

Asking for help requires humbling yourself before the Lord

There are several ways the spread of the coronavirus is impacting our lives. As I wrote last week, I believe it can be used by God to bring about a spiritual revival.

But it also shows us we really have no control over what happens in our lives, over what circumstances may come our way.

There are three responses to that reality. One is to press even harder to gain more control, to grab even firmer on what control we think we have. Another is to worry and freak out. The third response is to be humble and share everything we are going through with God. He knows anyway, as he already knows what we will say before the word is on our tongue (Psalm 139:4).

If he does know, though, why should we share with him what is on our mind, what our circumstances are and what our needs are?

We get to exercise faith in doing so. When we give a matter to him in faith, and he works it

out — even if it isn’t in the way we expect — it increases our faith.

We also are commanded multiple times in scripture to humble ourselves before God. Just a few verses that talk about humility are Micah 6:7 (“What does the LORD require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”), James 4:6 (“God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble”) and 1 Peter 5:6 (“Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you at the proper time”).

The opposite of humility, obviously, is pride. The attitude that says “I got it. I don’t need help. I can do it myself.”

God convicted me of pride in my life earlier this week with 1 Peter 5:6 and also verse 7. This is a continuing thought from verse 6, stating we need to be “casting all our anxiety on him, because he cares for you.”

Some Bibles translate “anx-

ietty” in that verse to “cares.” I personally like that translation better. And that is where God has been working on me. While I have been praying more during this time of the coronavirus, God showed me I’ve not been surrendering all to him. Either I have not been bringing some cares to him, or I have been asking him to answer them in the way I want, instead of saying “your will be done.”

Some of these cares are daily needs. Some are things I want to see happen. And some are worries. All need to be humbly given to God, and I need to trust he will take care of them. The Bible tells us he will. Jesus tells us in Matthew 6 not to worry about what we will eat or drink or wear, because “your Heavenly Father knows that you need all these things” (Matthew 6:32).

That is easier said than done in a time when COVID-19 is ravaging our nation by sickening and killing people. Meanwhile, businesses are being closed and people are losing their jobs.

But that is where we come back to 1 Peter 5:7 — “casting all our cares on him...”

Yes, we are commanded not to be anxious about our circumstances. But when we are, which we undoubtedly will be during this time — I surely have been — we need to tell him all that is going on. Share everything you are dealing with. All your cares, fears and worries. If you are scared you won’t have food for another week, tell him. If you are afraid you could lose your job, or have lost it and aren’t sure what the next step is, tell him. If you are afraid of what could happen if you become ill with the coronavirus, tell him. All your cares. And if this sounds preachy, know I am preaching to myself just as much if not more.

He will hold your cares so that you don’t have to, and he will deal with them. Look at the last part of 1 Peter 5:7 again: “...because he cares for you.”

God knows what you need. He also cares about what you need. And he will meet those needs.

But to be in a place to ask requires us to look again at 1 Peter 5:6 and be humble before God. To be humble and ask for our needs to be taken care of is to rid ourselves of pride. To tell

God “I don’t know how this need is going to be met, but I know you do, so please help me.”

We have the perfect example of humility in Jesus, who despite being God, emptied himself to be made in the likeness of man and “humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross” (Philippians 2:8).

Before going to the cross, Jesus asked the father if there was a way for the suffering he was about to face to be taken away, yet he submitted three times “not my will but yours be done” (Luke 22:42).

Jesus walked humbly during his time on earth and set the example for us to follow. We would be wise to do the same and surrender control of our lives to God.

To not ask for help is to say “I got this, God. I don’t need you.”

If the last few weeks have shown us anything, it’s that we don’t “got it.” We are not in control. And, in fact, we are in desperate need of his help.

Ronald Bond is a sinner saved by grace and the sports editor of The Observer.

HIGHLIGHTS

ONLINE WORSHIP CONTINUES ON PALM SUNDAY

LA GRANDE — Zion Lutheran Church and St. Peter’s Episcopal Church reported to The Observer their online offerings for April 5, which is Palm Sunday. Each church will post online Palm Sunday worship to its website and Facebook page on Saturday. The churches also indicated they are planning virtual services for Holy Week.

PARTICIPATE DIGITALLY IN LDS GENERAL CONFERENCE THIS WEEK

EASTERN OREGON — The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints’ 190th annual General Conference on April 4-5 will be broadcast from a small auditorium on Temple Square. The event will include messages of truth, hope and inspiration and pre-recorded music. Sessions are at 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. Saturday and Sunday and 5 p.m. This conference takes place during the year the church is commemorating the 200th anniversary of the First Vision.

PASSOVER AND A NEW COVENANT

This weekend is, regardless of the COVID 19 pandemic, the weekend before Passover on the Jewish calendar. Which means it is the time of Jesus’ final trip into Jerusalem that would lead up to his last week of life in his human form. At the Passover celebration — remembering

the Passover lamb that was slain in Egypt in obedience to God’s word so that the death angel would pass over their homes — Jesus declared his coming death on the cross. He was finishing the old covenant with his observance of the Passover and establishing the new covenant in his coming suffering and sacrifice for our sins and his victorious resurrection in his glorified form.

