



Cross Current

June-July 2025

Mother Esme's Notes for Rogation Sunday Week



Dear friends,

She's called a Rose of Sharon. *Hibiscus syriacus*, when we're being formal. Although she came into being in Asia, she's named for the gardens of Syria, where she grew thousands of years ago. It was then her name was lifted up in scripture* and, in time, her name came to be given to the Divine One who would walk among us on earth one day, the One who was and is called, the Rose of Sharon, the Lily of the Valley, Jesus, the Son of God. It seems fitting that Jesus would be named so, since like her, his humble beauty has never ceased to grace gardens, deserts, mountains and valleys and, in time, he became known everywhere and anywhere anyone took time to notice, even though he never asked anyone to.

Like a disciple of Jesus, one of a million birds flying across tens of thousands of miles, like so many winged apostles flying across the flyways of time, was destined to carry the seed of the Rose of Sharon across oceans and spread her beauty across new lands, and she took root where she was dropped and bloomed where she was planted.

Now, she grows softly and silently in every other garden you could come across, and sometimes she's carefully tended, given fertilizer in spring, and water in summer. Or one finds her growing on her own, as I did, untended, amid wild weeds and trees in a plot of government-owned land, softening the edges of rusty chain link and barbed

wire, simply being who she was made to be, available to anyone with eyes to see and ears to listen to her quiet story.

Just like Jesus.

Like Jesus, she stopped me in my tracks. During these days of rising human confusion, fear, challenging noise, loud argument and protest, awareness of her was breathtakingly calming. Receiving her message of serenity and her invitation to simply observe her quiet blooming amidst the unknown all around her, provided much-needed balm for the soul and a welcome quickening of hope.

Just as it is when one discovers Jesus.

Showing up, the way Jesus does; amid the tangled weeds of people's lives, from the mountains to the valleys, amid the deafening noise of human scrambling need for attention, to the quietly humble of heart. It doesn't matter to Jesus how he is discovered, by whom, or where. His beauty and grace blooms wherever and whenever he has been sought after and found.

Hibiscus syriacus, like countless flora and fauna we celebrate on this Rogation Sunday week, seems to gently offer the meaning of creation itself. One begins to understand why God created and what God so profoundly wants us to learn from God's creation. To simply be who one is meant to be and to bring beauty into the place where one finds oneself. To discern the truth of one's God-given gifts, in order to identify to the world who one really is and how one is really to serve. To know when to produce and when to rest. When to grow and when to wait. To lower the sound of one's voice, to lessen the need for attention, in order to realize the truth of one's existence. With grace and beauty, love and peaceful existence, one might already have found it. Like the Rose of Sharon, one can come to know how to serve in place.

Maybe this lone Rose of Sharon is unaware of the impact of her beauty or the depth of her history. Maybe she is unaware that people will stop and admire her as they do. She is invisible, yet visible. Present, but not proud. Magnificent, with few requirements. Teaching us that she is who she is, and that she asks only to be loved because she exists everywhere for all who care to notice along the way.

Like God. Like Jesus.

We journey together,

Mother Esme+

* *"I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valley...." (Song of Solomon 2:1)*



Art Camp is Shaping Up!

HEARTY thanks to all who are helping to plan GOTTA HAVE HEART ART CAMP!

We have received our first four registrations and are thrilled that they are a parishioner's grandchildren. We are getting the word out and expect to see registration forms rolling in.

Background checks have been initiated, and volunteers are registering for Safe Church Training. This is a fantastic step in the process and we appreciate all who are participating.

Three professional artists have volunteered to help with the camp so we'll have lots of fun activities. There will also be T-shirt, backpack and name tag decorating. We might even paint a mural on the new Blessing Woods fence.

We could use your help with finding youths to be camp counselors. If you know of anyone who could use a week's worth of community service hours, please let us know.

Art Camp meetings happen Wednesdays at noon in the Parish Hall and all are invited to bring their good ideas.

Mark your calendars for July 28-Aug. 1 for a week of adventure at the church!

Nancy Tarnai and Mother Esme

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

Christ Church Community Donations

Have you noticed the decorated tubs in the narthex? We have returned to collecting for our community donations.

We did the Food Bank tub for many years until the pandemic. If you see a good deal on non-perishable, in-date foods, consider buying some for our church to donate to the local Food Bank, whose funds have been cut back this year.



The second tub is the Community Meals Pantry tub. We started the project before the pandemic to help First Lutheran's Community Meals, a successful free

meal program every Tuesday. While it is mainly First Lutheran's project, many other churches and businesses in the area contribute by volunteering, cooking, serving, and donating. They have a team that has excellent funding talents. However, the budget is still tight. Our tub is for helping with those non-perishable items that run out too soon. Coffee, paper towels, and butter are some of these. (I know butter is not non-perishable, but we put a small tub in the kitchen refrigerator when it is needed. They use a lot of butter.) Every month, we check with them and see what is needed. This month (May), we are collecting coffee. In June, we will be collecting paper towels. They are always very appreciative when we take our donated items.

