

SPIRITUAL LIFE HIGHLIGHTS

Stories of Jesus' healing of others reveal his authority

LA GRANDE — Faith Lutheran Church will hold services at 10 a.m. Sunday, June 27, in La Grande and 2 p.m. in Enterprise. The sermon will expound upon the healings that Jesus performed for a 12-year-old girl and for a woman who had been ill for 12 years, as told in Mark 5:21-43. Jesus revealed that he has authority over our temporal ailments. These works are a foreshadowing of his authority over our eternal peace.

The church's annual yard sale in La Grande will be held from

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).

9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, June 26, at 104 S. 12th St. Proceeds from the sale will benefit SHINE Preschool.

St. Peter's holds Morning Prayer service

LA GRANDE — St. Peter's Episcopal Church of La Grande has resumed in-person worship and will meet at 11 a.m. Sunday,

June 27, for a service of Morning Prayer. COVID-19 precautions will be in place, including the requirement of masks and social distancing.

Zion Lutheran Church service streamed live

LA GRANDE — The Sunday, June 27, service at Zion Lutheran Church of La Grande begins at

9 a.m. COVID-19 precautions will be in place, including masks and social distancing. The service will also be livestreamed to YouTube, and the link for that stream will be posted June 26 to Zion's Facebook page and website.

LDS ward conferences planned June 27

LA GRANDE — The La Grande Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will hold ward conferences in the La Grande third, fourth and Union wards Sunday, June 27. High Council members will speak in the other wards about Sister Joy

D. Jones' April 2021 talk titled "Essential Conversations."

The "Come, Follow Me" lesson for the week of June 28 is based on Doctrine and Covenants sections 71-75, which were revelations given through the Prophet Joseph Smith as he sought the Lord's help in dealing with critics of the new church, providing instructions on how it should be organized and shared with others.

A stake activity is set for July 17 at the Union County Fairgrounds from 6-8 p.m. The event will be a celebration of pioneer heritage, and those who attend are asked to bring a pie to share.

— The Observer

Southern Baptists pick president who worked for racial unity

By TRAVIS LOLLER and PETER SMITH

The Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tennessee — The Southern Baptist Convention tamped down a push from the right at its largest meeting in decades on Tuesday, June 15, electing a new president who has worked to bridge racial divides in the church and defeating an effort to make an issue of critical race theory.

Ed Litton, a pastor from Alabama, won 52% of the vote in a runoff against Mike Stone, a Georgia pastor backed by a new group called the Conservative Baptist Network that has sought to move the already-conservative denomination further right.

Litton, who is white, was nominated by Fred Luter, the only Black pastor to serve as president of the United States' largest Protestant denomination. Luter praised Litton's commitment to racial reconciliation and said he has dealt compassionately with the issue of sexual abuse within SBC churches, another hot-button subject at the gathering of more than 15,000 church representatives.

Stone had campaigned aggressively, including speaking at churches across the country and even appearing on Fox & Friends on Tuesday before the vote. And the Conservative Baptist Network had encouraged supporters to come to the meeting as voting delegates.

But in the end, the message that seemed to resonate with voters was that Stone — who supported a motion to repudiate critical race theory, an academic construct for framing systemic racism that has been a target of religious and political conservatives — was a divisive choice.

"We're a family, and at times it seems like an incredibly dysfunctional family," Litton said after the results were announced. "But we love each other."

Delegates rejected a proposal that would have



Mark Humphrey/The Associated Press

Pastor Ed Litton, of Saraland, Alabama, answers questions after being elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention Tuesday, June 15, 2021, in Nashville, Tennessee.

explicitly denounced critical race theory. Instead they approved a consensus measure that does not mention it by name but rejects any view that sees racism as rooted in "anything other than sin."

The measure also affirmed a 1995 resolution apologizing for the history of racism in a denomination that was founded in 1845 in support of slavery and for "condoning and/or perpetuating individual and systemic racism in our lifetime."

One white delegate urged the convention to denounce critical race theory by name, saying it held him "guilty because of the melanin content of my skin." But another argued that the convention shouldn't be swayed by a political movement that has already seen some state legislatures ban teaching of the theory.

"If some people in this room were as passionate about the gospel as they are about critical race theory, we would win this world to Christ," said James Merritt, chairman of the resolutions committee and a former convention president.

Several Black pastors have voiced frustration over critical race theory debates playing out in the SBC instead of the denomination confronting systemic racism itself.

In an enthusiastically applauded address, outgoing president J.D. Greear,

himself a target of criticism, lamented "the slander, the distortion, the character assassination and baseless accusations" some SBC leaders have endured. While denouncing liberalism, he also criticized what he saw as power-seeking and divisiveness over secondary issues.

The SBC cannot be a "cultural affinity group" or "voting bloc," Greear said, but must focus on its spiritual mission.

On critical race theory, he said it arises from "a worldview at odds with the gospel," but he heeded "leaders of color who tell us that our denunciations of justice movements fall on



Mark Humphrey/The Associated Press

People take part in a worship service during the annual Southern Baptist Convention meeting Tuesday, June 15, 2021, in Nashville, Tennessee.

deaf ears when we remain silent on the suffering of our neighbors."

Pastor Bryan Kent of Compass Church in Mason, Michigan, commended Greear's remarks, saying that if critical race theory "has an echo of truth among our brothers and sisters of color ... we should not be in such a rush to condemn."

Several Black pastors have already departed the SBC over what they said was racial insensitivity

from overwhelmingly white leadership.

Dwight McKissic, a prominent Black pastor from Texas who had planned to join that exodus if Stone won, tweeted in response to Litton's election: "God has a plan for the SBC & I want to be a part of it. Truly, racism was rejected 2day!"

Delegates also approved a strategic plan seeking to increase churches, missionaries, giving and teen ministry, the latest in a series

of efforts to reverse steady declines in membership and baptisms over the past 15 years. Membership is now 14 million.

It was standing room only in the 18,000-seat hall where, with Nashville's COVID-19 precautions lifted, attendees were packed closely without face masks. One small section was reserved for those wearing masks.

Last year's annual meeting was canceled due to the pandemic.

2021 EASTERN OREGON PHOTO CONTEST

Voting for 'People's Choice' NOW OPEN

Vote online for People's Choice from 12:01 am Monday, June 21 through 11:59 pm Wednesday, June 30.

The winners will appear in the July 8th edition of Go Magazine; the top 25 will appear online.

Gift cards to a restaurant of your choice will be awarded for first, second and third place.

All photos online at: lagrandeobserver.com/photocontest

Northeast Oregon Directory of Churches

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~

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.imblercc@gmail.com

Sunday Services

9:00 a.m. Sunday School
10:00 a.m. Worship Service

Services This Week

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 summervillebaptistchurch.org

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

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
lagrandeor.adventistchurch.org

Learning for Today and Eternity

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

La Grande Nazarene Church

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.flmbc.org