

THE MESSENGER

All Saints' Church 51 Concord Street, Peterborough, NH 03458

Parish Office: (603) 924-3202 Office Hours M-F 9 AM-4 PM

Web: allsaintsnh.org Office Email: diane@allsaintsnh.org

Jamie Hamilton, Rector

Our Mission (What we do)

Our mission is to help people grow in their faith and trust in God by helping them recognize their God-given talents and to use them to serve God and their neighbor.

Our Vision (Where we are going)

Our vision is to be a community in which God's love is experienced and shared.

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Dear Parishioners,

I was at a dinner party one night and a young couple, after learning that I was a priest, asked if I could officiate at their wedding. "Oh, but could you make the ceremony joyful, and not religious?" Wow. I was surprised by how easily they made their request, as if I knew exactly what they meant.

Their question reminded me of another incident, many years ago in my early years as priest, when a couple were exploring the possibility of having me "marry them" because they couldn't imagine getting married by the Justice of the Peace. They wanted their ceremony in a church because people get married in churches, but they did not want a religious ceremony. "Can you handle that? Can you leave out Jesus? We're just not very religious. We're more spiritual."

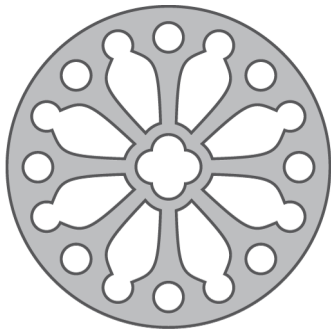
So, what are people saying when they want to "leave out Jesus" so that they can be "joyful and not religious"? I am assuming that they don't practice a faith tradition or commit to any particular creeds. And yet, they do not want to be defined as secular, either.

When I ask for a definition of spirituality, the responses always point to the importance of finding meaning and purpose and hope and trust. There should be more, something outside of themselves to help them connect with the mystery and power of life. They do not want to see their quests in life played out on a stage that is indifferent to their efforts or soulless in its character. They begin to talk about capacity rather than capabilities or spaciousness rather than successes or gratefulness rather than greatness. They want to engage with their own integrity, rather than feel a need to exaggerate or prove their worthiness. They want to feel whole.

And, unfortunately, a few, if not many with whom I have spoken, have had painful church experiences of ridicule and exclusion, and sometimes even abuse.

One of the fathers of the faith, Augustine of Hippo of the 4th century, claimed that we could identify our spirituality by asking ourselves how we order our loves, an "ordo amoris." He claimed that we could discover who we are by exploring what we love, cherish and desire. And then, to reflect on how we order those loves. The ordering may not be fully articulated or even conscious, and yet, he believed, we are creating our lives through that ordering.

What is this "ordering"? How did it arrive? What do we protect so that the essence of our lives is not ripped apart? Is there something at the core of our being that we hope to find? Where are we putting our energy and time? And how is that "ordering" shaping our lives? What do we treasure?



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Epiphany invites us to be open to insights, to how Christ's love is breaking upon us in new ways, giving us opportunities to explore what we believe *we are in* and what we believe we are *becoming*.

As you enlighten our lives, dear Lord, may we be light for others.

Blessings,

Jamie+

Christian Education

A Year for Families

THE MESSENGER

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Sixteen children.

I stared out at the cluster of madness and kinetic energy that lay before me in the upstairs classroom of the Old Parish House. I had never seen this many children in Sunday School on a single day, ever. It was holy chaos. I knew I needed to call things to order, but I stood there for a moment and just let it all run wild in front of me as sixteen little people, ranging in age from two to ten, giggled and leaped and circled each other waiting for my cue to begin. It was a marvelous sight! Any Christian Education Director prays for that kind of crowd and I had to take a moment and simply enjoy it.

During Advent, I was given an opportunity to step outside my comfort zone – WAY outside. I have several friends who stare at me with confusion when I wax eloquent about my hours in a mini-van with seven teenage girls headed to Boston. It's not for everyone, and I understand that. But God has given me a passion for working with teenagers and young adults and I can't picture myself doing anything but that ministry, at least for right now. However, the idea of suddenly being put in charge of almost 20 small children in order to somehow put a Nativity Pageant together – that felt terrifying. My journey this Advent as pageant director was an adventure, to say the least, but it has taught me much about the future of this church.

