



Cross Current

August 2025

Mother Esme's Notes for August

Dear friends,

Everyone needs a guardian for house and home, a sense of security and defense. As it was and will always be and as every generation says, "We live in rough times!"

Guardians come in all shapes and sizes: guardian angels most certainly, and any one of God's creatures gifted with a courageous heart.

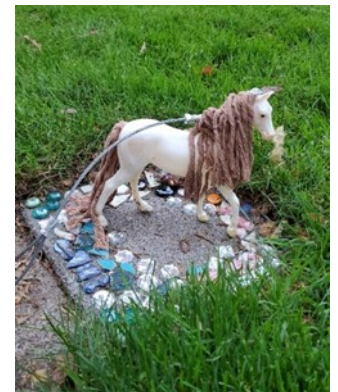
One could get a rather large dog to do the work of securing the boundary, but then dogs have to be walked a lot and tend to eat one out of house and home, which rather defeats the purpose. Cats don't



much want to be bothered with guarding anything beyond their own necessities for comfortable living and will befriend anyone who has decent bedding or a tasty meal. I'm told geese do a fairly effective job of chasing, hissing and just generally being offensive to intruders. The problem with geese, however, is that they often fall short of discerning the good guys from the bad guys which can be disconcerting for their own home owners who tend to put off weeding on a regular basis.

Thus, it makes sense to welcome other kinds of guardians onto one's property. The strong, silent kind. This fellow is not only sending a message of "only enter if you've got the right credentials," he also reminds me of a very wise, rather exacting presider reminiscent of an aging liturgy professor. He may be made out of wood, but I'd think twice before venturing up to the front door without producing the appropriate forms filled out correctly in triplicate.

This little guardian, on the other hand, is small but valiant and gives an impression of rapid response and quick getaways on the order of the Belmont Stakes, at least. The chase would be on, and intruders would not be coming in first at the rail!



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Mother Esme's Notes for August continued



No, we are not at Trafalgar Square, yet clearly this guardian of the gate must have come through one of the garden guardian training programs made available there. This sentinel, and his counterpart on the other side of the steps, is in no mood to accept suspicious strangers. His muscular power is magnificent, and worthy of respect and I would think twice about arousing him from his immoveable stare!

Have you ever seen a fox or come eye to eye with one. Well, I have, and I've always liked foxes, from a distance. They generally won't chase you, but they will slink carefully around and about, making sure you don't tread onto or near their territory. They look very sweet and probably

seem more welcoming than most guardians set to dissuade unwelcome intrusions, but best to pass them by and pretend you didn't notice them. They are not, after all, true guardians. Let's just say they serve as good lookouts (and they are very cute!)



Yes. She's lovely but has clearly lost round one. Let's just say she's doing her best with a house that needs a lot of attention, and when the owners of the house finish sprucing it up hopefully, she too, will get her head on straight, and learn what the guardian thing is all about. Meanwhile, she can pretend to be a guardian angel-in-waiting, an admiral goal and one that will insist on the necessity of understanding what the people she is guarding really need. She will have to work hard, however, to earn her wings, before attaining true guardian angel status and recognition.

It takes a lot more than just a pretty face to earn one's wings especially amid the trials and tribulations of daily living in this world. There is much to guard against: a backdrop of injustice, thoughtless and cruel, self-centered and mentally unstable shootings, political, economic and social divides, climate change, tsunamis, wildfire, and oh...yes....wars all over the world.

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Mother Esme's Notes for August continued

One can't simply order up a pair of wings and think one can become a guardian angel. It takes understanding God's purpose in life, thereby offering caring and kindness, rather than neglect and a mean spirit. Wings can never be earned with the latter.

We can only aspire, and with steadfast faith in Christ as our Guardian and Savior, we can imagine feather-covered nubs pushing out from under our shoulder blades. As Christians we are all qualified to guard and have the credentials to prove it. Jesus said, "Follow me." And we did. Then Jesus said, "Go. Go out and spread the word about love, mercy and grace and guard my people from all the demons in the world." And we will try, with God's help, we can, and we must.