Mother Esme has a third project to help those in need. The planning is currently in the beginning stages. It is very similar to the brown bag project of years ago, but will not include food.

These are strictly voluntary opportunities for our congregation to help the less fortunate.

Kathryn Brittain



From the Senior Warden

This month my topic is our outdoor property: building, landscaping and signs.

For the building exterior, Norm Keck has stabilized the stairs into the church, a total of four sets of stairs. He also has cleaned the gutters on both sides of the parish hall. Years of debris! We'll find someone more suitable to clamber up ladders and access the roof to clean the remaining gutters. Any recommendation? Also if you notice something related to our buildings which needs attention, do let Norm or Theresa Muth know. They have a list.....

Driving along Hwy 30 by Dahlgren's, have you noticed our gleaming church sign? The Bishop commented that it looked rusty. Before leaping to buy a new one, Nancy Tarnai inspected closely and decided to scrub with soap. What a transformation! The sign wasn't rusty, just dirty. The Bishop also suggested, in jest?, that we tie helium balloons to our highway sign, to be more visible. We have a couple more conventional ideas to try first. Keep an eye on our sign. Thanks to Cindi's work, our sign post gleams with an eye-catching coat of white paint. Way to go, Cindi!

As our Blessing Woods is starting its second summer, the pollinator wildflower garden is maturing and the single-stick shrubs are reaching a more noticeable height. We are grateful for the personal attention lavished on our nature park by the Native Plantscapes folks. Our thanks too for the reliable diligence last summer by Nancy Tarnai and her volunteers Kathryn Brittain, Cindi Caruso and Peggy Rolf to water the fragile young plantings. The goal of Native Plantscapes' head, Joni Elteto, is for the park to need only a few work-parties by church volunteers each year. Not a big burden for a church full of experienced gardeners. Joni and our master gardener Flora Brown will collaborate over the summer months so we learn the full scope of maintenance and can coordinate the work during these months.

Speaking of work parties, on May 2 a slew of volunteers joined Flora for a second work party to plant donated ferns and post-Easter lily bulbs and to prune the foundation plantings

Our thanks to Joni Elteto for introducing Blessing Woods to an interested donor who has given Christ Church \$5,000 for enhancements to the park, tools for volunteers, a sign board for us to communicate with people who visit the park. He understands that our church aims to develop activities built around Blessing Woods that will bring new people to our grounds and some, to enter our doors as prospective new members. The Gotta Have Heart Art Camp is the first of these programs. We are grateful for the extra funds to support our plans.

Rebecca Fowler
Senior Warden



Diocesan Renewal in Salem



Nancy Tarnai with the Rev. Dr. Miguel De La Torre and Mother Esme at the Diocesan Renewal in Salem.

Mother Esme and Nancy Tarnai represented our church at the Diocesan Renewal event in Salem May 5. They found the speaker, the Rev. Dr. Miguel De La Torre, to be amazing, motivating and nothing short of "mind blowing."

Hailing originally from Cuba, Dr. De La Torre is a Professor of Social Ethics and Latinx Studies at the [Illiff School of Theology](https://www.illiff.edu/) in Denver, Colorado. He preached the sermon at the Holy Eucharist service in Salem, then gave two other talks about history, immigration and our country's treatment of the downtrodden.

He has written 50 books on a variety of topics. If you are interested in listening to his thought-provoking ideas, or watching one of his podcasts, visit <http://drmigueldeatorre.com/>

Nancy Tarnai

Safe Church Safe Communities Training Online

The Diocese has a policy that requires anyone that is in a leadership role or working with children take the Safe Church Safe Communities training. This training is now online. It is important for all members of Christ Church to take this training, especially since we all will be helping out with the Gotta have Heart Art Camp in July.

We have already had one member go through the course in one day and it was not that hard to do. You can break it up into several days if you need to.

- Register for the online course at: <https://ecwo.org/safe-church/>
- The Safe Church Coordinator will create an account on Praesidium Academy for you and send you an invitation link to the platform.
- You will receive the link from Praesidium Academy, ***donotreply@praesidiuminc.com***, with instructions about the courses required for certification. **Please note:** the system may take up to one week to generate an invitation link to Praesidium Academy, the platform for Safe Church. Check your spam/junk folder if you do not see the email. Once you accept the invitation from Praesidium Academy, you will need to create a password for your account.

If taking the trainings online, you may begin the training.

Let's have everyone take the training as soon as possible.

If you have any questions, please contact Nancy Tarnai.

