

## HIGHLIGHTS

### St. Peter's Episcopal Church

LA GRANDE — St. Peter's Episcopal Church will not hold in-person worship this Sunday, Jan. 24, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A link to a recorded worship service for Sunday will be posted to Facebook. St. Peter's will not be worshipping in person until at least March.

### Faith Lutheran Church

LA GRANDE, ENTERPRISE — The sermon at Faith Lutheran Church this Sunday, Jan. 24, will consider Jesus calling

### 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), by fax to 541-963-7804, or by hand to the office.

some of his first disciples in Mark 1:14-20. He called four to "follow" him, and two of them, James and his brother John, "were in their boat mending their nets" (vs. 19). They were going about their healthy, industrious activity in which they served when Jesus called them. Sunday services are at 10 a.m. in La Grande and

2 p.m. in Enterprise.

### Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

LA GRANDE — The ability for all to receive personal revelation from the Lord is the focus of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints'

"Come, Follow Me" lesson for the week of Jan. 25. This lesson covers Doctrine and Covenants 6-9, when the work of translation of the Book of Mormon had resumed with Oliver Cowdery as scribe. Provided with the lesson are links to "Revelation in Context," videos and other material that provides a deeper understanding of the events taking place when these revelations were received. All study materials are available from the free mobile app called Gospel Library.

Individual wards are meeting for in-person worship services with limited group sizes and

condensed time frames. Those attending will be wearing masks and following social distancing guidelines. Contact your ward leadership for times and details.

### Zion Lutheran Church

LA GRANDE — Zion Lutheran will not worship in person this Sunday, Jan. 24, due to COVID-19. A recorded worship service for Sunday will be posted on the church's Facebook page on Saturday. The congregation will resume in-person worship once Union County is in the yellow zone of the state's metrics. The office also will be closed until then.

## Believing and Becoming: Finding ways to hold the center



**LAURA HUDSON**  
LA GRANDE

"How are you holding the center?" A spiritual mentor recently asked me this question, inviting my reflection on ministering to others, not only during a global pandemic but also painful political division. We are wrestling through a collective dark night of the soul, struggling to discern truth amid deep anxiety and distrust for one another. In these times, holding the center is more difficult than ever.

For me, that phrase means more than political or religious centrism. It names the effort it takes to stay connected to the steadiness of my faith, even as I experience waves of emotion, my own or others', which threaten to flood me. Holding the center also evokes the sensation of core strength I can feel in the center of my body, keeping my body upright and stable.

Holding the center is the approach I believe my faith asks me to take toward all the others with whom my life intersects. I am to encounter each being "center to center," as teacher Richard Rohr often puts it, core soul-self to core soul-self,

receiving one another each as we are in this moment, without judgment, without calculating how we might benefit or hinder one another.

In my experience, holding the center of faith is not a static stance but an ongoing process, full of movement, fluctuation and adaptation to changing conditions. Faithfulness requires continuous discernment to listen for divine guidance and enter into responsive action. Accepting any spiritual belief is just the initiating moment of a lifelong path of becoming humans who can love God and love all the neighbors God gives us.

"Love God and love your

neighbor," Jesus' greatest commandments, are the center I seek to hold. They point to the "narrow path," the most direct, streamlined path to experience the heart of God. Yet, following that way requires my willingness to receive the constant corrections God gives me, by which I return again and again from the wide extremes that tempt me, and focus anew on God's will and ways.

How are you holding the center? In these days brimming with collective uncertainty, the pull we feel toward extremes of rage, terror, grief and despair, and the temptation to produce words or deeds from these emotions, can be immense. What is the central,

stable core of your faith, and what practices help you stay anchored to it? There are many practices, and there are many mentors who can guide you to discover which ones can help you maintain connection to your soul's compass. Do not hesitate to reach out to wise mentors to guide you on your way.

*Laura Elly Hudson is co-pastor of First Presbyterian Church in La Grande, a mother of two boys (and two cats), and founder of Story Journey, where she guides spiritual seekers in believing and becoming as they explore their life story. You can find her at [fpclagrande.org](http://fpclagrande.org) or at [lauraellyhudson.com](http://lauraellyhudson.com).*

## Inauguration week prayer event aims to show Christian unity

By **ELANA SCHOR**  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — As a politically divided nation prepares to inaugurate a new president in the wake of a violent insurrection at the U.S. Capitol, a group of Christian leaders is hoping to ease tensions through prayer during three days of ecumenical, nonpartisan programming.

Using the slogan and social media tag #Peace-WithJustice, the effort aims to project spiritual unity and counter people's feelings of helplessness with action, during a time of high alert with thousands of troops securing the capital following the Jan. 6 violence, which has led to about 120 arrests so far.

The name of the gathering — held virtually due to the pandemic — is in part a nod to the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s observation that "true peace is not merely the absence of tension; it is the presence of justice." Details of the initiative were shared with The Associated Press in advance of its launch on the weekend when the country commemorates his birthday.

Leaders of the effort are incorporating the King holiday into their work, asking participants to use their Sunday messages to focus

on "redoubling efforts to work together to address systemic racism and restore trust and integrity to our democratic system and institutions."

