

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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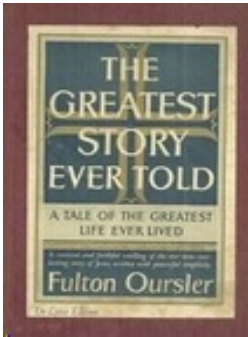
January 2021 Global Prayer & Praise Guide



Friday, January 1 - A question on the quiz show, *Jeopardy*, recently said that January 17 was the official day to break one's New Year's resolutions. Perhaps you've heard that doing something 35 times in a row will make it a habit. May the fresh page of a new year spur us on to specific actions that please the Lord which include knowing, praying for, communicating with and giving to **the global church** –the church militant, which will one day be the church triumphant!



Saturday, January 2 - Key Latin American leaders, John Jairo Leal and wife, Pastora Susana Castro, serve alongside Area Director Ricardo Gomez in many ways. A visionary leader with a fruitful track record, John is the coordinator of Community Church Planting in 14 countries where more than 600 new churches have been started in the past 3 years. Pastora Susana is in charge of pastoral care for the mission district leaders and is the lead pastor of the local FMC in Medellin, **Colombia** and its network of church plants. Their daughters are Valentina and Isabella.



Sunday, January 3 - An unbeliever in the **Middle East** tells how she came to know Jesus through the quiet ministry of a woman she enjoyed visiting. She would climb the stairs to her flat to talk with her about books, listen to her stories and leave with calmness and blessing. A year ago at Christmas the woman gave her the book, *The Greatest Story Ever Told*, and she spent the whole night reading it. The next day she returned to discover how she could be born again. Joy, that no words could explain, filled her heart. She was discipled by her friend, baptized a few months later and became part of a house church. May she share the Good News!



Monday, January 4 - About 600 families in **South Asia Country-N** received assistance from the Bishops' Crisis Relief Fund. Pastor Y hiked from his mountain village to a town in the valley to receive this assistance and purchased sacks of rice and other food. Then he paid for donkeys to transport everything back to his village –a 3 to 4 day journey. Several things complicate his people's suffering: government lockdown of stores and commercial transactions, isolation of villages due to the terrain and location in the mountains, limited services for travel, grueling poverty, and the seasonal onslaught of torrential rains and flooding.



Tuesday, January 5 - The Mosaico Cultural Center, in a suburb of Madrid, **Spain**, continues to bring change to both children and adults. Despite health concerns, more students just keep signing up. People who would not think of entering a church are willing to come to this center where, by God's grace, they will hear and understand the Gospel.



Wednesday, January 6 - Dan and Hope Owsley, career missionaries to **Brazil**, are giving thanks for all the changes that have taught them to trust God in new ways. They say, “Even though we felt hampered at times, God was never limited by coronavirus restrictions.” They expected a drop in the number of seminary students, but because of online classes, they had record enrollment. Pictured here to the right with Dan is Rodrigo Lima, the director of the seminary.



Thursday, January 7 - Gabe and Olivia Sevigny from Indianapolis, Indiana, are ready to leave as soon as restrictions are lifted to serve as VISA missionaries at Kibogora Hospital in **Rwanda**. Gabe has experience as a mechanical engineer and will be assisting with the supervision of the Kibogora guest house and future development projects there. Olivia has served as a nurse in a children’s hospital and is looking forward to using her nursing skills at Kibogora, and entertaining at the guest house.



Friday, January 8 - Dennis and Kyle Leon lead a network of churches and home groups in **Costa Rica** called the 360 Missions District. Positive results of the quarantine include seeing new people come to Christ via online services who might never have walked into a church; disciples from different churches being brought closer together through the virtual platform of the pastoral formation classes; opportunities to serve in practical ways making the church look resplendent amid the darkness surrounding the pandemic; and church boards focusing on the health of the church instead of bureaucracy. Children are Selah, Lucas, Cyrus, and Elias.



