



Cross Current

December 2019—January 2020



⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

Luke 2:4-6

Pencil Drawing by Mary Lewis, Sculptor

Christ Episcopal Church

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Advent—A Reflection

This month I had the privilege of spending two weeks in England and Wales, mostly visiting cathedrals and churches. As any visitor from the United States tends to be, I was struck by the antiquity of buildings in the UK.

But while some of the cathedrals and monasteries built 1,000 years ago endure, others were visible only as remnants of stone walls, and archeological sites. Part of the Canterbury World Heritage Site is St. Augustine's Abbey, which was once a major center of faith, pilgrimage, and worship. This is how it looks today.



This is how Canterbury Cathedral looks today. It is an active center of worship, tourism, and pilgrimage—the seat of the Archbishop of Canterbury. But note the scaffolding. Stones are being replaced; spires are being rebuilt. If not for this living re-creation, Canterbury Cathedral would look like St. Augustine's Abbey. The stones look dead and

eternal, but they depend on being important to a human community outside their walls.

This past month, the Bishop's Advisory Committee and Wardens of Christ Church took action to maintain the physical structure of our building. The crawl space was upgraded to deal with water problems,

and foundational supports were replaced. On a much smaller scale than Canterbury Cathedral, we are tending the building to ensure its continued life.

But a church building is not an end in itself. It stands for something. What does Christ Church stand for in our larger community?

This Advent I will be inviting you to participate in writing the Prayers of the People for the Christmas services. The direction for the Prayers of the People in our Book of Common Prayer (p. 383) says that intercessions are offered for

“The Universal Church, its members, and its mission

The Nation and all in authority

The welfare of the world

The concerns of the local community

Those who suffer, and those in any trouble

The departed (with commemoration of a saint when appropriate).”

Notice that most of these subjects are outside the bounds of the congregation itself. During this Advent, and in preparation for writing our Prayers of the People, I invite you to pray the news. Open your hearts and minds to the concerns of your neighbors and the world, and ask for guidance on how we as a community of faith can shine the love of Jesus Christ on the world around us.

Even cathedrals of stone pass away. “Life is short. We don't have much time to gladden the hearts of those who walk this way with us. So, be swift to love and make haste to be kind.” — Henri-Frédéric Amiel

Vicar Jaime

An Afterthought on Apocalypse

I began my homily on November 17th by saying that Holy Church guides us to consider the “end things” during the last Sundays after Pentecost and the first Sundays in Advent. I mentioned the term “eschatology” as the theological study of these matters. I also mentioned that the many portions of Scripture that speak of the end of the world were apocalyptic in nature. Unfortunately, our English use of the word “apocalypse” is almost synonymous with “catastrophe”, but that is not the meaning of the word in the Greek New Testament.

Apocalypse, as the New Testament uses the word, means simply “revealing” or “revelation.” While in at least one ancient pagan religion apocalypse was a doctrine about the battle of ultimate good and ultimate evil in the universe, in Judaism and Christianity it morphed into more of a literary form that uses symbols and images that would be familiar to the hearer. In other words, it is very strongly culturally informed. Hebrew and Christian apocalypse can be found in a number of places in the Bible, most notably, of course, in the Revelation to John, but also in parts of Daniel, Ezekiel, Zechariah, and there are hints of it in several of Jesus’ parables and discourses concerning both the end of the world and the future destruction of the Jewish nation. It is a mode of expression that would not be understood by people of another culture, relying as it does on symbolic visions.

The biggest problem with the apocalyptic passages in Scripture occurs when we try to take them literally. Taken literally, many apocalyptic passages are terribly frightening and may cause one to wonder how they have anything to do with the God who so loved his world that he sent his Son to redeem it. But they were never meant to be taken literally. In both the Old and New Testaments the apocalyptic visions were meant to give hope to those to whom they were read. For example, in his vision of our Lord’s coming at the end of the world, St. Paul concludes by encouraging the Thessalonian Christians to “comfort one another with these words.” (1st Thessalonians 4:13-18) Even the book of Revelation, which is all too frequently shamefully used to scare the living daylights out of people, was written to give its hearers the hope that

the kingdom of God and of Christ would at last overcome the oppression of Rome and its Emperor.

