

He is Risen! EASTER BLESSINGS TO ALL

'Out of death--new life, new power, new strength'

'On the side of the angels'

I was up in the mountains the other day and I noticed many of this year's pine cones still contained their seeds, having been protected by the winter snow and ice. In these tightly packed, tiny, attractive containers lies the tree's hope of recreating itself. In the insignificant lies the possibility of a 200-foot tall tree. The parent tree gave up nutrition and energy to make the possibility of new life a reality.

Easter is a very ancient celebration of the possibility of new life. Bound up in Easter is the cross-cultural understanding that if new life is going to happen, sacrifice must be made. You will find this is a universal truth in all life relationships.

We live in a world where the search for meaning and excitement is often found in the newest fad or remedy. We limit our possible experiences because we are not willing to sacrifice some time, money, selfish ambition to create new life for community, families and children. Our planet seems to spiral into more decay because of our misuse and abuse of that which we have been given in the name of progress and success.

The Christian tradition teaches that God can break through all those mistakes and selfishly placed ambitions to heal and make new all of God's creatures. The resurrection of Christ was amazing to even his closest followers who were filled with doubt, fear and awe. Yet, out of that death and utter humiliation of their Jesus, they found new life, new power and new strength. Sacrifice had made its point. The intentional giving away of power, of life and of selfishness brought new creation, new meaning and new purpose.

When we sacrifice our self importance. When we sacrifice our need to be seen as perfect and can acknowledge that we make mistakes, need help and need something or someone bigger than ourselves to depend on, then we are set free, then are we made whole, then will God meet us in our own foretaste of resurrection.

May you reap the seeds of righteousness sown in the sacrifice of your heart to a loving and understanding God. May he refresh and restore your thirst for life. May your Easter be a time of renewal and re-commitment to Jesus Christ our Lord.

-The Rev. Al Miller

'The Story of Life'

"This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is Light; in Him there is no darkness at all." "This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins." "If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God." "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him." 1 John 1:15; 1 John 4:10-15; John 3:36.

Each and every word of Jesus is the word of God. The Bible is actually a beautiful "love letter" from God. The Bible admonishes us to delight in its message and to meditate upon its contents. How sad that many Christians neglect it. Sadder still that countless lost souls have never opened the Book at all.

When Elizabeth Barrett became the wife of Robert Browning, her parents disowned her because they disapproved of the marriage. Their daughter, however, wrote to them almost every week, telling them that she loved them and longed for a reconciliation.

After 10 years, Barrett received a huge box in the mail. It contained all the letters she had sent. No one had been opened. How sad to think that they were never read by Barrett's parents. Had they looked at just one, the broken relationship with their daughter might have been healed.

Jesus came to provide a way of reconciliation with God. We need not be alienated from God. The Bible tells that He earnestly longs for fellowship with us. Jesus came to live on Earth with us, to experience the everydayness of our lives. How would you feel if Jesus came to your home to live with you? The following poem may help shed some light on that question:

If Jesus Came To Live With You, / What would you do? What would you do? / If Jesus came to spend some time with you? / If Jesus came to your house to spend a day or two; / If He came unexpectedly, I wonder... what you'd do? / When you saw him coming, would you meet Him at the door, with arms outstretched and welcome your Heavenly visitor? / Or would you have to change things before you let Him in? Like, burn some magazines and put the Bible out where they'd been. / Would you let Jesus walk right in or would you rush about, / To hide your worldly music and put some hymn books out? / Oh, I know that you'd give your nicest room to such an honored guest. / And all the food that you served Him, would be the very best. / And you'd keep assuring Him that you were glad to have Him there. / That serving Him in your home was joy beyond compare. / But, would your family conversation keep up its normal pace? / Would you find it hard each meal to say a table grace? / And, what about the songs you sing, the books you like to read? / Would you let Him know the things on which your mind and spirit feed? Would you be glad to have Him meet your very closest friends; / Or hope they'd stay away until His visit ends? / Would you take Him with you everywhere you planned to go? / Or, maybe-change your plans for just a day or so? / Would you be glad to have Him stay forever on and on; / Or sigh a sigh of relief when finally He had gone? / You know, it might be interesting to know the things that you'd do; / if Jesus came in person to spend some time with you. / What would you do? What would you do? / If Jesus came to spend some time with you? Author unknown

Jesus defeated death. He overcame the grave. Now He desires to live in your heart. 1 John 4:15 "If anyone acknowledges that Jesus in the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God."

-Pastor Duane Jones

"The Risen Christ." Is that one of the phrases that trips off a preacher's tongue on Easter morning, expected but unexplained? Would it not be enough, someone may wonder, to appeal to everyone to enlist on the side of the angels, to rise above the fog of pessimism and despair, to back life's better smells against its stink? With the unanimous voice of the holy and apostolic Church, with the backing of the saints of two thousand years, with angels, archangels, and all the company of heaven, I answer: "No! It is not enough!"

