

THE MESSENGER

April 2015, Volume 6 Number 1

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

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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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From the Rector...

Dear Friends,

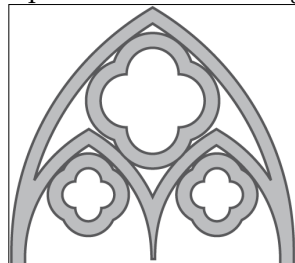
As I write, we have just lifted off from the runway in Johannesburg, South Africa, with the USA not yet in my sight, but at least in my mind and on my heart. I am both exhilarated and exhausted from my retreat with my Muslim brothers and sisters. All of you, members of All Saints', were with me in spirit, especially when I reflected about my life as a parish priest to so many who were curious. Thank you for all the ways you encouraged me to attend the conference. I am so blessed that I was able to go, and so happy to be returning home to celebrate the Easter season with you.

As many of you know, I was invited to speak about my life of faith and to express how I see humanity's connection with Divinity. I was with a group of Sufis, who are deeply rooted in their identity as Muslims, and who also are very articulate that their identity is much deeper than an "identification" of their religion. They, like many religious people, embrace the mystery of faith as an invitation to lift up the divine presence of God, the Sustainer of Life, within all of us.

Even though different scholars from around the world were delivering papers about their approach to the topic, I chose to write a sermon, entitled, "Our Ancient Future." I spoke as an Episcopal priest who was living Lent, and as I shared my spiritual practices, I made connections to the similarities Muslims and Christians share. Here is one of my opening paragraphs:

"Together, we believe in the Sustainer of the world, the Eternal, the Uncaused Cause of All that Exists, and we surrender to this Grace willingly. We believe that it takes intention to surrender, and we call this surrender freedom. We believe that Love is greater than death and that death never has the last word. We hope against hope, not as a stance of optimism but as a trust in divine providence. We believe that in losing our lives, we will gain them. We believe in the prophets, and we love Jesus. And we believe in the Last Hour, where God's mercy and compassion will prevail."

I look forward to sharing my sermon with you (not in church because it was forty minutes long), but we will find ways to continue this conversation as indeed Easter lifts up not only the power of the Resurrected Lord, but the sanctity of our connection with all believers whose stance of faith invites dignity, generosity,

**THE MESSENGER**

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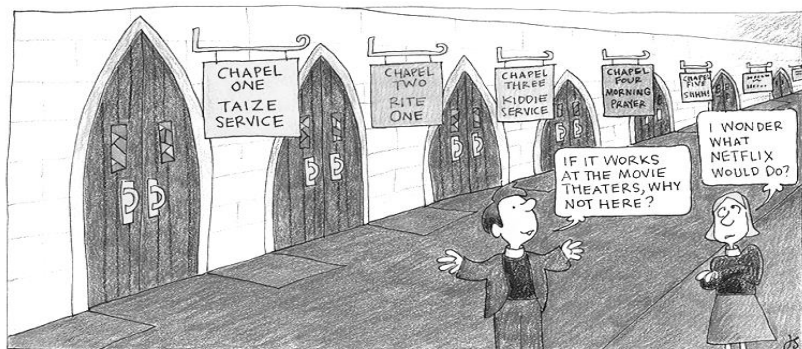
Christian Education

An Easter Birch

Last week, I drove along Route 136 on my way home on a particularly warm day. Many of you will recall that unusually heavy, wet snow storm right at the beginning of the season that knocked power out for many, and left countless birches and other softer trees bent completely over, their delicate branches trapped in ice and snow. As I rounded a corner on my drive, the ice around one such tree suddenly melted enough that, in a dramatic white explosion of snow, the tree shot back up and bounced a few times in celebration of its sudden freedom. It was a spectacular moment of resurrection and it filled me with delight, especially since white birches are my favorite local tree and this particular one was so pretty. It served to remind me that spring, in fact, always does come around. Easter, resurrection, new life – *freedom* – always comes.

