

National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration  
**Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center**  
2101 NASA Parkway  
Houston, Texas 77058-3696



February 18, 2016

Reply to Attn of: AL-16-026

Carl E. Bruce  
Fish & Richardson P.C.  
1717 Main Street  
Suite 5000  
Dallas, Texas 75201

Re: Response to Letter of 8 February 2016

Dear Mr. Bruce:

JSC does not prohibit the use of any specific religious names in employee newsletters or other internal communications. The 'JSC Today' daily electronic newsletter has cited religious themes and holiday events for years. A May 28, 2015 'JSC Today' posting for a JSC Praise and Worship Club (the Club) prayer and worship service caused some NASA employees to raise concerns the JSC newsletter went beyond mere announcement of the time, place and general nature of an activity; was essentially proselytizing; and, as such, was inappropriate. A JSC attorney discussed the concerns with a representative of the Club. Since that complained-of conversation, JSC has continued to make postings that have been religious in nature for both the Praise and Worship Club and other organizations – there was a posting right after the conversation, again citing the name of Jesus. I have attached a collection of those religiously-oriented postings, including one published as recently as this week. In fact, it is clear from its subsequent 'JSC Today' postings for the Club that JSC to this day continues to facilitate its employees' right to freely exercise their religious beliefs.

There is an exceptionally strong sense of community here at JSC. JSC is consistently rated among the very best places to work in the federal government, in no small part based on this commonly-held sense of community. JSC leadership has fostered that spirit of community and mutual respect over the years as a means to achieve JSC's missions. Human exploration is the greater good around which our community is unified and to which our community is dedicated. As part of that effort, JSC does not just permit but indeed affirmatively supports all employees in our community in their personal expression of their beliefs. JSC's support of religious expression extends to allowing the use of government facilities by the Praise and Worship Club (and its predecessor groups) for well over fifteen years. JSC also allows its community groups, including the Club, to use other government resources to announce where and when their upcoming activities will take place. Use of government resources on behalf of employees' private interests requires JSC to balance its community's many disparate interests, as well as the over-arching well-being of our JSC community as a whole. Concomitantly, JSC community groups have a choice as to whether and to what extent they, in how they conduct themselves, exhibit both care for our community and respect for all its constituent parts.

The best communities have means for amicable resolution of any internal conflicts that may arise among their constituent parts or individuals, or between the community itself and one part or individual. As a great community, JSC has those means, and widely advertises them to its employees: human resources office, ombudsman, union, equal opportunity and diversity office, mediation – to name a few. Consistent with our JSC culture, the attorney with whom the Praise and Worship Club discussed this matter invited further dialogue. We will continue to encourage our employees to make use of the multiple resources we provide them for conflict resolution here at JSC.

Should you have any further questions, always feel free to contact me again.

Cordially,



Bernard J. Roan  
Chief Counsel

Attachment

Published 31 March 2015

### **6. JSC Praise and Worship Club Meeting**

Join with the praise and worship band "Allied with the Lord" for a refreshing set of Resurrection Day praise and worship songs on Thursday, April 2, from 11:15 a.m. to noon in Building 57, Room 106. The theme for this session will be "Jesus is alive!" Prayer partners will be available for anyone who has need. All JSC civil servants and contractors are welcome.

Event Date: Thursday, April 2, 2015 Event Start Time:11:15 AM Event End Time:12:00 PM  
Event Location: Building 57 Room 106

[Add to Calendar](#)

[Mike FitzPatrick](#) [REDACTED]

Published 1 May 2015

### **1. National Day of Prayer**

Join many for the National Day of Prayer event at the Building 1 flagpole just before noon. The National Day of Prayer tradition predates the founding of the United States of America, evidenced by the Continental Congress' proclamation in 1775 setting aside a day of prayer. In 1952, Congress established an annual day of prayer and, in 1988, that law was amended, designating the National Day of Prayer as the first Thursday in May. Our presidents through the years have invited us to pray for our country. Please join us at the Building 1 flagpole before noon, and we will start praying very soon thereafter.

Event Date: Thursday, May 7, 2015 Event Start Time:11:55 AM Event End Time:12:30 PM  
Event Location: Building 1 Flagpole

[Add to Calendar](#)

[John Fields](#) [REDACTED] <http://www.nationaldayofprayer.org>

Published 7 May 2015

### **1. National Day of Prayer**

The National Day of Prayer tradition predates the founding of the United States of America, evidenced by the Continental Congress' proclamation in 1775 setting aside a day of prayer. In 1952, Congress established an annual day of prayer and, in 1988, that law was amended, designating the National Day of Prayer as the first Thursday in May. Our presidents through the years have invited us to pray for our country. Please join us at the Building 1 flagpole before noon, and we will start praying very soon thereafter.

Event Date: Thursday, May 7, 2015 Event Start Time:11:55 AM Event End Time:12:30 PM  
Event Location: Building 1 Flagpole

[Add to Calendar](#)

[John Fields](#) [REDACTED] <http://www.nationaldayofprayer.org>

Published 28 May 2015

**5. JSC Praise and Worship Club Meeting**

Join with the praise and worship band "Allied with the Lord" for a refreshing set of spring praise and worship songs on Thursday, June 4, from 11:15 a.m. to noon in Building 57, Room 106. (The theme for this session will be "Jesus is our life!") Prayer partners will be available for anyone who has need. All JSC civil servants and contractors are welcome.

