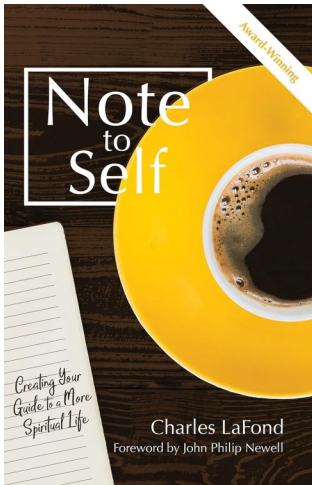




Cross Current

March 2025

Weekly Lenten Study with Mother Esme+



NOTE TO SELF by
Charles LaFond

Lent is our time to take stock. Who am I now? How have I changed? How has the world changed and what will be my way of being in the world at this time of re-assessment? What does God want of me now and in the future still before me?

Episcopal priest Charles LaFond helps us in our quest for answers

to these kinds of questions and more, as he guides us in the wisdom, creation and application of a personalized Rule of Life, with our own built-in daily reminders of how to live the life we want and need to live and the life God desires for us.

On Zoom

Starting in Lent on Wednesday March 5th, 2025

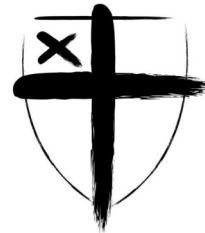
6:30pm—7:30 pm Study

7:30 pm—7:45 pm Compline

Join us as we learn together how to create our own personal Rule of Life in order to design stepping stones for our own journey toward a deeper spiritual life.

If you would like to have the book, it is available via www.forwardmovement.org or Amazon.com

I look forward to sharing this time with you, M. Esme+



Please join us for the Ash Wednesday Service on Wednesday March 5th at noon.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Do you enjoy knitting or even crochet? Come join the Prayer Shawl Ministry group that meets on the second Thursday of each month at 1:30 pm in the Chapel. Currently a group of 4 members, all are welcome. If you don't know how to knit or crochet, the group members will do their best to get you started.

In 2024, seven shawls were blessed and given to members of our congregation or personal friends of our congregation. During the meetings, the group shares current projects and prays for those who will be recipients. The group has been using patterns from a book titled "Prayer Shawl Companion".

The finished shawls are kept in Mother Esme's office. If you know someone who needs a little extra comfort



around their shoulders, contact Mother Esme or Patrichia Altimus. Recipients are kept confidential to us, only the person who delivers the shawl knows to whom it goes.

If you have more questions, contact Pam Vetsch.

A note from Mother Esme+,



Dear friends,

Sometimes we get the idea that Church should look like the church we grew up with, or came to know later in life, or worship in every Sunday, or just now and then. But it's not true. Church comes in all sorts of shapes and sizes. Like this one. Someone erected it on a riverbank as a sort of church-like shelter. That's appropriate. What else should a church be if not a shelter. Shelter from a world gone haywire, shelter from weather not far behind. Or simply a place of escape, to find peace and respite from all that is relentless outside. A place for prayer, wherein one can more easily hear the sound of God's voice, once the conversation has begun.

The shape of the Cross doesn't much matter either, as long as one can clearly see loving arms of grace and mercy reaching out. The arms of the cross invite one to lift it high, just as we do

when we enter into worship. Countless eyes around the world have caressed the sight of it as the cross makes its way down naves of all lengths and breadths, weaving a little back and forth, up and down as the human body carrying it sways with each step. Countless heads instinctively bow down and sometimes tears are shed at its passing by, each heart somehow wanting to walk with Jesus to the foot of the altar. Take me with you, I pray.

It seems a long time since we experienced the enforced isolation of the COVID pandemic. Zoom became a household word, leading us to see faces in surroundings that became oddly familiar as time went on: each home space becoming a part of pandemic-Church as we came to know it so well. Unfortunately, for some, collective worship became part of the memory of church as we knew it; seeing a familiar service bulletin, sitting ourselves in a familiar pew, greeting familiar faces, singing, praying and enjoying a good visit after worship, watching the cross make its way toward the altar.

