



Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

Outgoing Pastor Archie Hook stands by the sign of the Community Congregational Church in Enterprise on Thursday, April 22, 2021. Hook's last sermon as pastor at the "Big Brown Church" was Sunday, April 25.

# Hook says 'amen' to time as pastor

Pastor at 'Big Brown Church' leaving for La Grande

By BILL BRADSHAW  
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Enterprise's Christian community is losing one of its leaders, as Pastor Archie Hook gave his final sermon Sunday, April 25, at the Community Congregational Church.

After serving as pastor here for five years — come August — he's moving onto take a similar post at the First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in La Grande.

"I'm retiring from the (Wallowa County) Grain Growers and this job came up," he said. "It's people I've known and a church I've gone to in the past. They called and said, 'Would you be interested in coming back?' and we said, 'Sure.'" A Wallowa County native, Hook has lived here for about 25 years, working as fuel and propane manager at Grain Growers. He officially retires from there in mid-May, at which time he'll take up his new post as a pastor in La Grande.

"I was born and raised here and we came back," he said. "So it's always been a lifelong dream to live here and serve the people. There are absolutely wonderful people here in the county. They say the beauty is the mountains, but that's not the only beauty here in the county."

The "Big Brown Church" where Hook has served, with its congregation of about 40 regular attendees, has long been an integral part of the Enterprise community.



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Outgoing Pastor Archie Hook stands on the front steps of the Community Congregational Church in Enterprise on Thursday, April 22, 2021. Hook's last sermon as pastor at the "Big Brown Church" was Sunday, April 25.

The congregation has always vigorously reached out to people in their times of trouble, helping them through tough times, Hook said.

Hook said the COVID-19 pandemic has cut attendance at his church, as is the case with most.

**"THE PEOPLE ARE THE BEAUTY OF THE COUNTY. THEY'RE THE REASON TO BE HERE. YOU CAN'T SURVIVE ON SCENERY."**

— Archie Hook, former pastor at Community Congregational Church

"Just being here and allowing people to come in or, if they want, we'll go visit," he said of the outreach efforts.

The church, which is part of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches, also supports the local food bank and other

charitable organizations.

Hook said he and his wife will soon move from their Lostine-area home to the La Grande area. They also have a son and daughter here. But leaving the county is more than leaving a place with beautiful scenery, he said.

Hook said he and his wife will soon move from their Lostine-area home to the La Grande area. They also have a son and daughter here.

But leaving the county is more than leaving a place with beautiful scenery, he said. "The people are the beauty of the county. They're the reason to be here. You can't survive on scenery," he said. "If you can build relationships with the people here, you can survive on anything. If you can serve them in a loving, compassionate way, you'll have success."

And building those relationships is what he believes he's been able to do.

"It's been an honor to live here and serve the people here," Hook said. "It'll be a little difficult to leave, but not all that difficult. We know we have the prayers of the community, and we all have to rely on that."

# Wallowa replaces Niece with McCrea on council

History center upgrades planned

By BILL BRADSHAW  
Wallowa County Chieftain

WALLOWA — The Wallowa City Council voted to replace outgoing Councilman Christian Niece with former Councilman Oren McCrea during its monthly meeting Tuesday, April 20, at City Hall.

Niece resigned earlier in April because he was moving to the Enterprise area, Mayor Gary Hulse said Thursday. McCrea, he said, has experience with the council and had previously resigned for personal reasons.

"He felt he was ready to come back, and he'd already been voted on by the people, so we felt he'd be a good choice," Hulse said.

In another matter, the council approved the renewal of a five-year lease on Ben Deal's building where he operates Back Achers building supply on Douglas Street.

"We want to keep him

there and the council would like to keep with a five-year lease," Hulse said.

The council also heard an update on the Wallowa History Center from David Weaver.

Hulse said Weaver hopes to upgrade the old Forest Service grounds with a camping space, possibly a camp host and put a historic display in a warehouse there. The upgrading also involves working with an architect to make the center

handicapped-accessible and in keeping with its historic look.

Among the department reports:

- Hulse, as fire chief, reported several grass fires and one structure fire.
- The city public works director reported the sewer system had been cleaned out and a camera was run down the system.