Children are insightful, albeit energetic, creatures. They look at the Bible stories not as something that happened in the past, but as something that is happening NOW because NOW is where they reside. The stories of Abraham, of Jacob and Joseph with his colored coat are contemporary to them, as are Mary and Joseph and the shepherds (and the cow – they LOVE mentioning the cow in the stable.) God is alive to them in the Holy Moly stories – and He is funny. Laughter is ubiquitous in Sunday School, the uncontrollable movement of the Holy Spirit expressed as giggles and cheers. When we rehearsed the pageant, I could see the beautiful “mental furniture” I spoke of last month of the Nativity story. They each know it so well. The movements, the script, the flow of the story, it is all familiar and comforting to them. It is their story and watching them create it together was so very sweet. Tiny kings and tinier sheep. Such a delight!

All these children are here because their families have said yes to being part of a faith community. They are here because they see the value of ritual, story and sacrament. They are investing in the spiritual foundation that will support their children's lives into adulthood. And they are making All Saints' a richer place by doing so; we are so blessed to have them among us and this coming year, we will be making a focused and conscious effort to expand the opportunities for families and children. This process will begin with a dinner for families on February 6 at 5 PM in Reynolds Hall. Please let me or Jamie know if you would like to participate.

This coming year, we will lift up and celebrate all the families, of every variety, who call our church home. I look forward to sharing the experiences 2016 will offer with all of you and with my own family as well. Blessings for a happy new year!

Becky Goodwin, Director of Christian Education



January Saints' Days

1/1	Andrew Goss	1/12	Mary Weis	1/24	Laura Campbell
1/5	Peter Oliver		Susan Sarles		Finbarr McCullough
	Ryan Betz	1/14	Emily Manns	1/25	Judith Pratt
1/6	Jerry Branch	1/17	Martha Raymond		Bailey Guinn
	Beth Krommes		Libby Twitchell		Elisabeth Foecking
	Tommy Goodwin	1/18	Susan Gill		Catherine Pendleton
1/7	Lilianne Tullio	1/19	Heather Peterson	1/26	Lily Beyer
1/8	Charles Richmond	1/20	Louise Lawrence	1/28	Elsbeth Pendleton
	Megan Graff	1/23	Isabella Zielie	1/31	David Boothby
1/9	Christine Kelly		Claire Marlar		Naomi-Claire Praul

If your name is missing from our Saints' Days lists, PLEASE let us know so you can be remembered! Just call or email the Church office: 924-3202 or diane@allsaintsnh.org

Saintly News

Congratulations to...

- ❖ Sharon MacCartney in celebration of her recent retirement
- ❖ ConVal honor roll students Megan McClintock, Haley Spitzfaden, Andres Tourgee and Michelle Tourgee

Gloria Schultz

If you would like to share a special news item or a happy occasion with the Parish, please email Gloria Schultz at glojoemointheglen@gmail.com or call 924-9489

We Did It, All Saints'

During what is arguably the busiest and most stressful season of the year, All Saints' managed to host two events with such grace and hospitality, it needs to be noted. Record numbers of us came forward to put together receptions for Winnie Skeates' Ordination and Lessons and Carols. We provided delicious (and beautiful!) food and glorious table decorations and spent hours setting up and cleaning up. All who participated should know that their efforts were greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Libby Fuller



Book Note

I have been reading Christmas sermons by John Donne, much better known in the world at large for his elegant love sonnets, though perhaps his best-known sentence is “Any Mans *death* diminishes *me*, because I am involved in *Mankind*; And therefore never send to know for whom the *bell* tolls; It tolls for *thee*,” from one of his Devotions. This passage is included in the collection of ten sermons from which I read Sermons 6 and 8: *John Donne’s Sermons on the Psalms and Gospels*, edited, with an introduction, by Evelyn M. Simpson (University of California Press, 1963, but still available).

John Donne, who had had quite a varied and adventurous life as law student, traveler, naval expeditioner, private secretary, married for love Thomas More’s granddaughter. After he had abandoned hopes for a political or diplomatic career, he finally was ordained in the Church of England at the age of forty-two. One might not have guessed that this gifted poet would turn out to be one of the finest, and certainly the most unusual, preachers of all time.

