

HIGHLIGHTS

The importance of scriptural knowledge

NORTHEAST OREGON — The sermon at Faith Lutheran Church Sunday will focus on Jesus explaining the resurrection of the dead through scripture. Christians are also to pursue scriptural knowledge. The passage examined will be Luke 20:27-40. Services will be at 10 a.m. in La Grande and 2 p.m. in Enterprise.

Sermon encourages being gracious

LA GRANDE — The Church of the Nazarene in La Grande will begin its

Submissions

Churches and faith-based groups are encouraged to submit Highlights for the Spiritual Life page by 4 p.m. Tuesday for publication Friday. Submit by email to news@lagrandeobserver.com (with Highlights in the subject line), by fax to 541-963-7804, or by hand to the office.

Sunday events with Sunday school at 9:15 a.m. Worship will follow at 10:30 a.m. Pastor Kevin Goss will continue the "Upside Down Kingdom" sermon series with a message from Matthew 7:1-12, "Seeing Eye-to-Eye." We live in a world of difference that can be difficult to make sense of. Jesus invites us to

see our world through gracious eyes and consider how we treat one another.

What does it mean to take a risk?

LA GRANDE — Pastor Ray Smith's message Sunday at the La Grande First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will be "Sink or

Swim." He will share from Matthew 14:22-33, exploring Peter's story and what it means to take a risk. Worship will begin at 10 a.m.

Children present program in Sacrament Service

ELGIN — The primary children at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Elgin will present a special program during the Sacrament Service on Sunday. Members of the congregation will be the speakers in the other area wards. The second hour of service will be Relief Society and Priesthood

meetings. Hebrews 7-13 will be the scripture studied in the "Come Follow Me" lessons for the week of Nov. 11-17, with a focus on the priesthood and having faith in God's promises.

Congregation honored at potluck

LA GRANDE — Pastors Keith and Laura Hudson will host a Congregation Appreciation Potluck after the 9:30 a.m. worship service Sunday at La Grande's First Presbyterian Church. The Hudsons are celebrating 10 years as co-pastors and want to thank the congregation

for supporting and encouraging them. During the service, the sermon will be "Hope in the One Who Waits for Us," based on Mark 10 and Hosea 11.

St. Peter's Book Club meets Sunday

LA GRANDE — St. Peter's Episcopal Church in La Grande will celebrate Holy Eucharist at 11 a.m. Sunday. Pastor Roberta Smythe will officiate. Coffee and fellowship will follow. St. Peter's Book Club will meet at 6 p.m. Sunday evening.

— Observer staff

The shrouded mountain: the sin of gossip

A vast mountain towers thousands of feet above the village. It's most often hidden in a mass of dark, raging storm clouds and only rarely does the misty shroud part to reveal the hulking monster of rock and ice. The sight is so terrible it makes people look away and hope for the quick closure of the covering clouds.

This is like gossip. Most often the manipulative masters of the art keep their works shrouded in a cloud of smiles and pretense and seldom does their true face show. Yet when it does, the ugliness and the vastness of their evil makes decent people want to turn away — but what does it do to God?

"There are six things which the LORD hates, yes, seven which are an abomination to Him:

Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that run rapidly to evil, a false witness who utters lies and one who spreads strife among brothers" (Proverbs 6:16-19).

These sins describe each of the facets of gossip and they show us how deeply God hates this secretive sin.

Jesus says, "Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me"



JAN VARNEY

(Matthew 25:40).

Those who choose to practice the abomination of gossip have no hiding place from judgment for though they do their works in secret (the Greek word for gossip means "to whisper"), the result is the suffering of countless innocent, often sincere and admirable, people.

Grapes or thorns? Figs or thistles?

Have you ever felt the reluctance in a handshake or a hug? Have you ever seen the cold stares from others? Have you felt the deep pain of suddenly being left out, uninvited or made unwelcome to places you once enjoyed by those who once called you "friend"? Have you ever been asked pointed and even rude questions by others about something you had only shared with one other person?

If you have, then you have seen the parting of the clouds upon the vast mountain and you have felt both the pain and the power of gossip.

Gossip is loose talk about people who are not there to defend themselves against what is being said.

Gossipers form a kangaroo-court where they confidently play judge, jury and executioner. They revel in painting their victims in the worst possible light and in passing a merciless sentence, as if they were sinless and would never stand before a judge themselves. Yet Jesus said "in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you!" (Matthew 7:2).

Gossipers seal their own fate with every evil plan and every merciless action. It is a terrifying thought to know they will be judged by the same cruel, unloving standard they have so long used against their victims. Far from their base behavior Jesus commands, "In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets" (Matthew 7:12).

No one would want to be treated the way gossipers treat people, but Christian practitioners of gossip boldly choose gossip over Christ's command.

