

St. John's Episcopal Church

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

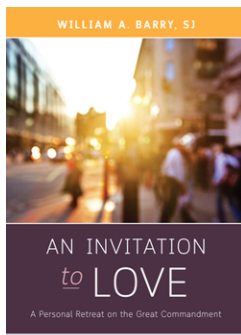


Rector's Essay **Liberty**

Our celebration of Independence Day causes me to reflect on liberty, both Constitutional liberty and the liberty we have in Christ. Both are precious. The former - Civic Liberty - provides a broad arena of freedom that allows us to practice our faith without constraint or fear of a Government imposed religion. The latter - Liberty in Christ - is the gift of Grace that comes when we are set free by the death and resurrection of Jesus and then empowered by the Holy Spirit to choose conformity with Christ as our way of life.

Liberty in Christ is freedom from all the forces in us and around us that corrupt and destroy our humanity and our relationship with God. Humans without God can enjoy a thin version of freedom that is more akin to willfulness; arbitrary, impulsive, or compulsive activity impelled by confused desire.

To continue reading this essay, scroll down.



A Summer-Long Retreat: AN INVITATION TO LOVE, a retreat in real life on the Great Commandment

Jesus' Great Commandment to each Christian was and is to *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind". This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'*"
(Matthew 27:37-40)

We meet on Thursdays from 6:30-7:30pm on [Zoom](#). Our guide is : [An Invitation to Love by William Barry, SJ](#). We look forward to seeing you there. If you have any questions, please contact Pat at formation@stjohnsbangor.org.

St. John's Young Adult Group

On **July 18th at 4pm**, the **Young Adult Group** will be gathering at Jarrett and Alison's house in Hancock. We will enjoy a variety of (optional) outdoor activities (hiking, kayaking, swimming, etc.) and conversation, followed by a communal dinner. Additional upcoming event include the [Summer Sidewalk Art Festival \(July 11th, 10:00am\)](#) in downtown Bangor. Generally, anyone between the ages of ~25-35 is welcome to participate. For questions and to RSVP, please email [William Somes](#).

Final Disposition of +Lev Sherman's ashes

Pastor Elaine Hewes will preside at a brief service on Sunday, July 19, 2026, at 9:30 am at St Brendan the Navigator in Deer Isle, Maine, after which the remaining ashes of the Reverend Levering B. Sherman, Jr. will be interred in the Memorial Garden of the churchyard. All are welcome.

Fresh Start

Scott Pardy, founder and president of Fresh Start, is grateful for all of the support they are receiving from St. John's. Here is some current information on the [Fresh Start program](#):



Fresh Start continues to expand its vital footprint in Maine's recovery community, providing the stable, supportive environments necessary for individuals to rebuild their lives. By focusing on accountability, community, and safety, we help residents transition from the challenges of early recovery to independent, fulfilling lives.

Our Current Footprint

- Total Homes: 22 certified recovery residences across the region, offering safe and stable living environments.
- Capacity: 180 residential beds, serving as a critical resource to meet the high demand for structured recovery housing north of Augusta.
- Standards: Proudly maintaining full certification by the Maine Association of Recovery Residences (MARR), ensuring the highest ethical and operational standards.

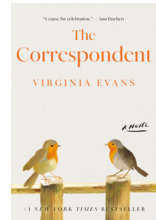
Vacation

It's summer and a perfect time for a few weeks of vacation. Fr. Kerbel will begin his summer vacation on July 20th and return on August 11th. The Parish Office will be open during most of his vacation (it will be closed on Monday August 10th). Morning Prayer will be on Zoom.

Women's Book Group

The Women's Book Group invites you to their next meeting, on July 21st at 2:00pm, to discuss "The Correspondent" by Virginia Evans. The group meets on Zoom and all are welcome.

Please contact the office with any questions. The group meets on [Zoom](#) and all are welcome. Please contact the [office](#) with any questions.



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, and announcements in Word (not in a PDF).

Rector's Essay - Liberty - Continued

In Chapter 7 of his Letter to the Romans, St. Paul describes the human soul without God, this way:

"I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me."

Until we are regenerated by Grace, and engaged in the ongoing sanctification of the Holy Spirit, we are fighting a losing battle with all that rebels against the 'with-God life' in us and around us. Our willpower is limited, misdirected, confused, and enslaved.

Once God's grace sets us free, then we are able to accept a 'with-God life,' which is real freedom. Put simply, God is loving us into the freedom to love like Jesus.

Now, someone might object and say, "Life conformed to Christ is a constrained life, so it cannot be a free life." When, in actuality, a life set free to walk in the way of Jesus is the highest expression of human freedom possible. We are truly free when we are able to choose the good, the true, the beautiful, the grace-full, the virtuous, and the life-giving path, not according to our own impaired judgment but according to the model and teaching of Jesus.

