

Mormon LGBT rule backlash spreads among faithful

By **BRADY MCCOMBS**
Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY — New Mormon church rules targeting gay members and their children have triggered a firestorm of backlash from church members of all political backgrounds.

Mormon scholar Patrick Mason said the symbolism of targeting kids has riled up even conservative, orthodox Latter-day Saints who don't usually get on the LGBT bandwagon or question church decisions.

Under the new rules, issued last week, children living with gay parents are barred from being baptized until they're 18. After that, they can be baptized only if they disavow same-sex relationships.

The policy also makes gay marriages a sin worthy of expulsion. It marked a dramatic detour from the religion's recent push to carve out a more compassionate stance on LGBT issues.

"The surprising impact has been the amount of people who are confused and troubled and disturbed and, frankly, repulsed," said



In this Monday, Nov. 9, 2015, file photo, Weston Clark speaks to a crowd during a rally to celebrate all families, sponsored by Equality Utah and the Utah Pride Center, in Salt Lake City.

Mason, associate professor of religion at Claremont Graduate University in California and Howard W. Hunter Chair of Mormon Studies. "And these aren't just progressives and LGBT advocates. ... They are saying: 'This doesn't feel right. This doesn't square with me.'"

He said the furious blowback is leading to widespread speculation that church leaders are working on revisions to the policy, which was leaked to the public after being emailed to local church leaders around the world.

Because the rules were made in the church hand-

book, and not considered doctrinal change, Mormon leaders have wiggle room if they choose to revise them.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints spokesman Eric Hawkins didn't immediately have any comment on the speculation. The new policy probably

directly affects only a small number of Mormon families because not many same-sex couples with children are active in the church, Mason said. But it also could impact children who have one gay parent.

Mason said one possibility for revisions would be to address rules for children with only one gay parent, perhaps those with parents who are divorced. In past generations, many gay Mormon men married women at the encouragement of church leaders as a way to overcome what the religion calls "same-sex attraction."

For the past several years, the church has tried to walk a delicate tightrope of becoming more gay-friendly while holding onto its belief that God intended marriage to be exclusively between a man and a woman. Leaders gave multiple speeches preaching a "fairness for all" approach that encourages compassion for gays while protecting religious liberties.

The church backed a landmark Utah state law passed this year that added anti-discrimination protection for LGBT people while shielding religious rights.

Members had bought into the new message of compassion and begun putting those lessons into action, Mason said. He called the rules the most damaging public relations move by the church since it urged members in 2008 to bankroll and support California's gay marriage ban.

Church leaders said the changes were designed to reiterate the conservative faith's doctrinal opposition to gay marriage and provide clarity to lay leaders around the globe asking questions after last summer's U.S. Supreme Court ruling legalizing same-sex marriages. The revisions also allow children of gay parents the chance to mature before making a decision about whether to fully invest in a faith that shuns their parents' sexuality.

"We don't want the child to have to deal with issues that might arise where the parents feel one way and the expectations of the church are very different," D. Todd Christofferson, a member of the faith's Quorum of the Twelve governing body, said in a video explaining the changes.



AP Photo by Elaine Thompson

Tempest in a cup: What's Starbucks Christmas flap all about?

By **ADAM GELLER**
AP National Writer

In the beginning, there was a paper coffee cup — bright red on top, shading to a darker cranberry below. That much seems beyond doubt.

But the brew-haha of supposed outrage that has spilled from it since the Starbucks coffee chain served up what looked, at first glance, like a seasonal throwaway, is increasingly hard to figure.

A week ago, a self-described evangelist named Joshua Feuerstein,

who lives outside Phoenix, posted a video on Facebook criticizing Starbucks for trying to "take Christ and Christmas" out of the holiday by designing cups devoid of seasonal symbols.

Ever since, controversy — or, at least, lots and lots of comment — has ricocheted around the Internet, taken as evidence that people were either similarly upset, or upset that others were upset.

Feuerstein's video has garnered millions of views, and has been pronounced by pundits as the latest

trope in longstanding complaints by some religious conservatives that American companies, government officials and others are waging a "War on Christmas."

Indeed, thousands of people have sounded off on Twitter and other social networks, many appending the "#MerryChristmasStarbucks" meme that Feuerstein coined for what he urged could be a movement to reassert the holiday's rightful spot in the American marketplace.

But few of the voices who have previously decried the ruination of

Christmas have joined Feuerstein's call to action — and some question its public support. Many of those commenting about it online express irritation or bemusement that anyone could be angered by a paper cup, despite scant proof that widespread offense was taken.

"If I were a touch more cynical, and maybe I am, I'd think the one who is winning this war is, maybe, Starbucks," said Steve Jones, a professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago who studies the social and cultural consequences of the Internet.

BRIEFLY

Faith Center offers turkey dinners

PENDLETON — The Faith Center Church each year helps families in need by supplying Thanksgiving dinners. The free meal includes a frozen turkey, ham, potatoes, canned vegetables, margarine and a gravy mix.

