

St. John's Journal

October 2026

Father Doug's Iconic Column

October is shaping up to be a busy month.

In the first half of the month, I will be preparing to officiate at the wedding of Tyler Christman and Michelle Joyce, granddaughter of Horthy Joyce, whom a few of you may know. Then in the latter part of the month will be Diocesan Convention and all the preparation that goes into it.

But what really caught my attention is how we begin and end the month.

We begin on October 4th, a Sunday that is also the Feast of St. Francis. As usual, we will have the Blessing of the Animals. Because it falls on a Sunday, Francis will get little recognition, being bumped by the text appointed for that Sunday. It also seems that Francis gets bumped by the importance of the Animals. Maybe we should call it the Feast of our Pets. After worship, we will gather on the deck to give thanks to God for our furry four-legged family members (and creatures of other configurations). We will give God thanks for the part that they play in our lives. And we will call upon God to bless them as well. It is amazing how our pets can have such an impact on our lives. And apparently, if the movement of their tails and/or their running toward us when we appear is any indication, we are a blessing to them as well. So, bring your pets with you or bring pictures of your beloved family members so that we might give them a blessing in return for all that they do for us.

At the other end of the month is the day when we do a blessing of children, though in a different way. On October 31st we celebrate Halloween, or All Hallows Eve. Originally, All Saints Day, November 1st, and the days on either side were meant to be a remembrance of those who were martyred for their faith in Jesus Christ. But on Halloween these days, the martyrs seem to be bumped aside by the children of our community. What becomes most important is children dressed



Being a blessing is so often a two-way street. We may think we are being the ones doing the blessing until we discover that in the process we are blessed.

Fr. Doug



THE CHURCH BEYOND OUR DOORS

It seems that most of us think about the Diocese that governs us only twice a year – during our own annual meeting at which we elect delegates and alternates to meet with other churches in our convocation and to attend and vote at the annual convention of the whole Diocese. It's a shame that more members of our congregation don't take the opportunity to

participate in those activities. (I've even attended when I wasn't a delegate and couldn't vote, just for a clearer understanding about what goes on in the Diocese.)



[Photos by Magnifyphoto 2025: Holy Eucharist and Voting by Colored Ballots]

The convention generally begins with Holy Eucharist and ends with Evening Prayer. Coming from a small church such as ours, it is impressive to see the long procession of clergy and multiple stations for distributing Holy Eucharist, and to hear the Word spoken multilingually. During the business meeting there are reports and presentations about the various ministries sponsored by the Diocese and debates about policies and ethical issues to be voted upon.

In the exhibit hall, groups display information about their various ministries and fundraising measures. There, and at round tables in the convention hall, casual conversations with delegates from churches of all sizes reveal what is going on in other places and allow us to share what we have accomplished.

It makes what we say in our creeds about believing in “one holy catholic and apostolic church” much more meaningful.

This year, the Diocesan Convention will be held at the Salem Convention Center primarily on Saturday, October 24th. (A few preliminary things, like setting up registration and exhibit tables, take place the day before, but most people arrive Friday afternoon, and our delegation sometimes carpools.) The convention center is connected to the Grand Hotel in downtown Salem. Our South Coast Convocation gathers Friday evening for dinner at Bentley's (right inside the hotel)

I hope that at St. John's next annual meeting (end of January) there will be new volunteers to do this important work of the church.

So, Noted! Bishop's Advisory Council Meeting September 13, 2026

Treasurers Report

Reconciliations – All bank accounts at First Interstate Bank have been reconciled for August. The Vicar's Discretionary Fund had no activity in August. A special offering of \$216 was received on September 6th, bringing the balance to \$912.08.

Investments - Morgan Stanley recorded our transfer of \$23,335.91 from the Money Market Clergy Reserve Fund to this Preferred Savings Account, bringing the balance (as of 9/1) to \$46,304.82. This entire account remains restricted for future clergy costs. The Money Market Clergy Reserve Fund is now closed.

The Sweet Fund had a net increase of \$102.07 in July, bringing the balance to \$43,620.69.

Financial Statements from QuickBooks:

Balance Sheet – The Medical Loan Closet received \$125 in August.

Income Statements – (formerly “Operating P&L”) for August and YTD through August are herewith. Note that the Vicar's Stipend in August includes both July (paid to the Diocese) and August includes both July (paid to the Diocese) and August (paid to Paragon Payroll).

