

**HERMISTON**

# Biblical story of Jesus comes to life at outdoor village

Free interactive tours Dec. 2-4

By **TAMMY MALGESINI**  
East Oregonian

An interactive tour depicting the story of Jesus' birth and beyond returns for the Christmas season.

Journey to Bethlehem features the sights, sounds and smells of what life may have been like 2,000 years ago in the village. Jo Ann Rincker, a member of the Hermiston Seventh-day Adventist Church, has been involved with the production since its inception in 2008.

"To me, this is the real meaning of Christmas," she said. "There are some people out there who have never heard the story, so I think it's important to be told."

The free 20-30 minute guided tours are Friday, Dec. 2 through Sunday, Dec. 4 from 5-8:30 p.m. behind the Hermiston Seventh-day Adventist Church, 855 W. Highland Ave., Hermiston. While waiting for their tour to start, people are invited to wait in the warm church sanctuary and listen to music. To help families with younger children in regards to having to wait, kids will be given little packets with a booklet and activities. They will get to take the little prize home with them, Rincker said.

"I think it will help with the wait," she said. "In the past we have had problems with the wait being too long and we've had people leave because they have children that would get impatient."

About 100 costumed actors participate in the dramatic production. In addition, there are people who take care of logistics, provide musical entertainment while guests wait for their guide and serve refreshments for visitors after taking the journey. Also, assistants are available to help in manu-



A villager carries a chicken during a past Journey to Bethlehem at the Hermiston Seventh-day Adventist Church. Interactive guided tours will again be offered Dec. 2-4 at the Hermiston Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Photo contributed by Sheila Botti

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— **Jo Ann Rincker**, member of the Hermiston Seventh-day Adventist Church

vering wheelchairs and strollers, as needed.

Starting out with members of the Hermiston and Anchor Point Seventh-day Adventist churches, other churches and community members have got involved with the effort. Located near the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the First Christian Church provides childcare.

Also, live animals include everything from sheep, goats and chickens to llamas, which are dressed up to look like little camels. The animals,

Rincker said, help provide an authentic experience of entering a Biblical village.

Rincker said when they embarked on the first production, they didn't know how it would be received.

"We said if people stop coming out, we'll know we've run our course," she said.

Other than one year when temperatures dipped down to single digits and below, the production has increased attendance numbers each year. The first production,

Rincker said, had 400 people going through. Last year, there were more than 2,000.

Provided as an outreach ministry, it's important to organizers to offer the experience free of charge. Some people, Rincker said, might not be able to attend if they had to pay.

"It's something we want to provide for our community," she said.

Last year, Sheila Botti, also of the Hermiston Seventh-day Adventist Church, said operating expenses are about \$3,000. That figure includes the cost of upgrades, as well as replacing costumes and providing refreshments. Donations are gladly accepted.

For more information, call 541-567-9000.

**BRIEFLY**

**Lutherans, Methodists plan special joint celebration**

HERMISTON — A special joint service will celebrate the shared site and ministry of Grace and Mercy Lutheran Church and the First United Methodist Church, both in Hermiston.

The event is Sunday beginning at 10:30 a.m. at Grace and Mercy, 164 E. Main St., Hermiston. Partway through the service, the group will move to the Methodist church, 191 E. Gladys Ave., which will include communion and a time of fellowship. Afterwards, people are invited to a potluck and decorating the Christmas tree.

Beginning Sunday, Dec. 4, the two congregations will offer worship services at 8:45 a.m. (Lutheran) and 11 a.m. (Methodist) at the Gladys Avenue site. People of all faiths are invited to attend either or both services. A nursery is provided during both worship services. In addition, Sunday school is at 10 a.m.

The two congregations also will continue ministries they have been involved in, including Open Table, providing outreach and a worship setting at the prison. In addition, they will explore new areas of ministry within the community of Hermiston.

For more information, contact Rev. Tom Inch at 541-289-4535 or gandmlutheran@gmail.com.

**Hermiston church plans holiday Hymnspiration**

HERMISTON — Old-fashioned Christmas carols, food and fellowship are featured during an upcoming Hymnspiration.

The public is invited to attend the family-friendly event Sunday, Dec. 4 from 5-6 p.m. at Victory Baptist Church 193 E. Main St. Hermiston. There is no admission charge.

For more information, call 541-303-3840.

**Bells of Peace choir sets holiday fundraiser**

PENDLETON — Bakery goods and crafts will be available for purchase during an event hosted by Bells of Peace, the handbell choir of Peach Lutheran Church.

The event is Saturday, Dec. 3 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the church, 210 N.W. Ninth St., Pendleton. In addition, people can purchase biscuits and gravy breakfast with a latte or a baked potato and chili lunch.

For more information, call 541-276-7592.

**BOARDMAN'S LIMEY PASTOR**

## Christ the King: Through the door we go

I may be wrong, but I suspect that you may be reading this either on Friday or Saturday. This means that you have been to at least one Thanksgiving feast, possibly two or more. Your body is attempting to process an avalanche of calories still residing in the portals of your humanity and swearing never again to eat as much. This is of course an oath likely to be circumvented at Christmas — and maybe even this weekend when a torrent of leftovers befall us.

Last Sunday my flock at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church was somewhat diminished as people began heading to the four corners of the world to feast with relatives and friends. So my sermon fell on a lot of empty seats. My sermon used our lectionary text from Luke, where Christ was on the cross, beginning to die. Besides him were two genuine criminals who had also been sentenced to death.

