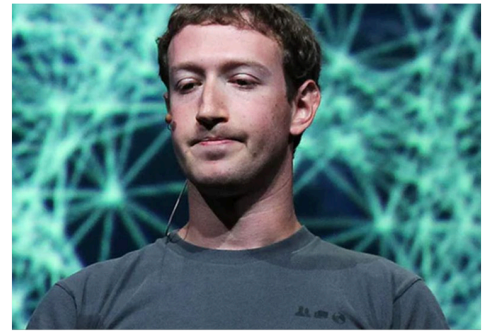


FRIDAY CHURCH NEWS NOTES

FIRST CHURCH ON FACEBOOK

The following is excerpted from “Mark Zuckerberg Is Planting the First Church of the Metaverse,” *The Federalist*, Aug. 2021: “The Church of Facebook is set to capture the human soul in silicon. On July 25, the *New York Times* reported that since 2017 the social media giant has quietly cultivated exclusive partnerships with select religious communities. As always, money is involved. While Facebook’s ultimate goals remain sealed behind non-disclosure agreements, the *Times* article does hint at things to come: ‘The company aims to become the virtual home for religious community, and wants churches, mosques, synagogues and others to embed their religious life into its platform, from hosting worship services and socializing more



Mark Zuckerberg

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A CHURCH STAYING FOCUSED ON GOD’S WORD IN THE COVID ERA

“I can see every evidence that God has blessed this church for obeying Him and not getting off track in the Covid era.”

Many have become focused on Covid vaccines. I have received a large number of links to anti-Covid vaccine material. I’ve looked at a lot of them, tested them as best I can, prayed about the matter. If someone thinks I haven’t looked at all sides, they are wrong. But life is very short, and I am confident that I have more important things to do with my time. And if you are saved, so do you. Since the beginning of the Covid pandemic, I have led our church to stay off social media and to stay focused **on the Bible** (reading, study, memorization, meditation, using the *Weekly Memory Verse Journal*, etc.), **on prayer** (private, family, corporate, prayer partners, “no prayer, no power; little prayer, little power; much prayer, much power”), **on discipling every new member** (one on one discipling with the *One Year Discipleship Course*), **on building the families in God’s will** (on mothers being the keepers of the

home and fathers being the spiritual heads, on educating and disciplining and discipling the children), **on expository Bible preaching**, **on personal and family Bible courses**, and **on evangelism** (every member being engaged, daily prayer for the unsaved, gospel Bible studies with the *Seeker’s Bible Study*, tracting, drug rehab guys, monthly gospel meetings, etc.). We want to be a Philadelphia church (Re. 3:7-13). God has blessed. I’ve never seen such unity in a congregation. Every single member of our church is faithful and growing spiritually, from the youngest to the oldest. This is our goal in obedience to Colossians 1:28, “Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.” We are witnessing amazing conversions. We are nothing, of course, and we don’t claim to be anything; but I can see every evidence that God has blessed this church for obeying Him and not getting off track in the Covid era.

FIRST CHURCH ON FACEBOOK

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casually to soliciting money.' ... 'Facebook is shaping the future of religious experience itself, as it has done for political and social life.' ... If Facebook's history is any guide, every digital prayer will be scooped up and turned into a data point. Livestreamed preachers who deny the sanctity of LGBT lifestyles will be flagged and punished as 'extremists.' ... According to Facebook's chief operating officer, Sheryl Sandberg, 'Faith organizations and social media are a natural fit because fundamentally both are about connection. Our hope is that one day people will host religious services in virtual reality spaces as well, or use augmented reality as an educational tool to teach their children the story of their faith.' ... Technology has become a religion. If you look at the personalities behind techno-fetishism, they frequently describe digital culture in spiritual terms. ... Striking a dissonant note, in 1976 the first Apple computer went on sale for \$666.66. Despite the cuddly Steve Wozniak's insistence that it was just a fluke, the numeric symbolism has dark resonance in the Christian imagination. You don't have to be superstitious to appreciate the mythical implications. When I visited the famous Apple Museum in Prague, Czech Republic, a large decal on the front window read: 'Three apples changed the world. The first tempted Eve, the second inspired Newton, and the third was offered to the world half-eaten by Steve Jobs.'" CONCLUDING NOTE: We know, of course, that Eve was not tempted by an apple. Steve Jobs didn't know his Bible.

LONDON STREET PREACHER WINS CASE AFTER BEING FINED DURING COVID LOCKDOWN

The following is excerpted from "Magistrates rule street preachers were entitled to evangelise and gather," *Christian Concern*, July 23, 2021: "London magistrates have thrown out a case against a Christian preacher, who was fined and prosecuted by the Metropolitan police for evangelising on Good Friday, 2020. Joshua Sutcliffe, 31, along with one socially distanced friend, were preaching and handing out leaflets in Camden, North London, on 10 April 2020 when they were stopped by the police. Detained and surrounded by four police officers, Mr Sutcliffe was told that he was outdoors without a reasonable excuse and acting contrary to government lockdown Covid regulations. Despite Mr Sutcliffe informing the officers that he was a pastor and worship leader and was therefore allowed to be outdoors providing charitable services, he was

cautioned and received a fixed penalty notice of £60. Supported by the Christian Legal Centre, Mr Sutcliffe contested the fine at the City of London Magistrates Court on 6 July 2021. Mr Sutcliffe told the court on the way home that he handed his shoes to a homeless man, which clearly he could not have done if he had just been preaching online. Handing down judgment, the Magistrate said: 'We find the defendant not guilty on all charges. We find that the defendant was outside and that he had a reasonable excuse as he was travelling to his place of work, as a worship leader. Whilst he was in a gathering and therefore in breach of regulation 7, however, the parties were together and were allowed to rely on articles 9, 10 of the European Convention of Human Rights. Their gathering was limited in duration, and they were entitled to gather for street evangelising.'"

