



pastor's
PEN

Dear Lakeview Family,

A couple of things happened this past week that have spurred me to address the issue of gambling, or euphemistically called “gaming.” First, a longtime friend of Heather’s and mine told Heather, matter-of-factly, that her son gambles for a living. There seems to be no concern on the part of this mother; in fact, she says because her son is good with numbers and math, he is good at gambling and does well for himself. Keep in mind, Heather’s friend is a professing Christian and raised in the church.

Second, you may well know, the Alabama House of Representatives last Thursday, February 15th, passed a legislative package that, if approved by the Senate and state voters, could create a state-regulated gambling industry for the first time in history. The legislation, if approved, would create a state lottery, and authorize seven casinos as well as sports wagering. One of the arguments for this push is that Alabamians are traveling to other states to gamble and helping those states with their education and infrastructure in the process. “We should bring this money home,” one state representative argues.

So the question I would like to address is how Christians are to think about gambling. Let’s define gambling first. Edward Rogers, in an article in The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Ethics, defines gambling as the “attempt to acquire money or money value, by appealing to an artificially created chance, in which the gains of the winners are made at the expense of the losers and the gain is secured without rendering an equivalent service or value.” In line with that definition, Daniel Heimbach defines gambling as “transferring ownership of something of value based on chance, using a contrived risk to settle winners who gain at the expense of losers, all without anyone doing anything to earn or forfeit the value exchanged and without producing anything constructive.”

Based on these definitions, gambling favors one, or a few, at the expense of others. Additionally, gambling is for the purpose of getting something for nothing - others lose.

J. Alan Branch, in his book on ethics, points out, gambling in the U.S. was once restricted to Las Vegas but now has permeated every corner of America. What makes this ethical issue a bit challenging to address is there are no specific Bible verses that directly prohibit gambling. The only time gambling is specifically referenced in the Bible is when the soldiers cast lots for Jesus’ garments at the foot of the cross (Matthew 27:5; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:34; John 19:24).

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With that said, while there is no verse that says, “Do not gamble,” I would argue that the implication is strongly there. Proverbs 10:2 “Treasures gained by wickedness do not profit, but righteousness delivers from death.” Isaiah 65:11-12 condemns worshiping gods of chance. Indeed, the LORD (Isaiah 65:1) warns of certain judgment for worshiping the “god of Fate” and “Destiny” (65:11, NLT). Does the Lord not condemn here the transferring of anything of value based on nothing but chance?

Then there is the issue of stewardship. We are called to be good stewards of our money (Luke 16:10-12). Indeed, Jesus says, “And if you have not been faithful in that which is another’s, who will give you that which is your own?” (Luke 16:12). It is the same as someone trusting you with something he owns and you squandering it instead of using it wisely and returning it with interest (Matthew 25:27).

Then there is the path of devastation gambling leaves behind. Several years ago, I was in Las Vegas with Heather because she was performing at a concert. I had to leave early so I took a cab to the airport. I mentioned to the cab driver that I figured he had some interesting stories as a cab driver in Las Vegas. He said, “Yes, and sad stories. There is not a week that goes by when I do not drive a man to the airport who has to go tell his wife he just lost everything.” Of course, that speaks to the addictive nature of gambling.

In fact, according to the National Council on Problem Gambling, gambling addiction costs society at least \$6 billion annually. The California Council on Problem Gambling reports that according to a 2006 California survey, problem gamblers are three to three and a half times more likely to be arrested or spend time in jail, and are two to seven times more likely to binge drink, and take illegal drugs than others.

Speaking of increase in crime, one study done by researchers at Baylor, UGA, and the University of Illinois, found that 8% of crimes in counties that had casinos were attributable to the presence of the casinos. A University of Maryland study on Indian casinos found that auto theft, larceny, and bankruptcy increased by 10% in communities that allowed gambling.

