

St. John's Episcopal Church

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



Rector's Essay

Mr. Rogers was Right

Fred Rogers left my generation many blessings. One such blessing is his sage counsel to children frightened by any sort of emergency. "Look for the helpers," Mr. Rogers advised in his gentle, soothing voice of love. After a weekend of horrors served up through every channel of the media, I needed to recall these words from someone I count as a Saint.

Our prayers go up for the Brown University Community, for the people of Sydney, Australia, the Jewish Community world-wide, and for Hollywood as well. In addition to our prayers, the Episcopal Church explicitly and emphatically denounces all Anti-Semitism, all Gun-Violence, all violence of any kind, and continues to work against the conditions that encourage such hatefulness. Jesus taught a non-violent path of faithfulness to God. He carried no weapons, and when his disciples did, he told them to put the swords away.

Scroll down to continue reading this essay.

2026 Stewardship update

Thank you to everyone who has generously made a pledge in our 2026 campaign. We are off to a great start. 66 households handed in cards totaling \$224,701 for our 2026 budget. 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.

Vestry Nominations

Seeking Leaders for the Vestry: The St. John's Vestry is accepting nominations to serve on the Vestry for a three year term beginning in February 2026. A member in good standing (someone who attends worship regularly, is active in at least one ministry, and is giver of record through a pledge or other identifiable financial gift) may nominate themselves or someone else in the congregation for Vestry. In the latter case we recommend that you consult with the person you wish to nominate. The names of nominees may be submitted to the Wardens Robert Ford and Jeff Perry or the Rector, Jarrett Kerbel. A nominating committee will create a slate of candidates who will be elected at the Annual Meeting in January 2026. The elections are not competitive, i.e. we nominate only enough people for the leadership positions available.

St. John's Elevator - Update

On Sunday the Vestry approved the funds to repair the elevator. A repair technician will be at the church on Monday to - fingers crossed - repair for the elevator. If you know any prayers for elevators, now is the time to pray them!



Christmas Baskets

Cassy Palmer, Vanessa Young, and Rachel Palmer delivered the Christmas Basket food on Wednesday, December 17th, to the Penquis Cap Child Care Center at Eastern Maine Community College. Our contact at Penquis, Connie Jipson, expressed that the 16 families will be particularly grateful for the food and gifts this year. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who generously contributed to the Christmas Basket fund or purchased a gift for a child. This year marked a special moment as parishioners purchased the gifts after several years of the church purchasing them with donated funds. Your kindness truly makes a difference.



The Greening of the Church

We'd love for you to join us in our annual Greening of the Church, on Sunday December 21st following the 10:00am service. Please come and help to make our Church beautiful with wreaths and poinsettias following the service.

Christmas Memorial Flowers

In honor of loved ones passed, please consider sponsoring the greens to decorate the church for Christmas. Contributions of any amount are gratefully accepted and are pooled to purchase the poinsettias and wreaths. They may be mailed or placed in the collection plate. Please make checks payable to "St John's Episcopal Church" and mark the memo "Christmas Memorials". The deadline for submitting names is December 21st.



Christmas Caroling

Share the yuletide joy with our neighbors at a fireside caroling event on the church lawn this Sunday, December 21st, at 3:00pm. We will gather around a firepit to sing beloved Christmas Carols while sipping hot cider and hot chocolate. Bring your kids, bring your neighbors to this fun event!

Attention Choir and Acolyte Alums returning to Maine for Christmas!

We welcome you to sing in the choir and to acolyte on Christmas Eve if you would enjoy that. We have a 4 pm and 9 pm service on Christmas Eve. You could also join the mini Christmas pageant at 4 pm if you are inclined to amateur theater. Please let us know if you are interested in singing or serving by contacting the [church office](#).



