

Bill would make Bible official state book of Tennessee

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Despite concerns that giving the holy Bible the same status as a salamander is a little tawdry and could be unconstitutional, Tennessee lawmakers are forging ahead with plans to make it the official state book — something at least two other states have failed to do.

The Tennessee measure has moved swiftly through the legislative process and could be on the House and Senate floors as early as next week. Similar proposals to make the Bible the state book failed in Mississippi earlier this year and in Louisiana last year.

But Republican Sen. Steve Southerland of Morristown, the sponsor of the Tennessee proposal, said he believes it has a strong chance to pass.

“It’s got 19 co-signers on it; it takes 17 people to vote for the bill,” he said Thursday.

One of the main concerns is whether the proposal would meet separation of church and state provisions in the federal and state constitutions. The Tennessee Constitution says “no preference shall ever be given, by law, to any religious establishment or mode of worship.”

Lawmakers are awaiting a legal opinion from the state’s attorney general.

However, Hedy Weinberg, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Tennessee, said the proposal would violate the state and federal constitutions.

“The Bible should not be used as a political football,” she said. “The First Amendment makes it clear that government cannot favor one religion over another and politicians should not try to influence what people believe by turning their personal religious viewpoints into law.”

BRIEFLY



Photo contributed by Sharon Fritz

Nearly 7,000 diapers were collected by 116 participants in the Hermiston Church of the Nazarene’s Diaper Dash.

Nazarene church dashes for diapers

HERMISTON — When pondering the idea of having an event to receive donations of diapers for needy parents, Rev. Eric Fritz of the Hermiston Church of the Nazarene had hoped for 25 participants.

New to the area, Fritz was overwhelmed when 116 runners and walkers participated in the March 14 Diaper Dash, which featured 5K and 10K distances. The entry fee was a donation of diapers. And participants didn’t disappoint, as nearly 7,000 diapers were donated and then distributed to local agencies.

Fritz asked church member Dawn Kennison-Kerrigan, a running enthusiast, to head up the effort. About a dozen volunteers helped with marking the route, registration, the water station and timing. In addition, the Umatilla County Sheriff’s Office aided in traffic control to help keep the participants safe.

For more information about future church events, visit www.hermistonnazarene.org, search Facebook for “Hermiston Church of the Nazarene” or call 541-567-3677.

Conference highlights spiritual renewal

PENDLETON — Biblical insights from the book of 2 Peter will be discussed during a Spiritual Renewal Conference at Grace Baptist Church.

Monte Leavell, a missionary evangelist, is the special speaker for the event, which includes sessions Sunday at 9:45 a.m., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. at the church, 2809 S.W. Goodwin Ave., Pendleton. Also, Leavell will speak Monday through Wednesday at 7 p.m., also at the church. There’s no admission charge, but a free-will offering will be taken.

During the conference, Leavell will address such topics as “Do you have everything you need for life and service?” “How do you spot false teachers?” and “What does the future hold for mankind?”

Everyone is welcome to attend. For more information, call 541-276-3031.

Ministry Fair showcases opportunities

HERMISTON — An event to showcase active ministries is planned at Our Lady of Angels Catholic Church.

Ministry Fair: Our Call to Faith in Action is available five times during the weekend of April 18-19. The sessions are Saturday, April 18 at 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. and Sunday, April 19 at 10 a.m., noon and 2 p.m. The event will take place in the church’s parish hall, 565 W. Hermiston Ave., Hermiston.

Parishioners and others interested in the ministries and organizations are encouraged to attend one of the sessions. The information discussed will include personal opportunities to participate.

For more information, contact Kathy Eldrige at kmeldrige@eotnet.net, 541-567-6087 or the church at 541-567-5812.

Nazarene women plan movie night

HERMISTON — Women are invited to enjoy pizza, snacks and fellowship during a Comedy Movie Night at the Hermiston Church of the Nazarene.

The evening will include viewing “Mom’s Night Out,” which offers a comedic look at what happens when the girl’s night out leaves the kids with two dads and a single man who doesn’t care for kids. The event is Friday at 6:30 p.m. at the church, 1520 W. Orchard Ave., Hermiston.

For more information, visit www.facebook.com/events/404155263097842 or call 541-567-3677.

Blackwood Legacy gospel quartet to perform in Pendleton

PENDLETON — Blackwood Legacy, a contemporary southern gospel quartet, will perform at the First Christian Church in Pendleton.

Blending Southern gospel’s traditional sound with today’s newer country gospel and worship music, the group is led by Rick Price, former lead singer for the Grammy and Dove award winning Blackwood Brothers Quartet.

Everyone is welcome to attend when the group performs Saturday, April 18 at 7 p.m. at the church, 215 N. Main St., Pendleton. There’s no admission charge, but a free-will offering will be taken.

