

THE MESSENGER

May 2016, Volume 7 Number 2

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

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

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Jamie Hamilton, Rector Her email: revjamie@allsaintsnh.org

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.

Dear Parishioners,

Some of the most moving moments in my life have been to sit with family members when one of their loved ones is in critical condition. Often we are in hospital rooms, and there are half filled cups of coffee, stale donuts, left over Chinese food, makeshift beds, and overnight bags either near the hospital bed, in the waiting rooms, or in people's cars. None of that mess matters. What we focus on is prayer, love, and support...and the overarching question that echoes in the hallways, especially when medical decisions have to be made: "What would she want? How should we best act on his behalf?"

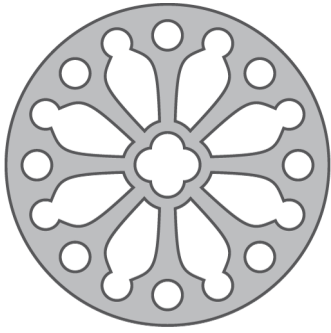
As many of you know we ran a five part series on "Being Mortal and Other Health Care Issues" in January. After spending two meetings discussing Atul Gawande's *Being Mortal*, we used our next meeting to explore unsettling questions: Which is more frightening to imagine: suffering the worst physical pain of your life or not getting a chance to say goodbye to your family? If you were diagnosed with a terminal disease, who would you turn to for advice? Do you want your doctor to be focused on maximizing the length of your life or the quality of your life? Those conversations helped to prepare us for our next two meetings with Jennifer McCalley, who is a facilitator from Dartmouth Hitchcock's *Honoring Care Decisions* and who deepened our understanding of how important it is to enter into Advance Care Planning, which is "a process, not an event, of reflecting and discussing a person's goals, beliefs and values in making choices about end of life care." I am happy to share that other churches in our region are using our model to bring the conversation to their parishioners, and I am forever grateful to Chris Howe, Madelyn Morris, Nina Pollock, and Liz Tong for initiating and organizing this series.

Inspired by Jennifer McCalley's presentations, parishioners Madelyn and Nick Morris continued conversations with Jennifer and with representatives from Dartmouth and have completed the training necessary to become facilitators for Advance Care Planning. All Saints' now has two parishioners who are trained and ready to offer their gifts and knowledge to help you fill out your Advance Directive. They will also help you identify your "agent" to speak for you if you cannot speak for yourself. This simple act of creating an Advance Directive is an incredible gift for our loved ones in the event of an accident or severe illness.

Madelyn and Nick will be supported by *Partners for Community Wellness* and supervised by Jennifer McCalley. One of our goals is to make it possible for all parishioners at All Saints', no matter their age, to have the first steps of their Advance Care Planning filled out. Don't hesitate to reach out and discuss your wishes with them. They can be reached at madelynmorris57@gmail.com or nwmorrismd@gmail.com. You can always call the church office as well.

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

As we celebrate Pentecost, the birth of the church, let us also celebrate the birth of this new ministry.

In peace,

Jamie+

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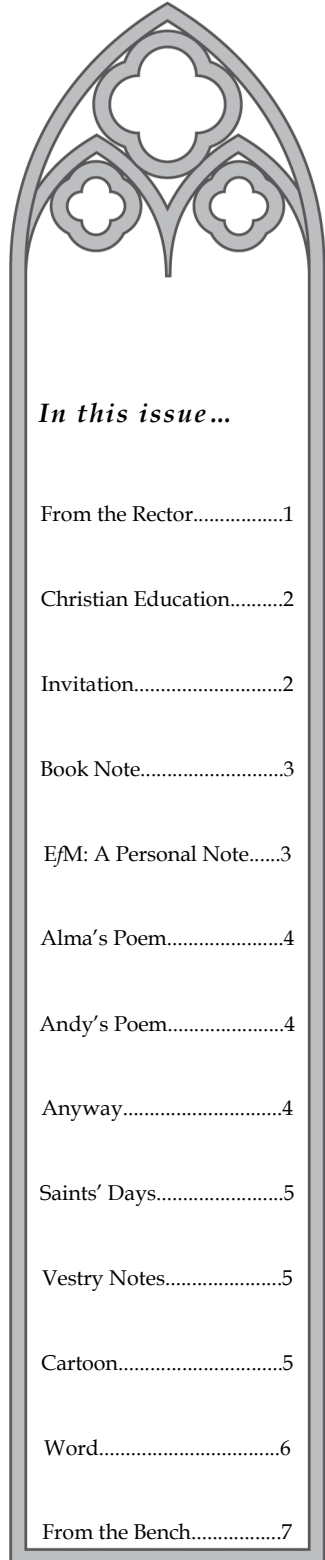
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**THE
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It's a Big, Wide World Out There

Let's Spread the Word!

