

The

# Chimes

Newsletter of

**The Congregational Church of Hollis (UCC)**  
3 Monument Square Hollis, NH 03049

December 2023

www.HollisChurch.org

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[www.hollischurch.org](http://www.hollischurch.org)

Lead Pastor

**Rev. Tanya Stormo Rasmussen**

Pastor@HollisChurch.org

Faith Formation (Christian Education)

**Kim Burton**

CE@HollisChurch.org

Minister of Christian Music

**Julie Oliver**

Church Office

**Jessica Cleveland**

admin@HollisChurch.org

**Eileen Widner**

ChurchOffice@HollisChurch.org

**Contact us:**

Office: 603-465-7797 or 465-7099

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published for the summer months.  
All submissions for the newsletter  
are due by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month  
preceding publication.

*What can I give Him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;  
If I were a Magi, I would do my part.  
Yet what can I give Him: I will give my heart.*

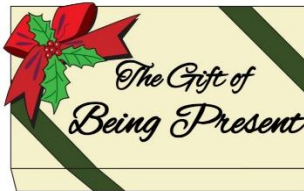
~ *In the Bleak Midwinter*, Christina Rossetti

Dear Friends,

Are you feeling stressed about Christmas yet? Maybe you're feeling more prepared than usual—after all, Christmas decorations were available in the shops mid-September this year!

“We know it well,” writes Amy Oden, “the tendency in American culture to rush through daily life at a breathless pace from one thing to the next, as we jump mentally ahead to the next thing while doing this one. We reply to emails and update our calendars while sitting in a meeting at work. We multitask our way through the day and pull into the driveway with no memory of driving home. We are numbed by overstimulation and continually preoccupied. We are never truly present to the moment we're actually living.”

She's not wrong. And that's why our Advent theme—during worship and at our Wednesday evening *Loaves & Lessons* gatherings — will be “**The Gift of Being Present.**” We're going to explore and practice some simple mindfulness exercises. We'll have some small devotional



booklets for you to take home. And/or, you can order copies of Oden's book, *Right Here, Right Now: The Practice of Christian Mindfulness* (\$14 at Amazon; \$16 at Abingdon Press) — a short, easy but nourishing read. At Wednesday *Loaves & Lessons*, we'll view a brief video with the author each week that will frame our conversation and deepening practice each week.

Mindfulness is akin to — in fact, is a form of — prayerfulness. It's all about staying grounded in and openly attentive to everything going on *in this moment*. We might notice the flurry of thoughts that ping and zing around our minds, often dragging our attention off with them. . . but patiently bringing our attention back to *now*, as often as it takes. (*continued on page 3*)

# From the Faith Formation Office

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## News from *The Flock...*



### Christmas Pageant Rehearsal & *Pajama Pizza Night*

Wednesday, December 6 at 5:30pm in the Meetinghouse. All Flock children who will be in the pageant are encouraged to attend. We will have our pizza night in the Flagg Room after rehearsal. *Don't forget to wear your pj's!!!*

Please let Kim know if you will be attending rehearsal. RSVP to Kim at [ce@hollischurch.org](mailto:ce@hollischurch.org)

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### Christmas Pageant: Sunday, December 10

at the 9:30 service. Please join us as the Flock tell the Christmas story and sing along with traditional Christmas carols. All children should arrive in Flagg Room 9:00 - 9:15 to get into costumes. Parents are welcome to find a seat in the Meetinghouse. This performance is sure to be a wonderful, uplifting conclusion to our fall semester. You won't want to miss it!



### Cookie decorating

On **December 17** we will be decorating cookies during class and listening to Christmas carols! Come join in the fun!

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### A Thank You to Volunteers

Thank you to all who have volunteered with the Flock and the Nursery in the fall semester. Your support and help in the classroom have been greatly appreciated! I look forward to spending more time with you in the spring semester! If you would like to join in the Sunday fun, please reach out to Kim Burton at [ce@hollischurch.org](mailto:ce@hollischurch.org) for more information.

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No Flock class Christmas Eve (December 24) and New Year's Eve (December 31)!

*Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!*

Flock classes will resume for the spring semester on Sunday, January 7.

(From the Pastor – cont from p. 1)

As a regular practitioner of mindfulness meditation, I can vouch for how transformational it is ... and also how much more scattered and anxious I feel when my focused practice lapses (as it occasionally does)!