I confess that I had it in my notes for my last homily to explain these things about apocalypse, and while I didn't get it done then, I have done so, albeit briefly, now. I welcome any discussion you would like to have with me about these matters.

Father Gary



...From the Treasurer

Financial Facts—October 2019

	October Actual	2019 YTD Actual	2019 YTD Budget
Income			
Contributions	\$5,071.00	\$64,570.72	\$64,133.33
Other Income	\$0	\$1,531.84	\$1,833.33
Total Income	\$5,071.00	\$66,102.56	\$65,966.66
Expenses	\$15,739.61	\$73,635.91	\$73,827.50
Net (Deficit)	(\$10,668.61)	(\$7,533.35)	(\$7,860.84)

Gratitude

This past month the members of Christ Church were invited to pledge their financial support to the church for the coming year. You were invited to help build

A FIRM FOUNDATION



As I write this, our campaign is not yet complete. The ingathering is this Sunday, and there are numbers of people who were not present at church last Sunday, and have not yet turned in their pledge cards. But as of last Sunday we received 25 pledges, and many people have increased their pledge from last year. I am grateful and humbled by your commitment to Christ Church.

Vicar Jaime



Mother Jaime leads the prayer before the Stewardship Pledge Ingathering Potluck November 24.

O God, by the leading of a star you manifested
your only Son to the Peoples of the earth:
Lead us, who know you now by faith, to your
presence, where we may see your glory face to
face; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives
and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Book of Common Prayer page 214



Habitat for Humanity Faith Build

The Habitat for Humanity Faith Build project broke ground on September 29. See the KGW news video on:

<https://www.kgw.com/article/news/local/homeless/churches-build-st-helens-homes/283-76a17d81-935b-4ef3-a7c5-d0cc55441807>



During Halloweentown festivities on October 12th, there was a 5-Church Chili Cook-off fundraiser held at First Lutheran Church.



UTO Fall Ingathering



We collected the Fall Ingathering UTO Boxes on November 3rd All Saints Sunday. We still have a few boxes out but the total as of now is \$307.30. Thank you to all who collected money for the UTO with these boxes. I hope you found the process of recognizing your

blessings a good one. Boxes for the Spring Ingathering are available in the kitchen pass through.

Kathryn Brittain

Faith Build Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers Wanted!

The Executive Director of Columbia County Habitat for Humanity made this list of things volunteers can do. These are in addition to fund-raising (thanks, Susan, for making Habitat your Facebook birthday charity!)

As the list mentions, Ikea has donated cabinets for the houses, but they need to be assembled. This is something that we can do inside during the winter months. The cabinet parts are presently stored at the St. Helen's Christian Church, 185 S. 12th Street, St. Helens. There will be an assembly party there on **Saturday February 15**, beginning at 10 am. You don't need to sign up – just show up!

Things Volunteers Can Do:

- Assembling IKEA cabinets
- Sorting IKEA cabinets parts
- Cooking and serving food to volunteers
- Being a site host: Making coffee on site and greeting volunteers, making sure everyone is signed in.
- Construction: framing, putting up siding, installing windows and doors, building the storage sheds caulking, working on trim, attaching towel bars and toilet paper holders, adding shelving, creating a tile back-splash in the kitchen and bathroom, laying down flooring, hanging cabinets
- Painting prep (masking), Interior painting, painting trim, exterior painting (spray)
- Building a fence; staining a fence
- Landscaping: raking, picking up rocks, planting
- Site clean-up: picking up scraps and sweeping, cleaning windows, wiping out cabinets
- Organizing the storage container on-site