Upcoming Advent / Christmas / Epiphany Events

The Greening of the Church - December 21st immediately following the service

Christmas Caroling - December 21st at 3:00pm

Christmas Eve Festive Eucharist - December 24th at 4:00pm and 9:00pm

Christmas Day Eucharist - December 25th at 9:00am

Wear Your "Ugly Christmas Sweater" to Church Day - December 28th at 10:00am

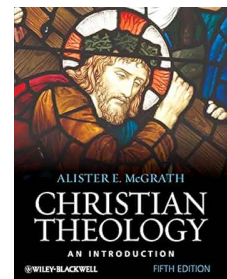
Contemplative Worship Service in the style of Taizé - December 31st at 5:00pm

The Epiphany Pageant - January 4th at 10:00am

Christian Theology Class

Our next class will be held on Tuesday, December 30th, on [Zoom](#) at 6:30pm, covering Chapter Fourteen "Human Nature, Sin, and Grace" from the book Christian Theology: An Introduction. Please review the following video prior to the class - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGosdENjpW4&t=40s>.

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



Considering Baptism?

The next opportunity for Baptism will be Sunday, January 11 which is "Baptism of Our Lord Sunday." Please reach out to Rev. Kerbel if you are interested in Baptism on that day or on another day in January or the first week of February. We take a break from Baptism during Lent and resume on the Sunday after Easter.

Rector's Essay

Mr. Rogers was Right Continued

The wisdom of Elder Fred Rogers - he was an ordained Presbyterian Elder - reminded me to take note of the acts of heroic love that marked the Sydney massacre. The man who tackled one of the shooters and disarmed him, for example. He risked his life to save his neighbors. The Holocaust survivor who shielded his wife from the shooter with his own body. The woman who held a three year old -who became separated from her parents in the chaos - close and shielded the child with her body. Both people gave their lives to save others. This is the highest expression of love.

So we look to the helpers and to the heroes to see all that is good on display, even in the midst of evil. We pray especially for survivors and first responders and emergency medical staff who, although they survive the event, are marked by the trauma. The sickness of violence is endemic - an individual is infected by the culture of violence and then passes on that infection by acting violently. School shooters and other mass shooters are people poisoned by hateful ideologies that dehumanize 'others' and, it seems clear, these shooters see murder on a mass scale as a way to 'fame,' even if that fame is infamy.

What breaks that cycle of violence? There have been 392 mass casualty shootings in the USA this year so we need to get busy! For followers of Jesus, we see the cycle broken by Jesus who responds to human violence with love and emerges from death with the offering of forgiveness, reconciliation, and transformation in his new creation. Following him, we are called to learn and practice non-violence and to learn and practice de-escalation and reconciliation. The people of faith who marched with Rev. Dr. King, did not just believe in non-violence; they dedicated time to train in it. Life as a disciple is a discipline that calls for training through practice.

Peace is not an accident. Peace is an investment of time, treasure, faith and relationships. Violence is not an accident. Violence is the result of policy, indifference, and sin.

We can be helpers that inspire children to see human virtue in the midst of human evil. For example, have you reached out to your Jewish neighbors with sympathy and reassurance this week? For example, would you like to attend Shabbat services this Friday with me at a local Synagogue as an act of solidarity?

When the Tree of Life Massacre happened in Pittsburgh, PA, my Philadelphia Congregation stood guard around our local synagogue while members filed in for the next Shabbat service. We then joined them for worship.

My heart was deeply moved by the resilience of that Jewish community in the face of anti-semitic hate and violence and by how that resilience flowed from the joy of worship and the gift of the Torah. The sacred Torah scrolls were processed around the sanctuary with joyous singing, dancing, bowing, ringing of bells, and people touching the scrolls with prayer shawls. (BTW - Wouldn't it be a joyful practice to have a Gospel procession like that!) That congregation reinforced in me the truth I know in Jesus: resilience comes from the joy of having our life renewed in God. Responding to God's gift in worship is one way to practice that joy and to grow courageous souls that can face darkness with light.

