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***The Chimes* is a publication of the
Congregational Church of Hollis
www.hollischurch.org**

Lead Pastor

Rev. Tanya Stormo Rasmussen

Pastor@HollisChurch.org

Faith Formation (Christian Education):

Kim Burton and Kim Verrecchia

CE@HollisChurch.org

Minister of Christian Music:

Julie Oliver

Church Office

Eileen Widner

ChurchOffice@HollisChurch.org

Susan Adams

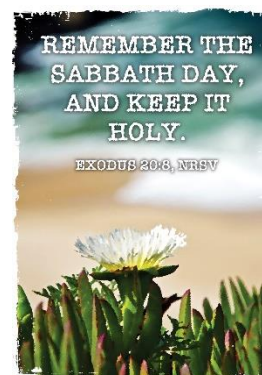
Sue@HollisChurch.org

Contact us:

Office: 603-465-7797 or 465-7099

The Chimes is published monthly September to May. One edition is published for the summer months. All submissions for the newsletter are due by the 15th of the month preceding publication.

*“Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.
Six days you shall labor and do all your work.
But the seventh day is a Sabbath
to the LORD your God ...
For in six days the LORD made heaven and
earth, the sea, and all that is in them,
but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD
blessed the Sabbath day and consecrated it.”*
(Exodus 20:8-11)



Dear Friends,

During a recent worship service in which a Psalm was one of our Scripture readings, the reader turned to me after coming upon the occasional *SELAH* amongst the words and said, “Someday, you’ll have to tell us what that means.” Well, today’s the day, and this summer we’re going to practice it!

Although its exact etymology and meaning is unknown, the Hebrew word *selah* (pronounced *see-luh*) is understood to be something like a musical instruction on the reading of the text, indicating “pause and listen” or “take a breath and reflect.” Its meaning dovetails nicely with sabbath, and sabbatical—both of which refer to resting from our work for a period and paying special attention to our relationship with God.

I’m calling our worship in June, July, and August this year a “Summer Selah Series”. We’re going to take some intentional time *selah*-ing: pausing to listen for God, breathing and reflecting on the divine activity in our life. Each Sunday, we’ll receive a new Psalm to read across the next week; I encourage you to read it aloud each morning and/or each night, and take a moment to see how it speaks differently to you as the days pass. Which words jump out differently? Which images appeal to your imagination, or ideas suddenly clarify when they weren’t as obvious the day before? What moves you, or doesn’t resonate, or confuses you?

(continued on page 3)

From the Faith Formation Office

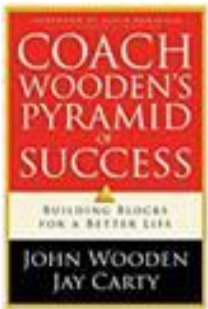


CE Book Read

Adult Education: What is the Christian Ed Board reading?

This month we offer the suggested reading below from one of our CE Board members. We would also enjoy hearing what the congregation is reading and if you would like to share with others in a book club session. Please reach out to ce@hollischurch.org with your suggestions or inquiries on a book club session or other CE Adult Education idea.

Coach Wooden's Pyramid of Success by John Wooden, Jay Carty



Written by arguably the greatest NCAA men's basketball coach ever in John Wooden, he

discusses the morals in conjunction with becoming the best we can be in this book. Co-Authored with Jay Carty, his values come through patience and faith which enabled these virtues to shape his character. These are why many admired John both personally and professionally. John lived to the age of 99.

Flock Summer Adventures

Join us this summer for fun-filled events!

Vacation Bible School: *The Great Treasure Hunt*

A week full of adventure!

We have lessons, games, STEM, crafts, snacks & more!

- **July 18-21** from 9-11:30am
- Ages 4-Grade 6
- Must be able to attend all 4 days
- \$5 per child ~ Registration deadline: June 15

Flock Adventure Days:

- Sundays, **July 10 & August 7**

We will be offering two Sundays during the summer where your child can join us downstairs while you enjoy the service upstairs (just like Sunday school!).

Nursery service available upon request!

Signups now open!

Butterfly Adoption Day



Sunday, **July 24**, join Kim, Kim, and Lee Harper as they will lead a shortened family service all about butterflies! You will have the opportunity to learn all about raising Monarch butterflies, adopt a caterpillar egg and watch it transform into a beautiful butterfly. If you choose to adopt, please bring \$10 to purchase your kit! Your kit will include all the supplies you need!



(From the Pastor – cont'd from p. 1)

At the end of each week of reading a Psalm, we'll reflect together on it during our Sabbath service, which will be shorter than our usual services — and probably have a bit more silence and dialogue, too. My hope is that we'll all feel refreshed and more deeply connected in some surprising ways, after sharing what we've gathered from our daily Scripture reading.

We'll have the Psalms circulated for you each Sunday to read for the following week, but I'm posting a list of the Psalms and the corresponding weeks below for those of you who'd like to have them all in one place. Like last year, we'll hold worship services at Rocky Pond (weather permitting) on the third Sundays of June and July (Father's Day-June 19, and July 17). And, while I'm away, I'm thrilled that you'll have lay worship leadership from several of our Deacons.