Peregrination



I'm attracted to new words like a crow to bits of tinfoil. Any time I cross paths with a shiny new one I am compelled to collect it. Recently I came across the word "peregrination," and snatched it up. It has avian overtones, a hint of beak and claw, but it also conveys a sense of motion. Turning the word over, I pictured a small falcon diving from a steel girder, its wings tucked close, its whole body a bullet hurtling toward some hapless prey. Turns out peregrination has more to do with motion

than it has to do with falconry. It's a word that emerged from early Christianity to describe the act of a spiritual journey. Celtic monks, fresh with the flame of God, sent themselves on *peregrinatio*, a kind of open-ended pilgrimage to, according to writer and scholar Esther deWaal, "we cared not where." They set out simply for love of Christ, to wander until they should arrive where He led them.

I've been thinking about those monks these last few days. They were mostly young men, we can suppose, bound by vows to serve God with their lives. I imagine them devout but restless, as young men are wont to be, anxious to try themselves against the elements and the miles. Some made their pilgrimages across land and among strange peoples; others, crafted boats out of hides (the traditional Irish *curragh*, for example) and tacked across the wild and frigid North Sea. The point, I think, was the recklessness, the surrender of it all. Lives offered freely to the will of a guiding God.

**

It's autumn now, the days marching along steadily to the beginning of the Church year again. It's the season of Mary, her patient wait for the Advent of Christ. Every representation I see of Mary conveys her in a kind of otherworldly poise. Oh sure, she is stunned occasionally by the sudden appearance of an angel armed with his shocking message, but

it clearly takes Mary only a moment to fold her disbelief into a proper meekness and piety - the very ideal of godly femininity. It occurs to me, however, that the popular representation of Mary is stunted. Surely the girl who acquiesced to that crazy, Divine scheme was not all that different from those early, daring, Celtic *peregrinati*. Each of those pilgrims leapt into the void, risking death (by the elements or strangers, or the judgements of society) and trusted themselves to providential purpose and protection.

**

When my children were young we read about one such pilgrimage in Tim Severin's marvelous book, *The Brendan Voyage*, - a detailed and harrowing recreation of St Brendan's wander through the North Sea. We were fascinated by the outlandishness of it, the vulnerability of the boat and the men, the urgent dangers of the sea, the unseemliness of risking life and limb for journey's sake. Here is romance, adventure, honorable - if slightly foolish - sacrifice. Brendan's story seems something out of another world, the kind of blood-stirring tale that lights the eyes and fires of the young (and makes their parents cringe.)

"Religion is story," author Timothy Egan writes, and there's no doubt Mary's story is as outlandish as any leather-boat suicide mission. But as I look at the calendar and mark down the day to get the Advent supplies from the attic, I can't help but wonder if my familiarity with her story has numbed me to the wildness of it, to the reckless courage of a girl spending her only currency - her respectability - on the sudden request of an unseen God.

It's something to remember when Advent comes around and we put out the wreaths and candles, get wrapped up in the chaos of Christmas. This is not the tame journey of a meek and obedient girl swept along in a Divine drama. This is the story of a woman who chooses and sets out on a dangerous pilgrimage. There are angry natives, unexpected alliances, providential rescues, maniacal kings, midnight escapes, a desperate birth in a back-alley shed, to say nothing of the demons she wrestled inside herself.

It's not the courage of a moment that makes these pilgrims so unique.

Peregrination *continued*

I imagine St Brendan and his pals felt pretty confident in their preparations when the shore was still in sight and their blood was high. I imagine the persuasive powers of that angelic messenger were strong enough to encourage Mary's yes. But it's the long, slow walk of commitment that makes *perigrinatio* so powerful. There are weeks and days in which to doubt, there is the facing of storms and stones, there is the moment when everyone loved is left behind, when your fiancé sees not angel-message but betrayal, when your bulging belly broadcasts your private communion - and all the long, interior miles wondering if you heard it right, if you really are the favored one, the chosen one...or possibly, insane.

