
FRIDAY CHURCH NEWS NOTES

HYMNS & HOPS IN GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA

Greenville, South Carolina, has long been a bastion of fundamentalism because of the presence of Bob Jones University, but it is fast becoming a bastion of emerging churchism. A sign of the times is Hymns & Hops, which has grown from a gathering of 80 in 2016 to gatherings of over 1,000 in 2020. Hymns & Hops “creates the space for families and people to celebrate the Gospel through community, song, and drink.” The motto that is featured prominently on its web site is “Sing loud, die happy,” which sounds like the theme song for 2 Timothy 4:3-4. One of the testimonials says, “There is nothing like worship at a brewery.” The rapid change in attitude toward drinking among “Bible believing” Christians is a major sign of the times. Baptist pastor Charles Spurgeon said, “Next to the preaching of the Gospel, the most necessary thing to be done in England is to induce our people to become abstainers” (1882),



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NASA LOWERS ESTIMATE OF NUMBER OF GALAXIES



New Horizons spacecraft,
NASA

Using technology from its New Horizons spacecraft, NASA now estimates that the number of galaxies is in the hundreds of billions rather than 2 trillion as previously thought. The New Horizons craft, launched in January 2006, captured the first close-up photos of Pluto and is now at the edge of the Milky Way galaxy, about 4.4 billion miles from Earth. The estimates are based on interpretations of “cosmic optical background” readings. The previous estimate was based on data collected by the Hubble Space Telescope. Scientists admit that they really don’t know how many galaxies there are or how vast the universe is. They are making guesses based on unproven presuppositions. The NASA website admits, “There may be many more faint, distant galaxies than theories suggest” (“New Horizons Spacecraft Answers Question,” Jan. 12, 2021, hubblesite.org). Regardless if there are hundreds of billions of galaxies or 2 trillion or

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and, “Those beer shops are the curse of this country--no good ever can come of them, and the evil they do no tongue can tell ... the beer shops are a pest ... the sooner their licenses are taken away, the better” (1884). According to Baptist historian Gregory Wills, since at least the mid-1800s Baptists have held “that a minister who drank alcoholic beverages was disqualified to preach” (*The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary 1859-2009*). When I was a kid growing up in a Southern Baptist church, evangelicals and Baptists in America did not drink and did not go to bars. Exceptions were rare. Schools such as Wheaton and Baylor had rules against drinking. By the 1960s, due to the influence of the loose, anti-separatist, New Evangelical philosophy, evangelicals were *beginning to accept* “social drinking.” In the 1980s and 1990s Contemporary Christian Music continued to push the boundaries of worldliness. In 1993, Michael W. Smith, one of the most prominent voices in CCM, complained in an interview, “... you’re always going to have those very, very conservative people. They say you can’t do this; you can’t do that ... you can’t DRINK, you can’t smoke. ... It’s a pretty bizarre way of thinking” (*The Birmingham News*, Feb. 1993, p. 1B). By the turn of the 21st century, many evangelicals were embracing drinking with enthusiasm. The book *Listening to the Beliefs of Emerging Churches: Five Perspectives* contains probably a dozen references to the joys of drinking. They all condemn drunkenness and call for drinking in moderation, but very few drunks have ever set out to become drunks. Commenting on Proverbs 20:1, Bruce Lackey, who played piano in bars before he was saved, said, “How is alcoholic wine deceptive? In the very way that people are advocating today, by saying that drinking a little bit will not hurt. Everyone admits that drinking too much is bad. Even the liquor companies tell us not to drink and drive, but they insist that a small amount is all right. However, that is the very thing that is deceptive. Who knows how little to drink? Experts tell us that each person is different. It takes an ounce to affect one, while more is necessary for another. The same person will react to alcohol differently in different situations, depending on the amount of food he has had, among other things. So the idea that ‘a little bit won’t hurt’ is deceptive.” “Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise” (Proverbs 20:1).

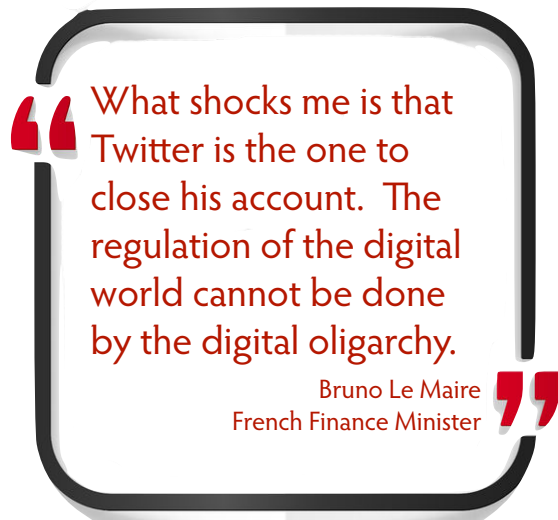
NASA LOWERS ESTIMATE OF NUMBER OF GALAXIES

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many more, the fact is that the universe is unimaginably vast and the number of stars beyond counting. There are 100 billion stars in our Milky Way galaxy alone. The universe star count announced in July 2003 was 70 sextillion observable stars (70,000,000,000,000,000,000). This was the conclusion of the Two-Degree Field Galaxy Redshift Survey. Before the invention of the telescope, man could see only a few hundred stars with the naked eye, but the very first book of the Bible, written about 3,400 years ago, says they are without number as the sand of the seashore (Gen. 22:17). The prophet Jeremiah, writing in about 600 BC, said the heaven cannot be measured (Jer. 31:37). This has been confirmed by current science. “Modern” man has discovered nothing that disproves the ancient Bible prophets. “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. *There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard*” (Psalm 19:1-3).

