



Cross Current

August—September 2023



Christ Episcopal Church

35350 E. Division Road, St. Helens, OR 97051

(503) 397-1033

find us on



God and Vacations

Dear Friends,

I am—for once—writing this article before its due date, because on the due date I will be absent from my office and without my computer. Like, I hope, most of you, in the summer I take a vacation. On July 16 and July 23 other people will lead the service here at Christ Church (thank you!)

I will be taking a vacation from church, but not from God. Here is the outdoor chapel at Ring Lake Ranch, the ecumenical retreat center near Dubois, Wyoming, where I will be spending a week.



Every morning, a short ecumenical prayer service is offered. Attendance is optional, and many choose to catch a few more minutes in bed before rising for breakfast. But last year at least there were a

handful of us who chose to begin each day with prayerful attention. Attention to the clouds and the birds and the sound of voices united in prayer.

The Ranch Director led the prayer service, and offered a short reflection, generally including a reading or prayer from someone else. In a book of those collected reflections, I found this poem. I offer it for your reflection, with the prayer that this summer you step away from your normal work, whatever that consists of, and find a place of beauty and interest. A place that invites you to pay attention and to listen for the Spirit.

Vicar Jaime

Receiving Place, by Bonnie Thurston

Place does not normally give
what one does not seek.
Receiving its gift
requires just being there,
listening into silence,
watching, waiting
like the osprey for fish,
like her chicks for supper,
like the thirsty sage
for evening's storm,
like great boulders
for lightning's shattering strike.
Knowing place requires
being broken open.

Reprinted from Andrew Blackmun, Holy One Go with Us: Reflections from the Wilderness, 37 (2019).

...From the Treasurer

Financial Facts—June 2023

	June Actual	2023 YTD Actual	2023 YTD Budget
Income			
Contributions	\$5,522.00	\$57,307.27	\$42,840.00
Other Income	\$290.00	\$7,502.00	\$8,397.50
Total Income	\$5,812.00	\$64,809.27	\$51,237.50
Expenses	\$11,345.91	\$49,427.22	\$53,781.00
Net (Deficit)	(\$5,533.91)	\$15,382.05	(\$2,543.50)



Thank you to everyone for keeping your pledges current .

You can always mail your pledge to the church PO Box:

Christ Church
PO BOX 478
St. Helens, OR 97051

Bishop's Advisory Committee

Meeting Summary July 2023

This is a busy time of year for the BAC. We have a financial audit coming up, along with a mutual ministry review which will help us determine if the church is on a path that is right for us. In the past two months we approved the purchase of the baby grand piano, and the hiring of David Lee Bassett to be our new church musician. We approved repairs to the roof for cleaning the gutters.

We had a report from the designers of the permaculture project and approved their design. This design is on display in the hallway of the church.

The Tea and Treasures event was held on July 8th, and the results are reported separately in the newsletter.

We approved an ecumenical event on August 6th to celebrate our permaculture project. We will meet with several other churches at 2:30 pm that Sunday.

Carol Craig
Senior Warden



Parish Health Ministry

Can You Trust Those TV Ads for Prescription Drugs?



My neighbor asked me if what he heard on a television ad for a prescription drug was “real”. The question got me reading and researching information behind marketing prescription drugs to the public, and what I found was troubling.

Prescription drugs were approved by the FDA in 1977 for direct marketing to the public, despite the fact that most other countries in the world ban the practice. While pharmaceutical companies argue that the ads educate people about medications and side effects, the industry has some common practices that make me wonder.

The Harvard Health group published the following points to remember about information that is common on TV ads:

“The purpose of drug advertising is to sell a product, not educate consumers. The language of drug ads makes that clear. Consider these common examples.

A Leading Treatment for this Condition. Perhaps, but what if there are only two or three drugs available for that condition? When considering any treatment, it’s important to know what the other options are and how they compare, but it’s unlikely this additional information will be mentioned.

No Other Treatment Has Been Proven Better. This suggests that the advertised drug is great. Yet it might be only as good as—and no better than—older, less expensive, or even over-the-counter competitors.