Event Date: Thursday, June 4, 2015 Event Start Time:11:15 AM Event End Time:12:00 PM  
Event Location: Building 57 Room 106

[Add to Calendar](#)

[Mike FitzPatrick](#) [REDACTED]

Published 3 June 2015

**7. JSC Praise and Worship Club Meeting**

Join with the praise and worship band "Allied with the Lord" for a refreshing set of spring praise and worship songs tomorrow, June 4, from 11:15 a.m. to noon in Building 57, Room 106. (The theme for this session will be "Jesus is our life!") Prayer partners will be available for anyone who has need. All JSC civil servants and contractors are welcome.

Event Date: Thursday, June 4, 2015 Event Start Time:11:15 AM Event End Time:12:00 PM  
Event Location: Building 57 Room 106

[Add to Calendar](#)

[Mike FitzPatrick](#) [REDACTED]

Published 10 July 2015

### 1. **46th Annual Lunar Communion Celebration**

During the Apollo 11 mission Buzz Aldrin, an elder at Webster Presbyterian Church (WPC), took communion on the surface of the moon. Each year WPC invites the local community to participate in celebrating this event.

A celebratory worship service, including an open communion served by elders with connections to the space program, will be held. People of all faiths are welcome and invited. However, participation in any part of the service is voluntary.

Later, you can see the Apollo 11 communion chalice and other artifacts from past programs. Participants can learn about WPC's strong faith and science connections and the Hubble-inspired nebulae windows. You can experience current NASA project displays, Russian space talk, space food, the Orion launch or the solar wind project.

WPC has had members supporting past, current and future NASA programs. We are proud of the wonderful partnership we continue to share with our neighbors at JSC.

Event Date: Sunday, July 19, 2015 Event Start Time:10:30 AM Event End Time:12:30 PM  
Event Location: Webster Presbyterian Church

[Add to Calendar](#)

[George James](#) x35550

Published 24 July 2015

### 2. **JSC Praise and Worship Club Meeting**

Join with the praise and worship band "Allied with the Lord" for a refreshing set of summer praise and worship songs on Tuesday, Aug. 4, from 11:15 a.m. to noon in Building 57, Room 106. (The theme for this session will be "Choose this day whom you will serve!") Prayer partners will be available for anyone who has need. All JSC civil servants and contractors are welcome.

Event Date: Tuesday, August 4, 2015 Event Start Time:11:15 AM Event End Time:12:00 PM  
Event Location: Building 57 Room 106

[Add to Calendar](#)

[Mike FitzPatrick](#) x30758

Published 3 August 2015

### **5. JSC Praise and Worship Club Meeting**

Join with the praise and worship band "Allied with the Lord" for a refreshing set of summer praise and worship songs tomorrow, Aug. 4, from 11:15 a.m. to noon in Building 57, Room 106. (The theme for this session will be "Choose this day whom you will serve!") Prayer partners will be available for anyone who has need. All JSC civil servants and contractors are welcome.

Event Date: Tuesday, August 4, 2015 Event Start Time:11:15 AM Event End Time:12:00 PM  
Event Location: Building 57, Room 106

[Add to Calendar](#)

[Ernest Smith](#) x36696

Published 7 December 2015

### **2. Star of Bethlehem Presentation**

Scholars have debated for centuries whether the Star of Bethlehem is a legend; but if the Star of Bethlehem were a real, astronomical event, what could it have been?

Researcher and law professor Fredrick A. Larson wrestled with this question and used the scientific method to assess historical clues. He then piloted a computer model of the skies to demonstrate what the ancients must have seen. The former chief of Planetary Astronomy for NASA and the technical editor of *Sky and Telescope* magazine states that the work is "well-researched and reasonable." Former publisher and editor for *Scientific American* magazine accredits "wide-ranging and insightful scholarship." Come view the DVD and judge for yourself. Sponsored by the JSC Praise and Worship Club. There are four showings.

**11:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**

- **Dec. 14 - Building 30 Auditorium**
- **Dec. 15 - Building 4 South, Room 1419**
- **Dec. 16 - Building 30 Auditorium**
- **Dec. 17 - Building 4 South, Room 1419**

Event Date: Monday, December 14, 2015 Event Start Time:11:15 AM Event End Time:12:30 PM  
Event Location: Building 30 Auditorium

[Add to Calendar](#)

[Mike FitzPatrick](#) 281-483-0758

Published 17 February 2016

**5. JSC Praise and Worship Club Meeting**

Join with the praise and worship band "Allied with the Lord" for a refreshing set of praise and worship songs on Wednesday, March 9, from 11:15 a.m. to noon in Building 57, Room 106. (The theme for this session will be "Jesus is our Victory!") Prayer partners will be available for anyone who has need. All JSC civil servants and contractors are welcome.

Event Date: Wednesday, March 9, 2016 Event Start Time:11:15 AM Event End Time:12:00 PM  
Event Location: Building 57 Room 106

[Add to Calendar](#)

[Mike FitzPatrick](#) 281-483-0758