

The Harvester

New Life Christian Church
Whiting, IN 46394
(219) 659-6566
www.newlifewhiting.com

Paul Vale, Minister

February 2019

With the Super Bowl just weeks away, and the Bears having stood a good chance at actually playing in this year's Super Bowl, I'll admit that I was *extremely* ticked off with the "double doink." I had predicted mid-season that Parkey was going to cost us a playoff game. And sure enough . . .

Even though I was sort of expecting it, it took me a few post-game hours to climb out of my funk. While I was wallowing in self-pity, and making sure everyone in my world knew just how ticked off I was about the kicker who no doubt robbed me of getting to celebrate a Bears Super Bowl victory in a few weeks, somebody posted this article on Facebook that evening, which felt like a punch in the gut. It made me realize there's more to the man than a made or missed kick.

Why I'm Telling My Sons to be Like Cody Parkey

(copied)

It's easy for most kids to gravitate to star athletes when it comes to players they want to be like. What youngster hasn't played backyard football and dreamt about being Tom Brady or Aaron Rodgers, heaving the team on their back and picking apart the opponent with clutch throw after clutch throw?

Today, I'll be making sure to have a sit-down conversation with my kids — especially my two boys (ages 7 & 9) who are really into football right now, and explaining why they need to be like the kicker who just lost the biggest game of his young career. At first glance, it seems counter-intuitive to emulate the player who arguably lost the game, especially in our winning and success-obsessed culture. The reality of life, however, isn't so glamorous. It's usually filled with disappointment, hardship, struggle. Whether it be from finances, relationships, internal angst, career, or something else — you can bank on the fact that in this life you will experience some level of pain.

But it's in these times of pain, loss, sorrow, sadness, disappointment, that we have the opportunity to learn and grow the most. No parent likes to see their child in pain, but if we neglect to prepare our children for the inevitable struggles they will face someday, we're not doing our job as parents. If pain is one of the only certainties in this life, the only difference is how we respond to it. I want my kids to know what to do when life hits them with a punishing left hook, and so I'm always looking for small examples I can show them along the way.

Cody Parkey is a great example. When the world comes crumbling down, knowing where to seek refuge is critical. Seeking it in worldly places will lead to further despair. We see this when people turn to the bottle or drugs in times of sorrow, only to spiral further out of control. It's false comfort, a false refuge. Seems like a good idea, but ultimately fails.

Immediately after the kick impossibly ricocheted off the left upright and then the crossbar, my kids (who were cheering for the Eagles) reacted with shock and compassion. My concerned 9-year-old asked me if Parkey would still have a job and be able to provide for his family. Of course, Parkey is making plenty of money — his family

will have food on the table for quite some time – but I mention it because I found it interesting that they seemed to know this was not an ordinary situation and things would be very difficult for Parkey. When something grabs the kids’ attention, it’s always a great opportunity to turn that into a teaching opportunity.

The game ending was our signal to begin the bedtime routine, and like most people with a house full of kids (we have four), bedtime can often be a bit chaotic and time-consuming. But I filed away something I noticed in Parkey’s reaction after missing the field goal. He still pointed to the sky, a reaction normally reserved for after a player experiences success on the field.

Later, cameras caught Parkey joining the prayer huddle at the center of the field that happens after nearly all NFL games.



I’m sure every ounce of emotion in his body wanted nothing more than to hit the tunnel and go curl up in a ball somewhere. Chicago fans booed him relentlessly as he made his way off the field. Eagles players and fans mockingly thanked him for missing the kick.

It’s all part of the territory, I suppose, but after devastation like that, those reactions felt just plain wrong. Celebrating a win is fine, but you don’t celebrate someone else’s failure. Parkey’s teammates immediately consoled him, which was nice to see. But the home crowd booing one of their own lacks basic humanity and decency, as well as intelligence. Do they somehow believe Parkey isn’t aware of how disappointing of a loss this was, and that his leg could – and should – have propelled them into the second round?

I wouldn’t blame anyone for crumbling in that situation. It’s easy to judge from the couch, but try being in a stadium filled with thousands of disappointed fans, let alone walking back into that locker room to face the teammates you just let down.

It’s moments like this – not the actual game – where the men are really separated from the boys. We hear that phrase a lot – worldly application of it usually evokes a machismo that glorifies those who rise to the occasion and win the game. I believe God views it quite differently. I believe the true measure of a man is when he’s at his lowest and darkest hour. When all hope seems lost, when there’s nothing else left – that is when you see what someone is really made of.

I’m in the business of teaching my boys to be men, not to merely win a game. And last night we saw Cody Parkey in a very emotional, low moment. And we saw he is one of the guys who is made of the right stuff. “The sun will rise tomorrow,” he said during a poised session with reporters after the game in which he expressed his disappointment in himself for his part in letting the game slip away.

