

SPIRITUAL LIFE HIGHLIGHTS

Bible study followed by 10:30 a.m. service

LA GRANDE — First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will observe the first Sunday of Lent on March 6. Pastor Archie Hook's message, "Find Our Humble Side," will reference Philippians 2:1-5. Sunday morning worship starts at a new time, 10:30 a.m., beginning this week. There will be a Bible study at 9 a.m. before the service. Pastor Archie will be leading a study on the book of Romans.

First Sunday of Lent focuses on Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness

LA GRANDE — For the First Sunday of Lent, observed March 6, Faith Lutheran Church will remember the 40 days of Jesus fasting in the wilderness before he

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).

began his three-year ministry. At the end of those 40 days Jesus was tempted by Satan who showed Jesus "all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time" (Luke 4:5). We worship Jesus who overcame those temptations and subdued Satan.

Following the Divine service is the First Sunday Potluck, Junior Confirmation and the monthly elders meeting at 12:45 p.m.

A midweek Lenten service is offered on Wednesday, March 9, at 6:30 p.m. The service will consider the witness to Christ of Mary, the sister of Martha and

Lazarus. A soup supper is served at 5:30 p.m. before the service.

Sermon series looks at how Jesus transforms relationships

ENTERPRISE — The Sunday, March 6, service at the Enterprise Community Congregational Church, also known as the "big brown church," will feature the message "New Society," based on Mark 2:13-22. The congregation's interim pastor, Rev. Dr. Craig Pesti-Strobel, will talk about how Jesus can transform relationships. Bible study is offered at 9:30 a.m.,

followed by the worship service at 11 a.m.

Worship in person or via livestream

LA GRANDE — The worship service at Zion Lutheran Church on Sunday, March 6, begins at 9 a.m. and will include Holy Communion. Masks and social distancing are required, and fellowship time will follow. The service will be streamed live to YouTube. The link for that stream will be posted on Saturday, March 5, on Zion's Facebook page and website.

March 6 is Fast Sunday

NORTHEASTERN OREGON — Sunday, March 6, is Fast Sunday for members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Individual testi-

monies will be shared during the Sacrament Service, and Sunday School classes will be held during the second hour.

The "Come, Follow Me" lesson for the week of March 7 will be on Genesis 37-41 and focus on Joseph's faithfulness, even when it seems he had been forsaken by the Lord, resulting in great blessings.

The Columbia River Temple will be closed from March 14 to June 20. The Boise and Meridian, Idaho, temples will remain open during much of this time.

The free RootsTech 2022 virtual conference continues through Saturday, March 5. Anyone interested in learning about their ancestry is invited to attend. Visit RootsTech.org to register and learn more.

— The Observer

Hymn sings bring back that 'old time religion'

By ERICK PETERSON
East Oregonian

ECHO — Not every churchgoer appreciates the tide of change, according to one Hermiston resident.

Doug Fehrenbacher said there are many believers, like himself, who prefer hymns. He is trying to bring them back to popularity with musical services at

Echo Community Church on the first Sunday of every month at 5:30 p.m.

He said people are allowed to sing the hymns they choose at his services from provided hymnals. Attendees are accompanied by Louise Sundvall, a fellow Hermiston resident.

"She is just absolutely outstanding," Fehrenbacher said. "Not only does she know all the

songs, but she can run that keyboard so beautifully."

Sundvall said she has been playing piano for around 80 years, though she has not played hymns exclusively. She started with classical music, then played for churches.

"I add my style to it," she said of church music. She described her style as "Southern gospel" with "life and pep."

In Fehrenbacher's Echo Community services, after a series of group hymns, he sometimes has what he calls "a special." One or two people will stand up in front of the congregation and sing by themselves.

"It's very unorganized and nondenominational," he said.

In his services, Fehrenbacher puts total attention on the music, he said. His services do not even

have a sermon. After the hymns and the special, there is only a fellowship. These hymns have served him, as well as his congregation, Fehrenbacher said. He added that hymns such as "It Is Well with My Soul" have helped him during dark times. He said he will continue singing hymns and giving others opportunities to sing them for as long as he can.

Ukraine invasion a sign we live in a broken world



ROBERTA SMYTHE
WALKING WITH THE SHEPHERD

Martin Luther said, "War is the greatest plague that can afflict humanity; it destroys religion, it destroys states, it destroys families. Any scourge is preferable to it."