Due to habits formed during the pandemic, we now find ourselves as part of a worldwide new kind of Church as we, like all others, move toward a combination of ways to come together for worship during the week and on Sundays. The word most often used is "hybrid," a word which reminds me more of Hildie the Dog than church! Although we have choices between coming to church in person, watching Sunday morning services on a computer, or phone via live-stream technology, it is still the same Church. Our church. A place that we humans recognize as familiar.

All that being true, nevertheless, there is no technology that can compare with coming home to our familiar church, seeing familiar surroundings filled with people we know and receiving Holy Communion together. Whether made of sticks or marble, whether built to the glory of God with pinnacles rising to the heavens, whether located on Division Road in St. Helens or on a riverbank as a kind of shelter from the rigors of the world, it's the particularities of the people found inside them that bring pleasure to God and God knows, God loves them all.

Remember that old Joni Mitchell song, "don't it always go that you don't know what you've got till it's gone..."

Come to church. Take the time. You belong here.

Mother Esme+

February, 2025

We journey together.



Joan Heide Memorial Service



With sadness and with gratitude, we give thanks for the life of our sister, Joan, who was called by our Lord, leaving her earthly life in the early hours of Wednesday, February 19th. Joan rose in glory following a life filled with faith and love. While we grieve for our loss as a community, we give thanks for the opportunity to have journeyed beside her and we offer gratitude that her earthly struggle is over.

Father of all, we pray to you for Joan, and for all those whom we love but see no longer. Grant to them eternal rest. Let light perpetual shine upon them. May her soul and the souls of all the departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen. (BCP 498)

Almighty God, Father of all mercies and giver of comfort: Deal graciously, we pray, with Joan's husband, Gary, and all who mourn; that, casting all their care on you, they may know the consolation of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP505.)

Memorial Service is Saturday March 8, 2025 at 11am.

Plastic Recycling at Christ Church Earns Two Benches So Far

Thank you to everyone who has brought their plastic in. We were able to get two benches before the recycle place upped the pounds of plastic donation needed to earn a bench within 60 days or something like that.



One of the benches we earned from plastic recycling is located next to the Little Library.

But I decided I really wanted to continue. Just think, all the plastic that we collect and I take to Kathy Syrstad (the stuff I can take to her) is not going into our oceans! So I will continue to sort the plastic and take what I can to Kathy. However, I want to ask everyone to please check the list I prepared of what plastic can be donated.

Unfortunately, I still sort out a large bag of inappropriate plastic each time. That bag has to go into the church's garbage cans, and I think I had to start a second garbage can the end of January. That means we get charged more for pick up.

So please continue sorting your plastics and I will check them and send them on. Please drop them off in the container in the Parish Hall. Clean oceans are what we want. I know I want to walk each summer in a clean ocean.

Peggy Rolf



Drop off your plastic in this bin in the Parish Hall.

PLASTIC RECYCLING PROJECT - ACCEPTABLE PLASTIC

Requirements: Sheet plastic only and **must be clean and dry**, stretchy not crinkly. Look near the bar code for **#2** or **#4** or "**Store Drop Off**". The following items are what are accepted:

- * Frozen veggie bags with the icons noted above.
- * Wrap from toilet paper and paper towels.
- * Ice bags (remove the metal clip).
- * Newspaper sleeves.
- * Plastic grocery bags including the new heavier one.
- * Produce bags that you pull from the roll.
- * Ziplock bags that you buy to use in the kitchen.
- * Wood pellet bags.
- * Bubble wrap.
- * Plastic mailer envelopes, such as from Amazon.

Cannot take used kitchen plastic wrap, chip/cookie bags, candy wrappers, coffee bags, pet food bags.

Cannot take rigid containers.

Christ Church to Host the Columbia Convocation

Christ Church will be hosting the Columbia Convocation meeting on Sunday March 9. We will need to provide refreshments of baked goods and will appreciate anyone who can bring some or help out with setup. Please contact Rebecca Fowler for more details.

Parish Health Ministry

Do we need to worry about bird flu?

Bird flu has been in the news quite a bit lately, and all of us have noticed that egg prices are skyrocketing as flocks are culled. In December, the press reported the first human case of bird flu (also sometimes called H1N5) in Oregon. This person was worked on a commercial poultry farm in Clackamas county. Also in December a cat died in Oregon from eating fresh cat food that used poultry infected with bird flu. The first human death from bird flu was reported in December involving a man in Louisiana who kept backyard chickens and fed wild birds.