Saturday, January 9 - A woman in the **Middle East** had been meeting with several women in her home once a week for Bible study. With the shutdown, they began meeting online, and three unbelievers recently joined the group. One

woman called herself a Christian, but she worshiped Mary and the saints. Now she has begun posting on FB that Jesus is the only Savior. Another woman joined the group after seeing Jesus in a dream. The leader was able to explain how Jesus could redeem her because of His death on the cross. May these two women continue to grow in their faith and knowledge, and may others come to salvation through this ministry!



Sunday, January 10 - Neddy Nanjowe Dingili is the retiring chairman for Tumaini Women of **Kenya**, a Christian NGO working predominantly with women enabling them to fight poverty in every aspect of their lives while they develop spiritually. Their frontline workers who manage the groups sometimes travel in harsh conditions, sleep in odd places, eat different foods, solve or listen to groups' challenges without solutions and just keep going. Even during the pandemic, TWK has begun the construction of a community sanitation project, fenced in property for a future training center, and hired new personnel. Additionally, all 500 member families received bags of food!



Monday, January 11 - Seth and Hlawn Hlawn Van Tifflin direct this ministry in **Southeast Asia** to keep abused and/or abandoned children from being trafficked. Three praises from creative access country 'M' include construction of a pre-school to teach young lives about Jesus, and also keep them safe while their parents work in the fields; property purchased for housing IBH teenagers who want to pursue higher education; and all \$8,000 raised for renovation of two dorm buildings. Besides this, a remote village in Cambodia now has a much improved after-school tutoring classroom. How they praise God for supplying these needs even –maybe especially– during a global pandemic!



Tuesday, January 12 - Children all over the world seem to love raising animals. This is particularly true in **Haiti** where food is often scarce. Nanny goats produce milk and give birth –sometimes having as many as two or three kids. In Haiti, a goat can be sold at market to buy food for the family for some time. If the family has enough goats, one might even be butchered. This boy, Fubensley, lives north of Port-au-Prince and received a financial gift from his ICCM sponsor with which he bought a goat. He named her Fubenscie, after his name, and when she gave birth to two kids, he named them Fubensleyna and Fubendjy. Whether or not we can pronounce these names correctly, we see how much Fubensley cares for them because of their names.



Wednesday, January 13 - Josh and Susie Fajardo lead the work in **Europe**, where they have served for 15 years. Josh writes, “It has been said that Europe is now the new Dark Continent, specifically for the spiritual darkness covering the nations there.” Sharing the message of God’s love is not easy as Europeans lead the post-Christian era. An exciting new model of ministry, however, is training house church leaders and faith communities in new areas by sharing the gospel with people who would not attend an established church. They praise God that people are searching, and doors are opening to evangelize.



Thursday, January 14 - This from Latin America Director Ricardo Gomez and Dr. Paul Olver - The pandemic has taken a devastating toll in **Latin America** where one-third of all worldwide deaths have occurred. Hard won economic gains are being obliterated as poverty rates rise to levels unseen in a generation. However, in the midst of these dire statistics, nearly 500 House of Peace leaders are reaching out to their communities. Aided by network facilitators and country coordinators,

may these leaders have what they need to sustain a growing ministry. Our prayers and financial support make a difference!



Friday, January 15 - Here Rodrigo and Tanya Rosado show their excitement for receiving permission to buy tickets for April 5 to begin their service in **Argentina**. May all funding be in place, health issues be such that allow this transition, and all the details of moving from one country to another be well-oiled with wisdom and provision. They say they’ve been doing their ‘happy dance.’



Saturday, January 16 - The entire **Impact Middle East** team gathered in Luxor, Egypt back in March of 2020. They prayed, worshiped and made great plans with great expectations! Then literally, everything changed –the day after their retreat! Lock-downs began, travel was restricted and life changed for the entire world. It seemed as if all plans for 2020 would be in vain, BUT God had other plans. New churches were born on Zoom! New leaders were discipled remotely. One leader said, “I thank God for Covid19. I have had more chances this year than ever before to talk to 'majority background' people about Jesus!”



