

## HIGHLIGHTS

### Candlelight service held in Wallowa

WALLOWA — The Wallowa United Methodist Church will have a candlelight Christmas Eve service. The service begins at 5 p.m.

### 'Sorrow and sighing will flee away'

LA GRANDE — Pastor Ray Smith will speak on "The Joy of Christmas" during the 10 a.m. Sunday service at the La Grande First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). His message comes from Isaiah 35:1-10: "Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away" (NIV).

A candlelight Christmas Eve worship service will be held at 6:30 p.m. The service will include Christmas carols, the Christmas story from Luke 2:1-20 and Communion. All believers are welcome at Christ's table. Pastor Ray will share a meditation from Dale S. Bringman, "A Star is Born."

### Community Christmas service held Sunday afternoon

COVE — The Cove United Methodist Church is holding a community Christmas service at 3 p.m. Dec. 23. The event will include music, candle lighting and refreshments. All are welcome.

### Usher in Christmas with song and scripture in Imbler

IMBLER — The Imbler Christian Church will celebrate Christ's birth through song and scripture at a short Christmas Eve service. The gathering begins at 6 p.m.

### 'Silent Night' is theme of Christmas worship

JOSEPH — Throughout December, the Joseph United Methodist Church has been exploring the meaning of one of the best loved Christmas carols, "Silent Night." This year is the 200th anniversary

of this holiday favorite. The theme will continue at Sunday's 10 a.m. service and at a 3 p.m. Christmas Eve candlelight service.

### Advent message focuses on two women of great faith

LA GRANDE — The La Grande First United Methodist Church will celebrate the fourth Sunday of Advent at 10 a.m. Pastor Al Trachsel will preach from Luke 1:39-45. The sermon, "Jeremy and Jesus," shares the story of two women of great faith who bore sons that changed the world.

### Union congregations worship together

UNION — Union's Grace Community Lutheran and Union Methodist churches will worship together at 10 a.m. Sunday. Pastor Carl will conclude his four-part sermon series on Jesus with a message titled, "When Will He

Return." Adult Sunday school begins at 9 a.m., and a time of fellowship follows the service.

At 5 p.m. Christmas Eve, the two congregations will hold a candlelight and Christmas carol service to celebrate Christ's birth.

### Two services held Sunday at St. Peter's

LA GRANDE — St. Peter's Episcopal Church in La Grande will hold two services on Sunday. Morning Prayer will be at 9 a.m., and the Rev. Richard Thew will officiate a Christmas Communion service at 3 p.m. Coffee and fellowship will follow the afternoon service. On Christmas Eve, there will be an Evening Prayer service at 4:30 p.m.

### Faith Lutheran hosts open gym tonight

LA GRANDE, ENTERPRISE — The sermon this Sunday at Faith Lutheran Church will expound on

Mary's relative, Elizabeth, and her joy at being visited by the "mother of (her) Lord" (Luke 1:43). Services will begin at 10 a.m. in La Grande and 2 p.m. in Enterprise.

Tonight, Faith Lutheran Church is hosting an open gym at the Riviera Activity Center, corner of Second and Y Avenue, La Grande. From 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., all are welcome to join in the activities, including basketball and indoor soccer.

Faith's 7 p.m. Christmas Eve service will include Christmas hymns and a candlelight rendition of "Silent Night." On Christmas Day, there will be a Divine Service with Communion at 10 a.m.

### Baptism will be part of Saturday service

LA GRANDE — The La Grande Seventh-day Adventist Church will continue celebrating the Christmas season by rehearsing the real

Christmas story with carols Saturday. Additionally, two young people will present their lives as gifts to God in service for him through baptism. Study begins at 9:30 a.m., followed by corporate worship at 11 a.m.

It's not too late to join Pastor Mike's prophecy seminar, which will resume Jan. 16, 2019. The teaching is held on Wednesdays at 1 p.m. in the church seminar room. Each attendee will receive a complimentary KJV Bible and study guides.

### Zion youth present pageant Sunday

LA GRANDE — Zion Lutheran Church in La Grande will worship Sunday at 9:30 a.m. The service will feature the children's Christmas Pageant including the Christmas story and the singing of Christmas carols. Fellowship and coffee will follow the service.

### Advent: preparing our minds and hearts

Advent, which begins the Church's liturgical year, began Dec. 3. Advent encompasses the four Sundays and weekdays leading up to the celebration of Christmas. The Advent season is a time of preparation for our hearts and minds for the anniversary of the Lord's birth.

Many congregations celebrate Advent by putting up an Advent wreath and lighting candles each week. The use of the wreath and candles during Advent are a long-standing tradition that was originally adopted by Christians in the Middle Ages as part of their spiritual preparation for Christmas.

