

## HIGHLIGHTS

### GRACE COMMUNITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

ISLAND CITY — Grace Community Lutheran Church will celebrate the word of God with a worship service beginning at 10 a.m. Sunday. Curt Bakker will give the message “The Holy Spirit and the Power of the Gospel.” He also will lead a 9 a.m. Sunday school class.

### ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH AND ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

LA GRANDE — The congregations of Zion Lutheran Church, St. Peter's Episcopal Church this Sunday are invited to join the Presbyterian Church in a drive-

### 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](mailto:news@lagrandeobserver.com) (with Highlights in the subject line).

thru Communion from 10 a.m. to noon in the parking lot of the Presbyterian Friendship Center, corner of Spring Street and Washington Avenue, La Grande.

Neither Zion or St. Peter's will be having in-person worship for the time being. Links to online services are posted on Saturday on Zion's website and Facebook page and on St. Peter's Facebook page.

Offerings may be mailed to

Zion at 902 Fourth St., La Grande, and to St. Peter's at P.O. Box 1001, La Grande.

### CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

EASTERN OREGON — The La Grande Oregon Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has not yet been approved to enter Phase 1 of the reopening process due to current

restrictions, although some operational changes are underway.

In an email message, the stake president, George Chadwick, offered these words of council: “Brothers and sisters, even though we cannot do many things in the way we are used to doing them, now is not the time to take a spiritual vacation. Rather, this is a time to draw closer to the Lord, to make sure the gospel is taught in our homes, and to minister and serve in appropriate ways. May we strive to respond to these current circumstances in a way that shows the Lord our commitment to Him and our desire to do His work.”

The “Come, Follow Me” lesson for June 1-7 focuses on Alma chapters 5-7 and follows the

theme “Have Ye Experienced this Mighty Change in Your Hearts?”

### FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

LA GRANDE — The Bible readings and sermon for Faith Lutheran Church will focus on the working of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit enabled people to prophesy (Numbers 11:24-30), to proclaim “the mighty works of God” (Acts 2:11) in a variety of people's own languages, and to receive the “living water” provided by Jesus (John 7:38).

This Sunday, called Pentecost, marks seven weeks from Easter and 50 days from the Sabbath of Passover (pente means “50” and cost means “day”).

## Growing old with grace

Rabbi Ben Ezra was a 12th-century Spanish scholar, and a poem by Robert Browning imagined what he might have said about growing old. The poem's attitude toward aging is positive. Its first lines read thus:

Grow old along with me!  
The best is yet to be,

The last of life for which the first was made:

Our times are in His hand  
Who saith “A whole I planned,  
Youth shows but half: trust God;  
see all, nor be afraid!”

I attended a lecture in British Columbia years ago in which a recognized Canadian poet denounced Browning's poem. She spoke of it with disgust. She was perhaps 60, so past midlife, and she seemed to me most unhappy about what she had to look forward to.

She is not alone with such feelings. Some years ago, a friend sent me a newspaper op-ed piece published in the Whig-Standard in Kingston, Ontario. The headline writer titled the piece, “You've Got to Be Tough to Stand Growing Old.”

The point the writer made is that people who are above retirement age do not always get respectful treatment from society, and he cited statistics that bear this out.

According to a study at the time, 80% of Canadians then believed that people 75 years and older are viewed by society as less important, and more than a third of respondents admitted to treating seniors “differently.”

At the same time, 41% of seniors said they had been ignored or treated as invisible; 38% felt they had nothing more to contribute; and 27% found they were assumed to be incompetent. They even claimed that in some doctors' offices their symptoms were written off as the result of having had too many birthdays.

All of that sounds bleak and probably reflects reality to some degree — with many positive exceptions, of course. We call ours a youth-oriented culture, and that seems accurate. Approaching 95,

I should know. Staying well, strong and active is a worthy goal so long as it's not an obsession or a

futile anxiety about death. It is possible to affirm our span of years in this life. Our doctor son has a Christian patient who introduced him to a very useful saying at the time of the death of her elderly husband. With a gentle, sad smile she said, “Well, none of us come here to stay.”

This introductory section of Browning's dramatic monologue is decidedly Christian, even though it doesn't point to the afterlife. It offers an understanding that we must make the most of every period of this life — youth and old age. He would say it's not youth that is the high point, with the last part of life a leftover to be endured. And it's not the opposite. Youth and old age together make up the whole of life.

Of advanced and uncharted years ahead he writes, “The best is yet to be.” He contends further that the last of life is intended to benefit from the first, which really is life's staging phase. The point that stands out is his summons to “Trust God” — and we Christians can have a radiant and confident faith in God because “our times are in his hand” (Psalm 31:15).

