

# St. John's Journal

December 2020



## Old Scottish Prayer

*From ghoulies and ghosties  
And long-leggedy beasties  
And things that go bump in the night,  
Good Lord, deliver us!*

I should have said this prayer before closing and emailing the previous, flawed edition of the December newsletter! Do I blame the full and waning moon? Trickster? Loki? Various unnamed nixies?

No! I goofed, and I apologize! This is the copy that should have been, the copy that will go out in the postal mailing.

g



## Fr. Doug's Iconic Column

I must confess that recently I have had days when I get a little depressed, maybe once a week. This season of COVID is wearing on me. There is the overall weight of living within a pandemic. There is the recurring task of having to rethink how we are going to do something because what we have done traditionally won't work this year. There is the rethinking of what we will do that happens because there has been another shift in the guidelines from the State. The past couple weeks as I received the body and blood of Christ in the worship service, it felt empty because I was unable to share it with you. There is the concern for my son, Emmett, who graduated from college in the Spring but cannot find work. Every once in a while, I have a flareup of "coronamentia," when my mind just doesn't seem to be working very well. I share this not because I want you to feel sorry for me, but because I want you to know that I believe that you are being affected in your own way, as well.

Sometimes, just getting a nap in wipes away the depression or lifts the mental fog. Sometimes getting to the church to do some work puts me in a better mental space. Spending time with Patti or joking around with Emmett lifts my spirits. Connecting with the good people of St. John on our Zoom Coffee Hour or at our in-person outdoor gatherings can be helpful as well. Sometimes a passage of scripture surprises me and awakens me to a new or renewed word from God.

We are entering the season of Advent. A month out from Christmas, there can be the overpowering desire to pull out the Christmas music. We especially might want to hear happy traditional music like "Jingle Bells," "Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer," "I'll be Home for Christmas," or "Grandma Got Runover by a Reindeer." We want to go to that happy place with all the great memories, decorations and favorite Christmas Carols.

But let us take a moment and recognize that Christmas is meant to follow Advent. Advent shows us that the journey to Christmas begins in darkness and difficult circumstances. Life is not all about always being joyful and hopeful, peaceful and loving, but it is about joy and peace, hope and love, breaking into the darkness of our lives. "Advent" means "to come." God is coming to us wherever we are, in whatever circumstances we find ourselves. We do not have to be in the Christmas spirit for Christ to seek us out. We do not have to have everything right before Christ comes. He comes to us wherever we are, whatever we are facing, and however we are feeling.

This December let us celebrate "Emmanuel," God with us, God coming to us wherever we are. Let us wait with expectation for how God will draw us into the Light.

Fr. Doug



*Musings from Denise*

## AN ADVENT TO REMEMBER

## AN ADVENT HYMN\*

Signs of endings all around us –  
 darkness, death, and winter days  
 – shroud our lives in fear and  
 sadness, numbing mouths that  
 long to praise. Come, O Christ  
 and dwell among us! Hear our  
 cries, come set us free. Give us  
 hope and faith and gladness.  
 Show us what there yet can be.

Can it be that from our endings,  
 new beginnings you create? Life  
 from death and from our rend-  
 ings, realms of wholeness gener-  
 ate? Take our fears, then, Lord,  
 and turn them into hopes for life  
 anew: Fading light and dying  
 season sing their Glorias to you.

Speak, O God, your Word among  
 us. Barren lives your presence  
 fill. Swell our hearts with songs  
 of gladness, terrors calm forebod-  
 ings still. Let your promised  
 realm of justice blossom now  
 throughout the earth; your do-  
 minion bring now near us; we  
 await the saving birth.

~Words by  
 Dean W. Nelson, c. 1988  
*Wonder, Love and Praise*

For countless years, the church's Season of Advent (the four Sundays of preparation leading up to Christmas) has been totally out of step with the increasingly frenetic consumerism and premature airing of cheery Christmas carols we find in the commercial world. With a couple exceptions, most of the hymns assigned to this season are unfamiliar to many of us. Take for instance, "Signs of endings"\* here, which I think seems particularly relevant in 2020.

