

St. John's Journal

December 2023

SPECIAL EVENTS AND SERVICES IN DECEMBER

Dec. 17: The greening of the church

Dec. 21: Longest Night.

Service at 4:00 p.m.

Dec. 24: Christmas Eve.

Service of Lessons and Carols at 4:00 p.m.



Fr. Doug's Iconic Column

Our Thanksgiving trip took us through a lot of different terrain. We started here on the Southern Oregon Coast, with its towering trees, formidable Pacific Ocean waves, and small towns. We traveled north through the Willamette Valley, with its mix of big cities, various crops, and many of the same trees. We then turned east through the Columbia Gorge, with long trains crawling along the edge of the mighty Columbia River, towering rock walls, and trees growing wherever they can find a place while drawing upon the abundantly available water.

It has been about a dozen years since I have been in the Columbia Gorge. Growing up in Portland, my family often had outings in the Gorge. The majesty of that incredibly wide river and all the rock faces caught me off guard. I had forgotten how impressive it is.

Once we left the Gorge, we turned north into Central Washington, into a land vastly different from what we had left behind. There were very few rocky walls and very few trees. Most of the trees had lost their leaves and the few that held onto their needles were found in very small pockets. What was left to see was many rolling hills covered with brown grasses and dried up bushes. But this sparse vegetation revealed something mostly hidden by trees and other vegetation on the Coast. While the land is not filled with people, it is filled with rolling hills textured by waves of land. The ground itself bore interesting shapes and seemed alive, much like the waves at the Coast.

As I took in this land fully revealed, I reflected upon how the trees we value so much obscure so much from our view. We get glimpses of the land when there is a clear cut of the trees, but otherwise we are mostly aware of the fluffy blanket of trees that cover the land. And who doesn't love a fluffy blanket.

As we begin the season of Advent and steadily approach Christmas, there is a lot of fluff in the season that obscures what lies beneath, at the core. We can be caught up in Christmas decorations and music, gift-giving and gatherings with loved ones, and mostly not think about the reason for the season. Even when we do think about the birth of the Christ child, we tend to romanticize it instead of looking at what it is all about. The baby lying in the manger is seen as cute or beautiful, rather than as a representation of the family's poverty, hardship, and displacement. We tend to focus upon this little boy child rather than have our minds twisted by the idea that the Almighty Creator of the universe came among us as that child. We can even say those words without having our world turned upside down, which it should be. It is a crazy idea, and yet we Christians proclaim it, and we should be shaken by it as well.

I invite you to take some time in the next month, to lift off the fluff of the season, to push the Christmas trees aside and take a good look for yourself at what lies beneath it all. Reflect upon the astounding mystery that we proclaim and how it can touch your life.

On December 21st at 4pm, we will be holding what is called the Longest Night Service. It is held on the longest night of the year. It presents the same Christmas story that we will also hear on Christmas Eve, December 24th at 4pm, at the Service of Lessons and Carols. But it does it in a way that helps the story speak to us in our troubled lives. It helps us peel back the fluff so we can truly hear the words of hope in the midst of dark aspects of our lives. Please consider coming to this service. Maybe invite a friend.

May God be at work in us so that we might truly see the light of God in the birth of the Christ child.



Fr. Doug

So Noted!

The BAC met after church on November 11th and spent most of the meeting discussing money matters.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

The BAC reviewed October and year-to-date income and expenses in light of our budget: pledges are coming in about \$12,000 below expectations. Expenses through October 31st were \$62,993.17, about \$6,110 below budget.

We will probably need to draw from savings to close out 2023.

Pass-Through Funds collected and distributed so far this year total \$3,007, including almost \$1,200 for local food pantries and meal programs, \$588 to victims of the war in Ukraine and \$286 for earthquake victims in Turkey and Syria. (Full details will be published in the annual report.)

The auditor's favorable opinion of our FY 2022 financial records was reviewed by the BAC. A couple of suggestions she made will be addressed at future meetings.

STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN and 2024 BUDGET DRAFT

As of November 12th we had 16 pledges totaling \$34,295 for 2024. The campaign will end November 26th.

A very rough draft of a budget for 2024 was presented, based on historical trends and anticipated cost increases. It predicts total operating expenses in the neighborhood of \$87,000. In December, with final figures from our stewardship campaign in hand, the BAC will begin revising the draft for our annual meeting. Three things are likely: fundraising goals will need to be set higher, expenses will need to be trimmed wherever possible, and we will again need to draw money from savings to balance the budget.