Sunday, January 17 - Supt. Daniel S leads the work in **Cambodia** where he has a vision to open a church plant in every province. Many current church members have converted from Buddhism. Thriving ministries include three ICCM child-development centers, church-plants, and microenterprise projects to support pastors and provide income for church members.



Monday, January 18 - John Habibu Said studies at Ewart Bible College in **Tanzania**. He was saved after realizing that the overwhelming number of deaths in his family had their root cause in ancestral spirit worship. Though they prayed to these gods for protection, they served them out of fear. John decided to seek refuge in the church where men of God prayed for him, led him in confession and helped him believe in Jesus. He joined the choir and was later appointed to teach Sunday School. Then, he received invitations to preach. With no spiritual foundation from his past life, he was eager to attend Bible college. May he lead many people out of spiritual darkness.



Tuesday, January 19 - Mike and Maria Long, career missionaries to **Greece**, have asked for resources to replace this van. It has served the Lord well for over 10 years transporting immigrants from camps to church and back, delivering humanitarian supplies as well as supplies for work projects, and been the moving van for needy families. It has taken youth on trips, been the support van for 5 cycling trips, and hauled visiting groups to Biblical sites. It has been a very good mission vehicle. Now it needs to be replaced. Pray with them that the funds will be provided.



Wednesday, January 20 - Vickie Reynen has served as the ICCM coordinator in West Africa for several years and has now passed the baton for ICCM children in **Togo** to these two capable people, Rev. Assah and Mazama, who have been serving on the Togo team. In spite of government restrictions, they have been able to keep up with the ICCM kids in Togo. The international church continues to raise up leaders in their own countries –praise the Lord!



Thursday, January 21 - Solar lights allow older students in **Asian** hostels the opportunity to stay up and complete their homework. These lights last well since the photo-electric cell can be charged during daylight hours. More importantly, they replace candles which can cause a fire or an injury. Costs vary widely for shipping these lights to various remote parts of the world, but a donation of \$20 per light can make a real difference for a student and maybe even the entire hostel as they are both efficient and safe.



Friday, January 22 - David and Yeya Lopez are nationals from the 'V' country who have served in **Peru** for 4 years. They say they have learned more in 2020 than every before developing a total dependence on God Who has kept them moving forward as they now oversee more than 50 community house churches that are growing and multiplying disciples. Thankful for their supporters, they look forward to the future. Here Son David Alejandro proudly wears his cap and gown upon graduating from the 6th grade. Daughter is Valery.



Saturday, January 23 - Jaime and Mariana Mafla serve the FMC in Quito, **Ecuador**. Jaime, recently retired, leads 2 community churches, and Mariana pastors a church in central Quito as well as overseeing 2 others in this capital city and 4 on the coast in Esmeraldas. As a leader of the work in Ecuador, Mariana is thankful for 55 people taking pastoral formation courses and the 22 community church planting projects in process. She and Jaime have 3 grown children and 2 grandchildren.



Sunday, January 24 - The Noor Center, a project of **Impact Middle East**, seeks to see women restored to dignity by addressing their physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. As many as 7,000 women from the Yazidi community were enslaved and brutally abused by ISIS during the Iraq War. Most adult men were killed and children taken to be child soldiers. Today, survivors face trauma from their past, poverty, and vulnerability in displacement camps in Northern Iraq. Separated from

their families and uncertain about their future, may they find security and hope in Jesus.



Monday, January 25 - Last year retired Bishop Roger Haskins and his wife Ellen spent 5 months in **southeast Asia** where they fell in love with the FM team, their mission, and the nations and cultures they serve. On their return to the US in May, they stayed connected doing many early morning and late evening video calls. Pray for the planning now being done to see how their roles will play out for future service with the Asia team.

Tuesday, January 26 - K in **creative access country 'C'** just taught the disciple class how to manage a 'factory.' This month he and his team will explain how to reach Muslims. K is happy to be in a classroom again after teaching five courses online. His wife, J, is excited about new partnerships with Hands of Hope and for a large order from a US client! May she be able to set up new sales channels.