Parking Lot Recap: Income and expenses were tracked within the Capital Fund. We collected \$211,050 for this project from 3 donors. We will have spent a total of \$158,866 when our retainage fee of \$7,311.50 is paid, leaving approximately \$51,000 for landscaping around the parking lot. Future capital projects will have about \$6,500 available in the Capital Fund.

Stewardship Campaign for 2027: The committee (Vicar, Wardens, Treasurer, and Maggie Lowery) met September 3rd and drafted a calendar of events. The campaign will “kick - off” with a potluck lunch after church on Sunday October 25th and conclude on Christ the King Sunday (November 22) with another meal. At the kick – off, packets will be handed out containing the Vicar's stewardship letter, a pledge card with FAQ, and an invitation to volunteer for various ministries of the church.\

Senior Warden Report

Laurea Arnoldt presented to the BAC a draft rewrite of a By-law Revision. It moved the statement, that the Junior Warden is the “Peoples Warden” to the Senior Warden Duties.

This complies to the general consensus of the wider Episcopal Church. This keeps the Junior Warden duties to predominately “Facilities, church properties, maintenance and the grounds. This was approved by the BAC.

Junior Warden Report

Parking Lot Project is complete. Now comes the landscaping!

The sacristy sink died and was needing to be replaced. Avery Plumbing will be doing this work.

Vicar Report

1. Dedication of the parking lot – Sept 20th
2. Blessing of the Animals – October 4th
3. Halloween – Saturday the 31st
4. Book Sale will be in December on the 12th

Upcoming Events –

October 11 - BAC

October 25 – Stewardship Campaign Starts

October 31 – Halloween Festivities 2 pm
decorating and doors open at 5 pm to 7 pm

October Birthdays & Anniversaries

10/12 – Tharwat Ghaly

10/15 – Cynthia Mohorko

10/16 – Ginny Hall

10/27 – Mary Garrett

Episcopal medical equipment ministries help ease the burden of illness, mobility issues

By Mary Frances Schjonberg

Posted Aug 25, 2026

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Nancy McCormick, foreground, fills out an application to get needed equipment for her 97-year-old mother as St. James Eatontown Medical Equipment Ministry volunteer Cassandra Durham Jones gets ready to help her. Photo: Mary Frances Schjonberg/Episcopal News Service



[Episcopal News Service] A planned joint replacement, a traumatic accident, a terminal diagnosis or the challenges of an aging body can be life-changing, as well as costly.

The cost of needed equipment and supplies can be a nightmare for many people. Durable medical equipment such as wheelchairs, walkers, commodes, canes, crutches and shower chairs cost hundreds of dollars, yet once people recover, most no longer need the equipment.

Enter Episcopal medical equipment loan closets, “ these have been started in some Episcopal churches throughout the country”.

operated by churches. Their goal is to provide people with the equipment and, at times, the supplies they need. Everything is free, and the equipment is returned when it’s no longer needed.

The [St. James Medical Equipment Ministry](#) in Eatontown, New Jersey, loans durable medical equipment and also gives out supplies such as wound-care bandages and ointments, adult diapers, catheters, feeding tubes and ostomy bags.

Donors who give equipment and money have been so supportive of the ministry at St. James Episcopal Church that it also can help other groups as near as Pennsylvania and as far away as Ukraine, according to Jeff Hughes, one of the nine volunteers who run the ministry.

“You ask for it; I can probably find it for you,” said volunteer Kathy Braun, motioning to the rooms and hallways at St. James stacked high with equipment and supplies.

Nancy McCormick, from Point Pleasant, New Jersey, learned about the ministry when a friend’s daughter was diagnosed with cancer and needed help. McCormick recently came to St. James to pick up a shower chair for her 97-year-old mother. “It’s been helpful to come and get all the equipment I need,” she said, adding that she returns equipment and gets other equipment as her mother’s needs change.

The St. James ministry began in 2022 when parish member and retired engineer Brian Meagher met an unhoused man confined to a motorized wheelchair with battery troubles. Meagher wanted to help fix the equipment and learned about the [Pluckemin Medical Equipment Ministry](#), operated by the Presbyterian church in Pluckemin, New Jersey, since 2010. The ministry helped Meagher get the man a newer, better motorized chair at no cost. The Presbyterian group encouraged Meagher to start the St. James ministry in partnership with them.

Judy Jackson, the founder and coordinator of [St. John’s Medical Loan Closet](#) in Bandon, a town in rural southwestern Oregon, found inspiration from a different source. St. John’s Episcopal Church did not have a permanent priest in 2017 and lacked an outreach ministry. A supply priest mentioned that she had heard about medical loan closets and suggested that the small congregation consider the ministry.

