

St. John's Episcopal Church

"Our mission is to know and to share the love of Jesus Christ"



November 30, 2025 First Sunday of Advent Worship time - 10:00am

Rector's Essay

David Conaway essay

Last Sunday, David Conaway addressed the congregation during the announcements on behalf of our Stewardship Appeal. I was so moved by his words that I want to share them here with you. - Jarrett Kerbel

At the beginning of this year, I had the privilege of walking through those big red doors for the first time. I can remember so distinctly being gripped by a terrible and persistent anxiety — an anxiety that dissipated almost instantly when I ran directly into Lorna and was handed my first program. I was quickly surrounded by smiling faces and by kind, gentle words welcoming me and assuring me that I was in the right place. How true that has turned out to be. I can say that I was not sold a false bill of goods; the atmosphere here put me immediately at ease.

I had also worried, separately, that I carried far too much doubt to attend church — that perhaps I needed to be more faithful before joining a congregation. Instead, I was met by Fr. Nutter, who kindly reminded me of the parable of the mustard seed, and told me I was welcome no matter who I was or how deeply I did, or didn't, believe. I discovered that the tiny bit of faith that helped me walk through the door was more than enough faith to stay.

Scroll down to continue reading this essay.

2026 Stewardship update

Thank you to everyone who took part in Commitment Sunday last week and handed in their pledge cards. We are off to a great start. 41 households handed in cards totaling \$170,869 for our 2026 budget. This includes 8 people who pledged the same amount, 25 who increased their pledge from last year, and 6 new pledges!! These 41 households pledged \$47,207.60 more than they did last year! WOW! Thank you so much. If you have not yet made a pledge and would like to, pledge cards can be found in the pews and at the back of the church. You may place them in the collection plate or mail them to the office at 225 French St. Bangor ME 04401. Thank you so much for your continued support of St. John's.

Christmas Basket Project

The Christmas Basket Project aims to provide 16 families from Penquis CAP with enough food for a Christmas turkey dinner and additional supplies for their cupboards. We also purchase a gift for each child in these families.

There are two ways you can support this project:

1. ****Donate Funds for Food****: It costs approximately \$150 to supply food for each family, totaling \$2,400 for all 16 families. If you would like to contribute, please write a check made out to the Christmas Basket Project and include "Christmas Basket Project" in the memo line.
2. ****Gift Donations****: We have seven children left who need a gift. After church on Sunday, you can select a name from the giving tree and purchase a \$30 gift for that child. Please wrap the gift and return it to the church on December 14th.



Fill the Truck

Thank you to everyone who came out with donations for "Fill the Truck" this past weekend!



St. John's Elevator

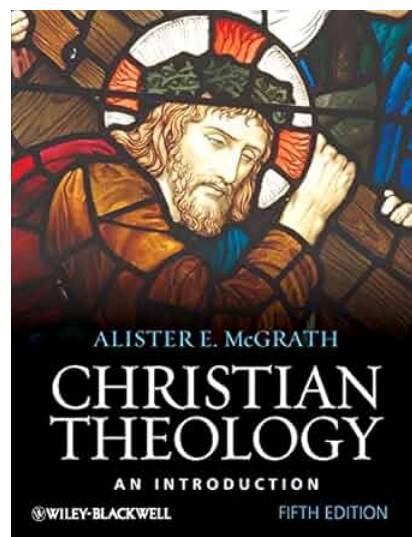
You may have noticed that our elevator has been out of order recently. We are working hard to get the issue taken care of as quickly as possible. Please note that we expect the elevator to be out of order for *at least* the next month. We apologize for any inconvenience this creates.



Christian Theology Class

Our next class will be held on Tuesday, December 2nd, on [Zoom](#) at 6:30pm, covering Chapter Twelve "The Holy Spirit" from the book Christian Theology: An Introduction. Please review the following video prior to the class - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bAsDCxBRKzw>.

If you have any questions or would like more information about joining the class, please contact [Pat S.](#)



Episcopal 101

After Church on December 7th The Rev. Kerbel will host his Episcopal 101 class after the 10 am service in the Undercroft and invites everyone to attend. Of course, we will all enjoy coffee, food and fellowship to start. This is essential and just what Jesus did! Then, he will offer his short, conversational class on the Episcopal Church. You may ask why is he offering this to everyone at church, even folks who have been Episcopalians their whole lives? Strategically speaking, he wants you all to have a taste of this offering so you can direct newcomers and neighbors to Episcopal 101 when he offers it again. In his first year here he will be inviting the whole congregation to participate in a few teaching opportunities so the whole church is on board with what we are doing to advance our mission through education.