WORLD LEADERS OPPOSE CENSORSHIP OF TRUMP

The following is excerpted from “Foreign leaders rip Twitter, others,” *Washington Times*, Jan. 13, 2021: “Global leaders are slamming decisions by American social media giants to ban President Trump from



their platforms, in many cases separating their personal opinions of the president from their unease over the sweeping power that American Big Tech firms such as Twitter and Facebook now wield. ... Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador told reporters in Mexico City this week, ‘I don’t like anyone to be censored, and for them to have their right taken away to send a message on Twitter or on

Facebook.’ German Chancellor Angela Merkel, one of Mr. Trump’s fiercest critics in Western Europe, and Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny were among the first to sound the alarm ... French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire said on French television, ‘What shocks me is that Twitter is the one to close his account. The regulation of the digital world cannot be done by the digital oligarchy.’ ... ‘The fact that a CEO can pull the plug on [Mr. Trump’s] loudspeaker without any checks and balances is perplexing,’ Thierry Breton, a prominent EU commissioner involved in the reform push [reform of social media], wrote in an opinion piece for *Politico*. [Breton said, further,] ‘It is not only confirmation of the power of these platforms, but it also displays deep weaknesses in the way our society is organized in the digital space.’ Matt Hancock, health secretary in the government of British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, said the social media industry’s moves against Mr. Trump raise some big regulatory questions. ... In Poland, right-wing Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki said in a lengthy Facebook post that the Silicon Valley companies seek ‘to ensure political correctness the way they like it and to fight those who oppose them.’ ... Acting Australian Prime Minister Michael McCormack said Mr. Trump’s suspension equates to censorship.”

AN ARMY OF OCCUPATION OR AN ARMY OF CONQUEST

“The conversion of the Apostle Paul was like a ‘call to arms!’ His movements read like the chronicles of Alexander the Great. He dared difficulties like Hannibal crossing the Alps! His visits were like military invasions! His letters read like military dispatches! His whole life was a campaign for Christ!

He was a Napoleon of the Cross! Read Ephesians 6:10-18 again, on your knees this time, then stand up ‘at attention’ and ask yourself if you belong to an army of occupation or any army of conquest” (Richard Clearwaters, *The Great Conservative Baptist Compromise*).

NEW MEXICO CHURCHES FINED \$10,000; ONTARIO PASTORS FACE POSSIBLE FINE OF \$10,000

The following is excerpted from “New Mexico megachurches fined,” *The Christian Post*, Dec. 31, 2020: “Calvary Church and Legacy Church, both based in Albuquerque, have been fined for violating restrictions on in-person worship services and mask mandates implemented by the New Mexico Department of Health to stop the spread of the coronavirus. The restrictions, effective Dec. 15, require churches located in ‘red-level’ counties to cap attendance at 25% of capacity. ... After noting that the churches ‘operated at or close to capacity’ during their respective Christmas Eve services, the letters informed them that they would face ‘a civil administrative penalty of \$5,000 for operating in violation of the public health order and a \$5,000 policy for violating the COVID Safe Practices by failing to wear masks or face coverings.’ In a statement, Legacy Church defended its decision to hold a Christmas service: ‘We have taken the pandemic seriously from the start, and have prudent measures in place. But when governments exceed their constitutional authority and contradict what we are called on by God to do, we answer first to His authority.’”

The following is excerpted from “6 Ontario

Elders Fined,” *The Christian Post*, Jan. 4, 2021: “Six elders of a church in Ontario, Canada, have been asked to appear in a criminal court for holding in-person services in violation of COVID-19-related restrictions. The elders, who face a fine of up to \$10,000, say the action is ‘a violation of God-given rights.’ The members of Trinity Bible Chapel in Waterloo were charged last week under Section 10.1 of the Reopening Ontario Act for exceeding the number of permitted people in attendance--10 people indoors and 10 people outdoors--during a worship service on Dec. 27, according to *CBC News*. Officers from the Waterloo Region Police Service visited the homes of the elders at night and gave them each a summons to court. The church says no outbreak has been traced back to its services since they reopened in June. But they ‘have heard a plethora of stories from many of our congregants about how they were negatively affected spiritually, emotionally, mentally, and financially during the first lockdown,’ the elders said in a statement. ‘We are peaceful family men seeking to pastorally care for our families and our church in sincere obedience to God. We are not criminals,’ they said.”

INFORMATION

The Friday Church News Notes is designed for use in churches and is published by Way of Life Literature’s Fundamental Baptist Information Service. Unless otherwise stated, the Notes are written by David Cloud. Of necessity we quote from a wide variety of sources, but this obviously does not imply an endorsement. We trust that our readers will not be discouraged. It is God’s will that we know the times (1 Ch. 12:32; Mat. 16:3) and that we be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves. The News Notes remind us that the hour is very late, and we need to be ready for the Lord’s coming. Are you sure that you are born again? Are you living for Christ? “And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof” (Rom. 13:11-14). This material is sent only to those who personally subscribe to the Fundamental Baptist Information Service mailing list. To SUBSCRIBE, go to <http://www.wayoflife.org/wayoflife/subscribe.html>. TO UNSUBSCRIBE OR CHANGE ADDRESSES, go to the very bottom of any email received from us and click “Manage My Subscription.” Way of Life Literature, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org.
