

Olivet New Church

CHATTERBOX

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The Lord's Power

Talking with a friend the other day, I mentioned a common saying used by people who are trying to be helpful but feel their efforts aren't good enough or aren't making much of a difference. It's called the 3 Cs:

You didn't **cause** it,
You can't **cure** it, and
You can't **control** it.

Oftentimes when friends or relatives are struggling, we come to their aid and begin to notice after a while that they are associating their difficulties with us. Children can often do this with their parents, blaming their problems on them. Trying to help a child get better grades may return the comment: "I wouldn't do so poorly in school if you didn't bother me all the time."

This may be a passing phase but may also turn into a relationship pattern in families. Children can turn into adults who look outside themselves for the **cause** of problems that are coming from within. The whole world can do this!

While we can certainly be the cause of other people's problems, as we each grow developmentally and hopefully spiritually we have to accept responsibility for either maintaining the source of our problems or making changes that lead to the problems being resolved.

We are not responsible for **curing** other people's problems. Even if you are in the medical field, you know that the patient who comes to get something looked at must then adhere to provided directions, exercises, or prescriptions if they want to avoid getting the same condition again or making it worse.

One of the hardest of the 3 Cs is believing that we can **control** other people's problems. This is classic in the mental health field. People with addictions or clinical depression, for example, often have family members who have been dedicating their lives to controlling the acting out of their loved one.

The Lord gives us freedom to have a life and to feel as if it were our own life. To give us that freedom and that feeling His Divine Providence operates very carefully with the 3 Cs.

People can easily look at this pandemic and assign blame to the Lord. "He must have caused it. We must be angering God for Him to send this plague," some may say. That is flawed thinking. The Lord, even when the state of the world was at its lowest, did not cause an army of angels to swoop down to destroy the Jews who condemned Him to death. "Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matt. 26:53) But He did not.

The Lord is not the cause of this pandemic. And, in our individual lives, He is never the cause of our troubles. We also have to learn not to "own" other people's problems as if we caused them and are therefore responsible for them, as much as our grief for others may somehow be satisfied if we accept some guilt for their troubles.

But the Lord is all powerful and surely could cure the world of this plague if He wanted? This again is a flawed way of viewing the Lord's power and His providence. Ask yourself: "How big does a problem have to be before the Lord 'steps in' to intervene?"

The Word tells us of the five churches that have been on earth. When spiritual freedom was being closed off after the Most Ancient Church fell, the Lord intervened with a judgement upon that church represented by the Flood. People were not literally drowned, but spiritually their evils led them to their destruction.

All humanity would have been eternally lost had He not changed the nature of the human mind, allowing for a separation of the understanding from the will. The understanding previously could not float above the evil of the sunken will, hence the flood. But the Lord changed people's minds so we can now rise above our own evil nature and a new good will from the Lord can be developed in an understanding guided by the truth of the Word. He did not cause the flood, but He provided an orderly means for salvation.

Again, when the whole world would have been destroyed at the end of the Jewish Church, Jesus came to intervene. On the outside, things did not look all that bad. People were carrying on with national and political causes. The Jews did not like the fact that their country was occupied by the Romans, but that would likely have changed in a century or two as the Roman Empire declined.

When the Lord came to "cure" the sick world then, it was again, as with the Flood, a sickness of a hidden spiritual condition that would have led to the loss of mental and spiritual freedom and eventually the loss of human rationality and freedom. But on the outside life looked "pretty normal."

How big a problem does it have to be before the Lord steps in to intervene? When the Lord made His Second Coming it came as the events of Last Judgement of 1757 were taking place. Again, on the outside life looked pretty normal. Nations were exchanging power and property, science was developing after a dark age, and new modes of transportation meant that state-of-the-art weapons and sailing vessels could explore strange new worlds. The Lord stepped in, but as to how He did so, we can only look back and glimpse His providence after the fact. He didn't put an end to wars and revolutions and slavery and colonization.

Again, on the outside life was just advancing at a faster pace than the centuries previous, but it was on the spiritual level that darkness and spiritual cold were closing in to lead to a shutdown of true human advancement. Had the Lord not made His Second Coming in a way which could be shared throughout the world, all humanity would have been lost. Rationality and freedom were restored by the Truths and Goods of the Lord's New Advent and the angelic heaven could again be populated by humans who could find the Lord and love and follow His commandments. Spiritual slavery was abolished, and abuses in the form of colonized spiritual dominion came to an end.