And then there is the reality that state-sponsored gambling is a tax on the poor. A 2013 study from the University at Buffalo Research Institute on Addictions found that the poorer a neighborhood is, the greater the risk is for gambling addiction. According to the National Gambling Impact Commission, in 1999, people with annual incomes of less than \$10,000 spent three times as much on gambling as those with incomes of more than \$50,000. According to the National Center for Policy Analysis, which cites research by the National Gambling Impact Study Commission at Duke, households earning \$10,000 spend twice as much on gambling as households earning \$90,000. This translates to the lowest-earning households spending roughly 10.8% of income on gambling compared to .7% of income for the highest earners. That makes sense of a study in the American Indian Law Journal, which looked at two dozen tribes in the Pacific Northwest between 2000 and 2010. During that time, casinos owned by those tribes doubled their total annual take in real terms, to \$2.7 billion. Yet the tribes’ average poverty rate went from 25% to 29%. Is this not what the wisdom writer warns against when he frowns upon “Whoever oppresses the poor to increase his own wealth” (Proverbs 22:16)? Or the Apostle Paul when he exhorts “Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor” (1 Corinthians 10:24).

For all these reasons, and more, let us pray that this legislative package is not approved by the Senate. Indeed, “wealth gained hastily will dwindle” (Proverbs 13:11).

Love and Gratitude,
Pastor Brian

NEAR HIS HEART

Please be in prayer for the Near His Heart Banquet this Friday night as we host families and caregivers of those with special needs.



youth NEWS

SUMMER RETREAT SIGNUPS ARE OPEN!

Summer Retreat is a time for Lakeview youth and their friends to get away from the distractions and normalcy of home and encounter the Lord through his Word. We bring small group leaders from Lakeview to serve and teach, and often bring in friends of our church to preach and lead in corporate worship. This year, from July 6-10, we are headed back to Ocoee Ridge for a week of Bible study through the book of Colossians, Christ-centered worship, and fun. Many of our students would say Summer Retreat is one of the most spiritually enriching weeks of the year!

Sign ups are open, but the Early Bird rate is up for only a few more weeks! So head over to lakeviewyouth.com and get registered. We would love for your students to join us!



congregational CARE UPDATE

MIKE CANNON AND A FULL LIVER TRANSPLANT

For five or more years we have waited for this moment. Mike Cannon has not just been given a partial, but a full liver transplant. What an amazing God we serve. The wait was long, but I believe Mike and Sharon would say it was worth it.

For the first three months of his recovery, medical staff requires Mike to live within two miles of the Vanderbilt University Medical Center. Needless to say, they will incur numerous medical expenses. We invite you to help with these expenses by giving to Lakeview Benevolence, placing Mike's name in your memo.

Let's continue to show them our love by covering some of their housing and other financial needs in Nashville. All funds given to the Cannon family will assist them with any current or future medical needs. Any and every amount will be much appreciated. Thank you.

SING-A-LONGS

AZELEA PLACE
Tuesday, February 27th
11:00am — 11:45am

AUBURN ASSISTED LIVING
Thursday, February 29th
10:00am — 10:45am

PRAYER & BUSINESS MEETING
THIS WEDNESDAY
6:00 PM





SAVE THE DATE

Ladies, join us at Lakeview from 8:30AM—12:15PM on Saturday, March 16th, for our Spring 2024 Women's Conference, titled "The Legacy of Eve." Our guest speaker, Dr. Georgia Purdom, is the Vice President of Educational Content for Answers in Genesis. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$15 for students (age 13 and up). Please visit the link below to register.

lakeviewladiesatthewell.wufoo.com/forms/mo6e2ob1gj7vyi



children's CHATTER

SHOUT OUT AND THANK YOU

Our MPAC Sweetheart Baby shower to benefit our local Women's Hope Medical Clinic was a great success! The GIRLS took home the WIN! And what a sweet win it was for them to give to a most worthy and important ministry! Our cash donation totaled \$599.96! Families also sent in loads of diapers, wipes, baby clothes, etc...great job, boys and girls!!! What a joyous time and beautiful example of 1 John 3:18 "Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth."

