



# *Cross Current*

*June—July 2024*



O heavenly Father, *who hast* filled the world with beauty: Open our eyes to behold *thy* gracious hand in all *thy* works; that, rejoicing in *thy* whole creation, we may learn to serve *thee* with gladness; for the sake of him through whom all things were made, *thy* Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*Book of Common Prayer page 814*

## **Christ Episcopal Church**

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*find us on*



Dear Friends,

I have been struggling with what to write in this, my last essay in the Cross Current. So I decided to go at it sideways, by starting with planning my last service, on June 30<sup>th</sup>. Liturgical planning is my “happy place” in ministry, and figuring out what I want to pray is a good starting point for figuring out what I want to say.

So I went to [www.lectionarypage.net](http://www.lectionarypage.net), and clicked on the calendar for June 30, which is Proper 8 of Year B. (This is where you can go to find out what the Sunday readings are for a particular Sunday. In this Season after Pentecost, you also need to know that we are following Track 1.) Here is what I found at the beginning of the Old Testament lesson:

“David intoned this lamentation over Saul and his son Jonathan. . . He said: “Your glory, O Israel, lies slain upon your high places!”

“This is not going to work,” I thought. “I hope that people in the congregation will be sad to see me retire, but neither of us is dying, much less been slain.”

Being a lawyer as well as a priest, I looked for a loophole. What other reading might I use while being faithful to my ordination vow to “conform to the doctrine, discipline, and worship of The Episcopal Church?”

You may not know of another book, besides the Book of Common Prayer, that can be used as a source of services: The Book of Occasional Services. This is where we turn, for example, for special seasonal blessings and prayers for dedicating church hangings. It contains a service that we are using on June 30, “A Service for the Ending of a Pastoral Relationship and Leave-taking from a Congregation.” That service has suggested Scripture readings. The one I choose to use is the beginning of the Song of Moses, his exhortation to the assembly of Israel.

Why only the beginning? Because after the initial praise of God, the song goes on to call the hearers “a perverse and crooked generation” and “foolish and senseless people.” Neither accurate in what I think of you nor a pastoral last message. This business of final messages is tricky!

Before being called here to St. Helens, I served as Interim Rector of St. Aidan’s in Gresham, and completed certification by the Interim Ministry Network. The message of that training was that every minister is an interim minister. Some have the title, and some stay longer than others, but all of us are privileged to drop into the life of a congregation, share

that life for a time, and then leave. Like people walking a labyrinth, who find that for a period they are pacing alongside another person and then the paths separate.

We go our separate ways, but we are changed by the encounter. I have learned something from each one of you, and I hope you have learned something from me. As a community we have experienced joys and sorrows. We have buried some beloved people; we have welcomed people who become beloved. In some cases, the people we have welcomed and the people we have buried are the same. The past is not gone, but lives as it affects us and the world today. This photo is of a print by Mary Lewis, that I bought at an Arts & Crafts Faire, framed, and hung in my river house.



You should know that when I am with colleagues, at Clergy Conference, for example, one of the things I say about this congregation is that you are kind. I have never heard back-stabbing, or had people come to me with feuds. I have watched you welcome people with generosity and openness. I pray that that characteristic continues.

Another characteristic of this congregation is that you live life as a participatory, not a spectator, activity. When you see something that needs doing, you tend to do it, not sit and complain if it is not done. You may need organization – someone with authority to say, “this is how we are going to do it.” I am confident that your BAC has the skills to do that, and with my departure they will also have the authority. I pray that you continue to find ministry to engage in, and work to do, so that when you call a new priest, he, she, or they will join in a moving current of love and ministry.

May God bless and keep you,

*Jaime*

May 23, 2024

# ***Parish Health Ministry***

## ***Why Be Concerned About High Blood Pressure?***

About half of all adults in the United States have high blood pressure, and the chance of having high blood pressure goes up as we grow older.

So what are the most common symptoms of high blood pressure? No symptoms at all. Most people with high blood pressure, even very high pressure, have few, or no symptoms.

Does that mean you have nothing to worry about?

No. High blood pressure may be “silent”, but that doesn’t mean that your body is not being damaged.

Let’s talk about what those numbers mean. High blood pressure means that you have two or more readings that are at or higher than 130/80. The upper number is your systolic blood pressure, which represents how much pressure your blood is placing on the artery walls when the heart contracts. The lower number is your diastolic number, which represents how much pressure your blood is placing on the artery walls when the heart rests between contractions.

When you have too much pressure on your artery walls, they can weaken and bulge outward, or break, which can lead to a stroke. Too much pressure makes your heart work harder, which can lead to heart failure, heart attack, heart valve failure, and kidney damage.