If his sermons are not nearly as much read as his poetry, it is not just because we don’t read sermons much anymore. A glance at a page of his preaching can be intimidating. Citations of early writers, Christian and not, abound, often given in Latin first and then translated. His sentences can be long and complex, the paragraphs sometimes several pages, and the sermons themselves live up to the expectation that a seventeenth-century preacher will take at least an hour to say anything worthwhile.

Even more striking, however, is the number of words in italics. And that is a key: these words were, and are meant to be, uttered aloud, not just read: they are proclamation, however thorough. The italics give a hint as to how to read intelligibly, what to emphasize, as the punctuation suggests pauses. As I read them, I find myself at least tasting the words, murmuring what Donne would have projected forth into Old St. Paul’s Cathedral, London, of which he was Dean.

But O! Is it worth it! These Christmas sermons of 1621 and 1624 are magnificent works, still exciting as they convey some of the implications of worshipping an incarnate God. They assume the classic form of sermons we have almost entirely forgotten: scriptural text, three points, often with several branches, frequent reminders of where we are, an evangelical challenge to us personally and as a community, and a concluding prayer. They use everyday life as illustration, take issue with error, and are above all humble and merciful. And Donne respects human reason and intelligence, including new astronomical and physical science, as all works of God.

I don’t claim that these are easy; but even dipping into this ocean is invigorating. The poet is here still, but he is a poet under obedience, which seems only to channel his energy, not to discourage it. The Christmas season may be all the better for this kind of treat.

Cassius Webb

Happy 2016

We’re starting a new year
But let’s be very clear:
Although events might re-arrange
God’s love for us doesn’t change.

Count your blessings that have come before
I hope this year brings you more.

Alma Ruth

Vestry Report

Good Fellow Parishioners, it brings me great pleasure to report to you that your vestry is alive and well, not to mention working hard, on behalf of our beloved All Saints' family. Our house is in good order as we look to the New Year because YOU responded so favorably to this fall's Stewardship Campaign. Your generosity is supporting our mission and ministries, our outreach to each other, to our community and to our world, to our rector, dear Jamie, our Diocese and its shepherd, Bishop Rob, even extending to our new Presiding Bishop, Michael. What a great way to kick off 2016. Thank you for your willingness to say an enthusiastic "YES to God's Work!"

Our physical house is also in good order. Our church is now sparkling with bright lights and repaired stained glass windows. Our drains are flowing. Our rectory is renewed and welcoming to Jamie and her family, not to mention a beautiful home to host many church gatherings. The Old Parish House is warm and inviting, with work being anticipated to upgrade phones and new wiring for better internet connections. The hiring of a new part time bookkeeper will free up Diane Callahan, our Administrative Assistant, to assist Jamie more fully with her ministry. And good news, the final loan from the Diocese for the energy efficient pellet boiler will be paid off.

We will be meeting most likely twice during January as we prepare the budget for 2016. We thank you in advance for completing your 2015 pledge. Thank you!

A struggle that has long perplexed the vestry is that of adequate parking for our Sunday services and weekly events. The good news is that the church is growing. What a thrill! The bad news is that our parking concerns are becoming even greater. Of course, it's a good problem to have. In light of these concerns, the Vestry authorized the leadership of the church to begin proceedings to negotiate an agreement to purchase the River Center and its parking lot that is for sale. If said agreement is drawn up it will be subject to the approval of the All Saints' vestry, legal counsel, and the Standing Committee of the New Hampshire Diocese. We are exploring many options.

Stay tuned as we will have much to report at our Annual Meeting, Sunday, January 31st following our one joint church service that will be at 9:30 AM.

All my love and best wishes for the New Year.

Boo Martin, Vestry

Ephphatha

Mark 7:34

Open up my ears
To hear the word you say
Loosen now my tongue
To speak plainly on this day
Bring my eyes new vision
That I may see clear
Open up my heart
To love and not to fear
Grateful I shall be
Following this way
Let my mind be opened
Opened up to pray

Andy Peterson

Each Day a New Beginning

Lately I've been thinking about new beginnings, especially as I get up early each morning to have some quiet time alone. With Christmas coming, the image of each day being a beautifully wrapped gift comes to my mind. This 24 hours is really a gift, a brand new beginning. My job, which is not so easy, is to keep that understanding in my awareness on a daily basis. All kinds of seemingly not-so-great things may come my way in one day, but if I can keep a good attitude (totally by the grace of God in my case), stay in the moment, and stay in the day, then all is well. Lately, God has been helping me.

Recently, I came across a wonderful poem by Rumi, an 11th century Sufi poet, called "The Guest House." The first verses are:

This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
As an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all

It concludes with:

Be grateful for whoever comes,
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

For me, this is a poem about acceptance. New experiences, both pleasant and difficult, come into my life as teachers every day. If I let them instruct me, I will be changed for the better and I will grow one 24-hour day at a time.

The other day I was driving down Route 202 and I glanced into my rearview mirror. I thought, "If I were to stare into this mirror for a minute or two, and not look at the road, I would probably have an accident." The same is true if I'm daydreaming about the future and concentrating on my driving. Has anyone else had the experience of whizzing right past an exit on the highway while worrying about some future problem that may or may not happen? I have! In Matthew 6:33-43, Jesus says, "Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble." I think that Jesus would be a great driver!

My next step in living in the day, which I have not taken yet, is to take a few moments at the end of the day to "put my day to bed," using an Ignatian spiritual exercise called the "Awareness Examine." It's a prayerful look at the day,

looking for ways that God has been graceful to me, awarenesses that have been given, and choices that I've made throughout the day. It's a time to ask for forgiveness and also to reflect on my behavior during the day to see if I've offended anyone and need to make amends.

The exercise concludes with planning with God's help, to live the next day in a way that would be pleasing to myself and to God. I'm doing to do this. Maybe soon I'll write about the Awareness Examine and what a wonderful effect it's had on my life. Wish me luck.

No, better still, pray for me.

Debbie Rogers



Saying Yes

Reminder: A Discussion Course Led by Jamie

I am offering a book group to begin January 18 and running through February 29 (Leap Year), for seven Mondays (a holy number!) from 7-8 PM in the Old Parish House parlor. We use Fr. Richard Rohr's book, *Yes, And...*, available on Amazon or at the Toadstool for about \$25. This book of meditations is very accessible.

What I particularly like about Rohr's meditations is that through them he builds up a theological and philosophical foundation of faith that relies not on dogma but on our experience. Yet, *Yes, And* is also about the beliefs that we hold very dear.

You do not have to have read the book to participate.

You do not have to attend all the sessions to participate!

Come as often as you can and join in the discussions as much as you wish.

Come one, come all, wanderer, worshipper, wayfarer, alike. Invite your friends. We will have fun.

These are the planned topics for each class:

January 18 *Methodology*: How do we know what we think we know? Scripture as validated by experience, and experience as validated by tradition, are good scales for one's spiritual worldview.

January 25 *Foundation*: Your image of God creates you or defeats you. There is an absolute connection between how you see God and how you see yourself and the whole universe.

February 1 *Frame*: There is only One Reality. Any distinction between natural and supernatural, sacred and profane, is a bogus one.

February 8 *Ecumenism*: Everything belongs, and no one needs to be scapegoated or excluded. Evil and illusion need to be named and exposed truthfully, and they die in exposure to the light.

February 15 *Transformation*: The separate self is the problem, whereas most religion and most people make the "shadow self" the problem. This leads to denial, pretending, and projecting instead of real transformation into the Divine.

February 22 *Process*: The path of descent is the path of transformation. Darkness, failure, relapse, death and woundedness are our primary teachers, rather than ideas or doctrines.

February 29 *Goal*: Reality is paradoxical and complementary. Non-dual thinking is the highest level of consciousness. Divine union, not private perfection, is the goal of all religion.

If you plan to attend, please call the church office at 924-3202 and let us know so we can plan.

Jamie Hamilton, Rector



Meet the Vestry Nominees

John Catlin



In 1986 I was introduced to St Michael's Episcopal church in Milton, Massachusetts by my good friend Jamie Bush, where both my boys were baptized and confirmed.

While at St Michael's I taught 4th grade Sunday school, was chairman of the building and grounds committee and served on the finance committee.

