

Happy Friday, New South Family. Welcome to the 75th edition of the Weekly Word – this for the week ending January 8, 2021.

-----**Announcements and Resources**-----

Announcements

- 1) **We Welcome Charlie Fiskeaux** to the position of Conference Administrator. Charlie assumed the responsibility on December 16, and will be the person on the other end of the e-mail address newsouthconference@gmail.com. You can contact him, or me, or both of us, to get your questions answered, or at least to receive confused looks!

- 2) **FM History and Polity** The conference is offering FM H & P in Wilmore or via Zoom this spring in a Friday evening / Saturday format. The dates/times are:
Friday - February 5, 6 - 9p
Saturday - February 6, 8a – 4p
Friday - February 19, 6-9p
Saturday - February 20, 8a - 4p
Saturday - March 6, 8a - 3p

Interested? [Please email me for more information or to sign up.](#)

- 3) **The Latest Free Methodist Foundation Newsletter** [is available by clicking here.](#) This is a helpful tool with current information on the financial world relevant to the church and to our denomination in particular.

- 4) **The Latest Light and Life Magazine (e-version)** [is available by clicking here.](#)

- 5) **The Latest Global Missions Prayer and Praise Guide** is attached/below.

- 6) **The Latest (wow – there are lots of “latest” things, aren’t there?) FMC Pastors and Leaders Newsletter** – [can be found here.](#)

- 7) **Annual Reports** All Conference Candidates, ordained Elders and Deacons, and appointed Licensed Pastors should have received via e-mail a fillable annual report form, to be turned in to me by January 31.

- 8) **Change of Status Form** Pastors who are enrolled in the FMCusa pension plan and experienced a change in annual income at the start of the year (or anytime, really) need to complete a change of status form with FM Human Resources. This affects your future pension amount. [The electronic version of that form can be found here.](#)

- 9) **Wabash Conference Classes** Our neighbor to the north(west,) the Wabash Conference, is conducting several classes in the coming weeks and anyone needing them is invited to participate. Details are attached.

- 10) **Some Thoughts on Current Events** You know, our current events really aren’t only current. Over the holidays, I was cleaning out around the house, and in doing so, I discovered an article I wrote back in 2009 – not long after the 2008 financial crisis – the ‘Great Recession.’ Check this out, and remember, it was written twelve years ago:

The economic realities of our time and the feelings of insecurity they produce cannot be ignored. Pastors who don’t feel it necessary to address these things and speak to where people are living today – may I say this politely? – have their heads in the sand.

Over the past eight months or so, many members of my congregation have kindly congratulated me for addressing these issues without being political or attacking some political party. They always seem pleasantly surprised – sometimes amazed – that I can “pull this off.”

You know, there's really no big secret to this. The reason I don't get political is because the problems our country and our world faces are not really political. At their core, our problems are spiritual. There used to be a critical mass of people in leadership in our country, both in business and government, who let basic Judeo-Christian principles guide their lives and decisions – principles such as trust, honesty, generosity, mercy, compassion and justice.

Sure, there were some skunks in there, too. The Madoffs have always been with us – in both business and government – but usually, the principled people won out.

I'm afraid that's not the case anymore. We've become, predominantly, a nation of greed, from the highest positions of leadership all the way down. You see it in the business practices of failed companies, which threw honesty to the wind in order to make all the money they could at any cost. You see it in the highest levels of government, where legislation is being passed that will amass and hold power over more people than ever before – at any cost.

The problem with our country, and much of our world, is that we've lost our spiritual bearing. We're out for ourselves, with no real regard for the common good. Pundits and talk shows can debate the stimulus package all they want, but I don't hear anyone addressing the core issue. In fact, we've banned religion from even being a viable topic of public discussion.

History clearly shows us that when nations get to the point of disintegration that the United States is at today, their only hope is spiritual revival. We need God to come and visit us powerfully and remind us of the realities of faith and the spiritual world. We need Him to impress upon us once again the eternal principles of virtue and the basic difference between right and wrong.

Truly, this is the only thing that will fix our nation.

Some things simply don't change...and won't change...apart from genuine spiritual renewal. Beyond all else, that is what we need in our nation – to turn our focus and locus of life to God and His will and way. This is the message of the Church of Jesus Christ, which offers true hope to our nation and world...and neighbors.

January Birthdays (*that we know of)

Curt Allen - 5

Don Stevens - 14

Kevin Hale - 17

Shivraj Mahendra - 19

Carol Matthews - 21

Bob Barnard - 25

Ron Johns - 27

Ralph Kester – 27

This Week's Passage, Quote and Joke

Passage: I begin a new series this week, taking a cue from the Ecclesiastes statement, "There is a time for everything." For this Sunday, I've been looking at Psalm 46 to reflect on the fact that there is a time to sing.

Quote: "The Bible is the chief moral cause of all that is good, and the best book for regulating the concerns of men...the man, therefore, who weakens or destroys the divine authority of that book may be accessory to all the public disorders which society is doomed to suffer..."

~ Peter Marshall (former chaplain of the U. S. Senate – we need another one like him, don't we?)

Joke – Yes, the times are challenging, but a sense of humor always comes with an eternal perspective:



Arminians Storm God's Throne Room To Protest Election

Blessings on your worship this weekend!

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