

SPIRITUAL LIFE HIGHLIGHTS

Message focuses on seeking the good of others

LA GRANDE — The La Grande First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will meet at 10 a.m. Sunday, July 4. Pastor Archie Hook's message, "The Fight for Independence," looks at celebrating the Fourth of July with reference to 1 Corinthians 10:23-24: "I have the right to do anything," you say — but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything" — but not everything is constructive. No one should seek their own good, but the good of others."

Sunday service includes Holy Communion

LA GRANDE — La Grande's St. Peter's Episcopal Church

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@lagrandeob-server.com (with Highlights in the subject line).

will meet for worship at 11 a.m. Sunday, July 4. The service, which will include Holy Communion, will be recorded for those who cannot attend. The video will be posted to the church's Facebook page and sent to members' emails Sunday afternoon or evening.

Fellowship follows in-person worship

LA GRANDE — Zion Lutheran Church, in La Grande, will meet for worship Sunday, July 4, at 9 a.m., followed by a

time of fellowship. The service will also be livestreamed to YouTube, and the link for that stream will be posted on Zion's Facebook page and website on Saturday.

July's sermons will be based on Mark 6

LA GRANDE — The sermons at Faith Lutheran Church, based in La Grande, for the month of July will use this sixth chapter of Mark's Gospel. On Sunday, July 4, the reading will be Mark 6:1-12, which tells that Jesus' hometown was skeptical of his authority.

They had seen him grow up, and when he presented his teaching "they took offense at Him" (Mark 6:3), and Jesus "marveled because of their unbelief" (Mark 6:6). The following verses state that Jesus remained steadfast as he sent his disciples to witness God's Word.

Following the Divine Service in La Grande will be the First Sunday Potluck and an elders' meeting.

Weekly lesson looks at prophet's vision of heaven

LA GRANDE — Sunday, July 4, is Fast Sunday for members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. All are encouraged to fast for two meals and donate the value of the meals to the less fortunate.

The "Come, Follow Me" lesson

for the week of July 5 looks at the answers to questions about resurrection after the death of our mortal bodies that were given to the Prophet Joseph Smith in February 1832, which was referred to as "the Vision" by early Saints. This revelation, teaching about the division of heaven into degrees of glory, was received as the prophet pondered the meaning of John 5:29.

A La Grande Stake activity is planned July 17 at the Union County Fairgrounds. Beginning at 6 p.m. members will be celebrating their pioneer heritage.

The Family History Center at 1802 Gekeler Lane is open to the public. Hours are Monday and Friday from 9 a.m. to noon, Tuesday and Thursday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Wednesday from 6-9 p.m.

We are not as independent as we think we are



ROBERTA SMYTHE
WALKING WITH THE SHEPHERD

This weekend we will be celebrating Independence Day. Specifically, independence and freedom from British rule. We are often quite proud of our independence and our freedoms, and there are indeed many areas in which we have freedoms many people in the world do not. As Oregonians, we especially value our freedom and independence.

And yet, we sometimes

struggle — individually, as a state and as a country — to determine at what point our personal freedoms may impinge on the freedoms of others. We see this in debates about COVID-19 mandates, gun control, abortion rights, Black Lives Matter vs. Blue Lives Matter, voting access, etc. These debates and issues highlight the fact that we are not as independent as we think we are. What we do affects others, and what others do affects us.

The reality is that we are all dependent and interdependent on one another. Few of us, if any, are 100% self-sufficient. We are dependent on doctors, nurses and

other frontline workers for medical care and emergencies. We are dependent on grocery clerks, restaurant staff and farmers for food. We are dependent on postal workers, delivery drivers and truckers to bring us all kinds of goods from around the country and around the world. We also rely on one another to follow the rules and laws that have been put in place to keep us all safe.

We are also not as self-sufficient as we'd like to think when it comes to our spiritual lives. Although we may use or hear phrases like "I've accepted Jesus as my savior" and "I've given my life to God," or we sing

songs that state "I have decided to follow Jesus," we don't really have that much say-so in our salvation.

According to Martin Luther, our inability to determine our own salvation is due to sin. Luther defined sin as the soul curved in on itself.

Focusing only inward, only on ourselves, prevents us from looking outward or outside ourselves for much of anything, whether it's living well with others or following God. And so, we need help in order to believe and follow God, and we especially need help in order to see beyond ourselves to the needs of

others. The good news is that we are not left on our own in either of these endeavors. God sends help in the form of Jesus, who died for our sins, and in the form of the Holy Spirit, who continues to call and inspire us to be better.

There's nothing wrong with celebrating our independence from England.

Just remember how much we are still dependent on one another, and on God, to live our lives to the fullest.

Roberta Smythe is the pastor of the Zion Lutheran Church and St. Peter's Episcopal Church, both in La Grande.

Jehovah's Witnesses hold global virtual event in 500 languages

Jehovah's Witnesses Public Information Desk

Breaking tradition in the name of health and safety, the Jehovah's Witnesses have moved their annual in-person event to a virtual format for the second time in as many years, canceling nearly 6,000 conventions in 240 lands.

In 2020, the pandemic unexpectedly interrupted the annual three-day event, moving the international religious organization to cancel in-person conventions throughout the world and launch a global virtual event. This was a first for Jehovah's Witnesses, who have held public conventions in stadiums, arenas, convention centers and theaters around the world since 1897.

"Powerful by Faith!" is the theme of the 2021 global event, which will be delivered in more than 500 languages to households throughout the globe over six weekends during July and August, uniting some 15-20 million people in 240 countries. Since the convention is typically

held from Friday through Sunday, the program will be available in six installments corresponding to morning and afternoon sessions.

In the past, Bob and Gloria Phillips, of Central Oregon, had attended conventions around the globe. They remember the friendships made and the hospitality they were shown. Some of their most memorable experiences were in Brazil, Russia, Hong Kong, the Philippines and Italy.

"What you see is a wonderful global brotherhood," said Bob Phillips, 90. "The spontaneous love of brothers and sisters from hundreds of ethnic backgrounds is an experience we will never forget."

Now that the event has gone virtual, the Central Oregon couple miss the refreshing association, but they enjoy some surprising benefits from the new platform. Gloria Phillips, 81, said that now she never misses anything on the program.

"Being able to repeat and rewatch and relisten

to that comment that was made that you didn't quite get is a very outstanding feature, I think," she said.

The continued risk of bringing thousands of people together in cities around the world prompted the organization to opt for a virtual platform for the second consecutive year. However, the move has not curbed the enthusiasm for the annual event. Congregations around the world are inviting the public to join them in this historic occasion.

"Faith has helped our global brotherhood to continue to thrive even during a pandemic," said Robert Hendriks, U.S. spokesman for Jehovah's Witnesses. "Our faith will continue to unite us in worship — even virtually — as millions gather in private homes around the world to enjoy a powerful and inspiring spiritual program."

All are invited to attend the event at www.jw.org or on the free JW Library app available for iOS or Android. The program is free and accessible to all.

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Northeast Oregon Directory of Churches

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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~

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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

CHURCH Service DIRECTORY

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

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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

LaGrande CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

109 18th Street • 963-3402

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

La Grande Seventh-day Adventist Church
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Saturday all age classes 9:30 am
Saturday Worship 11:00 am

2702 Adams Avenue, La Grande 963-4018
lagrandeor.adventistchurch.org

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1812 1st St. La Grande
Pastor Dave Tierce • 541-605-0215
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Sunday School - 10:00 am
Worship 11:00 am
Sunday Evening Bible Study - 3:00 pm (Effective June 10)
Wednesday Evening - 6:30 pm
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Services This Week