



Cross Current

September 2025

Mother Esme's Notes for September



Dear friends,

Sometimes you just have to notice when the doors swing open. When you do, it's left to you whether or not you choose to go through them into whatever is waiting for you on the other side. If you don't, well then, you'll never know what possibilities might have been waiting for you. If you do, you might find yourself walking into something you only dared to dream about before. There may be change and new challenges. There may be relief and opportunity. You just don't know until you step across the invitation that is being openly offered by a door that is clearly open.

So it is for me this month, as I spend my vacation recovering from hip surgery! Here exists a door I never expected to encounter. The situation begs the question: do any of us expect to experience physical issues that

have heretofore been something we merely sympathized with, having little or no understanding of what someone else is going through as a result of them?

I went through the usual doors which lead to understanding my unexpected surgical dilemma: denial (what!), concern (when will this happen and how long is recovery?), fear (what if the surgery doesn't go well (really?)) But now my awareness turns to the "why" of it all. Why me? Why God? Is this one of those doors?

We all go through these doors of uncertainty with various degrees of denial, anger or quiet acceptance and, given a little time, might then begin to question what impact this challenge will have on our lives. When we walk through the doors with too much trepidation, our anxieties have a good chance of hiding the possibilities ahead. Sure, I'm feeling a bit hampered right now, but it won't be long before, I pray, I'll be up and about with more vigor than before all this started. Maybe my hip wanted more than to remind me that it was there and needed not to be taken for granted. It also wanted to remind me that I need to heighten my awareness of all those, who for one reason or another, have to use a stick or a walker. I will never observe them in the same way again. The doors to my awareness of what others are going through just to get to church have never been closed, but rather than a little ajar, they are now flung wide open, allowing increased empathy and compassion to flow directly into and from my heart. Thanks be to God.

Just as we individuals are given gifts of awareness, the same is true for the church we love. We are experiencing opening doors here at Christ Church, and the more we allow ourselves to step through in trust and faith, the more open the doors seem to move.

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Mother Esme's Notes for September *continued*

Following God's call to "Feed my sheep," we have an opportunity to take part in our local ecumenical Community Meal, held at First Lutheran in St. Helens every Tuesday evening*. We began You gotta have Heart Art Camp this year and welcomed 10 campers and their families through our doors. The camp is now part of our annual lineup of reasons for people to find us along with our Arts and Crafts Fair, Blessing Woods and its River Walk. As we began working on these projects, we were led through doors to meet other people interested in some of the same thing we believe in, like serving the hungry, sustaining habitat for all God's flora and fauna, raising awareness of creativity and beauty in young hearts and minds. These are ministries growing out of our desire to answer God's call to serve the community in a way that is meaningful for us and for all those who need us and long to be lovingly welcomed.

We pray. The answers come. God's doors swing wide open.



Doors swing both ways, and sometimes God presents us with possibilities to open our doors wider than ever. On Saturday, October 4th, we will welcome our camper families to bring their animal friends for a special St. Francis Day blessing. There will be those among them who worship differently from us, but love the same God, other voices who express that love in other diverse and wonderful ways and some who have no expression of faith. We will welcome them all and invite

them to walk the River Walk and weather permitting, add a few adornments to our fence. Through all these possibilities, God has presented us with an opportunity to be a destination church for creation and creativity and to become known as a place of beauty where all are welcomed.

Before us there will be more opening doors and with faithful trust in God, we will walk through them. Who knows what awaits us when we do. Given the movement of the Spirit that hovers lovingly over this place, I know it can only be good. Like God, who opens all doors, and who is good and true, all the time.

We journey together,

Mother Esme+

*Call Kathryn Brittain for more information about serving.

*"Someone's knockin' at the door
Somebody ringin' the bell
Someone's knockin' at the door
Somebody ringin' the bell
Do me a favor
Open the door, and let 'em in....."*

Writer: PAUL MCCARTNEY

Publisher: Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd.

Lyrics licensed and provided by [LyricFind](#)

Album: Wings At The Speed Of Sound (1976)

From the Senior Warden

The big news is the wonderful success of our first Heart Art Camp! When our campers arrived in the morning, they raced to join their new friends inside. On the last day, the tables lining the aisle of the sanctuary overflowed with lively art creations. We had different artists each day, and even set up a studio in our Blessing Woods, in the cool of the shady trees. Some of our church volunteers revealed their “secret artist” and helped campers to craft “nature art” pieces, winding yarn around sticks to make a God’s eye or daubing paint to create an animal spirit-rock. If you park on the Blessing Woods side of the church, you’ll have noticed the cheerful designs on our fence. Our thanks to Peggy Rolf for inscribing the text from this year’s camp story book, “Follow your heart, and see where it leads you!”

