

Good Friday afternoon, New South Family. Welcome to the 44th edition of the Weekly Word – this for the week ending May 15, 2020.

-----The Critical-----

Announcements

1) Annual Conference 2020 Update: As has been mentioned, our delegates have voted, granting the BOA to consider and vote on all conference matters until we can meet together in person. That BOA meeting will be held via Zoom on Friday, June 5 at 7:00p. We are also scheduling an in-person gathering, if we're so permitted due to COVID, for August 29, which will also serve as our ordination service. Please mark your calendar, but at this point, in pencil. ☺

2) Pastor's Zoom: Someone (I won't say who) had the good idea to invite all who would care to come, to a zoom gathering of pastors (and spouses,) just to connect, see each other, tell an encouraging story or two and maybe share a prayer need or two. No sermons! ☺ Let's shoot for spending an hour together on Thursday, May 28th at 7:00p (eastern time.) I'll send the link to you via e-mail in the coming days.

3) Resources Regarding Reopening Your Church: Again, I realize this will only apply to those of you in Kentucky, but at the end of this e-mail, you will find the latest version of Kentucky's phase 1 guidelines for houses of worship. Since there are many states and localities involved in our conference, and many different approaches to worship and size of congregations, 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 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.

4) Here is the Latest Word from our Bishops, this one from Bishop Cowart. [Click here to watch!](#)

Church of the Week: Wilmore (KY) with pastors Daryl Diddle, Andrea Tinsley, and Dwight Winter, and appointed, volunteer elders Craig Saunders and Brian Nowitzki.

Conference / Superintendent's Calendar (all times eastern; schedule subject to COVID restrictions)

May 14:	DL Zoom, 9:30a
May 28:	Conference Pastors' Zoom, 7:00p
June 5:	BOA Zoom, 7:00p – Conference Business
June 8:	ABS (Area Bishop and Superintendents) Zoom, 3:00p
June 11:	DL Zoom, 9:30a
June 11-14:	NSC Family Camp – All Camps will be rescheduled for July
June 15-20:	NSC Teen Camp – All Camps will be rescheduled for July
June 22-26:	NSC Kids' Camp – All Camps will be rescheduled for July
July 9:	DL Zoom, 9:30a
August 9-11:	ABS Zoom, 3:00p
August 13:	DL Zoom, 9:30a
August 21:	BOA Zoom, 7:00p
August 25-28:	Starting Strong for new pastors - Indianapolis
August 29:	NSC Adjourned Sitting / Ordination – Wilmore (Proposed)
September 10:	DL Zoom, 9:30a
September 23-25:	New Room Conference, Nashville, TN

October 6-8: Global Overseer's Team, Indianapolis
October 16: DL Meeting – Wilmore, 2:00p
October 16: BOA Meeting – Wilmore, 6:00p
October 17: MEG / MAC Meeting – Wilmore, 8:00a
November 12: DL Zoom, 9:30a
December 10: DL Zoom, 9:30a
March 19: DL Meeting – Wilmore, 2:00p
March 19: BOA Meeting – Wilmore, 6:00p
March 20: MEG/MAC – Wilmore, 8:00a

And now...

-----The Important-----

Resources, Articles and Attachments

- 1) **A Helpful Interview**...really just a conversation including R. R. Reno, Rabbi Mark Gottlieb, and Carl R. Trueman discussing the impact of the COVID health emergency on the lives of Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant faithful, and the measures taken by civil and spiritual authorities. [Click here to go to the First Things web page.](#)
- 2) **SEED Resources and News** [Click here to check out](#) the latest information from SEED, a Free Methodist microenterprise ministry helping people around the globe become self-sustaining producers and entrepreneurs.
- 3) **Free Methodist Financial Services (FMFS) and Kentucky** A few years ago, our ability to do business with the FMFS was limited due to certain Kentucky standards. Those standards have been changed and now we are able, once again, to do business fully. Just a point of information for you. [Click here to see the sorts of things that FMFS offers.](#)

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 – June Birthdays (*that we know of)

Tim Huff – May 17
Scott Clark – June 4
Joy Ireland – June 11
Ryan Bigham – June 14
Burnam Reynolds – June 18
James Demaray – June 19
Sarah Baldwin – June 21
Jan Coleman – June 24
Sharon Bryson – June 27

*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: This Sunday I'm continuing the series on some of the "not-business-as-usual" events in the Bible, looking at the crisis that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego faced in Daniel chapter 3.

Quote(s): "When we are securely rooted in personal intimacy with the source of life, it will be possible to remain flexible without being relativistic, convinced without being rigid, willing to confront without being offensive, gentle and forgiving without being soft, and true witnesses without being manipulative." ~ Henri Nouwen

Joke:



Blessings on your worship this weekend!

