

Prayer Banned? A Controversial Move by This City Council

The city council of Tulsa, Oklahoma, is pulling prayer from its meetings after a pagan priestess dedicated an invocation to Medusa last fall.

On Wednesday, councilors voted 8-1 to replace the opening prayer with a moment of silence or personal reflection, according to Public Radio Tulsa. It was noted in the report residents who previously signed up to give invocations at meetings will still be allowed to do so.

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One councilor, Christian Bengel, abstained from the vote, arguing the spirit of the First Amendment of the Constitution centers on listening to things—including prayers—with which you might not agree.

Fellow Councilor Laura Bellis said she didn't want the invocation to make any residents feel like their government did not represent them.

She said, "Of course, we have invocations where anyone can sign up of any faith for, but the one time they may be there, it usually is a Christian prayer, and may send the message that their government is not for them or they don't belong."

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The impetus for the rule change arose in late November of last year, when then-Councilor Crista Patrick's pagan priestess,

Amy McAdams, delivered the opening invocation, during which she invoked Medusa, whom she described as the “monstrous hero of the oppressed and abused,” as well as “the Gorgonea, champions of equality and sacred rage.”

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