



Rev. Norwood N. "Woody" Hingle III, Ph. D; Sunday School: 9:15 AM; Sunday Worship: 10:30 AM
(504) 288-2242; email: office@LakeVistaUMC.org website: <http://www.LakeVistaUMC.org>; Vol. 19:9-September- 2018

A Word from Woody...

The Greatest Apologetic for the Faith

I recently came across two fascinating comments about the role of the defense of the faith-- i.e., apologetics-- **in the Christian's life today.**

Lee Strobel is well-known not only for his best-selling Christian books. He is also the subject of the recent movie *The Case for Christ* which tells how he went from an atheist to a Christian. In an article from a Christian publication called *Outreach* (September/October, 2018, p. 122) he makes the perceptive comment, "Evangelism in the 21st century is spelled *apologetics*" (emphasis his). He explains, "We live in an increasingly skeptical culture. A lot of people have spiritual sticking points-- question or objections that **are holding them back. That's where apologetics** can help clear the brush out so they can make progress toward the cross."

In the same publication Jerry Root, professor of evangelism at Wheaton College, focuses on what he thinks is the most important apologetic for the gospel. He acknowledges that in the course of the last century there have been great defenders of the faith—such as G.K. Chesterton, C.S. Lewis, and William Lane Craig—who could marshal logic and evidence to demonstrate the truth of the gospel. Nevertheless, Root is convinced that "the greatest apologetic for faith is embedded in the gospel message itself. God loves us. Christ died for our sins. And he is willing to enter our lives and bring order out of the chaos we make of things" (p. 106). He states that we all long for unconditional love and yet we have probably never experienced it from others. "Yet the longing for this kind of love persists. The gospel message is, in itself, a perfect apologetic, for it comes as a solution to the very nature of the heart's deepest desire: God loves us unconditionally. Furthermore, I've never met an honest, unpretentious person who fails to recognize that they are messed up. . . We have our high ideals and often catch ourselves living beneath them. We have standards of behavior we expect of others, but we are often blind to our own transgressions. The apologetic inherent in the gospel is once again made clear—this God who loves us unconditionally is also willing, in Christ, to totally forgive us all our misdeeds. Furthermore, since we've

acknowledged our shortcomings and failures, then we've also acknowledged our need for assistance to bring order out of the chaos we have created. When we ask him, God is willing to enter our lives as Lord and begin the process of restoration" (p. 106).

In other words, the message of Strobel and Root can be summarized in this way. We in the United States live in a modern culture that when we share the faith we *must* be prepared to do apologetics, and perhaps the *most persuasive argument for the faith* is simply the gospel message itself. This view of apologetics does not negate our having a defense for such things as **God's existence and the resurrection of Je-**



sus. But it does highlight something we can easily overlook. The most important argument we can give to an unbelieving world is the gospel living in our words and lives. It is a truism that for many people today who meet us, we ourselves will be the only Bible they have ever encountered.

So as we enter a new year of school, university, and getting back to the regular ministry and work pace after summer, I believe there are two questions we need to ask ourselves. First, are we having daily devotional times with Jesus in the Bible and prayer? **Or, are we catching time with Jesus "on the fly"**—a sermon here, a Christian radio song there, a quick prayer on the drive to school or work? Beloved, if we want Jesus reflected in our lives, we must spend time with Him— to worship Him, repent before Him, and seek His guidance. Second, do we know and hang out with people who have a worldview different from Christianity? Strobel says he and his wife frequent the same businesses over and over in order to get to know the waiters, cooks , and owners in the hope of sharing the gospel. May the Lord help us to be strategic like this in **sharing our faith. By God's grace, through us a world that is often weeping and weary can know, "In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins" (1 John 4:10).**

Yours in Christ,

Woody

Youth Corner

Putt-Putting Around

We had a great time at Gulf Islands Waterpark last month. Thankfully we did not have to exit the water due to an incoming thunderstorm! And we ended our trip in one of the best ways possible—a visit to Dairy Queen!

This month we will play putt-putt at City Park on Sunday, September 9th, meeting at the church for 4:00 PM and returning no later than 6:00 PM. Please be sure to invite friends!

Saints Sunday Is Coming!

The New Orleans Saints first game of the season will be Sunday, September 9th against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. In order to get in the team spirit, we are calling all fans to wear their Saints gear to church that Sunday!



Church Family Night

Church Family Night will meet again after a summer hiatus on September 5th with supper from 6:00-7:00 PM. Emily Hingle will be our speaker from 7:00-7:30, and she will share about her summer mission trip to Thailand. Please make plans to come, and bring friends!

Labor Day Celebration

We will have a Labor Day Celebration gathering in the Fellowship Hall on Monday, September 3rd. This gathering will be from 12:00 Noon to 6:30 PM, and will involve potluck food and a game day. Please see Linda Schirer for more information.

