

A Reflection from our Music Director, Scott Hayes: June 28, 2023

But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing.

-James 1:16-25 (NRSV)

When I arrived at All Saints in 2016, the choir room was an empty slate. The walls had been freshly painted, and all sorts of decorations were piled up in a corner, waiting to be put back up. Among them was a charming image of a chorister wearing vestments, with bold red letters asking, "WWSWD?" set against a backdrop of musical notes. It's been a mystery to me ever since I arrived, and I still haven't found the right person to ask about its meaning. However, it's so cute that we decided to display it near the women's vestments.

Similarly, have you noticed those small oval bumper stickers around town with the letters "BYD" on them? They've been around for ages. Have you ever wondered what they stand for? After doing some digging, I found out that "BYD" actually stands for "Be Ye Doers," which is a fancy way of saying "Be doers of the word," as found in the above passage.

As I write this note, we at All Saints are actively embodying that spirit. From my office, I can hear a Vacation Bible School class led by adult and youth volunteers, eagerly moving on to their next activity. Looking out the window, I see Miss Anne's Music & Movement class near the Pantry Garden. Winston, Ben, Tyronn, and Melissa are all on site, busy with preparations for upcoming events or the next school year. This afternoon, I'll be joining the Youth on the second day of their Local Missions Experience week, lending a hand with Project:Homes.

While reading the passage earlier, I couldn't help but notice the mention of the "law of liberty." It reminded me of the upcoming Independence Day celebration, which symbolizes the freedom we enjoy as American citizens, thanks to our Constitution. Just like in the book of James, there are two sides to this concept. Liberty is a tricky term to define precisely, but what's clear is that it emphasizes the same alignment—being doers of the word and not just hearers.

How have you lived out the word today? It could be as simple as holding a door open or as meaningful as joining Vacation Bible School. It might be something personal, like taking care of yourself after a busy time so you're ready for what's coming up. And let's not forget the importance of helping others in various ways, coming together as a community.

As we read in the Book of Common Prayer's Prayer for the Human Family (p. 815), let us reflect upon its words: "Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of life; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth."