



Cross Current

February—March 2020



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

Christ Episcopal Church

35350 E. Division Road, St. Helens, OR 97051

(503) 397-1033

find us on



Lent 2020

Dear Friends,

Every Sunday as part of our worship we wish one another “The peace of the Lord.” What is this peace of God?

In our hymn last Sunday, we sang, “The peace of God it is no peace, but strife closed in the sod.” This is a poetic image, but I don’t think it is accurate. The peace that is strife closed in is what in Jesus’ time was known as the *pax Romana*: an absence of overt conflict because of overwhelming military force. In our time, some of the most repressive regimes are also the most peaceful in the sense of the absence of visible crime.

The peace of God, on the other hand, I believe is related to what Jesus called, “the kingdom of heaven,” or “the reign of God,” - what Archbishop Desmond Tutu calls, “God’s dream.” It is the peace that results from justice and from right relationships: right relationship with our own soul, with others, with God, and with creation.

Our Sunday worship in Lent is focused on repentance. In services on Wednesday evenings, we will focus on praying for peace. With readings, chants, reflection, and sacraments, we will pray for the “peace of God which passeth understanding.” Please join me at 6:30 pm in the Chapel, March 4th through April 8th.

Vicar Jaime

Bishop's Visit

Bishop Michael Hanley visited Christ Church on Sunday January 19th. This will be his last visit to Christ Church before his retirement this year.

Bishop Michael met with the BAC before the service. Congratulations to Jennifer Warner who was received into the Episcopal Church during the service. Members of the church had a chance to visit with Bishop Michael during coffee hour.



Annual Meeting



The annual meeting was held on Sunday January 26 after the service. We had a wonderful potluck followed by the meeting led by Nate McCord, Senior Warden..

Susan Wellington and Carol Craig were voted as convention delegates and Peggy Rolf and Terry King were voted as alternate delegates. This year the delegates will be voting on our new bishop as well as going to convention.

David Cook's term on the Bishop's Advisory Committee (BAC) and as Junior Warden was ending and Mother Jaime presented a gift to him for his service. Peggy Rolf and Cindi Caruso agreed to remain on the BAC and Jim Fowler was elected for a 3-year term. All were voted by affirmation.

Mother Jaime reflected on what will be happening in the coming year.

Cindi Caruso explained how the Financial Team at Christ Church works: Ross Williams, Rebecca Fowler, Cindi Caruso, Tonia Peckover and Mother Jaime are on the team. Cindi also presented the financial results for 2019 and the budget for 2020. For those who did not attend the annual meeting, copies of the Annual Report are available in the Narthex.

Mark Peckover gave a talk on what the Property Planning Advisory Task Force Committee has been doing. See Article on page 6 for more information on this committee.

BAC Members

The members of the Bishop's Advisory committee for 2020 are:

Nate McCord, Senior Warden

Jim Fowler, Junior Warden

Cindi Caruso, Treasurer

Peggy Rolf

Tonia Peckover

Carol Craig



...From the Treasurer

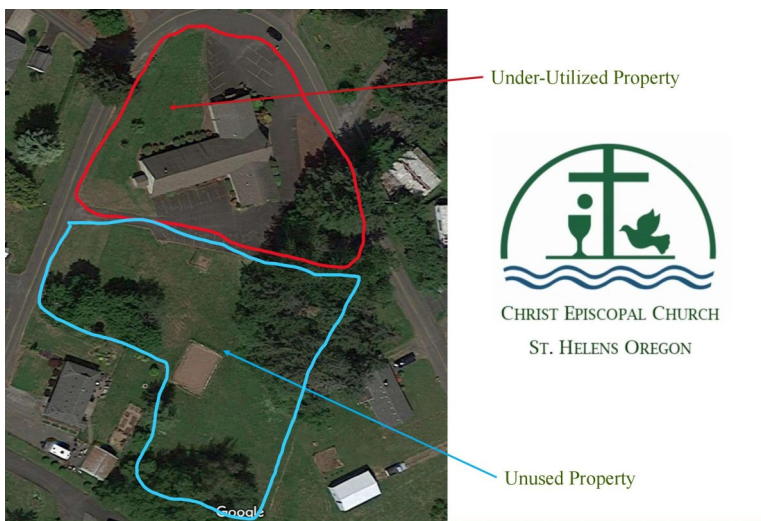
Financial Facts—December 2019

	December Actual	2019 YTD Actual	2019 YTD Budget
Income			
Contributions	\$6,486.00	\$76,012.72	\$76,960.00
Other Income	\$15,415.95	\$17,972.80	\$2,200.00
Total Income	\$21,901.95	\$93,985.52	\$79,160.00
Expenses	\$8,085.01	\$99,152.60	\$88,593.00
Net (Deficit)	\$13,816.94	(\$5,167.08)	(\$9,433.00)

Property Planning Advisory Committee

At the 2019 Annual Meeting, the congregation approved the use of a landscape service to provide ongoing maintenance of the church's property. As part of that decision, the Property Planning Task Force committee was organized to investigate the possible uses of the church's unused and under-utilized portions of the property.

The members of the committee are: Theresa Muth, Steve Sanders, Mark Peckover and Nate McCord. They met over the course of the last 6 months to investigate what is possible based on Columbia County land use laws, current infrastructure on the property and public infrastructure in the streets adjacent to the property, review possible uses of the property, and present the findings to the BAC and church congregation.



The Property Planning Task Force presented a number of possibilities for redevelopment and increased utilization of the church's currently owned property. The ideas ranged from simple, purposeful, revised landscaping to more sophisticated partnerships with other community minded organizations that facilitate the missions of both organizations. Our team requested further guidance from the congregation on how to best focus our efforts in 2020. At the annual meeting we

agreed to devote future coffee hours to furthering this conversation.

The report that the committee presented at the annual meeting is contained in the Annual Report available in the Narthex. The continuing discussions will be held on the 2nd Sunday of the month at Coffee Hour for those who are interested in participating.

Parish Health Ministry Activities

There is a new class coming in February, which is about a difficult topic, but a critically important one.

What Is A Good Death?

Many people will say that a “good” death is one where they are healthy, pain free and active until they die in their sleep at home, at a very advanced age, without suffering and without pain.

This happens to very few people. So the question of a good death becomes: What would I want at the end of my life knowing that I may take a while to die and I may need to be somewhere other than home? This class will help you to think about and discuss your version of a good death in preparation for writing advance directives that will guide your care in case you cannot speak for yourself.

Part One: Saturday, February 1, 1 to 2:30 pm

Part Two: Saturday, February 8, 1-2:30 pm

Christ Episcopal Church parish hall, 35350 E. Division Road, St. Helens 97051

We actively encourage people to attend with their spouse, life partner, caregiver or adult child. This helps those who will help you at the end of your life to know what you want and why you have chosen a particular action. Everyone is welcome!

Light refreshments provided

I hope you will decide to join me.

Carol Craig

There is a Place

If you pull off the highway near Cascade Locks, park your car in the lot just shy of the bridge, you can hike your way up the side of an embankment, under the freeway, along a gravel road that skirts a sagging, mossy little neighborhood, past the last mailbox into a shrubby clearing, take a left, and catch a skinny arm of the Pacific Crest Trail. That section winds up and away from the edge of town, backyards and blackberries giving way to a carpet of fern and salal, a march of fir and hemlock.

It's not a pristine landscape. The Eagle Creek fire tore through here a couple of years ago. Splintered and burned trunks lie in heaps off the path, the black scar of fire snakes among the remaining trees. I remember hearing the news reports when it happened, fears that the town of Cascade Locks was in the fire's path, and it, too, would burn. We visited just after Christmas, still on a sugarplum buzz from feasting, head full of Incarnation in the form of a Baby. As we passed from the neighborhood into the forest, I put my hand on the charcoaled bark of a massive fir and looked back. Within view was a swing set, the glint of a chain link fence; the bright blue rim of a plastic swimming pool rested against it. Just beyond, on the street, the roof of a garbage truck lumbered by. Destruction had come close.

~

When my children were younger, they enjoyed a collection of dark-humor books about three doomed orphans. It was called *A Series of Unfortunate Events*, and that about sums it up. The orphaned siblings managed to survive and stay together book after book, but everything that could possibly go wrong for those scrappy and resourceful children did go wrong. In one book, the three get a fresh start in a boarding school, which may seem promising, but when they pass through the entrance, the words "Memento Mori" are inscribed ominously over the door. Within the safety of two cardboard covers and a trusted author, "Remember you will die" sent delighted shivers down my children's spines.

Lately it feels that the whole world is passing under that boarding school door - but it is not provoking shivers of delight. Especially among younger people, there's a sense of doom in the air. The newspaper runs story after story about the load of anxiety we all carry. The young people I know make half-hearted jokes about climate change finally wiping out that student debt - along with their futures. It's as if, culturally, we've arrived at a perpetual Ash Wednesday.

~

On that Christmas-week hike, we made our way through a couple miles of flame-scarred forest. Eventually, we began to hear the sound of rushing water. We came to a creek and a picturesque bridge, the particular NW beauty of moss and stone, then we turned and followed the creek upstream to a towering rock wall that was split in the middle by a waterfall. Other hikers were there too, some standing quietly before the scene, some taking pictures, some opening backpacks and settling down for lunch. The air was cold and clean. We gladly shook off the heaviness of the woods.

I found a seat on a boulder just beyond the spray where I could watch the falls. How many years since God set in motion the water that pours over the lip of that rock? Everything around me in that place was green and ancient. The fire, if it had come that far, had left little mark at all. I didn't need to hear a God-voice to understand, at that moment I was in a place permeated by Presence. We had passed among ashes, but we had arrived at an Easter destination.

I've been thinking about what I might say to the people I know who talk about pervading despair. "God's in control," not only sounds naively simplistic, it leaves me hollow as well. What are the words for rising oceans, scorched landscapes, political horrors, fear and hatred between people? In Jesus, we're told, the Word of God comes to us as a *person who lived*. Creeds and liturgies, prayers and promises may make up a good portion of what we call our faith, but when God wanted us to know Him, He came and inhabited a body and a place. That kind of lived language may be the only thing we can offer a world passing under the banner of, "Remember you will die."

There is a Place *continued*

“When you cross deep rivers,” the prophet Isaiah* heard God promise, “I will be with you, and you won't drown. When you walk through fire, you won't be burned or scorched by the flames... Don't be afraid! I am with you.” Scripture doesn't tell us how Isaiah heard the message. An audible voice? A quiet knowing? The words of a friend? An ancient song? Carried on the wing of a raven? Somehow, Isaiah received the message and etched it down for us. It's the same message we are being asked to live now, a testimony that a frightened, word-weary world can hear. God is speaking it everywhere, in every time. He walked it out with His own footsteps, whispered it in the ears of poets, carves it in the scrim of the earth, pours it out like water.

On the other side of the ashes, He is saying, there is a place. I am going there with you.

Tonia Peckover



*Isaiah 43:2-5

Outreach Committee News

The total proceeds from the Arts & Crafts Faire was \$1,900.00. Half of the proceeds goes into the general fund. \$500 was donated to the Habitat for Humanity Faith Build. The remaining \$475 was allocated to the Outreach Committee. The committee decided to donate \$416.00 to the Backpack Buddies program in St. Helens which is a program that provides a backpack full of nutritious food for children who may need it when the weekend comes and they don't have access to the school cafeteria.

The remaining balance available in the outreach account for 2020 is \$498.47.

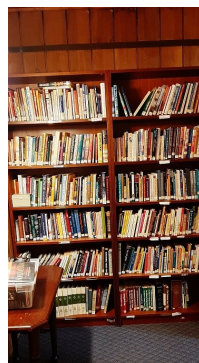
Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper



The men of Christ Church will again be hosting a Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper on Tuesday February 25th. If you are willing to help out with this tasty event, please contact Nate McCord.

Library

Currently our little library has no one to take care of it. If you check out books, you are requested to file them yourself. If you are interested in being our "librarian" please contact Mother Jaime.