Gossip is information that is not confirmed as true with the person being gossiped about, but gossipers happily accept it as 100% true and spread it quickly to "the gossip network." They want it to be true. They want to twist it into the worst

possible reading. Then they can sell it more easily and more dramatically to others. Then they can separate brothers and friends. Then they can feel truly powerful. They are the puppet masters behind the curtains and watch how they make everyone dance — but what a terrible price they will pay for practicing the abominations God hates.

On the other hand, Jesus commands all Christians: "If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private" (Matthew 18:15). This is how Jesus wants his people to treat troubling, secondhand information. Secondhand information cannot be trusted and if it troubles us we must obey Jesus' wonderful command — it puts together the people who need to be talking, quickly and in private. Matters can be cleared up and relationships can be preserved using Christ's way of love, but gossip stirs up strife. It does an injustice to a brother or sister and it separates even the truest souls. Christians who practice gossip have rejected Christ's way of love in dealing with their brothers. They don't want to find out what really happened or what was really said, they love to fan the flames. Like the pyromaniac, the gossip lives to start the fire burning.

Gossip is virtually always malicious, negative or sensational in nature and it is meant to hurt and isolate the person being targeted by the attacks of the gossipers. In fact, modern psychologists even call the victim "the gossip target."

How could sincere Christians treat others in this manner when God himself says, "You shall do no injustice in judgment; you shall not be partial ... but you are to judge your neighbor fairly. You shall not go about as a slanderer among your people... You shall not hate your fellow countryman in your heart; you may surely reprove your neighbor, but shall not incur sin because of him. You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD" (Leviticus 19:15-18).

In order for professing Christians to engage in gossip and treat others in this manner, it has to be a deep desire of their hearts. Jesus says, "You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles" (Matthew 7:16). The pathological gossip has boldly embraced the seven abominations God hates.

And, what is more, it is not enough for them to commit those abominations alone.

Northeast Oregon Directory of Churches

CHURCH
Service
DIRECTORY

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

901 Penn Avenue 963-2623
lgdisciples@gmail.com

Worship
10:00 a.m.



~Join us at The Lord's Table~

Services This Week

IMBLER CHRISTIAN CHURCH

440 RUCKMAN, IMBLER 534-2201
www.imblerchristianchurch.org

Sunday Services

9:00 a.m. Sunday School
10:00 a.m. Worship Service

CHURCH
Service
DIRECTORY

LA GRANDE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

"OPEN HEARTS, OPEN MINDS, OPEN DOORS"

1612 4th Street - 963-2498

Pastor Taylor Gould

lgumc@comcast.net

www.lgumchurch.org

Office Hours: Mon-Thur 9am-Noon

Worship 10:00 am

Fellowship Coffee Hour 11:00 am

- Nursery provided -

GRACE COMMUNITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Place

62848 Philynda Loop in Island City

"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

grace.lutherancove@gmail.com

Amazing Grace Fellowship

1316 T St., La Grande, OR

541-568-4567

Sunday 10:30 a.m.

2 Cor 12:9 My Grace is sufficient for you.

IS 40:31

Zion Lutheran Church

(an ELCA church)

902 Fourth Street, La Grande, OR

(541) 963-5998

9:00 am - Worship

10:00 am - Fellowship & Refreshments

10:30 am - Classes

Pastor: Roberta Smythe

www.zionlagrande.org

UNION BAPTIST CHURCH

1531 S. Main Street, Union

541-562-5531

www.UnionBaptistOregon.org

Sunday School 9:45 am

Morning Worship 11:00 am

Thursday AWANA 6:30 pm

Birthing, Building and Being the Body of Christ

First Baptist Church

SIXTH & SPRING, LA GRANDE

541-963-3911

Sun. 10:00 AM - Worship

Sun. 8:45 AM - Exploring the Bible

Wed. 6:15 PM - AWANA



LaGrande CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

109 18th Street • 963-3402

Sunday School 9:15 a.m.

Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.

St. Katherine's Catholic Church

Fr. Thomas Puduppalliparamban

301 E Garfield Enterprise

Mass Schedule

Sundays:

St Pius X, Wallowa - 8:00 am

St Katherine of Siena, Enterprise - 10:30 am

Saturdays

St Katherine of Siena, Enterprise - 5:30 pm

Weekdays

St Katherine of Siena, Enterprise - 8:00 am

(Monday - Thursday and First Friday)

All are welcome

SUMMERVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH

Sunday Services:

Sunday School & Adult Bible Classes 9:45AM

Children's Church & Worship Service 11:00AM

Family Worship Service 6:00PM

Wednesday:

Prayer Mtg, Children's Bible Club, Youth Group 7:00PM

A church for your whole family

Visit us at summervillebaptistchurch.org