Although I attended the services for a number of years in the stone church with the Reverend Jacobson officiating, I soon discovered the Reynolds Hall service (RiteNow) where I met Ivy, Shelly, Carter and, of course, my soon-to-become best friend, the late Rev. Ed Dell.

During all of this excitement I was fortunate enough to run into an old friend, Deborah Waldo, from Neenah, Wisconsin at the Children in the Arts festival and have been with her ever since.

We attend All Saints' pretty much every Sunday. As my former priest in Milton once said "John has a pretty good attendance record for an Episcopalian" – I think he was being humorous. Since meeting Vicky Fortier on the Reynolds Hall altar guild and later "trained" by Ann Lammers, I have had the great privilege of being a member of the Reynolds Hall altar guild for the past few years.

Barbara Kaufmann



I have been attending All Saints' for about 15 years. I live in Rindge with my husband Peter and two dogs. I have 4 children: Maggie, 31, is a bilingual Speech and Language Therapist in Massachusetts. Michelle, 28, is a BSN/case manager for Home Health group. Paul, 23, is in Chicago trying to get into the theater. Wendy, 19, is a student at the University of Mary Washington in Virginia. My husband Peter is Automotive Professor at Mount Wachusett Community College.

I have my Masters Degree in Special Education from Keene State College and have been teaching Special Ed/Social Studies for the past 12 years at Keene High School. In the fall, I am an assistant Field Hockey coach for Keene Middle School and still judge synchronized swimming. I have attended all of the services at All Saints', the 9:15 AM service was perfect when I had small children.

As they grew and Paul became an acolyte I attended the 11 AM service and now I enjoy the 8 AM service. I have been a "helper/door" sitter for the Sunday School and have participated in the Children's/Adult Christmas Eve Choir since its inception. Although I was not baptized an Episcopalian, I was confirmed at St. Matthews in 1988 in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

Greg Naudascher



I live in Dublin, New Hampshire and have been an All Saints' parishioner for six years. I was born and raised in Bucks County, Pennsylvania and relocated to New Hampshire in 2007.

I graduated from Temple University with a B.S. in Education, earned an M.Ed from Lehigh University and Superintendent's Letter of Eligibility from Marywood University. I have served as a public school educator 42 years in Pennsylvania and New Hampshire.

During my career, I have been an elementary teacher, principal, Director of Curriculum, and Assistant Superintendent for Instruction. I recently retired from the Jaffrey-Rindge Cooperative School District and look forward to the opportunity to use my training and organizational experience to support the varied ministers and community projects supported by All Saints' Church.

My favorite activities include gardening and landscaping, cooking, and art. Cynthia and I have been married for 41 years and have two children and two grandchildren.

"Meet the Vestry Nominees" continues on next page

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Lara Niemela



I have attended All Saints' Church for 25 years and have been a member for the past 16 years when I moved to New Hampshire. I serve as a lector and have helped with many Christian Education programs from the nursery to the Christmas Eve pageant. I was on the search committee that called Adrian Robbins-Cole to All Saints'. Both my boys, Max, 13, and Sam, 11, are growing up in the church and participate with me in parish life. Most recently Max has fallen in love with the children in Juarez at Centro Victoria whom he has visited twice now with my mother, his grandmother, Patty Wheeler.

I am a pediatrician at Monadnock Community Hospital in Peterborough. I live in Dublin with my family. I look forward to serving on the Vestry.

Autumn Roberts



I would like to be a member of the vestry to serve as the voice of our church youth, to provide a teen outlook as we continue to grow together at All Saints'. I am a team player and a leader as a head acolyte, a caregiver in the nursery and a Sunday school teacher. I am also an active member of our youth group. I am a focused individual who understands the ideals of commitment, as I am a certified 1st degree Black Belt in Kenpo Karate and a certified lifeguard and swim instructor, as well as, an honor student. I plan to pursue education as my college major and hope to attend a Christian college. I would consider it a privilege to serve on the vestry being the voice of our youth at All Saints'.

Conversations on *Being Mortal* and Other Health Care Concerns

The All Saints' Health Ministry reminds parishioners of the important program that starts the first week in January. All the sessions will be in Reynolds Hall on Sundays immediately after coffee hour – most likely starting around 11:30 AM. Each session will last an hour, except *Honoring Care Decisions* on January 24, which will be 90 minutes long.

