

Good Friday afternoon, New South Family. Welcome to the 43<sup>rd</sup> edition of the Weekly Word – this for the week ending May 8, 2020.

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

## Announcements

**1) Annual Conference 2020 Update:** At the direction of our Bishops, we will not be meeting personally for Annual Conferences this year. After discussion with our Board of Administration and per the vote of the delegates, we will instead be publishing an electronic version of the report book that all will receive, and delegating votes to the BOA. You will be receiving that booklet electronically, to be distributed near scheduled time of our annual conference. We will have a gathering, to include ordination service, as soon as we are able to meet together personally.

**2) Resources Regarding Reopening Your Church:** I've attached several documents to the end of this letter which may (or may not) prove helpful in reopening our churches. Since there are many states and localities involved in our conference, and many different approaches to worship and size of congregations, again, my best counsel to you is to follow your state and local guidelines for your worship gatherings. I think the main thrust of the guidance from our governments includes:

- Encourage the aged and vulnerable to stay away from crowds.
- Avoid physical contact...keep appropriate distances and wear masks.
- Limit socialization
- No child-care or close group meeting
- If you can continue online, do so.

**Church of the Week:** Westmoreland – Forrest Chapel (TN) with pastors Chris and Buffy Cole.

## Conference / Superintendent's Calendar (all times eastern)

May 14:	DL Zoom, 9:30a
May 29-30:	New South Annual Conference - Zoom
June 8:	ABS (Area Bishop and Superintendents) – 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 Free Webinar** is being offered by The Center for Faith, Sexuality, & Gender with Preston Sprinkle, entitled, "How to Engage the LGBTQ Conversation," Monday, May 11, from 8:30-10:00 pm EST. This webinar addresses the question of how to engage those you disagree with on the topic of faith and sexuality.

Almost every Christian these days finds themselves in conversations about sexuality with people they disagree with: parents with their kids, pastors with their congregants, friends with friends, and so on. Oftentimes, both

sides speak past each other because they haven't taken the time to understand where the other person is coming from.

How can we engage these conversations with a passion for truth and an unswerving love for others? Please join on May 11th as he shares his thoughts and then answers your questions!

**2) A Little Perspective** Below is a letter to the editor from a high school history teacher that appeared in the newspaper of my hometown. By including it, I'm not in any way minimizing the present situation facing our nation and the hurt many are going through. I include it simply as a tool for contextualization. One thing that helps in not allowing present circumstances to carry us away is the witness of history. I've often said, people who know history are typically the wisest people in the room. Someone here in the Wilmore church office, upon reading it, remarked, "This is a reminder that we've really had it pretty easy." Indeed we have.

East Liverpool (OH) Review, Letters to the Editor, May 4, 2020  
(Also appeared in the Salem (OH) News, May 5, 2020)

To the editor:

As we watch the evening news and the talking heads present us with the doom and gloom that this virus is causing us in 2020, I'm sure we all feel more than a little concerned. After all, we are watching — according to everyone from "entertainment," talk show hosts and news anchors — an unprecedented disruption.

We are experiencing (according to the "experts") a world crisis no one has ever seen. Economies are cratering, jobless rates are skyrocketing, and as of May we have over 50,000 deaths in American alone.

"MORE THAN THE VIETNAM WAR!"

"NYC DOCTORS AND HEALTH CARE WORKERS ARE NEAR THE BREAKING POINT!"

"IT'S LIKE ARMAGEDDON!"

Not to belittle any of that, or diminish in any way the very difficult circumstances those on the front line fighting this virus are experiencing, but let's put this in some context.

Imagine you were born in the year 1900 anywhere in the U.S.A.

— On your 14th birthday, World War I starts, and on your 18th birthday it ends. A total of 22 million people perish in that war.

— Later that year, the Spanish flu epidemic hits the planet and runs wild until your 20th birthday. A total of 50 million die from it in two years. Yes, that's right, FIFTY — 5-0 — million.

