

HIGHLIGHTS

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

LA GRANDE STAKE — The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints’ “Come, Follow Me” lesson for the week of June 15-21 is based on Alma 13-16, which is found in the Book of Mormon.

This week’s lesson continues to cover the story of Alma and Amulek as they preach in Ammonihah and face extreme persecution for their beliefs, wit-

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).

ness the martyrdom of their followers, are cast into prison and then saved from the destruction of the prison and the leaders who persecuted them. To see a video presentation of these scriptures,

and others, visit www.churchofjesuschrist.org/media/collection/book-of-mormon-videos.

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
LA GRANDE — The sermon

at Faith Lutheran Church this Sunday will focus on Jesus equipping his disciples with authority to “heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons” (Matthew 10:8). Christ with his compassionate mercy continues to equip us to serve one another. It is up to us not to reject the opportunities that are set before us.

Intergenerational summer Sunday school is at 8:45 a.m. with a Matins service at 10 a.m.

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

LA GRANDE — Zion Lutheran Church will not have in-person worship this Sunday, June 14.

Links to an online worship service will be posted on Zion’s website and Facebook page on Saturday.

Zion may resume in-person worship next week, June 21.

Offerings may be mailed to the church at 902 Fourth St., La Grande 97850.

Dare to be a Daniel

■ Strong moral leadership requires courage

Recently my wife Kathleen and I had an extended conversation about what constitutes strong moral leadership. What will it take to produce it in greater measure at all levels of a troubled society?

It’s a big topic for two 94-year-olds retired from public life and with no platform from which to speak. But we had just watched American news coverage of protests following the death of George Floyd at the hands of a policeman.

We had seen the walls of large buildings torched in some of America’s major cities. Streets were crowded with people, mostly young, who were demonstrating in an orderly way. But the fires were being set by another group whose obvious intention was to destroy everything of value.

Our conversation touched on the inner human commitments that make for strong character when taught and promoted. It was not about styles of leadership. There are plenty of courses, seminars and videos attempting to address them. It was rather about core qualities: wisdom, righteousness and commitment to justice.

We know that authentic righteousness requires that our thoughts and actions align with God’s moral law (Exodus 20:1-17). Justice seems to us to be the result of a human conscience aligned with God’s law written on our hearts, enacted into rule by law. And if we disobey such a conscience, and righteous rule by law, we damage character and deny justice.

Justice requires that both sides in a dispute be treated equally. To be just in a court of law is a most demanding challenge, and some say justice is always an approximation. Yet in everyday life, fairness can be discerned as a reachable standard.

Leaders who operate from power, emotion, personal animus, empathy alone, prejudice or taste

will quickly be seen to be unjust or weak, inflaming observers. And, of course, leadership based on subjective/relativistic notions of morality will come to be seen as puny and capricious.

In the course of our conversation about leadership, Kathleen reminded me of a Sunday school song written a century and a half ago by an Episcopalian clergyman named Philips Brooks. It is about the prophet Daniel, the young Jewish lad who had been taken as a captive from Israel to Babylon to be trained as a civil servant. There, he was twice at imminent risk of unjust execution (the second time cast into the lions’ den because he continued petitioning to God even when it was commanded to only petition King Darius).

Here are the words of a refrain we sang 85 or so years ago:

Dare to be a Daniel,
Dare to stand alone.
Dare to have a purpose firm!
Dare to make it known.

The morning after Kathleen’s and my earnest discussion about higher leadership I went to the little “den” of our apartment and read with delight the early part of the book of Daniel. I read how with utmost courtesy he stood like a rock on issues of importance, to his own peril. And how the Lord was powerfully with him.

And I like to think that today, too, we can say with Daniel (2:20-22): Praise be to the name of God forever and ever; wisdom and power are his. He changes times and seasons; he deposes kings and raises up others. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning. He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what lies in darkness, and light dwells with him.

About the Author: Donald N. Bastian, of Ontario, Canada, is the bishop emeritus of the Free Methodist Church of North America. Find more of his writings at justcallmepastor.wordpress.com.



CALL ME PASTOR
DONALD BASTIAN

Pandemic accelerates Mormon missionaries’ transition to online

By Brady McCombs and Miriam Fam
Associated Press

BRIGHAM CITY, Utah — Wearing dress shirts, ties and name tags, three missionaries with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints sit around the kitchen table inside a Utah apartment planning how they’ll spread their gospel that day.

