



Cross Current

October 2025

Mother Esme's Notes for October



Dear friends,

It's not too late! Sure, the temperature has since August and September, thanks be to God. I don't think it's been since my 20's, living in Santa Monica, steps from the beach, that I've really enjoyed 85+ degree weather. It's a disgrace really, since one's experience with sizzling days in the neighborhoods around Portland are far more incidental than being delivered on a daily basis for months on end so who am I to complain? But grumble I do.

It's when I go grumbling to God that I get my come-uppance along with the suggestion to take a trip to appreciate more of God's creation which lies less than an hour away for most of us on this side of Portland. So, I did just that. Even when it was even 10 degrees or so cooler than Portland and here's a picture of my old beater sand and garden shoes to prove it. (I actually forgot to change this pair for my nice church shoes one Sunday, but nobody seemed to notice. But then, you were probably too polite to mention it.)

Whatever it is that is less than pleasant like overheated weather or overheated whatever else in life that this unpredictable world wants to throw at us, we can still take time to escape to a place calling us to shake our shoes off and feel the warmth of ancient sand under our feet. Some things never change regardless of the time of year. The tides continue to ebb and flow as Oregon mists materialize, almost unnoticed, to shroud slopes of pines edging toward the ocean. And, tiny Sandpipers still play tag with the salty edges of the sea.

Life.

Sometimes, we forget it's there or we forget to search it out, to find it. We get so stuck in what we come to think of as life; the daily grind of tough news and disturbing possibilities, that we begin to think what we are hearing and experiencing from waking to sleeping is all there is to life. It's living all right, of a sort. But is it life giving? How does it build us up into joy? How does it fill our soul with such appreciation that our hearts fill with eager anticipation for what new discovery will come next? How does it fill our senses with simple gratitude for God's gift of it?

No matter our circumstances, we owe it to God, to search it out, and not let it be wrested from us. That truth is as old as the grains of sand on all the beaches of the world. We're not supposed to make it up as we go along, entwining ourselves with yet more anxieties, some probably less real and more imagined. No matter where we are in life, merely trudging through it, rather than embracing it fully, was never God's intention. The free will God gave us doesn't mean we have to just sit there and let life happen to us. We were made to move toward it in whatever way we can, with enthusiastic intention and faithful hope.

We are supposed to take ourselves out of ourselves far more often than we do, taking time to smell the ocean air, see snatches of snow still clinging to tops of summer mountains, feel cooling spray as seemingly endless gallons of water fall into clear ponds hundreds of feet below. We must find our way there, somehow. Not just in summer, but at any time we want to remember what life is really about and how life is supposed to be savored.

Mother Esme's Notes for October *continued*

And when we do, perhaps the sound we hear in response may just be our own joyous laughter, gurgling up to be set free at last.

It's the sweet side of life that we need to keep uppermost in living. We have no need to worry that all the bad news will pass us by, it will still be there. But we don't have to live that news day in and day out. We can notice it, deal with it, dismiss it or address it, but we do need to get back to the part of life that is life-fulfilling as soon as we can, in order to.....well.....live.

I'd be the last to say we should all bury our heads in the sand until the world becomes a happier place. But it does make sense to this searching heart, that to kick off one's shoes to walk on the sand that was created at the beginning of time itself, is to be transported in an instant to innocent and simple acceptance of what life was intended to feel like in the first place.

We journey together,
Mother Esme+



***Go there!
(and dig your feet in!)***

¹⁰God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good." (Genesis 1:10)



From the Senior Warden



Folks who park on the Blessing Woods side of the church may have noticed the improvements of our parking lot edge barriers. Norm Keck, our Junior Warden, removed the disintegrating old ones (not creosote, so the transfer station accepted them) and has

installed new pressure-treated wood barriers. These now guard both edges of the parking lot. We expect them to last for years. Thank you Norm for all the heavy lifting!



Another note about parking. If you have a large vehicle, do park it on the graveled area located between the driveway and the tool shed. The area looks grassy, but there's a solid layer of gravel underneath. We realize our car park narrows as it leads away from the church to the street. It's difficult to maneuver large vehicles, so take advantage of the gravel area!

I'm pleased to report a new Directory is in the works. Thank you to Karen Van Winkle!