We had such a blast and especially enjoyed hearing the precious heart beat from baby Melvin with our special guest mom, Jessica Melvin. What an amazing witness of the darling image bearer in their mother's wombs. Thank you to Allie Carlisle, Haley Wine, Laura Shadoan, Daria Monroe and all of our MPAC leaders for helping us with this event! And thank you so much for giving! What a blessing to serve with such an incredible faith family!



STAFF SPOTLIGHT: JOAN MOREMAN

How long have you been on staff at LBC?

As of today, I have been on staff for 32 years.

Tell us about your family in 2-3 sentences.

I am married to Sonny- we celebrate 52 years in December. We have 4 adult children, 11 grandchildren — aged 6–25, and 1 great granddaughter born April 27, 2023. We have been blessed to raise our family mostly at Lakeview and my Mom, Glenda Bradley is also a member here. We just celebrated her 99th birthday!

What does an average work week look like for you?

I am half-time so I do not spend much time in my office. The majority of my responsibilities lie in recruiting and training Sunday School teachers, welcoming new families and babies, and recruiting volunteers to serve in our worship nurseries.

What Bible verse has been encouraging to you lately/what is your life verse?

Hebrews 10:24 encourages me to live in fellowship with my fellow believers and Colossians 3:12-17 shows me what that looks like.

What is a fun fact about you?

I love to clean /straighten my house (or yours) — As you can see, my definition of "fun" probably differs from yours!

How has God been working in your life lately?

God is continually showing me that it is His work that is important — I am to seek to know Him better— and allow Him to work in and through me.

fellowship MEAL

WEDNESDAYS FROM 4:45-5:45

FEBRUARY 21

Chicken Sandwich, Tater Tots, California Veggie Blend,
Salad, Brownies

FEBRUARY 28

Hamburger Steak with Gravy, Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans,
Rolls, Salad, Peach Cobbler

*Fellowship Meals are open to everyone and cost \$5 per person
with a \$20 cap per family. Cash or Check only. Menu subject to change.*

sympathy

From the pastor, staff, and church family to:

Chris Cox and family in the death of his father.

The Morris family in the death of his mother.

IN *memoriam*

Louise Morris
November 2, 1926 – February 16, 2024

OUR *newest*

FRANCIS McCOY JACKSON
Born: February 13th, 2024
Parents: Frankie & Ruth Jackson
Grandparents: Paul & Cindy Fellows

REMEMBER IN *prayer*

ARBOR LAKE

Nancy Brownfield
Emaleen Fagen
Joe Waller

ARBOR SPRINGS

Jackie Adams

CAMELLIA PLACE

Linda Currie

CANTERBURY HEALTH CARE FACILITY

Dean Baker

EAMC

Renae O'Mary

EASE HOUSE

Anne Dodge
Harriett McNelly
Larry Ryan

LAFAYETTE EXTENDED CARE

Jennifer Hood

MAGNOLIA PLACE

Nancy Thornton

VALLEY PARK MANOR

Kay Gaillard

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

Mike Cannon

AT HOME

Matthew Baker
Daniel Benjamin
Matt Beth
Barbara Blankenship
Dennis Clark
Ambers Hanson
Fred Holmes
Latriece Jones-Thomas
John Kennedy
Jane Parker
Matthew Richardson
Lottie Sides
Jackie Snead
Larry Swango
Ilze West
Joe Youngblood

FEBRUARY 18 ATTENDANCE

MORNING SERVICE _____ 1,158

EVENING SERVICE _____ 495

FEBRUARY 18 GIVING

BUDGET _____ \$44,332.79

RESTRICTED _____ \$12,539.30

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“WE BELIEVE THAT GOD’S PURPOSE FOR
LAKEVIEW BAPTIST CHURCH IS TO
LOVE THE LORD GOD AND TO EXPRESS THAT LOVE BY
MAKING, NURTURING AND EQUIPPING
DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST
IN AUBURN AND THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.”



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