



# The Bruton Fount

## Friends of Bruton: Our Worldwide Congregation

Summer 2025

## SHABBAT SHALOM

The Rev'd Christopher L. Epperson, Rector

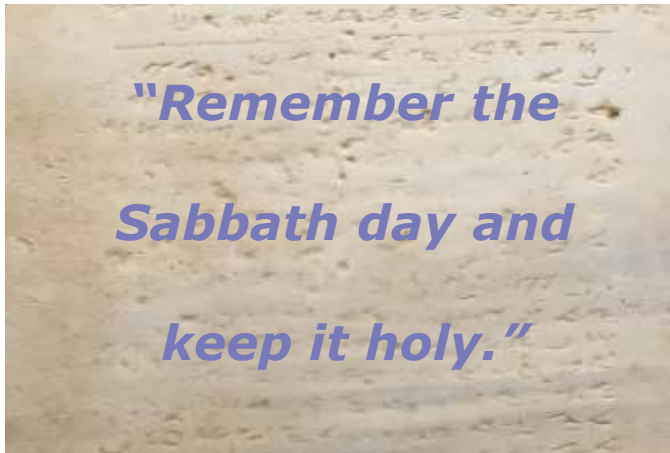
The Jewish Sabbath, Shabbat, is a critical component of Jewish religious life, deeply rooted in the Torah and Jewish identity. It is observed from Friday evening to Saturday evening, marking the seventh day of the week as a time set apart for rest, spiritual nourishment, and worship. The Torah commands Jews to remember and observe the Sabbath, reflecting both God's rest after creation and the Israelites' liberation from bondage in Egypt. Shabbat is described as an important holy day in Judaism, a "palace in time" that sanctifies time itself rather than physical space.

Abraham Joshua Heschel, a leading Jewish theologian, profoundly captured the essence of Shabbat in his book, *The Sabbath: Its Meaning for Modern Man*. He wrote, "There is a realm of time where the goal is not to have but to be, not to own but to give, not to control but to share, not to subdue but to be in accord. Life goes wrong when the control of space, the acquisition of things of space, becomes our sole concern."

For Heschel, the Sabbath is not a day off from work, but an opportunity to experience eternity within time. On Shabbat, Jews are called to set aside anxiety, refrain from work, and focus on joy, community, and the divine presence.

The Sabbath's influence on Christianity is significant. Early Christians, many of whom were Jewish, initially observed the seventh-day Sabbath with rest and prayer. However, as Christianity developed, especially after the resurrection of Jesus, the primary day of worship shifted to Sunday, known as the Lord's Day. This change commemorated Christ's resurrection and symbolized a new creation.

For Christians today, recovering a sense of the Jewish Sabbath would be useful and instructive. While the Sabbath is often reduced to Sunday worship and followed by lunch, the original intention of the Sabbath was the setting aside of a day to focus on God and community. The Sabbath is seen as a gift for physical, mental, and spiritual well-being,



*"Remember the  
Sabbath day and  
keep it holy."*

a counterbalance to the busyness of modern life. The New Testament, particularly Paul's letters, teaches that Sabbath observance is no longer a requirement but a matter of grace and freedom, with Christ as the fulfillment of the law.

Heschel's insights resonate with Christian practice as well: "Six days a week we wrestle with the world, wringing profit from the earth, on the Sabbath we especially care for the seed of eternity planted in the soul. The world has our hands, but our soul belongs to Someone Else."

The Sabbath serves as a sacred pause. For Jews, it is the heart of religious life and a taste of eternity, and it can be the same for Christians. It is a day to honor God, rest, and remember the resurrection. In both traditions, Sabbath observance offers a profound opportunity to sanctify time, cultivate joy, and reconnect with the divine.

The Ten Commandments place the Sabbath immediately following the first three commandments, which push us to recognize our obligations to God. The fourth commandment springs forth from the first three. We would do well to take note, "Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy." While the Sabbath is a holy obligation, it is also a gift.