We can't control what's going on in the "big, bad world" or even in the little world of our own personal existence. This is the third C, which is totally in the Lord's hands, and His hand operates in ways unseen to our natural and finite human minds. We enjoy appearances of control over our world, but they are only appearances. The Lord only has all control over what takes place "as in heaven, so upon the earth."

The Lord does have this situation "under control"—in the important ways that allow us to freely serve each other in a heavenly manner. Nothing in this pandemic will withhold you and me from continuing in our spiritual journey. In fact, at such difficult times spiritual advances may be more likely as we reflect on the truly important qualities of life. We will endure hardships, and sadly loved ones will die, but because the Lord preserves our freedom to become angels, whatever deaths are to take place will be as deaths at any other time. We have a life to live on earth in order to "graduate" to the next life. The Lord's power is and has been in place to lead us with "His strong right arm" and He has not, nor will He ever, leave us powerless to follow Him.

—Rev. Michael Cowley

From the Pastor

We continue into a third month of “shutdown” and isolation in order to keep the COVID-19 pandemic from overwhelming our medical facilities here in Ontario as well as in Canada and the rest of the world. As of this writing, it is not clear if we have reached the plateau or if we have weeks or months ahead with continued isolation and social distancing.

Jared and I are offering services, classes, and meetings online. Check out our YouTube channel “Olivet New Church Video” for archived videos, and join us online for livestreaming of church services.

I will reconvene Arcana Class Thursday mornings at 10:00 am via Zoom. We begin on May 7 and 21.

Please let me or Jared know if we can be of any help to you. We are trying to stay in touch on the phone with as many of you as we can, both near and far. But please let us know if there is anything else we can do.

Gillian Parker, who had been stuck in Savannah, GA after her fall, has been flown home and is, for now, in Etobicoke General.

I keep all of you my prayers—God bless,
Michael

From the Assistant Pastor

It has been a strange month, for sure. We’re all weathering the COVID-19 outbreak in our own ways, but I imagine that we’re all, to one degree or another, sharing in a feeling of disorientation as we adjust to new rhythms of life. Some of you, I know, are being directly and seriously affected by this outbreak—either by the disease itself or by changes to your income and your employment status. May the Lord be a source of comfort to you. And if there’s anything the Olivet community can do to help, we’re here for you. Please ask.

Speaking for myself, the new rhythm of life hasn’t been so bad. My family and I remain healthy and mostly sane. Learning to be a “remote pastor” has been a challenge, but on the bright side, I’ve been learning a lot of tech skills that I needed to learn anyway. We’re certainly not managing to recreate a “normal” experience of life in the Olivet community, but I am fairly satisfied with what we’ve been able to offer so far, and we will continue to improve our offerings. Among those offerings is a discussion class that I’m hosting over Zoom every other Wednesday evening. The topics of these classes so far have been “the permission of disease” and “forgiveness,” and the discussions have been good. If you would like to be a part of these classes, please email me at assistant@olivetnewchurch.org.

And if there’s anything else that I, as a pastor, can offer you, I’ll repeat what I said before—please ask. I am pleased and honoured to continue to serve this congregation. May you find peace in presence of the Lord, and safety in the shelter of His wings.

—Jared Buss

From the Principal’s Office

With teaching now happening remotely, the entire staff is grieving the loss of this time with our students, though we know it is in their best interest. The teachers are working very hard preparing for the delivery of robust daily learning opportunities. The concept of online teaching is a total paradigm shift for us, as we believe in (and practice) learning styles that are tactile in nature. However, in using various platforms we have been able to reach our children quite creatively and effectively. Jared and Michael are recording chapel talks for Mondays and Fridays, in line with our usual schedule, with teachers doing worship services on other days. We’ve had especially enthusiastic feedback from parents and students about chapel! Teachers are also doing read-alouds, math lessons, reading classes, spelling, vocabulary, tutoring sessions, and offering crafts and activities for parents at home. Some

classes are even keeping up Show-and-Tell! It's important for us to continue to offer options for socialization as well, so Parent Council graciously offered to put parents in touch with one another (those who wish to be) to set up virtual playdates. Our music teacher is conducting fantastic online music classes, and our art teachers have found crafts and activities to offer their students.

