

# *St. John's Journal*

Bandon-by-the-Sea, Oregon

January 2026

## Theological Education Offering

January 25, 2025

Three or four times a year we make a special offering to the Episcopal Diocese of Western Oregon in accordance with Canon 5.4. The first (on January 25th this year) will be sent to the seminary of our choice to support the education of future clergy. Cash offerings received on that day and checks that are designated for theological education will be forwarded to the Diocese for distribution.

Other canonical offerings are for Pentecost (which funds a variety of ministries within the Diocese through special grants) and Thanksgiving (which is generally transmitted to the Commission on Poverty and Homelessness). A fourth special offering is collected for the Bishop's Discretionary Fund when the Bishop makes an official visitation (every other year).



Notice of  
**ANNUAL MEETING**  
January 25, 2026

Group Leaders are asked to submit written reports to the office by January 12th.

Come and hear what the people of St. John accomplished in 2025 and help decide what we should focus on in 2026. Do you have time and a talent you would like to share with our congregation and community? You are encouraged to sign up at this meeting to volunteer for one of our existing ministries or to create a new one.

We will also be electing people to serve on the Bishop's Advisory Council (BAC), to serve as Clerk of the BAC, as Treasurer, and also to be Delegates or Alternate Delegates to the Annual Diocesan Convention. If you are interested in possibly serving, please speak to Fr. Doug or Laurea.

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*Musings from Denise*

## Welcoming 2026

I can't remember when I last rang in the New Year by staying up till midnight, watching the ball drop in Times Square, sipping champagne, and sharing a kiss. But just about every year I find a few traditions from around the world to mark the passage from one year to the next. Where I grew up, even when we took a nap on New Year's Eve, we were all awake at midnight to ring in the new year by shaking the cowbells that served as our doorbell. You'd think that would disturb the neighbors, but most of them had cowbells too. For us, the clanging bells weren't just about making noise—they symbolized a joyful farewell to the old year and a hopeful welcome to whatever lay ahead. In my current neighborhood, the predominant sounds at midnight are occasional gunfire followed by barking dogs.

Did you ever wonder how this noisemaking tradition got started? Chinese and Celtic folklore claim that loud sounds help scare away evil spirits and bad luck from the past year. However good or bad last year was, we are always hopeful that the year to come will bring us good health, prosperity, and love.

Most of the traditional practices on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day are rooted in superstitions about what we hope will bring us good luck in the coming year. For instance, we should avoid housework on New Year's Day (laundry, dishwashing, and cleaning) to avoid washing away good luck for the year and setting a pattern for toil throughout the year. (I happily embrace that practice.)

We should also avoid eating lobster (because it walks backward), crab (because it walks sideways) and chicken (because it has wings and could fly away). Pork, on the other hand, is safe to eat on New Year's because pigs always walk straight ahead.

In many Latin countries, eating **12 grapes** at the stroke of midnight on New Year's Eve (one for each month of the new year) is thought to bring good luck.

In Japan, it's tradition to eat a bowl of hot **soba noodles** on New Year's Eve to help eaters cross into the new year, breaking free from the past and gathering strength for a new journey ahead. If diners come across a long soba noodle while eating, it signifies a long, fulfilling life.

In the American South, it is considered good luck to include a plate of **collard greens and black-eyed peas** as part of your New Year's Eve meal. Both foods are believed to signify prosperity and well-being for the new year. Many cultures include other foods that have round shapes or green color (both representing money) – so lentils, pancakes, and even oranges are appropriate.

Among the wackiest traditions in some European countries is throwing couches and refrigerators out the window at midnight on New Year's Eve to do away with the old and welcome the new. In Denmark, it is considered good luck and a sign of friendship to break dishware on the door of someone's home. A tamer tradition is **opening your doors and windows** to allow old energy to leave and fresh new air to enter your space.

However you chose to mark the arrival of this New Year, I hope you are blessed with good health and good fortune in 2026.

**Fr. Doug's Iconic Column**

As we start a new year, there are plenty of new things happening.

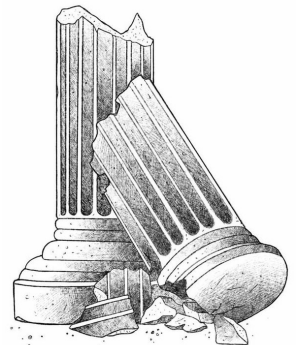
**WORSHIP SCHEDULE:** Regarding our worship schedule, January 4<sup>th</sup> the Second Sunday after Christmas, we will be celebrating the arrival of the wise men seeking the young Messiah. And then on the 11<sup>th</sup> we will be celebrating the Baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ. January 18<sup>th</sup> will be Morning Prayer, with Bobbie Neason preaching.

**VICAR'S VACATION:** I will be taking a week off, January 12-19, so that I can be of support to Patti, who is having surgery that week.

