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A Word from Woody...

"Screwtape's Battle for the Mind"

What if C.S. Lewis' mythical demon Uncle Screwtape from Lewis' The Screwtape Letters once again wrote his nephew demon Wormwood on how to destroy Christian faith? Fortunately, we have acquired one such letter. One cannot speak about the lives lost in acquiring it. . .

Dearest Wormwood:

Greetings and salutations from the battlefield for the human mind.

Lest you forget, we don't care a wit about the vicissitudes of human emotions on spiritual matters. One day a so-called Christian can wail a river of tears while singing a hymn or leap over a pew in worship, and the next day the same human animal is falling (once again!) to gossip or sexual promiscuity. Ultimately, **we really don't care what happens in a worship service as long as we get what we want.** What we want, what we *crave*, is control of the human mind—the resolve, the will, the behavior, the commitment, the worldview.

That is why it is crucial for you to capitalize on this year's date the Western Church celebrates Easter—April Fool's Day! Appropriate, indeed. And only a desperate fool would believe the nonsense of that pathetic condemned criminal Jesus rising from the dead. What exactly happened to his thoroughly crucified body we don't know for sure. By some trickery of the Enemy—we never know for sure what he is up to most of the time—his body slipped through our claws. Keep focused, young demon, on the superior spiritual powers we do understand-- and find intoxicating! — such as domination, deceit, debauchery, and defiance.

It is with great pleasure that I announce to you a reason for celebration worthy of the deepest pit below. Just days ago we saw the death of venerated British theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking. This Hawking was no intellectual initiate—he could express the position of the Dark Side with elegance coupled with convincing condescension. Behold his brilliance: "I believe the simplest explanation is, there is no God. No one created the universe and no one directs our fate. This leads me to the profound realization that there probably is no heaven or afterlife either" and "There is no heaven or afterlife for broken down computers; that is a fairy story for people who are afraid of the dark" [quoted in



The Times-Picayune, March 23, 2018, C-7]. Perhaps he was more preacher than physicist? But he was certainly no philosopher! We must suppress an absurdity Hawking proclaimed as evidence for his aesthetically appealing atheism: "Because there is a law such as gravity, the universe can and will create itself from nothing" [ibid.]. How can something—a universe—create itself? And how can Hawking say the universe created itself out of *nothing* and then slip in the back door that there actually was something at the beginning—namely, the law of gravity?! Unfortunately, Oxford University scholar John Lennox is on to Hawking's fatal flaws here: "What this all goes to show is that nonsense remains nonsense even when talked by world-famous scientists. What serves to obscure the illogicality of such statements is the fact that they are made by scientists; and the general public, not surprisingly, assumes they are statements of science and takes them on authority" [*God and Stephen Hawking* 2011, p. 32]. It is to our advantage, though, that this "general public", even many in the Enemy's fold, are more interested in reality TV and computer games than logic and the learned Lennox. So our pleasure is undiminished. Hawking seems secure for the darkest resting place, unless he uttered some obscene repentance to the Enemy in his final breath...

I must inform you also of a recent tragedy. The death of Rev. Billy Graham has sent shivers through the gates of hell. Not that we are displeased that he is no longer on earth spouting the poisonous prattle of salvation. That was pure horror for us— and for nearly a century! What especially worries us demons is this preacher's transformation in the Enemy's presence—he shines with a brilliance that is baffling, and blinding. But remain pragmatic, Wormwood! While we were largely unsuccessful in diminishing Graham's earthly efforts, we can still tarnish his children's ministries. This should not be too difficult, given that the media is often sympathetic to our cause.

I urge you, then, to remain true to the battle for the mind. We want, we *hunger for*, more Hawkings, especially those of the self-satisfied, pseudo-intellectual sort. They are easy prey for seeing Easter as an April Fool's joke, as long as the wretched humans dismiss the inner nudging in their hearts and minds that there is more to their lives now and beyond the grave than they could ever imagine...

Mindfully Yours,

Screwtape

Youth Corner

I Can Only Imagine!

We had a great time at the Winter Jam concert—the bands and messages were awesome!

This month we will go see the movie “I Can Only Imagine” on Saturday, April 7th for an afternoon showing. Details are forthcoming.

Also, let’s be sure to keep in mind our youth mission trip on the week of June 18-23, when we’ll return to Belmont University in Nashville, TN! For more information please contact Pastor Woody Hingle.



Our Winter Jam Jam



From crawfish to Easter Eggs...



Church Family Night

We will meet on Wednesday, April 4th and Bakhtier Rizaev from Uzbekistan will share how he became a Christian; he and his wife Elvira will join us for supper as well. The church will provide an Easter Ham. Our meal will be from 6:00-7:00 PM

Mission Opportunity

We will have an opportunity to assist at Habitat for Humanity’s ReStore, 2900 Elysian Fields Ave., on Saturday, April 21st in the morning shift. The ReStore sells used furniture, televisions, gas grills, construction material, etc. at good prices, and the proceeds help to build homes for the needy. This is a great opportunity to assist in an outreach that helps many! For more information, please contact Pastor Woody.