ONTARIO CHURCH FINED ADDITIONAL \$85,000

The following is excerpted from “Ontario Church Fined,” *The Christian Post*, July 29, 2021: “A Canadian pastor whose church has been fined over \$80,000 a second time for holding a worship service during Ontario’s ongoing restrictions on church gatherings said: ‘Jesus is worth it.’ Trinity Bible Chapel, a Waterloo-based church, was sentenced Tuesday for a worship service it held in April that violated provincial restrictions on in-person gatherings in response to COVID-19. Justice John Krakchenko ordered the church and its leaders to pay \$85,000 in fines after finding the church in contempt of court, according to Kitchener Today. This includes a \$35,000 fine for the church itself, \$10,000 fines for Pastors Jacob Reaume and Will Schuurman, and other leaders of the congregation each being fined \$7,500. ... Reaume posted a statement to the church’s website Tuesday, explaining that ‘... worship services are not ours to give up. They belong to Jesus. He purchased His worship with the price of His own

blood.’ ... Reaume added that his church intends ‘no disrespect to our courts or civil magistrates,’ but rather they ‘only wish to assert in word and deed that Christ is King of kings, Lord of lords, and Judge of judges. Those who are in authority have a derived authority, and that derived authority comes from God. It has been and will continue to be the detriment of our nation to fail to recognize as much.’ ... The congregation continues to hold outdoor worship services as the government locked them out of their church building in April due to their refusal to adhere to provincial lockdown orders. Trinity Bible Chapel was previously fined \$83,000 in February for violating Section 10.1 of the Reopening Ontario Act, which limited in-person services to 10 people, either indoors or outdoors.” *Christian Headlines* reported, “Trinity Bible Chapel created a GoFundme page in helping the elders pay off the fines. At the time of this writing, the church has raised \$73,710 out of its \$150,000 goal.”

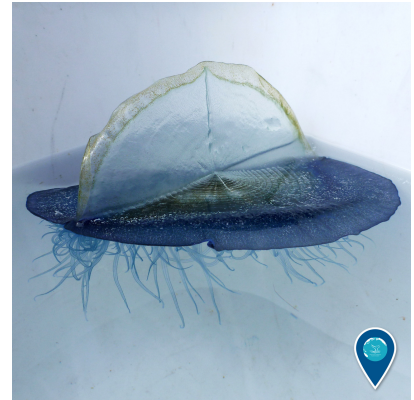
U.S. TO ADD 3RD GENDER ON PASSPORTS



The following is excerpted from *Christian Headlines*, July 2, 2021: “The U.S. State Department said Thursday it will add a third gender to passports for Americans who identify as ‘non-binary, intersex, and gender non-conforming,’ although the department added it will take time to implement. Secretary of State Antony Blinken made the announcement in a statement, saying the change is part of the Biden administration’s commitment ‘to promoting the freedom, dignity, and equality of all people—including LGBTIQ+ persons.’ ‘We will be updating our procedures to allow applicants to self-select their gender as M or F and will no longer require medical certification if an applicant’s self-selected gender does not match the gender on their other citizenship or identity documents,’ Blinken said.” The Bible says, “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (Genesis 1:27).

THE JELLYFISH WITH THE BROAD REACH

The following is from CreationMoments.com, July 27, 2021: “Unlike most jellyfish, *velella* does not merely drift with the wind. *Velella* has a triangular sail. However, unlike some jellyfish with sails, *velella*’s sail doesn’t simply catch the wind and move *velella* along with it. *Velella*’s triangular sail has an S-shaped base so that it can stand up to winds from any direction. The sail is set on top of *velella*’s body at an angle to its length. This makes *velella* a biological oddity--because its body is not symmetrical. This asymmetry is not without purpose. The unusual body design of this jellyfish allows it to sail as much as 60° off the direction of the wind. This is what sailors call a broad reach. Some *velellas* have their sails tilted to the right, allowing them to sail up to 60° to the right of downwind. Others have their sails tilted to the left, allowing them to sail up to 60° left of downwind. What’s more, *velellas* can change their angle of sailing by extending or retracting their tentacles in the water. When scientists noticed that *velella*’s body was asymmetrical, they immediately looked for a purpose behind the design. Even though many scientists will not recognize the Creator, they understand enough to realize that nothing in the creation is without purpose or design. So while many deny the Creator, they still recognize the pattern of His handiwork! Author: Paul A. Bartz. Ref: ‘The by-the-wind sailor: a masterpiece of natural design,’ *Discover*, Aug. 1987, p. 46.”



Velella Jellyfish

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.