



# All Saints' Memorial Church

www.allsaintsnavesink.org  
732-291-0214

GPS Address

202 Navesink Avenue  
Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey 07716

Mailing Address

P.O. Box 326  
Navesink, New Jersey 07752

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

*For everything there is a season...*

It has been my privilege and joy to serve as your Rector since 2014, and to be able to minister and grow and change along with you. But as all seasons do, my season with All Saints is drawing to a close; I have informed the Bishop and the Vestry that I will be retiring early this fall, with my planned last Sunday with you on October 4, 2026. This was announced at our January annual meeting.

While clergy can serve up to a mandatory retirement age of 72, Jim retired over a year ago, and for me, it is time. If being a parish priest has taught me anything, it is that our time together is precious, and too often all too short, and there are things we would like to do while we are able. In addition, we have family commitments that increasingly will need our attention as well. But beyond all that, my discernment is that All Saints' is called to step into a new chapter—one that needs different gifts and a perhaps a new way of being church (a vision that may come with community discernment and new clergy leadership).

We have accomplished much together, and lived through many changes together—in our congregation and leadership, in our buildings, communication, outreach and worship. We have traveled through a pandemic together, we have mourned the loss of beloved parishioners and Deacon Michelle and Father Bill together, and we have also embraced the joy of events and gatherings, Episcopal visits, bountiful outreach projects, and practical things like air conditioning in the parish hall, new roofs, and the long awaited accessibility ramp.

All of you will always be written on my heart. Your stories, your lives, have helped to shape and sustain me, have inspired me and given me so much more than I could offer you. We have several months more together—months to make more memories and to lay the groundwork for All Saints' next chapter. May you—and I—use that time wisely and well, for God's glory.

In peace and with love,

*Debbie Cook*  
Mother Debbie+

The Rev. Debbie Cook, Rector



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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

We are writing to you as a follow-on to Mother Debbie's letter announcing her retirement, effective Sunday, October 4, 2026. While this news was first shared at the Annual Meeting in January, these letters serve as the *official* notification to the Diocese of New Jersey that All Saints will be without a rector after that date.

In the weeks ahead, we will have opportunities to celebrate Mother Debbie's ministry among us and the many contributions she has made as both a faithful spiritual leader and a steady administrative leader of our community. Alongside that celebration, we also want to acknowledge that many of you may feel a sense of loss or grief. At its best, the Church makes space for lament; echoing the psalms, we honor the full range of human emotions as part of our common life.

As we move into this transition, any discussion about what comes next will be led by the Wardens, not by Mother Debbie. Diocesan guidelines make it clear that departing clergy do not participate in defining the next chapter of a parish's life.

While we face changes ahead, one thing that does *not* change is the love and care we show one another — the hospitality, the sense of community, and the shared desire to serve the world around us. These are the strengths that will carry us forward.

Any questions or concerns about the transition period should be directed to the Wardens, Mary-Elise Haug or Diane Gribbin. Because these letters begin the formal process with the Diocese, we ask for your patience as we await guidance and clarity about next steps. In time, there will be opportunities to engage in conversation with diocesan leadership, and we are committed to keeping the congregation fully informed throughout the process.

We ask that you keep us and All Saints in your prayers during this time of transition. Together, we will listen, discern, and faithfully step into the next chapter God is preparing for All Saints.

Faithfully,

Mary-Elise Haug, Senior Warden

Diane Gribbin, Junior Warden