



Swearing-In Remarks
Mayor Nicholas E. Hunter, City of Lake Charles
July 1, 2021

Ladies and Gentlemen, Judge Bradberry, Judge Kee, to my family, welcome and I am truly humbled to be here accepting this great honor for a second time. We stand here today in the middle of Lake Charles' greatest challenge in a generation, her greatest hour of need. No one needs a reminder of what the last year and a half has been like. The only way we will achieve success is by working together, and working together can mean different things to different people.

To me, working together does not mean we will always agree, but it does mean that when we disagree we can do it in a cordial and respectful manner. To me, working together, at times, means compromise. It means being willing to see this community from another person's point of view. There is not one definition or one all-encompassing, standardized Lake Charles experience for every citizen. Depending on their background, different people will view our community differently and have different opinions about where it needs to go. This is not something that should be chastised or denigrated. Quite the contrary. For this next term, I venture to say that we have one of the most diverse Mayoral administrations and City Council in Lake Charles' history. Some may say that's a recipe for stagnation or quagmire. Well, maybe in Washington, but I do not believe it is here. I believe the diversity you see before you today allows for a more complete interpretation of this City. It allows for all voices to be heard.

I make several promises and reaffirmations to you all today. I promise, every day to wake up and fight for the people of Lake Charles, to be vocal when I see that our state and federal partners should be doing more in the aftermath of natural disasters. I promise to think boldly and will challenge others to do the same. If our infrastructure is to rise to the level at which it should be, we cannot accept business as usual right now. I promise to seek growth and prosperity for all corners of this City. We have made headway in recent years, but we still have progress to make. Some of the imbalances we see have been decades, generations in the making, and they won't be changed over-night, but we can admit they exist and continue to make progress.

I promise to never give up, no matter how loud the distractions or antagonists may be. I will not be steered off course.

I promise to remember that infrastructure is important, probably the most important aspect of municipal government, but it's not the only attribute that makes a great City. Our quality of life, aesthetics, our culture make us unique and can create an atmosphere that is inviting to the current and next generation.

I promise to be an independent thinker, certainly willing to hear all sides, but in the end, I will not be pushed into a certain direction by any loyalty other than that which I have to my conscience, the law, and my God. I will not allow myself to be boxed in by some pre-determined dogma crafted by any organization or faction. Simply, I will do what I think is right for this City.

We are all in this together. Everyone in this room, every citizen in this City represents a thread of fabric that holds this tapestry together. We need each other. In our history, when have we needed neighborly compassion and love more than today? We are in the middle of transcribing a pivotal chapter in the history book of Lake Charles. The chapter is incomplete. I hope and pray and believe that when future generations look back upon this time, they will see that we seized upon the moment. We soldiered on in the face of great adversity. We chose to build this City back more resilient, more sustainable, and more inclusive.

We may not always understand why things are happening when they are happening and we certainly at times wish we had the capacity to explain why bad things have happened to good people. But that's not a luxury we as humans have. At times, we cannot control what is inflicted upon us, but we can lean on our faith, our family and our neighbors.

In closing, I thank my family for always being at my side. I thank my staff and my team for their loyalty, counsel and hard work. I thank the citizens for their support. I realize the great honor and responsibility.

I believe, in His way, God knows what He's doing. I believe He has placed everyone in this room where He wanted them, especially including those seated by my side. It is my faith I have in God, my family, and my community that tells me, we will be ok. We will be more than ok. We will get through this difficult chapter and we will emerge stronger. I ask you all to join me in this belief. Thank You