

Happy Friday, New South Family. Welcome to the 76th edition of the Weekly Word – this for the week ending January 15, 2021.

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

Announcements

1) The Bishop's Statement Regarding the January 6 Capitol Events [is available here.](#) and can be found below. Please do pray, and fast as the Lord would lead you, for the future of our nation.

2) The Free Methodist Way A new statement of who we are, what we stand for and why we exist as a denomination, can be found below.

3) Leadership Training Video Series Bishop Cowart and his area superintendents (including me) are creating training videos in a discussion format on the topic of how to lead in a crisis environment: "Leading in Tumultuous Times." The first, an overview, was released about a month ago – you can [see that by clicking here.](#)

The second, [available by clicking here.](#) has to do with reactivity...people who lash out in conversation and debate in anxious environments...and explores what causes it, how to recognize it, what Scripture says about, and how we, as leaders, can avoid slipping into patterns of reacting to, instead of responding to, other people.

I think they're very worthwhile – of course, I would, since I was part of creating them. 😊 Seriously, have a look and know that every leader is experiencing these sorts of challenges.

4) New South 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.](#)

5) An Invitation: "Ladies, save the date, because you are invited to Murphy, North Carolina, the weekend of April 10, beginning at 7:00pm Friday and closing with a worship service on Sunday at 9:00am. Vickie Reynen, wife of Africa Area Director, Mike Reynen, is the guest speaker. Imitating past ladies' retreats, activities will include worship services, prayer time, breakout sessions, silent auction, delightful options in the beautiful mountains of Western Carolina for Saturday afternoon and more.

There is no registration fee, but you will be responsible for your own lodging on Friday and Saturday nights at one of our 6 hotel/motels or an area B&B. The Murphy FMC will provide lunch and dinner on Saturday. Husbands are also welcome to all meals and worship services, should a couple wish to experience spring in the mountains together. NSC churches will receive more details soon."

6) A Director of the Center of Pastoral Formation, the newly created department that will guide credentialing for our denomination, has been hired. Rev. Dr. Steven P. Tungate will serve in this capacity. Steve is an elder in the North Central Conference, where he co-chairs the MEG Board; in his 22 years of full-time ministry in the Free Methodist Church, he has served on MEG Boards under five superintendents in two conferences and has been involved in mentoring several LMC's and CMC's of a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Steve articulates a clear vision for the future of Credentialing that is in harmony with the flexible baseline for Outcomes Based Ordination being developed by the Credentialing Task Force and the Board of Bishops. At the same time, he

knows he has much to learn from conferences that have developed effective systems for recognizing, equipping, and developing pastors in formation and looks forward to collaborating from coast to coast.

- 7) **The Latest Issue of *Connect* – the Newsletter of Free Methodist Chaplains** [is available by clicking here.](#)
- 8) **The Latest Issue Of *Light and Life Magazine*** [is available here.](#)
- 9) **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.
- 10) **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.](#)
- 11) **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.
- 12) **A Resource Attached** that I've found helpful and hope you do as well, on some things we can learn about nationhood from Israel, amazingly, from the Wall Street Journal.

January Birthdays

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: Continuing in our series, "A Time For..." this Sunday I look at the spiritual discipline of fasting and the time for, and manner of, it's use, as we see in Jesus practice and instruction. Matthew 9 is my text.

Quote: *"Never has the world had a greater need for love as in our day. People are hungry for love. We don't have time to stop and smile at each other. We are all in such a hurry. Pray! Ask for the necessary grace. Pray to be able to understand how much Jesus loved us, so that you can love others."* ~ Mother Theresa

Joke: Again from the Babylon Bee (think satire here):

Conservative Mental Health Up 300% After They All Get Banned From Twitter

U.S.—A recent report from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) revealed a huge spike in mental wellbeing among one segment of the American population—the tens of thousands of conservatives who were kicked off of Twitter last week. The report showed increases as high as 300% for those who are no longer engaging on the Orwellian social media platform.

"For years we knew Twitter wasn't great for mental health, but we didn't think it was this bad," said NIMH Director Dr. Joshua Gordon. "Some of these people are showing levels of good mental health that we've never even seen before."

Users whose accounts were shut down only took a few days to experience the benefits of their newfound freedom.

"At first I was upset," said Chet Bradman, one of many right-leaning Americans de-platformed by Twitter. "But after a few days, I realized how much better my life was. The sun was brighter, the birds'

songs were more beautiful. I just wish Twitter would have overstepped its reach and shown its true colors on free speech years ago.”

While the NIMH report is available to the public, Twitter, Google, and Facebook are doing their best to suppress the information in an attempt to keep users under their control and keep Americans in a toxic state of mental health.

Blessings on your worship this weekend!

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