These events led me to think about some common concerns. Can I get bird flu? What will happen if I get it? Can I do anything to protect myself and my pets? Let's answer them one by one.

Can I get bird flu? It's possible, but at this point not likely. As of January 3, 2025, there have been 66 confirmed human cases of bird flu in the U.S., primarily among individuals with direct exposure to infected birds. Raw eggs can contain the virus. Human to human infection remains rare. There is some very recent evidence that cows may pass on the virus in their milk when they have exposure to infected poultry. Bird flu virus has been found in raw milk, but pasteurization effectively kills the virus.

What will happen if I get it? Symptoms vary quite a bit, from a runny nose and congestion, to pneumonia and severe respiratory illness. As with Covid infection, people who have impaired immunity (underlying health conditions, older age) are more likely to be get very sick.

Can I do anything to protect myself and my pets? Practice good handwashing when you handle raw poultry. Cook poultry and eggs to at least 165 degrees to kill the virus. Avoid feeding pets raw or undercooked meat. If your cat brings home a wild bird, do not handle it with bare hands and keep watch for symptoms of respiratory problems in your cat. Do not drink raw milk.

And as always, keep yourself informed. Viruses are good at mutating, and what is true today may very well be changed tomorrow. This virus isn't Covid, but make certain that you are aware of when and if infection rates and patterns change.

Carol Craig
Parish Health Ministry



Updates

Our Vernonia project is sliding across home base! At long last we are approaching the end of construction for Cheri's new house! After hundreds of hours in education and lending a hand during the construction process, she and her teenage daughter and adult blind son plan to call this site "home" very soon. They have lived in Vernonia for many years now, some even without water and power. Their most recent rental has been sold recently requiring the family to be split up and living with friends, so they are very excited to finally be back together again under the same roof!



We have the doors all in, the flooring down and appliances in place at this time and we are currently working on paint trim. Carpeting will go in next week and then we'll be setting a date for the home dedication! Please let us know if you would like a notification for this event and we can celebrate this huge achievement together!

971-203-0020 or info@habitatcolumbiacounty.org

Angela Carlson
Family Services/Admin
Columbia County Habitat for Humanity

Blessing Woods Nature Park has an Instagram Account

Do you like to keep up with what's going on with Blessing Woods Nature Park? Follow on Instagram!

[https://www.instagram.com/
christepiscopalchurchpark/](https://www.instagram.com/christepiscopalchurchpark/)



**BLESSING WOODS
NATURE PARK & LABYRINTH**

Annual Meeting and Potluck

Results

The Annual Meeting and Potluck was held on February 2nd after the church service. It was well-attended and had a wonderful variety of yummy dishes to sample.

The meeting opened with prayer and a slide show by Terry King. Rebecca led the meeting and thanked all those who participated in everything that is done at Christ Church in 2024. Mother Esme talked about future plans and Cindi gave presented the financial report with a slide show. See the following page for the 2025 Budget.

We voted on the members of the BAC. Pam Vetsch is a new member and the following agreed to stay on the BAC: Theresa Muth, Jennifer Warner and Peggy Rolf. It was mentioned that Norm Keck and Theresa Muth were going to share the responsibilities of Junior Warden. The Convention delegates are Nancy Tarnai and Peggy Rolf.

Bishop's Advisory Committee Members

Rebecca Fowler, Senior Warden
Cindi Caruso, Treasurer
Peggy Rolf, Clerk
Carol Craig
Theresa Muth
Norm Keck
Jennifer Warner
Pam Vetsch



From the Senior Warden...

The weather is turning milder, and the BAC's attention is looking ahead into 2025. We welcome new member **Pam Vetsch**, and extend special thanks to Jr. Wardens **Norm Keck** and **Theresa Muth** as they tackle a list of projects.

Recently we discovered the furnace that heats the Parish Hall no longer works. Norm suspects a failed circuit board and is coordinating with a supplier to confirm the diagnosis. If this is correct, we expect repair in mid-March. Meanwhile **Terry King** has graciously offered to set up his space heaters when needed.