— On your 29th birthday, the Great Depression begins. Unemployment hits 25 percent here in America and higher worldwide. The World GDP drops 27 percent. The economies of all of Europe are virtually destroyed leading, in large part, to the rise of Fascist dictatorships in Germany and Italy.

— On your 30th birthday, the "Dust Bowl" begins. For the next 10 years the worst drought in recorded in U.S. History destroys an entire region.

– A year later at 31, massive dust storms hundreds of feet high carry the topsoil from Oklahoma to Washington D.C. There is a mass exodus from the plains states of Oklahoma and west Texas. Food becomes scarce. The country nearly collapses.

– When you turn 39, World War II starts. You aren't even "over the hill" yet – you're still "young" by today's standards. And don't try and catch your breath because:

– On your 41st birthday the U.S.A. is attacked at Pearl Harbor and you're pulled into WWII. If you're a male – even at 41 you will most likely volunteer to fight. You may even see your sons volunteer and be sent off to war. If you're a woman you will see your husbands, brothers and maybe your sons go off to war with a distinct possibility you will not see them for four years...or maybe never.

– Between your 39th birthday and your 45th birthday, between 70 and 85 million people will perish. Europe and Asia will have great cities totally destroyed. Atrocities thought unimaginable just a few years before will have taken place.

– At 50, the Korean War starts. Five million will perish.

– At 55 the Vietnam War begins and will not end for another 20 years. Four million will perish in that misbegotten conflict.

– On your 62nd birthday you will witness the Cuban Missile Crisis and hold your breath as you watch the world coming as close as it ever will to a nuclear holocaust. Life on our planet almost ended

– When you turn 75 the Vietnam Wars ends and America is disgraced. Our politicians have disgraced themselves, and our "trust" in our government will never be the same.

Keep in Mind when you were born in 1900 – there was no — NONE, ZERO — paved highways, radio, TV, electric appliances, indoor plumbing. Personal hygiene was washing your hair once a month and taking a bath once a week. Men grew beards because shaving was just too time-consuming and dangerous. As a woman, everything you consider "normal" in personal hygiene standards and sanitation did not exist. Really...think about that for a minute.

The average life expectancy of a man was 45 years. Most doctors didn't graduate from college...they went to medical schools. If you didn't kill it or grow it yourself, you probably didn't eat it. That means you, your spouse or someone in your family killed and gutted some kind of animal every week. There were no "teenagers;" you went to work at 8, 9 or 10 years of age and if you were a boy, most likely you were going to do what your dad was doing for the rest of your life. As a female you were expected to clean, wash cloths, cook and do most domestic chores. Schooling was an option only for a very few. If you made it to 20 without being married and having children you were considered a "spinster."

So, again, I intend no disrespect to those out there dealing with this virus. But instead of holding our heads in our hands and thinking "poor, poor, pitiful me," just remember how tough our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents were. Suck it up, quit being a snowflake and let's beat this thing.

And while we try to find a cure, let's remember that life is full of risks. For those that came before us life itself was a risk. If we're young enough and strong enough, let those of us that wish to do so take that risk.

Robert Spaite, Columbiana, Ohio

## Job Openings

At this point, we have a pastor or interim pastor in every NSC church, although those interim situations are indeed 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.

## May Birthdays (\*that we know of)

Sylvia Brown – May 11

Mark Driskill – May 12

Roberta Zent – May 12

Tim Huff – May 17

\*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](mailto:newsouthconference@gmail.com)

## This Week's Passage, Quote and Joke

**Passage:** This Sunday I'm continuing the series on some of the "not-business-as-usual" events in the Bible, looking at the virgin birth of Jesus using the account in Luke chapter 1.

**Quote(s):** "If you believe in a God who controls the big things, you have to believe in a God who controls the little things. It is we, of course, to whom things look 'little' or 'big'." - Elisabeth Elliot

"Relying on God has to start all over every day, as if nothing has yet been done." –C. S. Lewis

## Joke:



Blessings on your worship this weekend!

D-