We journey together,
Mother Esme+

*The Lord himself watches over you, the Lord is your shade at your right hand,
So that the sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.
The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; it is he who shall keep you safe.
The Lord shall watch over your going out and your coming in, from this time forth for evermore.
(Psalm 121: 5-8)*



Cleaning Up!

Thank you so much to Cindi, Kathryn, and David for cleaning up the pile of shrubs that were trimmed previously and Kathryn for hauling them off in her truck. Good job!



Arts & Crafts Faire Planning Meeting Date Set

Please put August 3 on your calendar for a planning meeting to get ready for the Arts & Crafts Faire 2025. We will meet after church in the chapel, so grab your coffee and join us please!

Cindi Caruso



Art Camp Fun

July 28—August 1

The Gotta Have Heart Art Camp was held the last week of July and is still going on as of this writing. The first day, everyone was welcomed to camp and they met to learn the camp

songs and our Storyteller (Rebecca Fowler) read from our book for this year, *"Maybe"* by Kobi Yamada, a wonderful book which introduced the ethos of the camp which is that we can create anything our imagination leads us to create. All creation is wonderful, especially when it comes from our own heart!

Finally, the artists of the day presented some of the ideas they have for our campers to consider creating. Then, it's off to the studios they went!

Stay tuned for how it went in the September edition of the *Cross Current*.



...From the Treasurer

Financial Facts—June 2025

	June Actual	2025 YTD Actual	2025 YTD Budget
Income			
Contributions*	\$17,833.00	\$80,848.76	\$46,737.50
Other Income	\$212.35	\$884.87	\$1,250.00
Total Income	\$18,045.35	\$81,733.63	\$47,987.50
Expenses	\$8,101.04	\$51,910.78	\$51,914.50
Net (Deficit)	\$9,944.31	\$29,822.85	(\$3,927.00)

Thank you to everyone for keeping your pledges current . You can always mail your pledge to: Christ Church, PO BOX 478, St. Helens, OR 97051

* Contributions include Regular Pledge and Musician Pledge payments and Plate offerings.

Christ Church and Community Meals

Community Meals, started by First Lutheran Church in St. Helens, is a powerful example of what happens when people from different churches, organizations, and businesses come together to serve others. This program now thrives thanks to volunteers from across our community.

Every Tuesday evening, nearly 90 people are welcomed with a hot meal — and often leave with extra food to carry them through the week. I am now assisting the cook Henry, in the kitchen on the first Tuesday of the month. Cindi Caruso and Mother Esme are some of the servers on the first Tuesday. We've found it deeply rewarding, and we would love for you to experience the same joy and purpose.

There's a role for everyone. Whether you prefer cooking, greeting guests, serving, setting up, washing dishes, or simply lending a hand, your time and heart are needed. Tasks are divided into simple shifts, so your commitment can be as little as a few hours a month.

Another easy way to help? Support the Pantry Box!

Located in our church narthex, the Pantry Box helps supply essential non-perishable items that Community Meals must have to meet health department regulations. Paper towels, disposable bowls, and other kitchen supplies are always in demand, especially since cloth towels aren't permitted when serving the public. By contributing these items, we free up grant and donation funds, allowing them to go directly toward purchasing food for those who need it most.

In the past few months, our congregation has donated coffee and paper towels. For August, we're asking for donations of **paper bowls** (used for salads). You can easily find them in packs of 20, 24, or 50 at Safeway, Fred Meyer, or Grocery Outlet.

If you're interested in helping, please reach out to one of our current volunteers. We'd love to have you join us at Community Meals!

Kathryn Brittain



Parish Health Ministry

Bodyweight Exercises

Do You Have 15 minutes? Want to strengthen your body and improve balance? Try BodyWeight Exercises. Bodyweight exercises don't require any equipment or special clothing or the need to go to a gym. Fifteen minutes can provide you with an excellent whole-body training opportunity. The exercises below can be done at any level of fitness, and they provide many benefits. What benefits, you ask? Better balance, strength, agility and perhaps a boost for your brain. What's not to like? To get you started, I found two simple bodyweight exercises that just about everyone can do.

