

LIMEY PASTOR Dust and ashes



COLIN BROWN
Faith

In many ways Lutherans have much in common with hobbits. They appreciate home and heart, peaceful lack of adventure, regularity and good food, in abundance if possible. I knew that when we were planning our Ash Wednesday service, and we had, for the sake of time, canceled the accompaniment of our Soup Supper, that we were treading into dangerous territory. Food is the main attractor for churches.

Soup is comforting; it can be conjured in many ways. Soup is not boring by any means. It is a warm flood of flavor of all kinds. On the dessert side, pie and cake lure the holy from many directions. Sadly we neither had pie nor cake — nor soup.

Our emphasis on fasting, perhaps, a little too much.

A service of preparation for baptism and the baptismal season, of the stripping away of the non-necessities by fasting, making alms and prayer and coming closer to the God of Presence who forgives our sins just isn't as catchy a game as it used to be. Repentance is a word that seems rusty, unloved and misunderstood. Repentance doesn't mean caught out or guilty. It means feeling our distance from our maker, feeling the shame of being humanly vulnerable. And by dropping the creature comforts we return to God, to the quietness and the hope of the great silence that God holds us in.

I drove into the church parking lot and saw the smoke rising. Kurt, servant

of the church and its God, was finishing up tidying the grounds. He had pulled the scrub rubble together and had made a good fire that was coiling its smoke into the darkening sky. Our friend Mr. Fire Marshal was there. I was pleased at the quality of the ash, fine and silky. The night before I had burned last year's palm leaves at home and created an ash that was uncommonly gritty, and mixed it with olive oil to mark

crosses on the congregation's foreheads. I went inside to get a spoon and glass bowl and came back outside, scooped up the ash of Kurt's making in the warmth of the declining fire, and went back into the church to mix its dark colors with my oily palm goop. It darkened the holy sludge to make its mark more serious and more definitive.

As we make the mark of the cross on each person we recite: "Remember that you came from dust, and to dust you shall return."

I hold these in my heart as holy words. I am now scheduled to have a heart bypass surgery on March 21, at the beginning of spring. The kind and clever actor, Bill Paxton, died this week of his complications in heart bypass surgery. I stand here alone by the mercy of God's grace, knowing that I serve by his pleasure only. Amen.

Colin Brown is the pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church on Locust Road in Boardman. Email him at Limey-Pastor@usa.net.

Evangelical Rio mayor skips Carnival, drawing ire and praise

Twenty-two percent of Brazilians identify as Evangelical

By MAURICIO SAVARESE and PETER PRENGAMAN
Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO — Rio de Janeiro Mayor Marcelo Crivella did the unthinkable over the last week: He snubbed the city's legendary Carnival.

And in doing so, the retired Pentecostal bishop exposed sharp divisions in a society known for easygoing attitudes toward sex and celebration but with a large-and-growing evangelical community that loathes a bacchanalia famed for its round-the-clock partying and overt sexual displays.

Crivella's unheard-of decision to stand up organizers at the Rio Carnival's opening ceremony Friday night, then skip the city's most important event entirely over the next several days, became one of the most talked about aspects of this year's bash. It even led to accusations that his seemingly hands-off approach could have been a factor in two float accidents that happened during the Carnival's central parades. Previous mayors have been front-and-center of lavish Carnival ceremonies.

"There is no bigger job for a mayor than to follow closely everything that happens during Carnival," wrote *Folha de S.Paulo* columnist Alvaro Costa e Silva. "The recent (accidents) were related to a lack of regulation" by city authorities.

But many evangelicals celebrated his decision to snub a festival they frown upon.

"Crivella is a good man, a bishop," said Maria Figuera, an 80-year-old member of a chapter of the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, Crivella's church. "As an evangelical, he should not be part of Carnival."

Carnival was always going to put the evangelical mayor in a tight spot. In the weeks leading up to the bash, Cariocas, as Rio residents are known, joked about whether Crivella might be photographed with a half-naked samba dancer or next to floats inspired by Afro-Brazilian religions like Candomble and Umbanda.

Still, Crivella, who took power Jan. 1 after winning 59 percent of the vote, had promised not to let his faith get in the way of governing. Many argued that he broke that promise with Carnival.

"When I read that the mayor wasn't coming, it was as if he was saying that the 70,000 people who come to the Sambadrome



AP Photo/Leo Correa, File

In this Sept. 2014 file photo, retired Pentecostal Bishop Marcelo Crivella campaigns for the governorship of Rio de Janeiro state, in Brazil's Copacabana.

"When I read that the mayor wasn't coming, it was as if he was saying that the 70,000 people who come to the Sambadrome and all the millions in the streets were bad people because we like Carnival."

— Carla Ferraz, 18-year-old reveler

and all the millions in the streets were bad people because we like Carnival," said 18-year-old reveler Carla Ferraz. "He should be a better host."

In a lengthy statement Wednesday, Crivella said he decided not to go to the Sambadrome because "in my case it would have been demagoguery."

