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INTERFAITH VOICES

Truth is scattered across the globe

ALICE RAMPTON

In the tradition of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, scriptures are of great importance. We consider them holy and sacred. We also value the inspired doctrines of other faiths. President Russell M. Nelson counseled Church members, “Learn to listen, and listen to learn from neighbors. ... Opportunities to listen to those of diverse religious or political persuasion can promote tolerance and learning. ... God is the source of all truth. The Church of Jesus Christ embraces all truth that God conveys to His children, whether learned in a scientific laboratory or received by direct revelation from Him.”



ALICE RAMPTON

Over the years, Brigham Young University, an educational institution operated by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, hosts speakers representing various viewpoints. Between 7,000 and 10,000 students attend these forums which have included:

- Francis Cardinal George of the Roman Catholic Church
- Joe Lieberman, a Jewish politician
- Dr. Albert Mohler, president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
- The Rev. Dr. Andrew Teal, an Oxford Anglican scholar
- The Rev. Dr. William Barber II, a pastor in The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
- Ari Berman, president of Yeshiva University
- David Brooks, a New York Times columnist
- Dallas Jenkins, creator of The Chosen
- Dr. Alwi Abdurrahman Shihab, a Muslim scholar

Religions throughout the world each hold sacred their books of holy writ. The Latter-day Saints recognize five books in their library of scriptures including the Old and New Testament (Bible), the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine of Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price. They represent our “standard works” and provide a framework on how to live our lives. I will share two scriptures from each of these five books that I have grown to love over the years:

Old Testament
Isaiah 9:6 – “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”
Micah 6:8 – “What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love

ABOUT INTERFAITH VOICES
The weekly “Interfaith Voices” column includes a regular rotation of writers representing the broad spectrum of spiritual voices throughout the mid-valley. The column is coordinated by the Reverend Barbara Nixon, who can be emailed at revbabs2000@gmail.com.

mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”

New Testament
Ephesians 4:32 – “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.”
1 Corinthians 16:14 – “Let all that you do be done with love.”

Book of Mormon
Mosiah 2:17 – “Learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God.”
2 Nephi 26:33 – “He denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond and free, male and female; and he remembereth the

heathen; and all are alike unto God.”

Doctrine and Covenants
D&C 109:7 – “Seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom, seek learning even by study and by faith.”
D&C 88:118 – “The Glory of God is Intelligence or in other words, light and truth.”

Pearl of Great Price
Moses 6:56 – “And it is given unto them to know good from evil; wherefore they are agents unto themselves.”
Moses 7:18 – “And the Lord called his people Zion, because they were of

one heart and one mind, and dwell in righteousness; and there was no poor among them.”
Elder D. Todd Christofferson, a current Apostle in our faith, taught that “truth is scattered liberally across the globe.” Obstacles may arise when one seeks for truth in this world of misinformation, but over many millennia and throughout world history, scriptures have offered light and truth. They have provided consistency and guidance to cultures and people everywhere. “Seek, and you shall find.” Matthew 7:7.

Alice Rampton is a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. She co-directs a nonprofit agency for Ukrainian children through the Corvallis Sister Cities Association, volunteers for the Benton County Historical Society, and has co-authored a book for grieving parents. She and husband Mark have seven children.

RELIGION CALENDAR

Sunday service: Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, 2650 NW Highland Drive in Corvallis, will share God’s Word and Holy Communion at 9 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 9, both in the sanctuary and via livestream worship at www.svlc-corvallis.org and [facebook.com/shepherdcorvallis](https://www.facebook.com/shepherdcorvallis).
Pastor Eric Bohlmann’s sermon is “Do Not be Afraid.” Shepherd of the Valley is a place of personal and group well-being and invites you to find rest and renewal in Jesus Christ.
Multi-gen Bible Study, and Sunday School for younger children, are offered as opportunities for further

study of the teachings of Jesus and how we might apply them to daily life. Multi-gen concludes the final interactive workshop about vocation and how to find and provide gratitude through our daily tasks, responsibilities, and activities.
Shepherd of the Valley is fully accessible.
Sunday worship: First United Methodist Church, 1165 NW Monroe Ave. in Corvallis, will hold a worship service at 9:30 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 9, in person and at [facebook.com/CorvallisFUMC/live](https://www.facebook.com/CorvallisFUMC/live).
Deepa Iyer writes, “More and more people are acutely realizing that issues of justice, equality,

and solidarity cannot be denied, dismissed, or delegated to others alone. These issues have become our business.” How do we, as a faith-based institution whose foundation was formed around social justice, make issues of justice our business?
Baha’i devotions and discussion: “The Light Within the Lamp” is set for 10:30 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 9, via Zoom. The Zoom room will open at 10:15 a.m.
What is the nature of the human spirit? Does that spirit inform our thoughts and actions? If so, how, and how do we know that it does? Readings will explore the

requirements of the soul’s journey in this life and the next.
All are welcome to enjoy fellowship, readings and discussion. Visit <https://tinyurl.com/2ejv7c7h>, where you will find a copy of readings for Sunday and a Zoom link to join the meeting.
Dinner and program: After 5 Connection, affiliated with Stonecroft, will present “The Occasional Card” at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 11, at Lebanon’s Ma’s Restaurant, 2416 S. Santiam Hwy.
Star Heilmann from Corvallis will share with us the hobby of “card making.” Her presentation will include ideas on how to get started,