January 3: Discussion of first half of *Being Mortal*, led by All Saints' volunteer Cassius Webb

January 10: Discussion of second half of *Being Mortal*, led by All Saints' rector Jamie Hamilton

January 17: Small group conversations based on "My Gift of Grace," led by Jamie Hamilton and facilitated in the groups by members of the All Saints' Health Ministry team and volunteers from the parish. Handouts and copies of the NH Advance Directives Planning Guide will be distributed.

January 24: *Honoring Care Decisions* led by Jennifer McCalley and Priscilla Reyns, who have been trained in this Dartmouth-Hitchcock program that promotes conversations with family and health care providers about end-of-life care, advance care planning and completion of advance directives. (90 minutes)

February 7: Jennifer McCalley and other members of her team will assist attendees with actually sitting down and completing their own advance care directives.

If you have any questions, please call a member of the Health Ministry: *Nina Pollock, RN (525-3612); Madelyn Morris, RN (307-254-4753) or Christine Howe, RN (759-5626)*

from Winnie Skeates' Ordination

Texts: Isa. 42: 5-9; Ps. 138; Phil. 4: 4-9; Lk. 4: 16-21

The Collect for Ordinations starts with the words, "O God of unchangeable power..." and then it includes these fascinating spiritual statements. It says: "... carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new..."

What a remarkable vision of God's work in the world, and in our lives! What an exciting opportunity for those who are called to be a deacon, priest or bishop – exciting primarily because we are called to share *with* God in this work and life, and exciting because we are charged with inviting all God's people into this vision and working together to bring it to reality: to "raise up what was cast down, and to make new what has grown old."

Read the prayer again, I say to myself, but this time with a deeper understanding than my own shortcomings. "Things cast down" and "things grown old" ARE being raised up and made new – not by *me* but by God. It is already happening "by the effectual working of God, in tranquility." That is God's work. It is what God is doing – in me, in you – no matter what age, or disability we may have – or what remarkable skills and energy we bring. Our calling is to see and know – to make known – this God, who raises up and makes new in a world that God loves beyond our deepest imagining.

The first time I preached, at an ordination was early in my ministry in Alaska. Joe Williams was our candidate: a young man with a growing family. He had been born in Allakaket, was related to almost everyone, and was clearly going to stay there, except for the brief times when he needed to find a job that paid actual money.

Joe had, maybe, eight grades of schooling, and then local training for ministry. What he knew was his people. He knew the land and the animals. He knew the stories and the relationships. He knew the language and the special words that talked of God and God's place in their lives.

When things were "cast down and had grown old," as happens in all our lives, people came to his house and sat with him, because they had a sense that he saw and knew about God and God's love, about the God, who raises up and makes new, who brings life and well-being.

And so, he was ordained in a community that honored not only the skills of hunting and trapping, and of traveling in summer and winter in their wilderness land, and of story-telling and of gathering wood to keep his family warm - but they also honored the insight and the faith of one who knew God was in the land and in the animals, and was a part of *everyone* and *everything* in their lives.

Jesus (in the Gospel we read from Luke) had just been in the wilderness of Judea when he came home to his family and friends, filled with God's Spirit. Their reception of him was mixed, at best!

The temptations, the *testing* in the Wilderness, brought Jesus to a new place in his understanding of God and of himself. He came to realize God was "raising up and making new," both himself and Israel - indeed he would come to see that the whole world was included.

When he picked up the Scriptures and read from the Prophet Isaiah, he chose the passage purposefully to state that same vision coming from the ancient past. He read one of the magnificent passages of the Jubilee, that 50th year in which people would know justice and equality and peace, when they would know God at work among them bringing new life.

And suddenly, as he sat there, among his family and friends, he declared a new Jubilee, not a date in time, but a person in time. A new Jubilee starting with him, and with them, and they were not ready for that.

Continued on the next page

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Winnie! I am sure you are already aware that the laying-on-of hands, and this ordination, are tied closely to the calling Jesus proclaimed. We are asking you to become no less than a "Jubilee person" among us, one who sees and knows that God raises up and God makes new.

Our new Presiding Bishop puts it another way, when he asks us all to join in the "Jesus Movement," to see and know that Jesus is on the move, right now in our common lives.