— *Contributed by Pastor Franklin Humber, Summerville Baptist Church*

MAUNDY THURSDAY AND GOOD FRIDAY EXPLAINED

Holy Week starts with Palm Sunday, which is April 5 this year. In this week, we will remember our Lord’s Passion on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Maundy is a Latin word that means “mandate” or “command.” On Thursday of Holy Week, Jesus washed His disciples’ feet and gave the mandate: “Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another” (John 13:34). Also on Thursday, Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper and gave the mandates: “Take, eat, drink of it...” (Matthew 26:27-28). Good Friday is so called because Christ paid the payment of mankind’s sin with his blood shed and his death by crucifixion — “good” for the sake of mankind because Christ has fulfilled the law with his sacrifice.

— *Contributed by Pastor Sam Wiseman, Faith Lutheran Church, La Grande*

Coronavirus lockdown changes how Hindus celebrate holy period

By Biswajeet Banerjee and Gary Fields
Associated Press

LUCKNOW, India — Rukmani Sharma fears the virus that has turned the world upside down. But as a devout Hindu, she also fears for her soul.

COVID-19 restrictions mean the 71-year-old woman won’t be allowed to go to temple Thursday to celebrate the birthday of the Hindu god Ram, and she says she’s “feeling guilty.”

Hindus around the world are in the midst of a nine-day period called Chaitra Navaratri that began with what for many is considered the Hindu New Year and will culminate with the festival of Ramanavami.

Normally there is fasting, masses worshipping together, offerings in temples and festivals.

But this year, celebrations and prayers are home-bound events and if there is group worship, it’s livestreamed. India, where most of the world’s billion Hindus live, is in a government-ordered 21-day lockdown.

People are allowed to leave

their homes only for essentials. Religious gatherings are explicitly banned.

The significance of that ban is especially striking in Uttar Pradesh. Yogi Adityanath, the top government official in the north Indian state, had planned a grand festival over five of the nine days leading up to Ram’s birthday. It was expected to draw more than 1 million people from across India, to celebrate a recent Supreme Court ruling that will allow a Hindu trust to build a temple on a long-disputed site where the religious believe Ram was born.

Instead, Adityanath, a former monk, is urging the faithful to stay home.

“No one should come to temple. This is a time of crisis and people should realize that prayers from home are as acceptable as prayers offered in temple,” Adityanath said.

Sharma, a resident of Uttar Pradesh’s capital, Lucknow, is distraught that she wouldn’t be able to perform a customary food ritual at the temple. She consulted a temple priest, and was advised to instead feed stray cows, which Hindus revere

and worship.

Some temple priests in Uttar Pradesh said they have declined requests to visit homes, suggesting instead that people should donate the money they would have spent cooking food to the chief minister’s virus relief fund.

“It is our responsibility to follow social distancing,” said Pandit Shubankar, a priest at Gomati Nagar Kali Bari temple in Lucknow.

Hindus in the U.S. also are following social distancing protocols.

Normally, Suhag Shukla would be scrubbing her Philadelphia home more intensely than usual, a sign of the renewal the holiday signifies. There would be guests and Temple worship. But the temples are closed, and the bells that worshippers ring when they enter are silent.

Her family’s prayers are confined to the altar in their home and worship and celebrations are happening in cyberspace.

With temples closed, Facebook and Zoom have become the way to connect for a religion where connection to all things is imperative.

Service

DIRECTORY

Northeast Oregon Directory of Churches

Services This Week

Service

DIRECTORY

LaGrande

CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

109 18th Street • 963-3402

Sunday School 9:15 a.m.

Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.

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~

SUMMERVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH

Sunday Services: 9:45AM

Sunday School & Adult Bible Classes 11:00AM

Children’s Church & Worship Service 6:00PM

Family Worship Service

Wednesday: 7:00PM

Prayer Mtg, Children’s Bible Club, Youth Group

A church for your whole family

Visit us at summervillebaptistchurch.org

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

CALVARY CHAPEL

1433 Jefferson Ave. 963-5884

Contemporary Worship

Expositional Teaching

Sunday Service - 10:30 a.m.

Studying The Book of Galatians

Wednesday Service - 7:00 p.m.

Studying The Book of Joshua

Wednesday Night Youth - 6:00 p.m.

Tune in to Calvary Radio 88.1 CSN

Cove United Methodist Church

1708 Jasper St., Cove, OR

NORTH POWDER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

390 E. St., North Powder, OR

JOIN US... Catch the Spirit!

Worship: 9:00 a.m. Cove

Worship: 10:00 a.m. N. Powder

St. Katherine’s Catholic Church

Fr. Thomas Puduppulliparamban

301 E Garfield Enterprise

Mass Schedule

Sundays: 8:00 am

St Pius X, Wallowa – 8:00 am

St Katherine of Siena, Enterprise – 10:30 am

Saturdays 5:30 pm

St Katherine of Siena, Enterprise – 5:30 pm

Weekdays 8:00 am

St Katherine of Siena, Enterprise – 8:00 am

(Monday – Thursday and First Friday)

All are welcome

LA GRANDE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

“OPEN HEARTS, OPEN MINDS, OPEN DOORS”

1612 4th Street – 963-2498

Pastor Taylor Gould

lgumc@eoni.com

www.lagrandeumc.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

La Grande Seventh-day Adventist Church

A Place where hope is found in Jesus

Join us in Fellowship & 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

www.lagrande.adventistchurch.org

Learning for Today and Eternity

Little Friends

Christian Preschool/Childcare 963-6390

La Grande Adventist Christian School

Christian Education K-8th Grade 963-6203

FIRST LANDMARK MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

1812 1st St. La Grande

Pastor Dave Tierce • 541-605-0215

We use the King James Version Bible

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”

www.flmbclagrande.com

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

All services have been temporarily cancelled. Live-streaming Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m. People can watch at: lagrandefbc.org