supplies you will need and the fun you can have creating cards for family and friends.
Guest speaker Judy Glenney is from Vancouver, Washington. Through the unique sport of weightlifting, Judy will speak about how she learned a new definition for femininity and champion. Please join us for Judy’s extraordinary story.
Cost is \$18 inclusive. Reservations are available from Sherri at 541-258-6414 or Nancy at nancy-pinizio@comcast.net. The group is not credit card-ready.
Concert: Sundays @ 3 presents Organ music of the Parisian Masters

at 3 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 16 at Church of the Good Samaritan, 333 NW 35th St., Corvallis.
Organist Zachary Duell performs his first solo recital at Church of the Good Samaritan since his appointment as director of music in 2021. The program will highlight the French-inspired sounds of the recently rebuilt and expanded Casavant-Hochhalter pipe organ – the largest musical instrument in Corvallis.
The concert is free and all are welcome. For more information, call 541-757-6647.

Trump creates task force to root out ‘anti-Christian bias’

WASHINGTON (AP) – President Donald Trump said Thursday that he wants to root out “anti-Christian bias” in the U.S., announcing that he was forming a task force led by Attorney General Pam Bondi to investigate the “targeting” of Christians.
Speaking at a pair of events in Washington surrounding the the National Prayer Breakfast, Trump said the task force would be directed to “immediately halt all forms of anti-Christian targeting and discrimination within the federal government, including at the DOJ, which was absolutely terrible, the IRS, the FBI – terrible – and other agencies.”
Trump said Bondi would also work to “fully prosecute anti-Christian violence and vandalism in our society and to move heaven and earth to defend the rights of Christians and religious believers nationwide.”
Hours after the two events, Trump signed an executive order directing the new task

force to identify unlawful policies, practices, or conduct by all executive departments and agencies, and recommend any additional presidential or legislative action.
Early in the day, the president joined the National Prayer Breakfast at the Capitol, a more than 70-year-old Washington tradition that brings together a bipartisan group of lawmakers for fellowship. He told lawmakers there that his relationship with religion had “changed” after a pair of failed assassination attempts last year and urged Americans to “bring God back” into their lives.
An hour after calling for “unity” on Capitol Hill, though, Trump struck a more partisan tone at the second event across town, announcing that, in addition to the task force, he was forming a commission on religious liberty. He criticized the Biden administration for “persecution” of believers for prosecuting anti-abortion

advocates.
And Trump took a victory lap over his administration’s early efforts to roll back diversity, equity and inclusion programs and to limit transgender participation in women’s sports.
“I don’t know if you’ve been watching, but we got rid of woke over the last two weeks,” he said. “Woke is gone-zo.”
Trump’s new task force drew criticism from Americans United for Separation of Church and State.
“Rather than protecting religious beliefs, this task force will misuse religious freedom to justify bigotry, discrimination, and the subversion of our civil rights laws,” said Rachel Laser, the group’s president and CEO.
At the Capitol, Trump said he believes people “can’t be happy without religion, without that belief. Let’s bring religion back. Let’s bring God back into our lives.”
The Rev. Paul Brandeis

Rauschenbush, a Baptist minister and head of the progressive Interfaith Alliance, accused Trump of hypocrisy in claiming to champion religion by creating the task force.
“From allowing immigration raids in churches, to targeting faith-based charities, to suppressing religious diversity, the Trump Administration’s aggressive government overreach is infringing on religious freedom in a way we haven’t seen for generations,” Rauschenbush said in a statement.
Kelly Shackelford, head of First Liberty Institute, a conservative Christian legal organization, disagreed, praising the creation of the task force and religious liberty commission.
“All Americans should be free to exercise their faith without government intrusion in school, in the military, in the workplace, and in the public square. We are ready to stand with President Trump to ensure that the religious

liberty of every American is safe and secure,” Shackelford said in a statement.
Trump also announced the creation of a White House faith office led by Paula White-Cain, a longtime pastor in the independent charismatic world. An early supporter of Trump’s 2016 presidency bid, she led Trump’s Faith and Opportunity Initiative in 2019, advising faith-based organizations on ways to partner with the federal government.
At Thursday’s prayer breakfast, she praised Trump as “the greatest champion” of religion, of faith and of God.
She’s the religious advisor “that he appears to trust the most,” said Matthew Taylor, a Protestant scholar and author of “The Violent Take It By Force: The Christian Movement That Is Threatening Our Democracy,” a 2024 book about the roles of White-Cain and other charismatic leaders who have been among Trump’s most

fervent supporters.
He said the faith-based office – depending on its mandate – may not raise major concerns. Past presidents have had similar ones.
“I’m actually much more concerned about this anti-Christian bias task force,” he said. In a majority Christian country, “it’s a bit absurd to claim that there is widespread anti-Christian bias. ... When a majority begins to claim persecution, that is often a license for attacks on minorities.”
In 2023, the National Prayer Breakfast split into two dueling events, the one on Capitol Hill largely attended by lawmakers and government officials and a larger private event for thousands at a hotel ballroom. The split occurred when lawmakers sought to distance themselves from the private religious group that for decades had overseen the bigger event, due to questions about its organization and how it was funded.

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