

St. John's Journal

December 2022

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP PLANS



We have begun the season of Advent. Christmas will soon be upon us.

The Choir has been in rehearsal. If they can stay healthy, the plan is that they will sing for us on Dec. 18 and at the Christmas Eve Service.

Wednesday December 21st is the Winter Solstice, the longest night of the year. The Wednesday Zoom Evening Prayer will be doing a form of what is called the Longest Night Service. This service is a Christmas service that recognizes that this time of year is not always joyful, but it can be hopeful.

The Christmas Eve service will begin at 4:30pm. It will be a service of Lessons and Carols followed by communion.

Christmas Day is a Sunday this year. While it is likely that many of us will be caught up with other things, Holy Eucharist will be offered at 9:30, as usual.

Fr. Doug will be on vacation the week after Christmas, so Sunday January 1 will be Morning Prayer.

Fr. Doug's Iconic Column

Three years ago, the congregation of St. John started on an experiment with my becoming your half-time Priest. This would have been very difficult to accomplish on our own. So, we sought financial assistance from the Bishop's Fund (EBOF). We were given a three-year grant that was quite substantial the first year and then decreased in the second year and then again in the third year. This next year we will be without Diocesan support.

The hope was that we would have three years to build up the life of St. John, to make it more able to meet the financial challenge of supporting a half-time Priest. But these past three years have not been what we had anticipated. The arrival of the COVID pandemic pushed us into taking steps toward keeping us together and surviving the limitations put upon us, rather than growing. As the end of the three years got closer and closer, a few of us became pessimistic about the prospects of being able to continue to support a half-time Priest.

We launched our Stewardship Campaign for 2023 with a fairly big increase in the goal for pledges. As the several weeks of the campaign went on, it did not look like we were going to reach our goal. But by the end of the campaign, we surpassed our goal by 8%. Those of us who were pessimistic started letting out exclamations of joy and "Hallelujah."

As I think about these past 3 years, we certainly were in a kind of survival mode, but at the same time we were exercising creativity and we were learning new skills. St. John was getting stronger and growing in ways we had not anticipated. For one thing, we have developed skills that allows us to have an online presence in. We were pushed into entering the 21st century. I think we have learned how much we appreciate the opportunity to be together, when we went through times of not being able to do so.

The Holy Spirit has been at work among us, holding together much of what St. John has been and adding new things to our life together. Who knows what the Spirit has in store for us in 2023 and beyond. Keeping our eyes and ears open for new possibilities will be the key. We need to open our hearts and minds to the possible changes and challenges that await us. We need to trust that God will see us through it all, as God has these past three years.

What will these next three years be like? Let's go find out!

Fr. Doug



Bishop's Advisory Committee Notes – November 2022

Here's what took place at the November BAC meeting.

We Reviewed

Notable financial issues:

- Pass-through fund third quarter contribution of \$377 was paid to Bandon Feeds the Hungry.
- \$129.40 from Ukraine collection box was add to the \$1,000 we sent to Episcopal Relief & Development from the Operating Fund.
- The Medical Loan Closet contributed \$1,200 in facilities use fees.
- The 2023 Diocesan Program Assessment is likely to be higher than anticipated.

We Learned

Pledges received to date are \$2300 below budget; \$35,938 is pledged with 14 people pledging.

About 10 folks have returned their Time and Talent forms.

Coast Community Health Clinic hasn't responded to a request for a recommendation of a family for holiday support.

Leftover Halloween candy has been shipped to an organization that sends it to deployed troops.
The choir has resumed and is meeting on Thursdays evenings.

We Discussed

BAC membership for next year. Members going off the BAC include Judy, Maggie, Mary, and Lani.
This coming Sunday's Morning Prayer/memorial service for Myra Lawson, with a reception to follow.
How to arrange extra seating in case community members come for Myra's service.

We Decided

To send Christmas cards to those who do not attend regularly etc. but not to our regular attending folk or wider community. (Judy to coordinate.)

We voted to accept the resignation of Beth as our clerk.

Upcoming Events

Advent begins Nov. 27th.

A Christmas Day service at our regular time.

A Christmas Eve service at 4:30

Wednesday Evening Prayer

Fr. Doug is leading Evening Prayer at 7pm on Wednesdays using the Zoom platform at this link: [https://us06web.zoom.us/j/5042346656?](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/5042346656?pwd=eGlTMETnUyQWk3TW9hNmszemRsQT09)

[pwd=eGlTMETnUyQWk3TW9hNmszemRsQT09](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/5042346656?pwd=eGlTMETnUyQWk3TW9hNmszemRsQT09) The same link can be used each week. The link to the gathering can also be found in his weekly Saturday evening emails. The same link can be used each week. Join and be blessed by this time of prayer and interaction with other folks from St. John.