For the gospel, the amazing good news is this: that the age-long battle between good and evil came to a climax in Jerusalem and Jesus was not just one more good man who was on the side of the angels. The story of his death is not just one more report of a noble martyrdom. The story of his Resurrection is not just one more legend of someone rising from the dead. This is not "Someone". It is the Son of the living God, God's gift of himself to the human race. And when he was hoisted on a cross to die it was as if the whole weight of human evil, the cruelty, the terror, the callousness, the greed, the demonic... conspired to crush the breath from his body and drew the blood from his veins. Evil had triumphed and the angels fled.

Then came the moment which reversed the tide of evil. Jesus came back. "On the third day he rose again from the dead!" In this one action God concentrated the good news that goodness is stronger than evil and life has triumphed over death. And, since this was the victory of love, it was a silent triumph... made known to those who were ready to believe.

Luke tells us that on the same day as the Resurrection, there were two travelers on the road to Emmaus. These two travelers were like many today, not knowing quite what to make of the report of the women at the tomb or the vision of the Easter angel, but hoping that it was true. The story in Luke ends with a meal to which they invited the Stranger. And what happened to them can happen to us. "Their eyes were opened and they recognized him." It is good to be on the side of the angels, my friends. However, it is even better to know the one who says to us: "In the world you will have trouble. But courage! The victory is mine. I have overcome the world." Happy Easter, my friends, Happy Easter!

-The Rev. Al Trachsel

'Rise from sinfulness to find joy, happiness, peace'

Holy week ends with the three most solemn days in the year of the Church. On Holy Thursday we commemorate the Lord's Supper, on Good Friday, the suffering and death of the Savior, on Holy Saturday night, the vigil of the Resurrection.

We remember the Passover at this time: it recalls and relives how God delivered the chosen people from slavery in Egypt, and how he committed himself to deliver later generations from despair to hope, from death to life. The paschal lamb, sacrificed that night, ward off the avenging angel with its blood; it nourished with its flesh the people going into freedom. The New Testament acclaims Jesus, who died and rose from the dead as our Paschal Lamb. Through his death and resurrection, he delivered us from slavery to sin into freedom of life in God's kingdom.

During these last days of lent we see Jesus as solemn and somber whereas at Easter we see him in glory, triumphant over sin and death. During lent we have prepared for our own victory through prayer, fasting and almsgiving, as directed in the Gospel Of St. Matthew. Our personal sacrifices have kept us mindful of the supreme sacrifice of Jesus, the sacrifice of his life for our salvation. As we contemplated his suffering and death, we looked into the depths of our lives to see where forgiveness is needed, where light is lacking, where hope is in short supply, and to learn where we must strive to gain the Father's grace.

On Good Friday we recall the suffering and death of Jesus, but we always keep sight of the ultimate outcome - the rising of the Savior, who emerged from the darkness of the tomb to new life.

Holy Week is a time to look at the last week of the Savior on earth. As we do so we draw our inspiration and courage from him. His sufferings challenge us to repent, to rise from our sinfulness, and to find joy, happiness, and inner peace in his resurrection. When we do that, life's hardships, frustrations, and losses are turned into opportunities for spiritual growth. Rejoice, He is Risen!

-Father Gerry Condon

Binghams celebrate 25th anniversary

Gary and Jenny Bingham, former residents of Heppner, celebrated their 25th anniversary with friends at the Beef & Brew Restaurant in Bend on Feb. 25.

The couple were married Feb. 25, 1972 at Hanau West Germany. Gary was in the army and stationed there at that time.

The Bingham's lived in Heppner from January 1984 to November 94. Gary worked for the city as a police officer

for eight years and Jenny worked at Murray Drugs for five years, before moving to Madras in Nov. of 1994.

Gary now is employed at the Jefferson County Sheriff's Dept. and works in corrections. Jenny is employed at a jewelry store.

The couple have two children, Sherry nelson of Coquille, a 1993 graduate of Heppner high, and Joanna a senior at Madras high.

Local Easter services announced

Valby Lutheran Church

Valby Lutheran Church of Ione will hold the following Holy Week Easter Services:

On Maundy Thursday, March 27, a special evening meal will be held in the fellowship hall at 6 p.m. The meal will conclude with a service around the tables led by lay readers and a candlelight communion service conducted by Pastor Baglien.

The Easter Festival Service will be held at 8 a.m. at the historic Valby Church located in the wheat fields of Morrow County. Special music will be provided by Rikka Tews, organist, and Sarah Carlson, flutist and soloist.

Holy Communion will be administered by Pastor Baglien who will preach on the topic, "Put That Light Back!"