The wreath and candles are full of symbolism tied to the Christmas season. The wreath itself signifies continuous life. The circle of the wreath, which has no beginning or end, symbolizes the eternity of God, the immortality of the soul, and the everlasting life we find in Christ. The four candles represent the four weeks of Advent, and one candle is lit each Sunday.

The first candle symbolizes hope. It is sometimes called the "Prophecy Candle" in remembrance of the prophets, especially Isaiah, who foretold the birth of Christ. The second candle represents faith. It is called the "Bethlehem Candle" as a reminder of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem. The third candle symbolizes joy and is called the "Shepherds' Candle." The third Sunday of Advent is sometimes referred to Gaudete Sunday ("gaudete" means "rejoice").

On the fourth week of Advent, the final candle is lit to mark the final week of prayer and penance. This final candle, the "Angels' Candle," symbolizes peace. It reminds us of the message of the angels: "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men." Some traditions place a white candle in the middle of the wreath that is lit on Christmas Eve. This candle is called the "Christ Candle" and represents the purity of the life of Christ.

—Adapted from [www.mercyhome.org](http://www.mercyhome.org)

## Mind what you say, others are watching and listening

Even though it rarely crosses our minds, there is always someone listening to what we are saying. Words are not just meaningless sounds but were created to communicate and, most important, to relay God's thoughts. They contain the power to influence and persuade the listener, which means those who speak are held accountable for their intentions. Words that are presented from a negative attitude can cause much damage, while words spoken from a heavenly influence are filled with life and can bring hope, faith and encouragement. A wonderful reminder about how we are to guard our communication is recorded in Philippians 4:8: "Whatever things are true, whatever things are honest, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." We have all been affected by words and realize they had some type of impact



**LIVING ON PURPOSE**  
DR. BILLY HOLLAND

on who we are today.

God's word gives us instructions and insight about the power of words, how critical it is to watch what we say. In James 3, we read about the potential dangers of the tongue. It talks about how we can put bits in the mouths of horses and use a rudder on a ship as a way to manage direction, but controlling the tongue must be disciplined from within: "The tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." This passage continues to identify the tongue as a "world of iniquity" and like a spark that can ignite a raging fire. For those who know God, our words can be filtered through a humble awareness of our weakness and a passionate desire to walk in God's character.

Have you ever heard the old saying, "It's better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak and

remove all doubt?" This is probably a paraphrase from Proverbs 17:28: "Even a fool when he holds his peace is counted as wise and he that closes his lips is esteemed a man of understanding."

Another old expression is "Our mind is a garden, our thoughts are our seeds, we can grow flowers, or we can grow weeds." When it comes to speaking, a good servant not only desires to eliminate judgmental opinions and negative conversations but has a passion to obey and relay what God is saying. I heard a true story the other day and it convicts me to consider that people are watching and listening and how important it is to respond when God calls.

A young high school student attended a church camp over the summer and accepted Christ as his savior. When classes started back in the fall, he really wanted to be a faithful Christian and was excited to tell others about his spiritual experience. He was a member of the football team and right before the game he sensed

that God wanted him to share his testimony in front of everyone at that moment. Naturally, he was a little embarrassed and nervously buckled under the pressure. The team went out and won the game, and as they returned to the locker room hooping and hollering he was again feeling a strong urgency to witness about how Jesus had forgiven and saved him. He asked the coach if he could say something, and through the noise and chaos the coach shouted, "Everyone be quiet for a minute!" The boy stood up on one of the benches and told about how he had surrendered his life to Jesus. When he finished the team went back to their wild celebrating. Two decades later, he received a phone call from one of the boys who was on that team. The man had always remembered that night and said those words had played a huge part in him becoming a Christian. He just wanted to call and say that we never know who is listening and how grateful he was for a young boy's obedience.



