

Good Friday afternoon, New South Family. Welcome to the 40th edition of the Weekly Word – this for the week ending April 17, 2020.

-----**The Critical**-----

Announcements

1) Annual Conference, 2020: As per the direction of our Bishops, we will not be meeting personally for Annual Conferences this year. After much discussion with our Board of Administration and the vote of approval by delegates, we will now begin the administrative process with the BOA. We will have a gathering, to include ordination service, as soon as we are able to meet together personally.

2) Financial Help For Small, Struggling Churches - This may prove helpful to some of you, from Mark Dowley, our chief financial officer at headquarters:

We have been made aware of a potential source of relief funding for small churches in your conference. Christian Post reports that NFL's Ben Watson has started a relief fund for small churches hit financially by the pandemic, and facing closure. It may be worth looking into. I followed the link as far as the application for assistance and found the following criteria for their \$3K grants:

Fund Criteria:

Located in low-income area and/or declared COVID federal disaster zone

Registered as a religious non-profit in your state

Must be submitted by an officer of the church (e.g. pastor, elder) with supporting documentation

We are biased towards smaller churches of less means

Must affirm either the Apostles Creed or Lausanne Covenant or submit your own statement of faith

Please write an essay describing the needs and how funds will be used (1-2 paragraphs)

Picture of your church

If interested, you'll find more info here: <https://www.churchrelief.org/>

Church of the Week: Agape Fellowship (Smyrna, TN) with pastor Sosthene Gatware

Conference / Superintendent's Calendar (all times eastern)

April 27:	ABS (Area Bishop and Superintendents) - Zoom
May 14:	DL Zoom, 9:30a
May 29-30:	New South Annual Conference - Zoom
June 8:	ABS – Indianapolis (Zoom?)
June 15-20:	NSC Teen Camp
June 11-14:	NSC Family Camp
June 22-26:	NSC Kids' Camp
August 9-11:	ABS – Baltimore
August 25-28:	Starting Strong for new pastors - Indianapolis
September 23-25:	New Room Conference, Nashville, TN

And now...

-----**The Important**-----

Resources, Articles and Attachments

1) **A Good and Helpful Word** from FM Missionary to Portugal, Cindi Angelo:

Dear Friends! Greetings from Portugal!

We are quarantined, but we are fine. God is keeping us. We have been praying for the US and for your families and ministries.

The times to come will not be easy for the world and especially for the church. We saw a statistic that after this quarantine, 20% of churches will go into insolvency and will cease to exist. Eduardo and I have been thinking about what can keep the church alive and active after these days? The answer that came to us was the pastoring, discipleship and small groups that have remained active through social networks.

Having millions of people watching our services online does not mean much, but the daily lives through pastoral visits in video calls, prayer groups, teaching and discipleship through the new platforms will make the difference.

As I wrote a few days ago: Social withdrawal should not give way to relational cooling. The Christian relationship remains vertical with God, and horizontal with people. I pray that when this quarantine ends, all believers will be engaged more than ever with the "Lord of the harvest," working to move His Kingdom forward like never before. We are not used to "being a church" in the comfort of our home. Others, like us, inside their homes are hard at work so that the people of God understand that even though our strategies may have changed, the target and our commitment has not!

Let us not be one of those who are part of the 5 foolish virgins who were distracted in the darkest hour of the night!

We are trying, in particular, to be closer to young and old. Have you thought about the number of older people who can go into depression and attempt suicide? Emotional care must be developed by the church like never before. Pray for our young people. Some shut themselves off from their worlds and cut themselves off from relationships.

Pray for us as we seek to continue that vision while leading our workers to do the same. One of the wonderful things about being part of a historic church like ours is the structure and identity that sets us apart from many who are independent.

Thanks for partnering with us even in these difficult times. ~ Cindi & Eduardo Angelo

2) Encouragement in Quarantine From FM Elder Mike Henry: "Please receive a gift of encouragement from Missionary Phyllis Sortor at this most unusual time in our nation and for the Body of Christ. Five years ago Phyllis was kidnapped in Nigeria and held hostage for twelve days. In captivity, her life was threatened daily and terror gripped her. Then, she found turn-around hope in an act of love. Later, when recovering from the ordeal, she had to decide if she would return to Nigeria or remain captive to the traumatic fear.

During the process of making a documentary of her story we encountered a setback in our timing, but now we see a gift from God to bless the Church with hope. [In this fifteen-minute video, you will hear Phyllis' testimony of victory and message of new life as we face the "captivity" of this COVID quarantine.](#)

3) Congratulations: to Rev. Carl Brannon, who was recently elected as Superintendent of the North Central Conference. After serving as an elder in the Gateway Conference for the past thirteen years, Carl will be returning to his home conference, which voted overwhelmingly in favor of his election. Carl's term will begin July 1. We congratulate Carl and Kim as well as thank current superintendent Rev. Mike Hopper and Janet for their service to North Central Conference. Carl and his wife Kim and their family plan to move from Greenville,

Illinois to Janesville, Wisconsin in the near future. Please pray for the Brannon family as they step into this responsibility in full reliance on the Lord, in this challenging and opportune moment in history.

Job Openings

At this point, we have a pastor or interim pastor in every NSC church, although those interim situations are, well, interim. We will have at least two pastoral openings this summer. Contact me for details.

Remember too that [if you click here](#), you will find job opening listings at FMC Human Resources.

April Birthdays (*that we know of)

Neil Anderson – Professor, Asbury University, Wilmore (KY), April 19

Joe Ritter – Pastor/Planter, Waynesville (NC), April 22

*I would love to know the birthdays of all those related to the NSC who receive this communique – pastors, elders, delegates, special friends, etc. Please send month and day to Timothy at newsouthconference@gmail.com

This Week's Passage, Quote and Joke

Passage: I'm completing our series (one week late due to COVID) on Jesus' letters to the churches of Revelation this week, speaking of Pergamum and faith and persecution. Revelation 2:12-17.

Quote: "No one ever told me that grief felt so like fear." C. S. Lewis, "A Grief Observed" (1961)

Joke: Charles Wesley, on the Asbury Seminary Campus these days:



Blessings on your worship this weekend!

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