St Augustine believed that, by definition, all Christians are *peregrinati* – pilgrims in a strange land. Those who wandered over the world are still venerated today. People of all types follow in their steps and make physical pilgrimages, visiting holy sites, walking the same paths that saints or gods once walked, wearing their bodies down to set their spirits free. But Mary's *perigrinatio* - which was played out on a tiny scale, in the smallest of towns, inside the narrowest of cultures, inside the body of a young girl - is reenacted annually, almost by rote, by millions and millions of people. It's tempting to forget - as it is with all crazy ventures, like democracy or love or belief - how radical it is. Perhaps this year, as Advent approaches, the retracing of her journey can be a light for us, a reminder that the life of faith is not for the comfortable and the safe, but for the reckless and the bold, those with courage to set out on a course "we care not where," simply for the love and trust of God.

Tonia Peckover

St. Francis Day Blessing of the Animals

On October 5, Christ Church had it's first Blessing of the Animals. Several dogs, 3 rescue kittens, 4 horses and one stuffed animal, a stand-in for a shy cat attended. The service was held on the front entrance of the church. Mother Jaime said a blessing and then visited each animal and blessed them individually. All the 4-legged attendees behaved themselves.



Convention Raffle Basket



Susan, Peggy and Mother Jaime put together a raffle basket with a theme of "Take A Break" for the Diocesan Convention. The proceeds go to the Diocesan Commission on Poverty & Homelessness, which uses them to make grants to congregations for projects to alleviate poverty and home-

lessness. To quote its website, " This Fund supports many projects, including food pantries, community gardens, medical clinics, and homeless shelters. The Fund especially seeks to support new ministries that involve children and youth, involve community partners, or display innovative ways of addressing poverty's many challenges." It has funded community gardens, kitchen equipment to support soup kitchens, tiny houses for homeless women, and many other initiatives by local congregations.

Here is a note from the winner:

Hi,

Not sure who's going to read this, but I've known Jamie for over 30 years – St Barnabas, McMinnville. At convention I had to deposit a couple of tickets in your basket and amazingly I won. I just want to thank whoever is responsible for putting together such a wonderful basket. My wife and I were amazed and so very pleased with the variety and abundance of what was included. Thank you so very much.

You are truly blessed to have Jamie as your priest. Best wishes for this coming Advent and Christmas season.

Rich Emery

Brownbag Ministry Update

Regarding the brown bags we packed with socks, snacks, tuna, water, etc., as of November 17, we have 35 bags left out of 110 we made earlier this year. Twenty bags were taken to the Community Action Team headquarters in November. The Warming Nights start December 1, but a people were coming by in November asking for help and they really like giving these bags to them. They will let us know if they need more. Also, in November Patrichia Altimus took 20 bags to the Scapoose Police Department who like to have something for people they meet who are homeless.

Kathryn Brittain

Community Meals Pantry Shower

Our pantry gift for October was Bar-B-Q sauce. We gave over 13 quarts of Bar-B-Q sauce. Our November gift was canned fruit. We gave 57 pounds of canned fruit. Community Meals is a nonprofit organization, they have to fill out forms on donations they received. These forms require donations to be given in pounds. I gave up trying to figure out pounds of Bar-B-Q sauce and just counted in quarts.

I would like to give Abby Burgbacher a big thank you for sending rolls, rice, cheeses and other items that she didn't use for the Arts & Craft Kitchen to Community Meals. The rolls were added to the Thanksgiving dinner that was served on November 19. The other items were also appreciated and will be used soon.