"People of Rio reject a mayor with a mask, even during Carnival," he wrote, apparently alluding to the clash between his religious beliefs and the celebrations.

Crivella said that during the festivities, he was focused on the safety of the city, and that his team had met to revise regulations so there are not future accidents during parades.

Evangelicals have enjoyed a growing role in politics in Brazil, a center of extraordinary growth for their churches and also home to more Catholics than any other country in the world.

Twenty-two percent of Brazilians currently identify as evangelical Christians, up from 5 percent in 1970. Congress' "evangelical bloc," representing about a fifth of seats in both chambers, has emerged as a political force that was influential in President Dilma Rousseff's removal last year and pushes for conservative laws.

Still, many Brazilians reject evangelicals, seeing them as judgmental and contrary to an easygoing attitude that is pervasive in the culture.

For many, those beliefs were reinforced by Crivella's handling of the situation.

On Friday night, Crivella stood up the ceremony in which the mayor traditionally hands a symbolic key to the city to Rei Momo, or the king of carnal delights. After the organizers spent hours waiting, key in hand and looking dejected, the mayor sent the head of Rio's tourism agency, who apologized and said Crivella's wife was sick. Revelers didn't buy the excuse, and their suspicions increased when two nights later the mayor and his wife, looking to be in fine health, were seen watching tennis at the Rio Open.

"Crivella was the only Carioca who didn't do anything during Carnival: he didn't party and he didn't work," said taxi driver Rafael do Nascimento. "I expected better."

Nor did Crivella attend any of the parades at the Sambadrome, which began Saturday with second-tier schools and ended Tuesday with the most famous ones.

After a float crashed into the crowd and injured 20 people on Sunday, revelers started speaking of a curse because the mayor skipped the opener. The talk was reinforced Tuesday when part of another float collapsed and injured 11 people. Five people are still in hospital, one in serious condition.

Crivella replied to critics by visiting victims of the accidents in the hospital and posting videos on his Facebook page. That decision was lauded by hundreds who chimed in on Crivella's page.

"There are more important things than handing over the key to open Carnival," wrote Elisangela Domingues.

BRIEFLY

Milton-Stateline Adventist School sets carnival

MILTON-FREEWATER — Food, treats, fun, games and rides are all featured during the Milton Stateline Carnival.

The event is Sunday from 3-7 p.m. at Milton-Stateline Adventist School, 53565 W. Crockett Road, Milton-Freewater. Proceeds from the event help support the faith-based school.

For more information, contact 541-938-7131, info@miltonstateline.org or visit www.facebook.com/events/710542399123679.

Blackwood Legacy to perform two local concerts

A familiar southern gospel quartet will perform a pair of shows in the area.

Blending southern gospel's traditional sound with contemporary country music, Blackwood Legacy Quartet is led by Rick Price, former lead singer for the award-winning Blackwood Brothers Quartet. The local performances are Wednesday, March 8 at 7 p.m. at the First Christian Church, 215 N. Main St., Pendleton; and Thursday, March 9 at 7 p.m. at Anchor Point Seventh-day Adventist Church, 77 W. Highland Ave., Hermiston. Admission is free at both concerts although an offering will be accepted.

For more information, call 541-276-5358 or 541-289-3022. For more about Blackwood Legacy, visit www.theblackwoodlegacy.com.

Movie night features family drama

BOARDMAN — A movie about a mother and her three children who end up wandering the streets of Los Angeles is featured during Saturday Night at the Movies.

"Come the Morning" highlights hard life lessons and hope. The public is invited to watch the flick Saturday, March 11 at 6 p.m. at the First Baptist Church, 200 Willow Fork Drive, Boardman. The 1993 drama is rated G. There is no admission charge. Refreshments and popcorn will be available.

For more information, call 541-481-9437.

Victory Baptist hosts hymn service

HERMISTON — An evening of singing old hymns with new and old friends is planned in Hermiston.

The Hymnspiration is Sunday from 5-6 p.m. at Victory Baptist Church, 103 E. Main St. Hermiston. Everyone is invited to attend for a time of fun and fellowship.

For more information, call Chris Finley at 541-571-2516.

Send information about local faith-related news and events, including concerts, special speakers and activities to community@eastoregonian.com.

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**

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

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 Ledford, Priest, PH: 367-6672
*We are an all inclusive Church
who welcomes all.*

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 Inchi, Pastor
Grace and Mercy Lutheran Church, ELCA
(First United Methodist Church)
191 E. Gladys Ave. / P.O. Box 1108
Hermiston, Oregon 97838

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"

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

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church LCMC
Sunday worship at 11:00 AM
420 Locust St. • Boardman, OR
541-481-6132
Colin Brown, Pastor

Peace Lutheran Church 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

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(Disciples of Christ)
215 N Main • Pendleton, OR 97801
Behind These Stone Walls
Beat the Hearts of Some of the Warmest
Most Sincere, Most Caring People in Pendleton
We Invite You to Come Get Acquainted!
Sunday Worship: 10:40am
Sunday School: 9:30am
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**

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

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

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