

LIMEY PASTOR

Knowing where you are

I'm still finding my way roaming about Eastern Oregon. It is a vast land wild place and empty, empty like a green desert. I discovered that a GPS device is really useful to have — 'cause I don't have one, and accidentally made my way north instead of south on Highway 74 after I visited the Lutheran pastor in Heppner. When I turned I ended up going along a long and winding road with no houses or villages. I was confident I was heading towards Arlington, but I wasn't. I ended up in Pendleton, the only name on a sign I saw that I recognized, but even then I didn't really know how far away that was. I had no map in the car either.

In the Middle East there is a saying: "Trust in God but tie up your camel first." My camel was far afield. The vastness of the land is breathtaking. Its verdant hue is magisterial. As I kept traveling to Pendleton, without map and certainty, a striped grasshopper leapt into my open window and began tap dancing on my car's dashboard. I traveled with him for some while before I pulled over to a rich green clump of grass and invited him to hop out, which he did. Then I was alone again.

I kept trying to use my cell phone, but there was no signal anywhere. I thought of Jesus when he went wandering alone into the mountains. They were his Father's mountains where he could think his Father's thoughts. I kept a stern grip on my steering wheel. I thought about what might happen should I lose my attention and drift over the edge. There were no railings to guide you back, just a freefall onto the sod below.

It really is important to know where you are, and also to both know your



COLIN BROWN
Faith

destination in an accurate manner, and how to return to where you came from.

I reflected on my own roots in the tightly compacted emerald isle of Great Britain, and how totally inhabited it is. There are indeed patches of forest and meadows, but you can generally see folk even crossing the valleys and hills. It is picturesque and busy too.

Here I am in Ancient America, a land that looks pretty much as it did thousands of years ago. You have to know where you are, how to get to where you want to go, and how to get back home. It is a vast, vast creation.

Last week I took my son Matthew to see the historical film "Dunkirk" — a mighty and moving film about how the British soldiers waiting on the shores of France were rescued in World War II, not by the military ships, but by an armada of small boats that set sail to cross the English Channel to rescue the troops who otherwise had no other means of escape.

I realized that the story's heart is in the fact that it was the fathers who came to get them — the fathers of all those troops got in their own little ships and sailboats and sailed across the waves being attacked by German fighter planes. These little boats rescued 300,000 young men from being lost forever and brought them home.

I realized that this is also God's story, when I read in the Gospel about Jesus in the boat. It is God who is in the boat who comes to rescue us from being lost. He gathers us into the boat with himself.

Are you lost? Or do you know where you are?

Colin Brown is the pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Boardman.



AP Photo/Ajit Solanki

Ganesh Chaturthi festival begins in India

An Indian woman combs the hair of a child as she waits for customers for idols of the elephant-headed Hindu god Ganesha ahead of Ganesh Chaturthi festival in Ahmadabad, India, Thursday. The ten-day long Ganesha festival begins Friday.

Tribal members 'seek justice' for sacred site leveled to widen U.S. 26

By **ANDREW THEEN** | *The Oregonian/OregonLive*

Tribal members "seek justice" for sacred site leveled to widen U.S. 26. A trio of tribal elders asked a judge in Oregon this week to settle a long-standing dispute with the federal government over sacred burial grounds they contend were destroyed nearly a decade ago to expand a highway near Mt. Hood.

The lawsuit claims the government destroyed a sacred site along a roughly 5-acre parcel on the north side of U.S. 26, about 13 miles west of Government Camp, in 2008 for a widening project. An attorney representing the tribal elders said they tried for years to work with the government to avoid a lawsuit but were unsuccessful.

Wilbur Slockish and Johnny Jackson, the Hereditary Chiefs of the Klickitat and Cascade Tribes of the Yakama Nation respectively, filed a motion for summary judgment in U.S. District Court Monday. Carol Logan, a tribal elder with the Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde, and two nonprofit groups, are also part of the lawsuit filed against the U.S. Federal Highway Administration and U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

The elders are seeking a ruling from the judge that the government violated a key section of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, the same law cited by the U.S. Supreme Court to protect the

owners of the conservative retailer Hobby Lobby and the Little Sisters of the Poor.