I contemplated the imagery of the moment for the rest of my drive home. Lent, with its spiritual weight and introspective bent, leaves one feeling a bit like the birch tree. I feel this Lenten season has called my attention to two particular areas in my spiritual life. The first is how to use meditation to listen, and hopefully in so doing, to increase my surrender and my willingness to accept whatever God asks of me. The second is to take note of where I feel trapped, where I encounter resistance, particularly in the ways I hang on to my will and the patterns in my thinking and acting which I am trying to outgrow. This “inside job” was the topic of my last *Messenger* article. Easter reminds me of something so important, however: while God calls me to surrender, to bow down, I believe I am not meant to remain this way. Rather, the discipline of being willing to leave it all at his feet is ultimately what leads to the melting away of the patterns that bind me so I can rise up renewed and reborn. Easter is our chance to burst back to life!

As I write this, I am preparing to depart for a three-day retreat with teens from New Hampshire to Portland, Maine for Teens Encounter Christ. I wrote about my experience at this event last year, and I have no doubt that this year’s experiences will once again further kindle my passion for youth ministry and the belief that empowering the youth of our church must remain at the forefront of our attention. Children, youth and young adults reflect the vitality, curiosity and freshness of the Holy Spirit. They are Easter-creatures, ever bursting with life and energy! They draw our eyes to see the mystery and wonder of our stories and sacraments and remind us of the questions we all start out with and for so many reasons, stop asking along the way. I hope you will pray for all the teens who gather in Maine



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Celebrating the Easter Season

Winter is over and nice weather is on the way. As I write this, Lent is nearly finished and Easter is coming soon. The connection of these two seasons is always amazing – the renewal and hope of spring and the promise and new life of the Resurrection.

After the snow and cold of this year, I am really looking forward to the sun and green, just as I look forward to Christ's rising and the holiness this brings to the Church year.

When I'm in the middle of winter, the warmth and sunlight of spring lie tantalizingly ahead. However, when I'm thinking ahead, there is an aspect of the upcoming season I tend to forget about. In addition to brightness and new life, the change in seasons also brings with it overcast skies, cool temperatures, gusty winds and long, rainy days. This dreary weather contributes to the growth of new life, and is all part of God's green Earth. The rain and clouds are a depressing, yet necessary, part of this time of the year.

I think this weather is a reflection of our spiritual life. We are eagerly anticipating the coming of Christ and looking ahead to the coming Church year. However, just like I do when I am in the middle of winter and thinking of spring, there are gloomy aspects to our future spiritual journey that we don't foresee but we will have to deal with.

There are days when I find myself full of questions, wondering about God's plan. I see the injustice and evil in the world and ask how God could love us and still allow people to do such things to each other. I see pain, hunger and sorrow in the lives of people around me, and wonder how our Christian faith can help the people in our community.

These dark spots in my faith, however, are like the rain and gloomy weather of spring. They are a part of my life cycle. Without rain, there would be no new plants. No flowers, no crops, no green leaves or fruits on the vine. I imagine that the low points of my faith serve a similar purpose. Questions, confusion, and bewilderment encourage me to find the answers. Looking for solutions helps my faith grow as I study and examine Christ's role in my life, and in the lives of others. Christ's resurrection helps me expand my religious journey every year, providing the sunlit counterpart to the times of confusion and searching for answers.

Lent and Easter bring about a sense of new life, a burgeoning excitement over the upcoming glory. Hidden among the greatness, however, are times of gloominess and dreary days. The promise of the new season, though, is that even the overcast days of our spiritual life bring growth. We just need to trust in God.

Quiet Love

Day by day I see you and say
How could I have missed it before?
You're walking the walk, not talking the
talk
What you do says so much more

Hands willing to give, for as long as we
live
Kind words to a tear drop gone dry
Be all that you will, then be more still
Find new love in the quiet inside

Invisible are the true of heart, to those
who rush on by
When it's all about me, I can't even see
The sunlight in the sky

Yet I see you in the churchyard, I see you
at the school
I see your secret wisdom and how I have
been fooled!