Partner Family



From Columbia County Habitat for Humanity:

Columbia County Habitat is pleased to introduce our new partner family. We are working through applications for the other side of the duplex.

Ginny Carlson is a single mother of two with a very generous spirit. She works with adults with special needs, volunteers in the community and serves the City of St. Helens as a City Councilor. Ginny is a familiar face. She has lent her hand to help with the last two Habitat houses. Her 15-year-old son, Ben, is very bright and loves to work with his hands. He hopes to go to trade school someday. Although he is on the autism spectrum, Ben prefers to be treated like everyone else and courageously musters through challenges. Kaylee is 19-years-old and is working her way through school to be a dental assistant.

Although Ginny is a planner, life has thrown a few curve balls including her husband leaving and battling cancer. Taking these financial hits has left the family feeling insecure about future housing. Three times they have been displaced by landlords selling the property and higher and higher rent costs. Their rent has increased twice since they applied for a Habitat home. They are thankful and excited to be working on building their home. Ginny explains, "I don't have much to give my kids for their future, but I want to be able to provide a place for Kaylee and Ben to live while they finish their education. I want to do anything I can to give them a bright more secure future; a forever home for us where we will never have to move again."

Join the Party!

Habitat for Humanity IKEA Cabinet Building

Saturday, February 15th at 10:00am

Lunch provided

Christian Church

185 South 12th Street, St. Helens



If you have these items, please bring them. Please put your name on your tools.



Medium Phillips Screwdriver

Rubber Mallet

Tape measure

Utility Knife

Work Gloves



We could also use some duct tape and quart size Ziploc bags.

Please email habitat@opusnet.com if you are able to donate these items.

Each church is requested to bring one pot of soup and a loaf of bread to feed the workers. If you are able to provide soup or a loaf of bread please let Cindi Caruso know. A sign-up sheet for volunteers will also be placed in the parish hall.

Face-to-Face

For the American People

O say can you see...

Shadowy hope of a stars-and-stripes of love wrapping the world in a healing vision

dissolving hurts and harms, cruelty and violence, wars and divides.

Dawn's early light glares red with humanity bursting in air—wounded, suffering, torn.

Off in a dimly-lit distance, will a battle-worn banner now endure the tattering of its own people

to yet wave o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

The first harrowing verse of a noble anthem sung by a proud people

Ends not in victorious exclamation, but in unsure question;

A question that all of us must answer if we are to sing on together...

Was it me? Driving away my brothers, my sisters,

a facade of righteousness disguising my duplicitous heart smoldering with judgement, prejudice, apathy, anger?

Or was it you? Standing on the other side of a tragic wall we toil at together,

heaping high upon each other crashing boulders

mined from the same cavernous quarry of abuse

mortared thick with mistrust and fear?

Truth is, it was both of us—

Professing the same false faith that the sum of our differences, distressing as they may be,

*could ever extinguish the **sun** of our shared humanity!*

How to end this cycle of harm?

How to reverse it in a healing spiral initiated by grace?

Stop! Get quiet, look inside to deeper motivations, listen...All is not lost!

Truth must be honored from both sides of the wall.

Harms must be acknowledged and repaired.

Broken hearts must be made whole.

*Forgiveness can be a transcontinental freedom flight
fueled by compassion for our shared frailties.
Your pain and fear are so like mine...
Disillusionment of dashed dreams,
Despair of meaningless toil,
Dismay at unjust forces conspiring against every step toward good.*

*Our human journeys tread countless trails through lonely tearful terrain
and sometimes pause for precious views from peaks of joy.
Yet for all our common travels, still we blindly strike each other
Until at last we **see** each other
Face-to-Face in God's mirror called grace!*

—Theresa Schumacher, November 23, 2019



Community Meals Pantry Shower

In November 2019, Christ church gave almost 3 gallons of Ranch Dressing to Community Meals. And in December 2019 we gave 14 pounds of Coffee. In January we collected paper towels.

The request for February is Butter. There will be a plastic tub in the refrigerator in the church kitchen with a Community Meals label for you to put your butter donation.