"When it's an endangered species, wetlands, or even a nearby tattoo parlor, the government finds a way to protect it," Luke Goodrich, an attorney with the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, said in a statement. "But when it's a Native American sacred site, they unleash the bulldozers and chainsaws. Becket is a nonprofit religious liberty law firm."

"After taking this land from the tribes in 1855, the government now has the gall to claim that it can destroy it because it is 'government land.' But it's not 1855 anymore," Goodrich said. Two of the plaintiffs are direct descendants of Sla-kish, the tribal chief who signed the Yakama Treaty in 1855.

A spokesperson for the Federal Highway Administration declined to comment, saying the agency does not comment on pending lawsuits.

According to court documents, the location near today's Wildwood Recreation Site was used for centuries by tribal members to practice Washat, an ancient Yakama religion.

The tribes used the specific site on the approach to Mt. Hood, named Ana Kwna Nchi chi Patat, or the Place of Big Big Trees, as a resting stop and religious campground.

Tribal members used the area to rest while en route to Celilo Falls, the lawsuit said.

For centuries, the site included an altar made of river rocks and other stone monuments nestled among old-growth trees.

"To me, this site was like a church. One that never had walls, or a roof, or a floor, but it was still just as sacred," Jackson said in a statement. "If the government can callously destroy our place of worship, it could do the same to any other group."

The elders say they were first made aware of a possible highway expansion in 1985. They say BLM officials surveyed the campground and determined the altar was a significant artifact that may be at least several hundred years old, according to the lawsuit.

But it was subsequently destroyed.

Goodrich said in an interview that the elders are not able to obtain a financial settlement under the federal religious freedom act. Rather, they are asking an apology, declaration that there was a significant wrong perpetrated on the native people and they are asking for some remediation of the site.

The group is asking for all or part of an earthen berm installed covering the campsite and burial ground to be removed, and trees and vegetation planted. The government could also install a marker acknowledging the historic nature of the site or allow tribal members to create a replica of the ancient altar on the site.

BRIEFLY

Local church shares vision

HERMISTON — The Hermiston Assembly of God Church has designated September as Vision Month. The focus is to dream bigger, believe in greater things and to love people even more. The congregation and its leaders invite the public to join them as they launch into a series called #ThereIsMore! Each Sunday features something special and fun:

- Sept. 3: Back To School Sunday provides free donuts in the lobby.
- Sept. 10: Taco Truck Sunday offers taco truck food available in the yard after the service
- Sept. 17: NextGen Sunday features a service highlighting Elevate Kids & Tribe Youth
- Sept. 24: I Love My City, a community outreach event

 The services begin at 10:30 a.m. at 730 E. Hurlburt Ave., Hermiston. For more information, call 541-567-5831 or visit www.facebook.com/hermistonassembly.

Local churches collects school supplies

Episcopal Church of the Redeemer in Pendleton and Hermiston Church of the Nazarene are collecting school supplies. The Pendleton church is collecting such items as backpacks, calendars, activity planners, pencils, pens, paper and tissues. The Nazarene church has adopted West Park Elementary School and is collecting supplies for students in need that will be distributed by a school counselor. Particular supplies needed include spiral notebooks and pencils — as well as other items that can be used in the classroom. The final collection date is Sunday, Sept 3 at both churches:

- Episcopal Church of the Redeemer, 241 S.E. Second St., Pendleton. For more information, call 541-276-3809.
- Hermiston Church of the Nazarene, 1520 W. Orchard Ave. For more information call 541-567-3677.

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.

Living Word Christian Center
401 Northgate, Pendleton
Celebration of Worship Sundays 10:00 am Youth: 0-6th grade
Midweek Sevice Wednesdays 6:00 pm Youth: 0-6th grade
Overcomer's Outreach Tuesday's 6:00 pm
In the Annex A Christ Centered, 12 Step Recovery Support Group
Pastor Sharon Miller 541-278-8082 www.livingwordcc.com

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

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
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10:30 am Fellowship
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Sunday Worship.....10:30 AM
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Worship Livestream at www.facebook.com/FUMCPendleton/
Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors
Rev. Dr. Jim Pierce, pastor

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

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

Faith Center Church
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108 S. Main • 276-9569
Sunday Worship 10:00 am
Sr. Pastor, Ray O'Grady
pendletonfaithcenter.org

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

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

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

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To share your worship times call 541-278-2678