Families interested in receiving a free Thanksgiving meal must call the church office and register. Thanksgiving meals will be distributed to those registered Tuesday, Nov. 25 from 5-6 p.m. at the church, 108 S. Main St., with a prayer of blessing.

Faith Center expects to distribute 25-30 free meals, which are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Leaving a message does not guarantee a meal. The church will call to confirm those who will receive a meal.

For more information, or to register, call the Faith Center at 541-276-9569.

Gospel singer to share at Aglow

WALLA WALLA — A female vocalist and songwriter honored by the Country Gospel Music Association is featured guest at this month's Walla Walla Aglow Community meeting.

Cherrie Simpson will share about Jesus through word and song Saturday from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Whitman Court, 305 Ash St., Walla Walla. A freewill offering will be taken for the event, which includes lunch.

Aglow, which started in 1967, is an international organization that seeks to minister to its members and share God's word in the community. Everyone is welcome to attend.

For more information, call Paula McKee at 509-220-1408 or Darya Tucker at 509-876-1668. For more about Aglow, visit www.aglow.org.

Redeemer church sets work party

PENDLETON — A fall clean-up day is planned at Episcopal Church of the Redeemer.

People are invited to bring yard tools to rake and gather leaves. In addition, inside projects also need to be completed as well.

The effort will run from 9 a.m. to noon at 241 S.E. Second St., Pendleton. Afterwards, participants are invited for a no-host luncheon in downtown Pendleton. For more information, contact redemerchurch1897@gmail.com or 541-276-3809.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Worship with us!

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

GRACE AND MERCY LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA
OPEN HEARTS - OPEN DOOR
www.graceandmercyutheran.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

St. Johns Episcopal Church
All People Are Welcome
Scripture, Tradition and Reason
Family service 9am Sunday
Gladys Ave & 7th Hermiston
Fr. Dan Lediard, Priest. PH: 567-6672

BAHA'I FAITH
"The Unity of All Mankind"
Pendleton Baha'i Center at 1015 SE Court Place
Devotions Sundays @ 11:00am; Everyone invited!
(541) 276-9360 visit us at www.pendletonbahais.org

Redeemer Episcopal Church
241 SE Second St. Pendleton
(541)276-3809
www.pendletonepiscopal.org
Sunday Morning Worship 9:00 a.m.
Wednesday Worship 9:45 AM
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"

PENDLETON FIRST CHURCH OF GOD
FIRST SERVICE 8:30 AM
SECOND SERVICE 10:30 AM
712 SW 27TH ST.
541-276-1894
www.fcgpendleton.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

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
~Come and be at Peace~
on 1290 KUMA noon each Sunday

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
in Mission for Christ LCMC
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
Center for Worship & Service
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

NEW HOPE COMMUNITY CHURCH
1350 S. Highway 395, Hermiston
Sunday Worship Services
English- Pastor Dave Andrus 9:00 & 10:45 am
Spanish- Pastor Genaro Loredó 9:00 & 10:15 am
Classes for kids during all services
For more information call **541-567-8441**

SHOPPING SURVEY

Enter to Win \$2,000

Pulse of America research
Cash prize will be awarded

To enter now, go to:
www.pulsepoll.com

Pulse Research
PULSESEARCH.COM

Community Presbyterian Church
14 Martin Drive, Umatilla, OR 922-3250
Worship: 10 AM Sunday School at 11:30

Faith Center Church
Worshiping God Loving People
108 S. Main • 276-9569
Sunday Worship 10:30 am
Sr. Pastor, Ray O'Grady
pendletonfaithcenter.org

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)
215 N Main • Pendleton
Sunday Worship 10:40a
Bible Class: 9:30a
Office 276-5358
M-F 8:30-12:30
WWW.FCCPENDLETON.ORG

First United Methodist Church
362 SE 2nd Street Pendleton, OR 541-276-2618
Sunday Worship 9am
Open Hearts, Open Hands, Open Doors
Facebook: www.facebook.com/FUMCPendleton
Services are broadcast every Sunday on KUMA-1290 AM @ 11am
Rev. Dr. Jim Pierce, pastor

a place to belong
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

Pendleton FREE METHODIST CHURCH
Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.
Mid-Week Children & Youth - Weekly Adult Life Groups
1711 SW 44th St. • 541-276-6015 • www.pendfmc.org

St. Paul Anglican Church, APA
Currently Located at 119 SW Quinney Pl., Home Church in Pendleton @ Sunridge Estates 541-303-1261
Holy Communion - 1st & 3rd Sunday
Morning Prayer - 2nd, 4th & 5th Sunday
All Services - 10:00am Sundays
The Rev. Fr. Vincent Varnas
facebook.com/stpaulanglicanchurchapa

THE COUNTRY CHURCH
Pastor James Becker
32742 Diagonal RD
Hermiston OR 97838
Sunday School 10 am
Worship 7 am
Evening Service 7 pm
Bible Study Wednesdays 7 pm
Firestarter Youth Ministry (Ages 12-17)
Monday @ 6 pm