
FRIDAY CHURCH NEWS NOTES

CANADIAN PASTOR FOUND NOT GUILTY OF VIOLATING COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

The following is excerpted from “Vindication,” *Christian Headlines*, Nov. 2, 2022: “A Canadian pastor who was arrested and jailed for holding church services during the COVID-19 pandemic has been acquitted of violating the province’s health rules. ‘All glory to God!’ Tim Stephens, the pastor of Fairview Baptist Church in Calgary, tweeted Tuesday after Provincial court Judge Allan Fradsham ruled that the government had failed to prove its case. The controversy dates back to church services on February 28 and March 7 of 2021, when peace officers for the city of Calgary cited Stephens for failing to follow Alberta’s social distancing rules. Fradsham, though, ruled that Stephens was not legally responsible for members’ conduct. Stephens’ only responsibility was that he himself followed the social distancing rules, the judge ruled. ‘I see nothing in the provisions ... which imposed any legal obligation on Pastor Stephens to ensure, compel, or encourage compliance, by those attending the religious services he was conducting,’ Fradsham wrote in a nine-page decision. ... Stephens wrote on Twitter, ‘In total, 5 health tickets withdrawn, 1 criminal charge withdrawn, 1 contempt charge withdrawn, and now acquitted on these two counts. But I still spent 21 days in jail.’”



Pastor Tim Stephens

KROGER TO PAY LARGE PENALTY FOR FIRING EMPLOYEES WHO REFUSED TO CELEBRATE GAY PRIDE

The following is excerpted from “Kroger reaches \$180K settlement,” *The Hill*, Oct. 29, 2022: “The supermarket chain Kroger reached a \$180,000 settlement in a religious discrimination lawsuit over its uniform, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) announced Thursday. The EEOC sued Kroger in 2020 on behalf of two former employees, who were ultimately fired for refusing to wear a uniform with a logo that they believed resembled a Pride flag. ... Brenda Lawson and Trudy Rickerd were working at a Kroger store in Conway, Ark., in April 2019, when the store adopted a new apron as part of its uniform. The apron featured a multi-colored heart



that several employees believed was a symbol of support for the LGBT community. Rickerd refused to wear the apron, and Lawson wore the new uniform but covered the symbol with her nametag. Both were written up for dress code violations. In response, the two employees requested religious accommodation from Kroger. However, Kroger determined that ‘there was nothing to accommodate since the symbol was not meant to represent support for the LGBT community.’ Lawson and Rickerd continued to refuse to wear the uniforms and were eventually fired. As part of Thursday’s settlement in the case, Kroger agreed to pay \$180,000, create a religious accommodation policy and provide enhanced training to store management on religious discrimination.”

LONDON POLICE APOLOGIZE, PAY COMPENSATION FOR WRONGFUL ARREST OF EVANGELIST

The following is excerpted from “Met police apologise,” *Premier Christian News*, Oct. 21, 2022: “The Metropolitan Police has apologised and admitted it ‘fell below standards’ following two wrongful arrests of a Christian evangelist at Speakers’ Corner in London. Hatun Tash, a Christian evangelist who regularly critiques Islam at Speakers’ Corner, has also received £10,000 in compensation and costs after challenging the arrests. ... Supported by the Christian Legal Centre, Tash challenged the arrests on the grounds of wrongful arrest and unlawful imprisonment. ... Following the apology, Tash said, ‘I am very concerned by the approach the police has been taking at Speakers’ Corner. The police have repeatedly taken away my rights and told me that they cannot protect me because they do not want to offend a certain group of people, which has been very disturbing. I believe Jesus Christ is the good news for Muslims, the police

and the world. Police need to protect my rights as I tell others this good news. My hope is that many Muslims will come to faith in Jesus. More must be done to properly deal with Islamic violence and intimidation at Speakers’ Corner. We don’t live in Pakistan; we don’t live in Saudi Arabia. I am Christian and by default I believe that Muhammad is a false prophet. I should be allowed to say that in the UK without being stabbed or repeatedly arrested. Police inaction and fear has led to mobs being encouraged to silence, threaten and to even try to kill me. It is heart-breaking that we live in a society where police do not want to arrest a Muslim for fear of being called Islamophobic. ... **By doing this, Sharia Law is ruling Speakers’ Corner rather than the law of the UK,** she continued. In July 2021, Tash was stabbed in front of police at Speakers’ Corner by a man in a black Islamic robe in broad daylight. No arrest has ever been made.”