It's a strange text to read just before Christmas, and also a strange text for the week of Thanksgiving. It seems quite out of balance for the mood of the season. Yet the text is about a significant moment in human history when the world of humans changed dramatically.

The crowd was jeering and mocking Jesus, saying, "Save yourself!! Save yourself!!" — and even one of the real criminals hanging beside the Lord joined in the scorn. But the other criminal said to his fellow crook that while they were getting their just desserts, Jesus had done nothing at all to warrant a sentence of death! This man turned to look and



**COLIN BROWN**  
Faith

Jesus and asked him to remember him when Jesus entered his Kingdom. Jesus replied that in fact, that very day this man, this convicted man, would enter Paradise with Jesus. This is why the text is so wonderful. This criminal, this man who admitted his own guilt, was the first of us to enter Paradise. The first of many!

There is no word from Jesus pronouncing forgiveness — it wasn't even asked for by the crook, but this poor man merely asked that he be remembered, not saved. Yet, all the above actually happened by Jesus' command.

You, my readers, too, will see this man in Paradise. Although it is a timeless state, Thanksgiving and Christmas are all present here in joy. Christ and this convict, among many others, will be there to welcome us into the bliss that is God's presence.

When I was a chaplain I came into a man's hospital room. He was grinning from ear to ear. He was a Lutheran, and he was about to die. The week before he had died on the operating table and had been brought back by the doctors. In that time of temporary death he had seen paradise and met his master. Never had I seen such a joyful man. We talked for a while and prayed together. He had no fear and told me he looked forward to getting back there.

So I ask that you be as fortunate as that crucified criminal and that Jesus remembers you and welcomes you into Paradise. Welcome him into your life.

Colin Brown is the pastor of Boardman's Good Shepherd Lutheran Church on Locust Road.

**SUBMIT FAITH NEWS**

Friday's faith page features local, national and international faith-related news. Send information about local faith-related news and events, including concerts, special speakers and activities 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.

# Worship Community

**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**

**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

**Faith Center Church**

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

**Community Presbyterian Church**

14 Martin Drive,  
Umatilla, OR  
922-3250

Worship: 10 AM  
Sunday School at 11:30

**Seventh-Day Adventist Church**

Saturday Services  
Pendleton  
1401 SW Goodwin Place  
276-0882  
Sabbath School 9:20 am  
Worship Service 10:45 am



**PILOT ROCK BAPTIST CHURCH**

585 SW Birch  
Pilot Rock, OR 97868  
(541) 443-5500  
prbcnline.blogspot.com  
Sunday School: 9:30 am  
Worship Service: 10:45 am  
Kids' Club: 6:00 pm  
Wednesday Services:  
Youth Group: 7:00 pm

**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"

**GRACE AND MERCY LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA**

OPEN HEARTS - OPEN DOOR  
www.graceandmercy.lutheran.org  
Sunday Worship 8:45 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  
(First United Methodist Church)  
191 E. Gladys Ave. / P.O. Box 1108  
Hermiston, Oregon 97838

**St. Johns Episcopal Church**

Join Us  
On Our Journey  
With Jesus.  
Scripture, Tradition and Reason  
Family service 9am Sunday  
N.E. Gladys Ave. & 7th, Hermiston  
Fr. Dan Ledgard, Priest, PH: 567-6672  
We are an all inclusive Church  
who welcomes all.

**Peace Lutheran Church**

210 NW 9th, Pendleton ELCA  
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

**Redeemer Episcopal Church**

241 SE Second St. Pendleton  
(541)276-3809  
www.pendletonepiscopal.org  
Sunday Holy Communion 9:00 a.m.  
Wednesday Holy Communion Noon  
Weekly Adults Spiritual Life Group  
All Are Welcome

**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

**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

**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

**PENDLETON FIRST CHURCH OF GOD**

FIRST SERVICE 8:30 AM  
SECOND SERVICE 10:30 AM  
712 SW 27<sup>TH</sup> ST.  
541-276-1894  
www.fcogpendleton.com

**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

**First United Methodist Church**

Pendleton/Hermiston  
352 SE 2nd Street, Pendleton  
Sunday Worship 9am  
541-276-2616  
Worship Broadcast on  
KUMA 1290 @ 11am  
191 E. Gladys Ave, Hermiston  
Sunday Worship 11am  
541-567-3002  
Worship Livestream at  
herfumc.com  
Open Hearts, Open Minds,  
Open Doors  
Rev. Dr. Jim Pierce, pastor

**Living Word Christian Center**

Sunday Worship  
10:00am  
Wednesday Bible Study  
6:00pm  
Youth Classes:  
Nursery - 6th grade Sun & Wed  
Jr & Sr High Discipleship Program Wed  
Overcomer's Outreach  
Tuesday at 6:00pm - Annex  
A Christ-centered, 12-Step  
Recovery Support Group  
Pastor Sharon Miller  
401 Northgate, Pendleton  
541-278-8082  
www.livingwordcc.com

**BAHA'I FAITH**

"The earth is but one country  
and mankind its citizens."  
Devotions Sundays @ 11am  
Investigate Religion Class  
7 pm Thursdays  
Everyone invited!  
1015 SE Court Place  
(541)276-9360  
www.pendletonbahais.org



To share your worship times  
call Terri Briggs 541-278-2678