Musings from Denise

ANTICIPATION

Although the Christmas season is only twelve days long and doesn't start until Christmas Day, you'd never know it by how early Christmas songs begin to creep into TV and radio programming, and stores begin to display Christmas decorations and merchandise. Certainly, I am not the first to bemoan the commercialism of Christmas. What is also lamentable is the loss of attention to the pre-Christmas season of Advent.

Traditionally, Advent was a four-week period of spiritual preparation for both a celebration of the birth of Jesus and anticipation of His Second Coming. Far from the frenzied shopping and partying of modern times, it was a period of fasting, solemn reflection, repentance, and almsgiving sometimes referred to as a mini-Lent. Even the traditional color for Advent (purple or violet) displayed a connection to that longer penitential season. The modern liturgical color for Advent is royal blue, and the intention is to focus on joyous expectation.

Advent wreaths help count the weeks and focus on themes in the lectionary: **Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace**. The circular wreath adorned with evergreen boughs represents eternity and unending love. Four candles are arranged around the wreath, with a large white "Christ Candle" in the center. Three candles are blue (or purple), and one is pink or rose. Blue candles are lit on the first, second and fourth Sundays, but on the third Sunday, the candle that represents Joy is pink and signals a shift away from repentance and toward celebration (the fasting is almost over!) The Christ candle is lit on Christmas Eve.

Advent hymns express our anticipation of the coming of the Messiah. The hymnal we use today (adopted in 1992) contains over twenty Advent hymns, most of which I still don't recognize. Some of the most familiar ("O come, O come Emmanuel," "Come thou long-expected Jesus," and "On Jordan's Bank," for example) are among seven of the fourteen Advent hymns contained in an earlier edition (adopted in 1892). That earlier hymnal, which St. John's earliest members used, had many more hymns that sadly didn't carry over to our current hymnal. They marked the passage from the old year to the new year with a couple stanzas (the first and last) from the "Hymn for the Old Year" by The Rev. James Hamilton in 1882:

Across the sky the shades of night
this winter's eve are fleeting.
We deck thine altar, Lord, with light,
in solemn worship meeting.
And as the year's last hours go by,
we lift to thee our earnest cry,
once more thy love entreating. . . .

Then, O great God, in years to come,
whatever fate betide us,
Right onward through our journey home
be thou at hand to guide us.
Nor leave us till at close of life,
safe from all perils, toil, and strife,
Heaven shall unfold and hide us.

Let us travel together through Advent and approach Christmas with joy and anticipation. Then as we bid farewell to 2022, let us remember the love of friends and family no longer with us, wonder at the wideness of God's goodness and mercy toward us, and step courageously into the new year with God at hand to guide us.

For it is in giving that we receive

Every autumn, our church holds a stewardship campaign to collect pledges of time, talents, and funds for the coming year. We count on every person who worships at St. John or otherwise feels a connection to this place to reflect on how much they value their relationship with the church and our church family. We greatly appreciate your generosity!

We launched our stewardship campaign for 2023 with an ambitious goal of \$54,000, hoping that all our financial supporters would see the truth of St. Francis' statement: "it is in giving that we receive." We recognized that even though this goal was a whopping 23% increase over the \$43,894 we pledged for 2022, it would not be enough to cover all our normal operating expenses. But that's okay because pledging isn't about balancing the church's budget. It is a deeply personal reflection on the blessings we have each received and how we can share them with others.

By the end of the first week, over one-third of our members had submitted pledges. Even though most of us increased our pledges, by the official end of the campaign on November 20th (Dedication Sunday) our combined total was about \$3,400 less than this year, which was disappointing.

Fortunately, God is not bound by our self-imposed timelines. In the week following Dedication Sunday, we received additional pledges, and as of November 28th, our total for 2023 was **\$58,538**, which is about 8.5% over our goal and a 33.5% increase over the current year.

Of course, stewardship is about more than money. As people sign up to share their time and talents with the congregation by filling roles within the worship services, handling chores around the church, and taking up various leadership roles, they demonstrate their commitment to the ongoing work of the church. In doing those things, we not only give but receive.

Thank you to all who pledged your time, talents, and treasure to St. John's for 2023.

A Time and Talent Thank You

Dear Friends,

Thank you for submitting Time and Talent forms during our stewardship campaign.