Have a blessed, restful, restorative summer! *Selah.*

Yours with faith, hope, and love,
Tanya

June 12: Psalm 8
June 19: Psalm 42 (Rocky Pond)
June 26: Psalm 46
July 3: Psalm 48
July 10: Psalm 62
July 17: Psalm 66 (Rocky Pond)
July 24: Psalm 84
July 31: Psalm 86
August 7: Psalm 96
August 14: Psalm 103:1-5, 11-18
August 21: Psalm 116
August 28: Psalm 119:1-3, 33-37, 65-66, 105
September 4: Psalm 131 and Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18

Caring Cooks

A New Ministry Outreach Program

If you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday. Isaiah 58:10



The Kitchen Ministry (KM) team is starting a new ministry called ***Caring Cooks*** (CC). This Care team will be making frozen prepared meals that the church will deliver to people in need. This service is greatly needed in our church community and beyond. The KM feels there is a need to start this ministry team to accomplish our church's needs. We are hoping that not only will this be a service ministry but also a fellowship time through cooking.

If you are interested in this new team or would like to help, contact us at kitchenministry@hollischurch.org. Feeding the needy is part of serving one another and as we serve others, we are serving Christ.

Dedication Ceremony planned for the Adam Verrecchia Memorial Community Garden

All are invited to attend the upcoming dedication ceremony at the Adam Verrecchia Memorial Community Garden on Sunday, July 24th following the 9:30am service (approx. 10:30 am). The garden is located at the back of the parking lot between the church and library.



Construction on the AVMCG garden is now complete, and everyone is welcome to come enjoy this calm and tranquil space that is surrounded by plants in bloom!

Refreshments and fellowship to follow. Rain date is July 31st following the 9:30am service.

From the Church Office...

A BIG Thank You goes to Nancy Bell, Sue Burton, Patricia Cordell and Deb Shipman for preparing your May *Chimes* for delivery to your mailbox.



June 2022



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Summer Items of the Month: School Supplies for Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter's <i>Backpacks for Back-to-School</i> program Donations deadline is August 7th !						
Music Sunday 9:30 am – Communion Worship (In Person and YouTube) 10:45 am – <i>Widening Our Vision</i> Open Forum/Discussion 5	7 pm – CE Board meeting 6	10 am – Prayer Shawl Ministry meeting 6:30 pm – Music Board meeting 7	10am – Zoom Coffee Hour 5 pm – Facilities Commit- tee meeting 7pm – Angel Choir ~ Free Concert 8	7 pm – Choir 9	Our church volunteers provide din- ner at Ash St. Shelter 10	4 11
9:30 am – Worship (In Person / YouTube) 10:45 am – Congregational Meeting to vote to become Open and Affirming 12	7 pm – Deacons meeting 13	1pm – Staff meeting 7 pm – Mission & Ac- tion Board meeting 14	10am – Zoom Coffee Hour 15	16	17	18
Father's Day 9:30 am – Worship at Rocky Pond (weather permitting) In-person only – No YouTube worship 19	7 pm – Trustees meeting 20	10 am – Prayer Shawl Ministry meeting 21	10am – Zoom Coffee Hour 7 pm – Council hosts the All-Boards meeting In Hardy Hall 22	23	24	25
9:30 am – Worship (In Person / YouTube) 2-4 pm – Strawberry Festival on the Town Common 26	7pm – Steward- ship Board meeting 27	28	10am – Zoom Coffee Hour 29	30		

Sunday worship services continue both in-person and on *YouTube* on Sunday mornings at 9:30. No *YouTube* worship on June 19th.
Church office: Closed Monday & Tuesday; Open Wednesdays 12:30-3:30 (closed June 8); Thursday 8am-3:30pm (8-12 on June 9); Friday 8am-12 noon
Church boards meet in June (unless otherwise notified by board chairs); on hiatus in July and August, resuming in September.

From the Widening Our Vision (WOV) Team...

Our Journey to Becoming Open and Affirming



The Widening Our Vision team thanks those of you who responded to the exploratory survey. The results indicated to us that the vast majority of members support becoming an Open and Affirming church, but there are still a number of members who are not yet ‘on board.’ The WOV team especially appreciates those respondents who took the time to express their concerns about ONA, giving us the opportunity to ‘listen’, consider, and offer an Open Forum/Discussion (details on next page) prior to the congregational meeting and vote on Sunday, June 12. You can also find information below that addresses some of the issues that surfaced on respondents’ surveys.

Some Concerns Raised and WOV’s Response...

ONA is a LABEL — ONA (Open and Affirming) is *not* a label, but a *status* with certification guaranteeing that the congregation has gone through a process of committing itself as a body to creating and maintaining a safe place for people who have felt very *unsafe* in churches. Congregations with ONA status explicitly commit themselves to ongoing work of understanding and welcoming the presence of all perspectives, including minority experiences and points of view.

Rainbow flags: they’re divisive symbols — We should not refuse to use a symbol that was designed to, and still does, signify a celebration of diversity and a place of sanctuary for some simply because it has been appropriated and re-cast by others to be a fearful political symbol.