It is hard to believe that Easter is already almost a month behind us, and only now does it really feel like spring outside. Time often passes so quickly, it's difficult to keep up. It feels some days as if the year just started and yet we are six weeks away from the end of Sunday School for the summer! While I am always sad to see another year come and go, the good news is there is exciting work being done around here this summer and I would love to share some of that with you.

To begin with, it looks as if a partnership will take place in July with the United Methodist Church and Union Congregational Church to offer a week of Vacation Bible Study for kids ages 5-10. (Older kids who would like to volunteer to assist are also welcome!) The theme will build on the Methodist church's theme last year – the goodness of the Earth. It will feature trips to local farms, a lesson on composting, some take-home gardening projects and more.

However, this year we will work to take things a step further by helping families grow and donate food to the local food pantries to help our friends and neighbors have access to fresh, healthy produce. More details will be coming but excitement is building. I look forward to this incredible opportunity and what I hope will develop into a steady partnership with our neighboring faith communities. Children naturally embody the energy of the Resurrection. This summer, we can gather as neighbors, friends and fellow disciples and empower our youngest members to dig in the dirt, worship and sing and share the Good News of a risen Lord with each other and beyond.

Second, I am planning to do some major work on our website this summer. A dedicated group took on the arduous task of creating a brand new website about five years ago. We are all indebted to their hard work. The website is our interface with the outside world and it is a vital tool for evangelism in the digital age. Many people are accessing our website (more than twice the number daily than even a year ago!) so it is vital that our site accurately represents who we are and what we believe. It is also important that we transition to a responsive site, one that can detect the device being used and format itself accordingly. Right now, our website does not respond, and so it can be difficult to use effectively on a tablet or smart phone.

Over the summer, I am going to be working to transition to a much more streamlined, simplified template which I hope will speak to our digital audience and allow us to expand our reach even more. I invite feedback throughout this process- have you seen something on another church's site that you would like to see on ours? Do you have photos or videos that could enhance and personalize our site? Are you skilled at writing for websites and would be willing to assist some of our committees as they prepare new material? Please contact me at becky@allsaintsnh.org if you would like to help.

Happy Spring!

Becky Goodwin, Director of Christian Education

You are Invited!

The members of the 2015-16 Education for Ministry group are inviting you to come visit! Anyone curious about EfM is welcome to join us at a special EfM session on Sunday, May 22, at 11:45 AM. This is an opportunity to peek in and see what EfM is like. You will be welcome to participate as you like or sit and listen.

Book Note

The smell of sweetgrass lingers. My parents had a couple of woven sweetgrass trivets, which retained their smell, though gradually fainter, for at least forty years. They obtained them on Walpole Island, a (as we would now say) First Nation Reserve in Ontario, where my father had spent childhood summers, and where we had relatives. I associated sweetgrass with that time and place, and with the Ojibwe who lived there.

I was easily drawn, therefore, to *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants*, by Robin Wall Kimmerer (Milkweed Editions, 2013), professor of botany, gardener, mother, poet, ecologist, and member of the Potawatamy Nation (close relatives of the Ojibwe).

This book is, I should say, an extended song more than anything else. It is a lament, a paean of praise, a summons to awaken, a ballad of memory, a selection of indigenous myths. And yet, our feet, and hers, stay firmly planted on the earth the whole time. Part of her mission is to show us how far we have come from that plantedness, sense of place, awareness of the interconnectedness of all that is around us. She does not suggest that we can immediately replace a commodity economy with a gift economy, but she challenges us to acknowledge the generosity with which we have been showered.

Most of all, I would say, this is a discovery of thankfulness as a moral act. A stunning passage contrasts the pro forma recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance in her daughters' school with the Thanksgiving Address of the Onondaga tribal school nearby, an ancient address used on all public occasions, a long, detailed recitation of the gifts of the natural world.

There is humor here. There is family history. And there is much, much fascinating information about the plants around us. Maple sugaring comes into it, as does basket making, and the growing of corn, beans, and squash/pumpkins (the "Three Sisters") together. But it is a careful, eloquent, respectful journey that refreshes and strengthens the heart: a remarkable work.

Sweetgrass, it turns out, is not a rare plant only used as incense in Native American ceremonies; it, *hierochloa odorata*, or *wiingaashk*, is found all over Eurasia and temperate North America. But it does reward careful planting and grateful care.