FUNDRAISING

The 2023 budget counted on event income of \$5,600. A holiday pie sale had been considered, but we determined more lead time was needed to pull it off. In lieu of that event, \$5,500 was raised through private donations and two other events were scheduled. Last Sunday, two pies baked by Fr. Doug were raffled during coffee hour and brought in \$70. The Rainy-Day Book Sale scheduled for December 9th is our next event. In addition, St. John has begun collecting and recycling bottles and cans. The first bottle drop earned \$29.

MEMORIAL GARDEN

Two marker stones have been ordered (delivery will take 2 to 3 weeks).

Yard clean-up will be needed before a dedication service can be held.

THANKSGIVING

Thanksgiving will be observed on Sunday, November 19th with a Eucharist and special presentation. A special

Thanksgiving Offering will be collected and sent to the Diocese to aid the poor and homeless.

On Thanksgiving Day (November 23rd) members and friends will gather for a potluck feast at the church, aiming for a 3:00 p.m. seating. (The community holiday dinner was cancelled this year.)

DRAFT 2024 CALENDAR

Holy Days to be observed were indicated, along with dates set for canonical offerings and contributions to the Vicar's Discretionary Fund (April and September). Special projects and fundraising events will be added as information becomes available.

(Continued on page 4)

So Noted (continued from page 3)

UPCOMING EVENTS (December and beyond)

- December 3: Advent I (The season begins.)
- December 10: BAC meets
- December 17: Greening of the Church
- December 24: Advent IV at the 9:30 a.m. service; Christmas Eve Eucharist with Lessons and Carols at 4 p.m.
- December 31: Feast of St. John (observed as our patronal feast)
- January – prepare grant application for roof repair/replacement
- March – commit to contractor for roof repair/replacement
- April 11-14 Cursillo weekend in Turner, Oregon (Fr. Doug will be attending)
- May – Repair/replace roof

Respectfully submitted,

Laurea Arnoldt, Bishop's Warden

THANKSGIVING OFFERING

A special Thanksgiving Offering was collected at St. John on November 19 and 26. This is an annual opportunity for our congregation to express our abundant gratitude for all we have been given, and to help the Episcopal Diocese of Western Oregon aid the less fortunate within our boundaries in concrete ways. This year, St. John very generously contributed \$505. (Last year we offered \$74.)

Combining our contributions with those of other churches, the Diocesan Council issues grants for projects serving people in need. Previous grant projects included food pantries, community gardens, medical clinics, and houseless shelters.

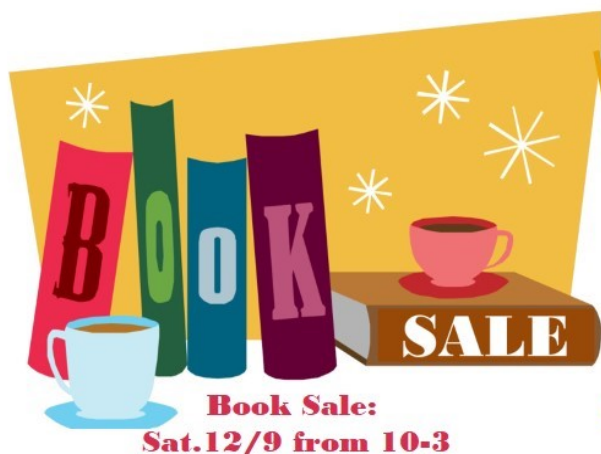
STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

This year's stewardship campaign, "Past, Present, and Future," acknowledges that the annual pledge drive is more than a promise to help fund the church's budget for the following year. It celebrates the investment past parishioners have made at St. John so that we can do the same for ourselves and future members of the church. By the end of this year's campaign, our pledges for 2024 came to \$48,495, which is an increase of nearly \$5,000 over the current year's pledges, and represents approximately 75% of our anticipated income in 2024. Thank you to everyone who pledged their support for St. John's.

Although it seems like pledging is a once-a-year activity, pledges actually may be added or adjusted at any time (just speak to the Treasurer). Remember that when we use what God has invested in us for the good of the church, we are investing in ministries and programs that transform people's lives through meaningful worship, education, and mission in places far and near.

December Birthdays

4: Jennifer Mello
12: Judy Jackson
21: Eddie Miller
21: Lani Reynolds
22: Jim Lawson
22: The Rev. Bobbi Neason
23: Fr. Doug Hale



Book donations drop off:
after church on Sunday, 12/3.
Or on Tuesday, 12/5
from 10 - 12.
Please separate books by genre.
Thank you!

Musings from Denise

I Should Spend More Time Reading

For one who reads slowly, I have a ridiculously large collection of books that fills shelves in five rooms of my house, including the laundry room. But I keep buying more and borrowing from the library.

On a recent dark and rainy afternoon when my furnace wasn't working and the house was uncomfortably cold, I fired up the wood stove and huddled near it with a cup of tea and a library book. What bliss!


