

Good Wednesday afternoon, New South Family. Welcome to the 51st edition of the Weekly Word – this for the weeks ending July 10, 2020.

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

Announcements

1) Annual Conference Ordination Service: This service is scheduled for Saturday, August 29, 10:00 a.m. to 11:30a at Wilmore. Bishop Keith Cowart will be with us.

Church of the Week: Please keep the Irvine (KY) FMC in your prayers, as well as Pastor Chris Robershaw.

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

July 19-26:	NSC Kids and Teen Camp (half the week kids, half teens) – pending restrictions
August 9-11:	ABS Meeting – Indianapolis
August 13:	DL Zoom, 9:30a
August 21	BOA Zoom, 7:00p
August 25-28:	Starting Strong for new pastors - Indianapolis
August 28:	BOA meeting – Wilmore, 6:00p (Superintendent Search Team)
August 29:	NSC Adjourned Sitting / Ordination – Wilmore, 10:00a
September 10:	DL Zoom, 9:30a
September 11-13:	NSC Family Camp – pending restrictions
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) Congratulations to the Newly Appointed denominational chaplaincy Endorsing Agent and Co-directors of FM Chaplaincy Ministries, Tim and Patricia Porter. Tim and Patricia follow the outstanding work of Rex and Louise Carpenter, who blessed our chaplains for 13 years. Please pray for Rex and Louise as they transition to retirement and Tim and Patricia as they assume this important work. If you don't already know the Porters, take a few minutes to read the bio (below.) They are eager to work with you to continue the great work of our FM Chaplain Ministry.

2) The Urgency of Sanctification, a tremendous reminder of our critical need for a cleansed heart written by our own Dr. David Schreiner:

The Urgency of Sanctification

Within the past few weeks, the Biblical Studies world has been rocked. On the one hand, it's been rocked by events expected among the contours of life. As I write this, James Dunn died within the past week. Dunn was a

giant in the field of New Testament scholarship, casting one of the longest shadows that the guild has ever known. Before him was Patrick Miller, and tonight word comes that Trent Butler passed on as well. Closer to me was the death of David Thompson. Dr. Thompson, who taught both me and my father while we attended Asbury Theological Seminary, is remembered for his humble intelligence and his approachable and caring demeanor. Most impressively, he was a man of paradigmatic faith...and I use that description intentionally.

On the other hand, the field of Biblical Studies was recently rocked by the shocking conviction of Professor Jan Joosten by French authorities. Joosten, similar to Dunn, was one of those “once in a generation” scholars, casting a long shadow across the field of Old Testament scholarship by impacting the intellectual development of people well beyond his immediate sphere of influence. And if there is one description that best explains the influence of this man it is the fact that, until about 2 weeks ago, he held the Regius Professorship in Old Testament at Oxford University (England). This means that he enjoyed a royal appointment to the world’s most famous professorship.

Joosten, who was a pastor in his native Belgium, was convicted of downloading over 27,000 images and 1,000 videos of child pornography over a six-year period, including some images and videos that depict the rape of a minor.

Let that sink in for a second. That’s just shocking, grotesque, disgusting, and any other adjective that you feel applies!

I first saw this story on the website of the Guardian newspaper, and my anger rose with every line I read. In fact, I physically paused after I finished the article, paralyzed by the gravity of the infraction and the height from which Joosten fell. Since the story hit the presses, the academic societies of our guild have issued statements, rescinded pending publications, and removed Joosten from all responsibilities and membership listings. None of this was an overreaction, but what remains to be seen is how the scholarly community will use Joosten’s work moving forward.

I originally enrolled at Indiana Wesleyan University as a Criminal Justice major; I wanted to be a police officer. For several reasons, I found the idea of investigating crimes to be very intriguing. However, after my Freshman year I shifted majors to a Bible degree. Nevertheless, I kept the Criminal Justice minor because, well, I enjoyed the classes. From Corrections to Police Investigation, I took one class a semester, but without a doubt, my Criminology class left the most significant imprint.