There's no doubt that Jesus practiced mindfulness prayer, because (as Oden points out and helpfully elaborates on) there are identifiable marks of mindful Christian lives. First and foremost, mindful lives are liberated from reactivity and the chronic anxiety it feeds. Christian mindfulness also marks our lives with authenticity; we're more confident being real, freeing us from the compulsion to project a false self. We become rooted, more centered. Our gratitude grows. And, we open ourselves more fearlessly to others. In all, the abundant life (even amidst inevitable hardships and desires) presents itself clearly — and peace, joy, hope, and love appear everywhere.

I hope you'll be present with us (see what I did there?) this Advent season, as we continue to journey together in faith — and that the miracle of the Christ Child becomes more real to you this year than it ever has before.

Yours with  
faith, hope, and  
love,

*Tanya*



## *Right Here, Right Now: The Gift of Being Present*

**Take a break from the holiday hustle and bustle** and spend some sacred time enjoying a meal and fellowship on **Wednesday evenings from 5:30 – 6:45 in Hardy Hall.**

The discussions will be based on readings from *Right Here, Right Now* by Amy G. Oden. A number of *Right Here, Right Now* books are available for purchase in the Church Office (\$14).

Spaces are limited to 30 — sign up early! **Please sign up for each session** you plan to be present for, including number of guests (important for food prep; please include dietary restrictions). **We also need volunteers to sign up to cook for each week!** (Suggested menus and recipes supplied if desired.) Sign up to cook and/or attend at: [https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050849ACAC29A7FF2-46059490-loaves#](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050849ACAC29A7FF2-46059490-loaves#/).



## **Christmas Fair a Great Success!**

*Many, many thanks!*



This year's Christmas Fair was another fun day for our church and the wider community. It's great to see all the many children and adults - both first timers and the ever-faithful return visitors - from the very young to our many seniors and everyone in between. It is truly a cherished holiday tradition and it's always wonderful to welcome others into our church!

- ❖ As always, the Angel Loft was a huge hit with the children who shopped privately without their parents, and Santa kept very busy talking with all the kiddos!
- ❖ Hardy Hall was packed for the luncheon, bake sale, silent auction and raffle baskets, along with holiday music from our clarinet/flute duet, carolers and pianist.
- ❖ Winners of the Raffle Baskets were thrilled with their prizes!
- ❖ We sold most of the baked goods, lunch soups, crafts, books, games, DVDs, and donated goods for the Silent Auction, New-to-You and Angel Loft.

Many attendees raved about how they enjoy our fair and the luncheon, and are grateful for this annual holiday season kickoff! They look forward to it each year.

There are far too many individuals and businesses to name, but to all who donated items, time, talent and treasure to the Christmas Fair, we are grateful for your support; we couldn't do it without you! To all who attended and bought baked goods, lunch, books, gifts, raffle tickets, and bid on auction items, we offer you our very sincere **THANK YOU!**

## Please Make Your 2024 Pledge...

*Because of YOU, Our Church changes lives*

Over the past several weeks, you have heard about how your stewardship of Time, Talent and Treasure makes a difference in the lives of our church members and to many of our neighbors in need. If you have already made your pledge, thank you so much! If you have not had a chance to submit your pledge, please take a few moments and consider how you can support the church and our community in 2024. Remember this is just the pledge, no money needs to be sent at this time, although some people prefer to submit it. If you already pledge regularly and can possibly do so, please raise your pledge as generously as you can to help meet our increased needs, which are impacted by inflation and loss of income from those no longer with us.

There are multiple ways for you to submit your Pledge:

- You may mail in your pledge card to the church — pledge cards are available in the church or the church office.
- Pledge online at <https://hollischurch.org/annual-pledge/>. This year, we created a QR code to make online pledging as quick and easy as possible. Just open your phone's camera, point it at the QR code below, and click on the link that pops up.



We hope the last several Sundays have been inspiring, and now it is time for all of us to do our part. Together, **Our Church Can Change Lives.**

The Stewardship committee thanks you profoundly in advance for pledging as generously as you are able so we might meet our budget, and continue to carry on God's work in our community and beyond.