Advent Lessons and Carols

All are invited to join us on Sunday, December 14th, at 5:00pm for Advent Lessons and Carols. This popular annual service in preparation for Christmas will feature familiar carols. The service is followed by our festive Advent Tea.



Searching for Thespians

At the early service (4:00pm) on Christmas Eve, it is the Rector's



custom to write and perform a Nativity skit for children. We will need at least four participants to pull it off; a narrator and three actors. Please let The Rev. Kerbel know if this would be fun for you!

Upcoming Advent / Christmas / Epiphany Events

Advent Lessons and Carols - December 14th at 5:00pm
Christmas Caroling - December 21st at 3:00pm
The Greening of the Church - December 28th immediately following the service
Christmas Eve Festive Eucharist - December 24th at 4:00pm and 9:00pm
Christmas Day Eucharist - December 25th at 9:00am
Contemplative Worship Service in the style of Taizé - December 31st at 5:00pm
The Epiphany Pageant - January 4th at 10:00am

Rector's Essay **David Conaway's essay - continued**

From that first service until now, there are many things I have seen here — and thankfully, a few things I have not. I see a congregation of loving, compassionate human beings. People I am proud to know and count among my friends. There is a sense of community at St. John's that I have never felt in church before, and I see in each of you the desire and the dedication to be good, and to do good. Getting involved with ministry has only increased the value I place on St. John's and the people within it.

I would point out that the problems our ministries address — homelessness, addiction, and human suffering — have no easy solutions. There are no clear answers. There is no finish line. The reservoir of pain in the world is unending, and I see this each Second Saturday, and each week under the Chamberlain Bridge. And yet this stops none of you. You bake, and knit, and donate, and volunteer simply for the sake of doing good, with no expectation that the work will ever be finished. It is difficult for me to imagine anything more truly Christian than that.

As for the things I have thankfully not experienced: Since I joined, not one of you has called me an abomination. No one has sent me specific quotes from Leviticus with detailed notes. None of you have told me I am living in sin or destined to burn for eternity because of my sexuality. The “love that dare not speak its name” is simply love here. And these warm, gentle conditions have helped the mustard seed I walked in with grow into an oak tree — a tree that grows in stature and strength each time I see God undeniably working through each of you.

Love is my empirical evidence, and it will always keep me coming back.

St. John's isn't just a building, or a church, or a community. It's a well — a well from which we all draw. A place where we come to be refilled, refreshed, and reminded once again who we are.

Thank you.



Phishing scam alert

If you receive an email or text from “Rev. Jarrett Kerbel” asking you for a favor and could you please email him back, please don’t! Rev. Kerbel will never ask you to purchase gift cards for him and will not email or text you with a vague request of needing a favor. If you aren’t sure about a request that you received from St. John’s, please call or email the office at 947-0156 or office@stjohnsbangor.org.

Announcements and Prayer Requests

Please be sure to submit all announcements and prayer requests to [the office](#) by noon on Thursday for them to be included in the weekly announcements and bulletins. Please submit photos / posters as a JPEG. Thank you!

Serving on Sunday November 30th:

Lectors – Chris M., Cindy L. and David C.

Acolytes – Grant P., Edmund H., Cindy L. and Isaac P.

Chalice Bearers – Cindy L. and Cassy P.

Ushers – Roger G. and Jim B.

Counters – Roger G. and Don L.

Serving on Sunday December 7th:

Lectors – Richard W., Laura S. and Nancy D.

Acolytes – TBD

Chalice Bearers – Jacquie W. and Dakota M.
Ushers – Andy H. and Patty H.
Counters – Hilary G. and Marsha C.

Thank you to all who volunteer as Lectors, Acolytes, Chalice Bearers and Ushers. If you would like to serve in one of these positions, please let the [office](#) know.

Sunday's Readings

[Isaiah 2:1-5](#)

[Romans 13:11-14](#)

[Matthew 24:36-44](#)

Sunday Worship:
[Worship Bulletin](#)

[YouTube](#)

Morning Prayer

Monday -

Friday:

9:00am

Morning

Prayer

[Zoom](#)

[Facebook](#)

Tuesday-

Friday:

in person in
the Bethlehem
Chapel

Evening Prayer

Monday -

Friday:

5:15pm

live on [Zoom](#)

What's Happening This Week

Friday, November 28th: The Parish Office will be closed.