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Guidelines for Places of Worship

Places of worship will be expected to meet the [Healthy at Work Minimum Requirements](#). In addition, **places of worship should follow the guidelines in order to reopen and remain open:**

Social Distancing

- Places of worship should, to the greatest extent practicable, continue to conduct alternative services, including tele-services, radio broadcasts, and drive-in services.
- Places of worship conducting drive-in services should ensure their congregants remain in their vehicles and not socialize through their vehicle windows, except at a distance of more than six (6) feet. Attendees should turn off their vehicles to avoid idling and protect everyone's health.
- Places of worship conducting in-person services should limit attendance to no more than 33% of the building occupancy capacity, including clergy and staff-employees, while maintaining social distance between household units of at least six (6) feet. This means that there must be six (6) feet between individuals on a row and individuals between rows, such that a six-foot radius is maintained around all household units. A place of worship that cannot maintain this space must further reduce its occupancy capacity until it is achieved.
- Places of worship should ensure, to the greatest extent practicable, that clergy, staff-employees, volunteers and congregants wear coverings (e.g., cloth mask or bandana) over their mouths and noses while attending services.
- Places of worship should wait to reopen youth services (including, but not limited to, Sunday schools) until childcare services have reopened on June 15, 2020. Once they reopen, youth services should follow the requirements posted for childcare services.
- Singing during services creates a higher risk of spreading infectious particles. Choirs should avoid singing. Congregants should wear face coverings and consider a greater than six feet social distance from others if they choose to sing. Houses of worship should consider alternatives to congregational singing, including by playing pre-recorded or live instrumental music (e.g. pianos and guitars - no wind instruments) during services.
- Places of worship should consider taking congregants' temperatures and asking about signs of illness before admitting them into the place of worship. If they do take temperatures, they should consider using a non-contact thermometer or thermal imager. If a place of worship must use a standard oral/aural thermometer, consider having the congregant take their own temperature and relay the information to maintain social distancing and sanitize the thermometer after each use.

Healthy at Work



- Places of worship should not allow individuals with elevated temperatures (100.5 degrees Fahrenheit or above) or signs of illness (coughing, shortness of breath, sneezing) to attend in-person services. Houses of worship should direct those having symptoms of COVID-19, as well as people who have had close contact with a person who has symptoms like dry cough, chest tightness, and/or fever, to refrain from participating in any aspect of in-person services. Places of worship should encourage symptomatic persons to stay at home, seek immediate medical care, or get tested.
- Places of worship should use greeters to direct congregants to available masks and bulletins. Greeters should be masked, maintain social distancing, and consider wearing gloves.
- Places of worship should display markers and signage in the sanctuary/meeting space to guide social distancing.
- Places of worship should communicate with the congregation often and with clarity and transparency. Prepare the congregation for worship and for the changes that are occurring in procedures due to the national health crisis.
- Places of worship making restrooms available must ensure restrooms are only used by one person at a time and all portions that are regularly touched (e.g., door, sink, and toilet handles) are appropriately disinfected after each use.
- Places of worship conducting in-person services must, to the greatest extent practicable, provide hand sanitizer, handwashing facilities, tissues, and waste baskets in convenient locations.
- Places of worship should not provide communal food or beverages to clergy, staff-employees, volunteers, or congregants.
- Places of worship should restrict access to common areas, to the greatest extent practicable, in order to maximize social distancing and reduce congregating. These common areas include, but are not limited to, foyers, lobbies, vending areas, community and multi-purpose rooms, and event spaces.
- Because of the requirement to socially distance at least six (6) feet apart, places of worship should refrain from the practice of handshaking, handholding, or hugging.
- Places of worship should encourage those at higher risk for severe illness per CDC guidelines not to attend in-person services. These guidelines are available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#Higher-Risk>. Instead, places of worship should, to the greatest extent practicable, provide services that are not in-person, including tele-services, drive-in services, and/or radio services for those individuals. If a house of worship is unable to provide alternative services, they should,

to the greatest extent practicable, implement hours where service can be safely provided to congregants at higher risk for severe illness.

Personal Protective Equipment Requirements

- Places of worship should ensure, to the greatest extent practicable, that clergy, staff-employees, volunteers and congregants wear face coverings (e.g., cloth mask or bandana) over their mouths and noses while attending services.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Requirements

- Places of worship must ensure facilities are properly cleaned and ventilated.
- Places of worship must ensure cleaning and sanitation of frequently touched surfaces with appropriate disinfectants. Appropriate disinfectants include EPA registered household disinfectants, diluted household bleach solution, and alcohol solutions containing at least 60% alcohol. Places of worship must establish a cleaning and disinfecting process that follows CDC guidelines when any individual is identified, suspected, or confirmed as COVID-19 positive.
- Places of worship, as appropriate, must ensure they do not use cleaning procedures that could re-aerosolize infectious particles. This includes, but is not limited to, avoiding practices such as dry sweeping or use of high-pressure streams of air, water, or cleaning chemicals.

Training and Safety Requirements

- Places of worship should ensure appropriate signage is posted throughout their facilities to inform clergy, staff-employees, and congregants about good hygiene and new practices.
- Places of worship should ensure clergy, staff-employees, volunteers, and congregants are instructed to avoid touching their faces, including their eyes, noses, and mouths, particularly until after they have thoroughly washed their hands upon completing work and/or removing PPE, to the greatest extent practicable.
- Places of worship should ensure clergy, staff-employees, volunteers, and congregants are informed that they may identify and communicate potential improvements and/or concerns in order to reduce potential risk of exposure.