As you would expect, that class was devoted to the study of crime and deviant behavior. In one module we studied sexual crimes, and every day during that module I walked back to my dormitory feeling dirty and under the weight of a spiritual burden. I was disgusted and saddened by what I had been hearing, and all these emotions and memories came flooding back to my mind as I read that article in the Guardian. And, truth be told, they were also intensified by the reality that I am now a father of three young girls.

I must confess that it’s hard for me to feel empathy for Joosten. What he engaged for so many years fed the beast of sexual sin, child exploitation and abuse, and many other manifestations of humanity’s depravity. These are atrocious crimes that helped steal from the victims a type of innocence that they will never regain, preventing them from experiencing a proper childhood. Moreover, Joosten’s crimes speak to not only the depths of sin, but also the penalty of hiding sin. Given enough time, sin will come out, and when it does it will be terrible for everyone in your sphere of influence. Joosten is a father of four. Stepping back from my anger and disgust, I can’t help but think that it didn’t have to end this way for Joosten. While I don’t want to trivialize Joosten’s action by boiling it down to singular cause—clearly there are many things in play here—we must acknowledge that at some point Joosten blocked off the sanctifying work of the

Holy Spirit. He repeatedly indulged an evil inclination until it morphed into a default response fundamental to his daily patterns. Instead of allowing the Holy Spirit to redeem those desires into something pure and glorifying to the Lord, he allowed those desires to drive him deeper into the hands of sin and Satan.

I pray for Joosten. Specifically, I pray for the transforming power of the Holy Spirit to take hold of him and redeem him. I also pray for his family, because only the Lord knows their newly found burdens. And practically, as I have considered this fall from grace over the past few weeks, I realize that we must preach the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. We must proclaim that there can be victory over sin and temptation and that our sinful desires and inclination can be redeemed. Perhaps more importantly, we must live lives that demonstrate these realities. We do not need to live as slaves to sin, but as victors in Christ.

3) A Good Word About the Christian's Relationship to Government, from Dr. Owen Strachan, Associate Professor of Theology at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. In light of what's happening in our nation and government...things I agree with and things I don't...I've found this, personally, very helpful and challenging and even empowering these last few days:

The Christian's Place in Society: Respectful and Law-Abiding

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. ~Romans 13:1-2

Later on in this same chapter, the apostle Paul brings up the notion of "respect." He encourages Christians to go beyond mere obedience to the law, and to adopt a posture of congeniality to one's government and ruling officials (when possible). This is a simple but potent idea for Christians. We are not simply to trudge about, following the rules of the state. We are to exude a healthy warmth for our country and locality and mark ourselves as those who strive to obey the law and their officials.

This section in Romans 13 comes immediately after a lengthy section on conformity to Christ. This shows us that one's relationship to the law closely reflects our level of Christian maturity. Less mature believers show less respect for the law and the state. More mature believers show more mature respect for the state. One's attitude to one's government and one's involvement in it is thus a much stronger indicator of our conformity to Christ than many Christians think.

On a list of entities and groups to which we are to concern ourselves, I think many of us would rank "respect for government" very far down—maybe number 15, or perhaps number 20. In the Bible, however, Paul's section on government follows directly a more abstract section on Christian conformity, indicating to us that our attitude to the government and our conduct within society is far more tied to our level of godliness than we might think. In voting, obeying laws and rules, speaking well of our authorities, praying for them, paying our taxes fairly, and other such deeds, Christians show that we are a unique people - a people who honor our government and submit to it when it in turn honors and respects us.

Christians, then, are to take pains to adopt a respectful attitude, even as we remember our roles as hated citizen, gospel witness, and prophetic voice. Christians in society do not choose one of these roles. Instead, we merge all of them, and seek to fulfill all of them with courage and conviction. In this way, we mirror our Savior, who paid His taxes, spoke the gospel, denounced individual and societal evil, and bore the hatred—and the sin—of wretched, fallen man on His cross of redemption.

Job Openings

At this point, we have three churches who need pastors:

Greenville (TN)

Bowen (KY)

Harriman (TN)

Please keep this process in your prayers – that the Lord would provide shepherds for His flock. Remember too that [if you click here](#), you will find job opening listings at FMC Human Resources.