We are emphasizing to parents that these times are unprecedented, and each family situation is unique and as such, we are ensuring no child is left behind and are making individual learning plans. We continue to be humbled to work with such fine, dedicated educators.

We received some glowing feedback from one family who wrote to Britteny saying:

“Notwithstanding the remote digital learning, the output and quality of teaching materials and instruction remains impressively and remarkably intact from the Olivet teaching staff! We are incredibly grateful to you, and all of the Olivet Staff, for the steadfast guidance in the Lord's Word and enrichment of the children's spiritual teachings and intellectual development. In our family's humble opinion, the ups and downs of using technology for our children's schooling are but a small price for being the beneficiaries of Olivet's storied legacy of spiritual and intellectual education. Mrs. Wilson, you, and the rest of Olivet teachers are unstoppable!”

Britteny Wilson, Laura Braam, Val Younan

Nominate a Young Person

Nominations are open for the **Kathleen McClure Fountain Memorial Award!**

This monetary award is designed to remember Kathleen McClure Fountain's love of children, respect for education, and sense of service freely given, as well as to inspire the best in every student.

Do you know a student in **Grade 5, 8, or 12** who demonstrates a strong standing in both academics and extra-curricular activities, as well as who participates in events at Olivet Church and/or School? A personal reference from a principal (or similar authority) is also required.

Please email kmf.nominations@olivetnewchurch.org to nominate a student or to ask any questions. **The deadline for nominations is Friday, May 15, 2020.** *And yes, parents can nominate their own child(ren)!* (Note: Nominees do not have to be currently/previously enrolled in Olivet School.)

Looking for new Greeters & Refreshments Committee Head

After many years of devoted service to the job, Patrick Horigan and Mary Broderick are stepping down from heading the Greeters & Refreshments (G&R) Committee. We thank them for all they've done to help welcome new visitors and to make everyone who attends church feel cared for.

The job entails scheduling greeters and refreshment volunteers for the year—usually in the spring so that by September the roster is ready to go. They are also the go-to person/people to find greeters for memorial services, which is very much appreciated by the families and particularly valuable for new visitors. There is a refreshments committee for memorial services, so the G&R committee head is not responsible for this part. A full description of the job can be found on the olivetnewchurch.org website or by emailing contact@olivetnewchurch.org. We hope you will consider this valuable use!

Swedenborg Ebooks

Dear friends, we have received the following notice from the General Church Translation Committee. While we are all at home more, with more time on our hands, perhaps one way we can put that time to good use is by reading from one of these new translations of the Word.

“Lisa Childs has been putting our General Church translations into ebook form and getting them available on Amazon. So far she has gotten onto Amazon the following: *Apocalypse Revealed Volume 1*,

Apocalypse Revealed Volume 2, Divine Love and Wisdom, Doctrine of Faith, Married Love, and Divine Providence. Conjugal Love is about to be submitted as well.

She is now working on *Doctrine of Life, Doctrine of the Lord, and Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture.* Search for the title of the volume + "Swedenborg" + "Rogers" on Amazon to find these translations.



~**~Maple is still scheduled to take place. Please express your intention to attend by sending a registration form. Cheques will not be cashed until further notice.~**~

A New Church Camp for Teens

Held at the Ecology Retreat Centre in Mono, Ontario

Please join us **Thursday, June 25 – Wednesday, July 1, 2020**

This will be a week of friendship building, laughter, restorative relaxation, and spiritual growth for teens who will have just completed at least Grade 8 or any year of high school.

This year's theme is: *Light*

Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." ~ John 8:12 ~

Have questions/need more information? Please contact Stephanie Kuhl, Camp Director

Email: stephkuhl@live.ca or call 519-895-1891

For the registration form, email Steph or find it on the Maple Leaf Academy Facebook page.

MAPLE LEAF ACADEMY — SERVING THE YOUTH OF THE GENERAL CHURCH SINCE 1969, SPONSORED BY THE GENERAL CHURCH IN CANADA. STAFFED BY EXPERIENCED VOLUNTEERS

CAMP FEES

Full cost of camp	\$650
GCIC Grant	<u>-\$350</u>
Regular camper fee	\$300
Early bird*	\$265
Junior staff**	\$200

Full payment is requested by June 8.