St. John’s started with one wheelchair and put out a call to the community for donations. Today they have close to 200 pieces of mobility equipment to loan, she said. The ministry also got some start-up money from the church and the diocese, and from a local women’s charitable [organization](#). The ministry does not solicit financial donations, but many people want to give something in return for the help they’ve received, Jackson said.

Pastoral care often comes with the equipment. Volunteers say some people cry when they come to donate items that a family member or friend no longer needs. The donors, they say, are gratified that the equipment they bring can help others, as their loved ones were helped.

Laurie Friedman, who volunteers at the St. John's loan closet, said it recently felt like "most of what I was doing at the loan closet was listening to people's stories and holding space for what they wanted to share."

"It seemed like everyone had a story to tell about why they were there seeking some kind of medical equipment. So much of what we do is to provide needed equipment, but just as important is that we offer kindness and a way to help folks deal with their stressful situations in a concrete way."

– *The Rev. Mary Frances Schjonberg is a freelance writer who formerly was a senior editor and reporter for Episcopal News Service.*

DIDJA KNOW?

The modern month of **October** is not mentioned by name in the Bible, but the time period corresponds to the Hebrew months of **Ethanim** (also called Tishri) and **Marcheshvan** (or Bul). [1]

Biblical Calendar Correlation

- **Ethanim (Tishri):** Spans parts of September and October. It is the seventh month of the sacred Hebrew calendar.
- **Bul (Marcheshvan):** Spans parts of October and November. It is the eighth month of the Hebrew calendar. [1]

Key Events During This Season

- **Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah):** Celebrated on the first day of Ethanim (Leviticus 23:24).
- **Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur):** Observed on the tenth day of Ethanim (Leviticus 16:29).
- **Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot):** Held from the fifteenth day of Ethanim (Leviticus 23:39), commemorating the wilderness journeys.
- **Temple Dedication:** King Solomon dedicated the first temple in Jerusalem during the month of Ethanim (1 Kings 8:2). [1, 2]

You can read topical reflections and verse collections for this time of year via the [OpenBible October Topics](#) or find daily reading guides on the [Bible Gateway Verse Calendar](#). [1, 2]

Coming Attractions

Stewardship

Thankful Generosity stewardship focuses on framing giving as a joyful spiritual practice and an expression of gratitude for God's abundance.

Core Principles

- **Gratitude First:** Cultivate thankfulness as the root of generosity.
- **Mission-Driven:** Connect financial support directly to changed lives, community impact, and shared ministry goals.
- **Discipleship:** Stewardship as a holistic invitation to manage time, talent, and resources responsibly.

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Medical Loan Closet

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**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.

BISHOP'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BAC)

Bishop's Warden: Laurea Arnoldt

Junior Warden: Kathy Webb

Treasurer: Denise Skillman

Clerk: Jennifer Mello

Members at large: Patti Wood, Lorilyn Colton, & Maggie Lowery

Convention Delegates: Laurea Arnoldt & Kay Marino

Alternates: Mary Garrett

CHURCH STAFF

Vicar: The Rev. Doug Hale

Music Director: Cynthia M0horko

Office: Denise Skillman, Laurea Arnoldt, & Maggie Lowery

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

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 to food, things like tooth paste, toothbrushes, shampoo, deodorant, and shaving needs are welcome.

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

October 2026



S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
				1 Conversations 10:30 am Choir 6:30 pm	2	3 South Coast Convocation at St Johns 9-12pm
4 Pentecost Blessing of the Animals	5 7:30 pm AA	6 7:30 pm AA	7 7:30 pm AA	8 Conversations 10:30 am Choir 6:30 pm	9	10
11 Pentecost Healing Service BAC Mtg	12 7:30 pm AA	13 7:30 pm AA	14 7:30 pm AA	15 Conversations 10:30 am Choir 6:30 pm	16	17
18 Pentecost	19 7:30 pm AA	20 S.E.A. Board Mtg 10-12 pm 7:30 pm AA	21 7:30 pm AA	22 Conversations 10:30 am Choir 6:30 pm	23	24 S.E.A. Ann. Mtg. 10 – 12 pm Diocese of Western Oregon Convention in Salem
25 Pentecost Stewardship Campaign Starts Potluck Lunch	26 7:30 pm AA	27 7:30 pm AA	28 7:30 pm AA	29 Conversations 10:30 am Choir 6:30 pm	30	31 Set Up at 2 pm Halloween 5-7pm