

SPIRITUAL LIFE HIGHLIGHTS

Holy Spirit is focus of June 5 message

LA GRANDE — Zion Lutheran Church meets for worship this Sunday, June 5, at 9 a.m. The sermon, titled "The Work of the Holy Spirit," is based on Acts 2:1-21 and John 14:8-17. The service will include Holy Communion and will be followed by a time of fellowship.

The service will be streamed live and may be viewed later as well. The link for those will be posted to Zion's Facebook page and website on June 4.

Trusting the Lord can turn tragedy into triumph

NORTHEASTERN OREGON — June 5 is Fast Sunday for members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Members are encouraged to fast for two meals

SUBMISSIONS

Churches and faith-based groups are encouraged to submit Highlights for the Spiritual Life page by noon Tuesday for publication Thursday. Submit by email to news@lagrandeobserver.com (with Highlights in the subject line).

and to donate the resulting savings to the church for the support of the less fortunate.

During Sunday's Sacrament Services members of the congregation will be sharing testimonies, and Sunday school classes will be held during the second hour.

The "Come, Follow Me" lesson for the week of June 6 is based on the Book of Ruth and Samuel 1-3. This lesson will focus on how trusting the Lord can turn tragedy into triumph, and how we can trust that God

will guide and help us regardless of our situation.

Pastor and others to attend district convention

LA GRANDE — This Sunday, June 5, Faith Lutheran Church will celebrate Pentecost. The Prophet Joel prophesied, "In the last it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh" (Acts 2:17). This took place as the people were able to hear in their own languages "the mighty works of God" (Acts 2:11). Jesus had told his followers that the "Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you" (John 14:16). We praise God for the Holy Spirit sanctifying ways.

Faith Lutheran Church will be sending their pastor, a lay leader

and a youth to the Northwest District Convention of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, June 9-11 in Portland. This convention occurs every three years.

Missionary shares experiences working in the Philippines

LA GRANDE — First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will celebrate Pentecost Sunday on June 5 with a guest speaker, Andrew Larsen, a missionary serving with the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

His message, "Justice in the Philippines: Learning from Our Siblings," will come from Acts 2:1-4.

Worship begins at 10:30 a.m. Those coming to worship are encouraged to wear clothing in the warm colors of the flames of Pentecost. Pastor Archie Hook will preside over the service.

There will be a potluck luncheon immediately following worship, with chicken and drinks provided. It will be an opportunity to speak with Andrew about his work as a missionary.

How do you experience spirituality?

NORTHEASTERN OREGON — The Observer welcomes thoughts and comments from community members on spiritual matters.

If you would like to share how you experience spirituality, email lkelly@lagrandeobserver.com or leave a message at 541-624-6019. Ongoing monthly columns and one-time submissions will be considered. Columns are generally 500-600 words and include a photo of the writer.

—The Observer

Prayer alone will not put an end to the violence



ROBERTA SMYTHE WALKING WITH THE SHEPHERD

May 21, 1998. I remember it was a Thursday. I was living in Eugene at the time, working as an administrative assistant for a consulting firm.

The Lutheran churches in the area had planned a combined Ascension Day worship service that evening, which would turn out differently. You see, while at work that day, we started hearing about a shooting at Thurston High School.

One of my co-workers had a brother who worked at the Spring-

field school, but we didn't know at the time if he was okay or not. Most work ceased as we waited for more information.

Ultimately, two were killed and 25 injured in the Thurston High School shooting. The shooter also killed his parents prior to coming to the school. My co-worker's brother was not among those shot. A woman who joined the firm later that year did have a daughter who was shot, though not fatally. She would go on to offer a victim's statement on behalf of her daughter at the sentencing hearing for the shooter.

At the time, the Thurston High School shooting was the most people shot at a school in nearly

a decade. After the shooting, the local fire chief and others started a "Ribbon of Promise" campaign, modeled after Mothers Against Drunk Drivers. But instead of red ribbons, they used light blue ones. They wrote out a mission: "We will unite the nation in an effort to prevent school violence by acting as a resource for communication, education, planning and action."

Despite their efforts, barely a year later, was the shooting at Columbine. Eight years after that, was Virginia Tech. A year later, Northern Illinois University. Four years later, Sandy Hook. Six years later, Parkland. And now, Uvalde. And those are just the school shootings where more than 25 were shot. There were many more in

the intervening years though, fortunately, most involved just a handful of people.

And after each of these shootings, there was a cry for changes to prevent future shootings. And yet, they keep happening. The various efforts to make changes are thwarted or lose steam. So, we keep losing young lives in an environment that should be safe.

