

# ~~~~~ He is Risen! ~~~~~

(Editor's note: Following are inspirational Easter messages from local pastors.)

## Heppner First Christian Church

### 'Hope'

Two disciples are walling down the dusty road to the village of Emmaus. Their talk concerns the crucified Jesus. They are in shock, in pain and struggling to understand things they cannot. Their Messiah is dead. His body in the tomb. And now it is gone.

"I can hardly believe it. He's gone."

"What do we do now?"

Just then a stranger comes up and says, "I couldn't help overhearing you. Who are you talking about?"

They stop, a sad look written all over their faces. Other travelers make their way past them. Finally one asks, "Where have you been these past few days? Haven't you heard about Jesus of Nazareth?" He continues and tells what has happened.

The scene is fascinating. Two sincere disciples telling how the last nail has been driven in Israel's coffin. God, in disguise, listens patiently, his wounded hands buried deeply in his robe. He must have been touched by the faithfulness of this pair. Yet he also must have been a bit disappointed. He had just gone to hell and back to give heaven to earth, and these two were worried about the political situation of Israel.

"But we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel."

But we had hoped... How often have you heard a phrase like that?

"We were hoping the doctor would release him."

"I had hoped to pass the exam."

"We had hoped the surgery would get all the tumor."

"I thought the job was in the bag."

Words painted gray with disappointment. What we wanted didn't come. What came, we didn't want. The result? Shattered hope. The world trembles. We walk the road to Emmaus wondering, "What kind of God would let me down like this?" And yet, so tear-filled are our eyes and so limited our perspective that God could be the fellow walking next to us and we wouldn't know it. You see, the problem with our two heavy-hearted friends is not a lack of faith, but a lack of vision. Their request was limited to what they could imagine - an earthly kingdom. We are not much different are we? We roll in the mud of self-pity in the shadow of the cross. We ask for his will and then have the audacity to pout if everything doesn't go our way.

Our problem is not so much that God doesn't give us what we hope for, as it is that we don't know the right thing for which to hope. Hope is not what you expect; it is what you would never dream. And it is the two Emmaus-bound disciples reaching out to take a piece of bread only to see that the hands from which it is offered are pierced.

Hope is not a granted wish or a favor performed; no, it is far greater than that. It is an unpredictable dependence on a God who loves to surprise us out of our socks and be there in the flesh to see our reaction.

(All excerpted from "God Came Near" by Max Lucado)

I believe in this post 9-11 era the greatest hope we can have is found in Jesus Christ.

- Pastor Andrew Johnson

## St. Patrick's Catholic Church

### 'Easter is a Feast of Faith'

Easter is a feast of faith. St. Paul tells us: that if Jesus is not risen from the dead, then our faith is vain. Consequently the New Testament goes to great lengths to convince us the Jesus is indeed risen. The Gospels tell us of the many apparitions of Jesus, of many interesting events in the lives of the apostles, and those who had been associated with Jesus. Consequently, we are told that very early in the morning, and as soon as the sun came out and they dared to go outside, that his friends hastened to the tomb.

The first ones who came were the women. They had linen, oil and perfume because they came to give him a proper burial. They found the stone rolled back, and the tomb empty. They hastened to inform the apostles of this fact. Next came Peter and John. They came running. John was the younger, so he outran Peter. What is interesting is that when they reached the tomb, John stopped, did not go in, and allowed Peter to enter first. They believed. Later Jesus appeared to Mary of Magdala. She believed. He appeared to the apostles who were gathered together, and they believed. He appeared to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, and they believed. He appeared again when the apostles were gathered together and Thomas was with them. Thomas who had been unbelieving in the resurrection, now believed, saying: "My Lord, and my God." Then Jesus said: "Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed." (John 20:29)

What we need to consider to-day is that those apostles not only said that they believed, but they gave their lives for that faith. I do not think that any one of them would have sacrificed their lives had they not been completely convinced of the resurrection of Jesus. Consequently it is no wonder that St. Paul says: "...and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is vain..." 1 Cor. 15, 17. Like the apostles, let us put our faith in the resurrection of Jesus, and like them, live that faith.

- Fr. Gerry Condon

## Heppner Christian Missionary Fellowship

### 'In Him We Live'

He came that we might live, (Jn. 10:10)

That we may be alive, (Acts 17:28)

He wants much more for us, / Than to merely survive!

Our own strength is limited,

Though it may seem to help some,

It can never make us whole, (1 Thess. 5:23)

Or enable us to overcome! (Rev. 12:11)

Trying to establish our own righteousness, (Rom. 10:3 and 4)

We ignore what was accomplished at the cross, (Gal. 2:21)

"But what things were gain to me", (Philip. 3:7)

Those I counted for Christ, a loss.

Each time the path isn't clear, (Prov. 16:9)

Or things don't go as I'd planned,

I'm reminded that I can trust, (Prov. 3:5 and 6)

In the Master Potter's hand. (Is. 64:8)

When all I can see, / Is where I fail, (Is. 64:6)

I turn my eyes to the One,

Who does all things well! (Philip. 4:3)

His grace is always sufficient, (II Cor. 12:9)

He is our, "hope of glory", (Col. 1:27)

"When I am weak then I am strong", (II Cor. 12:10)

That's good news to me!

For I've tried to be righteous by works, (Heb. 4:10 & Eph. 2:8 & 9)

And even sheer determination, (Philip. 2:13)

But it is, "repentance from dead works", (Heb. 6:1)

That helps to build a solid foundation.