# FRIENDS OF BRUTON SPECIAL PRESENTATION BY W. TAYLOR REVELEY III

On June 7, 120 attendees in the Parish Hall were treated to a lecture by former William & Mary President W. Taylor Reveley III. In a compelling and insightful talk, Reveley explored the enduring relationship between Bruton Parish Church and William & Mary -- from the early days when Bruton's rectors also served as the college's presidents, to the evolving connection between the two institutions in modern times.

With a blend of historical detail and engaging anecdotes, Reveley captivated the audience with the story of these two historic sites on the Duke of Gloucester St. in Colonial Williamsburg. Here are several photos taken at the memorable event.



# FRIENDS OF BRUTON: CHAIRMAN'S ARTICLE

Jonathan Stolz, *Friends of Bruton* Chairman

This issue marks the final edition of the *Friends of Bruton* newsletter in its current form.

This fall, *The Bruton Fount* will debut as a redesigned triennial printed magazine. It will be mailed to Cornerstone Circle members, parishioners and others closely associated with the church. Those in the broader *Friends of Bruton* community, who currently receive *The Fount* electronically, will be emailed a digital version of the hardcopy publication.

The newly formatted *Fount* will feature indepth articles, detailed coverage of the church's various ministries, and broader reporting on past and upcoming events in the life of the parish. It will also include a section for readers' letters and comments. Look for the inaugural issue -- arriving by mail and online in four months.

It is not too early to start thinking about the annual *Friends of Bruton* Day Luncheon! It will take place on **Saturday, September 27**, at the **Williamsburg Inn**.

This year's theme highlights Bruton's deep historical connection to its namesake English location and Anglican cousin -- **St. Mary the Virgin Church** in Bruton, Somerset, England. We are honored to welcome **The Rev'd Jonathan Evans**, rector of St. Mary's, as our keynote speaker. **Invitations will be sent out soon!**



Rev. Jonathan Evans

Finally, a thank-you to all who have shown their annual support for the *Friends of Bruton* by renewing your membership or by joining the group as a new member of the Cornerstone Circle. If you have not already done so this year, please mail a check for \$100 per person (or more) to Bruton Parish Church (with "Cornerstone" in the memo line) at P.O. Box 3520, Williamsburg, Virginia 23187-3520.

You can also join or renew online by visiting our website at **[www.brutonparish.org](http://www.brutonparish.org)**, and clicking on the **GIVE NOW** button in the upper right-hand corner of the screen. **Be sure to change the Fund field to FOB-Cornerstone Member!** Your contributions are gratefully appreciated.



# SUMMER MEAL PROGRAMS

Lynn Smyth

This year, as we have for the past seven years, Bruton is participating once again in the Summer Meals for Kids (SMFK) program. The program, administered by the Williamsburg area Meals on Wheels, partners with civic and faith-based organizations in our community to prepare and deliver meals to hundreds of children who receive free or reduced cost meals at their schools during the academic year. These kids are often hungry in the summer months.

This spring, as the planning sessions kicked off, it became clear that this year was going to be harder. First, the numbers of children in need of nutritional assistance has grown. According to the Williamsburg James City County (WJCC) School District, 433 children in the district are homeless and 46% qualify for free or reduced priced meals. In addition to these problems, grants and funding have been cancelled or reduced to the traditional recipients USDA and SMFK. Feeding over 200 kids for 10 weeks this summer seemed almost impossible.

But wait, we learned it only costs Meals on Wheels about \$4 to feed each child a lunch. What if EVERYONE knew that? Knew that it was possible to feed one child lunch for one week for just about \$20? If they knew, would they help?

The answer is a resounding YES! Our Mission and Outreach Committee, together with Loaves & Fishes, pledged \$2500 to serve as a match to funds donated by parishioners. But before we could even announce the match challenge, a donor, wishing to remain anonymous, stepped forward and matched the \$2500! A few days before Easter, we sent an email to the entire parish asking for donations to equal the \$5000 fund. We asked parishioners to consider donating to this valuable program during the period between Easter and Mother's Day. But, before Easter, we had already matched



the \$5000 fund and had over \$10,000 to donate to the summer meals for kids program!