Dr. Paul Copan to Speak on April 29th

Dr. Paul Copan, renown Christian theologian, philosopher, apologist, and author or editor of over 25 books, will bring our message during our Sunday, April 29th worship service and then later speak and entertain questions at a luncheon after the worship service. Dr. Copan currently holds the endowed Pledger Family Chair of Philosophy and Ethics at Palm Beach Atlantic University. His Ph.D. is from Marquette University. He has spoken and/or written on such subjects as atheism, human sexuality, God and holy war in the OT, and the historical Jesus.

Easter Celebrations

Easter Breakfast: On Sunday, April 1st we'll begin our celebration of our Lord's resurrection by holding a church breakfast in the Fellowship Hall from 9:00-10:00 AM. There will be no Sunday School that morning, but we will have a brief devotional at 10:00 AM.

Easter Luncheon for Parlor Class: For Easter Sunday, April 1 we will have lunch at Piccadilly off of Clearview Parkway at 1:00 pm. We will have an Easter hat contest as usual. Piccadilly has a variety of foods and reservations will not be necessary.

Come Sing in the Choir

Choir practice continues to meet at 9:00 AM on Sunday mornings with our Music Director Leonardo Santos and Worship Leader Randy Roberts. For more information please contact the Church Office.

With a touch of GREEN in between!



Prayer Focus

- ✝ Barbara Velasquez, health
- ✝ The UMC, unity and faithfulness to the Bible and its doctrines
- ✝ Matthew Cull, recovery from accident
- ✝ Keith Randazzo, recovery from January surgery
- ✝ Windemi Sawado and his family in the death of his father Péguédéwindé Sawadogo on March 29th.

Sermon Series on Ephesians

Pastor Hingle will return to the sermon series on **Ephesians called "Ancient Instructions for the Modern Church" on Sunday, April 8th**. You are encouraged to read this letter in its entirety—only six chapters!—before he begins the series. This is a wonderful part of Scripture which addresses such issues as the church, spiritual gifts, and marriage and family roles.

Finally, a Time for Guys!

We have a new adult Sunday School class which is geared for men! Pastor Woody Hingle is leading this group that meets in the Library at 9:30 AM. All men are invited and encouraged to bring friends!

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

S.P.A. Ladies To Host Phyliss Schirer Simulcast

Lake Vista's S.P.A. Ladies invite you to join them and women from around the world on April 28th for an inspiring one-day event with Priscilla Shirer!

This global, one-day simulcast focuses on the power of prayer and learning to study God's Word for yourself. It will be brought to you in our Fellowship Hall!

The cost per person is only \$20.00, and that includes a light lunch. We are expecting to begin around 9:30 AM, but the exact time will be announced closer to the date. Walk-ins are welcome, but if you can let Susan (in the office) or Debby know you are coming, it will help us plan for food.

S.P.A. Ladies will meet in the Fellowship Hall on Tuesday, April 24 instead of at regular venues to set up.

Skeptic's Corner:

We will meet on Friday, April 6th at 12:00 noon and **continue our discussion of Sam Harris' *The Moral Landscape: How Science Can Determine Human Values*, ch. 5 on "The Future of Happiness". You are invited to join us, regardless of whether you have read the chapter, and bring your lunch (the church will provide the drinks).**

Prayer Walk Around the Neighborhood

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

Small Group Offerings

Newcomers are welcome at all the gatherings below!

Wednesday SONset and Wonderful Wednesday Bible and book study on the WCA book *A Firm Foundation*: The Wesleyan Covenant Association has recently put out a book called *A Firm Foundation: Hope and Vision for a New Methodist Future*, which consists of several articles by United Methodist ministers who discuss biblical truth in the midst of the current crisis over the authority of the Bible and homosexuality in our denomination. The study includes a DVD, and we meet in the Fellowship Hall from 7:00-8:00 PM. All are welcome! No meeting on the 4th because of Church Family Night. **The S(tudy), P(ray), A(ct) Ladies** meets Tuesdays from 9:00-10:00 AM, alternating between Cheryl Richard's house at 27 Warbler St., and Debby Grimm's house next door at 31 Warbler St. to study Lysa Terkeurst's *Finding I AM: How Jesus Fully Satisfies the Cry of Your Heart*. Easter Break on April 3rd, then back to Debby's house on the 10th and Cheryl's on the 17th. See article on "S.P.A. Ladies To Host Phyliss Schirer Simulcast." **Sunday School classes for all ages** begin at 9:30 AM on Sunday mornings. Adult classes meet in the Parlor and library. Youth and children meet in the Education Building. *Please call Susan in the office (504-288-2242) if you have any questions about any of the above activities.*

A lighthouse for Christ in the heart of the lakefront.

Lake Vista

United Methodist Church

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