The BAC appreciates **June Dodson** and **Barbara Morris** volunteering to organize our hospitality activities. This includes recruiting YOU (!) to bring munchies to coffee hour and food for special occasions. They also will need extra hands to set up before and clean up after (why "up"?). Do say "yes" when they ask.

Did you know we have a master gardener among our midst? **Flora Brown** has agreed to work with the BAC to set up a maintenance plan for the large rhodies, pieris and other shrubs planted around our church building. I'll have more news next month. We envision this to be a Do It Yourself project for our congregation.

Carol Craig has piled a stack of cushions on a chair at the back of the sanctuary. If the pew would feel more comfortable with a bit of padding, grab a cushion on your way in. Let us know what you think about our experiment.

The Columbia Convocation will meet at Christ Church on Sunday 9 March, 3pm. This group includes representatives of churches from the northern coast to Portland, including Trinity Cathedral. It meets quarterly, to share news and provide input to the diocese. We take turns meeting at different churches or can attend by Zoom. **Peggy Rolf** and **Nancy Tarnai** represent Christ Church to the Convocation meetings as well as the annual Diocesan Convention.

Rebecca Fowler
Senior Warden

2025 Budget—Approved at Annual Meeting

CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH 2025 BUDGET

Acct Description	Pledges	Offerings	Earnings	Building Use	Carryover	Total Income
Plate offerings		2,000.00				
Pledge payments	77,720.00					
Music Pledges	13,755.00					
Arts and Crafts Faire			1,000.00			
Christian Education						
Contributions from diocese						
Investment Income			0.00			
Gain/loss on Sale of Investments						
Interest on checking						
Interest on savings						
Undesignated contributions		600.00				
Misc income			300.00			
Building Use reimbursement				300.00		
Fund Raising Income			300.00			
Cash Carryover						
	91,475.00	2,600.00	1,600.00	300.00	7,854.00	103,829.00
Expense Source	Vicar	Other staff	Program Operations	Building Operations		Total Expenses
Clergy parish portion	48,120.00					
Clergy Car allowance						
Employer Tax Expense		780.00				
Custodian		6,400.00				
Supply Organist		7,020.00				
Administrative Asst		2,714.00				
Supply clergy		1,200.00				
Diocesan Assessments			16,185.00			
Vicar discretionary fund			1,000.00			
Altar and worship			800.00			
Music and Organ			500.00			
Office administration			2,600.00			
Advertising			300.00			
Printing and paper			3,000.00			
Postage			500.00			
Website Management			200.00			
Christian Education			100.00			
Other operating expense			200.00			
Lay training and Education			100.00			
Fellowship/social			0.00			
Kitchen supplies			100.00			
Convention/Retreat			0.00			
Electricity				1,100.00		
Heat				1,810.00		
Other utilities				1,000.00		
Telephone & Internet				1,900.00		
Bldg repair supplies				300.00		
Bldg cleaning supplies				100.00		
Bldg paper products						
Bldg repairs				2,000.00		
Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment				0.00		
Building Insurance				3,800.00		
Major Property Improvement				0.00		
	48,120.00	18,114.00	25,585.00	12,010.00	0	103,829.00

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



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

Ash Wednesday Service—March 5th at Noon

Lenten Study on Zoom— “NOTE TO SELF” by Charles LaFond

Wednesdays in Lent starting March 5th

6:30pm—7:30 pm **Study**

7:30 pm—7:45 pm **Compline**

Joan Heide Memorial Service - Saturday March 8, 2025 at 11am.

Columbia Convocation— Christ Church is hosting Sunday March 9th

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper Cancelled

At the Annual Meeting it was decided to cancel the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper due to the availability of people able to help. We hope to bring it back next year.

Prayer Requests

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

March 2025

O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy: Be gracious to all who have gone astray from your ways, and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of your Word, Jesus Christ your Son; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen*

Collect for the Second Sunday in Lent



Christ Episcopal Church 35350 E. Division Road, St. Helens, OR 97051
(503) 397-1033

find us on 



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

Home of:



THE
Episcopal
CHURCH



welcomes you