In March the request is for canned Green Beans, any size. Kathy Bauska from Community meals tells me that 36 average-size cans are used for one meal.

Thanks to everyone who donates to the Church Pantry for Community Meals. It is one way we can really help our neighbors.

Kathryn Brittain

Item for February: Butter



Item for March: Canned Green Beans

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 Peggy Rolf 503-556-2319 or send her an email at fprolf@gmail.com

Cursillo



The 2020 All Adults Cursillo Weekend will be held Thursday evening, September 10 to Sunday afternoon, September 13, 2020 at the Oregon Christian Convention Center in Turner, just outside Salem.

From Oregon-Cursillo.org/What-is-Cursillo/

- Cursillo is a ministry of the church. Its purpose is to help those in the church understand their individual callings to be Christian Leaders. The leadership may be exercised in work situations, in the family and social life, in leisure activities, and within the Church environment. Leadership, in Cursillo, does not mean power over others, but influence on others; all of us need to be aware that we can exert a positive influence on those around us.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Cindi Caruso.



FYI

Our Website is: www.christchurchsthelens.org

Email: Office@christchurchsthelens.org

Priest@christchurchsthelens.org

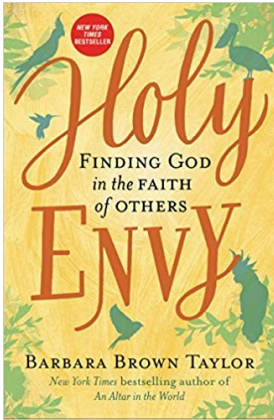
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BOOK GROUP BEGINS FEBRUARY 20

Thursday mornings at 10 AM, join Vicar Jaime and others in discussing this recent New York Times bestseller by Episcopal writer Barbara Brown Taylor. Here is a description:

The renowned and beloved *New York Times* bestselling author of *An Altar in the World* and *Learning to Walk in the Dark* recounts her moving discoveries of finding the sacred in unexpected places while teaching the world's religions to undergraduates in rural Georgia, revealing how God delights in confounding our expectations.

Barbara Brown Taylor continues her spiritual journey begun in *Leaving Church* of finding out what the world looks like after taking off her clergy collar. In *Holy Envy*, she contemplates the myriad ways other people and traditions encounter the Transcendent, both by digging deeper into those traditions herself and by seeing them through her students' eyes as she sets off with them on field trips to monasteries, temples, and mosques.

Troubled and inspired by what she learns, Taylor returns to her own tradition for guidance, finding new meaning in old teachings that have too often been used to exclude religious strangers instead of embracing the divine challenges they present. Re-imagining some central stories from the religion she knows best, she takes heart in how often God chooses outsiders to teach insiders how out-of-bounds God really is.

Throughout *Holy Envy*, Taylor weaves together stories from the classroom with reflections on how her own spiritual journey has been complicated and renewed by connecting with people of other traditions—even those whose truths are quite different from hers. The one constant in her odyssey is the sense that God is the one calling her to disown her version of God—a change that ultimately enriches her faith in other human beings and in God.

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!

- **February 23**
- **March 22**

Parish Health Ministries “What is a Good Death?” End of Life Preparation, Advance Directives, etc.

- Part 1: Saturday February 1, 1—2:30 pm
- Part 2: Saturday February 8, 1—2:30 pm

Congregational Discussion of Property Options—2nd Sundays at Coffee Hour

- February 9
- March 8

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.

Book Group—“Holy Envy Finding God in the Faith of Others” - Thursdays at 10 am starting February 20.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper—Tuesday February 25

Ash Wednesday Service—February 26

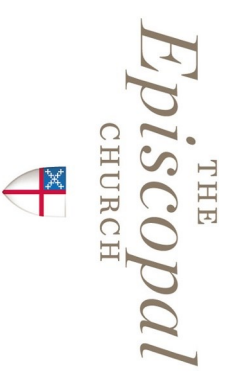
Wednesday Evening Lenten Services— “Praying for Peace” March 4th through April 8th, 6:30 pm in the Chapel

Prayer Requests

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



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



welcomes you