Kathryn Brittain

Item for December: Coffee



Item for January: Paper Towels



47th Annual Arts & Crafts Faire

"Make the Holiday Magical"

Thank you to all the parishioners who decorated, setup, tore down, baked for the bake table and cooked and assisted in the kitchen. And, thank you to those who manned tables. The rock painting project by Karen Van Winkle was a big success for the children who came to the fair. Karen was also our Marketing guru who prepared all our flyers, advertised on Facebook and in set up articles for our local newspapers. Special thanks to Nate who brought in his "square" credit card processor and Sherine who lent us her tablet for an emergency fix to our cashiers table. Besides doing all the shopping, our super sleuth kitchen coordinator, Abby, came in early and stayed late into the evening cooking soups. She handled the inspector with finesse as he questioned her about how everything was prepared and kept warm during the fair. Our starry sky in the parish hall was designed by Mimi and Mo with the beautiful contributed decorations from Dorothy Schneider. Even though she had her burned hand, Peggy with her husband Fred and Vivian did a beautiful job decorating the Christmas tree. Judy Keck and Jennifer Warner focused on decorating the parish hall by papering the bulletin boards. It was a real added touch of class. Lastly, I'd like to mention the individuals who donated money to help defray the costs for our fair. They were very generous and we appreciate them. All in all the visitors and artists felt welcome and enjoyed their visit with us at the fair.



See the financial results on page 18.

Cindi Caruso



Arts and Crafts Fair Financial Results 2019					
Beginning Balance					317.88
beginning book balance					317.88
Artist Activity	Expenses		Revenue		
Table Fees			180.00		180.00
Sales			4,088.00		
85% of Sales pd to artists	3474.80				613.20
cash box shortage					(61.22)
Increase in Fund for Artist's activity					731.98
Donation- Kitchen			83.46		
Kitchen Sales	(283.46)		698.00		498.00
Bake Table			568.50		568.50
other donations			300.00		300.00
Raffle Basket			191.00		191.00
expenses	(95.20)				(95.20)
merchant fees	(71.50)				(71.50)
bank fees					
advertising	(326.00)		250.00		(76.00)
Paid to Christ Church					(1,900.00)
Ending Balance					



Tuesday Morning Adult Education

We started our class in September with the study “The Journey” which is the story of Mary and Joseph. We decided to not do another Advent study but continue with the study Comparative Religions that we started in October. Comparative Religions is 24 lessons taught by Prof. Charles Kimball. Prof. Kimball is very interesting in that he is a Baptist preacher whose paternal grandfather was Jewish and had escaped from the Russian/ Poland area. His grandmother on the other side was Presbyterian. Professor Kimball has lived and studied many years in the Middle East. We think this will be very interesting class. We will be looking for a Lenten study in April.



Parish Health Ministry Activities

The talk about medical marijuana/cbd oil and chronic pain led to all of us learning a great deal, including myself, about these newly legal treatments and all of the hype that surround them. If you are dealing with chronic pain but weren't able to come to the lecture, I'd be glad to give you a synopsis of what we learned. If you are interested on how to purchase and use these products, I'd also be glad to give you some ideas.

January will bring new cooking classes. If there are other topics that interest you, please let me know. I'm always interested in helping people to learn more about managing their health and wellness!

Carol Craig

FACEBOOK as a Force for Good—

Raising Funds for

Columbia County Habitat for Humanity



Susan: Last week FACEBOOK reminded me that I have a birthday coming up. In truth, I have had enough birthday's that I did not need FACEBOOK to remind me. And I was invited to setup a birthday fundraiser. I have contributed to the FACEBOOK birthday fundraiser for some of my friends so I accepted the invitation. It was very easy to set up. A few clicks and a little typing and FACEBOOK was spreading the word.

FB: [Select a non-profit]

Susan: Type in the name of the organization. Rather than raising money for the Cornell University that does research on Icelandic Horses or Sound Equine Options that rescues abused horses, I chose this Episcopal community's goal of supporting Columbia County Habitat for Humanity. When I typed in Columbia County Habitat for Humanity FACEBOOK had two (!) from which to choose. I did not click on the one in Lake City, Florida.

