

HIGHLIGHTS

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

LA GRANDE — Individual wards continue to meet in person, with limited size groups and condensed time schedules. Contact your ward’s leaders for meeting information. Face coverings and social distancing are required at all meetings.

The home-centered, Church-supported “Come, Follow Me” lesson for the week of Feb. 1 is on Doctrine and Covenants Sections 10-11 where we learn about how the “wisdom of the Lord is greater than the cunning of the devil” and ways that Satan has sought to destroy the Lord’s work.

The First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is encouraging all members to receive the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as it becomes available, just as they have along with other senior apostles older than 70. Visit the newsroom on the Church’s website at <https://newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/> to read about their vaccinations and counsel to us, along with inspiring articles on many other topics.

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).

Each of us carries a light inside

LIGHT OF UNITY



SARAH HAUG
BAHA’I FAITH

So powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole earth ... I chose to title this column Light of Unity, because unity is the central tenet of the Baha’i daith. That core idea includes:

The oneness of God.

The essential oneness of religion.

The unity of humankind.

This idea — that all humanity is one, interconnected community — is more obvious today than at any other time in history. Until recent decades, few people were able to see that everyone on this planet is connected to everyone else. Vast distances separated continents and travel and communication were difficult. And when people from different continents and cultures did mingle, the plain fact of looking, dressing and acting differently erected insurmountable barriers. These differ-

ences were all anyone could see.

As humans, we have a distressing tendency to view the world through a zero-sum lens, an us-versus-them mentality. You’re either on our team or you’re an opponent.

Photos from space confirm that state and national borders are not God-given demarcations. Rather they are lines on maps we ourselves have drawn. Sometimes those lines are a matter of administrative expedience. More often, unfortunately, they act as a means to separate one group of people from another.

As a planetary community, we have chosen to perpetuate that division. We fear that tearing down barriers between people and countries means we all have to be the same.

But that’s where we’re wrong. We don’t have to think that way anymore.

We are all battling for the same team.

We can not only accept our differences — we can celebrate them. What’s more, our diversity, those differences, make us a stronger, better team.

When I was 25, I went with my husband and two small children to live in Punta Gorda, a little town in Belize, where I studied ethnicity and nationalism in children for my doctorate in anthropology. I was constantly amazed at the way children could ignore, and even transcend, their elders’ conceptions of identity. They could become friends with all other children, regardless of ethnic group or religion. They knew, because they were growing up in a diverse society, that unity was possible even amidst diversity.

The Belizean government realized it too. Their slogan for their independence day celebrations in 1994 was “from many cultures, one nation.”

The Baha’i faith expands that idea further to say “from many nations, one planet.”

Each of us has a light inside. If we can find a way to all shine together, we can illuminate the whole earth.

Sarah Haug is a member of the Baha’i faith and has called Pendleton home since 2002. You can find her most days walking on the riverwalk with her husband, Dan.

God never promised you a Cadillac

Once heard a sermon entitled “If God Loved Me He Would Give Me a Cadillac.” The title was a spoof, of course. But many subscribe to the notion that abundant faith is certain to resolve critical health needs or lead to remarkable wealth.

It is true that health and wealth are often side benefits of the Gospel. A new believer may be delivered, whether instantly or by a process, from addictions that have been robbing him of health and his family of material support. As a result of this, the whole family begins to thrive spiritually, emotionally and financially.

JUST CALL ME PASTOR



DONALD BASTIAN
BISHOP EMERITUS

Or, a woman eaten up by bitterness because of a failed marriage turns to the Gospel and may find peace in forgiveness and support from a caring Christian community. Soon, various symptoms that have been driving her to the doctor begin to ease, and her health is gradually restored.

In such situations, the Gospel has paved the way to health and wealth. But this isn’t its first purpose nor always the result, because the Gospel is still first of all a call to discipleship, whatever that entails. Think of Paul’s beatings, shipwreck and imprisonments, for example. There are no first-century equivalents to Cadillacs in that picture. Instead, he suffered afflictions and beatings for Christ but released the life-transforming Gospel into much of the known world.

And remember these words of Jesus: “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me” (Luke 9:23).

This verse is at the heart of Jesus’ call to discipleship. The New Living Translation says it more explicitly: “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must put aside your selfish ambition, shoulder your cross daily, and follow me.”

Renounce the “me first” impulse so deeply ingrained within us? Say no to self-indulgence, the love of ease, the desire to be pampered? It all seems so grim, so demanding.