Cassius Webb

Education for Ministry

EfM – A Personal Journey

I signed up for EfM four years ago to learn more about the Bible (Year One participants study the Old Testament and Year Two, the New Testament) as well as learn more about the history of the Church and Christianity. Over several years, I found that the program IS a guide for the journey of faith discovery, and it IS NOT a journey that you take alone. It is more than academic readings.

EfM has taken me not just on a personal journey on how to become a minister – not an ordained priest, but a minister of my faith. EfM is also a journey with the people in my session who are interested in Jesus and how Jesus calls us to individual ministry in our lives. The discussions we have cover the reading material for the week using some guiding questions about what each of us read. Our conversations necessarily incorporate our own life experiences.

Jesus calls each of us to follow him. EfM is one way to help you understand that call to action.

Why would you sign up?

- To learn about your faith
- To answer your personal questions and find out what Jesus has called you to do

- To learn what God has said

I would encourage you to come to visit a session in May. EfM has helped me, and it may be what you are looking for.

Helene Robbins, EfM participant

Alma's Poem

Once a man who thought he was wise
(actually his "truths" were all lies)
Expressed his opinion regarding belief
Claiming it an opiod to find relief
From the world's pain and sorrow
And folks would feel worse tomorrow.

When faced with a choice
I have to add my voice
Lets's see: drinking, drugs and constant TV
Don't seem to alleviate misery
So I've chosen the Christian way
And let Jesus light up my day.

Alma Ruth

Child of my Heart

Oh, child of my heart...
The light in your soul
Now shines out for all to see
In beauty we extol...
If child be father of the man
Then let this child be free
To grow and thrive 'til all alive
Will a woman born to giving see...
The kind whose mind turns by nature
To kind thoughts and carefully
Let these thoughts grow into a life that shows
It's love that sets us free...
Oh, child of my heart!
So upon this day's commencement
See through these words to what is meant:
*Child of my heart
Now and from the start
You make the child in my heart
Sing!*

Andy Peterson

Anyway

People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered.
Forgive them anyway.
If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives.
Be kind anyway.
If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies.
Succeed anyway.
If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you.
Be honest and frank anyway.
What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight.
Build anyway.
If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous.
Be happy anyway.
The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow.
Do good anyway.
Give the world the best you have, and it will never be enough.
Give the world the best you've got anyway.
You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and God.
It was never between you and them anyway.

*Credited to Mother Teresa
Submitted to The Messenger by David Simpson*

(Ed Note: These lines have been widely circulated as having been written by Mother Teresa and are inscribed on the wall at a children’s home in Calcutta. Although this attribution has been disputed [<http://quoteinvestigator.com/category/mother-teresa/>], their spirit is commendable.)

May Saints’ Days

5/1 Dick Wilson	5/9 Jonathan Juarez	5/26 Ramona Branch
5/2 Judy Collier	5/10 Augusten Dreher	Michael Scott
5/3 Mary Lee Leedham	5/13 Thomas Warren	Montana Schultz
5/4 Ellen Avery	Anna Guinard	5/27 Anne Peirce
Mary Gregory	5/16 Priscilla Bourgoine	Clifford Jarest
5/6 Pat Row	5/19 Anne Webb	5/28 Arthur Stevenson
5/8 Iona French	5/20 John Kerrick	Lucy Beyer
David Dodge	5/25 Natalie Deschenes	5/31 Lorraine Bishop

*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*

(With apologies, two Saints were inadvertently left off the April list, so please let’s honor Nick Morris (April 3) and John Koch (April 12)



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Vestry Report

Vestry spent the fall and winter in discernment Phase One about whether to proceed with the purchase of the River Center and buildings in order to provide All Saints’ with needed parking. In Phase One , we intentionally set aside (temporarily) the question of what we will do with the property once we own it. We are in the process of buying the River Center and buildings with a probable close date of the end of May.

At April’s vestry meeting we picked up where we left off at the end of our March vestry retreat with Brother David, where we had begun to discuss “What’s next concerning the River Center?” For this next discernment Phase Two, Jamie asked us to go around the table and each of us briefly share his/her thinking regarding next steps. After this we had a full open discussion with many questions raised and options proposed. We are in the process of discerning our direction, gathering information and revealing what we need to know to move forward. A motion was made and approved

unanimously that “Vestry agrees that further discernment is necessary regarding the utilization of the River Center property post-purchase and that we will do our best to complete this by the end of July.”

An additional April vestry meeting will be held April 27 to continue our discernment and discuss the various options.