Sincerely,

*Chris Hyde*

*Beth Harper*

*Allison D' Ambrosio*

*Dee Wagner*



### December 3

#### First Sunday of Advent ~ Hope

Communion Worship at 9:30 am

The Flock at 9:30 am

### December 10

#### Second Sunday of Advent ~ Peace

*Pageant Sunday*

UCC Christmas Fund special offering

Worship at 9:30 am

The Flock at 9-9:15 am for Pageant prep

### December 17

#### Third Sunday of Advent ~ Joy

*Music Sunday ~ Poinsettia Sunday*

Worship at 9:30 am

The Flock at 9:30 am - Cookie Decorating

### December 24

#### Fourth Sunday of Advent ~ Love

9:30 am Worship (In Person/Livestream)

No Flock Sunday School

### *Christmas Eve*

4:00 pm – Family Candlelight Service  
(in-person only)

8:00 pm – Candlelight Service of  
Lessons & Carols ~ with choir singing  
(In Person and Livestream)

### December 31

#### First Sunday after Christmas




9:30 am Worship (In Person/Livestream)

No Flock Sunday School



# December 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
 <b>GIVING TREE</b> ~ Deadline for Giving Tree monetary donations is Sunday, December 3 All gifts (wrapped and tagged) are due back at church by Sunday, December 10						1	2
<b>First Sunday of Advent ~ Hope</b> 9:30 am – Communion Worship (In Person and Livestream) 9:30 am – The Flock  Deadline for Giving Tree monetary donations	7 pm – CE Board meeting	10 am – Prayer Shawl Ministry meeting 6:30 pm – Music Board meeting	10am – Zoom Coffee Hour 5:30pm – Christmas Pageant rehearsal & <b>Pajama Pizza Night!</b> 5:30-6:45pm – <i>Loaves &amp; Lessons</i> Advent Study #2/4 <b>Poinsettia orders deadline</b>	7 pm – Choir		<b>Holiday Luminaria Stroll</b> 4pm - Tree lighting & Luminaria 4:30 pm – Lit Tractor Parade 4:45pm - Community Chili Supper ~ Hardy Hall <b>Community Christmas Concert</b> 7:00 pm at Hollis Brookline High School	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
<b>Second Sunday of Advent ~ Peace</b> <i>Pageant Sunday</i> UCC Christmas Fund special offering 9:30 am Worship (In Person/Livestream) 9:30 am – The Flock Deadline for Giving Tree gifts	7 pm – Deacons meeting	7 pm – Mission & Action Board meeting	10am – Zoom Coffee Hour 12pm – Facilities meeting 5:30-6:45pm – <i>Loaves &amp; Lessons</i> Advent Study #3/4	6 pm – Caring Connections 7 pm - Choir	January Chimes deadline		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
<b>Third Sunday of Advent ~ Joy</b> <i>Music Sunday ~ Poinsettia Sunday</i> 9:30 am Worship (In Person/Livestream) 9:30 am – The Flock 11am – 1pm – Christmas food basket packing at Brookdale	5:30 pm – Trustees meeting	7 pm – Church Council meeting	10am – Zoom Coffee Hour 5:30-6:45pm – <i>Loaves &amp; Lessons</i> Advent Study #4/4 6:30 pm – Stewardship mtg 7pm – <i>Winter Solstice</i> Music Meditation	7 pm - Choir			
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
<b>Fourth Sunday of Advent ~ Love</b> 9:30 am Worship (In Person/Livestream) <u>No Flock Sunday School</u>  <b>Christmas Eve</b> 4:00 pm – Family Candlelight Service (in-person only) 8:00 pm – Candlelight Service of Lessons & Carols ~ with choir singing (In Person and Livestream)	<b>Christmas Day</b> 	Church Office hours will be limited during Christmas week – Call before stopping in! 603-465-7797	10am – Zoom Coffee Hour				
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
9:30 am Worship (In Person/Livestream) <u>No Flock Sunday School</u>							31

# Mission & Action News

## **CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE\***

We are in the midst of collecting Christmas gifts for our Giving Tree.

### **If you chose a tag...**

- \* Please wrap gifts individually with the child's name on each package, from: Santa.
- \* Place all gifts in a large plastic bag. Attach the tag to the bag with the gifts you purchased checked off. Any other items which are not on the tag, please list.
- \* Please **return the bags to church as soon as you have them ready to go. The deadline is Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>** to give us time to deliver them.



**You can still make a donation!** Monetary donations toward fulfilling "Christmas wishes" are also gratefully accepted. Checks should be payable to the Congregational Church of Hollis with *Giving Tree* on the memo line. **Monetary donations are needed by December 3<sup>rd</sup>** to allow time for M&A to shop.