I find myself saddened by the events of the past week regarding the invasion of Ukraine. I also feel helpless. This invasion is almost half a world away—what could I possibly do about it?

This is not the first time, nor will it be the last, that there is conflict, invasions and outright war in our world. We live in a broken world, and there are many broken people, including some in positions of

power and authority, who want more: more power, more territory, more wealth, more control.

Even the Bible has many stories of wars and conquests, some over whose God was THE God, some over territory, some over power and wealth. The reality is that conflicts often arise where there is disparity in resources. And unfortunately, the Earth's resources are not distributed evenly among people or nations. Some have more, some have less. And sometimes those with "more" still want even more.

Regrettably, religion is another common cause for war. Christians have killed and conquered in the name of Jesus, which is ironic given Jesus' own words, "Blessed are the peacemakers."

I am certainly not alone in feeling sad and helpless about conflicts and wars. Rarely can we do anything about them on

own own. The Bible records these feelings in the form of laments, many located in the psalms, where the psalmist or even all the people cry out for an end to whatever has befallen them: war, poverty, illness, etc.

Yet a lament is not limited to complaints about suffering and misfortune. A lament also includes statements of hope and faith that God hears us and is powerful enough, and willing enough, to act on our behalf. But as with all prayer and supplication, sometime God's answer is "yes," sometimes "no" and sometimes "wait." And sometimes the people God would work through do not listen or follow.

And so I lament the current situation, even as I continue to pray for peace and for the wisdom of political and military leaders around the world.

Of course, we may disagree on what

our own leaders should do. Should the U.S. get involved at all? In what way? Are diplomatic measures enough? Are economic sanctions enough? What are we willing to risk in order to rein in Russia?

I don't have the answers. And yet, I am not as helpless as I feel. Neither are you. Though we may not have much power individually, we can make a difference together. If you have good ideas, share them, especially with your legislators. If you have the means, donate to organizations that are doing humanitarian work for Ukrainians affected by the invasion. And continue to keep the faith. Keep believing that God walks with us during these discouraging times.

Roberta Smythe is the pastor of La Grande's Zion Lutheran and St. Peter's Episcopal churches.

Aligning behaviors with physical, spiritual world



SARAH HAUG
LIGHT OF UNITY

I stopped drinking alcohol 32 years ago in January, long before "Dry January" made it a thing. I did it because I was becoming a Baha'i, even if I hadn't yet declared myself to be one. The Baha'i Faith forbids the consumption of alcohol or non-medically prescribed drugs.

This law against substances is what we call a "social" law. It isn't as fundamental to the Baha'i Faith as the central tenets, which include the oneness of God, the oneness of religion and the oneness of humanity, but rather is a commentary on

the needs of the world today.

That's a crucial caveat: the needs of the world "today." While alcohol has been an important part of human society for at least 10,000 years, the needs and understandings of our ancestors are not necessarily the same as ours.

I felt the effects of alcohol long before I decided to quit drinking. When I drank, my behavior changed, and I was more open to suggestions — from men, from friends, from total strangers. Often these behaviors were ones I would never have considered when I wasn't under the influence. During my junior year abroad in England (where, ironically, I was only 20, so not yet a legal drinker in the U.S.), someone told me that it took 36 hours for alcohol to leave the body. I couldn't

remember the last time it had been 36 hours between drinks.

"It is inadmissible that man, who hath been endowed with reason, should consume that which stealeth it away."

Few would argue that alcohol has potentially destructive effects on people's lives and that it puts up a barrier between an individual and their usual self — or even, one could say, their "true" self. From a Baha'i perspective, alcohol thus acts as a veil between an individual and God.

Baha'is are instructed not to condemn anyone or judge the behavior of others — ever. (We don't believe in hell, either.) But we are taught that there is a physical world and a spiritual world. Those worlds aren't actually separate or distinct from one another, but exist within

a single whole. Our job is to align our behaviors with, and live within, the laws of both. In so doing, we become happier and healthier.

"Every created thing in the whole universe is but a door leading ... to His straight Path." These last two years have been hard for our world as a whole, as well as for me personally. Given the dramatic increase in alcohol consumption in the United States as a result, I can only be grateful to my 21-year-old self for putting my feet on this path I've walked for 32 years.

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.

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

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

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
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

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

Services This Week