



# Lewiston Church of Christ

## May 17, 2020



### Weekly Services

Sunday Morning

Bible Study 9:45 AM

Worship 10:45 AM

Sun. Day/Evening Groups

Wed Bible Study 7:00 PM

#### MINISTER

Joel Solliday: 208-743-2711

#### ELDERS

Doyle Dawes: 208-836-5718

Cal Groen: 208-602-8165

#### DEACONS

Education – Rick Richardson

Fellowship – Joe Bieren

Finance – Tom Hill

Outreach – Mark Whittaker

#### AREAS OF SERVICE

Building – Ken Vogtman

Custodian – Ron & Cindy Roberson

Fellowship – Joe & Carrie Bieren

Grounds – Cody & Doyle Dawes

Music Ministry – Ron Roberson

Secretary – Renee' Hill

Technology – Eric Kjorness

Technology – Cody Dawes

## A Chariot of Fire

*“Hope is patience with the lamp lit.”*  
(Tertullian, c. 155 – c. 240 AD)

According to scripture, the prophet Elijah and his protégé Elisha were walking along the Jordan River when Elijah was suddenly taken up in a chariot of fire to heaven in a whirlwind. This story inspired Wallis Willis (reportedly a slave) in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, to compose a classic *spiritual* entitled, “*Swing Low, Sweet Chariot.*” In those days, a widespread longing for life on the other side helped make this song popular, especially among slaves.

“Swing Low” was a song conceived in suffering. So was “Michael, Row the Boat Ashore,” calling for the archangel to come ashore to pick us up. In many *spirituals*, crossing the River Jordan was a metaphor for death, with heaven as the “promised land” on the other side. Sometimes, a train rather than a boat or chariot was the vehicle of deliverance.

If a chariot of fire swung low for you, would you get in? Would you trust the driver? Could you stand the heat? If you are like me, you might equivocate. Don't row that boat up too closely to the shore quite yet.

Perhaps my willingness to hop into that hot chariot is hampered by my pampered life. It's hard to focus on heaven when the cares of this world intrigue me as they do. It's hard to relate with long-gone slaves and other strugglers who longed for deliverance from a life that offered little more than a lot more suffering. Survival looks pretty good to me. Besides, others (like my mom) depend on me.

Elijah's option still challenges me to focus my heart on heaven. Instead of living in a superficial worldly fog of fun and games, or in a scary cloud of fear and fatalism, our heavenly hope is the lamp we carry, guiding us forward in the real world into which God has placed us. Longing for heaven does not mean wallowing in a stagnate pool of religious escapism or floating on a blissful cloud. It calls us to face our challenges here and now with a courageous love that comes only to those willing to light our lamps with a heavenly purpose.

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