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to all who have taken this opportunity to make a child's Christmas extra special!

## **Christmas Eve Fuel and Food Fund**

The Christmas Eve offering (other than pledge payments) is dedicated to our Food & Fuel Fund which offers assistance to those in need throughout the year. You may donate to the Food & Fuel Fund at *any time this month*. Please make checks payable to the church with "*Food & Fuel*" on the memo line. This annual offering raises money for fuel and food assistance to local families in need. We provide fuel (oil, propane, wood pellets, electricity) certificates and grocery gift cards for local families needing heating fuel or food assistance. If you know of anyone needing this assistance, please contact Lee Harper at [missionandaction@hollischurch.org](mailto:missionandaction@hollischurch.org).



## ★ THE CHRISTMAS FUND for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund

### **Offering taken on December 10**

For over 100 years, the **Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross** has supplemented the low or inadequate pensions of clergy and helped the retired workers and surviving spouses secure necessities, such as medications, food and basic utilities. Your donation to these faithful church leaders would be appreciated. *Please consider making a donation to the UCC Christmas Fund at worship on December 10* (checks payable to the church with *UCC Christmas Fund* on the memo line) *or online at our Donations page*. Watch for the special donation envelope on December 10!

### **Blood Drive Update**

Our last Blood Drive of the year was very successful. We collected over 29 units of blood. Our next drive will be March 2, 2024. Sign up now. Did you know that our church has held over 19 Blood Drives collecting more than 460 units of blood? Thank you all for your gift of life.

### **Your November M&A Dollars at Work**

- *Bridges*
- Marguerite's Place
- HB School Nurses – gift cards to give to families in need
- UCC Ukraine Emergency Appeal

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### *Winter Solstice*



**Wednesday, December 20 at 7:00 pm**

A live ambient music meditation presented by Hyponova, honoring the year's passage through darkness to rebirth & renewal.

### **From the Church Office...**

My grateful thanks go to Nancy Bell, Patricia Cordell, Brenda Gibson, Freddi Olson, Deb Shipman and Joyce Toli for preparing your November *Chimes* for mailing.

## Chari-Tea Thanks!



### *Gratitude for Chari-Tea Contributions*

Many thanks to everyone who generously supported the Chari-Tea event on Sunday, Nov. 5th! We were delighted with the overwhelming contributions of tasty goodies, and especially with the overwhelming result of funds raised, in excess of \$1,700 to support our Deacons Fund.

An extra-special word of gratitude to the musicians Sharon Funk and Shannon Laine, who donated their time and talent — and without whom the event would never have happened. If you'd like to hire them for a special occasion, or are interested in possibly taking lessons, you can contact Sharon at: violinsharon@gmail.com, or 781-330-0544.

## Our Church Records

### Baptisms

*October 29, 2023*

Adelaide Mackenzie D'Ambrosio,  
daughter of Allison and Dan D'Ambrosio  
Evelyn June Sage, daughter of  
Cory and Melissa Sage  
Taiao Luke Mason, son of  
Amos Ponga-Fou and Hannah Mason

*November 19, 2023*

Sylvi Fern Hertenstein Perez, daughter of  
Audrey and Jack Hertenstein Perez  
Jensen Richard Dyer, son of  
Jonathan and Angelike Dyer

### New Members

*November 19, 2023*

Becky Henderson

### Deaths

*November 12, 2023*

Jerry L. Amos

### Memorial Donations

*In loving memory of Dot Pitman by:  
Karen and Warren Coulter*



## Church and Community Chili & Cornbread Supper Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup>

Come to town common for the tree lighting festivities, Tractor Parade, and Luminaria. Then head to the church for a Chili & Cornbread Supper.

**Serving 4:45-6:15pm** at the Church (Hardy Hall & Squires Community Patio) with Take-Out also available.

- Traditional Beef & Bean Chili\*
- White Chicken Chili
- Vegetarian Bean Chili\*
- Cornbread\*
- Hot Dog / Kids Meal

*\* gluten-free options available*

First come, first served as long as the chili lasts! To Go pre-orders available by sending email with order to [chilisupper@HollisLuminaria.org](mailto:chilisupper@HollisLuminaria.org) with quantity and chili choice(s). Please include name and cell phone number. All proceeds and donations gratefully accepted to support the Holiday Food Boxes to local needy families.