Any questions should be addressed to Jamie, Phil Suter, Senior Warden, or Greg Naudascher, Junior Warden.

Beth Healy, for the vestry

The Word

(Ed. Note: This column first appeared in the November 2012 *Messenger* and is reprinted with permission)

Several weeks ago – armed with vacuum and duster – I approached with ‘unpleasure’ the task that lay ahead. Then noticing a collection of Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s meditations and sermons in a nearby bookcase I sensed relieve. Reading being infinitely more attractive than dusting, I settled down in a comfy chair, book in hand, cleaning forgotten.

Bonhoeffer, as you may know, was the Lutheran pastor and theologian who was executed by the Nazis in 1945. The charge: being implicated in a plot to assassinate Hitler. American friends had managed to get him out of Germany in 1939, but his heart remained behind. Bonhoeffer felt that he had to stand with his “fellow oppressed and persecuted Christians” and so never doubting God’s guidance, he returned to Germany. Arrested in 1943 and incarcerated, he continued to live by the teachings of Christ, inspiring “fellow prisoners and guards alike by his indomitable courage, his unselfishness and goodness.”

Though the world was much with him, as it is with us, Bonhoeffer’s life was shaped by God’s word and prayer: He wrote that “The heart of God opens itself to us in God’s word.” The idea being that with patient meditation and study of God’s word, the word will lead us into the presence of God, form our prayers and actions and transform our lives.

There in my comfy chair, I felt – again – the power of Bonhoeffer’s writings and life, and I recalled my days as a new believer. I was late to the faith. Being of stubborn disposition, I suppose, I hid from God. But by my mid-30s God’s grace caught up with me, turned my world upside down and introduced me to Jesus. I discovered the Bible, and discovered that the words written there weren’t just any words, they were living words, words alive and active in my life and in the life of others. Could it be that God was a verb?

I wanted to know more, so I joined a weekly Bible study, first a group in a nearby pastor’s living room, later at a neighboring Episcopal Church. Then before long I began studying on my own, which morning by morning brought new revelation. During these earliest years a friend gave me a framed calligraphy with the penned inscription, “O Lord, thou didst strike my heart with thy

word and I loved thee.” It was true. I loved the Lord and I loved God’s word (both as scripture and as the Word made flesh, John 1:14), and in the glow of those days it was as if I had stepped into a new and enchanted land – think Narnia. The Word had changed my life, and I was captivated by the wonder of it all.

But God wasn’t through with me. Not yet. With the decision to enter seminary came change. My theological sensibilities, honed rather narrowly until then, clashed with biblical criticism and the plurality of thought on offer. My neural circuits clicked on overload, of course they did! It felt as if I had fallen into a black hole, as if ‘a ray of darkness’ – and I use the term advisedly – had taken aim at my carefully constructed belief system.

According to Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, ‘a ray of darkness’ was coined by Dionysius in the 5th century to say that: “God interrupts our blindness and ignorance with a kind of holy light” in order to bring us to new levels of understanding. Over time I came to see the truth of it: the blind spots, the need for new learning. And so, for me, seminary morphed into a kind of God-inspired boot camp. Yale Divinity School offered amazing academic opportunity that I came to love, but the most amazing and the most difficult learnings were served up a la carte as life lessons. These I didn’t love. At mid-life, a mom twice over, I had to move out of that cozy place I had created for myself at the center of the universe. It was painful, but as I grew, new capacities came alive, new emotions, new fruits of the spirit opened up and I came to see the once oppressive darkness was in reality “a dart of love.”

I had lost nothing, and gained everything. God helped me grow into parts of myself I never knew existed. And that’s the Christian journey, God with us as we go, God’s word to guide us, shaping and reshaping us throughout our lives; and when the tough patches come along, as they will, God’s love beside us, within us, around us. Way more than enough to be thankful for. So “let God chart your course, thrill to God’s Word, chew on Scripture day and night, so that you might be like a tree planted by the water, bearing fruit in its season.” (Psalm 1, The Message & the RSV)

©JoAnn Munro



News from the Bench

All we go down to the grave, yet, even at the grave, we make our song:

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

The Commendation – The Burial Office, Book of Common Prayer, 1979

I have presided at the organ of one church or another for more than five decades. You may or may not know that, for the last thirty-six of those years, I have also been a fundraiser on the staff of a number of nonprofit organizations. In that role, I have had occasion to talk with many individuals about the sort of legacy they hoped to leave behind. For many of them, talking about end-of-life issues was not at first comfortable, but given enough time, they often embraced the opportunity to make better informed decisions about how to provide for the people and organizations they had cared about most during their lifetimes.

