

*This is the first of what I hope will be many weekly notes to you all as we minister together. As I alternate between two places on Sundays, I intend to share a brief reflection each week in the Trinity News which will also appear in the St. James Happenings. They will be a reflection on the Sunday texts, liturgical year, or events in the life of the broader church or world. I hope it's a small way to stay connected weekly even when I'm across the river on that Sunday.*

This Sunday is All Saints Sunday. It's a day when we honor not just the famous saints who populate our official church calendar, but all the baptized saints of God who have preached with words and actions, who have lived lives of service and prayer, who have bumbled along best they could, serving God with what they had. It is perhaps a day when you remember in a particular way the saints who have shaped your life and who now rest fully in God's embrace.

I think it's a key celebration for the church, because our ministry does not ride on single identified leaders, on people ordained to professional ministry, on the ones who make a name for themselves. The ministry of the church is everything lived out in all our lives from the PTO meeting to the yoga class at the senior center to the corporate office meeting to the challenges of making one's way in the middle school cafeteria. It's the quiet acts of service and the imperfect but heartfelt attempts at caring for one another.

As we enter this partnership, I'm glad to serve as your priest. I will strive to bring my own gifts to our shared work. And one of the exciting opportunities of not being full time at either place is that we will continue to have a chance more than most to see very visibly the way that all our gifts contribute to ministry.

And so I share with you this painting by Wassily Kandinsky – "All Saints Sunday I." Unlike more traditional All Saints icons with rows of saints lined up one after the other, this scene is chaotic at best. Far as I can tell there is even a horse in the mix. All the saints together can be a little bit messy. There will be times when we try to put this all together and it doesn't quite work the way we intend. But on All Saints Sunday we can remember that even when it's messy or chaotic, it can also be incredibly beautiful.

-Pastor Steven