An Easter breakfast will follow the service. This annual event is in charge of the AAL members.

Hope Lutheran Church

Hope Lutheran Church of Heppner will hold the following Holy Week Easter Services:

On Good Friday, March 28, the traditional Tenebrae Service, entitled "The Darkness Deepens", will be held with congregational participation.

The Easter Festival Service with Holy Communion will be held at 11 a.m. on Sunday, March 30, with reception of members by Holy Baptism and Affirmation of Faith.

Pastor John L. Baglien will preach on the theme, "Put That Light Back!". Special music will be provided by Debbie Basile, pianist.

All Saints' Episcopal

All Saints' Episcopal Church announces a change of worship time for Easter Sunday service on March 30.

Worship will begin at 11:30 a.m. on Easter Sunday. Father Al Miller will celebrate and preach. An Easter brunch will be served at 10 a.m. before the worship service. Those planning to attend the brunch are asked to call the church at 676-9970.

During Holy Week, All Saints' will participate in the ecumenical Easter program on Wednesday, March 26, at St. Patrick's Catholic Church.

On Thursday, March 27, beginning at 6:30 p.m., the church will host a "Passover Seder Dinner", a meal dramatizing the Jewish commemoration of "The Exodus" and the Christian beginnings of the "Lord's Supper".

Students participate in writing contest

By Shelby Krebs

Niki Sullivan, Nathan Rietmann, Cara Miller and Jessica Krebs from Ione High School recently participated in the 47 annual Oddfellow's United Nations pilgrimage for youth writing and speak-off contest. Each student composed an essay on child abuse and then presented it to a panel of three judges in the Pendleton Oddfellow's Lodge.

Niki Sullivan, was chosen as one of two delegates to represent the Oddfellows. Sullivan will be flying to New York City in late June and then traveling by bus to cities such as Boston, Baltimore, and Washington D.C. Sullivan will have to be opportunity to visit the United Nations building on

St. Patrick's Catholic Church

Commemoration of the Last Supper and institution of the Blessed Eucharist will be held on Maundy Thursday, March 27, at 7 p.m. at St. Patrick's Church in Heppner.

On Good Friday, March 28, the Way of the Cross will be at 12:05 p.m., with Solemn Commemoration of the death of Jesus at 7 p.m.

Easter Vigil Mass will begin at 5 p.m. on Holy Saturday, March 29.

Easter Mass of the Resurrection will be at 11 a.m. on Easter Sunday, March 30.

St. William's Catholic Church

The Way of the Cross will be held on Good Friday, March 28, beginning at 5 p.m. at St. William Church in Ione.

Mass of the Resurrection will begin at 8:45 a.m. on Easter Sunday, March 30.

Heppner United Methodist Church

Good Friday service will be held at the Heppner United Methodist Church on Friday, March 28, beginning at 7 p.m.

The Easter service will be at 10:30 a.m. Sunday, March 30.

Ione United Church of Christ

Maundy Thursday will be observed at Ione United Church of Christ, 370 Main, on Thursday, March 27, at 7:30 p.m. with a service of Taize chants, scripture readings, communion, prayer, and special music.

Maundy Thursday commemorates Jesus' last night with his disciples.

Easter at IUCC begins at 9 a.m. Sunday, March 30, with breakfast followed by worship at 10 a.m.

The sermon by the Rev. Lea Mathieu is entitled "Really Living."

There will be no church school that day, but the service includes a special children's time.

Easter will be Rev. Mathieu's last Sunday as Ione's minister.

She is retiring to stay home with her young children.

Park District meeting set

The regular meeting of the Willow Creek Park District will be held on Thursday, April 17, at 7 p.m. at Ione city hall.

Students participate in writing contest

her two week tour. Sullivan is a sophomore at Ione High School and participates in volleyball, basketball, tennis, FBLA and 4-H. She enjoys endurance horse racing. She is the daughter of Brian and Lori Sullivan of Ione.

Nathan Rietmann was selected as an alternate and received a fifty dollar savings bond. Rietmann is a junior and is involved in basketball, tennis and National Honor Society. He is the son of

John and Kerry Rietmann of Ione.

Bethaney Hansel of Weston McEwen was selected as the other delegate from this area. Sullivan and Hansel will join 12 other delegates from Oregon and students from around the country.

Genealogy society to have speaker

The newly formed genealogical society will have a guest speaker from the Pendleton Genealogical Society on Tuesday, April 8, at 6 p.m. at the Morrow County Museum. Rosemary Farley will discuss the activities of their group, organization of research

documents and research techniques. Following the discussion a help session will be held to answer questions regarding individual's research. The presentation is open to the public. Anyone interested in genealogy is invited to attend.

Everything's Coming Up Roses...
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