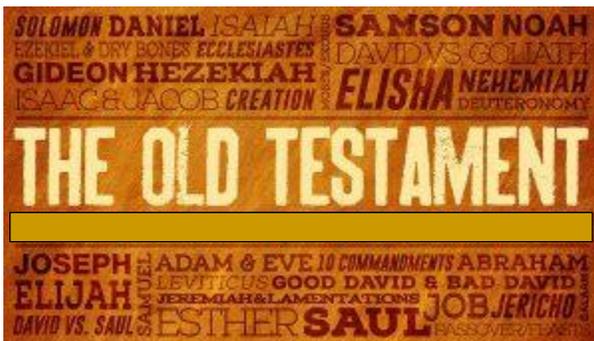
He’s going to be fine because he knows God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. He knows that although there’s pain right now, there is also hope. God is sovereign. He cares. He has a purpose for all of us and is working all things for good. As parents, those are the kind of role models we should be pointing to – the ones who have an eternal perspective.

Bible Study

We will have a new 5-week Wednesday Night Bible Study starting up, led by Susie Vale. It will be held on five consecutive Wednesdays, from February 20 through March 20, at 7:00 p.m., in the Adult Classroom (Room 5) on the 1st Floor at Sacred Heart School. Susie will be teaching on "Great People of the Old Testament." If you didn't attend Sunday School as a child, or perhaps you *did* but have forgotten some of the things you learned long ago, Susie is going to teach us about some truly amazing people and their stories. All adults, college age, and high schoolers are welcome to attend. We hope you'll join us for this 5-week study of "Great People of the Old Testament."



On Sunday, February 17, at 5:00 p.m., be sure to come to church and join us for Movie Night. It'll be a fun evening of getting together to watch a movie (appropriate for all ages), munch on some popcorn, and just enjoy each other's company. Mark your calendar!



Congratulations to Heather Soltis on the birth of her baby girl, Adelina Marie, born December 29. Barb O'Drobinak sure is proud of her new little granddaughter. 😊

College-age & Young Adults ABF Class

We have a new Adult Bible Fellowship class that will be meeting on Sunday mornings after the worship service and donut fellowship. The class is for those who are age 18 to 29. Tiffany Bayless will be teaching the class, which will begin meeting on February 3. The class will meet in the Adult Classroom (Room 5) on the 1st Floor.



Sympathy

Christian sympathy is extended to Jim and Dolores Fejes and family upon the recent passing of Jim's sister, Esther Kimberley. May God's comfort surround the Fejes family at this time of sorrow.

Teen News *from Paul*

January 18th was our last official XTREME. We've had an incredible run for 17 years! We've been able to see 1000's of teens come through our doors, striving to give them a safe place to come and hang out. And show them the love of Jesus. It has been my privilege to lead this adventure we were on, and continue to be on. I want to thank all the leaders who have helped make the dream of XTREME a reality, who spent time with the teens of our community to show them love. I want to thank all the teens who came and hung out and played games and stayed to hear about this guy named Jesus.

XTREME may have come to an end, but there are exciting things ahead! New programs and adventure are on their way . . . beginning with our new teen ministry called Impact. The teens (middle school and high school age) will meet each Monday night at 7:00 p.m. in our new Teen Room at Sacred Heart (1st Floor). We'll spend some time hanging out, playing games, and going deeper in our walk with Christ. Teens, be sure to bring your friends!



Teens who are going to CIY this summer, your first \$50 is due by February 10.



The Youth Volleyball schedule is:

- January 25, 8:30 p.m., at Westminster
- January 26, 10:00 & 11:00 a.m., at Westminster
- February 2, 10:00 a.m., at SSCC
- February 8, 8:30 p.m., at Westminster
- February 9, 9:00 a.m., at Westminster
- February 15, 7:30 p.m., at SSCC
- February 16, 10:00 a.m., at SSCC
- February 23, 11:00 a.m., at Westminster
- March 2, 10:00 a.m., at Westminster

Come out and cheer on our team!

Stats

December 2

Attendance 144
Offering \$2,222

December 9

Attendance 137
Offering \$3,260

December 16

Attendance 193
Offering \$1,737

December 23

Attendance 180
Offering \$4,166

December 30

Attendance 145
Offering \$1,672

Baptisms in 2018: 15
Transfers in 2018: 1



Spark! Plugs

by Colleen Horjus

SPARK ALL IN 2019!!!

It has been a busy Christmas and New Year Season! We worked on and performed our Christmas Show for our NLCC family. What a great experience! We had so many people help us put this together, and it felt so good and comfortable to be with our family and friends, celebrating the most important thing in our lives . . . Jesus. Our show was "UnFrozen," a great message of how our Savior saves a frozen world even today! In between all our practices (LOL), we still had fun. I am fast realizing that we have a very fun-loving and competitive group! They especially like the girls to compete against the boys! ☺ We had a Christmas wrapping contest, where we wrapped the present we would want to give to the world, just like Jesus gave us the gift of salvation! We also had some relay races where the kids worked as teams and had to clean the manger, rock the baby, clean up after the wisemen and animals, and then flee to Egypt! Girls won! Maybe next time boys!