Wednesday, January 27 - David and Jill Sweet have served in **Bulgaria** since 2017. They assist with church planting, pastors' training, and hosting short-term mission teams from around the world. They also help with the St. John's Home, a safe place for girls to live and thrive. David engages church members of all ages in recreational activities, and Jill provides accounting assistance to the foundation that supports the church-planting projects, the Bible school and the St. John's Home. They also work with Team Balkans on regional events such as camps. In 2019 the Sweets adopted twins Elijah and Matthias out of the Bulgarian foster-care system.



Thursday, January 28 - At the end of 2020, while in **Togo** Africa Area Director Mike Reynen helped lead training for several pastors organized by country leader Dosseh Takpale. Using the uncompleted facilities at the Wesley Missionary Institute, Mike said, "It gave me a sort of 'first fruits' sense about our preparations for the missionary training slated to begin in January."



Friday, January 29 - From **Tanzania**, Pastor Conrad Bitoye shares his concern for people there who have disabilities since they are almost universally despised. Few buildings are handicapped accessible preventing the disabled from sharing events –even at church. His goal is two-fold: to educate the community through the Word of God about the concept of disability as part of life which anyone can experience at any time, and to encourage those who are already affected by a disability showing God's love for them, encouraging their daily activities, and supporting them physically when possible.



Saturday, January 30 - Bishop Rosario Castro Garibaldi leads the Provisional General Conference in **Mexico**. The country is plagued with poverty, violence, addictions and government corruption. May the community church planting system take root and begin to transform many individuals and communities. Mexico City, is the largest city in the Western hemisphere and the 5th largest in the world.

Sunday, January 31 - As the Spirit of the Lord has been moving the Free Methodist Church into West Africa, Area Director Mike Reynen is asking God to provide partners to support the work in **Guinea Bissau, Ivory Coast (Cote D'Ivoire), Mali, and Sierra Leone**. Since as of yet, no commitments exist for their development, Mike says, "We are not discouraged, but positively challenged to find the partners that are a . . . divine match for each country." May we share in God's desire for this harvest.



The Wabash Institute is pleased to announce the following classes for the **Winter 2021 Semester**:

Free Methodist History & Polity

Professor: Rev. Gerald Coates

This class will meet on Tuesday evenings for six weeks beginning **Tuesday, January 19, 2021**.

Classes will be held via **Zoom**.

Time: **7-9 p.m. (ET)**

[Click here to register for History & Polity](#)

Inductive Bible Study: Book of Acts

Professor: Rev. Dr. David Nicholson

This class will meet on Thursday evenings for 8 weeks beginning **Thursday, January 21, 2021**.

Classes will be held via **Zoom**.

Time: **7-9 p.m. (ET)**

[Click here to register for Inductive Bible Study: Book of Acts](#)

Wesleyan Theology

Professor: Rev. Dr. Kristen Marble

This class will meet on Monday evenings for 8 weeks beginning **Monday, January 18, 2021**.

Classes will be held via **Zoom**.

Time: **7-9 p.m. (ET)**

[Click here to register for Wesleyan Theology](#)

Spiritual Formation

Professor: Rev. Brett Heintzman

This class will meet on Monday evenings for 8 weeks beginning **Monday, January 18, 2021**.

Classes will be held via **Zoom**.

Time: **7-9 p.m. (ET)**

[Click here to register for Spiritual Formation](#)

For **Local Ministerial Candidates (LMC's)** and **Conference Ministerial Candidates (CMC's)**, these classes may apply toward your education requirements for ordination. For **appointed pastors**, these classes may revive and enhance your ministry.

The cost for each class is **\$100** (plus the cost of books). Wabash Conference **LMC's** and **CMC's** will receive a special rate of **\$75** per class (plus the cost of books).

You will receive an email with your instructor's information and your syllabus once you have registered and paid for your class.

If you have any questions, please contact the Wabash Institute Coordinator, Judy Kinnick at wabashfm@aol.com or **317-442-1631** (cell).