

BUILD

EN-

DUR

A Refreshed
Liberatus
Vision
Overview
at 7.5 Years



ANCE

INTRODUCTION

VISION

American Unity

MISSION:

INSPIRE AMERICAN UNITY

Create a culture of American unity for the next generation by producing content, experiences, and leaders that inspire it today.

LiberatusDC.org

Since 2015, more than 200 people have participated in the Liberatus mission to inspire American unity. Thank you! The Liberatus community represents the full range of political perspectives and includes both Americans with professional experience in politics and supporters scattered across 20 states.

While the way we have worded our vision has evolved from healing through freedom, to wholeness in politics, to American unity, our approach has always been to grow through personal connections and relationships. National healing or unity is by nature relational, not a marketing campaign or top-down directive.

We believe the American idea is this: we can establish justice and secure freedom when we collaborate and build trust. Collaboration and trust happen when we choose unity and commit to the long journey.

While many of us grew up inspired by The Greatest Generation, we feel powerless to move the country in the right direction. Division, noise, and choosing against our fellow Americans often seem to be the only ways to participate in self-governance—including in Christian communities.

But unity is America's first founding ideal, going all the way back to the "Join, or Die" cartoon published by Benjamin Franklin in 1754. And unity was the prayer of Jesus for the body of Christ before he was betrayed. The mission of Liberatus is a beautiful and direct response to division, abuses of power, and rejection of who we can become in Christ by leaders in the Church, in politics, and in our own lives.

We all want leaders who make our country stronger. And we want our voices and values to guide them.

What our stakeholders have created so far is a foundational, transformative, and monumental new way to approach American self-governance.

Liberatus offers inspiration for American unity to help you choose unity, build endurance, and become the leaders who make our country more just and free for the next generation.

Build Endurance,

Caleb Paxton
Liberatus Founder

*Cover photo by
Anastasia Waltschew*

part one

**THE
LIBERATUS
PLAN FOR
AMERICAN
UNITY**

GO DEEPER

Explore what it means to choose unity in greater depth by diving into any of our assets:

LIBERATUS VOLUME ONE (AND ALL FUTURE ISSUES)

An illustrated journal containing congressional-level research, contemplative spirituality, and beautiful photography

ISSUE 019: THE TRAILHEAD

An online series exploring Leadership for American Unity

THE PHILOSOPHY OF FREEDOM IN POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

What it means to live as people who are free in a modern American context

THE VALUES OF FREEDOM

Values that drive us and guide us as we make our country more just and free for the next generation

THE LIBERATUS LEADERSHIP LIBRARY

Works on leadership, creativity, and life that have shaped Liberatus or help frame what we do to inspire American unity

THE LIBERATUS JOURNAL ARCHIVE

All 122 original journal entries on healing and unity from writers in American politics

We started Liberatus as a creative outlet for professionals in American politics to write about healing or unity. Out of the conversation, deeper reading, and writing that produced the 122 digital journal entries across eighteen creative themes in the Liberatus journal archive, we discovered three actions that we can take to choose unity:

1. Be inclusive.
2. Stay grounded in wisdom.
3. Create!

We believe anyone can take these actions at any time, and in many contexts. We believe that they represent the nature of God and reflect the way God relates to us: as children of God, we can be led by the Spirit of God to live creative lives of restoration. Therefore the problem with division isn't that it's not nice; it's that it's not true. Humanity's full story arc from a Christian perspective begins in original goodness and ends in restoration. As American citizens and as people of faith, that's the story that we get to not only tell in political communication, but also live. When we do so beautifully over time, despite setbacks, we learn to master a build endurance mindset and demonstrate the meaning of hope.

part two

**WHO
WE SERVE
AND WHAT
WE DO**

INSPIRE AMERICAN UNITY

WHO WE SERVE

Professionals in American Politics

If you've ever felt that American politics is dysfunctional and wanted to tune it out, imagine what it feels like to work in politics professionally when the stated values—including among people of faith—is to divide, sideline other Americans, and communicate ideas that we know are only half true.

Liberatus is first a creative outlet to write about healing or unity for professionals in American politics because they have immense firsthand perspectives and experience on how to start where they are to heal and unite the country. We help them explore a deeper set of values and empower them to share the wisdom they've learned with others, while learning from the writings of other spiritual guides like Henri Nouwen, Richard Rohr, and Diane Langberg.

Their act of writing creates something new and beautiful for all of us to feel grounded, and it deepens their perspectives too as they go about their jobs. There are no solutions to our country's problems that do not include professionals in politics writing and talking about how we can create new culture. Liberatus is their platform to craft a new ethos of unity and peace.

WHO WE SERVE

Americans Across the Country

When millennials, Gen Zers, and people of faith get involved in American self-governance, we wish to do so without giving up our values and ability to connect with each other. Many Americans don't know what to expect out of our leaders because we have not taken risks to show them the kind of beauty and creativity that they want.

Liberatus offers them inspiration for American unity so that they too can take up their own leadership journey to make our country more just and free for the next generation. Their support for each illustrated journal not only gives them a beautiful work of art to read, enjoy, and share with their friends, it also supports our work to connect with congressional staff, executive branch employees, and our partner organizations who are doing work to heal our country in ways that are both deeply meaningful and completely unnoticed.

Volume One, along with each future illustrated journal, makes their stories and perspectives real and tangible. Every time we ship a copy to another supporter somewhere in America, inspiration for American unity finds another home and becomes a real part of our culture, and a guide that can lead anyone to a deeper and more life-giving approach to American self-governance. When inspired to choose unity, Americans move from apathy to active participation. It's both our individual actions and our work together in a fresh, organized way that will make our country stronger.

