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A Word from Woody...

To Kneel or Not to Kneel?

There were a lot of people kneeling in our nation on the last Sunday of September— not only in churches. **Much of it happened in that other place of "worship":** NFL stadiums. Athletes were not kneeling to God, but rather in protest as our national anthem was sung and our flag waved high. Over 200 NFL players decided not to stand, 10 of whom were New Orleans Saints, which set many of the football faithful seething. We are left trying to make sense of the rightness and wrongness of this emotional day.

We recall that such protests began last year with the (then) San Francisco 49er quarterback Colin Kaepernick. His protest was against police brutality and oppression. In fact, Kaepernick went so far as to wear practice socks which depicted pigs dressed as police. His attire could have offended the sports purist by his lack of officially licensed NFL merchandise. But more importantly, it was a horrible insult to the vast majority of fine men and women of the police force.

Then recently in late September, President Donald Trump addressed the situation of players who protested the anthem. With unfortunate profane language he said such players should be removed from the football field and the NFL owners should fire them. The resulting rage at President Trump from the NFL and media (the October 2nd issue of *Sports Illustrated* devoted six articles vilifying Trump!) led to the mass protests at the NFL games.

There appears to be, however, more heat than fire here. I have not heard anyone—including Trump— deny that athletes have the first amendment right to express themselves on social issues. Likewise, NFL owners have the right to tell its multi-million dollar employees who disrespect the American flag on prime time that their services are no longer required.

One also senses, though, a basic confusion here. Why did the players refuse to stand for the anthem? The *Times-Picayune* columnist Tim Morris is right to point out, **"Now, we are not sure what the protests even mean. Are they for Kaepernick or against Trump? Or for something else altogether?"** (September 27, 2017; B-6). Or were the protests addressing a general sense of the

inequality experienced by minorities in the U.S., or globally?

One must also admit to a certain inappropriateness here. Who really cares if a millionaire athlete has doubts on whether America is the land of opportunity? If there is any example that the American dream can work for minorities, certainly one need look no further than the NFL! Also, there may well be an inappropriateness of our looking to NFL players as a major voice for social justice. As the African American head coach of the Pittsburgh Steelers, Mike Tomlin, stated to the media, **"You're asking us about middle ground, you're asking us about right or left. We're a football group. That's what you guys don't understand. We don't care, largely, professionally speaking. We have personal opinions yes. Professionally, we're about to kick a ball off"** (ibid., D-2).

So here's the real issue: to kneel or not to kneel for the national anthem as a protest against societal ills? **I am convinced the answer is, don't kneel!** To kneel is to shoot oneself in the foot, for anthem protests attack the symbol of democracy that allows one to voice dissent. Moreover, we do not live

in a country like Nazi Germany where social justice was tossed into a mass grave. And we are not like Iran where one can be beaten and imprisoned indefinitely for criticizing the government. Even liberal U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg said about such anthem protests, **"I think it's dumb and disrespectful. I would have the same answer if you asked me about flag burning. I think it's a terrible thing to do, but I wouldn't lock a person up for doing it. I would point out how ridiculous it seems to me to do such an act"** (Morris, B-6). I like the way, as Drew Brees has recently announced, the Saints will handle the situation—the entire team kneeling initially, and then all standing for the national anthem.

The Christian response to these anthem protests goes deeper. We are to respect our government because it is, while imperfect, **"God's servant for your good"** (Romans 13:4). And we are to take seriously when someone feels unjustly treated; we are to listen, respond with kindness, and seek justice together (Micah 6:8). Perhaps if Christians did more of this we would be instead discussing the **awesome Saints' defense against the Carolina Panthers!**

Yours in Christ,

Woody



Youth Corner

Bowled Over!

We had a fun time last month at City Putt. Kaylor's friend Izzy took the "putt-putt title" for the youth, and Dr. Debby Grimm and Pastor Woody enjoyed going through the New Orleans Course with them. This month on Sunday, October 8th we will go bowling at AMF All Star Lanes

(3640 Williams Blvd., Kenner). We will meet at the church at 12:30 PM, returning by 3:30 PM. Please invite friends!

Youth enjoy their outing in City Park.



WCA Global Gathering at LVUMC!

Lake Vista UMC is pleased to host by live simulcast the Wesleyan Covenant Association's 2017 Global Gathering on Saturday, October 14th. We will not only host this event for our church but also for other United Methodists in southern Louisiana and Mississippi. This event is entitled, "Move—On Mission with God", and will emphasize that Methodism needs to re-claim its historic reputation as a movement advancing God's Kingdom globally. We will meet from 9:00 AM-3:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall, with a possible brief elections meeting afterwards for the Louisiana WCA going no later than 4:00 PM. Since Lake Vista UMC is a member of WCA, all our members and attenders get the discounted price of \$30 per person (down from \$55!) which includes lunch. To register, please go to wesleyancovenant.org by Saturday, October 6th if you want to be sure to get your lunch order secured, although registrations will be taken even up to the day of the event. For questions or more information, please call the Church Office.



Church Family Night

On Wednesday, October 4th we'll enjoy our Church Family Night where we eat from 6:00-7:00 PM. Our program will be a look at two major Christian contemporary singers who have passed from this life but still have an impact today. We will use our new internet video access in the Fellowship Hall to see old videos of singers Keith Green and Rich Mullins (who died 20 years ago this past September). The church will supply chicken pot pie, and would appreciate attenders bringing a side dishes, salad, or dessert. Suggested donation is \$5 per person, no more than \$15 per family.