Have a Strong-willed Child?

If you have a strong-willed child, help is here! Pastor Woody will lead this class based on psychologist Dr. **James Dobson's book and workbook** *The New Strong-willed Child* beginning Tuesday, September 11th from 6:30-7:30 PM. This will be a nine-session class, and at the first class we will decide whether to meet weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly. Free childcare will be provided. The two books can be purchased through the church for \$22, or you can purchase them yourselves at Amazon.com. Please help get the word out on this important class. To register, please call the Church Office.

Nominations Committee meets Sept. 24th 7:00 PM



Additional VBS Info!

A blessing of this past summer's Vacation Bible School not mentioned in last month's newsletter was Dr. Debby Grimm's leading the science class for our young attenders—it is wonderful the way Dr. Grimm can bridge science experiments into lessons about our Savior! Also we give thanks to the Lord for a very successful initiative to support the mission of Gideons International, which places Bibles in such places as hotels, hospitals, and around the world. By God's grace, we raised \$184.38

Stewardship and 70th Anniversary Celebration!

Next month, on Sunday, October 28th our church will celebrate not just Stewardship, as we prepare for financial giving for 2019. We will also celebrate the blessing and privilege that the Lord has allowed us to be "in operation" shining the light of His Good News for 70 years! Rick Gilmore will be our Stewardship Chair. Please make plans to attend that special Sunday's worship service and the celebration luncheon afterwards.

Back to School Pancake Breakfast!

On Sunday, September 9th we'll enjoy a delicious pancake breakfast to celebrate the beginning of the school year! We'll meet in the Fellowship Hall from 9:00 -10:00 AM, with a brief devotional at 10:00 AM.

Prayer Focus

- ✝ Barbara Velasquez, health
- ✝ The UMC, unity and faithfulness to the Bible and its doctrines
- ✝ The family of Dr. J.D. Phillips on his death on August 26th
- ✝ Jim and Cheryl Strauss on Jim's health
- ✝ Randy Roberts, health

Ephesians Sermon Series

Pastor Hingle will finish this month the sermon series on Ephesians called "Ancient Instructions for the Modern Church". You are encouraged to read this letter in its entirety—only six chapters!—as we go through this important part of God's Word. This month we will focus on chapter 6 which address such things as the child-parent relationship, the slave-master relationship, and putting on the spiritual armor of God.

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, and we are currently studying the Gospel of Matthew. All men are invited and encouraged to bring friends!



Matters of Heart & Mind



Summer!

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

Habitat Mission Opportunity!

We have an opportunity on Saturday, September 15th to help Habitat Humanity in New Orleans by volunteering at their ReStore for a half-day of service. The ReStore is on 2900 Elysian Fields Ave., and this service opportunity is from 8:30 AM-12:30 PM. Please let the Church Office know if you can come—and please invite friends! Pastor Woody can drive volunteers from the church if needed. Volunteers must be 16 or over.

Skeptic's Class

This event will return on Friday, September 7th at 12:00 noon in the Parlor and continue our discussion of Paul Copan's *Is God a Moral Monster? Making Sense of the Old Testament God*. We will discuss chapter 9 ("Barbarisms, Crude Laws, and Other Imaginary Crimes? Punishments and Other Harsh Realities in Perspective"), chapter 10 ("Misogynistic? Women in Israel"), and chapter 11 ("Bride Price? Polygamy, Concubinage, and Other Such Questions"). You are invited to join us, regardless of whether you have read the chapters, and bring your lunch (the church will provide the drinks).

Prayer Walk Around the Neighborhood

Prayer Walk—Saturday, September 1stth from 10:30 -11:30 AM. Please join us for this wonderful ministry.

Small Group Offerings

Wednesday SONrise (6:30-7:30 AM) and Wonderful Wednesday Bible and book study— Pastor Woody will lead Bible studies this month on God's love and holiness, and in October we will begin the Gospel of John. The study meets in the Fellowship Hall from 7:00-8:00 PM. All are welcome!

The S(tudy), P(ray), A(ct) Ladies' summer reading book is *Wherever the River Runs* by Kelly Minter. Kelly's honest and engaging narrative pulls back the curtain on one of the most captivating places on earth as well as on parts of the gospel we may be able to recite but have never fully believed. The final discussion of chapters 14 to the end will be Sunday, Sept. 9 at 12 to 1:30 PM. All women are invited whether you have read the book or not. **Fall study begins Tuesday, Sept. 11 at Debby Grimm's house, 31 Warbler St.**

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. **Back to School Pancake Breakfast!** On Sunday, September 9th we'll enjoy a delicious pancake breakfast to celebrate the beginning of the school year! Sunday School classes are cancelled.

September's Bible Memory Verse: "Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ." Ephesians 5:21

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

6645 Spanish Fort Blvd.
New Orleans, LA 70124