So between now and never, I pray that I
may see
That quiet love that's waiting here

Patrick Armstrong

April Saints' Days

2	Carol Walsh	Betsy Fowle	28	Jeff Fuller	
	Sylvia DeVinne	15	Anna Graff	Colin Fuller	
6	Alexandra Catlin		Elizabeth Graff	Greg Naudascher	
7	Chris Tourgee	16	Rylan James	29	Mike Steere
	Caitriona Row		Bria Frehner	Lisa Koziell-Betz	
9	David Clinkenbeard	19	Morgan Humphrey	Charlie Beyer	
	Bill Gill	20	Sarah Scott	30	Joseph Schultz
	Sam Hulbert	21	Alice Weir	Grace Phillips	
11	Natalie Sanderson	22	Jo Wheeler		
12	William Finlayson	27	Steve Smillie		
	Cassius Webb	27	Hayden James		
14	Jana Kiely		Nina Gatto		

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...

- ❖ Jean Peters on the birth of her new great-granddaughter Caroline Ryan

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

<h3>Alma's Meal Train</h3> <p>Lent, a time of prayer and contemplation Leads to a joyous Easter celebration. But when it's past Let's make it last! an ingenious online scheduling tool to assist us in providing meals to those in our parish family when needed. The wonders God has planned for us. In the life of His son, our beloved Jesus Adding bible reading to your day Will bring joy and peace in a new way In church you're given the word Now read what you have heard</p>

Book Note

The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics, by Daniel James Brown (Penguin, 2013), is, first, a tale well told. If competitive rowing is unfamiliar to you, you may appreciate that it was equally unfamiliar to those freshmen standing on the University of Washington's dock trying out for crew in the fall of 1932. They had been selected by a legendary coach scouting high schools for tall boys with upper body strength.

But they, and we, learn the intricacies of rowing in an eight-rower shell. We learn about the boats themselves, and the visionary craftsman and philosopher who built them, right there in their boathouse. They learn about each other. Most of all, perhaps, they, and their coaches, come to know themselves.

Although it may on some freezing winter day have seemed to them as though they were learning this skill in a vacuum, the reader knows better. This is the time of the Great Depression, the Dust Bowl, and the emergence of Nazism and Fascism. These boys all had stories of their own, many of them grueling. It was also a time of immense spectator interest, in the U. S. as elsewhere, in crew.

Meanwhile, Hitler and Goebbels intended the Berlin Olympic Games to showcase the resurgence of Germany and its indomitable will to triumph. Their meticulous planning forms a sinister subplot within this story of races and trials, of East against West, of physiology and psychology, of physics and mechanics.

Americans are often described as individualistic, lacking in community spirit and the willingness to cooperate for

the greater good. *The Boys in the Boat* describes the mysterious union of nine such Americans with each other, and indeed with "the boat." Much of this is also competitive, but there are also descriptions of rows taken just for fun; they are possibly a form of prayer. And each chapter is headed by a passage by George Yoman Pocock, the master builder whose reverence for his material spilled over into reverence for the material of the lives he touched.

The spiritual turning point is described by Brown, in part, in these words:

Each in his own way, they had all learned that nothing could be taken for granted in life, that for all their strength and good looks and youth, forces were at work in the world that were greater than they. The challenges they had faced together had taught them humility – the need to subsume their individual egos for the sake of the boat as a whole – and humility was the common gateway through which they were able now to come together and begin to do what they had not been able to do before.

The book reads almost as effortlessly as a well-rowed eight seems to glide through the water; but it is built with the precise skill that such rowing also requires.

Cassius Webb

Remembering Rob Steinert

Six years ago, I became Rob's pastoral visitor from All Saints', meeting with him almost weekly at his residence at RiverMead. I had known Rob and his family for many years – I first met him when he came from California for his mother's funeral at All Saints'. Both his mother and father's families had summer cottages in Dublin, and so he always felt very close to this area.