Your gracious offers of help have been recorded and 2023 will see the many tasks of St. John's being handled with love and dedication.

If there is a coordinator for the job for which you volunteered*, you will be contacted to arrange service. Otherwise, watch for notices and calls-for-service announcements.

Sincerely,

Judy Jackson
for the Stewardship Committee

* Trash & Recycling – Mary Garrett

Prayer Chain – Denise Skillman

McKay's Receipts – Maggie Lowery

Grounds Maintenance – Sally Glunt

December 2022

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

				1	2	3
4 2nd Sun of Advent HE II	5 7:30 AA	6 8:00 AA	7 7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer 8:00 AA	8	9	10
11 3rd Sun of Advent Rose Sun. HE II	12 7:30 AA	13 1 p.m. BAC 8:00 AA	14 7:00 p.m. Even- ing Prayer 8:00 AA	15	16	17
18 Last Sun. of Ad- vent HE II	19 7:30 AA	20 8:00 AA	21 7:00 p.m. Even- ing Prayer 8:00 AA	22	23	24 Christm as Eve 4:30 p.m. HE II
25 Nativi- ty of Our Lord HE II	26 7:30 AA	27 8:00 AA	28 7:00 p.m. Even- ing Prayer 8:00 AA	29	30	31

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS**4 Jennifer Mello****12: Judy Jackson****21: Eddie Miller****21: Lani Reynolds****22: Jim Lawson****22: Bobbi Neason****23: Doug Hale****A Time and Talent Thank You****Dear Friends,**

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Judy Jackson
Stewardship Committee

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Prayer Chain – Denise Skillman
McKay's Receipts – Maggie Lowery
Grounds Maintenance – Sally Glunt
Transportation Ministry – Denise Skillman

FIRST COMING

He did not wait till the world was ready,
till men and nations were at peace.
He came when the Heavens were unsteady,
and prisoners cried out for release.

He did not wait for the perfect time.
He came when the need was deep and great.
He dined with sinners in all their grime,
turned water into wine. He did not wait

till hearts were pure. In joy he came
to a tarnished world of sin and doubt.
To a world like ours, of anguished shame
he came, and his Light would not go out.

He came to a world which did not mesh,
to heal its tangles, shield its scorn.
In the mystery of the Word made Flesh
the Maker of the stars was born.

We cannot wait till the world is sane
to raise our songs with joyful voice,
for to share our grief, to touch our pain,
He came with Love: Rejoice! Rejoice!

Madeleine L'Engle

BANDON FEEDS THE HUNGRY

The ecumenical food pantry depends on each of us for our gifts of food each month. As you bring the non-perishable food items for this ongoing need, please remember, too, the family dog or cat. Since these items are not for human consumption, they cannot be obtained with food stamps. You also cannot obtain any of these needed items with food stamps: deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, deodorant,, safety razors, soap (bath and laundry), and women's sanitary products.

"Love God, love our neighbor, and serve one another."

BAC

Senior Warden: Judy Jackson
Junior Warden: Sally Glunt
Members at Large: Mary Garrett, Lani Reynolds, Maggie Lowery, Gail Pray
Treasurer: Denise Skillman
Clerk: Beth Wilmot
Banker: Kathy Webb

Convention Delegates: Judy Jackson & Sally Glunt

Staff

Vicar:
 The Rev. Doug Hale

Music Director:
 Cynthia Mohorko

Church Administrator:
 Virginia MacCallum

OFFICE HOURS

Our Vicar, Fr. Doug, is generally in his church office Tuesday and Thursday from about noon until about 4:00 p.m.

Time and Talents, Part 2

One of the rich and precious aspects of our Episcopal worship is that all of us, not just the priest, the lay eucharistic minister, and the musicians, are actively engaged in the service. Yes, the liturgy would happen, but it would be all up front behind the altar rail if it were not for the other magnificent thing that is happening out in the pews.

What am I talking about? The first person you may see as you enter the church is the **usher**, who greets you, hands you a bulletin, passes the alms basin at the offertory, and guides us to the rail for communion.

Then there is the **lector**, who reads the two lessons and invites us to join our voices in the psalm.

And there is the **intercessor**, who leads us in the Prayers of the People to which we respond.

We need more volunteers to lead us in these ways, beloved. Here is what we promise if you are willing to give it a try:

Training
 A handbook (the "how to")
 Endless support, even to duetting or trio-ing, if needed

Please give this thought, and let Fr. Doug or Judy Jackson know when you are ready. We are ready for you right now.

St. John Episcopal Church

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



A Believe Out Loud
 Congregation

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.