

**St. Patrick's Catholic Church
'The Hope of Easter'**

We can face all kinds of difficulties and hardships when we believe they will not last forever, or sometimes when we believe that something better will happen. There are many examples of this. People will face a long and dangerous operation if they believe they will then have a better quality of life. I have heard people who have been faced with that kind of decision say, "It would be easy to decide if I knew how long I am going to live." Those who go to prison face a long sentence better when they know when they believe it will end and they will be able to enjoy freedom again. All of us can face a long and difficult winter because we know that spring will come in time.

Easter provides a great degree of hope for the human spirit. Such hope is needed in our modern world. There is an abundance of tragedy in life. There is war, which destroys life and our resources. There is murder and mayhem in our cities. There is drug addiction that is destroying many young and old. There is alcoholism, child abuse, corruption and deception. The list could go on. It is not much consolation to think that such things have existed back through history.

Jesus was put to death. The world did not pay much attention at the time. The world did not pay much attention to his resurrection. He did not appear in the Temple in triumph, breathing vengeance on those who had killed him. Rather he appeared in quietness to a small group of chosen individuals. His message was not of hatred, but of peace. Yet even that group was slow to believe. But when they did believe, a new spiritual revolution began. Men and women risked their lives to proclaim his truths. And so it has continued down through the centuries. Jesus Christ is the inspiration of multitudes. There are those who sacrifice fame and fortune for him; those who endure hardships and ridicule; those who give up the material for the spiritual. He is their hope and inspiration. May he be yours also.

-Father Gerry Condon

**Heppner Christian Church
'Resurrection, the story'**

The story is simply that life overcame death even death on the cross and eternal life became available for everyone in the victory of Jesus' death on the cross, his burial in the tomb and his resurrection to life. Some would say this is a faerie tale and that Jesus did not rise from the dead but we have ample evidence to counter that claim in both eye witness testimony, an empty tomb and most impressive of all, changed lives from that time to this in the name and power of Jesus Christ.

This Easter for those who believe I will rejoice with you at the power of our risen Lord. For those of you who do not believe, I would ask you to consider the claims of Christianity and the life that Jesus Christ can give you. The choice is yours; no one can make it for you and remember to smile because God truly loves you too.

-Pastor Andrew Johnson

Smith to represent South Morrow County at Head Start conference

Melanie Smith, a volunteer in the Heppner Head Start classroom has been chosen to attend the National Head Start Association's 32nd annual training conference in Orlando, FL, May 24-27, said Candy Green with Umatilla-Morrow Head Start.

As part of being chosen, Smith's airfare, hotel accommodations and meals will be paid for. At the conference, Head Start staff members and parent representatives receive training in a variety of areas as well as learn about the Head Start agency.

"We are so excited that South Morrow County will be represented this year," said Green.

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UMHS chose two parents out of 25 policy council representatives to represent them at the conference. Besides volunteering in the classroom, Smith has been active on the policy council.

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**Shared Ministries of Hope Lutheran, Valby
Lutheran and All Saints' Episcopal
'God is good- all the time'**

As I sat down at the computer to begin writing this note this morning (actually Saturday), I heard the sad news that they found the body of 9-year-old Jessica Lunsford in Florida. I imagine that each of us are saddened by the news. Anyone who has raised children knows how the death of a child is one of those "terrors" that we lock away in our minds. Thankfully, for most, this horror will never come to us. But you also know that even when your children are grown, you never stop fearing for them because you never stop loving them. My heart goes out to her family and I encourage you to keep them in your prayers.

This kind of news is not the way I would like to begin Holy Week, but since it is the news this weekend, I am also mindful that it is because of evil that we have Holy Week at all. It is because little girls are kidnapped and killed by adults who should protect them; it is because spouses still find themselves having to fight for, and sometimes against, the life of their spouse; it is because terrorists are willing to blow up everyone they can for the sake of their "cause"; it is because human beings not only recycle every evil ever known but seem to invent new evils with each succeeding generation that Jesus had to die and God had to watch His Child be buried in the ground.

Holy Week is God's answer to human evil by answering it the only way God could answer it. Instead of becoming evil Himself (by destroying his creation or simply washing his hands of us troublesome humans), God took on evil by loving it to death: His own. He took evil right on the chin and right in the heart and even though it killed Him to do so, He won.

All evil ever needs to do to win is to make others resort to evil themselves. Jesus did not do that. Ever as he was nailed to the cross, Jesus remained loving and forgiving. And when he spoke those last words, "It is finished," the evil in the crowd thought he was referring to his own life. However, what he really meant was that because He could still love even after the cross, it was evil that was ultimately finished and God wins.

What that means for me this morning is that even as I mourn the loss of such a young life, in such a terrible way, I can still believe that Jesus' victory means that her life is not wasted. Evil had done its worst. God has done better. Which is why we continue to celebrate Holy Week and have all these worship experiences each year. Jesus' resurrection takes place in the context, not of the holiness of heaven, but in the reality of the human world. Easter Sunday is not an escape. Nor is it just another holiday excuse to have a party. It is God's answer to evil and it comes right out of evil that was acted upon God Himself. That's why I encourage you to experience all of Holy Week, not just Palm Sunday and Easter.

-Pastor Ron Zschoche

Holy Week and Easter services

St. Patrick's Catholic Church:
Holy Thursday, March 24- Solemn Commemoration of the Lord's Supper, 7 p.m.;

Good Friday, March 25- Station of the Cross, 12:15 p.m.; Solemn Commemoration of the Death of Jesus, 7 p.m.;

Holy Saturday, March 26- Easter Vigil, 8 p.m., Lighting of the Easter Candle, Scriptural Readings, Baptisms, Confirmation, Resurrection Mass;

Easter Sunday, March 27- Easter Mass, 11 a.m.