When we realize how much we are loved by God and how generous he is toward us — all of which is communicated to us through Jesus Christ — we can face the uncertainties of this and every day in resolute, courageous and restful faith.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**  
Donald N. Bastian, of Ontario, Canada, is the bishop emeritus of the Free Methodist Church of North America.



**CALL ME PASTOR**  
DONALD BASTIAN

## Our heart has only one throne

If our minds are filled with a world of thoughts that are contrary or even dishonorable to God, how can there be room for us to concentrate on

his goodness, peace and hope? When Mary was about to give birth and there was no room in the inn, God was also allowing us to see that many people in this world have no room in their life for Jesus.

Their hearts and minds are filled with carnality, selfishness, arrogance and negativity.

This is why the enemy of our souls has created many obstacles and diversions for the purpose of redirecting our attention away from our Lord. Secular reading material, video games, movies, cell-phones and television are only a few distractions that can be snare traps that can replace and redirect our mental and spiritual focus away from Christ. Having a disciplined mind for God is a key to living a victorious spiritual life.

When we talk about our love for the Lord, there are plenty of ways to prove we are not just cluttering the air with empty words. The call to take up our cross and follow Christ has everything to do with our level of devotion to him. When a person falls in love with someone, this is all they think about. Why? Because whatever captures your heart has

also captivated your mind. If Jesus has been invited to sit on the throne of your heart, you are sitting at his feet intently waiting for him to speak and always ready to respond and obey his voice.

Our desire to please Christ is a direct result of our love for him. Within this personal and intimate relationship is the reverent

tial fear and awe of who he is. This respect of his holiness is the beginning of wisdom and causes us to be humble and grateful for his presence.

Until sin convicts and wounds our hearts to the point of weeping, we have not understood the full meaning of spiritual transformation. The term “lukewarm” is mentioned in Revelation chapter three — the passage in context is generally talking about a person who is drifting along in a spiritually lethargic state and is convinced they are approved and acceptable in the sight of God.

In verses 15-19 God declares, “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou were cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth... As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.”

To say the least, this is a

sobering warning for all who proclaim to be followers of Jesus. Deception is common and can easily happen when we are not constantly devoted and focused on God.

The true Christian life is not about fulfilling our own plans and then squeezing Jesus in if we have some extra time. This is referred to as “broad way thinking,” which allows carnality to influence and manage our priorities. In reality, our relationship with God is about abandoning our life, laying down our will, and rising every morning singing, “I surrender all, all to thee my blessed Savior, I surrender all.” Sadly, many have never realized what this means and most have no intention of learning.

John the Baptist said of God in Chapter 3, Verse 30, “He must increase, but I must decrease.”

Why did he say that? He was trying to explain that our old nature is filled with a strong love for pleasure and our heart has only one throne. We cannot be filled with God if we are already filled with everything else.

Those who hide behind the mask of denial have willingly convinced themselves they can have their cake and eat it too. This is a lie from the dark side.

We cannot serve God and our carnality at the same time. If we fail to control our thoughts, our thoughts will not hesitate to control us.

**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](http://www.billyhollandministries.com).



**LIVING ON PURPOSE**  
BILLY HOLLAND

*We cannot serve God and our carnality at the same time. If we fail to control our thoughts, our thoughts will not hesitate to control us.*

## Northeast Oregon Directory of Churches

Services This Week

### First Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)

901 Penn Avenue 963-2623  
[lgdisciples@gmail.com](mailto: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](http://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](http://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](http://lagrandefbc.org)



1531 S. Main Street, Union  
541-562-5531

[www.UnionBaptistOregon.org](http://www.UnionBaptistOregon.org)  
Sunday School 9:45 am  
Morning Worship 11:00 am  
Thursday AWANA 6:30 pm

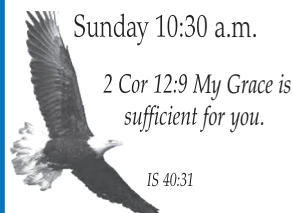
Birthing, Building and Being the Body of Christ

### LA GRANDE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

“OPEN HEARTS, OPEN MINDS, OPEN DOORS”  
1612 4th Street - 963-2498  
Pastor Taylor Gould  
[lgumc@eoni.com](mailto:lgumc@eoni.com)  
[www.lagrandeumc.org](http://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



### 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](mailto:grace.lutherancove@gmail.com)

### IMBLER CHRISTIAN CHURCH

440 RUCKMAN, IMBLER 534-2201  
[www.imblerchristianchurch.org](http://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](http://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.lagrandeor.adventistchurch.org](http://www.lagrandeor.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