A deposit of at least \$50 is required with registration. (\$5.00 non-refundable)

***Early bird** fee is available to those who register and send in full payment by May 1, 2020.

****Junior Staff** must have completed Grade 12 and attended Maple at least once before. Junior staff campers are expected to hold a leadership role and participate in specific camp activities. **Financial assistance is available.** Please apply early as funds are limited. Direct your requests to the Camp Director (Steph Kuhl).

CANCELLED: 2020 Jacobs Creek Family Retreat CANCELLED

The bad news is that due to the coronavirus pandemic, we have decided that we must cancel our 2020 Jacobs Creek Family Retreat (JCFR) in July. This was not an easy decision. We will very much miss seeing everyone this summer. July just won't be the same without Jacobs Creek!

The good news is that we already have our dates for next year. Our 2021 JCFR is now scheduled for July 25-28, 2021. Please put these dates on your calendar and plan to join us for a fantastic time. We will carry over the Ten Blessings theme, since we didn't get to learn about it this year, and hopefully our same staff of ministers can join us next summer.

If you have already sent in your registration and deposit, please contact me directly about what to do with it, since I have not yet deposited your checks. If you have any questions about this cancellation or JCFR, please call Jamie Uber at 412-782-2710 or email him at james.g.uber@gmail.com.

Laurelville, where we hold our retreat each year, is really suffering. Like us, many of their groups this summer have had to cancel their events. They could really use our help right now. Julie and I have decided to redirect our annual JCFR donation to Laurelville this year to help them through their tough times. Whatever you can give them will be greatly appreciated. They have been very understanding in dealing with the present situation, and they have allowed us to cancel and reschedule our event for next year without penalty. Please send any donations to Jeanette Lahm, Executive Director, Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, 941 Laurelville Lane, Mt Pleasant, PA 15666. Please note in the memo line that you attend Jacobs Creek Family Retreat.

Laurelville also wanted us to let you know that if they do open this summer, and individual families want to have extra elbow room for family vacations, please let them know as they would love to accommodate you. You can contact them at: www.laurelville.org, 724-423-2056 (main number), 724-272-2039 (Jeanette's cell).

Thanks and God bless you all. See you next year! The JCFR Steering Team:
Jamie and Julie Uber
Blake and Paul Messman
Rev. Matthew Genzlinger

Gathering Leaves 2020, August 28-31

Gathering Leaves, the international retreat for Swedenborgian/New Church women, will take place at the Purley Chase Centre, in Warwickshire, England. The theme for the event is "Fruits of the Spirit." There will be a variety of activities, and time for connecting. Room and board fees for the retreat for everyone are being covered by generous donations, at the Early Bird rate. Details about the event, and about booking in, are on the Purley Chase Centre website (purleychasecentre.org.uk).

Here is an update from Rev. Alison Southcombe about Gathering Leaves 2020:
"As the collective Gathering Leaves Committee, we have decided to make a final decision and announcement about whether to proceed with Gathering Leaves at the end of May. This may be somewhat optimistic, but we should be better able to see how measures have worked to impact the COVID-19 situation at that time with a fervent hope that we may be able to proceed with our Gathering Leaves event at the end of August as planned."

May Anniversaries

Fran and Glenn Raymond.....	May 2, 28 years
Frank Giancola and Catherine Carswell.....	May 5, 15 years
Tony and Julianne Diab.....	May 5, 8 years
Jerry and Amy Jutras.....	May 8, 38 years
Gillian (and Richard) Parker.....	May 19, 58 years
Doris (and Dennis) McDonald.....	May 26, 58 years
Ersa and John Parker.....	May 30, 67 years

[W]ith those who are in love truly conjugal, the faculty of becoming wise increases[.]” CL 211

~ Olivet New Church and Olivet School ~
~ May 2020 ~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 10:30a Worship (MKC)	4 7p Pastor's Council	5	6 8p Online Doctrinal Class	7 10a Arcana Via Zoom	8	9
10 <i>Mother's Day</i> 10:30a Worship (JJB)	11 7p Board Meeting	12	13	14	15 Chatterbox Deadline Deadline for Kathleen McClure Fountain Award Nominations	16
17 10:30a Worship (JJB)	18 <i>Victoria Day</i>	19	20 8p Online Doctrinal Class	21 10a Arcana Via Zoom	22	23
24 10:30a Worship (MKC)	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 10:30a Worship (JJB) 12p High School & Middle School Classes						



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