Those conversations never extended to funeral planning. I suspect that most people have given but minimal thought to their funeral service – but I would suggest that your funeral is also a part of your legacy. It's not the Easter message you might expect, but during this season of resurrection, here are a few things to consider based on some of my real-life experiences as a "funeral musician":

- ❖ Funerals are for the living, not for the dead. Not a thought that is original to me – it's usually meant to remind people that their families and friends need an opportunity grieve and say "good-bye." If you leave the selection of music, readings, and psalms to those who will no doubt be under considerable stress immediately following your death, your legacy may not be quite what you would intend. Put another way, did you really mean that your daughter should ask the organist to include your favorite dancing music, "Bad, Bad Leroy Brown," at your funeral service? By doing a little planning – leaving a "musical advance directive" of sorts – you can avoid such situations.
- ❖ Is it your intent that your funeral or memorial service should be at All Saints' Church? Then, plan ahead by looking at *The Hymnal, 1982*, and at the Burial Office in the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer*. There are many options for lessons and psalms, and for where you may want hymns during the service. Except under extraordinary circumstances, you will want to select hymns from our hymnal. Why? First, and foremost, so that those in attendance can sing them. Second, that hymn you remember so fondly from your childhood – especially if from another denomination, or from the Lawrence Welk Show – may be unknown to 90% of those gathered to celebrate your life. If so, they won't sing and they're going to feel bad about it. So refer to #1 above and consider your favorite hymns that those gathered are most likely to know. Finally, other music you may want to include may be under copyright or out-of-print.
- ❖ If you are anticipating having music that involves more than organ and congregation, it's especially helpful to let the church know of your wishes ahead of time. We can't schedule musicians in advance, but we can talk about the feasibility of what you propose. For instance, no matter how much you love the final movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, it can't happen. (However, we can sing Hymn #376, "Joyful, joyful, we adore thee.") Booking professional string players or preparing a choir may not always be possible depending on funeral scheduling. I once was asked to provide a male chorus to sing a specific piece of music at the funeral of the father of the New Jersey governor (a member of the parish where I played) on three days' notice. I spent nearly eight hours on the telephone arranging for professional singers and for music to be "overnighted" directly from the publisher in Boston (at significant cost.) I was able to secure eight professional male singers for a Thursday morning funeral only because the parish was within 15 miles of Manhattan.

I would urge you – no matter your age – to do a little advance planning for your funeral. Provide a copy of what you would like with the church office. I am happy to talk with you about music and such. Discuss your thoughts with your children or immediate family members. While this task may not be of the same magnitude of importance as your will or your advance directives, your family members likely to be involved with decisions at your death will thank you. You will be honored and remembered in a way that is meaningful to you. As you go down to the grave, think of this as part of your legacy – your gift – to those who follow: one less thing for them to worry about.

Jeffrey L. Fuller, Organist and Choirmaster



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Editor's Note

A few days after the publication of the March *Messenger*, both our publisher Gail Anthony and I received phone calls from our former interim rector Bruce Jacobson. He called to say our *Messenger* is "what a church newsletter ought to be, filled with godliness and love...both the problems we're facing today and news of the parish." It is because of all of you - your dedication to All Saints' and your willingness to write about it - that we received this praise. Thank you.

As Jamie writes in her opening letter, we welcome the new ministry of Nick and Madelyn Morris as they facilitate advance care planning with any member of the parish who requests it. Becky tells us of All Saints' upcoming partnership with the Methodist and Congregational churches down the street this summer for both Vacation Bible Study and ongoing gardening.

This month, Cassius reviews *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Kimmerer, inviting us all to reflect on our relationship with the natural world in this "lament, ...paean of praise, ...summons to awaken, ...ballad of memory, ...selection of indigenous myths."

Once again we look forward to celebrating Saints' Days and find wisdom and amusement in one of the cartoons by Jay Sidebotham from The Church Pension Group. Beth brings us up to date on the activities of our vestry, and by the time you read this *Messenger*, they will have met again. Vestry members are listed on the first page of *The Messenger*, and they are always eager to speak with parishioners.

"Word," by JoAnn Munro, was first published in *The Messenger* in November 2012, and her timeless wisdom is shared with us again this month.

Helene writes of how much Education *for* Ministry has meant to her and Marilyn invites us to attend an open meeting of EfM on May 22.

Jeff gives us all sound advice about making "musical advance directives."

The deadline for the June *Messenger* is May 18. The theme will be "Growing in Faith." Please send your contributions to me at chow6569@gmail.com.

With much gratitude and great joy,

Christine