Seth Rather, 19, of Wichita, Kansas, reads aloud as he types on a smartphone: “During this time, we must put our faith in God to deliver us through these unprecedented times. How has putting your faith in God helped you in your life?”

“That good?” he asks his two companions.

“I like it,” Andrew Zitting responds. Guenter Castrillo nods.

With that, the young men have their Facebook post for the day. This is what missionary work looks like during the coronavirus pandemic, which has forced the Utah-based faith widely known as the Mormon church to accelerate its online outreach.

After hastily bringing home more than 26,000 young people from overseas missions aimed at recruiting new members, the church has begun sending many of them out again in their home countries with a new focus on online work that may persist even after the pandemic, officials told The Associated Press.

“The leaders of our church have been asking us: What are we learning from this pandemic that will help us become better, become more efficient,” said Brent H. Nielson, executive director of the church’s missionary department. “We’ve learned that finding people, teaching people online is much more effective than trying to meet people in person on a bus or on a street corner or somewhere else. This will change what we do, I think, forever.”

Missionary work has changed drastically for young people like

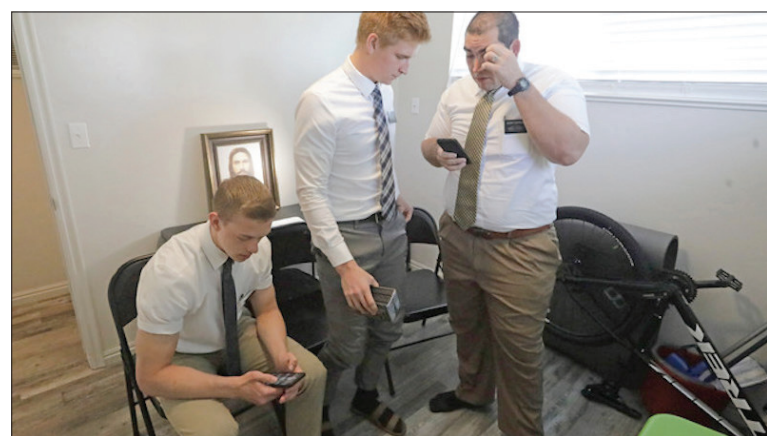


Photo by Rick Bowmer/Associated Press

In this May 27 photo, missionaries with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, from left to right, Andrew Zitting, Seth Rather, and Guenter Castrillo look at their smartphones after a Zoom meeting with a local family at their apartment, in Brigham City, Utah. The faith has begun sending out many young men and women in their home countries with a new focus on online work that could stick even when the pandemic is over, church officials told The Associated Press.

Rather and Castrillo, who had spent days walking the streets in the Philippines to spread the word of their faith before the pandemic hit. Now, they hardly leave an apartment in Brigham City in northern Utah.

After sending the Facebook post recently, they dialed in to a Zoom call with a family. A similar scene is playing out worldwide as reassigned missionaries navigate new realities.

In Orlando, Florida, Bella McCain and Madison King hold a video call with a family they have been teaching church doctrine. They invite the family to take the sacrament for the first time and follow up on an earlier proposal: forgo coffee, a key part of the faith’s health code, which also bans alcohol and tobacco.

The husband and wife had different outcomes: She says she found it difficult but would work on it. He says he’d given up.

On Facebook, McCain and King craft a message in Portuguese, the language they learned for their original assignments in Brazil. They also text people asking to set up a call to talk about the church.

It’s a far cry from just months ago. In Brazil, McCain largely spoke to people face to face.

“Sometimes we feel like pioneers,” said McCain, 19, from Texas. “We’re not used to using social media in this way and, like, I never made videos and posted them online before. ... We’re all learning, and it’s really interesting and really fun.”

The church began incorporating online faith outreach when it gave some missionaries tablets six years ago. It’s since made technology more prevalent, giving most missionaries smartphones even before the pandemic, Nielson said.

A more online-based approach would be a major shift and could diminish the appeal for some young church members who crave an enriching cultural experience, said Ryan Cragun, a sociology professor at the University of Tampa.

“There’s this quasi-tourist experience of going to these cool places, but there is also the connection you get to the people,” Cragun said. “That’s probably one of the more meaningful things that happens to them.”

Northeast Oregon Directory of Churches

Services This Week

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 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

CHURCH Service DIRECTORY

Zion Lutheran 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

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

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.

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

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.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