



St. John's Episcopal Church
234 French St.
Bangor, ME 04401

March 14, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ,

Our Senior Warden, Andy Hamilton, and I have met this morning to discuss our community's life together in a time of pandemic. We want to encourage and support one another in faith through a time of anxiety. We want to protect and care for each other's health, especially those who are vulnerable. We want to serve as best we can our larger community, especially those most vulnerable such as the homeless on our streets who need food and the recovery groups whose members depend on meetings for their very lives. How we do these things will shift and change as the pandemic changes. Your input, your ideas, your initiatives are needed and wanted. Please use the email community@stjohnsbangor.org to initially offer your thoughts and willingness to be part of leading our response.

For the next two weeks, we want to be part of our national, statewide, and local efforts to "flatten the curve". This is the period that can make an enormous difference in keeping our hospitals equipped to address and care for the sick during the pandemic. At St. John's we can help and even lead in our larger community to flatten the curve by taking some immediate actions. To this end, although it is short notice, we will not hold services tomorrow, March 15th. Instead everyone is encouraged to worship on-line at the National Cathedral at its 11:15 streamed service when the Presiding Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Michael Curry, will be preaching (<https://cathedral.org>). We also encourage you this week to either join together in morning prayer by calling a friend to pray together over the phone, or to stream the 10am morning prayer service of our own cathedral in Portland (<http://stlukesportland.org/index.php/sunday-live-stream/>). We will have plans for worship options and streaming from St. John's hopefully available for March 22 and 29. We will not have regular Sunday services before Palm Sunday, April 5th.

However, at least for this week, we will continue to hold morning and evening prayer in our oratory especially for those who are feeling isolated and need to be with someone in person. Those services will be limited to 5 persons, and people are asked to practice social distancing in them. The room will be disinfected after each use. Please note, once in the office building you may not enter rooms other than the Oratory. Similarly, for this week at least, we will hold the Wednesday 12:15 Eucharist in the chapel, with attendance limited to 5 and practicing social distancing. If you would like to attend, please email us at office@stjohnsbangor.org to reserve a seat by Tuesday at 6pm. Saturday's confession will be held by appointment only. Please call or email me at 947-0156 x1 or rector@stjohnsbangor.org to schedule any appointments.

As of today, our Parish Office is closed until further notice. Staff will work primarily remotely and meeting with staff members is by appointment only.

- Music Director, Dr Webb Parker press 2 or email at choirmaster@stjohnsbangor.org
- Office manager, Vanessa Young press 3 or email at admin@stjohnsbangor.org
- Staff accountant, Patricia McLaughlin press 4 or email at bookkeeper@stjohnsbangor.org
- General mailbox press 5

"Make God's Love Known."

- Communications Director, Angelina Meucci press 7 or email at programassistant@stjohnsbangor.org
- Formation leader, Patricia Sprague press 8 or email at formation@stjohnsbangor.org
- Family formation, Anne-Marie Miller press 10 or email at youth@stjohnsbangor.org

While the Parish Office is closed, the Bangor Room and Back Lounge will still be used by recovery groups such as N.A., A.A., and Al-Anon. These rooms are effectively quarantined and no church groups will meet in these spaces during the Office Shut-down. For at least the next two weeks, regular meetings scheduled by the church will not be held on site, effective today. Please expect to hear from your group's leader for information as to whether the meetings are being postponed or held online. The church has a zoom account already for on-line meetings and groups may use it by contacting Vanessa to schedule meetings and for instructions.

Most importantly, please reach out to one another. An updated directory will soon be available. If you think your email or phone number may be out of date, please send them right away to office@stjohnsbangor.org. To begin, please call at least three households each week as part of our shared life together in this difficult time. Keeping connected and caring for one another will be challenging, but a worthy ambition for us as a community. Finding new ways to pray together and to serve one another could strengthen us and our faith - and even lead us into our future. May God use this time for his purposes. And may we be blessed in it to be a blessing to the world around us.

Thank you for your continued witness to faith, your love in action, and sacrifice in service - *To the Glory of God and for the Common Good, We Make God's Love Known...*

Yours in Christ,



The Rev. Marguerite A.H. Steadman
Rector

“Make God’s Love Known.”