On the printed page we can tell stories at a foundational depth that screens cannot, and that's what it will take, combined with a relational approach with our writers and readers and outward creative action to fund our partners, to inspire American unity.



photo by Anastasia Waltschew

WHO WE SERVE

Partner Organizations

We all want life to be meaningful. The founders of our partner organizations, Border Perspective and Refuge Coffee Co., show us how with their care for the relational and physical needs of our fellow humans and fellow Americans. 20% of the funds donated to receive each copy of an illustrated journal on our website go to them. We plan to add more partners in the future as we grow. We chose the Refuge theme for Volume One, and decided to fund partner organizations, because we believe that when we listen to the stories of those who have been displaced or marginalized, we begin to find the path to wisdom.



photo by Joe Gonzalez

HOW WE GROW

Strengthening Leaders and Building Partnerships

We move the mission forward and grow through firsthand personal connections. Unity is relational, and therefore it's not a top-down marketing campaign, because top-down marketing is about conformity. We connect with our fellow Americans in real life, create work that lives up to our shared values, and inspire them for their journey to become leaders for American unity. And we self-evaluate continually to be sure that this statement is true.

To grow, developing or strengthening leaders for American unity is the core of what we will do. We can build a sustainable organization by connecting with other Americans, and we can connect with Americans by building a team of leaders. We anticipate that leaders who work with us from creators to ambassadors will go on to lead for American unity in other roles in the future.

In the pursuit of collaboration and building trust, we are also actively pursuing conversations with the leaders of other organizations to develop more partnerships. There are many brands working in various ways to heal our country's divides, and the more creative options Americans have to get involved, the more likely they will be to find one that fits their style, and the stronger our country will be.

Our Pledge

When you participate in the mission to inspire American unity, our pledge to you is that we will not only be relentless about living our values and philosophy, and our build endurance mindset, we will also constantly evaluate our craft to deliver the best possible artistic, cultural statement we can. And we will communicate with you constantly, because communication is what creates community.

What the Mission to Inspire American Unity Means

40 years from now, inspiration for American unity through a biannual journal means we will have leaders for American unity. Our kids, grandkids, nieces, and nephews will grow up knowing how to pursue wisdom in self-governance; in Christian circles this has not been well taught or understood.

Think of Liberatus as the grandchild of organizations like the National Geographic Society and the Center for Action and Contemplation—and imagine what will be possible culturally and creatively when we organize the resources and team to reach the goal of biannual publication!

RESULTS AFTER 7.5 YEARS

202

**Copies of Volume
One claimed**

130

**Digital journal entries on healing
or unity across 19 creative series**

20

**States represented
by supporters**

127

Lifetime donors

36.49%

**Crowdfunders giving
more than the \$55
ask for one copy**

\$567

**Lifetime funds
contributed to
partner organizations**

19

**Total writers
published out of 60
content contributors**

\$110,668.65

**Total funds donated from
March 2015 through
November 2022**

0

**Number of full-time
staff employed to
produce these results**

What Stakeholders Are Saying

“It’s easy to spend every day on Capitol Hill focused on the grind of the Hill’s daily life without ever taking a breath to think critically about the purpose of it all. Writing for *Liberatus* forced me to examine my time in DC with eyes wide open. I’m grateful for the opportunity.

PETE OBERMUELLER

Liberatus Writer & Eight-Year Congressional Staffer

“It’s so encouraging to be part of a new, creative, and refreshing approach to our nation’s political climate.”

TERASSA WREN

Former Executive Assistant on Capitol Hill

“We received our copy of *Liberatus* this week and we are blown away! It is such an engaging, beautiful, meaning-rich publication and art piece. It is clear how intentional every page is; thank you for your dedication to share these stories. We are so excited (and proud) to have it on display in our office.”

TRISHA SHANK

The Clapham Group

part three

WAYS TO SHARE THE MISSION

Build Endurance by Funding the Team

As we work toward the larger goal of biannual publication, we've set an end of year or short-term goal of raising \$3,000 to fund final editing and publishing of over 100 letters on leadership as part of onboarding new leaders.

To reach biannual publication, we will need \$200,000 per year for five consecutive years. We can scale and build the Liberatus community by developing leaders on our team and across the country who join us as Ambassadors (field reps), and through partnerships with other organizations to distribute copies. Major investments over five years will allow us to reach the larger goal of biannual publication.

**GIVE TO THE END OF YEAR CAMPAIGN AT
[LIBERATUSDC.ORG/BUILD-ENDURANCE](https://liberatusdc.org/build-endurance)**

Additional ways to give* as we reach for the goal of biannual publication

VOLUME ONE

Get a copy of Volume One for yourself and an extra copy for someone else.

VOLUME TWO

Crowdfund Volume Two

LIBERATUS ADVOCATES

Make a monthly donation of \$5 or more as a Liberatus Advocate. This current set of donors has kept Liberatus online and running!

FOUNDERS' CIRCLE

Join the Liberatus Founders' Circle with a five-year commitment to fund our team members as we do the work.

OUTREACH PARTNERS

If you lead another like-minded organization, reach out to us about becoming an Outreach Partner.

BUSINESS SPONSORS

If you're a business owner, reach out to us about sponsoring Volume Two.

MAJOR GRANTS

If you're a major funder or philanthropic network, we can work with you to reach our shared goals over the upcoming years.

**For more details, visit the end of year campaign.*

Build Endurance by Getting Involved

If you'd like to join Liberatus as a writer, editor, photographer, designer, board member, mentor, or serve in another role, sign up to join the Leadership Council.

We choose unity because we choose to create out of love because of the love that our Creator has for us.