FB: [Let's start with the basics]

Susan: Here there was a box for the goal amount you want to raise. I changed the default 200 to 300. USD was the default in the next box. Then you choose a date for your fundraiser to end. I choose two weeks after my birthdate.

FB: [next]

FB: [Tell your story]

Susan: FACEBOOK generously supplied three paragraphs about the parent organization. I modified the middle paragraph to reflect this church's participation in Columbia County Habitat for Humanity's Faith

Build. Everywhere the text said “Habitat for Humanity (name)” I modified it to say Columbia County Habitat for Humanity. (At, least I hope I got it everywhere).

I also added other ways people can support: by shopping at or donating to Restore or by direct contributions to Habitat for Humanity at 164 Little St, St Helens, OR 97051.

FB: [next]

FB: [Congratulations. Your fundraiser is set up]

Susan: FACEBOOK went on to explain that a check would be sent to the chosen organization and I would receive updates on contributions. I was also given the opportunity to make the first contribution to get the ball rolling. That works because I have a credit card linked. I don’t know yet how my fundraiser will be credited to the Christ Church pledge to the Faith Build but I expected to work that out when the fundraiser is over.

There is no policy that says you should have a birthday fundraiser but FACEBOOK is ready to make it easy to do so. So far \$205 have been contributed.

Susan Wellington



Mother Jaime Office Hours

- Wednesdays 2—5 pm
- Thursdays 9—11 am

For an appointment contact Mother Jaime at priest@christchurchsthelens.org. To arrange a home visit, please Call Joan Heide at 503-970-7078 or send her an email at jmheide@comcast.net

Christmas Services



Christmas Eve - The Joy of Christmas

Tuesday December 24 at 7:30 pm

Jesus' birth brings people of all ages together
with carols, story and communion

Christmas Day - The Hope of Christmas

Wednesday December 25 at 10 am

A more contemplative service, without singing,
drawing on prayers from around the world.
Includes communion.

Bishop Hanley to Visit Christ Church



**Bishop Michael Hanley
Visitation**

Sunday, January 19, 2020

Bishop Michael is retiring in 2020. I am grateful that he will be visiting St. Helens once more before he turns over the responsibility to the new Bishop of Oregon we will elect this spring. If you are considering being received or confirmed in The Episcopal Church, please let me know.

Vicar Jaime

Prayer Requests

Send requests to Kathryn Brittain by email at kjbritt44@gmail.com or phone 503-543-6870 or cell phone 503-438-5908.

Other Important Dates

Tuesday Religious Study Class - Tuesdays from 10:00—11:30 am in the parish hall.

All Ages Sunday Service—Fourth Sunday of the Month—Bring your children/grandchildren/nieces/nephews/neighbors!

● **December 22** ● **January 26**



Parish Health Ministries Cooking Club— Will start back in January

Choir Practices—Sundays at 9 am until Christmas

Come help write the Prayers of the People for the Christmas Service—December 1 and 15 during coffee hour

Christmas Eve Service - December 24 at 7:30 pm

Christmas Day Service—December 25 at 10 am

Bishop Hanley Visitation—January 19, 2020

Annual Meeting—January 26

Habitat for Humanity Faith Build Assembly Party—St. Helen's Christian Church, 185 S. 12th Street, St. Helens. Saturday February 15, beginning at 10 am.

FYI

Our Website is: www.christchurchsthelens.org

Email: Office@christchurchsthelens.org

Priest@christchurchsthelens.org

CrossCurrent@christchurchsthelens.org

Phone: (503) 397-1033

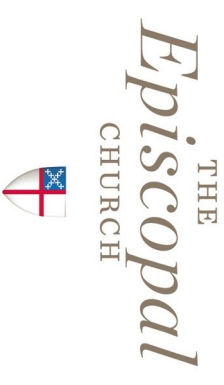
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welcomes you