June / July Birthdays (*that we know of)

Dale Hale July 10

Rick Boyd July 19

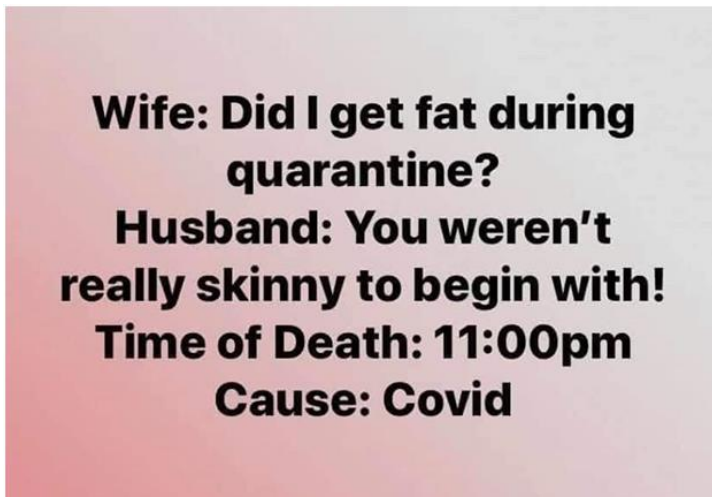
*I would love to know the birthdays of all those related to the NSC who receive this communique – pastors, elders, delegates, special friends, etc. Please send month and day to Timothy at newsouthconference@gmail.com

This Week's Passage, Quote and Joke

Passage: This Sunday's study of Jude focuses on the danger of insidious evil and godlessness that creeps in unaware and the damage it can do to a person, family, church and community.

Quote: "Worry is the darkroom in which negatives can develop." - Wanda E. Brunstetter

Joke:



Blessings on your worship this weekend!

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Tim and Patricia Porter Free Methodist Chaplaincy Ministries and Endorsing Agent

Tim and Patricia Porter are excited to assume the role as Co-Directors of Chaplain Ministries for the Free Methodist Church – USA, with Tim serving additionally as the Endorsing Agent beginning 1 July 2020. Tim retired as the Wing Chaplain at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson, AZ, on June 2020 after 34 years of reserve and active duty service. Tim and Patricia pastored the Light and Life Church in Bend, Oregon (1987-1993), then pastored the Living Hope Church in Eugene, Oregon (1993-2000).



Tim joined active duty in 2000 and has served at various levels of leadership. They have been stationed overseas in South Korea and England, and Tim has deployed to Balad, Iraq in 2004, and to Resolute Support NATO Headquarters, Kabul, Afghanistan in October 2018 - April 2019. Tim earned a Doctor of Ministry in Marriage and Family Therapy from Gordan-Conwell Theological Seminary in 2007, and has served as a volunteer on the Free Methodist Chaplain Association Executive Committee as an At Large Member, Secretary, Vice President, and President. Tim enjoys watching football and basketball, fishing, hiking and the outdoors.

Patricia initially worked as a licensed physical therapist (1984-1998) while assisting Tim in their two church assignments, ministering as a worship and music director, women's ministries leader, and administrator. Patricia felt the call of God and became an ordained Elder in the Oregon Conference in 2007 and subsequently attended Fuller Theological Seminary graduating in 2015 with Masters in Theology with emphasis in Biblical Studies. While the Porters were stationed in England, Pat had the privilege of participating in a short-term chaplain internship at Addenbrooks Hospital, Cambridge, England. Patricia was involved actively in the Air Force chapel ministries in the areas of mentoring, counseling, discipling, developing/leading women's groups, preaching when called upon, and developing new programs for the chapels. Pat enjoys traveling, hiking, and reading.

Tim and Patricia are ordained Elders and members of the Oregon Free Methodist Conference. They will be celebrating their 40th wedding anniversary this year and have two married sons and two grandchildren who live in Los Angeles and San Diego, California.

The Porters are excited to embark on this new ministry endeavor and look forward to meeting all of you and serving with you!