FIFTY YEARS AFTER THE VIETNAM WAR:
Remembrance and Reflection



VETERANS DAY
November 11, 2025
3:00 pm

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
225 French Street • Bangor, Maine

FIFTY YEARS AFTER THE VIETNAM WAR:
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Photographs: Northern I Corps, Hue, Khe Sanh, Da Nang, Vietnam, 1970-71
Lee Souweine

Musical Introduction

Berceuse	Gabriel Fauré	Marisa Solomon, cello Patricia Stowell, piano

Program introduction — Bruce C. Mallonee
Chair, Committee on Music and the Arts

Poet introductions — Jeffrey Sychterz, Ph.D.

Poems

"The Next Step"	W. D. Erhart	
"A Bummer"	Michael Casey	Jeff Sychterz

Reminiscence — Tom Bennett

Poet introductions — Jeff Sychterz

Poems

"Song of Napalm"	Bruce Weigl	
"Counting Small-boned Bodies"	Robert Bly	
"I Stand Here"	Lieutenant Nguyen van Nghia	Jerry Lyden

Reminiscence — Lua Thi Nguyen

Poet introductions — Jeff Sychterz

Poems

"How Do You Say I Love You in a War?"	Bobbie Trotter	
"The Best Act in Pleiku, No One Under 18 Admitted"	Sharon Grant	
"Not-So-Fond Memories of Basic Training"	Paul Johnson	Nancy Dymond

Reflection Rabbi Bill Siemers

Poet introductions Jeff Sychterz

Poems

"Starlight Scope Myopia"
"Facing It" Yusef Komunyakaa Dillon Murray

Reflection Nancy Dymond

Poem

"In Celebration of Spring" John Balaban Jeff Sychterz

Reflection The Rev. Jarrett Kerbel

Musical Interlude

Movement VI., "Let Evening Come" Marisa Solomon, cello
from *Lyric Trio for Trumpet, Cello, and Piano* Jack Burt, trumpet
by Carson Cooman Patricia Stowell, piano

Program Dedication:

Leon E. Souweine
Judith Jones
Rear Admiral Charles F. Rauch, Jr., USN Brennan Mallonee

Commemoration of War Dead from Bangor Jerry Lyden

Taps John Patterson, Trumpet

Hymn "Eternal Father, Strong to Save" Hymnal #608 Joshua Singer, organ

Please join us for a reception in the undercroft following the program.

We thank the following for their kind permission to read the poems on this afternoon's program:

Texas Tech University Press for W. D. Erhart's "The Next Step"
Michael Casey, for his poem "A Bummer"
Atlantic Monthly Press for Bruce Weigl's "Song of Napalm"
HarperCollins for Robert Bly's "Counting Small-boned Bodies"
William Joiner Center for the Study of War and Social Consequences, University of Massachusetts at Boston for Bobbie Trotter's "How Do You Say I Love You in a War"
Brunner/Mazel, a division of Taylor & Francis Group for Sharon Grant's "The Best Act in Pleiku, No One Under 18 Admitted"
Paul Johnson for his poem, "Not-So-Fond Memories of Basic Training"
Wesleyan University Press for Yusef Komunyakaa's "Starlight Scope Myopia" and "Facing It"
John Balaban, for his poem "In Celebration of Spring"

We thank **Carson Cooman** for his kind permission to perform "Let Evening Come."

Thanks also to **Jeffrey Sychterz** for sharing his deep knowledge of the poetry of the Vietnam War, to **Eric Roberg** for unfailing technical support, to **John Connors** for securing copyright clearances, to **Charlene Boggins** and the **St. Andrew's Guild** for hosting the reception, and to **LeeAnne Mallonee** for splendid graphics.

Participants

Tom Bennett grew up and went to school in Bangor. He spent summers at YMCA's Camp Jordan, where his mother and father worked as directors for 30 years. He studied at Eastern Maine Technical College and the University of Maine, earning a business degree. He served in the US Army Air Corps for 4 years, including 18 months in Vietnam. For forty years, he has been a local business owner and community advocate, including serving as president of the American Heart Association and on the board of the Bangor YMCA. He is the proud owner of Bennett Auto Center on Thatcher Street.