Poppy was the star of our camp! The love flowed both ways, between her and our campers. Our church volunteers enjoyed hugs with her too.

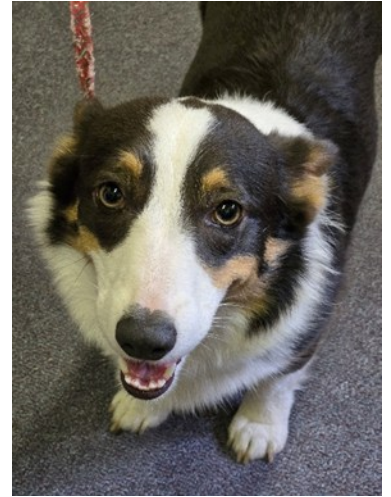
We wrote a letter of thanks to the campers’ families, and asked for their feedback, what went well and what we could improve.

St Francis Day falls on Saturday, 4 October. We will invite our campers, their families and the generous friends who have donated resources to the Heart Art Camp and Blessing Woods. Mother Esme welcomes them to come with their furry friends for a picnic lunch, a table for art projects and of course, a blessing for their animal buddies. For those so inclined, we welcome them to join us on Sunday for our special service to bless our animal companions.

I extend my personal **“Thank you!”** to the church members to volunteered their time and energy to make our camp possible.

Next year, we expect our first batch of campers will bring friends. We have learned the ropes this year, improvising as needed with our small group of ten campers. More campers will require more organized schedules and more counsellors to help. We look forward to “more!” next year.

Rebecca Fowler



St. Francis Day—Picnic and Blessing of the Animals

Come join us on October 4th at 11 am for a St. Francis Day Picnic and Blessing of the animals. Bring a sack lunch and your animal friend. The church will provide a dessert.

If you can’t make it on Saturday, you can also bring your animal friend to church on Sunday for a blessing.

See you there!



Arts & Crafts Faire Save the Date!



The Arts & Crafts Committee has set the date and is planning the 51st Annual Arts & Crafts Faire to be held on Saturday November 8 from 9 am to 4 pm.

We will need help from everyone to make this event successful. Look for sign-up sheets in the near future to help set up, take down, work in the kitchen, decorate, bake for the bake table and make soups and chili to sell.

This year we are having a "Home Gardening" themed raffle "basket". As you can see, the basket is actually a garden cart that we are asking you to help fill with gardening items such as gardening gloves, shovels, small gardening tools etc. These should all be on sale now as the end of gardening season is near. Please consider donating an item and crossing it off on the list when you do. Thank you!



...From the Treasurer

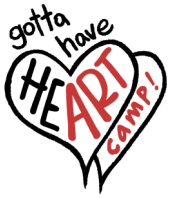
Financial Facts—July 2025

	July Actual	2025 YTD Actual	2025 YTD Budget
Income			
Contributions*	\$4,683.00	\$85,531.76	\$54,495.93
Other Income	\$0.00	\$884.87	\$1,457.50
Total Income	\$4,683.00	\$86,416.63	\$55,953.43
Expenses	\$7,658.99	\$59,569.77	\$60,532.31
Net (Deficit)	(\$2,975.99)	\$26,846.86	(\$4578.88)

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.

Gotta Have HEART ART CAMP 2025



Some time ago in late Fall 2024, Christ Church decided to create an art camp for kids. Although the new Vicar had past art camp experience, this was an unknown adventure for Christ Church. Armed with little knowledge about art camps, the church knew it was time to make itself visible to young(er) parents and their children to Christ Church, so, win or lose, the with faith and determination, the church decided to do it.

Even though getting off to a late start, the small congregation embraced the concept of the camp and nearly all became involved in one way or another. Whether through donation, commitment of time, talent, experience from various other child-oriented activities, or just plain moral support and encouragement, everybody said, "Let's do it!" So, we did.



