



NEWS & NOTES

■ Early voting in the Presidential primary goes through Tuesday, Feb. 23. The Republican ballot also includes delegates to the Republican National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio, in July. Voters may select delegates if they like or simply bypass the list of up to 428 candidates. [Also on the Knox County ballot are candidates for County Commission, Law Director and Board of Education.] *Tennessean*, 2/10

■ A resolution, SJR 0506, was introduced in the state legislature on Tuesday that would recognize Tennessee's rights under the Tenth Amendment and urge Congress to return the definition of marriage to the states and to take actions to restrain the federal judiciary. Meanwhile, two lawsuits are proceeding in Bradley County and Williamson County on behalf of ministers who want to know if they are still authorized to solemnize marriages since the Supreme

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Court invalidated the existing marriage laws in Tennessee. Finally, Senate Bill 1556 that would protect religious liberty rights of licensed professional counselors and therapists was recommended to the full Senate by a vote of 8-1. *FACT*, 2/12

■ Kentucky Clerk Kim Davis won the case brought against her by the ACLU that would have made her violate her conscience by having her reinstate the old marriage licenses that forced her to sign licenses issued to same-sex couples. She is now allowed to issue licenses that do not bear her signature or name. *FACT*, 2/12

■ In San Diego's new Visual and Correspondence Style Guide, city employees of San Diego are not to mention the term "Founding Fathers" but only refer to them as "Founders." Also, writers are to "Use neutral words for 'man' and 'woman' in job titles or descriptions." The guide also advises against using the terms "sexual preference" or "the gay lifestyle" when referencing LGBTQ. *FACT*, 2/12

■ Ohio state legislators on Wednesday passed a bill blocking state and federal funds for groups that perform or promote abortions, effectively cutting \$1.3 million annually used by Planned Parenthood clinics. Governor John Kasich, a Republican presidential candidate, is expected to sign the bill, which the state Senate

had already passed. A spokesman for Kasich said, "The Ohio Department of Health had already stopped awarding state dollars to Planned." *Reuters*, 2/10

■ A California church is filing a lawsuit against the California Department of Managed Health Care for forcing it to purchase a health care plan that includes provisions for voluntary and elective abortions. The church claims that forcing them to provide health care that includes abortions is a violation of their religious freedom rights and is being assisted by the Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF). *Christian Headlines*, 2/10

■ As parts of Texas' pro-life law go before the Supreme Court, a new coalition called Texas Loves Life has been formed "solely to pray for the Supreme Court." One leader said that about 40,000 lives have been saved in Texas since HB 2 went into law in 2013, and life-affirming pregnancy centers in Texas "have reported increases as high as 300 percent of women using our ultrasound and other services." *RT*, 2/11

■ Kentucky's Governor has signed a bill which makes it mandatory for a woman considering abortion to receive direct medical consultation at least 24 hours before the procedure. Previously, information for a woman seeking an abortion was limited to a telephone

message. The bill is the first pro-life measure signed into law in the state in 12 years.

Christian Headlines, 2/8

■ NASA's Johnson Space Center newsletter has prohibited the JSC Praise & Worship Club from mentioning the word "Jesus" in any future club announcements that appear in the publication. The Christian group, which has been meeting at lunch since 2001, received a complaint after the May 28, 2015 edition of the newsletter mentioned the club meeting's theme of "Jesus is our life." Years earlier, NASA defended the Apollo 8 astronauts who read the Creation story while orbiting the moon. In addition, astronaut Buzz Aldrin received communion while on the moon as part of the Apollo 11 mission. *FACT*, 2/12; *Christian Headlines*, 2/10

■ At Super Bowl 50, 16 teens ranging in age from 13 to 17 were recovered from child prostitution, marking the most recoveries by the FBI at one time. The sex trafficked victims, mostly girls, will get long-term help in the form of social services, including family counseling, since many of these teens were runaways. The FBI and law enforcement also identified and arrested 45 pimps in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut in the days leading up to the Super Bowl. More than 1,600 human trafficking victims sought help in 2015--a

24 percent increase over 2014, according to an annual report released by Polaris, an organization that provides resources and a hotline to call to help human trafficking victims. Thirty states now require certain businesses such as strip clubs, motels, and truck stops to display National Human trafficking hotline numbers in prominent places. *FACT*, 2/12; *Christian Headlines*, 2/8

■ A new Rasmussen Reports poll found that 52 percent of women oppose requiring women to register, while 61 percent of male respondents favored requiring that women register. The poll comes after two top generals said they think women should be required to register for the draft and two House Republicans introduced a bill that would require it. Discussions on women in the draft have arisen in recent weeks as lawmakers and military officials work to implement Defense Secretary Ashton Carter's order to open all combat positions to women. *The Hill*, 2/10

■ The new sitcom Superstore on NBC has suggested in one of its episodes that Jesus was pro-gay marriage and may have been a homosexual himself, according to a discussion between a manager and his gay employee.

