

Meet our New Rector

by Maggie Mercer, Whitefish Pilot Intern

All Saints is excited to welcome The Rev. Gabe LePage as the new rector. "It's been great. This is a very generous and supportive community," he said.

While his family was originally from Whitefish, he was born and raised in Kenya while his parents were doing Christian relief and development work there.

He moved to Chattanooga, Tennessee at age twelve, and was exposed to the effective element that geography plays in poverty. This sparked an interest in geography and the environment for him.

After graduation from Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan where he studied geography and international development, he spent time learning different styles of leadership from a range of community leaders.

While living in Florida he worked for a nonprofit organization that sent plant seeds to missionaries, his interest in the environmental aspect in communities deepened, in his words, "putting science to service."

"Our health and our wealth is based in our land," he said. "If our land is not healthy, we cannot be healthy as a people."

He then attended Yale Divinity School and Yale School For the Environment to get a joint degree in religion and ecology. This is where he got to "dive hard into my questions," he said.

Last September, he moved to the Flathead Valley to be closer to his parents and grandparents. He was ordained in February and started full time at All Saints Episcopal church in June.

He really appreciates the love of the land here in the valley and is hoping to incorporate this love for the environment into the church.

Father Gabe wants the church to be a place that people in search of a community can come to.

“The church is a place of community development,” he said. “Coming back here has been the first place I have been living in that I feel like I belong to.”

He is interested in hearing what the people of the congregation and the community want to see.

“I want to listen to what they want our community to be,” he said.

One of his favorite parts of this community so far has been meeting people doing good work.

“I have been really inspired by the generosity that I have seen already,” he said.

He has been working to build relationships with nonprofit partners around the valley.

He says that he has enjoyed, “Hearing the stories of what people are up against and what others are doing to help these people stand up.”

In his free time, he enjoys spending time outdoors hiking and rock climbing. He is eager to continue exploring the Flathead Valley.

All Saints is currently holding Sunday worship services at 8:00am (spoken service) and 10:00am (with hymns). Father Gabe is excited to welcome both returners and newcomers into the congregation. “We are throwing a party every Sunday and we would love for people to join us,” he says.