

Israel at 70: Satisfaction and grim disquiet share the stage

Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Is Israel a success as it turns 70? As Israelis commemorate the milestone this week, satisfaction and a grim disquiet share the stage.

It has a standard of living that rivals Western Europe, though it lacks significant natural resources. It can boast of scientific achievements and military and technological clout beyond its modest size. It controls most of biblical Israel, and despite widespread criticism of its policies toward the Palestinians, it has cultivated good diplomatic ties with most of the world.

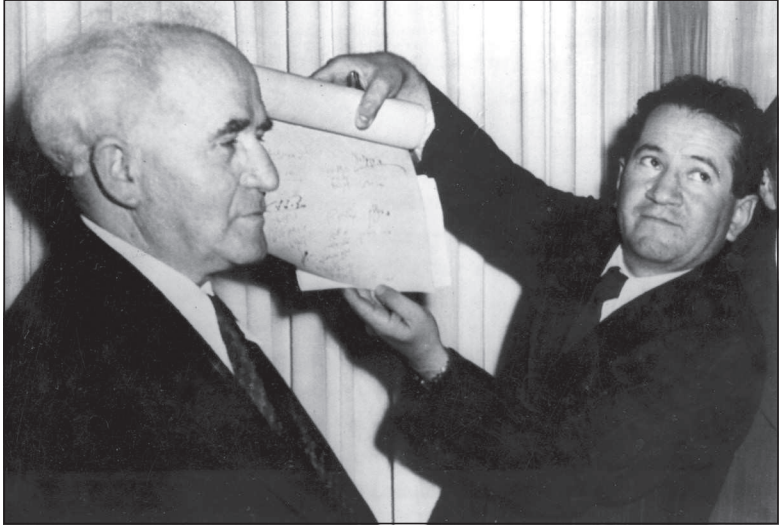
But it's also a country that is weary from decades of conflict with the Palestinians. It is riven by religious, ethnic and economic divisions. It is still seeking recognition in a region that has not fully come to terms with the presence of a Jewish state.

Its founding declaration offers it as a "light unto the nations," but it still is regularly accused of war crimes against Palestinians, millions of whom it has controlled for decades without the right to vote. There is no end in sight to its occupation of the West Bank, or to its crippling blockade of Hamas-ruled Gaza.

The grand peace hopes of the 1990s have mostly evaporated. Israel still feels endangered, with well-armed adversaries calling for its destruction and no permanent borders. Israelis are fretting over the possibility of war with archenemy Iran, which has a military presence in neighboring Syria.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, despite winning three elections since 2009, is reviled by many and faces corruption scandals.

A look at Israel at 70:
Wealth and economic inequality
Fueled by a vibrant high-tech sector, Israel's per capita GDP of almost \$40,000 ranks with Italy and South Korea, and is within



AP Photo, File

In this May 14, 1948 file photo, an official shows the signed document which proclaims the establishment of the new Jewish state of Israel declared by Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion in Tel Aviv, Israel.

reach of Britain and France.

But it also suffers from one of the highest levels of inequality in the developed world, and poverty is especially prevalent among its Arabs and ultra-Orthodox Jews.

These two sectors, at nearly a third of the population and growing, risk dragging down the rest of the economy.

Punching above its weight

For a country of just under 9 million, Israel has enjoyed surprising success. It counts eight living Nobel winners among its citizens and has helped give the world instant messaging, Intel chips and smart, autonomous vehicles. High-tech units in the military have made Israel a global cybersecurity powerhouse.

It is in a small club of nations to have launched a satellite, and is widely believed to be among an even smaller group with nuclear weapons, although the government won't confirm it. Israel has one of the world's strongest air forces.

It has won European basketball championships and song contests, and hit shows like "Homeland," "In Treatment" and "Fauda" are

Israeli creations. Last year's blockbuster "Wonder Woman" — the highest-grossing live-action movie directed by a woman — starred Israeli actress Gal Gadot.

Forging a national identity

Despite decades of development, Israel is still working at forging a national identity.