Christian Headlines, 2/10

■ Within a decade, parents may be able to find treatment for their unborn children with Down syndrome. NBC reports that researchers plan to start in March a study in which unborn children with Down syndrome will receive Prozac, an anti-depressant, beginning as early as 18 weeks gestation, until they are 2 years old. Studies show mice that would have been born with cognitive impairment functioned normally when given Prozac. Those effects continued into adulthood. *World News Service*, 2/8

■ Franklin Graham has been instrumental in resolving the conflict at the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in eastern Oregon and had been in contact with the protesters for over a week

From your Valentine." — SAINT VALENTINE
In the 3rd century, the Roman Empire was being invaded by Goths. Believing that men fought better if they were not married, Emperor Claudius II banned traditional marriage in the military. Saint Valentine risked the Emperor's wrath by standing up for traditional marriage, secretly marrying soldiers to their young brides. Valentine was arrested, dragged before the Prefect of Rome, and condemned him to die. While awaiting execution, his jailer, Asterius, asked Saint Valentine to pray for his blind daughter. When she miraculously regained her sight, the jailer converted and was baptized, along with many others. Right before his execution, Valentine wrote a note to the jailer's daughter, signing it, "from your Valentine." He was beaten with clubs and stones, and when that failed to kill him, he was beheaded outside the Flaminian Gate on February 14, 269 A.D. In 496, Pope Gelasius designated Feb. 14th as "Saint Valentine's Day."

“helping them work through their issues so they could come to a point where they were ready to leave of their own volition.” At least one of the protesters had requested Graham be present when they emerged from their encampment.

Christian Headlines, 2/12

■ The oldest surviving copy of the Hebrew Bible has been officially recognized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as a world treasure. The manuscript was smuggled out of Syria and brought into Israel in 1958. It has been housed in the Israel Museum since the mid-1980’s. Older manuscripts which contain portions of the Old Testament have been found, such as the Dead Sea Scrolls which date back to the first and third centuries B.C., but the Codex remains the oldest, most complete manuscript of the Old Testament. Christian Headlines, 2/11

■ Christians are reportedly now a minority in the U. K., according to Anglican and Catholic leaders. They concluded that Christians are now a “significant minority” in Britain, and that this applies to both Protestants and Catholics. Church of Eng-

land attendance has, for the first time ever, dropped to less than one million per week, with only 1.4 percent of the population is attending Anglican services.

Christian Headlines, 2/11

■ Catholic Church leader Pope Francis met on Friday with the leader of the Russian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Kirill, in the unlikely location of Cuba’s international airport. The Catholic Church and the Russian Orthodox Church split during the Great Schism of 1054 A.D. They have remained at odds with one another over a variety of differing doctrines, including the primacy of the Pope. They signed an historic joint declaration. Pope Francis went on to visit Mexico while Patriarch Kirill visited Latin America. Meanwhile, a large church in eastern Cuba affiliated to the Apostolic Movement, an unregistered Protestant denomination, was demolished by the authorities on 5 February while hundreds of church members were detained. Christian Headlines, 2/11;

Vatican, 2/12;

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 2/9

■ Around the world, public opinion is divided about whether government-sponsored torture can ever be justified as part of efforts

to prevent terrorist attacks, according to a Pew Research Center survey of 38 nations. A median of 45% across the countries polled did not believe in the use of torture, while a median of 40% thought it could be justified. The U.S. public is among the most likely to consider torture justifiable: 58% say this, while only 37% disagree. Nearly three-in-four Republicans (73%) think torture can be justified, compared with just 58% of independents and 46% of Democrats.