Jim Wallis, founder of the Christian social justice group Sojourners and a lead organizer of the event, said he hoped to see the faithful "move beyond the emotions of anger and fear" and toward the moral truth of communal reconciliation.

"Prayer is action, in my view," Wallis said.

After the federal holiday on Monday, Jan. 19, the event continued Tuesday with a multidominational Zoom prayer service. On Wednesday, when President-elect Joe Biden is inaugurated, participants plan testimony and other statements on Twitter in the hopes of restoring a sense of harmony to a transition of power that has been marred by violence.

"Defending democracy for all Americans — no exceptions" is imperative for all people of faith, the group says on its website.

Prominent participants include Michael Curry, presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church; Walter Kim, president of the National Association of Evangelicals; Commissioner Kenneth G. Hodder, National

Commander of the Salvation Army; and Barbara Williams-Skinner, co-convenor of the National African American Clergy Network.

Williams-Skinner said she hopes it will become a model for collaboration by people of faith across denominational boundaries.

"I hope that this is the beginning of a strong ecumenical coalition to fight against the evil of racism and all kinds of systemic injustices going forward, and to connect those to public policies that will come out of this administration and this Congress," she said.

Kim said that while many member churches in his group are planning their own programs during inauguration week, the non-partisan event appealed to him because "we need, in this moment, something that transcends partisan politics."

He also acknowledged the presence of Christian symbols and Christian identification among some of those who breached the Capitol in a bid to overturn the election for President Donald Trump, saying that the potential convergence of Christian and nationalist identities "does grieve my heart."

## March for Life asks supporters to stay home this year

By **DAVID CRARY**  
AP National Writer

WASHINGTON — Organizers of the March for Life, the anti-abortion movement's preeminent annual event, are asking their supporters nationwide not to gather in Washington this year because of the COVID-19 pandemic and political unrest.

Instead, a small group of invited anti-abortion leaders will march Jan. 29, and the event will be livestreamed, March for Life's president, Jeanne Mancini, announced Friday. "Since we are in the midst of a pandemic which may be peaking, and in view of the heightened pressures that law enforcement officers and others are currently facing in and around the Capitol, this year's March for Life will look different," she said. "The annual rally will take place virtually and we are asking all participants to stay home and to join the March virtually."

Tim Tebow, the football star, is still scheduled to make a keynote speech at a virtual gala taking place after the downsized march, Mancini said.

Mancini said she looks forward to holding the event in person next year.



Susan Walsh/AP Photo/Susan Walsh

Anti-abortion activists participate on Jan. 24, 2020, in the "March for Life" rally near Capitol Hill in Washington. Organizers of the March for Life, the anti-abortion movement's preeminent annual event, are asking their supporters nationwide not to gather in Washington in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and political unrest.

The march has been held annually since 1974, one year after the Supreme Court's Roe v. Wade decision that legalized abortion across in the United States. Even blizzards in 1987 and 2016 did not force cancellation, although turnouts were smaller than usual.

Local March for Life events also have been affected this year. State marches in Arkansas and Oregon have been indefinitely postponed, while a march planned in Tucson, Arizona, was converted into a car caravan dubbed the Road Rally for Life.

The annual National Prayer Vigil for Life, usu-

ally held the night before the national march at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, will instead be a livestreamed event, with bishops participating virtually from across the U.S.

A year ago, President Donald Trump became the first sitting U.S. president to address the March for Life. Trump became a hero to many anti-abortion activists for appointing Supreme Court justices and other federal judges viewed as open to the possibility of repealing or weakening the Roe v. Wade ruling.

## Northeast Oregon Directory of Churches

Services This Week

**LA GRANDE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
"OPEN HEARTS, OPEN MINDS, OPEN DOORS"  
1612 4th Street - 963-2498  
Pastor Taylor Gould  
For service information go to [www.lagrandeumc.org](http://www.lagrandeumc.org)

**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)

**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

**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~

**UNION BAPTIST CHURCH**  
1531 S. Main St. Union 541-562-5531  
[www.UnionBaptistOregon.org](http://www.UnionBaptistOregon.org)  
Sunday Morning Worship Service 11:00 am  
Sunday School at 9:45 a.m.  
Birthing, Building and Being the Body of Christ

**CHURCH Service DIRECTORY**

**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.imblercc@gmail.com](mailto:www.imblercc@gmail.com)  
Sunday Services  
9:00 a.m. Sunday School  
10:00 a.m. Worship Service

La Grande Seventh-day Adventist Church  
A Place where hope is found in Jesus  
Join us in Fellowship & Worship  
Saturday all age classes 9:30 am  
Saturday Worship 11:00 am  
2702 Adams Avenue, La Grande 963-4018  
[lagrande.adventistchurch.org](http://lagrande.adventistchurch.org)  
Learning for Today and Eternity  
Little Friends  
Christian Preschool/Childcare 963-6390  
La Grande Adventist Christian School  
K-8th Grade 963-6203

**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 CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE**  
109 18th Street • 963-3402  
Sunday School 9:15 a.m.  
Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.

**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)