Over a century ago, Zionists in Europe saw the Jews as a nation, not just a religion. Persecution in Europe, culminating in the Holocaust, sent European Jews pouring into the Holy Land.

Soon after Israel's establishment in 1948, they were joined by immigrants from countries like Morocco, Yemen, Iraq and Iran.

These Middle Eastern, or Mizrahi, Jews had little in common with their European counterparts. They were poorer, more religious and often targets of discrimination. Three generations of integration and intermarriage have blurred the distinctions, but gaps remain.

Arrivals from the former Soviet Union and Ethiopia have made Israel even more diverse, yet the different communities still often keep to themselves.

LIMEY PASTOR

Spring is springing

Another season of God is arriving. There is a perceptible tingling down my forearms and down the lower half of my spine — as if life is starting the motor once more time. In my spirit I feel pleasantly restless — as if a call is cooking, a call to move forward into the unknown. I know this feeling, this unsung song from the high places. God is up to something again.

I reach up in my heart and feel the joy inside cascading like a fountain, like a spray of fireworks on July 4th. Water and fire, spirit cascading.

So, what is up, what is the question these answers are for?

In a couple of weeks I'm going to be performing a wedding for old friends of mine. I had teased them about it for a while — but now they were moving ahead into the decision and its fruits. They've picked Champoege Park, close to Wilsonville, for the ceremony. It's at the pavilion there where my son and daughter-in-law tied the knot and below the tumbling water of the river symbolizing the dance of time.

New life is sparking in me, a growth of that which broke a little last year when I had my heart attacks and surgery. I feel stronger inside, as if the muscles are reconstituting and blood is reddening. So, what is my mission going forward?

Today I was at Our Savior's in Salem, meeting with the small group of other pastors that make up my denomination in my area. We were discussing ways in which we can preach more loudly, proclaim the gospel more vigorously and invite more people into the arms of love of our Lord.

I am thinking of a friend of mine, Matthew, a man who is called by God. He was an electrician in Modesto, California, with his own business and was one day called into



COLIN BROWN
Faith

service by Jesus. He sold his business and bought a fine bicycle and is now cycling around the United States visiting little home churches, small congregations and individuals. He is an evangelist. He came to visit me when I had an advertisement for a little home church that I had started in my dwelling,

and my friend, Pastor Rock, who also had a home church and also preached at the men's prison in Salem. Rock had been a pastor for a larger church, but when his wife took off with another man, his Pentecostal church required him to step down from his pulpit and stay away.

So Rock continued in his own way, in prisons, with neighbors who need the Word, with anyone who thirsted after the living water of faith — obeying God's call exactly, even if the rules of his own church sent him away. I understand recently that his wife came back to him seeking forgiveness and there is a healing taking place. His daughter and her young man are staying with him, close to the fire that burns in his heart for God. Goodness is bright and warm.

God is all seasons, and now we move into the bright season of promise that is Spring, when new life appears, breaking forth from the seed and flying up into the heart to break out in buds and blossoms.

I pray for all of us that we can hear the music of Christ's springtime, and end our long somnolence by entering his holy adventure, resting in the peace that surpasses all understanding and takes us into his purpose for our creation. May we know — as we are known by him!

Amen.

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

BRIEFLY

Silver thing challenges teens

PENDLETON — A faith-based experience for youths that features two hours of high energy music, videos, dramas, special effects and comedy is coming to Pendleton.

The Silver Ring Thing is presented by a team of peer-level leaders who serve as role models and examples of the freedom found in living for Christ. They share a message of hope, boldness, and truth that features powerful speaking, personal testimonies and the grace-filled message of Jesus Christ. Teens are challenged to live boldly and not take a casual view of love and relationships.

The event is Wednesday, May 2 from 7-9 p.m. at the Vert Auditorium, 480 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton. There is no admission charge. In addition, there is a special parent session at 7 p.m. People can register or provide sponsorships at www.silverringthing.com/events/pendletonor.

Following each event, students seeking to symbolize their conviction have the opportunity to wear a SRT ring as an external reminder of their internal decision. Rings are

available for \$20.