## Northeast Oregon Directory of Churches

### Services This Week



<p><b>IMBLER CHRISTIAN CHURCH</b> 440 RUCKMAN, IMBLER 534-2201 <a href="http://www.imblerchristianchurch.org">www.imblerchristianchurch.org</a></p> <p><b>Sunday Services</b> 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Worship Service</p>	<p><b>First Christian Church</b> (Disciples of Christ) 901 Penn Avenue 963-2623 <a href="mailto:lgdisciples@gmail.com">lgdisciples@gmail.com</a></p> <p><b>Worship 10:00 a.m.</b></p> <p>~Join us at The Lord's Table~</p>	<p><b>SUMMERVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH</b> of Christ for the World</p> <p>Sunday Services: Sunday School &amp; Adult Bible Classes 9:45AM Children's Church &amp; Worship Service 11:00AM Family Worship Service 6:00PM</p> <p>Wednesday: Prayer Mtg., Children's Bible Club, Youth Group 7:00PM</p> <p><b>A church for your whole family</b> Visit us at <a href="http://summervillebaptistchurch.org">summervillebaptistchurch.org</a></p>	<p><b>Amazing Grace Fellowship</b> 1316 T St., La Grande, OR 541-568-4567 Sunday 10:30 a.m.</p> <p>2 Cor 12:9 My Grace is sufficient for you.</p> <p>IS 40:31</p>	<p><b>GRACE COMMUNITY LUTHERAN CHURCH</b> LCMC 667 N. Main in Union "We are called to Serve" Sunday School for all ages - 9:00 am Sunday Worship 10:00 am Pastor Carl Seelhoff Phone: 541-786-0447 <a href="mailto:grace.lutherancove@gmail.com">grace.lutherancove@gmail.com</a></p>
<p><b>COVE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH</b> 1708 Jasper St., Cove, OR</p> <p><b>NORTH POWDER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH</b> 390 E. St., North Powder, OR</p> <p>JOIN US... <i>Catch the Spirit!</i> Worship: 9:00 a.m. Cove Worship: 10:00 a.m. N. Powder</p>	<p><b>ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH SERVICES</b> La Grande - Our Lady of the Valley 1002 L Avenue Saturday 5:30 pm Mass Sunday 10:00 am Mass Weekdays 8:00 am Mass <b>Union - Sacred Heart</b> 340 South 10th Avenue Sunday 8:00 am Mass No Weekdays <b>Elgin - Saint Mary's</b> 12th and Alder Sunday 12:30 pm Mass No Weekdays</p>	<p><b>VALLEY FELLOWSHIP</b> 963-0340 507 Palmer Ave (just east of city pool) Sunday Worship 10:02 am Come and share in a time of worship, prayer and the study of God's word with us. Worship includes communion on Sunday. <a href="http://www.valleyfellowship.church">www.valleyfellowship.church</a> Email: <a href="mailto:vfchurch2@gmail.com">vfchurch2@gmail.com</a></p>	<p><b>LaGrande CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE</b> 109 18th Street • 963-3402</p> <p>Sunday School 9:15 a.m. Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.</p>	<p><b>LA GRANDE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH</b> "OPEN HEARTS, OPEN MINDS, OPEN DOORS" 1612 4th Street - 963-2498 Pastor Al Trachsel <a href="mailto:lgumc@eoni.com">lgumc@eoni.com</a> <a href="http://www.lgumchurch.org">www.lgumchurch.org</a> Office Hours: Mon-Thur 9am-Noon <b>Worship 10:00 am</b> Fellowship Coffee Hour 11:00 am • Nursery provided •</p>
<p><b>La Grande Seventh-day Adventist Church</b> <i>A Place where hope is found in Jesus</i> Join us in Fellowship &amp; Worship Every Saturday 9:30 a.m. - Bible Study / Fellowship 10:45 a.m. - Worship Service 2702 Adams Avenue, La Grande • 963-4018 Pastor: Mike Armayor <a href="http://www.lagrande22adventistchurchconnect.org">www.lagrande22adventistchurchconnect.org</a> <i>Learning for Today and Eternity</i> <b>Little Friends</b> Christian Preschool/Childcare 963-6390 <b>La Grande Adventist Christian School</b> Christian Education K-8th Grade 963-6203</p>	<p><b>FIRST LANDMARK MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH</b> 1812 1st St. La Grande Pastor Dave Tierce • 541-605-0215 <i>We use the King James Version Bible</i> Sunday School - 10:00 am Worship 11:00 am Sunday Evening Bible Study - 3:00 pm (Effective June 10) Wednesday Evening - 6:30 pm "Where you can find TRUTH according to the scriptures" <a href="http://www.flmbclagrande.com">www.flmbclagrande.com</a></p>	<p><b>Zion Lutheran Church</b> (an ELCA church) <b>902 Fourth Street, La Grande, OR (541) 963-5998</b></p> <p>9:30 am - Worship 10:30 am - Fellowship &amp; Refreshments 11:00 am - Classes Pastor: Rev. Colleen Nelson <a href="http://www.zionlagrande.org">www.zionlagrande.org</a></p>	<p><b>Union Baptist Church</b> 1531 S. Main St., Union 541-562-5531 <a href="http://www.unionbaptistoregon.org">www.unionbaptistoregon.org</a> Sunday School 9:45 am Morning Worship 11:00 am Sunday Night 6:30 pm Thursday AWANA 6:30 pm <b>Knowing, Loving and Proclaiming Jesus Christ</b></p>	<p><b>First Baptist Church</b> SIXTH &amp; SPRING, LA GRANDE 541-963-3911</p> <p>Building Together On Christ Alone</p> <p>Sun. 8:45 AM - Bible Classes Sun. 10:00 AM - Worship Wed. 6:15 PM - AWANA</p>