My family always started focusing on Christmas just after Labor Day, so in one respect, our season of preparation was 15 weeks, not four. In early September, Dad would begin laying out Christmas ad campaigns for various department stores and Mom would begin her holiday baking with – yes -- fruitcake (*which was very light, moist and tasty, actually, so I've never understood the fruitcake jokes*). Then she'd select recipes for the many cookies we would bake and mostly give away.

By Thanksgiving, Mom had most of her baking done and was ready to decorate the house. By that time Dad was DONE with Christmas, and already planning ads for after-Christmas sales. So getting him to help with anything more than stringing lights outside or fetching a Christmas tree from a seller in a nearby parking lot was a challenge.

One year stands out, though. I was about 10. Dad had been out of work for several months at the same time Mom had some health issues that racked up huge medical bills. They sold valuables to pay the bills and considered giving up their \$300/year lease on a little cabin near the Palomar Observatory. Although they strove to keep me unaware of their difficulties, it became obvious we were facing a Christmas akin to what each of them had experienced growing up during the Great Depression.

There would be much less baking. All presents would be homemade (most of ours were anyway), and there would be no Christmas tree. We still put up lights (continued on p. 4)

*Musings from Denise* (continued from page 3)

Yet, somehow, the austerity of that season seemed to intensify the joyous expectation of Christmas in a way that shopping and parties and gorging on rich foods never did.

Then came a mid-December snow storm that felled a number of trees near our little cabin. Rangers urged all owners and tenants to check their cabins for damage. Mom was too ill to travel, but Dad and I went. The cabin was fine, but a large fir had fallen across a fire access road about half a mile away. Dad grabbed a vintage buck saw from the cabin and we set out to top that tree. As we pushed/pulled the saw together, he told me stories of his childhood in Montana (something he had never done before). An hour or so later, we got back to the cabin with our prize Christmas tree, numb from the cold, with hands sore and blistered. After some hot cocoa, we strapped the tree to the roof of the Jeep and headed home. Because it was so large, Dad had to build a special stand for it and prune some of the larger branches, but once decorated it was magnificent. And in spite of all the worries and stress, and the many cutbacks in our typical preparations, when it finally came, that was the . . .

**BEST . . . CHRISTMAS . . . EVER!**

## **A MOST UNCONVENTIONAL CONVENTION**

Way back on Halloween (doesn't that seem a long time ago?) the Diocese of Oregon held an annual convention like no other. Rather than traveling to a convention center somewhere in Western Oregon and spending a couple days sharing meals and visiting with other delegates, browsing exhibit tables, hearing reports from various ministries, raising funds through basket raffles, and enjoying the live music and pageantry of the event, 324 delegates met via Zoom from the comfort of their own homes or their local churches.

Granted, many of the enjoyable benefits of meeting in person were lost, but we did manage to pray together, hold hearings and pass two proposed resolutions to be forwarded to the House of Deputies at the next General Convention of the Episcopal Church USA, elect officers and adopt a \$1,739,394 operating budget for the Diocese for 2021.

During Morning Prayer, Bishop-elect Diana Akiyama preached on the Gospel of Luke (10:1-9), in which Jesus appointed seventy followers to go out in pairs to towns he was about to visit. They were to travel light and carry only the urgent message that the Kingdom of God is near. They were to offer peace and healing to those who welcomed this good news and provided them hospitality.

Later, in his address to convention, Bishop Michael Hanley spoke "one last time" about the Camino de Santiago, a pilgrimage hike he made before becoming our 10<sup>th</sup> bishop (which he mentioned in his first visit to St. John's). This time, he recalled walking alone in the rain one day, until he met an English stranger. They began swapping stories, ignoring the rain. He then said the year 2020 has seemed like a very long, wet walk -- with Covid-19, hyper-politics and wildfires -- and concluded the journey is always easier when shared.

