

Trump hosts first Muslim iftar dinner

By JILL COLVIN And ANNE FLAHERTY Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Wishing Muslims around the world a "Ramadan Mubarak" — a blessed holiday — President Donald Trump on Wednesday hosted his first White House dinner for Islam's holy month of Ramadan...



AP Photo/Andrew Harnik

President Donald Trump speaks at an iftar dinner, which breaks a daylong fast, celebrating Islam's holy month of Ramadan, in the State Dining Room of the White House.

plete and total shutdown" of Muslims entering the country, compared Syrian refugees fleeing civil war to a deadly snake and declared, "I think Islam hates us" in an interview with CNN.

Instead, Trump spoke of "the renewed bonds of friendship and cooperation" forged with "valued partners" from across the Middle East and said iftars "mark the

coming together of families and friends to celebrate a timeless message of peace, clarity and love. There is great love."

He recalled his visit last year to Saudi Arabia — his first foreign trip — as "one of the great two days of my life."

"Only by working together can we achieve a future of security and prosperity for all," he said.

The dinner came as the Supreme Court considers legal challenges to Trump's travel ban, which critics say unfairly targets some Muslim-majority countries. A ruling is expected as early as this month.

Several Muslim civil rights groups pushed back, organizing a "NOT Trump's Iftar" protest at a park across from the White House. The groups say Trump's heated rhetoric has contributed to an increase in bullying and discrimination against Muslim Americans.

Sharif Aly, CEO of Islamic Relief USA, a humanitarian and advocacy organization, said the group was glad to see the White House had reinstated the iftar, "an event that should be hosted every year, just like the Easter Egg Roll, the Passover Seder and Christmas Open House."

LIMEY PASTOR

The many wills of God

Many years ago, back in the 1990s, after my first year of training in Sister Pat McCrann's program of Spiritual Direction in Oregon, she had said to me that I needed to do something and that she didn't know what it was, but I was to take some time and go and do it. This had come to her in prayer. I had no idea what was being asked of me. It was a very strange feeling. At the time I had no intention of diving into the life of a clergyman. But I stopped, prayed and stepped into the bright darkness.

Within weeks I was traveling down to San Francisco where I went to work on a project with Wells Fargo, and somehow, I can't remember now how it happened, but I was invited to serve on the Technology Committee of the United Religions Initiative headed by the Anglican Bishop Swing of Grace Cathedral. I had to enter the cathedral in a secret elevator because there were death threats from fundamentalists who believed that the Antichrist was behind it.

All that was behind this project was the commandment to "love one another as I have loved you." This commandment is ignored by many.

As we see, our world is still fractured, our faiths are still in pieces, seeing through a dark glass more darkly every day it seems. Religion seems part of the problem, not the beginning of a solution. This problem still burns like a festering wound.

Why am I writing this, you may ask? It is because I am feeling called by something that is commanding as well as disquieting. God is moving in my breast, like a shark under the water. I have no idea what is being asked of me.

The Lutheran theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer said that God's will is not just one will, but can be many. We are given the freedom to choose if we are quiet enough to discern. We are not slaves of God, but brothers and sisters of Jesus and God gives us the dignity of choice — a free choice.

Such a freedom is dramatic and can be terrifying — our choices bend the universe as we twist and turn. Our love is alive in this maelstrom of discernment. God's design is melded with our multiplicities and we are not puppets but dancers riding the foam of possibilities. We all count in this dance.

So this week I ask for your help. Please pray for me to discern the right next steps and where the most blessing and joy will arise for my master, Jesus, if I find them.

Last week I received a letter from a reader, a most thoughtful and heartfelt letter. I give thanks to her for it, for it touched on my blind spots and helped me see more clearly. What a blessing!

I pray for you, dear friends of East Oregon. I pray that new gifts will descend on you and your churches as we enter uncertain times. I pray that your journey will draw you close to Jesus Christ and that you will bring a holy eye to all the matters in your life as you ask yourself what the next steps will be and look toward the challenges and joy to come.

Amen.

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

Student ambassadors share through music

BOARDMAN — Ambassadors from Rio Grande Bible Institute will perform a concert in Boardman.

The free event, which features music with a Latin American flair, is Friday at 7 p.m. at the First Baptist Church, 200 Willow Fork Drive. Everyone is invited to attend.

Based in Edinburg, Texas, the non-denominational school was founded in 1946 by Rev. M.C. Ehler. A Baptist pastor and evangelist, Ehler first went to the Rio Grande Valley in 1937 to do tent evangelism. He was inspired to provide biblical training to Hispanic believers and new converts.

In addition to the faith-based state-accredited college, it offers a 9-month program of concentrated Spanish language instruction designed for Christian workers whose ministry includes Hispanic populations. The ministry also expanded

with broadcasting through Radio Esperanza.