**Volunteers needed** to help at this event -- contact [FandH@hollischurch.org](mailto:FandH@hollischurch.org).

*Coming in January...*

### **Fall Prevention Workshop**

11am on Sunday, January 21 in Emerson Chapel

*Are you or a relative concerned about falling?*  
Would you like to learn more about how to avoid a fall?

Britta Bergeron and Ruth Kabel are both Occupational Therapists who work in home care. They are passionate about preventing falls and would like to share some of their tips for staying safer with our church family. They are hoping you can join them for an informal chat!



## CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

To place Christmas poinsettia plants in the church on December 17<sup>th</sup> as a memorial to a loved one or in honor of a special person or occasion, please fill out the form below.

I would like to order \_\_\_\_\_ poinsettias (please show quantity) to be placed in the church.

I am enclosing cash/check in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_  
(\$10.00 per plant)

Checks made payable to: **The Congregational Church of Hollis**

This plant is given \_\_\_\_ **in loving memory of**

**OR \_\_\_\_ in honor of:**

**(PLEASE PRINT NAMES AS THEY SHOULD BE LISTED)**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
**( PRINT YOUR NAME(S) EXACTLY AS IT SHOULD APPEAR)**

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I wish my plant TO BE DELIVERED to friends or members of our church family in hospitals or nursing homes.

\_\_\_\_\_ I WILL PICK UP my plant(s) after the service on Sunday, December 17, 2023.

Please return this form to: The Congregational Church of Hollis  
3 Monument Square, Hollis, NH 03049

**DEADLINE FOR ORDERS — WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2023**

## *Hollis Holiday Luminaria Stroll*

*Saturday, December 9*



We are very excited to continue this tradition in the Historic Village where the sidewalks will be all aglow with candles. The lit Tractor Parade will wind its way around the square, carrying



Santa to his much-anticipated visit with his young friends at the Lawrence Barn. Come and enjoy the afternoon festivities and have a meal at the chili supper in Hardy Hall. Finish the evening at the HB High School with the Annual Hollis Town Band Holiday Concert (where the only admission is a donation of canned goods!). The Women's Fellowship & friends bake and sell holiday goodies; money raised helps offset the costs of the Christmas food baskets that the Deacons and volunteers prepare and distribute.

***See you at the tree lighting ceremony!!***

### Schedule of Events

10 am Workshop classes at Hollis Artspace

1 – 6:30 pm Gingerbread house contest at Lawrence Barn

2 pm Placing bags and lighting candles in the village

2 pm Decorate an ornament - Flagg Room at the church

2:30 pm Story time for children at Library

3-6 pm Holiday Craft Sale at Town Hall

4:00 pm Tree lighting in Square

4:30 pm Lit Tractor Parade with Santa Claus

4:45-6:15 pm Chili & Cornbread Supper in Hardy Hall –  
Eat in or Take-away

5-6:30 pm Visit with Santa at Lawrence Barn

7:00 pm Annual Holiday Concert presented by the Hollis Town  
Band & Community Chorus at Hollis Brookline High  
School Auditorium

Enjoy and admire our twinkling village as our town prepares for the season and listen to festive music with a holiday sing along.

For more information contact Kimber Harmon at  
info@HollisLuminaria.org





The Congregational Church of Hollis  
 (United Church of Christ)  
 3 Monument Square  
 Hollis NH 03049

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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**



*The Hollis Town Band  
 and Community Chorus*

invite you to our...

***Holiday  
 Concert***

**Saturday, December 9, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.**

Hollis Brookline High School auditorium

Co-sponsored by our Women's Fellowship & Hollis Town Band

**Admission: non-perishable food items**

All food items help fill our church's Christmas food baskets.

*Join us for an evening of music and fellowship*

**Your Help Is Needed for the  
 Christmas Concert**

Our Women's Fellowship will sell finger desserts at the Christmas concert to raise money to help pay for the perishable food for our church's Christmas baskets. The more sweets we have to sell, the more funds we raise, the more food can be purchased! Your special goodies may be brought when you come to the concert (or Chili Supper at the church) or drop them at the church office on the morning of Friday, Dec. 8.

***Won't You Help?***

- **Bake** and donate a few goodies. *Please wrap in individual serving size!*
- **Volunteer** to help at the bake sale – contact FandH@hollischurch.org
- **Come to the concert!** Bring your non-perishable food items to donate, enjoy the festive music, and buy some sweets at intermission