It all seems forbidding until we read what follows in Luke’s account: “As (Jesus) was praying the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning” (verse 29).

In that moment, the disciples saw who Jesus really was: God in human flesh. Catching a glimpse of who Jesus really is changes his call to discipleship — from a call to self-abasing, grim duty to one of ever-expanding joy in his kingdom’s service. Either we say yes to Christ and discover true health and wealth of the soul or we say no to him and deprive ourselves of the fullness of life that only he can give.

Donald N. Bastian, of Ontario, Canada, is the bishop emeritus of the Free Methodist Church of North America. For more of his writings, go to justcallmepastor.wordpress.com

Auschwitz survivors mark anniversary online

By VANESSA GERA
Associated Press

WARSAW, Poland — A Jewish prayer for the souls of the people murdered in the Holocaust echoed Wednesday, Jan. 27, over where the Warsaw ghetto stood during World War II as a world paused by the coronavirus pandemic observed the 76th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

Most International Holocaust Remembrance Day commemorations were being held online this year due to the virus, including the annual ceremony at the site of the former Auschwitz death camp, where Nazi German forces killed 1.1 million people in occupied Poland. The memorial site is closed to visitors because of the pandemic.

In one of the few live events, mourners gathered in Poland’s capital to pay their respects at a memorial in the former Warsaw ghetto, the largest of all the ghettos where European Jews were held in cruel and deadly conditions before being sent to die in mass extermination camps.

German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, in a message to a World Jewish Congress and Auschwitz memorial museum event, said the online nature of remembrance events takes nothing away from their importance.

“It’s a duty but also a responsibility, one we inherit from those who lived through the horrors of the Shoah, whose voices are gradually disappearing,” Steinmeier said. “The greatest danger for all of us begins



Czarek Sokolowski/AP Photo

A wreath is laid at the monument to the Heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto in Warsaw, Poland, on Wednesday, Jan. 27, 2021, as part of world observances of the 76th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi German death camp Auschwitz. Most observances were online, due to the coronavirus pandemic, and only few people attended the ceremony at the monument.

with forgetting. With no longer remembering what we inflict upon one another when we tolerate anti-Semitism and racism in our midst.”

“We must remain alert, must identify prejudice and conspiracy theories, and combat them with reason, passion and resolve,” Steinmeier said.

From the Vatican, Pope Francis said remembering was a sign of humanity and a condition for a peaceful future while warning that distorted ideologies could lead to a repeat of mass murder on a horrific scale.

In Germany, the parliament held a special session to honor victims. In Austria and Slovakia, hundreds of survivors were offered their first doses of a vaccine against the coronavirus in a gesture both symbolic

and lifesaving given the threat of the virus to older adults. In Israel, some 900 Holocaust survivors died from COVID-19 out of 5,300 who were infected last year.

Israel, which counts 197,000 Holocaust survivors, officially marks its Holocaust remembrance day in the spring. But events were also being held across the country, mostly virtually or without members of the public in attendance.

Meanwhile, Luxembourg signed a deal agreeing to pay reparations and to restitute dormant bank accounts, insurance policies and looted art to Holocaust survivors.

Survivors and many others joined a World Jewish Congress campaign which involved posting photos of them-

selves and #WeRemember. They were broadcast at Auschwitz on a screen next to the gate and a cattle car representing the way camp inmates were transported there.

The online nature of this year’s commemorations is a sharp contrast to events marking last year’s anniversary, when some 200 survivors and dozens of European leaders and royalty gathered at the site of the former camp. It was one of the last large international gatherings before the pandemic brought normal life to a halt.

Due to the pandemic, most survivors today live in “isolation and loneliness,” said Tova Friedman, 82, a Poland-born Auschwitz survivor who attended last year’s event and had hoped to return this year with her eight grandchildren.

Northeast Oregon Directory of Churches



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



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



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

Worship
10:00 a.m.



~Join us at The Lord's Table~



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

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LaGrande
CHURCH OF THE
NAZARENE

109 18th Street • 963-3402

Sunday School 9:15 a.m.
Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.



FIRST LANDMARK
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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

GRACE COMMUNITY
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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.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

lagrandeoadventistchurch.org

Learning for Today and Eternity

Little Friends
Christian Preschool/Childcare 963-6390
La Grande Adventist Christian School
K-8th Grade 963-6203