Bishop Hanley then reviewed the progress the Diocese of Oregon has made in the past ten years: continued healing after the departure of former Bishop Johnny Itty, restructured diocesan roles and responsibilities, and congregations found ways to continue their work under the restrictions posed by Covid-19. This year, the Diocese almost sold the Bishop's Close (diocesan offices), completed a forensic audit through a third party, dissolved a 19<sup>th</sup> Century "Corporate Sole" legal entity to create more transparency (continued on page 5)

**Convention** (continued)

and supervision of bishops' finances, provided emergency grants through EBOF, and worked with St. Philip the Deacon (a historically African-American congregation) on a housing project. He thanked the many "wonderful people" with whom he has worked over the past ten years, and wished the Diocese well. He and his wife, Marla, plan to remain in Portland in retirement.

Alan Murray (Trinity Cathedral), chief proponent of the two resolutions, stated that 2020 is a year of reckoning, and as we strive for full inclusion we must learn our past to improve our future.

**Anti-Racism Training for Deputies and Alternates:** "Resolved, ... That beginning January 1, 2022 the lay and ordained leadership of The Episcopal Church, including all ordained persons, professional staff, and those elected or appointed to positions of leadership on committees, commissions, agencies and boards, and as deputies or alternates to General Convention be required to take anti-racism training and receive certification of such training...." The Diocese of Oregon already has this policy, and variations have been adopted by various other dioceses since the topic was addressed in 2000, but there is no consistent church-wide requirement to include delegates and alternates or to mandate data collection. Since the General Convention is the governing body of the Episcopal Church, this resolution proposes all members of the House of Deputies should have this training. Delegates to our convention concurred. [PASSED: 97% to 3%]

**Study on the Complicity of "The Diocese of Oregon" in Oppressive Acts of Racism and Exclusion:** Beginning in 2006, the General Convention directed dioceses to "research those instances where 'they were complicit in or profited from the institution of Transatlantic Slavery'" as a means to encourage truth telling and reach reconciliation. The Diocese of Oregon did not originally respond to that order, or to another adopted in 2009. The current resolution directs the diocesan Commission to End Racism to establish a Task Force on Truth and Reconciliation to gather information in the coming year and report findings at next year's diocesan convention. It recognizes that although Transatlantic Slavery may not have been directly part of Oregon's history, segregation, discrimination and mistreatment of blacks, as well as indigenous peoples and immigrants from Asia and Latin America, have been. The resolution expands the effort to include these other people in its study. [PASSED: 95% to 5%] A subsequent amendment to the explanatory clause that included a specific reference to "lash laws" that excluded black settlers in Oregon up until 1926 also passed [89% to 11%].

**ELECTIONS:** Newly elected to 3-year terms on the **Board of Trustees** are Pamela Filbert (St. Timothy, Salem) and the Rev. Sara Fischer (SS Peter and Paul, Portland); elected to 4-year terms on the **Standing Committee** are Don Metheny (St. Mary, Eugene) and the Rev. Ernestine Flemister (St. Luke, Grants Pass). The **Diocesan Council** (advisory to the Bishop) had four 3-year openings (two clergy and two lay representatives). Elected on the first ballot were Megan Brazo-Erickson (Trinity, Portland), the Rev. Ryan Baker-Fones (St. Mary, Eugene) and the Rev. Diane Higgins-Shaffer (Calvary, Seaside). It took three more ballots to elect the second lay person out of a field of four. Ann Frazier (Christ Church, Lake Oswego) emerged the winner. In other elections, **Trinity Cathedral** added Barbara Brecht (St. David, Portland) and the **Camp and Retreat Board** added the Rev. Jackee Martinez (St. John the Divine, Springfield).

The convention ended with resolutions of courtesy acknowledging the efforts and cooperation of various groups and of Bishop Hanley's service to Oregon, concluding with a tribute from Presiding Bishop Michael Curry.

-- Reported by Denise Skillman

## **Advent/Christmas Plans**

In this season of COVID, the Christmas season will be very different, especially since the number of daily positive test results is actually increasing. As a result, we are not gathering for in person worship, and even cutting back on the number of people present at any one time. So the challenge is, how do we celebrate the season. Clearly it will be centered much more within our households. Because of that most everyone should have received by now an Advent/Christmas home worship brochure. Please use this as seems best to you. If you did not receive one and would like one, please contact the office and we will get one to you as quickly as we can.

Depending upon the weather, we are planning for an outside caroling gathering at the church on December 20<sup>th</sup> around dusk. Communion will be offered at this gathering. Stand by for information when we get close to that date.