Pew Research Center

■ The Siege Watch report says that 1.09 million people are living in 46 besieged areas in Syria. “Electricity and running water are usually cut off, and there is limited (if any) access to food, fuel, and medical care,” the report says. RT, 2/9

■ A teenage girl who was kidnapped by Boko Haram militants and forced to carry out a suicide mission has escaped her captors, aborted the mission, and is sharing what she knows of the militants’ plans. Though fearful, she decided to abort the mission. She threw off her suicide vest as soon as she was out of sight of her captors. She also attempted to persuade two of her fellow captives to do the same, but the other two girls went through with their mission, killing 58 people, as well as themselves. Boko Haram has brought terror to Nigeria for six years now, killing 20,000 people and making 2.5 million homeless.

Christian Headlines, 2/12

Justice Scalia

by Russell Moore

Saturday brought the shock to the country that the legendary United States Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia died in his sleep in Texas. My first thought was that the loss of this great jurist, a tragedy under any circumstances, is even more so because of the moment’s cultural and political chaos. My second thought, though, was about what Christians can learn from the way Justice Scalia did his work. Most of us will not serve as justices or judges or attorneys, but we can still glean some lessons from this life.

He stood by his principles. Justice Scalia held to a particular view of constitutional interpretation, that the meaning of the text is found in the words of the text, defined by their understood meaning at the time of their writing, not in the evolving standards of the country’s moral and legal progress.

Scalia was solidly pro-life, but he didn’t believe the federal government could prohibit states from allowing abortion, since abortion isn’t mentioned in the Constitution. He wrote that he hated flag burning and would outlaw it immediately if he were king, but the First Amendment allowed it. He wasn’t willing to sacrifice his view of the Bill of Rights just to get to an outcome he liked.

In our context, Christians can tell the principled from the hacks by a similar metric. If your principles change based on whether it helps your “tribe,” then it’s your tribe you believe in, not your principles. Christians who talk about religious liberty, for example, but are silent (or worse) when religious freedom is compromised for unpopular religious minorities, don’t really believe in religious freedom. Principles stand regardless of the politics of the moment.

He could think of the future. Scalia is famous for his dissent, and he could see how decisions made now would have implications for other decisions later on. He argued, for instance, that the Lawrence v. Texas decision could be used to find a constitutional right to same-sex marriage. Twelve years later, it was. The same scenario played out repeatedly, because he applied his intellect to the

WHAT CAN THE CHURCH LEARN?

logic inherent in decisions made.

This applies to far more than the legal arena. Why were evangelicals so slow to advance the pro-life witness? It’s because we didn’t see ahead of time how cultural moves, including some within the church, could advance an abortion culture. We weren’t ready. Why were evangelicals caught so unawares by the shifting family structures in the U.S.? It was partly because we didn’t see the price we paid in accommodating the divorce revolution. Will Christians be ready for the challenges in the years to come?

He could be friends with his opponents. Scalia was, arguably, the most conservative justice on the high court. Even so, he had a strong friendship with liberal Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. He famously took Justice Elena Kagan hunting with him. Was this inconsistency? No. This was confidence. He knew that his ideas could prevail, so he didn’t see the persons who opposed him as those to be avoided or shunned. He knew that his convictions were clear, so he didn’t have to play tribal politics by isolating himself within an ideological cocoon.

As the church, we have much more reason to befriend those who disagree with us. After all, we’re not called merely to civility but to active kindness (2 Tim. 2:24-26), including to those who hate us (Rom. 12:14-21). If our friends and acquaintances are all those who agree with us on our politics, then it could be that politics is our god. And if our friends and acquaintances are all those who agree with our theology, then maybe our talk about mission is just talk.

With the death of Justice Scalia, the Supreme Court will be at the epicenter of American culture wars, again, even more than before. The issues at stake are critically important. But as we think and pray about those things, let’s remember too the life of Justice Scalia, and see what we can learn. That’s especially important in a culture where, as in every culture, the church must often dissent.

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ENTERTAINMENT NOTES

★★ NEW MOVIES

	Quality	Moral	Age
Zoolander 2	PG-13	+3	OT/A
How to Be Single	R	+3	A
Deadpool	R	+3	A?

A- Adult, T-Teen, OT- Older Teen

Film “Quality” is an estimate (+1 to +4) of appeal for the intended audience or age group. “Moral” rating ranges from extremely objectionable (-4) to very good (+4).
movieguide.org