AMERICA’S TEENS AVERAGE 70 HOURS PER WEEK GLUED TO SCREENS



The following is excerpted from “Outside of School,” *The Federalist*, Oct. 31, 2022: “Americans ages 11 to 18 play online for an average of 10 hours per day, according to a study out today by a research team that includes psychologist Jean Twenge, author of ‘iGen’ and ‘Generation Me.’ The researchers surveyed 1,600 Americans ages 11 to 18 in May 2022. **On average, the study participants reported using digital media an average of 10 hours and four minutes per day,** on such entertainment activities as social media, video chat, texting, shopping, and gaming. ... this total of 70 hours per week spent on screens also did *not* include time spent watching TV. ... Other studies on children’s screen use reinforce this finding--that **America’s young people are wasting almost all of their waking free time on entertainment instead of personal growth or service to others.** ... The study recommends

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AMERICA'S TEENS AVERAGE 70 HOURS PER WEEK GLUED TO SCREENS

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that parents keep electronic devices out of kids' bedrooms at night, limit screen time to a few hours per day, delay smartphone access to age 16 or 18, keep kids off social media as long as possible, and arrange for their kids to make friends with kids in families with similar boundaries about tech use to help their children socialize with people instead of robots. ... This is another form of societal suicide. Laziness cannot maintain, let alone keep advancing, the United States' world-class level of scientific and cultural advancement. Nothing worth having comes without strenuous and sustained effort. Internet addictions erase not only willpower but also self-discipline, excellence, and the communication skills needed to work with others and sustain key relationships such as marriages, as Twenge and others' academic work shows. ... Parents need to man up and do the hard work of tightly restricting the addictive side of the internet from their kids, for not only their own good but for the sake of our country. ... don't wait for others to do your job for

you. Put down your phone, grab your kids, and make your family motto the title of one of my childhood books: 'Do Something Besides Watching TV. **If your children enter adulthood having done nothing with 25,000 hours of their lives they can never get back, and with their brains destroyed by internet slot machines, that's on you. You're the one paying for their phone and letting them self-destruct.** Tell them to get a job or read some books or do anything but sabotage themselves and our society."



[For a Bible-believing Christian approach to this danger and for practical suggestions for homes and churches, see *Spiritual Safety in the Facebook Age*, https://www.wayoflife.org/publications/books/spiritual_safety_in_the_facebook_age.php]

STREET PREACHER IN ENGLAND FOUND NOT GUILTY OF HATE SPEECH

The following is excerpted from "Street Preacher," *Premier Christian News*, Nov. 3, 2022: "A street preacher has been found not guilty of hate speech after suggesting the Muslim prophet Muhammad was a paedophile. Shaun O'Sullivan was accused of causing religious and racially motivated harassment, alarm and distress by criticising Muhammad and Buddha when preaching in March 2020. Passers-by suggested he was being racist, alerting the police of his actions in Swindon Town Centre. ... Appearing in Swindon Magistrates Court, the 32-year-old was found not guilty of the public order offence with which he

was charged. ... Mr O'Sullivan--who is a born-again Christian WHO would previously heckle and persecute street preachers, said: 'I am relieved that the magistrates have seen sense and found me not guilty. It was never my intention to offend or upset people. My intention was to tell the truth based on the evidence in the Bible and Islamic scripture, and when you do that in public there is always someone who will be offended. Offending someone is not and never should be seen as a crime.' ... According to Islamic tradition, the prophet consummated his marriage to his wife Aisha when she was 9-years-old."

FABULOUS ANCIENT SCIENCE

The following is from creationmoments.com, December 3, 2020: "For centuries the Chinese were the world's greatest scientists and engineers. Many people know that the Chinese invented the compass and gunpowder, but these are only the beginning. Over 1,000 years ago, Chinese astronomer Su Song built the first planetarium. He even tilted it at a precise 23.5° to match the Earth's tilt. More than 2,000 years ago another Chinese astronomer noted the moons of Jupiter--long before Galileo 'discovered' them. Almost 1,000 years ago, the Chinese used gunpowder to make over 30 types of fire arrows, including one that was a two-stage rocket. They were great shipbuilders as well. One of the most famous examples is a nine-masted, 300-foot ship with watertight bulkheads. The Chinese-invented odometer featured reduction gears and carved figures that beat a drum every time a distance of about one-fifth of a mile was traveled. The world's first known working seismometer--a device that registers earthquakes--was built in 132 AD. A 16th-century palace roof was designed with a series of interlocking joints that were layered to provide flexibility in case of an earthquake. As our knowledge of humanity reaches into history and grows, the picture we are seeing is not that of a primitive becoming more like a modern human. Rather, we see humans--ever curious and inventive--creatures that are very different from the animal world. Truly we have come from the hand of God Himself! Author: Paul A. Bartz."



An early Chinese rocket powered by gunpowder.



A Han dynasty magnetic compass



Treasure Ship of Ming Navy

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.