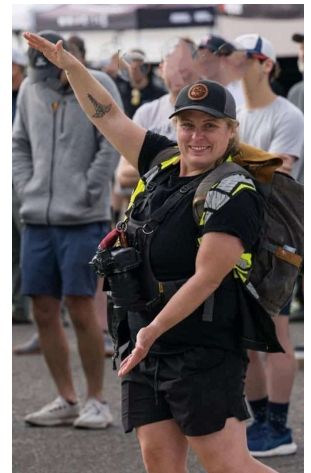
Rebecca Fowler

Some Good News!!

We will soon be seeing a new face among us from time to time. Her name is Hayley May, and her official title in the world is "Media Specialist." Hayley knows her way around our website (Go Daddy) and has some exciting ideas about how to bring us out of the shadows and into a bit more limelight with the help of a re-designed website and a new social media presence for Christ Church. Her aim is to help us attain a more significant presence in our community and surrounds. She will photograph us, publish our events, such as the Arts & Crafts Fair, Heart Art Camp, Blessings Woods events, classes and more. Hayley will also help us produce and print our bulletins when Susan Wellington heads for more sunshine

When you see Hayley, give her a happy welcome to Christ Church!

Mother Esme+



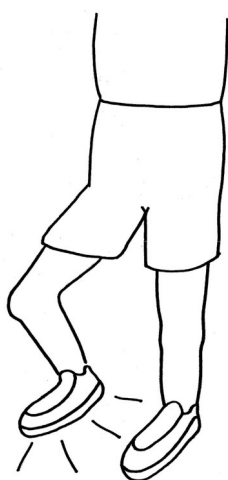
Parish Health Ministry

Maintaining a Healthy Balance

I'm not talking about your checkbook. As if wrinkles, grey hair and a thickening middle weren't enough, balance also tends to as our age increases. Nearly 1 in 3 adults over age 65 will fall each year, so it's no surprise that falling is the number one cause of injury among senior adults. As we age, our bodies naturally lose muscle, flexibility, and coordination—but the good news is that with intentional habits, you can maintain (and even improve) your balance. Here's how:

Staying physically active is the key. Activities like walking, taking the stairs, parking away from store entrances, etc., can keep you moving. Try to reduce your sitting time and spend time outdoors.

Here's some very simple balance exercises that you can do at home. When you first try these exercises, be sure to have a chair or other sturdy support that you can use to help you keep your balance.



Single Leg Stance

Stand on one leg while brushing your teeth or waiting for the microwave. This builds ankle and core strength which are important for preventing falls.

Toe Raises

Rise up on your toes—this takes some practice if you haven't tried it lately. It's another good exercise to try while waiting in the kitchen. It strengthens your calves, which helps you stay upright.

Tandem Stance

Place one foot directly in front of the other while standing in line. This narrows your base of support to challenge your balance.

Marching in Place

Do this while watching TV or waiting for your coffee to brew. It enhances dynamic balance and hip mobility.

None of these moves need to be formal exercise to benefit your balance. Keeping it simple helps to make improving your balance more practical and possible.

Carol Craig



"Country Christmas"

Come join us at the 51st Annual

Arts & Crafts Faire

Saturday November 8

9 am to 4 pm

At

Christ Episcopal Church

35350 E. Division Road (off Hwy 30), St. Helens

Featuring unique handcrafted items:

- Wood Art
- Wire-wrap gemstone and glass bead Jewelry
- Lavender Products for home, bath, beauty
- Quilted Artwork
- Pottery
- Cards and Paper Creations
- Watercolor Designs
- Decorative Crafts
- And Much More!

*Enjoy a bowl of soup or chili or a piece of pie and browse the bake table while you shop: cookies, pies, breads and more!
There will be a wonderful raffle basket too!*



Arts & Crafts Faire November 8th



The 51st Annual Arts & Crafts Faire will be held on Saturday November 8 from 9 am to 4 pm.

We will need lots of help to put this event on. Look for sign-up sheets in the Narthex. We will need help setting up, taking down, decorating, kitchen help, etc. For those of you who bake, please bring some items for the bake table.

This year we are having a "Home Gardening" themed raffle "basket". Thank you to all of you who have donated to fill it up with gardening things.

The proceeds from the Arts & Crafts Faire are split between the outreach committee and the church general fund. Last year we were able to give \$800 to the outreach committee.



United Thank Offering Ingathering Sunday November 9



Bring your blue UTO boxes to church on Sunday November 9 where we will be collecting them to send in to UTO.