Rob was prodigiously intelligent, had a great wit, and loved to discuss topics ranging from Quantum Physics to medieval Middle Eastern history to Christian theology. He could spout detailed, accurate information on numerous topics off the top of his head with no trouble at all. He quickly found out that I was neither a scientific, historical or biblical scholar, but he knew I was an attorney. He was dubious about my legal credentials. He said, "There's a doctrine in the law that has to do with the circumstances when torts speak for themselves," I said, "Yes, *res ipso loquitur*." Well, I passed his test! Rob admitted I did know something after all!

We usually talked about current events and politics. Rob loved a good debate and we had many. After Rob's stroke almost 20 years ago, his activities were curtailed. He worked as hard as he could with physical therapists but was never able to resume his athletic pursuits. He was proud, though, that the physicians said that otherwise, he was as healthy as a horse. He maintained his independence as long as he could and drove himself to church until just a few years ago.

All Saints' has lost a fascinating, loyal and deeply devout Saint, and we will all miss Rob.

Rod Falby

Remembering Dick Cunningham

Exactly when Dick Cunningham began attending All Saints' isn't clear to me. Like many others, drawn by the beauty of the architecture and stained glass he, although not an Episcopalian, began attending the 8 AM Eucharist. In those days, I spent most of my days off taking classes at Keene State College, and when I discovered that Dick was a professor at KSC, I often asked for his advice about courses.

Early on, there was a funeral, followed by a wedding, here at All Saints' that brought me even more deeply into the life of the Cunningham family. After my retirement in 2002, I occasionally would see Dick and his wife Jane at various events. But in mid-August of 2014, our relationship took a very different turn.

He called and said he wanted me to visit, "Not a parish call," he made clear. "I just want to see you: I've been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer." During that hour-long visit, we talked about family and retirement. But from the second visit through January 2015, our weekly time together was spent with the poetry Dick chose. At first, the poetry was about death and dying, and it seemed as if this were to be the very creative way Dick and I were going to talk about him and his cancer. But quickly our poetry blossomed into everything else. There was Philip Larkin's "musty smell and threadbare" words as imagery of the Church, there was Wallace Stevens' question, "And shall earth seem all the paradise that we shall know?" and Gerard Manley Hopkins' imagery of Christ as freeing in "The Windhover."

Emily Dickenson's words:

I know that He exists.
Somewhere - in silence -
He has hid his rare life
From our gross eyes

made it seem as if God were playing hide and seek with us. Shakespeare, Dylan Thomas, Walt Whitman, Frost, Longfellow, Yeats, Housman, and others provided us the opportunity to talk about creation, depression, beauty, youth, age, sex, and love.

For months, I became something that I truly enjoy: a student. And Dick was doing something that he truly loved doing and had done all his life: teaching. Metastasizing cancer is cruel and demanding: it robs us not only of our life but also can rob us of our dignity. It also, however, provides us with one tremendous gift if we can accept it: time. Time to distinguish what's true, valuable, and most important in life. Time to treasure our loved ones, drawing them ever closer and saying the words we

most want to say to them; and time to allow our loved ones the chance to speak of their love for us. Time to sit in the warm afternoon sun of a Monadnock fall afternoon and realize the bounty of life. Time to embrace life's fullness. Time to laugh at one's foibles, and time to let go of missed opportunities. Dick accepted the gift that cancer offered and even as his physical strength diminished, with courage, dignity, and love he himself continued to grow. His was a beautiful dying.

Lewis Stone



View from the Bench

Feed my lambs, tend my sheep

Nearly 40 years ago I was Organist-Choirmaster at Lamington Presbyterian church in Bedminster-Far Hills, New Jersey (that's the part of the state dotted with horse farms and weekend Basseting outings.) I had organized a (very young) children's choir and scheduled them to sing one Sunday soon after their newly purchased vestments had arrived. They looked really cute and they sounded – well – really cute. They sang a children's anthem by Natalie Sleeth, very popular in the 1970s, with one of those lovely melodies you can't get out of your head. It's still a bestseller today.