It's about justification by faith, (Gal. 2:16)

And love we could never earn, (Rom. 5:8)

To rather glory in our infirmities, (II Cor. 12:9)

We all must learn!

"For in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring."

(Acts 17:28 KJV)

By Catherine Sims

May each of us find life in Him!

-Pastor Lynda S. Crane

## Heppner United Methodist Church

### 'New Life, Hope and Purpose'

Two thousand years ago, a radical and revolutionary voice taught about a God who was a God of Love and a God of Life. To a culture that valued only the rich and powerful, this voice demonstrated that God sides with the poor and oppressed. To a culture that insisted upon racial purity and held little regard for women, he showed that God highly esteems minorities and women. To a world that measured worth by the size of one's purse and property holdings, he proved that character and soul matter more than the size of one's bank account. To a culture that met military violence with terrorist violence, he taught the way of non-violence and of transforming one's enemies into family.

The imperial government of his time tried to silence this voice by applying a military solution - and Jesus of Nazareth was executed by means of crucifixion. The religious establishment and military governor thought another rabble-rousing troublemaker had been put away and was done with for all time.

But God's ways are not human ways, and God's solutions are not military solutions, and the Author of Life overruled the human courts of death. Hallelujah!

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is God's way of urging us to leave the camp of the forces of death and come to the camp of life. "Choose life," Moses urges the Israelites in the Sinai Desert. "I am the resurrection and the life," Jesus tells Martha and tells us in the Gospel of John. This is the message of Easter.

But Easter is more than just a message, it is a transforming experience. It is the experience of moving from a life that is more like death to a life that is abundantly and unabashedly alive. It means to live the reality of the Good News Life that Jesus taught. It means to reject the destructive way of violence as a solution to anything, and to embrace the life-giving way of non-violence. It means to truly believe and live according to the idea that God so loved the world that He sent his only Son not to condemn the world but to save it. If God loves this way, so can we.

This is the Way of Life. The resurrection is God's proof that the Way of Life is real, is ultimate, is powerful, and is the final Word.

This Easter may God's resurrection power release us from whatever attitudes, behaviors, memories or lifestyles we have that destroy life. May the power of the resurrection fill each of us with new life, hope and purpose.

- Pastor Craig Strobel

## Holy Week Services

### St. Patrick's Catholic Church

Holy Week Services at St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Heppner are as follows: Holy Thursday, March 28, an Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper will be held at 7 p.m.; Good Friday, March 29, Stations of the Cross will be at 12:50 p.m., with a Solemn Celebration of the Lord's Suffering and Death at 7 p.m.; on Easter Sunday, March 31, a Mass of the Resurrection will begin at 11 a.m.

### St. William's Catholic Church

Holy Week Services at St. William's Catholic Church, Ione, are as follows: Good Friday, March 29, the Stations of the Cross will begin at 5:30 p.m.; on Easter Sunday, March 31, a Mass of the Resurrection will be held at 8:45 a.m.

### Heppner First Christian Church

Easter Sunday worship on March 31 at Heppner First Christian Church will begin at 9:30 a.m. with donuts, coffee and breakfast casseroles and fellowship. Worship service will start at 10:45 a.m. All are welcome to attend.

### Ecumenical Easter Sunrise Service

A Sunrise Service will be held at the Morrow County Fairgrounds on Easter Sunday, March 31, at 7 a.m. Everyone is welcome to come. This service is sponsored by South Morrow County Ministerial Association and area churches.

### Heppner United Methodist Church

Maundy Thursday Communion Service at Heppner United Methodist Church will be held in the church basement at 7 p.m. on Thursday, March 28.

Friday, March 29, a Good Friday Tenebrae Service will be held in the sanctuary. This service is in cooperation with All Saints Episcopal Church, and Hope and Valby Lutheran churches.

On Easter Sunday, March 31, a community Sunrise Service will be held at the Morrow County Fairgrounds at 7 a.m. with a Celebration of the Resurrection Service in the sanctuary at 10:30 a.m.

### All Saints Episcopal

On Good Friday, March 29, a Tenebrae Service will be held at the Heppner United Methodist Church, in cooperation with the Methodist church, Hope and Valby Lutheran churches and All Saints Episcopal. A Holy Saturday vigil will begin at 8 p.m. at All Saints Episcopal on Saturday, March 30. Easter Sunday services March 31 will begin at 11 a.m. with celebrant Father Gilsdorf.

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**HAPPY EASTER!**  
*Sunday, March 31st*

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**Please Join Us...**  
 The Heppner Seventh-day Adventist Church, 569 Minor St., invites everyone to a video showing of "The Life of Jesus Christ" on Friday, March 29 at 6:30 p.m. in the church gymnasium. Refreshments will be served.  
 For more information, call Cynthia Wenberg, 676-5036.  
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**Babysitter training workshop set**  
 A babysitter training workshop will be held Friday, April 19, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Port of Morrow in Boardman. Participants must be 11 years old or older. The workshop will cover what is expected of sitters, how to handle emergencies, basic child care, supervising children and simple meals and snacks.  
 Cost is \$5. Scholarships are available and participants are encouraged to inquire about them. Contact Laura McElligott at 676-5421 for more information. Pre-registration is necessary. Contact the Morrow County Extension Service at 676-9642 or 1-800-342-3664.  
 The workshop is sponsored by OSU Extension Service and the Morrow County Health Department.

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