Parish Health Ministry ***Do You Have A Rash Behind Your Ears?***

I have from time to time discussed various vaccines and the need for adults to maintain immunity for some diseases. With measles on the rise this year, I got to wondering if older adults such as myself who had measles as a child (and I remember those itchy bumps and fever very well) can get measles again. I looked it up and here's what I learned:

According to the CDC, people born before 1957 were exposed to measles epidemics and have thus likely developed an immunity to the disease, so they do not need to undergo vaccination when they're older. However, individuals who received an inactivated measles vaccine in the 1960s, or were never vaccinated when they were a child, are recommended to get another round of shots, as is anyone born after 1957 who has no record of ever receiving the MMR vaccine.

However, according to [vaccines.gov](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz/downloads/p/13-0010.pdf), anyone born during or after 1957 who has not had measles or been vaccinated is at risk and should get at least one dose of MMR vaccine. Two doses are recommended for adults who are at higher risk, such as:

- College students, trade school students, or other students beyond high school
- Those who work in a hospital or other medical facility
- International travelers or those who are passengers on a cruise ship
- Women of childbearing age

So there's my answer. I don't need the vaccine, but you might!

By the way, a rash that begins behind your ears is a possible sign of measles.

Carol Craig
Parish Health Ministry

Bishop's Visit

Bishop Diana Akiyama visited Christ Church on Sunday April 27 the week after Easter Sunday. The members gathered for a group photo followed by a wonderful coffee hour enjoyed by all. Then Bishop Diana met with the members of the Bishop's Advisory Committee (BAC).



...From the Treasurer

Financial Facts—April 2025

	April Actual	2025 YTD Actual	2025 YTD Budget
Income			
Contributions*	\$5,156.00	\$48,832.00	\$31,158.33
Other Income	\$40.00	\$652.52	\$833.33
Total Income	\$5,196.00	\$49,484.52	\$31,991.66
Expenses	\$10,326.29	\$40,980.44	\$34,609.66
Net (Deficit)	(\$5,130.29)	\$8,504.08	(\$2,618.00)

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.



Updates

Our Vernonia home is finished! We are so excited to celebrate with Cheri and her family on June 14th as they prepare to begin their journey owning this home built by so many hands! Please RSVP to: info@habitatcolumbiacounty.org to find more about the parking details as soon as we have a plan put together. We would love to have you all here to help us bless this home and join in the wonderful wishes for a happy, secure future at last!

Angela Carlson
Family Services/Admin
Columbia County Habitat for Humanity



You're
invited!



The LORD bless you and keep you;
the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;
the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

Numbers 6:24-26



\$185
PER CHILD

Fun, Creative Activities
For First to Sixth graders
July 28-August 1, 2025

- ❖ A secular camp in sacred surroundings.
- ❖ A week of discovery and exploration.

INCLUDES

Storytelling & Song | Fiber Arts
Drawing & Painting | Music & Dance | T-shirt



WHERE?

Camp sponsored by:
Christ Episcopal Church
35350 E. Division Road
St. Helens

WHO?

- ❖ Local Professional Artists
- ❖ Experienced Director
- ❖ Local Youth Counselors
- ❖ Safety Trained Staff
- ❖ Loving Assistants
- ❖ (Parents always welcome to visit)

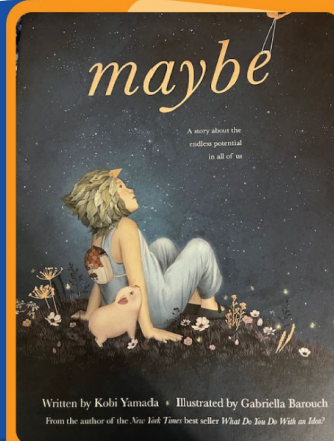
WHEN?

9 a.m.-3 p.m.
(3 p.m.-5 p.m. after camp care available)

REGISTER AT

<https://sthelenschristchurch.org/childrens-art-camp>
or Scan the Qr

Leave a message for Nancy Tarnai 503.397.1033 & she'll get back to you.
Email: SocialMedia@StHelensChristChurch.org



**"DO EVERYTHING WITH LOVE.
FOLLOW YOUR HEART AND
SEE WHERE IT LEADS YOU."**

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

Gotta Have Heart Art Camp Planning Meetings — Wednesdays at Noon in the parish hall

Pentecost Sunday—6/8

Gotta Have Heart Art Camp—7/28—8/1

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 Nancy Tarnai, socialmedia@sthelenschristchurch.org if you have ideas or questions.



Cross Current

June-July 2025

Almighty God, on this day you opened the way of eternal life to every race and nation by the promised gift of your Holy Spirit: Shed abroad this gift throughout the world by the preaching of the Gospel, that it may reach to the ends of the earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Collect for Pentecost Sunday, Book of Common Prayer



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(503) 397-1033

find us on 



Christ Episcopal Church

PO Box 478

St. Helens, OR 97051

Home of:



THE
Episcopal
CHURCH



welcomes you