

First Lady Visits Central Florida Megachurch

On the last day of First Lady Michelle Obama's three-day "Let's Move" tour, she took part in an event at **Northland Church** in Longwood, Fla. to promote her health and fitness initiative among religious and other community groups.

As the motorcade pulled in at the church, anti-abortion activists held up placards saying abortion is murder but not referring specifically to the Obama administration.

Before the First Lady appeared, the Northland Church **worship** team entertained the congregation of more than 3,000 with "Takin' it to the Streets."

Joel Hunter, the senior pastor of the church, introduced Obama, reciting her resume but saying she's most proud of being "Malia and Sasha's mom." He also recalled a meeting with President Obama in which Hunter praised his leadership and great family, and he replied, "I don't know how it is in your house," but in the first family, "I'm just labor."

Hunter praised Obama as a "talented, caring, a very physically fit first lady."

Michelle Obama then took to the podium in the arena-like main hall under a vaulted ceiling. She thanked the crowd for turning out on a Saturday morning.

The bulk of her remarks reprised her comments at previous stops, where she talked about the commitments of food companies and restaurant chains to offer healthier menu choices.

"We as a country cannot fulfill our promise unless our children can fulfill their promise," she said.

Obama then talked about how lifestyles were healthier when she was a child, walking to and from school, watching only Saturday morning cartoons, *American Bandstand* and *Soul Train*, before going out to play tag and “double Dutch.”

At family meals, “there was always a vegetable on the plate,” she said. “My mother never cared whether my brother and I liked what was on our plates.”

The crowd whooped and cheered, and one pumped-up dad turned to his daughter and said, “Did you hear that?”

The first lady lamented, “Those wholesome family meals are unfortunately a thing of the past.”

“For so many of us, food is so much more than nourishment for our bodies,” she said. “It’s how we knit our families and communities together.”

Obama described how the first family still huddles in the White House family kitchen. Of course, she added, “I’m not cookin’.”

Then she talked about how to adapt those traditions to modern lifestyles.

“We know that government doesn’t have all the answers,” she said, calling on religious groups to step up their role. “As part of Let’s Move, we wanted to work with from the very beginning.”

Some churches, she noted, have created “no-fry zones” in their congregations, or sponsored communal walks.

She encouraged churches to serve healthy food instead of donuts and coffee cake at after-service meetings.

Obama ended by announcing a competition in which people make videos of their best efforts, and submit them to the USDA. The winners, she said, will be invited to a reception at the White

House.

“Let’s finish what we started,” she declared.

Michelle Obama then worked a rope line, which was five or six deep. She hugged little kids and reached across a sea of outstretched hands. A man held up a T-shirt saying “Muslims: Let’s Move.”

Hunter and his wife, Becky, waited on the line with a young girl who looked to be their granddaughter.