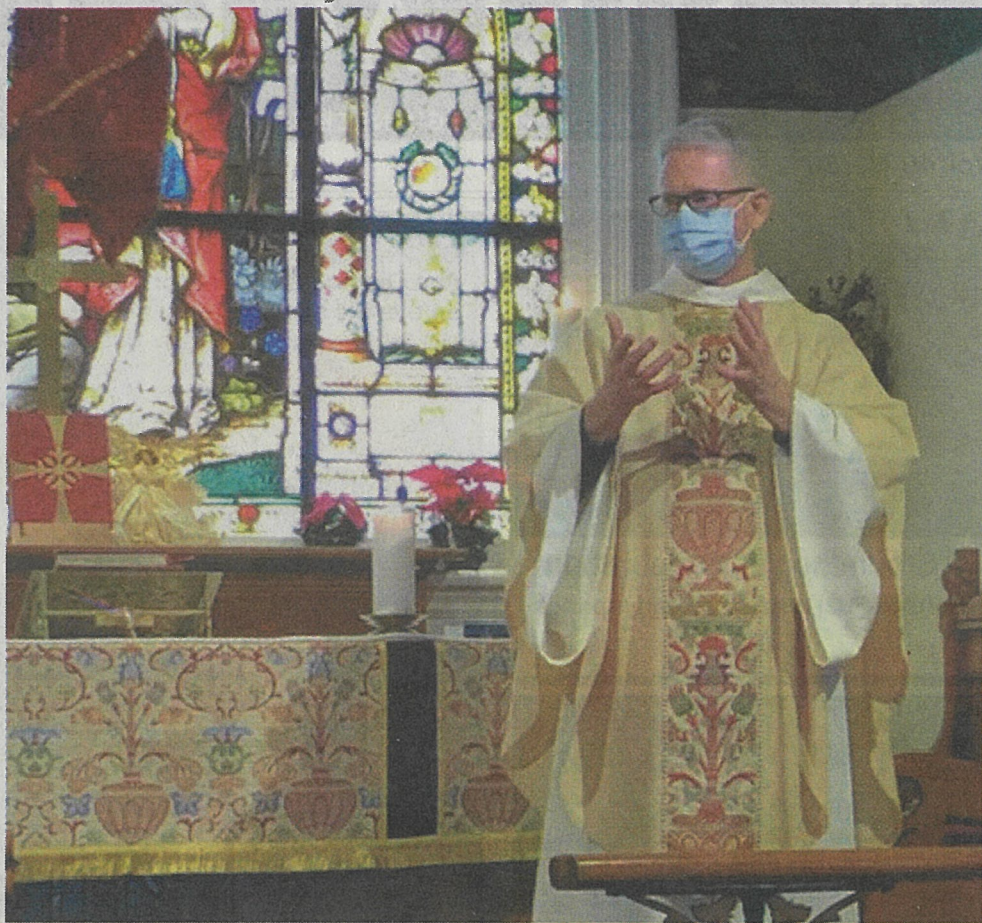


Community News



Father Tom Reese during his first sermon at All Souls church in Stony Brook village. Photo from All Souls

Father Tom returns to the duck pond

SUBMITTED BY DANIEL KERR, ALL SOULS CHURCH

As a child growing up in Lake Ronkonkoma in the 1960s, Father Tom Reese often rode his bicycle north to visit the duck pond in Stony Brook village. After attending Seton Hall High School in Patchogue and graduating from Colgate, and The Episcopal Divinity School, he was ordained as an Episcopal priest in 1980.

Over the past 40 years, he has served as Rector of St. Luke's Forest Hills (2000 to 2021), Saint Anne's Bridgehampton (1992 to 2000) and Holy Advent Clinton, Connecticut, (1988 to 1992). On Jan. 1, he returned to the duck pond as Vicar of historic All Souls church in Stony Brook village.

Having served as Priest in Charge for three large churches, Father Tom wanted to "down shift" a bit to have more opportunities for ministry in new ways: starting a blog/podcast about Religion in the News throughout the World, creative writing to reach any and all seekers of the Divine, and humbly offering his experience and gifts to a smaller parish.

When asked why he was attracted to All Souls, Father Tom described a visit to the Stanford White-designed chapel last year. He was pleasantly surprised to see that the doors were open. As he entered the church, he saw the

mission statement posted on the wall: "We strive to be mutually supportive of the personal spiritual journey, respecting the individuality of all, and accepting the value of meeting people wherever they are on that journey."

Upon entering the beautiful church, he saw separate flyers for All Souls' monthly Native American Drumming, Saturdays at Six Concerts, Second Saturdays poetry readings, and the weekly interfaith Morning Prayer and Rosary services. With the doors open every day, and all this outreach and service to the community, he concluded that All Souls was exactly what he was looking for in his next parish.

In his first email to the congregation, Father Tom said, "As your Vicar, not only am I your dedicated worship leader and preacher, but I also look forward to serving with you as spiritual guide, teacher and pastor."

Father Tom is mindful that All Souls was recently described by Suffolk County Councilperson Jonathan Kornreich (D-Stony Brook) as "the heart and soul of Stony Brook village" and looks forward to meeting and getting to know the broader community as well.

Father Tom can be reached through the church office 631-751-0034 or email vicarofallsouls@gmail.com.