Normal and abnormal ranges of blood pressure depend on age, health conditions and risk factors. However, the American Heart Association provides the following general guidelines for adults:



## Why Be Concerned About High Blood Pressure?

Blood Pressure Category	Systolic mmHg	Diastolic mmHg
Normal	Less than 120	Less than 80
Elevated	120-129	Less than 80
Hypertension Stage 1	130-139	80-89
Hypertension Stage 2	140 or higher	90 or higher
Hypertensive Crisis	Higher than 180	Higher than 120

### Controlling blood pressure

If your blood pressure is in the **normal range**, stick with heart-healthy habits such as following a balanced diet and getting regular exercise.

If your blood pressure is **elevated**, work with your health care professional to control the condition.

In **hypertension Stage 1**, your health care professional is likely to prescribe lifestyle changes. They may consider adding medication based on your risk of heart disease or stroke.

In **hypertension Stage 2**, your health care professional should prescribe blood pressure medication and lifestyle changes.

In **hypertensive crisis**, you need medical attention.

- Wait five minutes after your first reading.
- Take your blood pressure again.

If your readings are still unusually high, contact your health care professional immediately.

Remember, the only way you will know if you have high blood pressure is to check. If you don't have a monitor at home, use one in a grocery store or pharmacy.

*Carol Craig*

*Parish Health Ministries Coordinator*

## ***Transition: Looking Ahead...***

On 19 May, we welcomed Chris Craun, Canon to the Ordinary in the diocese of Western Oregon, to preach and then meet with us during coffee hour. She sketched out the process for finding a new priest, as well as how the diocese will help.

To provide a priest for Sunday services and for pastoral events, we expect to mobilize several options. Chris hopes to provide a “care pastor” who would provide continuity, likely for two Sundays per month until our newly called priest can start. We will recruit supply priests for the remaining Sundays. As summer is fast upon us, when demand for supply priests is highest, we hope to move quickly.

Plan C, for Sundays when we lack a supply priest, we can organize our own service. Father Gary has graciously offered to assist, either presiding or preaching. We can field a team for Morning Prayer, using parishioners. Vicar Jaime will offer a two-hour training for interested members to learn the ins and outs of Morning Prayer, in preparation for leading services. Traditionally, two people lead each Morning Prayer service, so we don’t have to fly solo!

Carol Craig has cheerfully agreed to take on the role of music planning. With initial guidance from Vicar Jaime, Carol has begun selecting our hymns, service music and lectionary readings. She will coordinate with our musician, David Bassett.

While Susan Wellington is out of town, Carol also is preparing the Sunday bulletin and seasonal service leaflet. Cindi Caruso and Kathryn Brittain finish the process: printing, folding and stapling. Yay team!

The BAC has invited Nancy Tarnai to serve as a part-time (5 hrs/week) Parish Administrator beginning 1 June. In this role, she will assist the Senior Warden with administrative matters during the interim between vicars, in addition to her activity as Coordinator of the Nature Park.

The big picture search schedule takes us through year-end.

First, the BAC organizes the Profile and Search Committee. Target date: end of June.

The Committee’s first job is to write the church Profile, which the Diocese posts as a job notice. The Profile tells potential applicants who we are and the gifts we are seeking in our new priest. The Diocese

## ***Transition: Looking Ahead... continued***

will provide us a consultant to advise the Committee, and stimulate our thinking with examples of Profiles from other successful searches. Target date: end August.

Job posting. Target date: September.

Candidates express interest. Target: Oct – Dec.

Initial interview by search committee, by zoom and in person. Target: Oct -Dec.

Second interview by BAC and vote. Target: Oct-Dec.

Some of us remember this process over a decade ago. Sherine Amick recalled at our meeting with the Canon that back then, church members grew closer together. We look forward to a similar, grace-filled experience together in 2024.

*Rebecca Fowler*  
*Senior Warden*



## ***50th Annual Arts & Crafts Faire Planning Meeting***

This November we will celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Arts & Crafts Faire here at Christ Episcopal Church. This will be a special event for our church. Let's have a meeting on July 7<sup>th</sup> after church to share ideas on projects that will magnify our achievement for the church in bringing together artists and the community for fellowship, food and beautiful art.

This year will also be extra special as our Blessed Woods should be fully established by then and some of our visitors may choose to take a walk through the woods.

*Cindi Caruso*

# **Caregiving 101: A Guide to Family Caregiving for Older Adults**

**June 8 and June 15 10-11:30 am**

Sooner or later most people will be caregivers. Over 53 million people were providing unpaid care in the US in 2020, according to American Association of Retired People (AARP). Many never imagined themselves in that role—it just sort of happened. For some, it was an accident or a serious illness in someone who matters, for others it was a gradual decline in such a person. For some, that person is a partner, others a parent, others a friend, or even a friend of a friend. Help is wanted (or needed) and people step up.

