

# The Messenger

November 2020 | Volume XI, Number 4

All Saints' Church • 51 Concord Street • Peterborough, NH 03458 • [allsaintsnh.org](http://allsaintsnh.org)

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Dear Parishioners,

Last week, during Evening Prayer on the lawn, parishioner Pam Harrison brought me a loaf of sourdough bread, fresh out of her oven. It was still warm, and I was happy. As the service was ending, I was easily imagining myself cutting into the loaf for a slice, lathered in butter and honey.

As I thanked her, we talked about the gifts of the Spirit, and she said, "If at the count of three God stopped loving us, we would cease to exist."

As I heard her words, tears welled up and my breath was taken away. "Could you say that again?" She repeated it, and I closed my eyes, trying to absorb the encircling thread of God's love. A love beyond the door of existence.

"It's one of James Finley's insights," Pam continued, and we both reveled in how much we enjoy reading and listening to James Finley, a contemplative practitioner and clinical psychologist [jamesfinley.org](http://jamesfinley.org) whose wisdom has deepened our faith.

"Say it again, please." As I heard the words, I realized I was being treated to bread for my soul. Standing in the yard, dressed in my cassock and surplice, surrounded by the vesper light of fall's orange and yellow, I was reminded of the BIG PICTURE.

I am guessing that you, like me, have found yourself these days sighing, frightened, anxious, impatient, or full of argument. Sometimes, I wake up in the middle of the night and my throat is scratchy, and I'm sure that I have come down with COVID. Occasionally, the panic is so real, I get up and make myself a cup of tea to calm down. As I sip my tea, I pray for those suffering, and by the grace of God, I am taken out of myself, grounded in the Divine Spark that is within all life.

Remembering and recognizing the BIG PICTURE is the antidote to worry and fear. How often we forget. Please join me in **remembering**, as we are woven together by our faith, that our very existence is only because God loves us. This remembering needs to be a daily intention. And then together, let's **recognize** when we experience food that feeds our soul. It usually comes in the simple things: finding homemade soup left on your porch, receiving a phone call checking in to see how you are, or a teenager, in a mask, thanking you for the hike.

Pause and celebrate the gift of being able to read a poem, dig in the garden, buy snacks for the school children, write a check to support church ministries, mail a thank you note, or grocery shop for your neighbor. Life is holy and we are privileged to be able to give and receive.

Surprisingly, during these days of not receiving the bread and the wine, we can become more aware of how we are God's bread in the world, baked fresh out of God's oven. In the memory of the chalice and the paten lifted up at the altar, a memory seared in our hearts, we continue to behold what we are, as we become what we receive from God's warm breath of love's yeast.

Blessings abound,

Jamie+

**Deb Waldo**, *Editor*  
(603) 654-7341

**Brad Taylor**,  
*Assistant Editor*  
(603) 924-6595

**Margaret Baker**,  
*Design & Layout*

---

## **VESTRY**

**Jack Calhoun**,  
*Senior Warden*

**Greg Naudascher**,  
*Junior Warden*

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# **A Time for Healing**

**“Be still and know that I am God” ~ PSALM 46:10**

I am not a patient person by nature. Bob uses the Yiddish term *shpilkes* to describe my tendency to be unable to sit still except for short periods of time. There is always something to keep me occupied. A closet to purge, a pie to bake, a picture to straighten on the wall. One more project to conceive or plan for church or for other ministries and interests. All things I enjoy, and yet, there are times to be still and content in the presence of God and of those God puts in my path.

I am so grateful for your prayers during my recovery from back surgery. I am doing very well, but I admit that my body did not meet my mind's expectations for a miraculous, and admittedly most unrealistic, rebound. Nurses are like that. By all measure, I have received the gift of relief from pain. Now full healing depends on trusting in the wisdom of others to guide me to complete recovery.

But being still remains a practice that I have found I must hardwire into my days. Setting time aside for prayer and meditation is a bit easier while I am continuing recovery from surgery. A 7:00am meeting with like-minded friends in prayer and contemplation is a lovely way to begin my day. Warmer days are spent in my favorite chair on the porch simply reading, listening to music or to the sounds of my neighborhood. A Saturday morning Recovery prayer circle at a park in Manchester will continue until we become covered in snow. This spiritual scaffolding, this Grace, is a gift of the Spirit.