For more information about the group, visit www.theblackwoodlegacy.com.

Tests of faith for a biker church

By VIRGINIA BLACK
South Bend Tribune

SOUTH BEND, Ind. — Pastor Albert Ganser was praying aloud, as he usually does, while riding his motorcycle to work in the early morning of Sept. 2.

Ganser has long been called “Big Al” because of his 6-foot-3 frame that carries more than 300 pounds. He routinely used the considerable trek from his family’s home north of Plymouth to his job at Federal Mogul in South Bend to sing and to pray, his entreaties to God masked by the noise from the great machine under him.

Big Al is a God-fearing man, a former sailor and “prodigal son” who dedicated himself to God not once, but twice, after realizing the anger he had carried with him since he was 12 years old threatened to destroy his family. On the morning of Sept. 2, the 51-year-old man who had answered a calling to pastor a church for fellow motorcycle riders eight years ago was still running through his prayer requests when he saw “the wink of a headlight” about five cars back in the line of traffic heading his way as he approached the intersection of Oak and Mayflower roads.

The wink was gone, and then Big Al saw it return as the spotlight changed to allow the biker to proceed.

“I don’t know why, but I said out loud, ‘This isn’t good,’” Big Al recalls now of the car’s impending impact. “You’re trained to watch everyone and avoid everything and I pride myself on that. There was just nothing I could do.”

Later, a police officer would tell the Gansers the other driver thought he was entering a turn lane as he crossed the yellow line into Al’s motorcycle.

Al used his considerable strength to push himself up on the bike’s handlebars, throwing his body over the car rather than into it, landing about 15 feet past the other side of the car. He doesn’t remember landing but does recall lying on the ground in pain, crying, “Help me, Jesus.”

Al, who has not heard from the other driver, says he would like to talk with him someday. “I forgave him right



AP Photo/South Bend Tribune, Greg Swiercz

A member kneels to pray at a service of the Biker Church of the Heartland temporary site at Living Stones Church in South Bend, Ind., on April 2. Pastor Albert Ganser was seriously injured in a car crash last year.

then. I didn’t want to carry that forward,” he tells the *South Bend Tribune*. “I just want to tell him, ‘Hey, we’re good, man.’”

A South Bend police officer introduced himself as “Officer Rick” and used Al’s cellphone to call his wife, Angela, as the biker was rushed to Memorial Hospital.

Although his biker vest and boots weren’t damaged, Al’s helmet was spider-cracked in the back and likely saved his life. The man who Officer Rick called “an ox” was rushed into a nine-hour surgery to repair his badly broken body: nine broken ribs, a fractured shoulder and collar bone, spinal damage and a punctured and deflated lung.

Family and friends gathered at the hospital, and prayers were shared. Among the visitors was Pastor Arthur “Hemi” Heminger, 52, a close friend who had begun the biker ministry with Al. “Hemi’s just a light, just his personality walks into a room,” Angela says. “He makes everyone feel comfortable, and that’s how he was that day when he came.”

Hemi left the hospital about 3:30 that afternoon, steering his own motorcycle toward home before heading to

Culver for that biker church’s Tuesday night service.

Hemi’s wife, Marilyn, waited at their Walkerton home for Hemi to return and, when he hadn’t yet, left on her own to unlock the church doors. She posted on Facebook, “Has anyone seen my husband?”

She’s heard since that Hemi might have had the sun in his eyes. He looked as if he’d been crying, someone said. But for whatever reason, Hemi stopped at the intersection of Quinn and Oak roads before inexplicably continuing on, in the path of a truck that had the right of way.

They think he died instantly.

The close-knit group of biker Christians were dealt two blows on the same sunny fall day, a beautiful day to ride.

Big Al awoke three days later, a tube down his throat and his arms tied to his ICU hospital bed. His first crazy thought was, “They’re going to harvest my organs.”

Al didn’t yet know the man he considered a brother had died. Angela asked Heath Hiatt, a fellow pastor with the Church of the Heartland group of small churches affiliated with the two biker churches, to deliver the bad news.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Worship with us!

