

A limey pastor comes to Boardman

First Letter to the Boardmanians:
Greetings to you people of Eastern Oregon.
Blessings to you, Boardmanians.
This is how the Apostle Paul might have started off with one of his letters to each of his slightly errant flocks as he traveled around the Mediterranean. Without Paul, Christianity wouldn't be what it has become, a massive world religion. With Paul's status as a Roman Empire insider — a Roman citizen, as a businessman tentmaker — he was able to sprinkle the seeds of evangelism all over the Roman world, and thus ultimately to us.
Without Christianity there would have been no pilgrims, and without pilgrims there wouldn't be an America — that would be the same one we are standing in.

There is a mighty wind in Boardman.



COLIN BROWN
Comment

The little Church in Boardman known as Good Shepherd Lutheran Church would still be a patch of grassy ground, or a parking lot in an elementary school. I wouldn't be here, standing in its doorway, looking at tumbleweeds rolling in to gather in a big pile of weed balls against the fence. There is a mighty wind in Boardman. Like the Holy Spirit, the wind moves the atoms of the world into new configurations, and it has moved towards Good Shepherd Lutheran Church on Locust Road to move it into a new configuration.
The Paul of this church, Pastor Paul, who has been a burning coal in the fireplace of Boardman, warming it with the love of Christ, is retiring to live a gentler pace and the church has been kind enough to call me as its new servant, its new pastor. A British pastor, with strange tea-drinking ways, and a man who does not know how to clean a Remington. My name is Pastor Colin.
I want to invite you to come to this church and be a member of its flock. I call you as I have been called by God, and by the people of Good Shepherd.
I shall be ordained on March 20 at 3 p.m. You are most heartily invited. I want to see you there, of whatever denomination you are or none. Be present with me to commit this new journey. As students of the Living God, led by our teacher Jesus Christ, we have much work to be done in Boardman, to bring rejoicing to human hearts, comfort to the forlorn, and energy to all the friends of God. Together, we shall bring the message of Christ's liberation to the human soul and freedom to the people who have been entombed in separation and loneliness.

Pastor Colin Brown will write occasional columns for the East Oregonian Faith page, which appears each Friday.

Christian hamlet bears scars of fierce fighting

MAALOULA, Syria (AP) — Its historic churches pillaged by jihadis and buildings riddled with shrapnel, this ancient Christian town north of Damascus still bears the scars of the fierce fighting that devastated it two years ago.
Residents vividly recall the shock they felt when they returned to their town after it was recaptured by the Syrian army from the Nusra Front, al-Qaida's branch in Syria, and other militants in 2014.
“We were horrified by what we saw: Everything was ruined, burned and plundered,” said Rayan Wehbi of the once-scenic hamlet that was seized by the jihadis in 2013. “After the militants stormed the city, they stole all they could and destroyed the rest.”
International journalists on a trip to Syria organized by the Russian government on Thursday visited Maaloula, some 60 kilometers (40 miles) northeast of Damascus.
Although heavily armed Syrian soldiers could be seen patrolling the town, the relative peace in Maaloula contrasts sharply with other areas on the outskirts of Damascus where intense fighting continues to rage. The capital's eastern suburbs, such as Douma or Harasta, are still held by the rebels even though government troops made some advances there recently.
An enclave set into the region's rocky hills, Maaloula changed hands several times in the war. The government recaptured it from militants in early 2014 in an important propaganda victory for President Bashar Assad's government in its quest to be seen as protector of religious minorities. Some Maaloula residents still speak a version of Aramaic, the language of biblical times believed to have been spoken by Jesus.
At St. Takla Convent, a Greek Orthodox monastery that dates back to the early centuries of Christianity, the dome and walls of the church were gutted by fire, its frescoes damaged by bullets and its windows broken.
A local priest says the invaders stole valuable icons and destroyed others. By the hundreds they come, trudging along the sides of highways and



A view of the Greek Orthodox Mar Taqla monastery in Maaloula, Syria, on Thursday.



Christian icons destroyed by fighting are placed next to a wall at the Greek Orthodox Mar Taqla monastery in Maaloula, Syria.

across fields, dragging tired toddlers and pushing the elderly and injured in wheelchairs — a seemingly endless stream of humanity heading north for a better life.
Only their path has been blocked by border restrictions set up by European leaders balking at the sheer magnitude of the problem they face: How to care for and integrate hundreds of thousands of refugees and migrants knocking at their door.
The fields on the outskirts of this Greek border town have become the flashpoint in Europe's massive refugee crisis, the size of which the continent has not seen since World War II.
More than a million people, mostly Syrians fleeing a vicious five-year civil

war, fled to the European Union in 2015. The first two months of this year have seen no letup despite the winter and its rough seas, and governments across the continent are bracing for even more with improving weather in the spring.
At the border, Macedonian authorities have set up coils of razor wire, leaving a narrow passage through which they control the migration flow. Over the past few weeks, the controls have grown increasingly stringent, and only a trickle are now allowed through.
The first restrictions were applied late last year to those deemed to be economic migrants fleeing poverty in their homelands. Only Syrians, Iraqis and Afghans were permitted to pass. Then last month, Afghans were stopped too. Now, Macedonia says it will only let as many refugees in as Serbia to the north will allow to cross its frontier — sometimes as few as 30 a day. Sometimes none.
It didn't take more than a day or two for the refugee camp on the Greek side of the border, with a capacity of about 2,000, to overflow. Now, hundreds of tents are pitched around it, spilling out across a railway line into the nearby fields. An estimated 10,000 people are camped here, hoping against hope that the border will open.