Rev. Patti, from Emmanuel, and Fr. Tim, from St. James, and I are planning on doing a special service online that is often called a Blue Christmas or Longest Night service. This service is often held around the Winter Solstice, the longest night, on December 21<sup>st</sup>. This service recognizes that not everyone is happy at Christmas time. We continue to face difficult times in our lives, which is certainly true this year, and it is important to hear the message of God coming to us in the midst of our pain.

There will also be an online Christmas Eve service on December 24.

On December 27<sup>th</sup> we will be celebrating the Feast of St. John as part of our usual Sunday worship online.

We are leaving the lights on in the sanctuary so that the stained-glass windows will shine out into the darkness every night. This is a gift to the community. Come by and enjoy them.

## **Annual Meeting**

Every year around the end of January or the beginning of February we hold our Annual Meeting. At that meeting we hear reports on various aspects of our life together in past year and the budget for the new year. We also elect members of the Bishop's Advisory Committee and Delegates to Diocesan Convention and the South Coast Convocation. This year having an in-person meeting does not seem like a good idea as it would probably keep some people away from the meeting when under normal circumstances they might attend. So the BAC is putting together a plan to vote by mail. As Oregonians we are used to this method. This bends the church's bylaws a little bit, but our plan tries to honor the intent of the bylaws without being in person.

We ask if there is anyone who is interested in being a member of the BAC or a Delegate to the Diocesan Convention or Convocation to please let, Fr. Doug, Denise or Judy know. If nothing else, call the office and leave a message and we will get back to you. Please let us know as soon as possible and certainly before Christmas. Don't delay!

The January Newsletter will have a more detailed description of the process. At this time, we anticipate that there will be a mailing sent out in mid-January that will include ballots. You will be voting on candidates and some minor changes to the bylaws. There will be information included about the proposed bylaw changes. The ballots can then be brought to a drive by drop off in the parking lot on February 7. When people drop off the ballots, they will be given a packet of the various annual reports. Those who prefer to mail in their ballots will need to make certain they arrive at the church before the 7<sup>th</sup>. The annual reports packet will be available to be picked up at other times.

**December Birthdays**



<b>4th</b>	<b>Jennifer Mello</b>
<b>12th</b>	<b>Judy Jackson</b>
<b>21st</b>	<b>Eddie Miller</b>
	<b>Lani Reynolds</b>
<b>22nd</b>	<b>Jim Lawson</b>
<b>23rd</b>	<b>Fr. Doug Hale</b>



**Classic Basic Sugar Cookies**

Beat 2 sticks butter, 1/2 cup granulated sugar and 3/4 cup confectioners' sugar until fluffy. Beat in 2 egg yolks, 1 teaspoon vanilla and 1 teaspoon orange zest. Whisk 2 1/4 cups flour, 1/2 teaspoon baking powder and 1/4 teaspoon salt; stir into the butter mixture, then chill 30 minutes. Roll tablespoonfuls into balls and flatten; sprinkle with coarse sugar and bake 15 to 20 minutes at 350 degrees.



**Peanut Butter Cookies**

Make Classic Sugar Cookie dough without zest. Add 1 cup peanut butter with the sugar. Roll into medium balls; press with a fork. Sprinkle with coarse sugar and bake 12 to 15 minutes at 350 degrees.



**Mexican Wedding Cookies**

Make Classic Sugar Cookie dough (No. 1) with almond extract instead of vanilla. Add 1 cup almond flour to the dry ingredients. Chill 30 minutes, then scoop into tiny balls and bake 20 to 25 minutes at 325 degrees. Cool, then toss in confectioners' sugar.

**Easy Whoopie Pies**

Make Classic Chocolate Cookie dough (No. 21) with 3 eggs and 3/4 teaspoon baking powder total; add 6 ounces melted semisweet chocolate with the eggs. Roll into balls and bake 6 to 8 minutes at 375 degrees; cool slightly. Flip over half the cookies, top each with a marshmallow and return to the oven to soften, 2 minutes. Top with the remaining cookies.