*Feed My lambs, tend My sheep, over all a vigil keep.
In My Name, lead them forth, gently as a shepherd.
When they wander, when they stray, their protector be,
As ye do unto My flock, thus ye do to Me.*

Of course, its simple, childlike imagery is difficult to mistake. It is the parable of the Good Shepherd.

Our Eucharistic Lectionary appoints a portion of the 10th chapter of the Gospel of St. John for the Fourth Sunday of Easter every year – the parable of the Good Shepherd. Not surprisingly, that particular Sunday has become known as Good Shepherd Sunday, although it's not really so named in our liturgical calendar. However, its appointed readings have inspired an enormous organ and choral repertoire based on the pastoral imagery of the 23rd psalm or with texts about Jesus the Shepherd and Christ the Lamb of God. What a great Sunday for Choral Evensong!

So after scheduling the All Saints' Choir to sing Choral Evensong on the afternoon of Good Shepherd Sunday (April 26, 2015), imagine my consternation that the lessons appointed for Good Shepherd Sunday in the Daily Office Lectionary (which contains the lessons for Morning and Evening Prayer) are quite different in their perspective. The author of the apocryphal Wisdom of Solomon, probably writing in the First century AD, offers hope in the face of death, suggesting that we follow the examples of Old Testament biblical characters as models of virtue – not because who they were matters, but because what they represent to us in the present does. (Sheep following only virtuous shepherds?) In the fifth chapter of Peter's first letter, we first hear about *elders* in the early Christian communities – those who are lead, not because of age, but by their wisdom, maturity and example. (How to be a wise shepherd?) In the seventh chapter of Matthew's gospel, part of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, Jesus warns us to beware of wolves in sheep's clothing, admonishing us to build our house on a rock, not on sand, if we hope to ward off the "evil one." (Don't assume that because it looks like a sheep, it will act like a sheep?)

Although you won't hear quintessential "shepherd music," at Evensong, the choir will sing two beautiful settings of texts quite appropriate to these lessons. Our introit will be Crawford Thoburn's setting of the Christina Rossetti's "None other lamb" and James Whitbourn's setting of the Isaac Watts text, "Give us the wings of faith to rise." The evening canticles are from Robert Powell's "Good Shepherd Service," written for the Centennial celebration of Good Shepherd Church in Columbia, South Carolina. The organ voluntary before the service will be Herbert Howell's Psalm Prelude, Opus 32, #3, based on a verse from Psalm 23: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil."

Please join us for Evensong on April 26 at 5 PM and for a reception that will follow in Reynolds Hall.

(Ed Note: You can hear the treble choir of a church in Maryland sing "Feed my Lambs" at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=As7X-h6G-FM>)



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Editor's Note

Welcome to Spring in New England! Today is March 21 and it is snowing – but the sap is running, a mother bear and two cubs were spotted near Peterborough recently, and my little garden pixie is sitting next to some very tentative crocus shoots. Our long, hard winter officially ended yesterday at 6:48 PM – none too soon.

This issue marks the first issue in Volume SIX of *The Messenger*. Cassius, Jeff and Alma deserve great applause, for they have been the most faithful of writers, with their beloved and celebrated **Book Note**, **View from the Bench**, and **Poem** appearing each month.

Jamie opens this month with a brief account of her trip to South Africa and a promise to share more about her talk

Becky urges us to embrace our new lives promised in Easter, Andy writes of "Quiet Love," and Heidi invites us to board the Meal Train.

Dick Cunningham is remembered by Lew, and Rod writes about his time visiting Rob Steinert.

Patrick contemplates how we celebrate the Easter season in our daily lives. Gloria keeps us up on news of the Saints, and we remember this month's birthdays.

The deadline for the May *Messenger* is April 15. The theme will be "Spreading the Word of the Risen Lord." Please send your contributions to me at chow6569@gmail.com.

With much gratitude and great joy,