BRIEFLY

Aglow members share about unique ministries

WALLA WALLA — A pair of local ministry leaders will speak at the upcoming Walla Walla Aglow Community Lighthouse meeting.
Kim Wilson will share about a new ministry she started for low-income families called Better Together, and Stacy Just will talk about her ministry to partner unwanted horses with children to benefit both. The gathering is Saturday, March 12 at 10 a.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 Lora Sykes at 509-540-0212 or Darya Tucker at 509-876-1668. For more about Aglow, visit www.aglow.org.

Adventist school hosts fair

MILTON-FREEWATER — An afternoon of fun, food and games are featured during the school fair at Milton Stateline Adventist School.
The event is Sunday from 3-7 p.m. in the school's gym at 53565 W. Crockett Road, Milton-Freewater. Activities also include a carousel ride

and a money booth to win prizes.
For more information, contact 541-938-7131, info@miltonstateline.org or search Facebook for “Milton Stateline Adventist School.”
Local gathering connects women
ATHENA — Women of faith in Eastern Oregon are hosting a digital broadcast from the recent sold-out IF:Gathering, held last month in Austin, Texas.
The local event taps into the broadcast to provide a venue to wrestle with essential questions of faith, to dream and to help build local connections. Women from throughout the area are invited to attend IF:Gathering Local Friday, March 11 from 2-10 p.m. and Saturday, March 12 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Athena Baptist Church, 413 N. Fifth St. Registration is \$25, which includes a formal dinner on Friday, and breakfast and lunch on Saturday.
To register, visit www.ifgathering.com/gather/local/ attend. For more information, call Jennifer at 541-566-0991 or Chrissy at 541-566-2076.

Send information about local faith-related news and events to community@eastoregonian.com or drop off to the attention of Tammy Malgesini at 333 E. Main St., Hermiston or Renee Struthers at 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton. Call 541-564-4539 or 541-966-0818 with questions.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Worship with us!

Peace Lutheran Church 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 Center Church Worshipping God Loving People 108 S. Main • 276-9569 Sunday Worship 10:30 am Sr. Pastor, Ray O'Grady pendletonfaithcenter.org	NEW HOPE COMMUNITY CHURCH 1350 S. Highway 395, Hermiston Sunday Worship Services English- Pastor Dave Andrus 9:00 & 10:45 am Spanish- Pastor Genaro Loreda 9:00 & 10:15 am Classes for kids during all services For more information call 541-567-8441	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
Community Presbyterian Church 14 Martin Drive, Umatilla, OR 922-3250 Worship: 10 AM Sunday School at 11:30	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.graceandmercyelca.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	Redeemer Episcopal Church 241 SE Second St. Pendleton (541)276-3809 www.pendletonepiscopal.org Sunday Morning Worship 9:00 a.m. Wednesday Worship Noon All Are Welcome
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	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	First United Methodist Church 352 SE 2nd Street Pendleton, OR 541-276-2616 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	Come meet Jesus at PENDLETON BAPTIST CHURCH 3202 SW Nye Ave Pendleton, OR 541-276-7590 Sunday Morning Worship 11:00 AM Sunday Bible Classes 9:45 AM Sunday Youth Group 6:00 PM Mon. Community Women's Study 9:30 AM & 6 PM Awana Kids Club (K-6th grade) Wed Men's Study 6 PM MOPS meeting the 1st Thur of the Month 6 PM
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH -Presbyterian Church (USA)- 201 SW Dorton 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	PENDLETON FIRST CHURCH OF GOD FIRST SERVICE 8:30 AM SECOND SERVICE 10:30 AM 712 SW 27th ST. 541-276-1894 www.fcogpendleton.com	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	Living Word Christian Center Sunday Worship 10:00am Wednesday Bible Study 7:00pm Youth Classes - Nursery-6th grade Sun & Wed YOUTH GROUPS: Jr Hi, Wed 7pm Sr Hi, Sun after the service Sharon Miller, Pastor 401 Northgate, Pendleton 541-278-8082 www.livingwordcc.com
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			
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			

NEW LOCATION!

ST. PAUL'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

Open House

SATURDAY, MARCH 12, 2016 • 2:00 - 4:00 PM
LOCATION: WHITE EAGLE GRANGE HALL
43828 WHITE EAGLE ROAD
Take U.S. 395 south about 10 miles from Pendleton.
The Grange Hall is a lone white building with a green roof about 400 ft. west of the Hwy.

Come and learn about Anglicanism and the Anglican Province of America.
Light refreshments will be served.

SERVICES ARE EVERY SUNDAY AT 10:00 A.M., BEGINNING FEBRUARY 7, 2016

The Rev. Father Vincent J. Varnas, Priest-in-Charge
For more information, telephone: 1-541-303-1261
Also visit us on:
www.facebook.com/stpaulanglicanchurchapa