## OUR PRAYER LIST

Sabra, Doris, Gisela, Karen & Joe, Gail P., Myra & Jim, Roy, Juanita, Kelly, James, Sue W., Bea B., Michelle, Mike L., Kathy, Mike F., Melissa L., Brady, Lori & Jay, Sandy B., Kimberly S., Zoe B., Donna & Kevin B., Marilyn P., Bill & Steve, the Gaffney family, Deanna, Sheri, Debbie, Elliot, Bill M., Mike & Sandy, Sara R., Evelyn, Lenor, Jamie S., Sharyn, Connie, Karen, Janet & Barry.

### Can you identify the Christmas carols in the puzzle on page 8?

#### Attend Church Even While We Cannot Gather!

Fr. Doug is presenting a beautiful service on YouTube each Sunday. Even if you do not have a computer but have internet connection, use your Smart Phones to log on. Services are reverent and feed our hearts and souls with the familiar rich liturgy and music. Know that while Fr. Doug partakes alone of the bread and wine he consecrates during the Eucharist, we are still part of the communion by our prayers, participation, and presence – even from our homes. Join Fr. Doug also for Coffee Hour on Sundays, also available through your Smart Phones. You will receive separate email with the link. Follow us on our web pages: [www.stjohnsbandon.org](http://www.stjohnsbandon.org).

Find us on Facebook at

<https://www.facebook.com/St-John-Episcopal-Church-in-Bandon-Oregon-234749653862372>

**“Love God, love our neighbor, and serve one another.”**

#### BAC

##### Senior Warden

Denise Skillman

##### Junior Warden: Tom Glunt

##### Members at Large:

Laurea Arnoldt, Mary Garrett, Judy Jackson, Lani Reynolds

##### Treasurer: Kay Marino

##### Clerk: Sally Glunt

##### Music Director:

Cynthia Mohorko

##### Church Administrator:

Virginia MacCallum

##### Priest-in-Charge:

The Rev. Doug Hale

##### Office Hours:

The office is not presently open for visitors to reduce the chances of spreading illnesses. The administrator is working in the office and is taking and returning calls.

## BEING GOOD NEIGHBORS

Our generous congregation contributed 175 pounds of food to the Good Neighbors Food Pantry last month! So many are hungry during this pandemic. Please remember their needs in December. The basket is in the kitchen. Please call the church if you want to bring your donation so we can meet you here.

#### UPDATE THE PRAYER LIST

Let's keep the listings on our prayer list current. This is an on-going process, so please check the listings above to be sure it is current.

You may email or call the church to make your additions or corrections to the listings. Call 541-347-2152 or email [stjohns.bandon@gmail.com](mailto:stjohns.bandon@gmail.com).

# DECEMBER 2020

---

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 3 ACOA 8 AA	2 8 AA	3	4	5
6 2nd Sun. of Advent	7 7:30 AA	8 1 BAC 3 ACOA 8 AA	9 8 AA	10	11	12
13 3rd Sun. of Advent	14 5 Good Earth 7:30 AA	15 3 ACOA 8 AA	16 8 AA	17	18	19
20 4th Sun. of Advent	21 7:30 AA	22 3 ACOA 8 AA	23 8 AA	24 Christ- mas Eve	25 Nativity of Our Lord	26
27 St. John the Apostle	28 7:30 AA	29 3 ACOA 8 AA	30 8 AA	31		



**St. John's  
Episcopal Church**

795 Franklin Avenue  
P.O. Box 246  
Bandon, OR 97411

Phone: 541-347-2152  
Email: [stjohns.bandon@gmail.com](mailto:stjohns.bandon@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.stjohnsbandon.org](http://www.stjohnsbandon.org)  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/St-John-Episcopal-Church-in-Bandon-Oregon-234749653862372>



**WHO WE ARE**

St. John Episcopal Church is a community where God leads us in healing, teaching, reaching out, and stewardship.

We are a community that sees Christ in all people and judges none. We believe in inclusion for all people regardless of race, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation. We aim to break down barriers that separate us from one another and to provide a home for anyone on their spiritual journey. Our work brings together people of faith who believe in the inherent dignity and worth of all people on their journey.