By the time we presented Cathie Upton and Grace Rutledge of Meals on Wheels with the check, it totaled over \$23,000. Over 90 parishioners took part in our challenge! As a result of Bruton's donation, Meals on Wheels has increased the number of children it will serve this summer from 200 to 300.

Thank you ALL for your generosity. Friends, THIS is what LOVE looks like.

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL AT ST. MARTIN'S

Meghan Brewer

Vacation Bible School is a long-time cherished tradition that mostly takes place at churches during summertime. We are fortunate enough to have three local Episcopal churches in the Williamsburg area that rotate Vacation Bible School, each summer during the first full week in August. **This year VBS will be held at St. Martins on Monday, August 4 through Friday, August 8 from 9am to noon each day.** The theme this year is *Stand Up For Yourself and Others: A Week of fun, faith and friendship*. Registration closes July 31.

We can't wait to welcome children and youth from all three churches to share in a special week together. Youth and Adult volunteers are needed also, so please consider volunteering. You may reach out to Meghan Brewer at [mbrewer@brutonparish.org](mailto:mbrewer@brutonparish.org) with any questions.

STAND UP  
FOR YOUR  
SELF AND  
OTHERS!

# EARLY AMERICAN CHURCH HISTORY: A LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

Anne Conkling

As explorers began to cross the Atlantic to investigate and settle the new world, religious leaders and writers of history accompanied them.

The great American experiment did not suddenly emerge as a fait accompli. It was a seed planted, watered, nourished, pruned, fed and loved. From the missionary zeal of religious leaders to the profit-hungry financiers to adventurous explorers, goals and motives varied and often collided.

Fast forward to a time when creative educators began to write history books for public consumption -- education was suddenly deemed a blessing for the many, rather than the privileged inheritance for the very few at the top of society. God plays better than gold always, so most texts came out of New England, particularly Boston, and America began to think the whole world started in 1620 with 95 dissidents on a leaky, unstable rental boat called the Mayflower, braving mighty seas, storms, disease and the unknown -- all in a search for the right to worship God their way, not the established, accepted English way.

Most history books ignored the power-hungry Vatican settlers in Florida and Canada and Mexico, as though they never existed. But as Bishop Laud said "God is English!" so His people and His church can do no wrong. Politics and religion always seem to be married, and so Reformation thinking Anglicans set out on three little ships to convert any indigenous residents on the Continent of Virginia. Along with lofty theological ideas, they were supposed to find adventure, gold and other riches, and secure the new world for the future.

Since the English do most things by Committee, the Great Charter of 1606 was put together by a group. Part of the governing was to be here in the wilderness, and the Council would remain in England. Anglican clergy, specifically Robert Hunt, then Alexander Whitaker came to shepherd the flock. Ultimately, they would aim to build a church every six miles from Jamestown. But first, prayers of thanksgiving, Communion and sermons! Despite starvation, fires, disease, political shenanigans and what felt like abject failure, they survived, largely due to help from the local residents who had been here for 12,000 years.

No matter what they found here, they hoped it would be better than what they left behind. Often they wanted to give up and go home to merrie old England, and they almost did. Yet the one thing they could hold onto was their faith and the church, and that constant comforting memory sustained and strengthened many a weary colonist. By 1619 they were ready to set up a real government here and, with the blessing of yet another Charter, they held an election and took the first step towards representative government.

We have multiple leaders with now famous names from Jamestown, but it is thanks to a lesser known luminary that we have real details about the summer of 1619, all of which

altered history. His name was John Pory -- linguist, writer, secretary to English Ambassadors, world traveler, possibly the first news reporter, member of Parliament, and Speaker of the House of Burgesses in 1619. He was conversant with John Donne and John Milton, and his translations from Arabic and Italian may have been used by Shakespeare when he composed *Othello*.