Our willpower is limited and disordered without God's grace which restores our alignment with Godliness.

In conclusion, JD Salinger tells the following story in his novella *Raise High The Roof Beams Carpenters*,

"Would you like to know how Charlotte got those nine stitches?" I asked suddenly, in a tone of voice that sounded perfectly normal to me. "We were up at the Lake. Seymour had written to Charlotte, inviting her to come up and visit us, and her mother finally let her. What happened was, she sat down in the middle of our driveway one morning to pet Boo Boo's cat, and Seymour threw a stone at her. He was twelve. That's all there was to it.

He threw it at her because she looked so beautiful sitting there in the middle of the driveway with Boo Boo's cat. Everybody knew that for God's sake-me, Charlotte, Boo Boo, Waker, Walt, the whole family." I stared at the pewter ashtray on the coffee table. "Charlotte never said a word to him about it. Not a word." I looked up at my guest, rather expecting him to dispute me, to call me a liar. I am a liar, of course. Charlotte never did understand why Seymour threw that stone at her. My guest didn't dispute me though."

Almost everyone I know, including me, has a story like this one in their lives. The story of an irrational, hurtful, impulsive action that defies explanation. For many, such a moment startles us into an awareness of our confused, and disordered inner life, and our need for outside assistance to right ourselves. Thanks be to God we have God to turn to for just that.

-Jarrett

Serving on Sunday July 12th at 9:00am:

Lectors – Ben O., Ann H. and Nancy D.

Acolytes – David C., Obi O. and Eric G.

Chalice Bearers – Cassy P. and Nancy D.

Ushers – Andy H. and Patty H.

Counters – Hilary G. and Don L.

Serving on Sunday July 19th at 9:00am:

Lectors – Shannon W., Kelsi H. and Michele V.

Acolytes – Robert F., Dakota M. and David C.

Chalice Bearers – Richard W. and Robert F.

Ushers – Mary W. and Zach W.

Counters – Marsha C. and Jim B.

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 55:10-13](#)

[Romans 8:1-11](#)

[Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23](#)

***Sunday
Worship:
[Worship](#)
[Bulletin](#)
[YouTube](#)***

What's Happening This Week

Saturday, July 11th, 12:00pm: Second Saturday lunch for the community. For more information on how to get involved, contact [David C.](#)

Sunday, July 12th, 9:00am: Rite II Eucharist with Choir, in-person and on [YouTube](#), followed by Lemonade on the Lawn.

Sunday, July 12th, 7:00pm: [AA](#) meeting in the Undercroft.

Tuesday, July 14th, 7:00am: Men's Breakfast at the Coach House Restaurant on Wilson Street in Brewer. Contact [Jim B.](#) for more information.

Thursday, July 16th, 6:30pm: Invitation to Love Retreat on [Zoom](#).

Saturday, July 18th, 4:00pm: Young Adult Group Gathering. For more information please email [William Somes](#).

Sunday, July 19th, 9:00am: Rite II Eucharist with Choir, in-person and on [YouTube](#), followed by Lemonade on the Lawn.

Sunday, July 19th, 10:30am: Vestry Meeting

Sunday, July 19th, 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.

**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](#)

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.

*****Nursery Care and Children's Chapel are on Hiatus and will resume on September 13th*****

Opportunities to pray together:

Sunday Morning Eucharist

9:00am in person and on [YouTube](#)

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.

In Thanksgiving for the birth of Jimmy Gentry Clark, son of Stephen and Skye Clark.

For the Sick, Injured, or Distressed, and for those who have requested prayer: Sean C., Judy A., The Kosciusko Family, Mikenzy, Laurel, Roy G., Robin S., Brian M., Cindy K., Perry D., Donna W. and Leith W. **Continued prayers for** – Earlene B., Donald K., Jane Z., Joan P., Susan J., Elena B., Allison S., Jay B., Susan S., Loretta, David B., Jane P., Henry L., Kelly M., D., M., and L., Katie B., Ross M., MarLynne M., Kent C., Ann C., Esther R., Marcia & Richard, and Russell M.

For our Homebound Members: Bonnie A., Kathy C., Ginny F., Carolyn L., Evelyn L., Roberta D., Carolyn S., Esther R., Gary S., Deborah T., Lee W., Donna W., Lura W., 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 for the people in the Middle East and Sudan. 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. For all members of our military currently in harm's way. We pray for peace.

With Thanksgiving for the lives of those celebrating birthdays during the coming week including: Terra C., Kevin F., David S., William S. and Patricia S.

For the Departed: Georgia and Dennis Kosciusko, Fred Knuth and for our service members killed in the current conflict.



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

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