With the help of Grace Memorial and St. Aidan's, Portland, we learned quickly what we needed to know about running a camp, keeping things orderly, safe, legal and accountable and FUN! Without their assistance, we'd still be sorting it all out and we are eternally grateful for their willing help!

With trust, faith and a good bit of imagination and humor, our corps planning team met weekly to fashion our first art camp. Even though we received generous donations, and some money from camper registrations, we knew this year would have to be a volunteer effort by all involved, including those who would normally receive payment for their efforts: artists, counselors and more.



Because of this outpouring of generosity, we were able to offer part and full scholarships to campers who otherwise could not afford to attend. After much time and effort, we put our final touches on the camp mere days before our doors opened to our campers. What a joy it was to see all these fresh faces, anticipatory and eager. It seemed to make us all feel 20 years younger!

Our artists entered into this first camp with enthusiasm and great ideas. We brought new concepts to the campers, with

Gotta Have HEART ART CAMP 2025 *continued*

flow art, watercolor painting, glass art, heart-shaped decorated stepping stones to be set in the ground outside or to be admired inside. In the music and dance studio we learned line-dances. We looked closely at the organ, the piano, the keyboard and discovered how to create tunes with just three notes. Who knew! And, we entertained our parents at the closing ceremony with the YMCA song. Everyone participated even if they weren't sure they remembered all the moves!

From what we observed that night, and have heard since, the camp was a success and we sent our campers and their families home with smiles, gratitude and a lot of original art. So, we're off and running and expect to double the size of our camp next year with the help of a dedicated and enthusiastic congregation, parents, campers and many others in this community.



Gotta Have HEART ART CAMP 2025 *continued*



Filled with gratitude, exhausted to the bone, we gave thanks, still do and will give thanks for Heart Art Camp's return next year!

You Gotta have Heart
Lots and lots and lots of HEART
When you put your HEART in your art
That's when your art can really start
YES! You Gotta have HEART!

With an H!
With an E!
With an A. R. T!
HEART ART CAMP!
YEAH!

Mother Esme+
(Mama E.)

Volunteer Focus—Prayer Chain

Do you believe in prayer? Christ Church has long had a “Prayer Chain” where the people pray for those who need our prayers.



Kathryn Brittain is currently the point of contact for the Prayer Chain. She believes in prayer and has had several prayers answered. Kathryn said that around the time she turned 50, she had a brain

tumor. While in the hospital, she received a card from a co-worker of her husband who wrote that his whole church congregation was praying for her healing. Having people that she didn't know really touched her.

Kathryn started coming to Christ Church in 2002 and participated in the Prayer Chain at that time. Back then, the people on the chain were notified by a phone tree. When you got a call, you called the next person. Dana Jester, who was the point of contact then got it going with email which made it easier to contact everyone. Kathryn took it over from Dana.

Currently there are 17 people who are on the chain. Email also makes it easy for the person who asked for prayers to update everyone on the condition of the person we are praying for. Some have been prayed for a long time due to long illnesses.

If you feel like you want to be a part of the Prayer Chain or have someone who needs prayers, email Kathryn kathjbritt@gmail.com or phone 503-438-5908.

Landscaping & Blessing Woods

After the break for the Art Camp, we need to gear up for a fall cleanup around the property. Flora Brown will be meeting with Joni from PlantScapes to talk about what we need to do next. Our contract with them has ended but they want to help us where they can.

On September 2nd the tree cutters will be coming to top a couple of trees and cut one down that is a hazard.

Flora plans on scheduling a date in the near future to prune the remaining bushes around the church and planting some bushes, including the rose bush that Mother Esme offered in honor of our first Art Camp, before a fall clean-up. Please volunteer in this endeavor.

The garbage can area has been cleaned up and gravel will be put down so it won't be so muddy in the winter. Behind the parish hall, larger rock will be put down because nothing can be planted there due to underground pipes and wires.

Thank you Flora for your effort in coordinating everything that needs to be done for our landscaping and Blessing Woods.



Community Meals Donation for September

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

Kathryn Brittain

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

St. Francis Day Picnic and Blessing of the Animals—Saturday October 4 at 11 am

Blessing of the Animals also at church - Sunday October 5.

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

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.



Cross Current

September 2025

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. *Amen.*

A Prayer attributed to St. Francis—Book of Common Prayer page 833



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find us on 



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Home of:



THE
Episcopal
CHURCH



welcomes you