His report on the first meeting of the House of Burgesses in the church on Jamestown island includes this notation from July 30, 1619 -- "Since men's affaires doe little prosper when God's service be neglected, we began with a prayer." Following the prayer, the Burgesses all took the Oath of Supremacy to the Crown. The prayer was led by the Rev. Richard Bucke, who had survived the wreck of the *Sea Venture* in Bermuda. From that experience William Shakespeare would later write *The Tempest*. The prayer Bucke led asked God "to guide and sanctifie all our proceedings to his owne glory and the good of this plantation." While seeking Divine Guidance, government in America began in a church, with prayer.



The Church on the Main  
Jamestown Island

Lost in the midst of history is why the prayer habit did not continue. Suddenly it reappears on June 28, 1787 at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. After weeks of meetings with no progress, Ben Franklin felt that secular wisdom was not working and they should seek a higher source, the 'Father of lights'. Hamilton disagreed, and the motion

was recorded but not passed. Undeterred, Franklin commented that daily prayer was the answer -- "God governs in the affairs of men. If a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid?" Soon a Chaplain was appointed for both the House and the Senate, and each day begins with prayer. The chaplain today may counsel members, perform funerals and weddings, and help where needed. Many faiths are represented and no effort is made to convert anyone - strictly non-partisan, non-political. The first chaplain to the Senate was Samuel Provoost, Anglican Bishop of the Diocese of New York and then Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in America.

Interestingly, in researching this piece, all sources led me to the Constitution time period, not Jamestown 1619. Next time you are in Bruton, look at the large plaque under the South gallery. It refers to the first meeting of the House of Burgesses in 1619, when Government sought Divine Guidance. Parliament in England has begun with prayer since at least 1559, so there is certainly English precedent, which Pory would have recognized. After all, since we were under the Bishop of London and the King of England, Virginia was simply a suburb of London!

Source: *Encyclopedia Virginia*



# THEY SHALL LAUGH AND SING

Dr. JanEl Will, Bruton Organist

The phrase "they shall laugh and sing" appears several times in the Book of Psalms and tells of times of great rejoicing. It is a phrase which has been adopted by many singing groups and has inspired much artwork which appears on the walls of choir rooms around the world. The Bruton Parish Choir saw it on display in several rehearsal areas where they prepared for services and Evensongs while on their England choir tour this past February, and it encapsulates the joy experienced during this time together.

The tour began with an Evensong sung in Norwich Cathedral, a weekend residency at Ripon Cathedral followed by touring and singing at Selby Abbey, Jesus College, Ely Cathedral and University Church. The final event was attendance at Evensong in the renowned King's College Chapel in Cambridge with a banquet on campus afterward.

While on tour, the choir was honored to meet two English composers, Andrew Carter and Cecilia McDowall, who travelled to hear their compositions sung in services.

The entire trip was a time of wonderment at the history and architecture of these magnificent sacred spaces as well as fulfillment in sharing music of America with all who attended. There was much laughter as we were able to grow together as a community as well as sharing in the joy of singing.

Many pictures and videos were shared at a High Tea Reception held for the parishioners of Bruton Parish, narrated by Rebecca Davy, Choir Director. The collage below (designed by Greg Davy) along with a group photo with composer Andrew Carter were presented to her with special appreciation for the incredible effort put toward this life-affirming trip.

On behalf of the Bruton Parish Choirs, thank you to all who supported us in our travels with prayers for safety as well as financially.

We shall continue to "laugh and sing" together.





# 2025 ANNUAL LABOR DAY WEEKEND BOOK SALE

Jeanne Hobbs

Please join us in Lewis Hall for this year's Book Sale beginning **Thursday, August 28, for the Early Bird Sale (5-7:30pm)** with a \$5 entrance fee) and continuing throughout the weekend on **Friday, August 29 (10am-5pm)**; **Saturday, August 30 (8:30am-4:30pm)**; and **Sunday, August 31 (10:30am - 2:30pm)**. We offer low, low prices on 1000's of fiction and nonfiction, hardbacks, paperbacks, children's books, music, puzzles, games, and more.