Last month's speaker: Emily Hingle, tells about Tampa Mission

New Website Full of Info You Need!

If you haven't seen our new website, launched on Sunday, April 2nd, you should check it out! ! The new address is lakevistaumc.org. Please take a moment to browse the site and enjoy the new features—like a calendar of events, new pics, some manuscripts of Pastor Woody's sermons, and archives of newsletters dating back to April.

Nominations Committee Meets

The Nominations Committee will meet with Pastor Woody Hingle on Monday, October 16th in the Junior High classroom at 7:00 PM. Please keep them in prayer as they organize the committees for 2018.

Niko and Chika & Friends...



Come Sing in the Choir

Choir practice continues to meet at 8:30 AM on Sunday mornings with our Music Director Leonardo Santos and Worship Leader Randy Roberts. For more information please contact the Church Office.

Men's Sunday School Class!

Starting Sunday, October 8th, Pastor Hingle will teach a **Men's Sunday School Class from 9:30-10:15 AM**. The class will begin by watching a video of former Buffalo Bills quarterback Jim Kelly giving his Christian testimony. The class will also begin a study on Lee Strobel's book *The Case for Christ*, which has a workbook and DVD. The men may be encouraged to go to **Susan Doyle's house on October 25th at 6:00 PM to see the movie "The Case for Christ" on Strobel's life.**

SPA Ladies Outreach

The SPA Ladies Bible Study will have an outreach to Second Harvest Food Bank (700 Edwards Ave. in Elmwood) on Tuesday, October 31st from 9:00 AM-12:00 Noon. All are welcome to join them for this event as they act as the hands and feet of Christ to those in need.

Prayer Focus

- ✚ Barbara Velasquez, health
- ✚ Megan and Jonathan Walker, expecting a child in October
- ✚ The UMC, unity and faithfulness to the Bible and its doctrines
- ✚ Thankfulness on our joining the Wesleyan Covenant Association and the leadership of this organization
- ✚ Leann Grimm, health
- ✚ Jeanette Lynch and family in the death of Howell and **Jeanette's Mother**
- ✚ **Larry Federico, the church's florist, recovering from a car accident**
- ✚ All the victims from Hurricane Harvey, Irma, and Maria
- ✚ Ann and Karl Tornyo, Karla and Travis Crabtree, and Veronica whose homes were flooded in Houston

Charge Conference Date Set

Lake Vista UMC will participate in a New Orleans District-wide Charge Conference on Sunday, October 22nd at 3:00 PM. This will be held at Gretna UMC, with a reception to follow. Everyone in the Church Family is welcome to attend, but only the Church Council members can vote.

**We hear about
and DO
mission work**



Read your newsletter online at <http://www.LakeVistaUMC.org>

Join *Dare to Discipline!*

Pastor Hingle will lead a parenting class for two more Tuesdays, October 3rd and 10th from 6:30-7:30 PM. The class will be based on child psychologist Dr. James Dobson's book *Dare to Discipline*. We'll meet in the Fellowship Hall. Free childcare will be provided. Please contact the Church Office at 288-2242 or email Pastor Hingle at nhiii@bellsouth.net for more information.. Please invite friends who would be interested in some wise parenting information.

Addressing the Skeptics

Our next meeting will be Friday, October 6th at 12:00 noon in the Parlor. We will begin a new book discussion on Sam Harris' *The Moral Landscape: How Science Can Determine Human Values*, which is a New York Times Bestseller. Harris is a neuroscientist and author of other New York Times Bestsellers *The End of Faith* and *Letter to a Christian Nation*. Harris is considered one of the leading New Atheists along with Richard Dawkins. We will address his introduction, "The Moral Landscape". Please feel free to join us for this friendly and informative discussion, regardless of whether you have read the material beforehand.

Prayer Walk Around the Neighborhood

This month's prayer walk will be **Saturday**, October 7th from 10:30-11:30 AM. Please join us for this wonderful ministry!

Small Group Offerings

Newcomers are welcome at all the gatherings below!

Wednesday SONrise Continues! We will continue to offer a mid-week time of worship and fellowship from 6:30-7:30 AM called Wednesday SONrise in the church parlor. This service is hoped to make a time of congregational prayer for individuals, our church, and The UMC. During this service we will have not only a time of discussion of prayer needs and prayer, but also a devotional and communion. What a wonderful way to be refreshed in the middle of the week!

The Wonderful Wednesday book and Bible study is studying Matthew 5-7, the Sermon on the Mount. We will meet every Wednesday this month from 7:00-8:00 PM except for October 4, Church Family Night, and October 25, when **all are invited to Susan Doyle's house at 3304 N. Labarre Rd. in Metairie for supper and *The Case for Christ* movie.** RSVP on Lime Green Inserts in the bulletin or through the church office.

S.P.A. Ladies Fall Study The Study, Pray, Act Ladies are studying **Laura Story's *When God Doesn't Fix It.*** Debby Grimm leads the study, and meetings alternate between 27 and 31 Warbler St. from 9:00-10:00AM Tuesay mornings.

Sunday School classes for all ages begin at 9:30 AM on Sunday mornings. The adult class meets in the Parlor. Youth and children meet in the Education Building. Come and get to know the Lord with us!

A lighthouse for Christ in the heart of the lakefront.

Lake Vista

United Methodist Church

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