UCC pastor Jeffrey Nelson, in writing of Paul's explanation of grace to the Romans, reminds us that God's grace, freely given, must be willingly received. It is only then that we may be transformed, justified in God, as God's own possession. Once accepted, we may never be left as we once were.

I am grateful for this time of healing and for the opportunity to practice receiving and accepting the gift of time to heal and to be still. Perhaps we are all feeling a bit of *shpilkes* during this time. Yes, there is work to be done; this is always true. But the work of the Spirit does not always need to manifest in physical and intellectual busyness. I pray we find nourishment for body, mind and spirit, in the still times offered in these days. God's Spirit abides in us. Prayer is a powerful change agent. Jesus shows us this over and over.

God bless us all as we heal in whatever ways we need in these days. God knows our need and our joy. Let us accept the gift of time, and be transformed and renewed in God's grace and love.

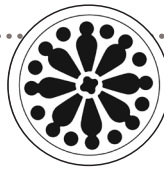
Peace,

*Sandi+*

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# From the Vestry

*Nathaniel Peirce, Vestry Member*



## Greetings All Saints!

On behalf of the Vestry, I want to extend our warm greetings to all of you, your families and friends. We trust that you are healthy and staying safe.

The Vestry has been meeting throughout the summer and fall, deliberating on a number of issues. First, under the leadership of our treasurer David Drinkwater, the Finance Committee has been monitoring the financial health of the church. Our greatest source of income now is the annual pledges. We deeply appreciate all who have paid or are paying their pledges for 2020 because it is sustaining the church. We have received a payroll protection loan from the CARES ACT which has enabled us to keep paying our staff. We are now applying for this loan to be converted to a grant that will alleviate the need to pay it off in 2021. As of now we anticipate a deficit of around \$16,000. Our greatest loss of income is of course the plate offerings and property rentals. Now that we are able to have outdoor prayer services on the lawn, we may be able to recover some of this income. We are now working on our 2021 budget and will have more to report on this later in the fall. As always, the vestry is grateful for the generosity of our fellow parishioners.

The second focus of our attention has been to maintain the campus. The Building and Grounds Committee has been diligent in this area. One item of note is the kitchen renovation for Reynolds Hall. Due to a generous donor, we were able to hire a kitchen designer and we have, through the Capital Campaign Funds, hired a project manager to seek bids for the renovation and move this project forward. Most importantly, we have given Jamie and Sandi the equipment, resources and support to bring their ministry virtually to you at home and, where safely possible, outside at church.

Lastly, we are devoting a portion of our vestry meeting to a review of our ministries. We want to do everything we can to keep all of our ministries as active as possible. At the October meeting, Nina Pollock shared with us how she is keeping the Prayer Ministry active. If you need a prayer for any reason, please do not hesitate to call the church office, leave a message through the website or contact Nina by her email: [nina.pollock@gmail.com](mailto:nina.pollock@gmail.com)

Your Vestry stands ready to help keep All Saints' a vibrant place of worship and a source of support for all of our members and friends. Please let us know if we can be of any service to you. May God bless you!

*Nathaniel*

## A Virtual Visit with Bishop Rob!

**Bishop Rob will hold a  
(virtual) Coffee Hour  
on  
Saturday, October 31  
at 5:00 p.m.**

 Join via ZOOM by clicking this link:

<https://zoom.us/j/4639636546>

**PASSWORD: 3202**

or

 Dial-in by PHONE:

**929-205-6099**

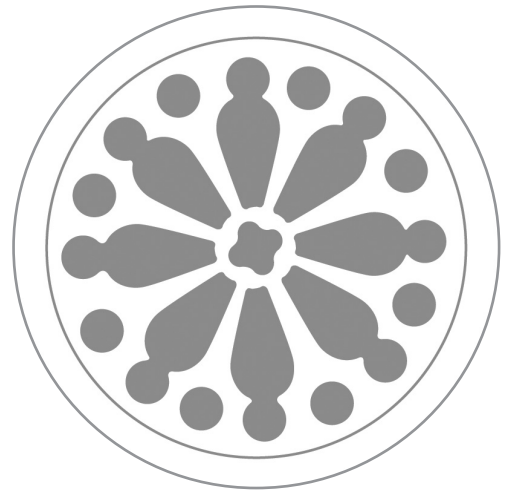
**301-715-8592**

**Meeting ID: 463 963 6546##**

## Bishop Rob will be our Celebrant and Preacher

**For our recorded service on  
Sunday, November 1**  
(The link will be posted on our website.)

*We look forward to the bishop's visit!*



## Saints' Days ~ NOVEMBER 2020

Robert Scheerer	11/02	Katy Barnes	11/16
Anna E. Ritchie	11/03	Isaac Ramey	11/17
Hugh Beyer	11/04	Daniel Keaveny	11/18
Kathy Miner	11/08	Kai Cooper	11/19
Marguerite Krommes	11/09	Jack McLaughlin	11/19
Bradford Taylor	11/11	Caroline Manns	11/20
George King	11/12	John Vance	11/23
David Jette	11/15	Frances Beyer	11/24
Jacob M. Levesque	11/15	Mary Lou Weathers	11/27
Isaac Dylan Sistare	11/15	Paige Spaulding	11/29



If you don't see your  
name here, or if you see  
your name in error,  
please contact Gail Caron  
at (603) 924-3202 or  
[admin@allsaintsnh.org](mailto:admin@allsaintsnh.org).



# Pandemic Reflections

Ivy Freeman

## We live in challenging times!

**A**t All Saints, creative ideas are making it possible to maintain connection and community amongst parishioners. We have the choice of worshipping by audio, video, or meeting outside. *The Messenger* and *Saints Alive* keep us up to date on our community life.

Many thanks are due to Jamie our Priest, Sandi our Priest Associate, Jeff our organist and choirmaster, and Nick Morris our photographer for all their work on our behalf.

So, how is it going? COVID-19 makes many demands of us. In the decades to come what will be known about us by those who inherit our legacy? The history books will tell them of the Pandemic, the politics, the Nobel Prize winners of our time. What the history books won't tell them is how our daily lives were changed.

To fill this gap, Jamie, Sandi, and I have talked about collecting stories from parishioners. These will become part of an All Saints' historical document and they will be shared with all of us. It will be a collection of stories, informal personal reflections, and perhaps fragments of journal entries.

This could include topics such as buying groceries, not getting our hair cut, remote learning, Zoom calls, how we spent the holidays, daily patterns and relationships disrupted, along with anxiety about the safety of loved ones. Loss.

How has all of this impacted your spiritual life? Have you been challenged and has your faith been deepened by the challenges?

I am happy to collect your reflections. Eventually they will be gathered together in a format that we all can read. We are still looking for suggestions for a title for this project.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

*Ivy*

*email: britsrus\_745@msn.com*

## Alma's Poem

*"The peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard your heart and mind in Christ Jesus."*

~ PHILIPPIANS 4:7

**In challenging times we need this verse.**

**Day by day the news gets worse.**

**But to those who believe,**

**The blessings they receive**

**Translate to good news**

**And keep them from the blues.**

**Love,**

**Alma**



# The Advent Lections

## *A Service of Lessons and Carols for the Advent Season*

**T**he COVID pandemic has ensured that the All Saints' Choir is on a very long hiatus. Since we cannot gather as a group this fall to rehearse and sing the Festival of Lessons and Carols or for the Christmas Midnight Mass, we have undertaken a project to provide something seasonal in this virtual Zoom/YouTube environment — something meaningful to the parish community and musically satisfying to choir members as well. On or about November 29, Advent Sunday, we will post a YouTube service of Advent lessons and carols, known as The Advent Lections.

Based on the seven Great 'O' Antiphons, which date from the 4th century and have been in wide liturgical use since the 8th century, The Advent Lections has a format similar to the Festival of Lessons and Carols we have traditionally presented at Christmas time. Each section of the service begins with the chanting of an 'O' antiphon followed by a reading from one of the Messianic prophecies from the Hebrew Scriptures. An Advent carol, sung by a soloist or ensemble of 2-3 singers, reflects on the prophecy, and each section concludes with a collect. The final video presentation of The Advent Lections will have been built from some 28-30 separate video sessions that began in October. Choir members have taken every precaution: sanitized, masked when not singing and staying at social distances recommended for singers (well more than 6 feet!), to ensure their safety.