Eric Roberg is a graduate of the University of Maine (1990) and Husson University (2022). Coming from an American Baptist background, Eric has been a member of St. John's Episcopal Church since 2015 and was confirmed in 2018. He finds great joy in contributing to the life of the parish, offering his time and talents wherever they're needed—as a choir member, Tech Team leader, Vestry member, and most recently, Chair of the Discernment Committee. He finds joy in singing in ensembles both in the church and in the community.

Dr. Jack Burt is a Professor of Trumpet at the University of Maine School of Performing Arts where, in addition to his studio responsibilities, he teaches courses in Music History. Jack holds degrees from the Baldwin-Wallace College Conservatory of Music, the University of South Carolina, and the University of Texas at Austin. He has enjoyed an extensive performance career that includes recitals, master classes, and appearances with the Chicago Symphony, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Vienna Philharmonic, and the Berlin Philharmonic. He has also produced instructional videos that have been viewed more than 1,000,000 times. Jack is a Schagerl Performing Artist.

John Connors is a Bangor native, long-time parishioner, and recent graduate from The University of Vermont.

Nancy E. Dymond is a Bangor native and a member of St. John's Episcopal Church. She is a retired elementary school teacher who loves to sing, be on stage performing, as well as, enjoy a performance as a fan of the Arts. It's been a pleasure to collaborate on this third Veteran's Day memorial event with Bruce Mallonee and Jeff Sychterz in honoring our military personnel. Thank you for your dedication, service and sacrifice.

The Rev. Jarrett Kerbel was born in 1966 on a Strategic Air Command base near Fort Worth, Texas. At the gate to the airfield a billboard proclaimed, "Peace is Our Profession." Rev. Kerbel's father Colonel Kent Kerbel flew B-52s over Vietnam during two deployments. After his father transferred to the Air Force Reserve and joined TWA, the family moved to New Jersey where Jarrett was raised in a rural part of the state near Princeton. He 'attended' seminary with his mother when she studied for her MDiv. in the late 70s. Following college at Northwestern University, Jarrett completed his own MDiv. at the University of Chicago Divinity School and Union Theological Seminary. During 31 years as an Episcopal priest he has been a leader in Community Organizing, Union Organizing, Gospel Justice, and Community Engagement. He has served in Chicago, Philadelphia, New Jersey, New York City, Rhode Island and now Bangor, Maine.

Jerry Lyden graduated from John Carroll University in Cleveland, Ohio, after which he served as Broadcast Officer for the 7th Infantry Division of the U.S. Army. In addition to a long career in radio he has acted professionally. His film appearances include "Goodfellas" and he has been seen on television in "Homicide" and "Law and Order." Jerry has published an audiobook, Poppies Grow in Normandy, of his grandfather's service in World War I and World War II as a counterintelligence agent attached to Patton's Third Army. Jerry lives in Bangor with his wife, Nancy Nicholson, where they are members of St. John's church.

Brennan C. Mallonee, LMHC was born and raised in Bangor, Maine, and grew up singing in the St. John's Episcopal Church choir. She is a licensed mental health counselor in private practice in the Boston area, with a focus on anxiety, trauma, and depression and a particular specialty in the intersection of spirituality and psychotherapy. Her work has led her to a deep sense of appreciation and wonder at the human capacity for resilience and meaning-making in the face of suffering.

Dillon Murray serves as the Legislative Liaison for the Maine Department of Labor. Born in Mississippi, Dillon was adopted as a baby and grew up in Bangor. Receiving a degree in Political Science from the University of Maine, Dillon immediately went to work in electoral politics and advocating for human-centered policy. As an organizer both in federal and state elections, as well as organized labor, Dillon has always worked to center equity and historically marginalized communities in every policy decision.