What we need are those with insight, with faith, with courage, with imagination, with spiritual strength to recognize God beside us, walking with us, challenging us, prodding us, niggling our consciences, making our palms sweat and our feet tingle, leading us deeper into life than we care to go - into a life where so much has been "cast down and has grown old," where a new message is badly needed.

Think of it! After all these years, we have not yet completed the work of healthy race relations. Our consciences may have been stirred, but the old systems are largely still in place. The ugly message of closing our national borders, our doors, our compassion to others who cry out for help, are heard once

more across our land, and even in our own state. The debilitating hand of fear chokes off our generosity and our willingness to take risks. Fear for our own security and welfare, fear of who is foreign and speaks with foreign words, fear of losing entitlements, of losing elections, of losing what is old and familiar – all of that, (and so much more), diverts us from the work God does among us. If we do not see and know *that*, we quickly lose our way.

And so I say: Proclaim the Jubilee! It is no longer a celebration in some unknown 50th Year. Jesus is the Jubilee, who is set loose among us. He is the justice, the healing, the feeding, the forgiveness, we yearn for, when we are cast down and grow old, at whatever age, or circumstance, may befall us.

Winnie: you have traveled your own wilderness road and been tested, in a long and quite remarkable journey toward ordination. You survived Harvard Divinity School (these many years ago), and more lately the Episcopal Divinity School – and a multitude of ordination steps in between.

You have done well, and continue to do so, in the workplace of the secular world. You have been at the center of a family, and still hold that sacred and holy calling. Way too early in your life (as is true for many others of us) you and your family suffered the terrible loss of husband and father of your son: a wilderness testing like the 23rd Psalm's "walk through the valley of the shadow of death."

You found God was not absent. God traveled your same path. To put it in Native American imagery: you found the track of God's snowshoes breaking trail for you to follow. God is always present! That is the bedrock truth we have to proclaim. It is our hope and faith. It is the blessing we have been given and that we are called to give.

You have the trust of this community to be one through whom God's blessing is known. The time for ordination has come! It is God's will - and now it is ours!

If I may paraphrase a little of St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians, I say to you: "We rejoice in the Lord, for this moment. Let your gentleness (rooted in God's tranquility) be known to all. The Lord is near. Do not be afraid, do not worry, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let God be known in your requests. Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, just, pure, pleasing, commendable – if there is anything of excellence and worthy of praise, think about these things, and keep doing the things you have learned and received, heard and seen; and the Peace of God, which surpasses all understanding will guard your heart and mind in Christ Jesus, our Lord. That is God's blessing for you, and for all of us.

The Right Reverend Donald Hart

(Slightly abridged by the editor)



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Editor's Note

Each *Messenger* has a theme, and the one for this issue is "Beginning Anew," chosen of course because we are at a New Year.

Jamie starts out writing about the weddings – certainly new beginnings for the couples – and leads us to reflect on how Christ's love invites each of us to reflect and grow in our beliefs. In a lovely and enthusiastic article, Becky shares her experiences as a first-time Christmas pageant director and speaks with joy about expanding opportunities for children and families during the coming year at All Saints'.

In their very different yet similarly wonderful poems, both Alma and Andy write about new beginnings and opening ourselves up to God's love. Cassius's review leads us to look at poet John Donne in a very new way – as preacher.

Deb's article "Each Day a New Beginning," speaks of developing a spiritual discipline that includes looking at each day as a gift, treasuring every experience. Boo, writing for the vestry, celebrates where we are as a parish and shares news about

Jamie reminds us that she is offering a discussion group on Monday nights starting January 18, open to all and based on Rohr's book *Yes, And...*

The five nominees for vestry introduce themselves to us, and share their stories of how they came to All Saints'. We are all urged to attend Annual Meeting on January 31 after the one 9:30 AM service.

We hope you'll join our "Conversations on *Being Mortal* and Other Health Topics," the series of after-coffee hour discussions in Reynolds Hall starting on January 3. Thanks as always to Gloria for "Saintly News" and help us celebrate our very own Saints' Days by remembering the January birthdays.

You will delight in and be inspired by reading the sermon Bishop Hart delivered at Winnie Skeates's ordination.

The deadline for the February *Messenger* is January 20. The theme will be "Spreading the Word." Please send your contributions to me at chow6569@gmail.com.