A little explanation of the Great 'O' Antiphons may be in order. Perhaps you wonder exactly what an antiphon is. An antiphon is simply a verse or phrase

chanted or recited before and after a psalm or canticle. In our Anglican tradition, the 'O' antiphons bookended the singing of the *Magnificat* during Evensong on the seven days before Christmas Eve. Perhaps you wonder what the 'O' antiphons are. You know them best as verses 2-8 of Hymn #61 in The Hymnal, 1982: "O come, O come, Emmanuel;" each verse is a paraphrase of one of the antiphons. The significance of the Great 'O' Antiphons is twofold. First, each one highlights a name for the *Messiah* (in Latin, of course): *O Sapientia* (O Wisdom), *O Adonai* (O Lord), *O Radix Jesse* (O Root of Jesse), *O Clavis David* (O Key of David), *O Oriens* (O Morning Star), *O Rex Gentium* (O King of Nations), and O Emmanuel. Second, each antiphon references a prophecy of the coming of the Messiah, and concludes with a petition for God to come dwell among us.

*An Interesting Sidenote:* There is an acrostic hidden in the seven Messianic titles (no doubt contrived, according to scholars, by the ordering of the antiphons by 8th century monks). When the traditional ordering of the Latin antiphons (as above) is reversed — Emmanuel, Rex Gentium, Oriens, Clavis David, Radix Jesse, Adonai, Sapientia — the first letters of the titles spell the Latin words *Ero cras*, or 'I am coming soon,' the cryptic response to the petitions of each of the seven antiphons.

# The Confessions of St. Augustine of Hippo

**T**he *Confessions of St. Augustine of Hippo* are one of those landmarks of world literature, as well as Christian writing, that many of us have felt for years we were supposed to read, but something else always came up. Like many people (and virtually all seminarians), I was required to read excerpts from it in various courses, but I was in my twenties and it was judged to be asking too much to expect us to read it all.

Finally I have resolved to do just that. It has been a fascinating ride, and at my age not at all frustrating because I am now able to take it as it comes and not keep expecting it to be something different.

In form, it purports to be a prayer: the “confessions” are directed to God, Whose extraordinary patience with this intelligent, wayward, and most of all impassioned man he sets out to praise, even as he details what he perceives as his own destructive obstinacy in deed and even more in thought.

At the time of writing, Augustine is the established (Catholic) bishop of Hippo Regius, a Roman town in what is now Algeria, not far from his birthplace, Thagaste, or from the metropolis of Carthage. It has been more than a generation since Constantine had ended the persecution of Christians and had allowed them to become an established faith community in the Roman Empire. It seems, however, that the marketplace of ideas was still open to many alternatives, such as Manichaeism as well as traditional cults. Augustine’s mother was a devout Christian, but not his father, who however tolerated her educating her children in the Catholic faith. Augustine’s hormonal, as well as intellectual, restlessness kept him from embracing his mother’s certainty, and he eventually became a Manichee, though never completely happy with their elaborate mythology and denial of material goodness.

After becoming a successful teacher of rhetoric in Carthage, he moved to Rome and eventually to Milan, where he came under the influence of St. Ambrose, already the seasoned bishop, who could go toe to toe with the Empress and come out ahead. Mother Monica also arrived in Milan, and between them, Augustine finally surrendered to a God Whose nature and purposes he now saw he had completely misunderstood.

He accordingly gave up teaching would-be lawyers how to obfuscate and dazzle, was baptised, and with his brother, son, and mother headed back to North Africa, his mother dying an irreproachably edifying death along the way.

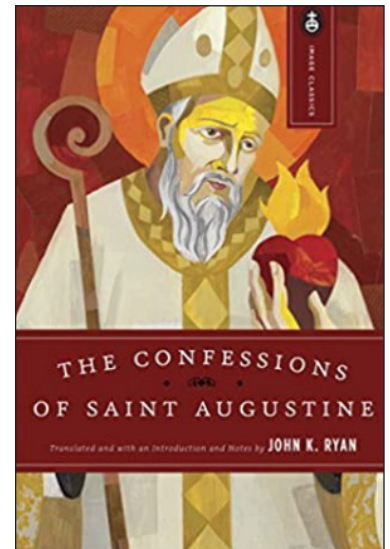
That is pretty much the outline of the story the bishop has to tell his flock and anyone else who may read his book. But it is not

the end of the book, and indeed the narrative is interrupted frequently with the author’s attempts to make sense of his story, to see where he had gone wrong, and in meditations steeped in biblical and philosophical references to relate all this to the desire God had given him to experience the goodness of the Creation and eventually to make his way back, like the Prodigal Son, to a welcoming and joyful God. The rest of the work consists in musing about Memory, upon which he has relied for these confessions, about Time and Eternity, Heaven and Earth, and finally the Days of Creation, Prophecy of the Church.