-Jarrett

Together Place Warming Center Seeking Volunteers

The Together Place Peer-Run Recovery Center (Across from the YMCA) is currently operating a much needed warming center for our neighbors who are experiencing homelessness. Volunteers are needed for two volunteer shifts, 7:00 PM–12:00 AM and 12:00 AM–7:00 AM. In total, there are 56 shifts that need to be covered each week. Volunteers assist with security check-ins, running totes, monitoring bathrooms, and helping maintain a safe and respectful environment. I will be volunteering for a shift so please join me if that will make you more comfortable responding to this opportunity to serve God's beloved. Potential volunteers can reach out directly to Nicole Demont at 207-852-6157. -Jarrett

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.

The office will be closed from December 24th-January 4th. All announcements for the December 28th and January 4th bulletin/announcements need to be submitted prior to noon on December 22nd. Thank you!

Serving on Sunday December 21st:

Lectors – Ann H., Joe F. and Mary-Frances B.

Acolytes – Grant P., Isaac P. and Scott B.

Chalice Bearers – Nancy D. and David C.

Ushers – Sheila S. and Joe F.

Counters – Jim B and Delores L.

Serving on Wednesday December 24th 4:00pm:

Lectors – Mary-Frances B., Nancy D. and Emma P.

Acolytes – Dakota M., Edmund H. and Gavin F.

Chalice Bearers – Robert F. and Jacquie W.

Ushers – Andy H. and Patty H.

Serving on Wednesday December 24th 9:00pm:

Lectors – Jacqueline C., Nancy D. and Chris M.

Acolytes – Scott B., Nancy D. and Robert F.

Chalice Bearers – Scott B. and Nancy D.

Ushers – Jim B. and Roger G.

Serving on Thursday December 25th 9:00am:

Acolytes – Robert F.

Chalice Bearers – Robert F.

Ushers – Ken H.

Serving on Sunday December 28:

Lectors – David F., Nancy D. and Kelsi H.

Acolytes – Eric G., Ruth G. and Edmund H.

Chalice Bearers – Robert F. and Grant P.

Ushers – Ken H. and Jeff P.

Counters – Rex B., Marsha C. and Delores L.

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 7:10-](#)

[16](#)

[Romans 1:1-7](#)

What's Happening This Week

Sunday, December 21st, 10:00am: Worship, in-person and [online](#) followed by coffee hour in the Undercroft. Nursery and Sunday School are available during the service.

[Matthew](#)
[1:18-25](#)

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](#)

Sunday, December 21st, immediately following the service: The Greening of the Church

Sunday, December 21st, 3:00pm: Christmas Caroling

Sunday, December 21st, 7:00pm: [AA](#) meeting in the Undercroft.

Tuesday, December 23rd, 9:30am: Dorothy Day Soup Kitchen, help to serve a warm meal to our community at the Salvation Army at 65 S. Park Street in Bangor. If you have any questions, contact [Claudia and Jim B.](#)

Wednesday, December 24th-January 4th - The Parish Office will be closed. Worship services will continue during this time.

Wednesday, December 24th, 4:00pm: Christmas Eve Festive Eucharist in person and on YouTube.

Wednesday, December 24th, 9:00pm: Christmas Eve Festive Eucharist in person.

Thursday, December 25th, 9:00am: Christmas Morning Eucharist in person.

Sunday, December 28th, 10:00am: Wear your "Ugly Christmas Sweater" to worship, in-person and [online](#) followed by coffee hour in the Undercroft. Nursery and Sunday School are available during the service.

Sunday, December 28th, 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](#)

Christmas Eve, Wednesday December 24th - 4:00pm and 9:00pm

Christmas Day, Thursday December 25th - 9:00am

Morning Prayer, Mon-Fri, 9:00am on Facebook and 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 list, please contact the church office or prayers@stjohnsbangor.org.

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

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 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: Paul M. and Isaac P.

For the Departed: Chris Royal and Dean Neal



St. John's Episcopal Church

225 French Street, Bangor, Maine 04401

207-947-0156

<http://www.stjohnsbangor.org>



St. John's Episcopal Church | 225 French Street | Bangor, ME 04401 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!