In clinical studies, this medication proved more effective than standard treatment. So how good is standard treatment? If a drug only helps 20% of people with a disease and “standard treatment” helps 15%, is the added cost and risk of side effects of a new therapy worthwhile?

Testimonials—This Drug Gave Me My Life Back. The power of the anecdote is undeniable. The problem is that studies actually matter. Otherwise we’d all be taking the advice of the proverbial “snake oil salesman” recommending unproven and potentially dangerous drugs because someone said it worked for them. And, of course, that someone is often a paid actor or spokesperson.”

Parish Health Ministry *continued*

As I continued my research, I found out that TV drug ads are made by a formula that you can easily see once you know what to look for. The people who have the medical condition that the drug treats are always healthy and active. They always look like a young version of an older adult. They frequently will add a dog or a child, and will always add a visually interesting activity when the announcer begins to tell you about potential side effects. Some of these side effects are very dangerous, and the advertising industry knows that we tend to pay more attention to the interesting new visuals that we will to the warning.

Experiment yourself: the next time you see a prescription drug advertised on TV, note how healthy the people said to be suffering from the disease appear to be. Watch how the ad expands to show more happy, healthy adults (don't forget the dogs and children that suddenly show up) when the warnings are being noted. It's a formula that works to sell these very expensive drugs. I find myself sitting on the couch yelling, look how healthy everybody is! There's the kid! There's the dog!

One last point: it's also very informative to check out the cost of some of these drugs. One 60 gram tube of Opzelura cream costs \$2,000! One injection of Dupixent costs 3,787.58! No wonder each of these drugs has so many ads on TV...

Now that my eyes are opened (and yours, too, I hope), next time I'll talk about over-the-counter medication ads on TV.

Carol Craig

Parish Health Minister



Columbia County Habitat for Humanity Updates



When Habitat initially held informational meetings for homeowners and volunteers for our upcoming Vernonia project, we were blessed to meet Kimberly Normand. Kimberly had been working with R Kelley Construction, but has recently decided to start her own construction company in Vernonia. She has enthusiastically agreed to volunteer as the main contractor and site supervisor for our Vernonia home build. We are excited to finally begin working on the

lot we've waited on for so long so we are bypassing our normal groundbreaking ceremony and are planning to begin excavation this coming week. We hope you get a chance to meet her, her passion for construction as well as the local Vernonia area is infectious!



Judy Ann Johnson from the First Lutheran Church made the quilt pictured here and requested that we sell tickets for a drawing to be held August 15th to

support Columbia County Habitat for Humanity.

Angela Carlson
Administrative Assistant
Columbia County Habitat for Humanity



Win this Quilt!

Tickets are only \$1 each
-or- 6 for \$5

Made by Judy Ann Johnson
817432
Longarming by Brenda Birmingham

Drawing held August 15th

Tea and Treasures Report



The first annual Tea and Treasures event was on July 8th, and it was both fun and lively. The event made a total of \$677 for the church between our 15% of sales and our bake sale. About half of our profit came from the goodies! We had 19 people who sold items at the event, and our biggest problem was finding enough room for everyone and their treasures.

The BAC is considering having the event again, to make it a genuinely annual affair. We would like to have feedback from participants to give us an understanding of what worked well and what did not. The BAC will make a final decision in the next two months.

In the meantime, I hope you had the opportunity to declutter and re-clutter!

Carol Craig
Senior Warden



The Bake Sale Table was a success at the Tea and Treasures event.

Blessing Woods: Work Party and Final Concept Plan

We are grateful to Native Plantscapes NW for their efforts in creating the plan for Blessing Woods! The Steering Committee and Vicar Jaime worked with designer Catherine Trzybinski over the past few months to ensure that crucial elements are included. A large scale version of the plan is available in the church hallway for closer inspection. Soon we will begin ordering plants for the fall planting season.

To stay abreast of the project, keep checking our blog <https://christchurchsthelens.org/blessingwoods-nature-park>.