St. William's Catholic Church:
Good Friday, March 25- Stations of the Cross, 5 p.m.;

Easter Sunday, March 27- Easter Mass, 8:45 a.m.

Combined Ministries of Hope, Valby and All Saints:


Wednesday, March 23- Time for prayer and Word at Valby Lutheran, Ione, 7 p.m.;

Maundy Thursday, March 24- Maundy Thursday Worship at All Saints Episcopal, Heppner, 7 p.m.;

Good Friday, March 25- Good Friday Tenebrae at Hope Lutheran, Ione, 7 p.m.;

Easter Sunday, March 27- Easter Celebration at Valby, 8 a.m., with Easter Breakfast following; Easter Celebration at Hope (for both ASE and Hope), 11 a.m.

Heppner Christian Church:
Easter Sunday, March 27- Easter Brunch, 9:30 a.m.; Worship Service, 10:30 a.m.



By DAVID SYKES

REALTOR

FINAL WALK THROUGH

Prior to settlement, buyers are entitled to walk through the property. As a purchaser, you want nothing more than to assure that the property is being delivered in the condition promised by the seller. If the property is to be "broom clean", the house should be entirely devoid of trash and old furniture. If an old car was to be removed from the yard, it should be gone. If the appliances worked when the contract was ratified, they should work now.

With new property, you'll want to walk through with the builder's representative and your inspector. Items that are incomplete or not done at all should be marked on the builder's "punch list". Naturally, a duplicate buyer's list should be maintained.

Buyers should insist that all seller obligations are satisfied and if they are not satisfied, buyers could then demand suitable compensation. For instance, if a repair is not made, then an amount from the seller should be placed in escrow to assure completion.

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**Heppner Church of the Nazarene
'Why not believe?'**

From the crucifixion of Jesus Christ on the cross, to His resurrection from the grave, the believers in Christ haven't questioned how it could happen; rather, they just simply believe that it did happen. This is called believing by "faith."

Romans 3:22-24 tells us, "This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus."

It is through God's grace that we are saved, not by good works, not by good deeds. After Christ's resurrection some still scoffed at Him; yet, others believed. In John 20:29 Jesus said, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Still, even today, Christian faith is based solely upon the hope provided to them as found in the Bible. Hebrews 11:1 describes it, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Gladys Talbot tells the story of three little trees who wanted to become something big in life. The first tree wanted to be a pretty cradle when it grew up. One day some people came to the forest and cut the tree down. The tree was hewn into rough pieces and carelessly put together to form a manger in a stable in Bethlehem. The little tree was disappointed because it was shoved into a dark barn with no one to see it but some cattle. One day however, God was laid there, His own Babe- the Son of God. The manger quivered with delight. "Oh, this is wonderful. In all my dreams I never thought to hold a Baby like this. This is better than all my dreams. Why, I am part of a miracle."

Years passed by, and men came to the forest to cut down the second tree. This tree aspired to be a great ship when it grew up. But the little tree did not do great things. It was not made into a great vessel, but instead it became a tiny fishing boat, owned by a simple Galilean fisherman named Peter. This little boat was most unhappy. One day it stood by the shores of the Sea of Galilee dejected and disappointed. A crowd had gathered by the shore and because of the multitude, a Man, called Jesus, stepped into the little boat and taught the people from it. "This is wonderful," it whispered. "In all my dreams and planning I never thought I would be used as part of a miracle."

Some months later, men came to the forest to cut down the third tree. This tree just wanted to remain on the hillside and point heavenward to God. But men did not leave the little tree alone. They tore away its branches; they cut into its bark and deeper into its very heart. They hewed it apart and put it together again, in the form of a crude cross. The little tree quivered through all its disappointment.

"This is terrible," it whispered. "They are going to hang someone. Oh, I never wanted this to happen to me- I only wanted to point to God. This is awful."

One day, outside of Jerusalem, a great crowd gathered. In the midst of the crowd was Jesus and beside Him was the cross. After nailing Him to the cross, the little tree heard Jesus utter words of forgiveness and peace that were offered to the whole world. Then Christ completed His work of redemption and said, "It is finished," then He gave up his spirit.

And the cross began to understand. "Oh, this is so wonderful," it whispered. "In all my dreams I never thought I could point to God in this way. I am part of a miracle. This is better than all my dreams." - Credit: "Stories I Love to Tell," by Chicago: Moody Press.

For years the cross has been a major stumbling block for many people. Out of the ugliness and agony of crucifixion, God accomplished the greatest good of all- the redemption of sinners.

Maybe faithful Christians are foolish. But one cannot deny the evidence of the changed lives of those who have claimed Jesus Christ as Lord. They know the truth and the truth has set them free. Others have denied the truth and are now captive to a troubled and distressed conscience. When skeptics are scornful because Christians do not have all the right or perfect answers about God and the Bible, just recall this statement by Vance Havner: "I do not understand all about electricity, but I don't intend to sit in the dark until I do." A believer's faith is the same.

Revelation 2:7 says, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God."


-Rev. Duane Jones

Easter Sunday sunrise service to be held at fairgrounds

The Ministerial Association of South Morrow County wishes to invite everyone to an Easter Sunrise Service at 7 a.m., Easter Sunday, March 27 at the Morrow County Rodeo Grounds football field.

The speaker this year is Rev. Andrew Johnson from the Heppner Christian Church. Music will be lead by the Heppner Elohim Association of South Morrow County wishes to invite everyone to an Easter Sunrise Service at 7 a.m., Easter Sunday, March 27 at the Morrow County Rodeo Grounds football field.

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