Adams Community Church <i>Duane Geyer, Pastor</i> 140 N. Main, Adams, OR 566-9457 <u>Worship</u> 9 am	GRACE AND MERCY LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA OPEN HEARTS – OPEN DOOR www.graceandmercy.lutheran.org Sunday Worship 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:00 a.m. (Nursery Provided) Fellowship, Refreshments & Sunday School Check Out our Facebook Page or Website for More Information 541-289-4535 Tom Inch, Pastor Grace and Mercy Lutheran Church, ELCA 164 E. Main St. / P.O. Box 1108 Hermiston, Oregon 97838	<i>St. Johns Episcopal Church</i> All People Are Welcome Scripture, Tradition and Reason Family service 9am Sunday Gladys Ave & 7th Hermiston Fr. Dan Lediard, Priest. PH: 567-4672	Redeemer Episcopal Church 241 SE Second St. Pendleton (541)276-3809 www.pendletonepiscopal.org Sunday Morning Worship 9:00 a.m. Wednesday Worship Noon Wednesday Evening Prayer and Pot Luck 6:00 p.m. All Are Welcome
Grace Baptist Church 555 SW 11th, Hermiston 567-9497 Nursery provided for all services Sunday School - 9:30 AM Worship - 10:45 AM 6:00 pm Wed Prayer & Worship - 7:00 PM “Proclaiming God’s word, growing in God’s grace”	FIRST CHURCH OF GOD First Service @ 8:30am Second Service @ 10:30am 712 SW 27th Pendleton 541-276-1894 www.fcogpendleton.com	FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH -Presbyterian Church (USA)- 201 SW Dorion Ave. Pendleton Service of Worship - 10:00 am Children’s Sunday School - 10:20 am Fellowship - 11:00 am www.pendletonpresbyterian.com Open Hearted...Open Minded	Come meet Jesus at PENDLETON BAPTIST CHURCH 3202 S.W. Nye Avenue, Pendleton, OR 541-276-7590 Sunday Morning Worship 8:30 & 11:00 AM Sunday Bible Classes 9:45 AM Sunday Youth Group 6:00 PM Awana Kids Club Tuesdays 6:30 - 8:00 PM K - 6th Grade (Sept-May)
FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH <i>in Mission for Christ LCMC</i> Bible Study.....9:00 AM Sunday Worship.....10:30 AM Red Lion Hotel (Oregon Trail Room) www.faithpendleton.org	Living Word Christian Center Sunday Worship Service 10:00 AM Wednesday Bible Study 7:00 PM Sharon Miller, Pastor 401 Northgate • Pendleton 278-8082 www.livingwordcc.com	The Salvation Army <i>Center for Worship & Service</i> Sunday Worship Service 9:30 - Sunday School 10:30 - Worship Service Wednesday Bible Study 5:30 Family Fellowship Meal 6:00 Bible Study COME AS YOU ARE 150 SE EMIGRANT (541)276-3369	Peace Lutheran Church ELCA 210 NW 9th, Pendleton Join us Sundays 9:30 am Sunday Worship 10:30 am Fellowship 11:00 am Sunday School & Adult Class <i>~Come and be at Peace~</i> on 1290 KUMA noon each Sunday
Community Presbyterian Church 14 Martin Drive, Umatilla, OR 922-3250 Worship: 10 AM Sunday School at 11:30	Faith Center Church Worshipping God • Loving People 108 S. Main • 276-9569 Sunday School 9:30 am Sunday Worship 10:30 am Sr. Pastor, Ray O’Grady pendletonfaithcenter.org	FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) 215 N Main • Pendleton Ph:541-276-5358 Web: www.fccpendleton.org Join us for 10:40am Sunday Worship with Sunday School at 9:30am. Wednesday Fellowship Meal & Study Groups-Open to All Ages-at 5:15pm. Quality Nursery Care is Offered at No Charge.	New Hope Community Church <i>Ministries for the entire family</i> 1350 S Hwy 39S, Hermiston Sunday Worship Services: 9 a.m. & 10:45 a.m. Classes for kids during both! Call 567-8441 Servicios en Español
<i>a place to belong</i> Pendleton First INVITING ENRICHING INVOLVING EMPOWERING SUNDAY SERVICES AM Celebration-10:00am AM Kids Place -10:00am The Connection--6:00pm Groups for all ages: Adults, Children, Youth, & College Thursdays Celebrate Recovery-6:00pm Celebration Place-6:00pm Other Groups Available Weekly For more info visit WWW.PENDLETONFIRST.COM 1911 SE Court Ave 541-276-6417 Assembly of God Church	Seventh-Day Adventist Church Saturday Services Pendleton 1401 SW Goodwin Place 276-0882 Sabbath School 9:20 am Worship Service 10:45 am	First United Methodist Church 352 SE 2nd St., Pendleton, OR Office 276-2616 <i>New Pastor Dr. Jim Pierce</i> Worship Service 9:00 AM Fellowship 10:15 AM Broadcast KUMA 11:00 AM Childcare Available Choir practice Sundays 8:30 AM	PILOT ROCK BAPTIST CHURCH 585 SW Birch, Pilot Rock, OR 97868 (541) 443-2500 prbconline.blogspot.com Sunday School: 9:30 am Worship Service: 10:45 am Wednesday Services: Kids’ Club: 6:00 pm Youth Group: 7:00 pm

To share your worship times call

Amanda Jacobs

541-278-2683