

HIGHLIGHTS

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

LA GRANDE — Zion Lutheran will not have in-person worship this Sunday. Links to an online worship will be posted on Zion's website and Facebook page on Saturday. Offerings can be mailed to Zion at 902 Fourth St., La Grande 97850.

ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

LA GRANDE — St. Peter's Episcopal Church will not worship in-person through May. Links to an online worship for Sunday will be posted on St. Peter's Facebook page on Saturday. Offerings can be mailed to St. Peter's at P.O. Box 1001, La

Submissions

Churches and faith-based groups are encouraged to submit Highlights for the Spiritual Life page by 4 p.m. Tuesday for publication Thursday. Submit by email to news@lagrandeobserver.com (with Highlights in the subject line).

Grande 97850.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

NORTHEAST OREGON — The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' "Come, Follow Me" lesson for the week of May 25-31 is based on Mosiah 29 — Alma 4, which is found in the Book of Mormon. The lesson covers the time when the Nephite

people begin to rule themselves and kings are replaced with chief judges, and we are reminded how we each can be a positive influence in our communities.

On this Memorial Day Weekend, a message from the church encourages the community to "honor with deep respect ... those who have given their lives to protect the freedoms we are blessed to enjoy in this country. As we ponder their lives,

and those of our ancestors that have gone before us, let us also consider the counsel of Malachi 4:5-6, which reads 'Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.'

Let us use this time as an opportunity to renew our commitments to follow the guidance of our leaders and dedicate ourselves to learning more of our ancestors through genealogical research and the linking together of families over generations of time."

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

LA GRANDE — Today, Thursday, May 21, is the 40th day after Easter. This day is called Ascension Day, for Jesus ascended to heaven 40 days after his resurrection. We read in Acts 1:9 that on the 40th day Jesus "was lifted up, and a cloud took Him out of their sight." Jesus has assured his faithful: "Because I live, you will live also" (John 14:19).

This Sunday, Faith Lutheran Church's sermon will be based on Jesus' prayer recorded in John 17. This prayer begins with "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son that the Son may glorify You..."

Our lack of courage may keep us from Christ

I recently had the opportunity to watch season one of "The Chosen."

The multi-episode series about the life of Jesus uses interesting backstories that bring the scriptures into a deeper understanding.

(It's a free app and for those of you who have some technical savvy, you can cast it to your television without charge. Through donations from many believers, the series is available free for anyone to watch around the world. This presentation of the gospel is done with excellent quality and the acting is amazing.)

There are several scenes that touched my heart deeply, but one in particular I have been thinking about is a scene that involved Jesus and a man named Nicodemus.

If you remember in the Bible, Nicodemus was a Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin who was a highly respected teacher of the Jewish religious law. He knew that a Messiah was coming to be the king of the Jews, but he never dreamed that the Messiah would arrive as an ordinary person or that he would actually have the honor to know him.

Christ began his ministry when he was around 30 years old, and we know that his wisdom to relay God's message and his miracles were causing quite a stir.

The Romans and the Sanhedrin were strongly against a rogue preacher turning the hearts of the people toward what they considered a blasphemous cult. However, in the book of John, we are introduced to Nicodemus who was keeping a close

watch on this prophet called Jesus of Nazareth. Nicodemus was observing these miracles with his own eyes and he knew in his heart that only someone who had been sent from heaven could do

these things.

He arranges a secret meeting with Jesus at night and begins to question him about God's law. In chapter three, we notice the renowned and highly esteemed Nicodemus humbly addressing Jesus as rabbi, which means "scholar." They begin to talk and Nicodemus admits he believes Jesus is truly the promised redeemer as there is no other explanation.

Christ responds by telling him, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Nicodemus replies, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be reborn?"

Jesus explains that a person who wants to follow God must be born twice. Once in the natural and once in the spiritual. Nicodemus was astounded and truly in awe of these words.

Jesus went on to talk about how Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness and how soon the son of man will be lifted up on the cross as the savior.

Jesus was telling Nicodemus that no matter how much people know or what good they do on the outside, everyone needs to be changed on the inside. That can only happen through a supernatural act of God when his Holy Spirit convicts us of wrongdoing and transforms us into a new creation.

Words of the Buddha

If for company you find a wise and prudent friend who leads a good life, you should, overcoming all impediments, keep their company joyously and mindfully.
—Dhammapada 23.328

By effort and heedfulness, discipline and self-mastery, let the wise one make for oneself an island which no flood can overwhelm.
—Dhammapada 2.25

When past conditioning is released and no fresh one produced, the mind no longer seeks for future birth. The seed consumed, cravings no more arise. Such-minded wise ones cease like [the flame of] this lamp.
—Sutta Nipāta 2.238

Well done is that action of doing which one repents not later, and the fruit of which one reaps with delight and happiness.
—Dhammapada 5.68

Source: www.pariyatti.org

In verse 16, Jesus speaks one of the most popular promises in the Bible.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

They end their meeting with Jesus inviting Nicodemus to follow him. He tells him where to meet the next day and Nicodemus actually shows up, but he hides around the corner of a building listening intently.

In this scene in "The Chosen," Jesus looks around and quietly whispers, "You were so close."

You see, Nicodemus had a wife, children, grandchildren and many earthly possessions along with a reputation of being one of the most esteemed religious leaders in all the land. Unfortunately, he chooses not to step forward and join the cause of Christ. Instead we see

him weeping bitterly because he allows his pride and lack of courage to keep him from Christ.

I cried when I watched this because I know he represents most of us. How many have wanted to abandon their lives and be more dedicated but were not willing to take up their cross and follow Jesus?

God says in Ezekiel 36:26, "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you."

Being born again means we have a new identity and a new purpose for our existence. We no longer live for ourselves but for him.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Ordained minister and chaplain William "Billy" F. Holland Jr. is the founder of an independent ministry in central Kentucky.

For more writings and original music, visit www.billyhollandministries.com.

Poll: U.S. believers see message of change from God in virus

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The coronavirus has prompted almost two-thirds of American believers of all faiths to feel that God is telling humanity to change how it lives, a new poll finds.

While the virus rattles the globe, causing economic hardship for millions and killing more than 90,000 Americans, the findings of the poll by the University of Chicago Divinity School and The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research indicate people also may be searching for deeper meaning in the devastating outbreak.

Some who don't affiliate with organized religion, such as Lance DeJesus of Dallastown, Pennsylvania, saw a possible bigger message in the virus.

"It could be a sign, like 'hey, get your act together' — I don't know," said DeJesus, 52, who said he believes in God but is not religious.

The poll found 31% of Americans who believe in God feel strongly the virus is a sign of God telling humanity to change. Evangelical Protestants are more likely than others to believe that strongly, at 43%, compared with 28% of Catholics and mainline Protestants.

But the virus has prompted little change in Americans' overall belief in God, with 2% saying they believe in God today, but did not before. Fewer than 1% say they do not believe in God today but did before.

Northeast Oregon Directory of Churches

Services This Week

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~

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

First Baptist Church

SIXTH & SPRING,
LA GRANDE

541-963-3911



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

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

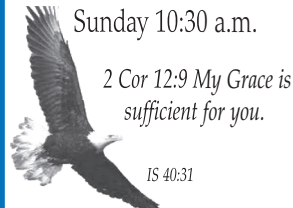
Birthing, Building and Being the Body of Christ

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 -

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

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:
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

LaGrande CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

109 18th Street • 963-3402
Sunday School 9:15 a.m.
Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.

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
Phone: 541-568-4230
grace.lutherancove@gmail.com

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

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 summersvillebaptistchurch.org

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