I had selected a British crime novel because the setting was in Surry (south of London), a rural area where I stayed with friends many years ago. I was not familiar with the author, though I probably should have been. Freeman Wills Crofts (1879-1957) wrote more than 30 detective novels, and the one I chose was halfway through a series featuring Inspector French of New Scotland Yard. I enjoyed it so much that now I want to read all the others.

The Hog's Back Mystery was written in 1933, and its perspective is not only culturally different from ours, but its concept of aging is not the same. Of one of his characters, Croft wrote, "*She was certainly a wonderful old woman, nearly seventy, and with the wanderlust of a girl of twenty.*" I beg your pardon! Not only do I challenge the notion that a 20-year-old female is a "girl" and not a "woman," but I'm nearly seventy and many of you are past that and we still have miles to go before we rest. "Old" indeed!

The quaint turns of phrase and complex plot turns were not only typically British but reminded me of the works of Agatha Christie. So, it was not surprising to learn that Crofts was considered one of the pre-eminent writers of the "Golden Age" of British fiction (between the World Wars) and was greatly acclaimed by both Agatha Christie and Raymond Chandler.

(Continued on page 6)

Please
join us for
the
St. John's




Rainy Day Used Book Sale
Saturday, December 9th - 10 am - 3 pm

St. John Episcopal Church - 795 Franklin, Bandon

Shop for books,
dvd's, cd's, puzzles, & handmade bookmarks.

Also,
take home book-themed gift baskets,
and,
buy raffle tickets to win a Kindle Paperwhite
e-reader* (winner need not be present at drawing).



Last but not least,
enjoy holiday treats & hot drinks.

Hope to see you there!

* Kindle is a refurbished product

stjohnsbandon@gmail.com - (541) 347-2152 - www.stjohnsbandon.org

Musings by Denise

(Continued from page 5)

One thing I object to in modern fiction is the amount of profanity staining the pages. Older novels are generally free of it. Crofts' characters are not above swearing, but we don't read the actual words. Instead, we read "he swore a blustering oath," or "(he said) with a strange but efficient sounding oath." Isn't that better than sticking a nasty word in our minds?

I've been culling books from my library for the upcoming "Rainy-Day Book Sale" on December 9th. I hope to replace them with new (used) books from your libraries to fill my empty shelves and give me something enjoyable to read on long, cold winter nights.

LAY MINISTRY

Can you participate in this important aspect of our worship? We need more folks willing to usher, to read the lessons and lead the psam, to lead the prayers of the people.

Please let the office or Fr. Doug know if you are available. Yes, training is provided — for FREE!

FEED MY SHEEP

So Jesus asked us to do. We can respond by our donations to the Ecumenical Food Pantry, which assists those who are hungry and in need. A basket in the narthex is there for your donations. In addition, things like tooth paste, toothbrushes, shampoo, deodorant, and shaving needs are welcome.

December 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				6:30 Choir Practice each Thursday	1	2
3 1st Sun of Advent HE II	4 7:30 AA	5 8:00 AA	6 8:00 AA	7 10 Conversations Class 3:30-5 BIG 6:30 Chjoir	8	9
10 2nd Sun. of Advent HE II	11 7:30 AA	12 8:00 AA	13 8:00 AA	14 10 Conversations Class 3:30-5 BIG	15	16
17 3rd Sun of Advent HE II Healing Service	18 7:30 AA	19 8:00 AA	20 8:00 AA	21 10 Conversations Class 3:30-5 BIG	22	23
24 See service post on page 1	25	26 8:00 AA	27 8:00 AA	28 10 Conversations Class 3:30-5 BIG	29	30
31 HE II Feast of St. John				Dec. 17 Greening of the Church	Dec. 21 : 4 p.m. Longest Night Service	

St. John Episcopal Church

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John-Episcopal-Church-in-
Bandon-Oregon-
234749653862372**

Medical Loan Closet

Phone: 541-590-2443



**A Believe Out Loud
Congregation**

W H O W E A R E

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.

BISHOP'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BAC)

Bishop's Warden: Laurea Arnoldt

Junior Warden: Sally Glunt

Treasurer: Denise Skillman

Clerk: Ginny Hall

Members at large: Gail Pray & Kathy Webb

Convention Delegates: Laurea Arnoldt & Kay Marino

Alternates: Sally Glunt & Judy Jackson

CHURCH STAFF

Vicar: The Rev. Doug Hale

Music Director: Cynthia M0horko

Administrator: Virginia MacCallum

Our Vicar, Fr. Doug, is generally in his church office Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00 a.m. until about 4:00 p.m.



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