Caregivers help maintain the health and well-being of older adults and people with disabilities or chronic health conditions. These two classes will help you learn about the work involved in caregiving and in caring for yourself. We will meet in the Parish Hall at Christ Church. There is no fee, and you don't need to be a church member to attend. I hope to see all of you there, with any interested friends in tow!

*Carol Craig*

*Parish Health Ministries*

## **...From the Treasurer**



### Financial Facts—April 2024

	April Actual	2024 YTD Actual	2024 YTD Budget
Income			
Contributions	\$5,607.00	\$32,674.00	\$25,226.67
Other Income	\$998.00	\$12,455.00	\$5,466.66
Total Income	\$6,605.00	\$45,129.00	\$30,693.33
Expenses	\$8,542.70	\$35,788.10	\$36,109.66
Net (Deficit)	(\$1,937.70)	\$9,340.90	(\$5,416.33)

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



# ***Nature Park Watering & Weeding Help Needed***



We will be asking parishioners to "adopt" areas of the nature park to water and weed this summer. If interested, see Nancy Tarnai. We will provide hoses. Volunteers will need to watch the weather this summer and when it's hot and dry, visit the nature park as needed to water. We will host some casual weeding parties to keep on top of the blackberries and ivy.

## ***Nature Park Work Party***

On May 11, 20 volunteers from the church and community spent a couple of hours in the nature park with Endre Elteto and Joni Shaffer-Elteto, owners of Native Plantscapes NW learning about the maintenance needs of the nature park.



Jonie Shaffer-Elteto of Native Plantscapes NW leads volunteers through the nature park.

# ***The River Labyrinth***

When our congregation discussed how to use our outdoor space for ministry, way back in January of 2020, one of the popular options was a labyrinth. Saturday May 25, Bishop Akiyama blessed our new labyrinth, which I call “The River Labyrinth.”

Why “River?” First, because the shape, which is a spiral, evokes an eddy in a river. Second, because the larger stones that separate the path are river rocks. The large stone at the entrance is Columbia River Basalt.

Most labyrinths take their shape from medieval European church labyrinths, such as the famous one at Chartres. The spiral is a more ancient, and universal, shape. In Great Britain, it is found in Neolithic and Celtic art. On our continent, it is found in ancient and contemporary Native art. One contemporary artist, Tonawanda/Seneca artist Linley B. Logan, noted that in his culture, the spiral is, “a pattern of life-giving forces.” (<https://eighthgeneration.com/collections/kitchenware/products/pattern-of-life-bowls-set-of-2>, retrieved May 21, 2024).

Most labyrinths, even those based on a spiral, employ switchbacks: sharp reversals of direction. We chose not to do that because we want the labyrinth to be usable by all, including wheelchair users. We chose to make the path wider, and the turns more gradual, to make the experience more universal. The path is packed, small-grade, gravel. Over time it and use it will become more packed and provide a harder surface.

In addition to the spiral shape, the labyrinth incorporates two other patterns.

First, the stones embedded in the center of the labyrinth form a cross, the Christ symbol. These stones were part of the original altar in this Christ Church building, and we found them in the woods when clearing invasive plants. The cross at the center signifies the centrality of Christ to the life of this community that created and hosts the labyrinth.

Second, there are single flat stones embedded in the path at the four cardinal directions, in a sunwise pattern. Walking the labyrinth, you come first to the East stone; second to the South stone; third to the West stone; fourth to the North stone. You can stop and look in the direction, and reflect on what lies beyond the horizon, in the landscape. To the East is the Columbia River Gorge; to the North are the great mountains of the Cascades; to the West is the Pacific Ocean; to the South is Willamette Falls. Or you can reflect on what lies closer to hand, within sight: trees, bushes, seasonal water. Walking a labyrinth

forces us to slow down, and experience ourselves in a unique place and time on the earth.

The stones indicating directions also allow the labyrinth to be used in a variety of Native spiritualities, in which the four directions have symbolic and spiritual significance. In the Lakota tradition, for example, each direction has a specific spiritual significance, and a walker may reflect on which one has the most meaning for them at this time.

In the European Christian tradition, walking a labyrinth is a bodily accompaniment to prayer, either worded or wordless. You may choose a repeated prayer, such as “Lord, have mercy,” or a longer prayer such as those attributed to St. Patrick or St. Francis. Or you may pray a question that is on your mind and heart, and sometimes you may reach peace with an answer.

In the dedication of the labyrinth, we used the following passage of Scripture: “You will show me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy. *Psalm 16:11.*” May all who walk the River Labyrinth experience the presence of the One source of life and joy.

*Vicar Jaime*



## Goodbye

Most readers of the Cross Current know that we will bid farewell to Vicar Jaime at the end of June.