Sunday, November 30th, 10:00am: Worship, in-person and [online](#) followed by coffee hour in the Undercroft. Nursery and Sunday School are available during the service.

Sunday, November 30th, 7:00pm: [AA](#) meeting in the Undercroft.

Tuesday, December 2nd, 6:30pm: Christian Theology class on [Zoom](#).

Wednesday, December 3rd, 5:30pm: Wednesday Evening Holy Eucharist.

Thursday, December 4th, 5:30pm: Choir Rehearsal

Sunday, December 7th, 10:00am: Worship, in-person and [online](#) followed by coffee hour in the Undercroft. Nursery and Sunday School are available during the service.

Sunday, December 7th, 11:30am: Episcopal 101

Sunday, December 7th, 7:00pm: [AA](#) meeting in the Undercroft.

For more information about these and future events, as well as ways to get involved, check out www.stjohnsbangor.org.

Nursery Care and Children's Chapel

Children should arrive between 9:45 and 10:00 am in the Undercroft on Sunday mornings for Nursery care, ages 0-3, and for Children's Chapel, ages 4-10.

In **Children's Chapel**, we celebrate the boundless curiosity and wonder of our young ones as we delve into the stories and lessons of the Bible. We aim to cultivate a nurturing and engaging environment that teaches our youngest members the stories of their faith and promotes spiritual growth and a strong sense of community. For inquiries or to register, please contact Mary-Frances Beesorchard at children@stjohnsbangor.org.

Opportunities to pray together:

Sunday Morning Eucharist, at 10:00am in person and on [YouTube](#)

Wednesday Evening Eucharist, at 5:30pm

Morning Prayer, Mon-Fri, 9:00am on [Zoom](#)

and in person Tuesday - Friday in the Bethlehem Chapel

Evening Prayer, Mon-Fri, 5:15pm on [Zoom](#)

Volunteering is a wonderful way to give. Looking for the right Ministry Opportunity for you? Just click the link below for more information.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINISTRY

Parish Prayer List:

If you would like to add or reinstate a name or concern for our parish prayer

For the Sick, Injured, or Distressed, and for those who have requested prayer: Kent C. **Continued prayers for** – Esther R., David B., Jane P., Kelly M., Katie B., Ross M., Claude K., Mikenzy M., MarLynne M., Russell M., Kyra H., Rachel M.T., Persis S., Duane P., Donald K., Jane Z., Steve S., Margaret C., Elena B., Jay B., Susan S., and Loretta.

For our Homebound Members : Lilly P., Earlene B., and Eileen H.

For the World: for Peace and Goodwill among Nations and for peoples in places of violence or oppression, and for the many places in our world where there is danger and desperation. We pray for the people of Jamaica. We continue to pray for the people in Ukraine and the Holy Land, especially for the people in Gaza in this time of great suffering, and for the innocent people of Sudan caught in a brutal civil war. For an end to war and all forms of violence. For all who suffer for conscience's sake. For our enemies and those who wish us harm. For all suffering effects of climate change and of natural disasters. For refugees, immigrants, and those who are displaced.

For our Nation: For the healing of divisions and the celebration of diversity; for the recognition that no single viewpoint on any issue, no matter how important, is without human error; and for all who struggle to change our world and its systems of oppression and exploitation.

For the Leaders of our Country, State and Community : Donald J. Trump, President; Members of Congress, especially, Susan Collins, Angus King, Chellie Pingree, Jared Golden of Maine; Janet Mills our Governor; and Susan Hawes our Mayor; for those who administer justice in the courts of this land, that they all may serve our nation and the world with wisdom, civility, and compassion.

For our Military Personnel, especially those of this Parish : Sarah M., Dillan L., and Joshua M. and we also give Thanksgiving for all veterans and their willingness to lay down their lives for our country.

With Thanksgiving for the lives of those celebrating birthdays during the coming week including: Cassy P., Lorraine S., Inez T. and Lorna W.

For the Departed :

The Altar Greens are given to the Glory of God and in memory of Orlando Frati by his loving wife and family.



St. John's Episcopal Church

225 French Street, Bangor, Maine 04401

207-947-0156

<http://www.stjohnsbangor.org>





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