**CONVERSATION GROUP:** The Thursday Morning Conversation Group has been taking a little hiatus but will resume on January 21<sup>st</sup>. We will be starting a different topic for conversation. Each Thursday at 10:30 from the 21<sup>st</sup> through the season of Lent, we will be looking at the Psalm appointed for the following Sunday. This will be an opportunity to become more familiar with the psalms and possibly make their use in our worship more meaningful. We are quite used to speaking many of the psalms on Sunday mornings, but they may not have sunk into our hearts and minds like they might. So, consider joining us for a new experience of the scriptures that may enrich your worship.

**ANNUAL MEETING:** Following worship on January 25<sup>th</sup>, we will be having our Annual Meeting in Theresa Hall. We hope that you will be able to stay for the meeting, and we hope that there will be sufficient food to keep us going through the meeting. Please join us in reviewing the past year and looking ahead at what may await us in 2026.

**FUTURE PROSPECTS:** On another note, there are some encouraging things that tell us things are going well at St. John. At both our Longest Night Service and our Christmas Eve Service we had an approximate 50% increase in attendance over those services in 2024. I haven't yet gone over the whole year to see if our average attendance has gone up, but I will be doing that soon. Also, our 2026 Pledge Campaign saw a significant increase over the 2025 campaign. These are hopeful signs for our future.



Let us pray that 2026 will be a wonderful year, and may we be a blessing to each other and to our community.

Fr. Doug

*"You are never too old to  
set another goal or to  
dream a new dream."*

—C.S. Lewis

## **January Birthdays and Anniversaries**

January 2 Gail Pray

January 17 Jennifer Leseberg

Please contact the office if your name should be on this list.

## **So, Noted!**

The December 14, 2025 BAC meeting was attended by Fr. Doug Hale, Denise Skillman, Maggie Lowery, Lori Lyn Holton, Gail Pray, Kathy Webb. Senior Warden Laurea Arnoldt and Clerk Jennifer Mello were absent. Kathy Webb served as clerk.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

Update on Stewardship for 2026 – Two new pledges were received. One from 2025 was not renewed. A total of \$100,730 has been pledged so far.

A draft operating budget for 2026 was reviewed, with the BAC setting \$2,400 for landscape expenses (not including Memorial Garden landscaping which is covered by a separate fund. The BAC also approved the addition of outreach expenses, but did not set an amount.

The Vicar's compensation package will increase to \$60,989 due to a 2% stipend increase promoted by the Diocese.

Audits are needed for 2024 and 2025, but will not be completed in time for the Annual Meeting on January 25, 2026. Kay Marino is reconciling the Money Market Account to rectify a glitch that appeared in November 2024. Sally Jaeggli from Emmanuel will be asked to do our audit for both years.

### **Junior Warden Report:**

- Reese Electric is bidding on additional track lighting for the choir area, so they can read the music, as well as replacing one of the faulty lights in front.
- Kitchen door lock is sticking. Denise suggested we use Graphite instead of WD 40 on it. Fr. Doug suggested that maybe we need a stronger lock if Graphite does not work.
- Thanks to Gail for her donation of 24 rolls of toilet tissue.

### **Vicar Report:**

Multiple readers are still needed for 12/21/25 (The Longest Night) and 12/24/25 Christmas Eve (Lessons and Carols). The Choir will be singing at both services.

### **Calendar:**

1/11/26: BAC Meeting

1/12-1/19: Vicar on vacation

1/18/26: Morning Prayer will be led by the Rev. Bobbie Neason.

1/25/26: Annual Meeting

# JANUARY 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 NEW YEAR'S DAY	2	3
4 Christmas II EUCHARIST <i>Dances of Universal Peace 2-4p</i>	5 7:30 AA	6 EPIPHANY 7:30 AA	7 7:30 AA	8 (NO Choir)	9	10
11 Bapt. of Jesus EUCHARIST, Healing Svc. & BAC	12 7:30 AA	13 7:30 AA	14 7:30 AA	15 6:30 Choir	16	17
18 Epiphany II MORNING PRAYER	19 7:30 AA	20 7:30 AA	21 7:30 AA	22 10:30-12 Conversation 6:30 Choir	23 <i>Newsletter Deadline</i>	24
25 Epiphany III EUCHARIST ANNUAL MEETING	26 7:30 AA	27 7:30 AA	28 7:30 AA	29 10:30-12 Conversation 6:30 Choir	30	31

**St. John By-the-Sea****Episcopal Church**

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**Medical Loan Closet**

(Open by Appointment Only)

**Phone:****541-590-2443****WHO WE ARE**

*St. John Episcopal Church is 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.*

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

**CHURCH STAFF****Vicar: The Rev. Doug Hale**

Office Hours: Tuesdays &amp; Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Music Director: Cynthia Mohorko****BISHOP'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BAC)**

Generally meets 2nd Sundays after Coffee Hour.

Officers:

Laurea Arnoldt, Bishop's Warden; Kathy Webb, Junior Warden;  
Jennifer Mello, Clerk; Denise Skillman, Treasurer

Members at Large:

Lori Holton, Maggie Lowery, Gail Pray

Convention Delegates:

Mary Garrett, Sally Glunt

(Alternates: Patti &amp; Chris Wood)