The United Thank Offering (UTO) is a ministry of The Episcopal Church for the mission of the whole church. Through UTO, individuals are invited to embrace and deepen a personal daily spiritual discipline of gratitude. UTO encourages people to notice the good things that happen each day, give thanks to God for those blessings and make an offering for each blessing using a UTO Blue Box.

UTO is entrusted to receive the offerings, and to distribute the 100% of what is collected to support innovative mission and ministry throughout The Episcopal Church and Provinces of the Anglican Communion.

The theme for 2025 is Gratitude. Gratitude is a pretty simple concept but is something that many people find hard to practice. Being grateful requires simply noticing something good in your life and responding with thanks. Noticing more good things, feeling gratitude for them, and thanking the people who made those good things possible builds positivity and happiness in both the grateful person and the thanked people.

For more information about United Thank Offering visit <https://unitedthankoffering.com/>

Bottle Drive

If you are used to bringing in your returnable cans and bottles to be credited to the church general fund, we have a new process in place. We have green bags in the parish hall with labels that you can take home to fill up and return to the church.

I have set up an account with Safeway that is sooooo much easier than our former method of driving huge bags in a truck to the recyclable transfer station in Clackamas. Once there is a bag to return, I will take it to Safeway and drop it off. Within 2 weeks there will be money in the account that I can hand to the cashier and I will bring the money to church to be deposited with our usual Sunday collections.

Thank you for donating the returnable bottles and cans. Remember: only for those that say they are returnable in Oregon for 10 cents please. These donations will not be posted to any person's behalf though, so I hope that won't discourage anyone from donating.

Thank you!



Community Meals Donation for October



Thank you for contributing to the staples and non perishables used by Community Meals. Our donation for October is paper towels. Please leave it in the bin in the Narthex.

Kathryn Brittain

Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service Date Set

The Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service date will be Sunday November 23rd at 3 pm at St. Frederic Catholic Church. 175 S 13th St, St. Helens

Volunteer Focus—Flora Brown



This past year, Flora Brown was asked if she would take on the duties of coordinator for the church landscaping and Blessing Woods. Of course, she said yes!

Flora coordinated with Joni and Eric of Native Plantscapes NW who designed Blessing Woods Nature Park until their contract ended recently. The BAC and Flora will be looking into their fees to come out when we need more help with Blessing Woods.

The coordinator job includes working, when necessary, with Norm Keck and Theresa Muth the current Building and Grounds Wardens.

Flora has been making sure the shed is stocked with tools. An electric mower was donated by Susan Wellington...thank you Susan, and an electric string trimmer was purchased. Stay tuned for a future date to trim up the bushes and place mulch around the church.

We are no longer paying for a lawn service, so anyone willing to mow the small patch of lawn behind the parish hall as needed, let Flora know!

Flora appreciates the help from those in the congregation that show up for the several clean-up days throughout the year. Please help where you can.

Landscaping & Blessing Woods

This past month, a couple of trees out in Blessing Woods were topped and one was cut down. A tree trunk was left standing because it was hollow and had woodpecker holes in it. Other critters might want to live in it too. The downed trees were put in a chipper and we will be able to use that around the property.

The area under the trash cans was covered with gravel donated and delivered by Mark who also helped to place it with the help from our hired-hand Edward. That will be nice and keep the mud at bay.



We were able to use some of the wood chips in the area behind the parish hall rather than purchasing river rock as a

cover. This area cannot be planted due to underground pipes and wires.

Flora is planning a clean-up day in the near future where we will be trimming up those bushes that we were waiting to finish up blooming. She also hopes to pressure wash the foundation of the church that is visible before the mulch is placed around the church. Native Plantscapes NW will be mulching around the labyrinth but will also bring the mulch we need for around the church building. Stay tuned for the date!

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

Blessing of the Animals—Sunday October 5 at the 10 am service.

51st Annual Arts & Crafts Faire— Saturday November 8th 9 am to 4 pm

United Thank Offering (UTO) Ingathering—Sunday November 9th—Bring your Blue UTO Boxes to church.

Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service—Sunday November 23 at 1 pm at St. Frederic Catholic Church, 175 S 13th St, St. Helens.

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.



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Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray, and to give more than we either desire or deserve: Pour upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things for which we are not worthy to ask, except through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ our Savior; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Collects—Proper 22—Book of Common Prayer page 234



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find us on 



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Home of:



THE
Episcopal
CHURCH



welcomes you