One: Squats. This is a key exercise to maintaining your ability to stand up and to maintain balance. Start your squat from a seated position. Keep your feet hip width apart, with your toes pointed forward. Plant your feet on the floor. From there, keep your chest up, knees out, and push down through the floor to stand up. Lower back down to the chair.

If you have a knee issue that hurts when you squat, start from a seated position and push up just a couple inches. Once you feel some tension, release to sit back down. Even with this small range of motion, you'll still build strength in your legs, hips, and core.

Work towards 2 full cycles of 10 repetitions without pain or soreness in your muscles or joints.

Two: Wall push-ups

Wall push-ups are a safe and effective exercise to build upper body strength. Here's how to perform them:

Stand facing a wall with your feet shoulder-width apart and arms extended in front of you, hands on the wall at shoulder height.

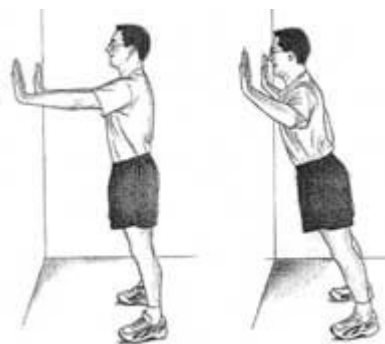
Bend your elbows to lower your body towards the wall, keeping your feet planted and body straight.

Push back to the starting position, ensuring you maintain a controlled motion.

Start with 5-10 repetitions and gradually increase as you build strength.

Benefits of wall push-ups include improved upper body strength, better balance, and enhanced quality of life.

That's it! Give a try and see if you don't start feeling stronger, more flexible and more stable.



Get Involved at Christ Church

Christ Church has many ways you can get involved in the life of the church:

- Host a coffee hour
- Become a Lector
- Become an Usher or Greeter
- On outside cleanup days, come help.
- Water the garden, as needed in the summer time
- Attend learning events
- Help out on our various events
- ...and many more opportunities.

Find the various sign-up sheets in the Narthex or Parish Hall.

It is a great way to get to know the members of the congregation!



Calendar



For the most up-to-date calendar of events, please see the website: StHelensChristChurch.org

Sunday Services - Eucharist—Sundays 10 am

Men's Fellowship Breakfast—First Saturday of the month at Warren Country Inn 9 am.

Prayer Shawl Group—2nd Thursday of the month at 1:30 pm

Arts & Crafts Faire Planning Meeting—8/3 after church in the Chapel.

Prayer Requests

Send requests to Kathryn Brittain by email at kathjbritt@gmail.com or phone 503-438-5908.

Christ Church Contact Information

Our Website is: www.sthelenschristchurch.org

Email: office@StHelensChristChurch.org

Phone: (503) 397-1033

Search Facebook: Christ Episcopal Church

Mother Esme's email:

MotherEsme@StHelensChristChurch.org



To receive the "Cross Current" newsletter via email rather than printed or "snail mail" email us to be put on the list.

Church Buildings for Rent

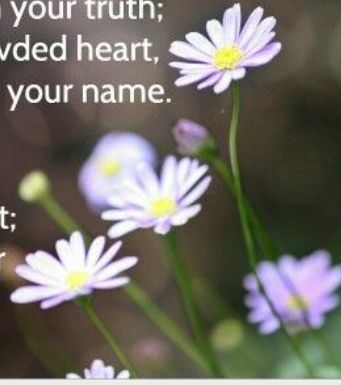
Do you know of any nonprofits seeking space for meetings or events? We are making the Parish Hall and other spaces (including outdoors) available for rent for reasonable prices. Please contact the church office at: office@StHelensChristChurch.org if you have ideas or questions.



Cross Current

August 2025

Teach me your way, O Lord,
and I will walk in your truth;
give me an undivided heart,
that I might fear your name.
I will praise you,
Lord my God,
with all my heart;
I will glorify your
name forever.
Psalm 86:11-12



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(503) 397-1033 *find us on* 



Christ Episcopal Church
PO Box 478
St. Helens, OR 97051

Home of:



BLESSING WOODS
NATURE PARK & LABYRINTH

THE
Episcopal
CHURCH



welcomes you