For questions, contact Lisa Conner at lisa@silverringthing.com or 412-424-2425 or visit www.silverringthing.com.

Yard sale to fund missions team

HERMISTON — Donations are being sought for a yard sale sponsored by Hermiston Church of the Nazarene.

Money raised will be used by the missions team for projects and trips. People wanting to do some spring cleaning to get rid of extra toys, furniture or bags of clothes that don't fit anymore can donate them to the cause.

Items can be dropped off Monday, May 7 through Thursday, May 10 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the church, 1520 W. Orchard Ave., Hermiston. Mattresses and TVs are not being accepted. The yard sale is Saturday, May 12 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For more information, call 541-567-3677, visit www.hermistonnazarene.org or search Facebook.

Stuff the Bus blesses Desert Rose

HERMISTON — Desert Rose Ministries in Hermiston was thrilled with the Stuff the Bus effort by Leadership Hermiston Class 21.

Participants collected donations April 7 at Walmart, Fiesta Foods and Safeway. After the buses were stuffed, they distributed items to Desert Rose Ministries, Agape House, the Hermiston Warming Station and the Domestic Violence Services shelter in Hermiston.

Stuff the Bus truly blessed us, said representatives from Desert Rose. They expressed appreciation to everyone that made donations and volunteered their time to work on the project.

Desert Rose Ministries is located at 152 E. Main St., Hermiston. For more information, call 541-667-9566 or search Facebook.

Submit information to community@eastoregonian.com or drop off for Tammy Malgesini at 333 E. Main St., Hermiston or Renee Struthers at 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton.

WORSHIP COMMUNITY

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

GRACE AND MERCY LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA

OPEN HEARTS - OPEN DOOR
www.graceandmercyelca.org
Sunday Worship 8:45 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

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

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church LCMC

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

Faith Center Church

Worshiping God
Loving People
108 S. Main • 276-9569
Worship Service: 10:30am
Sunday School: 9:30am
pendletonfaithcenter.org

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

Living Word Christian Center

401 Northgate, Pendleton
CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP
Sundays 10:00 am
Youth:
0-6th grade
MIDWEEK SERVICE
Wednesdays 6:00 pm
Youth:
0-6th grade
Pastor Sharon Miller
541-278-8082
www.livingwordcc.com

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"

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

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 School: 9:30am
Worship: 10:40am
Fellowship to follow
Office 541-276-5358 M-F, 8:30-12:30
www.fccpendleton.org

PENDLETON FIRST

SUNDAYS
Morning Celebration - 10am
Morning Kids Place - 10am
Evening - 6pm
Adult - Study
Youth - Small Group
Kids - Rangers & Girl's Ministries
THURSDAYS
Celebrate Recovery - 6pm
Celebration Place - Kids - 6pm
The Landing - Teens - 6pm
WEEKLY
Groups For All Ages
AN ASSEMBLY OF GOD CHURCH
1911 SE Court Ave.
541.276.6417 • pendletonfirst.com

Community Presbyterian Church

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

PENDLETON Lighthouse Church

Sunday Service: 10am & 6pm
Tuesday Kingdom Seekers: 7pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
We offer: Sunday School • Sign Language Interpreters • Nursery • Transportation • & more!
Pastor Dan Satterwhite
541.377.4252
417 NW 21st St. • Pendleton, OR 97801
www.facebook.com/PendletonLighthouseChurch

Seventh-Day Adventist Church

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

To share your worship times call 541-278-2678

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
Sunday Worship.....9:00 AM
Bible Study.....10:00 AM
Red Lion Hotel
(Oregon Trail Room)
www.faithpendleton.org

First United Methodist Church Pendleton

352 SE 2nd Street, Pendleton OR
Sunday Worship 9am • 541-276-2616
Worship Broadcast on KUMA 1290 @ 11am
Worship Livestream at www.facebook.com/FUMCPendleton/
Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors
Rev. Dr. Jim Pierce, pastor

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
PH: 567-6672
We are an all inclusive Church who welcomes all.