"Right now, it's looking pretty good," Hulse said, adding that the city

is awaiting a final report from Anderson Perry, the city's engineering firm, on any problems that need addressed quickly.

- The council hired an information technology person to upgrade computers and its internet service to ensure the city systems can't be hacked.
- The city library is planning a summer program.

**IN BRIEF**

**Methodists to turn over church to tribe**

WALLOWA — What once belonged to the Nez Perce people will be returned Thursday, April 29, with celebration and fellowship, at Wallowa United Methodist Church in Wallowa.

The deed and keys to the now-closed Wallowa United Methodist Church are being turned over to the Nez Perce Tribe by The Oregon-Idaho Conference of The UMC as a gesture of gratitude, respect and repentance, according to a press release.

Leaders from the tribe, along with Methodist leaders will join in a ceremony of celebration and fellowship as the property, which has been owned by the church for 144 years, is returned to the tribe.

This is the second piece of property the church has returned to the tribe. In 2018, the conference returned 1.5 acres of riverbed property from its Wallowa Lake Camp to the tribe to be used for fish spawning habitat.

The event begins at 11 a.m. outside the Wallowa UMC at 102 W. 1st St. in Wallowa. There will be singing, prayers, a ceremonial sharing of gifts and fellowship. Attendees are being asked to wear masks and practice social distancing during the ceremony.

**Tunesmith Night wraps up May 8**

The 15th season of Tunesmith Night, put on by the Wallowa Valley Music Alliance, wraps up Saturday, May 8, with a performance that will be livestreamed to YouTube and the WMVA website, wvmvalliance.org. The event begins at 7 p.m., and viewers will be encouraged to support the program through online donations.

Songwriting duos Wanderlodge and Jezebel's Mother will be the featured acts, according to a press release.

The release states that Wanderlodge, the Port-

land-based duo of Matt Cadenelli and Kris Stuart combines "their love of classic rock and country with their own tunes, those of other favorite local songwriters, and a taste for the sunny, country rock sounds of LA and its surrounding canyons."

Carolyn Lochert and Janis Carper, who make up Jezebel's Mother, blend their styles to make music that is "swirling with rhythms and harmonies, sentiment and smiles, tight but spontaneous," the release states.

**Grange to hold clean-up day Saturday**

JOSEPH — Friends of the Grange are invited to join Hurricane Creek Grange volunteers for a garden/landscape clean-up event at 9 a.m. Saturday, May 1, at the grange, according to a press release.

The grange is located at 82930 Airport Ln. just outside of Joseph.

Volunteers are urged to bring their favorite gloves, pruning shears, rakes, etc. Participants will be pruning, digging and dressing.

Doughnuts, coffee and tea will be provided to volunteers.

**Crash on Highway 82 kills Netarts man**

WALLOWA — A crash last week in Wallowa County claimed the life of a Netarts man.

The crash occurred Wednesday, April 21, just before 4 p.m. near milepost 48 on Highway 82 just outside of Wallowa.

According to the initial investigation, a Ford pickup driven by 74-year-old Thomas Stumpf left the road as it traveled eastbound and rolled. Stumpf, who was pronounced dead at the scene, was the only injured person in the single-vehicle crash. It is unknown at this time what caused the vehicle to leave the roadway.

Wallowa County Sheriff's Office, Wallowa Emergency Medical Services, Oregon Department of Transportation and Oregon State Police all responded to the call.

— Chieftain staff

This week's featured book

**My Year Abroad**  
by Chang-Rae Lee

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**Births**

A son, Kai River Micka, was born April 3, at home to Shiann Dreadfulwater Micka and Jared Micka of Enterprise. Grandparents are Lisa & Brad Dreadfulwater of Grangeville, ID, and Sherry & Friend McFarland and Jeff & Brenda Micka of Enterprise.

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This month we want to do a special shout-out to our awesome local librarians for partnering with us to serve kids and families! Denine Rautenstrauch in Enterprise and Holly Goebel in Wallowa are instrumental in helping us deliver quality activities for local children.

Thank you for going above and beyond to help, we appreciate you!

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