January has brought us to a message of new beginnings! We each picked a character trait or something we wanted to improve in ourselves, to help us be who God has called us to be. We know we may fail, but we also know that by His grace, we can get back up again, it's not the end of the story! We talked about Saul, and how he became Paul. We talked about Peter, and how Jesus told him he would deny Jesus but Peter couldn't believe it, but how Jesus still loved him and made him the rock of the church! We had to have another relay to illustrate the lesson, and this time it was a tie!!!! The kids had to reenact a new day with waking up, eating breakfast, flossing teeth (the dance, LOL), getting their books, and out the door! (Any ideas for a Valentine's relay are welcome!)

We also had a relay with words from a verse hidden in a blown-up balloon. Each team member had to pop the balloon and bring back to team to put it together into the verse! WOW Georgie! Everyone wants you on their team for Bible verses. Amazing!



On Sunday, February 10 at 5:00 p.m., we will have a Spark Families Karaoke & Pizza Night in the Worship Center. All Spark kids, their parents and siblings are welcome to come! Friends are welcome to come, too! Just please let me know who all's coming so we know how many pizzas to order.

February will all be about the love – the love our Savior gives us, and passing it on to others. Going back to our heart and praying for others! Look for our Spark Prayer Warriors, they would love to pray for you!! Lots of fun, but also lots of love. That is how Jesus teaches us ☺ We are ALL IN for His kingdom!

Sunday Schedule:

10:00 Worship Service
10:00 Spark! (K-5th)
10:00 Attended Nursery
11:00 Donut Fellowship
11:15 Sunday School / ABFs

February



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 Susie Vale birthday	2 Volleyball 10:00, SSCC
3 College-age/ Young Adult ABF begins, 11:15	4 Impact, 7:00	5	6 Moore anniversary Heather Soltis birthday	7	8 Volleyball 8:30, WPC	9 Dominic Pagan birthday Volleyball 9:00, WPC
10 Spark Family Karaoke & Pizza Party, 5:00	11 Impact, 7:00	12	13	14	15 Volleyball 7:30, SSCC	16 Kelly Kompier birthday Volleyball 10:00, SSCC Leadership Conference at LCU
17 Debbie Hobson birthday Elders/deacons meeting, noon All-church Movie Night, 5:00	18 Impact, 7:00	19	20 Bible Study, 7:00	21	22	23 Volleyball 11:00, WPC
24	25 Impact, 7:00	26 Matthew Phelps birthday	27 Josiah Falk birthday Bible Study, 7:00	28		

We are a non-denominational Christian church. We follow the Bible and have no other creeds.
Each Sunday we worship together and partake of communion.

Sunday Schedule

10:00 a.m. Worship Service (Spark! for K-5th; attended nursery for ages 2-5)
11:15 a.m. Sunday School and Adult Bible Fellowships (all ages)

We Believe:

- that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and the final authority for all matters of faith. (*2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Rom. 15:4; Heb. 4:12*)
- that God is the creator of man and all things. (*Gen. 1:1; Acts 17:24-28*)
- that man willfully sinned and, as a result, is lost and without hope apart from Jesus Christ. (*Acts 4:12; Rom. 3:23; 1 John 1:7*)
- in the deity of Jesus Christ (that Jesus is God in human form), and in the trinity (God is three in one – God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit). (*John 14:9-11; Matt. 3:16-17*)
- in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ. (*Isaiah 7:14; Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:34-38*)
- that Jesus Christ, God's only Son, is the Messiah, the Savior of the world. (*John 3:16-17; 1 Peter 3:18*)
- that Jesus died on the cross, and that salvation comes by grace through the blood of Jesus Christ. (*1 Cor. 15:3; Eph. 2:8-9; Matt. 26:28; Rom. 5:8-11*)
- that three days after His crucifixion, Jesus came out of the grave in bodily form, and then ascended into heaven. (*Luke 24:36-43; 1 Cor. 15:4; Mark 16:19*)
- that the Bible teaches that God's plan of salvation is to hear God's Word, to believe His Word to be true, to repent of the sin in your life, to confess that Jesus is God's Son, and to be immersed in baptism. (*Luke 13:5; Rom. 10:9-10; Luke 24:45-47; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:1-7; 2 Peter 3:9*)
- that the Holy Spirit dwells within every Christian. (*John 16:5-15*)
- that Jesus Christ is going to come back one day. (*John 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 4:14-18*)
- that heaven and hell are real, and that there is coming a day of judgment when all people will be held accountable for their behavior; the saved will inherit eternal life; the unsaved, eternal separation from God. (*John 5:28-29; John 6:47; Rev. 20:10, 15; Rev. 21:2-5, 27*)
- that the church is the body and Bride of Christ, founded on the Day of Pentecost, consisting of all Christians everywhere. (*Matt. 16:13-18; Acts 2:14-47*)

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