *OR* go to [www.newchurch.org/materials/publications/theta-alpha-journal/index.html](http://www.newchurch.org/materials/publications/theta-alpha-journal/index.html) and click the “Pay Dues” button to pay electronically. Donations are also welcome.

## **How can we take "church" beyond the limits of Sunday?**

Join us for a three-day gathering – Impact 365 – where we will learn strategies for developing a thriving church community in which people are nourished and inspired every day.

**Register for the event:** learn more about the schedule, speakers, location and event pricing.

<http://www.newchurch.org/materials/programs/leaders/Impact365>

**Who Should Attend:** Pastors, church leadership teams, small group leaders, people who want to get more involved with their church, New Church educational and non-profit leaders, those who love their church and want to see it thrive, those who want to make their church teachings and community more available to seekers.

April 19, 20, & 21 (Thursday – Saturday) at Oak Arbor, MI