We will continue to collect Book Sale donations throughout the summer. Please peruse your shelves for gently-used books, CD's, DVD's, vinyl records, board games, and puzzles. *(No encyclopedias, dictionaries, VCR or cassette tapes, or moldy, coverless books.)*

Pack your donations in sturdy, manageable boxes or doubled paper bags. Then load up your car and drive your donations to the Parish House. We will do the rest!

**Donations Drop-Off Days are July 23 & 26, and August 13, 16 and 20 from 9am - noon at the Parish House.**

If one of our Donation Drop-off Days does not work for you, please contact the Parish Office (757-229-2891), especially if you are unable to carry your donations directly to the church nursery collection area. We will coordinate a time when someone is available to help you. **Come and shop for some new treasures!**



## SERVICES, SERMONS & MORE ONLINE

Visit our YouTube Channel for sermons recently given by our clergy. Each Sunday, our 9:15 a.m. service is live-streamed for the members of our community — both local and worldwide — who are not physically present. A few months' worth of sermons and services are kept on our website under *Worship* at [www.brutonparish.org](http://www.brutonparish.org) and other videos of parish life at [www.youtube.com/BrutonParish](https://www.youtube.com/BrutonParish) for those who would like to revisit a particular service or sermon.

**Become a subscriber today!**

# THE HYMNS WE SING: *GOD OF OUR FATHERS* - NATIONAL HYMN

Jim Morford, FOB Chairman Emeritus

The period from Memorial Day in late May to Labor Day in early September marks the summer season in the United States. Highlighted between these two holidays is Independence Day on July 4th. These holidays emphasize three uniquely American celebrations. One hymn that is often sung during this period, especially around Independence Day, is *God of Our Fathers*.

Most hymns are written to commemorate a solemn occasion or joyful experience. *God of Our Fathers* was written to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. There were several hymns and patriotic songs written for this Centennial event, but this hymn is the only one that survived. It has become a traditional patriotic hymn of American Christian churches.

Daniel C. Roberts (1841-1907), a Civil War veteran and an Episcopal priest, wrote the text. At that time he was serving as rector of St. Thomas & Grace Episcopal Church in Brandon, Vermont. The hymn was to be used during a small patriotic celebration there. The lyrics ask God to continue, as in the past, to guide and protect us. The words convey a feeling of patriotism while honoring the greatness of God. When Rev'd Roberts introduced the hymn to his congregation, it was sung to an existing hymn called the "Russian Hymn."

Several years later Roberts sent the hymn anonymously to the General Convention of the Episcopal Church for consideration by the Commission, formed to revise the Episcopal hymnal. If approved, he promised he would send them his name. The commission approved it, and it was printed in its report. Reverend Tucker, who was the editor of the "hymnal," and George W. Warren were commissioned to choose a hymn for the celebration of the Centennial of the United States Constitution. They chose Roberts' text, and George Warren wrote a new tune for it, which the commission named the *National Hymn*.



Daniel C. Roberts  
Credit: hymnary.org



George W. Warren  
Credit: hymnary.org

George William Warren was born August 17, 1828, in Albany, New York. Like most great composers, he displayed a talent and love for music at an early age. Upon graduation from college at age 18, he became a church organist, eventually winding up in New York City at St Thomas, and later at Holy Trinity. Upon his death in 1902, mourners, numbered in the thousands, believed they could find no finer organist in America, so no music was played at his funeral.

Today, *God of Our Fathers*, sung to the melody of *National Hymn*, is one of the few "patriotic" hymns in the Episcopal Hymnal. The hymn is a national treasure!