Ten parishioners wielding brush cutters attacked the invasive plants in the church woods on June 24. Special thanks to all who participated, especially Fred and Peggy Rolf who came by after the work party to haul off the accumulated debris

Final Concept Plan for Blessing Woods



Collect Plastic for a Bench

A new initiative tied to Blessing Woods has come to the church. We are now collecting plastic for the Lions Club and will eventually be rewarded with a bench for our nature park.

Peggy Rolf volunteered to spearhead the project. "This is one way to help combat the pollution the human race has created world wide," she said. "It's baby steps but it is stepping in the right direction."

Everyone can help by saving household plastic and bringing it to church to place in a blue tub in the narthex (left side as you enter the church).

Plastic must be clean and dry, stretchy not crinkly. Look for #2 and #4 sheet plastic, such as bags from frozen veggies and:

- wrap from toilet paper and paper towels
- ice bags (remove metal clips)
- newspaper sleeves
- plastic grocer bags
- produce bags that you pull from a roll
- Ziplock bags
- wood pellet bags
- bubble wrap

plastic mailer envelopes (including Amazon)

We can't accept used kitchen wrap, chip. Cookie bags, candy wrappers, coffee bags or pet food bags, and can't take rigid containers.

The St. Helens Lions Club participates in an innovative recycling program offered by TREX, makers of composite decking. By collecting 500 pounds of plastic bags in six months, they earn a recycled plastic/wood bench shipped from TREX to be placed wherever they desire in the community. The Lions have already placed benches at local schools and several parks. TREX is able to keep more than 400 million pounds of plastic and wood scrap out of landfills each year through their recycling programs.

If you have questions about the project, talk to Peggy at coffee hour.



A bench similar to this will eventually be presented to the church by the local Lions Club.

July 4th Bell Ringing The Tradition Continues

On July 4th at 2:00 p.m., our church bell was rung 13 times by two members of the VFW, David Sleightam and Roger Antonich. This tradition has happened at least six times at Christ Church. This year it was attended by Hal and Jennifer Warren, Jim and Rebecca Fowler, and Kathy and Terry King. We had a nice visit with our guests and feasted on patriotic cupcakes. We hope more of you will join us next year.



Groundbreaking & Ice Cream Social



We are inviting the churches in the St. Helens Ministerial Association and our own congregation to a special blessing of our outdoor space project before construction begins. On **Sunday, Aug. 6 at 2:30 p.m.** we will walk the future area to be called Blessing Woods in prayerful contemplation and then enjoy ice cream cones. Please join us!



49th Annual Arts & Crafts Faire Coming Soon

The 49th Annual Arts & Crafts Faire will be held on Saturday November 11th this year. Like last year, we will be having it on one day only. We plan on bringing back the sale of soups and pies this year. Nancy Tarnai has obtained her food handlers license and promises to be present in the kitchen for fair. So, if you are interested in helping plan or participating by running or working in the kitchen, please contact Cindi for more information. Of course we will still need bakers to supply the bake table with goodies. Stay tuned for more information.

Calendar

Evening Prayer via Zoom—Thursdays at 5 pm

Sunday Service - Sundays 10 am in person and on zoom.
see the email invitation with the zoom link.

Blessing our Outdoor Space—Sunday August 6 at 2:30 pm

49th Annual Arts & Crafts Faire—November 11



Prayer Requests

Send requests to Kathryn Brittain by email at kathjbritt@gmail.com or phone 503-543-6870 or cell phone 503-438-5908.

Vicar Jaime's Office Hours

Thursday 1—5 pm
Other days by Appointment

FYI



Our Website is: www.christchurchsthelens.org

Email: christchurchsthelens@gmail.com

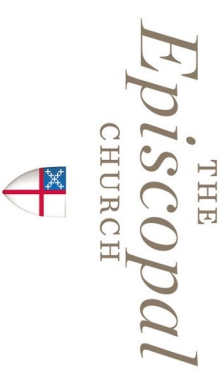
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welcomes you