I hope my thoughts here echo our congregation's fond memories from the nine years she has led and pastored us. Some will never forget her warm presence at a hospital bedside. Others drew sustenance from her beautifully worded prayers and liturgy. Sermons, delivered without notes, often wove together Scripture, history and personal spirituality in stimulating, sometimes provocative, reflections. Her most tangible gift will be the Blessing Woods and Labyrinth, an opening to future inspiration and ministry for us to explore.



And then there's Steve! We will miss his bountiful spreads at Coffee Hour, his big bouquets of garden flowers, and his lively chats about orchids, cooking, Oregon fish and wildlife, and most any other subject you might raise.

We will miss them. We also understand the seasons of life, bringing change as we release the present and turn toward the future. May both we at Christ

Church, and Jaime and Steve, find God awaiting us along the road, with grace and blessing for our way ahead.

*Rebecca Fowler*  
*Senior Warden*

## Worship Leader Training

With the impending retirement of Vicar Jaime, it would be helpful to have more trained worship leaders to lead Morning Prayer occasionally. Jaime will offer a training Saturday, June 15 from 1-3 p.m. at the church. If you are interested in helping lead services, please come to this event.

Morning Prayer is a great way to lift up lay leadership and to experience the full breadth and flexibility of our *Book of Common Prayer* and our Episcopal worship.

## ***Dedication of Blessing Woods Nature Park and Labyrinth***

A lovely dedication of the nature park was held May 25, with the Rt. Rev. Diana Akiyama, bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Oregon, officiating.

Vicar Jaime Sanders and parishioners read scripture and the bishop blessed each part of the nature park with holy water and prayers. The service began with the vicar reading a land acknowledgement that the church occupies the traditional, ceded lands of the Kathlamet Chinook. "We of the Episcopal Church in Western Oregon are living out our commitment to ensure that this church will be of enduring benefit, not only the state of Oregon, but also to the people on whose ancestral lands it is now located and the plants and animals that once flourished here," she said.

The children's play area, patio area, woods and labyrinth were each dedicated and then the crowd of about 40 mingled over homemade cookies in the parish hall. The concluding prayer was: "Blessed be the animals, the citizens of a planet without borders, the neighbors we see in all their variety and beauty. Blessed be the forests, the trees and the plants, who breathe for the whole world each day. Blessed are the waters, the rivers and seas, the liquid life that connects us all wherever we are. Blessed are the ancient stones, the keepers of secrets, in whose life story is written our own, as long or brief as it may be. Blessed be the Earth, the good Mother, the only home we have."



The Rt. Rev. Diana Akiyama, bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Oregon, officiated at the event, which drew over 40 attendees

"We are grateful for the donors who have brought this park to this point," Vicar Jaime said.

*Nancy Tarnai*

# Memorial Service for Dorothy Fleury



There will be a memorial service on **Saturday June 8 at 2 pm** at Christ Church for long-time Christ Church member Dorothy Fleury who passed away February 5, 2022.



## Columbia County Habitat for Humanity Updates

Columbia County Habitat for Humanity turns 25 this year! We'll have a big splash with sales and prizes in our ReStore on June 1st. Come on by for a free lunch as well!

Our applications are open now until July 15!

We recently had a lot in St. Helens donated to us with a very small footprint of buildable area. We're planning to build a 2-bedroom, 1 bath, no garage home for our next partner family. Could that be you or someone you know? While our income guidelines vary based on household size, **please keep in mind that there can be some flexibility as well** since income can be determined in different ways. Most important is that the applicant is either a US Citizen or legal resident and have lived or worked in Columbia County for at least one year before applying. Please email or call for more an orientation meeting: 971-203-0020 ([info@habitatcolumbiacounty.org](mailto:info@habitatcolumbiacounty.org))

Angela Carlson

Administrative Assistant

Columbia County Habitat for Humanity

Household Size (35-60% Area Median Income)	Annual Income (before taxes taken out)
1 	\$28,910 to \$49,560
2 	\$33,040 to \$56,640
3 	\$37,170 to \$63,720
4 	\$41,300 to \$70,800

# 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.

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

**Diocesan Renewal Gathering**— June 1, 9 am to 4 pm at St. Paul Episcopal  
Church, 1444 Liberty Street SE, Salem.

**Caregiving 101: A Guide to Family Caregiving for Older Adults**—  
June 8 and June 15, 10-11:30 am in the Parish Hall.

**Dorothy Fleury Memorial Service**—June 8 at 2 pm.

**Worship Leader Training**—June 15 1 pm to 3 pm

**Vicar Jaime's last day at Christ Church**—June 30

**50th Annual Arts & Crafts Faire Planning Meeting**—July 7 after church.



## Prayer Requests

Send requests to Kathryn Brittain by email at [kathjbritt@gmail.com](mailto:kathjbritt@gmail.com) or  
phone 503-543-6870 or cell phone 503-438-5908.

**FYI**



Our Website is: [www.sthelenschristchurch.org](http://www.sthelenschristchurch.org)  
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