Link to Mormon Tabernacle Choir performing *God of Our Fathers*: <https://youtu.be/hMw-7Nsg78M>

## PRAYERS FOR OUR FRIENDS

Anne Conkling

Amazing and wonderful things can occur when we keep our fragile lives wrapped in prayer. Whether it is the Lord's Prayer or a myriad of other possible prayers, each one brings a benefit and a sense of blessing and calm. It can be as simple as, *Lord, have mercy!* If you need prayers, please email [hcooley@brutonparish.org](mailto:hcooley@brutonparish.org) and our clergy and local Daughters of the King will be glad to pray for you or your need for three weeks. This month, we offer the *Prayer for our Country* from the Book of Common Prayer below:

*Almighty God, who hast given us this good land for our heritage: We humbly beseech thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of thy favor and glad to do thy will. Bless our land with honorable industry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people the multitudes brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues. Endue with the spirit of wisdom those to whom in thy Name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that, through obedience to thy law, we may show forth thy praise among the nations of the earth. In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in thee to fail; all which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

## ***Friends of Bruton Resource Associates***

Jo Anne Coy, Charter & Cornerstone Circle Member

Rebecca Davy, Bruton Music Director & Organist

Dr. William Greaf, Sons of the American Revolution,  
Bruton Member

Channing Hall III, Cornerstone Circle Member,  
Attorney, Bruton Member

Larry & Peg Zensinger, Bruton Members,  
Guide Coordinators, Cornerstone Circle Members

Dr. William Kelso, Director of Research  
Jamestown Rediscovery (Emeritus)

Virginia Lee, Daughters of the American Revolution,  
Bruton Member

Dr. Carl Lounsbury, Senior Architectural Historian  
Colonial Williamsburg Foundation (Emeritus)

The Rev. Lauren McDonald, Associate Rector  
Outreach & Women's Ministry

Joe Poole, III, Director of Special Gifts  
Colonial Williamsburg

W. Taylor Reveley, III, Former President  
The College of William & Mary

Susan Riggs (Retired), Special Collections Assistant  
William & Mary Libraries, Swem Special Collections

Scott M. Spence, Architect, Bruton Member

## ***Friends of Bruton Committee***

The Rev'd Christopher L. Epperson, Rector

Donald Bogus, Bruton Member,  
Charter & Cornerstone Circle Member

Lianne Johnson Boller, Bruton Member,  
Cornerstone Circle Member

Isabel Burch, Bruton Member,  
Cornerstone Circle Member

Lynn Clark, Bruton Member,  
Cornerstone Circle Member

Anne Conkling, Bruton Member,  
Cornerstone Circle Member,  
*The Bruton Fount* Editor, Guide Trainer

Hilary Cooley, Bruton Parish  
Communications Director

Judith Dorn, Bruton Member

Catherine E. Freemon,  
Cornerstone Circle Member

John Fogarty Controller & Treasurer,  
Bruton Member, Cornerstone Circle Member

James Morford, Chairman Emeritus, Bruton Member,  
Charter Member & Cornerstone Circle Member

Jonathan Stolz, Committee Chairman  
Bruton Member & Cornerstone Circle Member

Larry Zensinger, Bruton Member,  
Co-Coordinator of Bruton Guides,  
Cornerstone Circle Member

## **Bruton Parish Church**

The Most Rev'd Sean W. Rowe, Presiding Bishop

The Rt. Rev'd Susan Bunton Haynes, Bishop  
Diocese of Southern Virginia

The Rev'd Christopher L. Epperson, Rector

The Rev'd Charles H. Bauer  
Associate Rector, Christian Formation

The Rev. Lauren M. McDonald  
Associate Rector, Outreach & Women's Ministries



Bruton Parish Church  
P.O. Box 3520 (331 W. Duke of Gloucester St.  
Williamsburg, VA 23187  
Phone: 757-229-2891 Fax: 757-221-0290  
Email: BPC@brutonparish.org  
Website: www.bرتونparish.org