Lua Thi Nguyen was born on February 12th,1951, in the little village of Xã Nhơn Lọc, Bình Định, Vietnam. She is the youngest of four siblings and was limited to a second-grade level of education in a society that limited academic opportunities for girls. After leaving Vietnam in 1990, she settled in Churchville, NY, where she now lives with her husband, Bruce. We are honored today to receive Lua's story of motherhood and endurance.

John Patterson, a former chorister under Fred Jones, started playing the trumpet in elementary school. He accompanied the choir on their trip to England and Scotland in 1996. After studying Jazz and African-American music at UMass, he attended NESCom, where he earned a degree in Audio Engineering. When not knee-deep in musical endeavors, John can be found in the kitchen, where he manufactures his own brand of hot sauce, Hot Choy.

Rabbi Bill Siemers has led Congregation Beth Israel in Bangor since 2014. He was ordained by the Jewish Theological Seminary and previously served communities in Philadelphia, Southern Maryland, and Long Island. Rabbi Siemers has been on the faculty of the University of Maine since 2014 where he has offered courses in Jewish History, Antisemitism, and Yiddish. He has also taught at the University's Honors College and at the Penobscot Valley Senior's College. He lives in Bangor with his wife Deborah and they have two children.

Joshua Singer, born May 6th, 1956 in Providence, R.I., began his keyboard studies at age 6, evolving to organ and in high school, studied with John Weaver, head of the organ department at the Curtis Institute, Philadelphia. He earned a Bachelor and Master's degree at the Juilliard School in Organ, 1979. He also did postgraduate work with Leonard Raver, Professor of Organ at Juilliard, and organist for the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. He was music director at Grace Lutheran Church, Forest Hills, Queens, N.Y. City for 32 years before becoming Organist at St. John's Episcopal Church, Bangor, ME.

Cellist Marisa Solomon received performance degrees from the Oberlin College and San Francisco Conservatories, studying with Norman Fischer and Bonnie Hampton respectively. She is the founder of Shelter Music Maine, director of the Kneisel Hall Program for Maine Students, adjunct faculty at the University of Maine, a member of the Bangor Symphony Orchestra and a 2023 recipient of the Director's Award from the Collins Center for the Arts. Festivals include the Aspen Music Festival, New York String Seminar, Kneisel Hall, the International Festival-Institute at Round Top, SpoletoUSA, Festival de due Mondi in Spoleto, Italy, and the Breckenridge Music Festival in Colorado

Patricia Stowell is known for her work as a performer, chamber musician, and teacher. The former director of the Kneisel Hall Program for Maine Students, she also coordinates the Arlan A. Baillie Steinway Series and co-founded the Chamber Music Society at the University of Maine. She has performed widely across Maine and taught for 15 years at Bay Chamber Music School. Internationally, her work has taken her to Austria, Germany, Poland, Bulgaria, and Russia, where she gave concerts, master classes, and a lecture at the first Scriabin Conference in Moscow. She has held university teaching positions and presented master classes throughout the U.S. Her studies include degrees from Indiana and Northwestern Universities, as well as advanced training in Vienna and Stuttgart as a Rotary Scholar.

Jeff Sychterz is an Associate Professor of English at the University of Maine at Augusta and Dean of the UMA Bangor campus. He teaches composition and literature, including a class on war literature. Jeff graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1991 and served eleven years on active duty and nine years in the Naval Reserves as a Naval Flight Officer. He researches and writes on poetry and modern war literature, including Anglo-American poetry of the two world wars. Additionally, Jeff has led book groups throughout central Maine, including at the Bangor Vet Center, the Bangor Public Library and at the Mountain View Correctional Facility in Charleston Maine.

St. John's Episcopal Church
Bangor, Maine

The Rt. Rev. Thomas James Brown, Bishop
Diocese of Maine

The Rev. Jarrett Kerbel, Rector

Colin Graebert, Choirmaster

Joshua Singer, Organist

Vanessa Young, Parish Administrator

Robert Ford, Sr. Warden

Jeffrey Perry, Jr. Warden