For questions about the free performance, call 541-481-9437. To learn more about the Rio Grande, visit www.riogrande.edu/en.

Lutheran church rolls out summer fun

HERMISTON — All area children are invited to make crafts and create things, play games, listen to Bible stories, learn new songs and enjoy snacks at Trinity Lutheran Church.

The Fun Maker Factory vacation Bible school is Monday June 11 through Friday, June 15. It runs daily from 9 a.m. to noon at 485 W. Locust Ave., Hermiston. All children are invited to participate in the free event, regardless of religious affiliation.

Classes will be available for kids that are 4 years old through those who just completed fifth grade. In addition, teens

are invited to come and help with the classes and activities.

For more information, call Nancy Carlson at 541-567-9660.

Musical minister releases new video

PENDLETON — Rev. Marc Mullins of the Pendleton First Christin Church recently released a new music video.

It features an arrangement of St. Francis of Assisi's "All Creatures of Our God and King," arranged by Mullins in 2012. In addition, the video was produced by Mullins this year with the audio recorded and mixed at CrossWired Studio in Walla Walla. In addition to Mullins (guitar, bass guitar and vocals), musicians include Carl Scheeler (harmonica) and Kevin Gutierrez (drums and percussion). To view it, visit https://youtu.be/BMIOTU19oZU. The musical pastor also has a YouTube channel; search "Marc Mullins" at www.youtube.com.

FAITH BRIEFLY

COMING EVENTS

FRIDAY, JUNE 8

STORY AND CRAFT TIME, 2 p.m., Echo Public Library, 20 S. Bonanza, Echo. (541-376-8411)

SPRING FEST, 3-8 p.m., July Grounds, 73310 July Grounds Lane, Pendleton. Drumming, 3-on-3 basketball tournament, clothing swap, potluck, eating contests, bounce house, races, games, prizes and more. (Chelsea Hallam 541-429-7904)

AFTER SCHOOL 3-ON-3 BASKETBALL, 3:15-5 p.m., Pendleton Recreation Center, 510 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton. For ages 13-18. Free. (Casey Brown 541-276-8100)

VFW BINGO, 6 p.m., Hermiston VFW, 45 W. Cherry St., Hermiston. Doors open at 6 p.m., games begin at 7 p.m. Everyone welcome. (541-567-6219)

SATURDAY, JUNE 9

HELIX FUN RUN, 7-11:30 a.m., Helix Community Park, Concord Street, Helix. Check-in at 7 a.m., races begin at 8 a.m. One-mile, 5K and 10K races, trophies for 1st place overall of 1-mile and

female and male winners of each age category of the 5K and 10K races. T-shirts will be available for purchase. Cost to enter is \$20 in advance (https://heartofthecountry.iityourace.com/register/), \$25 day of race at check-in. Proceeds will help buy new pool furniture for the Helix city pool. (Breanne Parker 541-805-4611)

FREE FOR ALL, 9:30-10:15 a.m., Pendleton Center for the Arts, 214 N. Main St., Pendleton. Free art classes for children up to age 12. Children under 8 should be accompanied by an adult. (Roberta Lavador 541-278-9201)

YARN CLUB, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., Hermiston Public Library, 235 E. Gladys Ave., Hermiston. (541-567-2882)

HIP & HANDMADE, 11 a.m.-12 p.m., Pendleton Center for the Arts, 214 N. Main St., Pendleton. Free drop-in project class for adults. (Roberta Lavador 541-278-9201)

HELIX COMMUNITY DAYS, 11 a.m., Helix City Park, Concord Street, Helix. Annual potluck (brings a side dish or dessert), swimming, games and relay events for the kids following the Helix

Fun Run. Everyone welcome. (Breanne Parker 541-805-4611)

COUNTRY HOEDOWN, 1-4 p.m., Milton-Freewater Neighborhood Senior Center, 311 N. Main St., Milton-Freewater. Live music, dancing and singing. Admission \$2, refreshments available for purchase. (541-938-3311)

IRRIGON FARMERS MARKET, 3-7 p.m., Irrigon City Hall parking lot, 500 N.E. Main Ave., Irrigon. Local vendors, local produce, crafts and more. (Aaron Palmquist 541-922-3047)

SUNDAY, JUNE 10

MUSIC IN THE PARK, 5-7 p.m., Heppner City Park, 444 N. Main St., Heppner. Enjoy live music from your blanket or lawn chair. Food concessions will be available for purchase. Free admission. (Sheryll Bates 541-676-5536)

INFORMATION AND OUTREACH FELLOWSHIP MEAL, 6 p.m., Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 515 S.W. Seventh St., Hermiston. Dinner and discussion of "Extending Hope to Those Facing Pregnancy Decisions." Free, but RSVP required. (Debbie Cissna 541-567-2393)

Advertisement for Pendleton First Sundays and Thursdays services.

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