There are of course many English translations of Augustine’s Latin. I read that by Maria Boulding, OSB (1996), which contains a very helpful preface. However you read it, I suggest taking some time over it, pondering the power of this great thinker’s yearning for, as it turns out, God, and his abiding, but never static, gratitude for all he has been given, including the opportunity to give to others in his, and in God’s, care.

Augustine is worth reading. But he is also, in the *Confessions*, very enjoyable reading. His perceptiveness, his ability to ridicule himself, his engaging sense of a story, move effortlessly along with his philosophical sophistication and piety. Even infants do not quite escape a jaundiced look, as he imagines what he was like as one. What a mind! What a heart! What a yarn!

*Cassius*





All Saints' Church  
51 Concord Street  
Peterborough, NH 03458

Nonprofit Postage  
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Permit #46  
Peterborough, NH  
03458

Parish office: (603) 924-3202

Office hours: Monday through Thursday, 9am to 2pm

Office email: admin@allsaintsnh.org

Website: allsaintsnh.org

Rector: Rev. Jamie L. Hamilton, revjamie@allsaintsnh.org

Priest Associate: Rev. Sandi Albom, revsandi@allsaintsnh.org

Organist & Choirmaster: Jeff Fuller, jeff@allsaintsnh.org

Ministries Coordinator: Gail Caron, admin@allsaintsnh.org

Projects Coordinator: Gretchen Rae, gretchen@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.

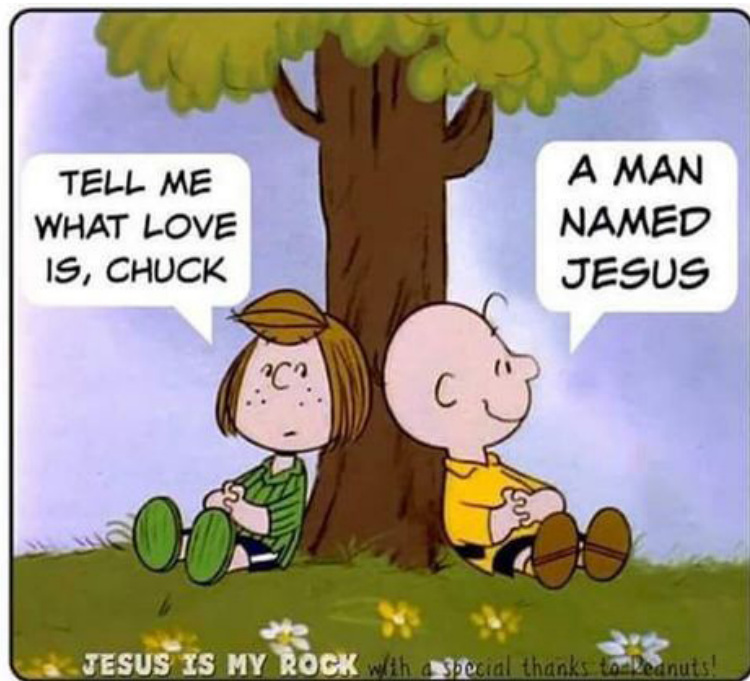
### Our Vision (Where we are going)

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



# The Messenger

November 2020 | Volume XI, Number 4



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## PRAYERS FOR PEACE

The yard in front of All Saints' Church at 51 Concord Street will be open all day for prayer on Election Day, November 3rd, 7am through 7pm.

The bells will toll and simple (non-political or partisan) prayers for our nation and for peace will be read each hour on the hour beginning at 7am.

Stop by anytime (masks will be provided if you don't have one.) If you would like to help lead prayers at any hour, just show up and let us know that you would like to read. Please join us.

We invite you to send articles, letters, poems, or printable artwork to [deborahwaldo18@gmail.com](mailto:deborahwaldo18@gmail.com). The submission deadline for the December/January issue is Monday, November 16.