I realize that gun-control measures are not the entire answer for mass shootings, at schools or elsewhere. But I do believe that limiting high-power, high-capacity, fast-cycling firearms would help limit the number of lives lost or harmed in the event of a shooting. That alone is not enough. We also

need more investment of money and staffing in mental health screening, assessment and treatment. Education in, enactment of, and enforcement of anti-bullying policies could also help.

Thoughts and prayers are appropriate in the face of such loss of life, but they are not enough. We must follow up our heartfelt sentiments with concrete actions: writing and calling legislators, and voting for those who will work toward meaningful changes in laws and funding to truly prevent, or at least minimize, the harm from future shootings.

■ Roberta Smythe is the pastor of La Grande's Zion Lutheran and United Methodist churches.

14,000 steps — 17 paces at a time



SARAH HAUG LIGHT OF UNITY

We went to Mexico and got COVID-19. The people there were very nice about it, but my husband, son and I had to quarantine for five days in a space half the size of my living room at home, albeit with a balcony that allowed us to see the sun.

As the door to that room closed behind me, I honestly didn't know if I was going to be able to do it. I am an antsy person, always up and about, doing things all day long. That last day of quarantine, I walked more than 14,000 steps, 17 paces at a time, which was the distance from the door to the balcony. The fact that my husband and I still are married and our son continues to speak to us probably means we can put the end result in the win column.

That said, I wanted to share a few things I learned from the experience:

Detachment: Detachment means to "appreciate without attaching ourselves to the things of this world." It isn't that we don't care, but rather that we don't allow our material experience to control us, and we accept what can't be changed. Stuck in that room, unable to leave until 120 hours had passed, detachment was probably the most important thing we all had to achieve. We could complain, or

we could get on with living those hours the best we could. Kind of like life.

Gratitude: As it turns out, we had a great deal to be grateful for, even in quarantine life: we weren't sick; we had plenty of food to eat and work to do, since we'd brought our laptops to Mexico; our friends, with whom we'd traveled but who did not test positive, played hearts over Zoom with us from their home in Minnesota; our children called to check in; we watched the sun set each evening over the Pacific. Things definitely could have been worse.

Empathy: Millions of people, whole nations, in fact, have been made to quarantine for far longer and under far worse conditions than we experienced. In some countries, 14-day quarantines just for being exposed to someone with COVID-19 have been the norm. Most didn't have a room overlooking the ocean to do it in either. When our quarantine was over, we found it unexpectedly hard to leave our safe cocoon, to talk to people and navigate the world. Millions of people might be feeling the same way right about now.

Quarantining isn't something I ever want to do again, but I'm glad to know I have what it takes. Fourteen thousand steps. Seventeen paces at a time.

■ Sarah Haug is a member of the Bahá'í Faith and has called Pendleton home since 2002. You can find her most days walking on the Pendleton River Parkway with her husband, Dan.

WORDS OF THE BUDDHA

Should a seeker not find a companion who is better or equal, let one resolutely pursue a solitary course; there is no fellowship with the fool. — Dhammapada 5.61

Slay anger and you will be happy, slay anger and you will not sorrow. For the slaying of anger in all its forms with its poisoned root and sweet sting — that is the slaying the nobles praise; with anger slain one weeps no more. — Samyutta Nikaya 1.187

Calm is one's thought, calm one's speech, and calm one's deed, who, truly knowing, is wholly freed, perfectly tranquil and wise. — Dhammapada 7.96

Arise! Do not be heedless! Lead a righteous life. The righteous live happily both in this world and the next. — Dhammapada 13.168

A person with good eyes, encountering a treacherous, uneven place, would try hard to avoid it. A wise person, in the world of life, should avoid evil deeds. — Udana 5.43

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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 Bible Study 9:00 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m. ~Join us at The Lord's Table~

IMBLER CHRISTIAN CHURCH 440 RUCKMAN, IMBLER 534-2201 www.imblerccc@gmail.com Sunday Services 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Worship Service

GRACE COMMUNITY LUTHERAN CHURCH The Place 62848 Phylinda 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.lutheranrove@gmail.com

CHURCH Service DIRECTORY

SUMMERVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH Sunday Services: 9:45AM Sunday School & Adult Bible Classes 11:00AM Children's Church & Worship Service 6:00PM Family Worship Service 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 Roberta Smythe For service information go to www.lagrandeumc.org

LaGrande CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE 109 18th Street • 963-3402 Sunday School 9:30 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 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