We’ll lose people if we become ONA — We will also lose people if we don’t. Becoming ONA will commit us to deepening our understanding of the ways we’re *not yet* as welcoming as we could be, and commit us to doing what it takes to further embody that wide-open welcome of all God’s beloved.

ONA is divisive and excludes people with different opinions about political matters — The point of becoming Open and Affirming is that the congregation commits to learning and practicing how—with the power of Christ Jesus at work in us—we are able to welcome, engage, and even love people who are very different from ourself. The point is not to practice divisiveness, but to recognize that the world is divisive and hateful, and the Church needs to be wise in our commitment to welcome—though part of that wisdom includes a recognition that not everyone will appreciate what we’re doing. Jesus did not shrink from doing things that the religious establishment deemed divisive--in particular, openly associating with ostracized communities and individuals (e.g., Zacchaeus and tax collectors, one characterized as a prostitute, lepers).

What changes will ONA status make to our church??

What will happen when we become Open and Affirming:

1. We will be certified as an Open and Affirming church, joining 57 other UCC churches in our New Hampshire conference. ONA designation is a status that lets people know our church will be safe and welcoming to all.
2. We will add indications of our ONA status to existing signs outside our building. Mock-ups of proposed changes will be available for viewing at the Open Forum on June 5 and at the congregational meeting on June 12.
3. We will add our ONA status to our web site so that anyone looking for a church to call home will know that they will be welcome.

What will NOT happen when we become Open and Affirming:

1. We will NOT be flying a giant rainbow flag or painting the pillars at the front door in rainbow stripes!
2. We will NOT be changing our worship service. Rev. Tanya already uses inclusive language during worship. The traditional pieces of our worship (e.g., Call to Worship, Assurance of Pardon, Doxology, Gloria Patri, Common Commission) will continue to be part of our service.

3. We will NOT get new hymnals. Our hymnal already uses inclusive language and contains a mix of both traditional and newer hymns.
4. We will NOT get new pew Bibles.
5. We will NOT change the Sunday School curriculum. Rev. Tanya sent these words to parents of Sunday School students, but they are important for everyone to read:
 “For those of you wondering whether the move to become ONA will change anything about our curriculum or what and how we teach our children, please be assured that it will NOT. Our message has always been, and will continue to be, that as followers of Jesus Christ—as those striving to love others as openly and fearlessly as he did, we affirm every individual for who they are; we honor and celebrate diversity and will practice caring for every individual with the strong love of God regardless of how they may differ from ourself.”

So, what difference will adopting our ONA covenant make?

Throughout the past year, a number of church members have shared their personal stories — adult children or siblings who are LGBTQ+ folks, a teenage child who is gender fluid, other teens who are questioning or coming out, an adult son transitioning to become a woman, a family member who left our church due to condemnation of who he is. Our ONA covenant will make a difference to them and to ALL of us. **After all, becoming ONA is really just a recommitment to what we’ve been saying all along ~ No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here**

Join us for these two important events...

Sunday, June 5: WOV Open Forum & Discussion

Join us for a free-form discussion about the Open and Affirming process and what it means for our church. Our Welcome Statement has been ‘trimmed down’ based on suggestions received by survey respondents and will be available for perusal. We will have mock-ups of exterior signs with possible minor changes to indicate Open & Affirming status (Many thanks to Randy Forgaard!) for you to see and offer comments. Come with your questions!

Sunday, June 12: Congregational Meeting and Vote

To the members of the Congregational Church of Hollis, New Hampshire, (United Church of Christ) qualified to vote in Church affairs: You are hereby notified to meet, either in person in said Hollis, New Hampshire, or virtually in the Church Zoom link which will be provided, on Sunday, June 12, 2022, at 10:45 a.m. to consider the following article:

Article 1: To see if the congregation will accept the Welcome Statement as our church’s Open and Affirming (ONA) covenant, allowing our church to be certified as an Open and Affirming church of the United Church of Christ.

Welcome Statement

“Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.” Romans 15:7

We, the members of the Congregational Church of Hollis, United Church of Christ, believe that all people are created in God’s image and are loved, valued, and blessed by God. Understanding that repression and discrimination of any kind is incompatible with the gospel of Jesus Christ, we are committed to the on-going work of inclusivity and discovering ways to live out our support and respect for all of God’s beloved children. This community of faith is an Open and Affirming congregation which welcomes persons of all races, ethnic backgrounds, ages, sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, physical and mental abilities, family structure, marital status, and socio-economic background. All are invited to fully share and participate in all aspects of our church life and leadership. For no matter who you are, or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.

Mission & Action News

Summer Items of the Month:

Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter's **Backpacks for Back-to-School** program collects new backpacks and school supplies for families trying to live on minimum wage, staying at shelters, or coming to the soup kitchen for food. Eligible children are provided with a new backpack filled with new, grade-appropriate supplies. Throughout the summer months, we will collect items to support this program. **Deadline for donations is Sunday, August 7th.**

- **New Backpacks** for Boys and Girls, K – Grade 12
- Dry-Erase Markers for All Grades (when called up to the board)
- 8GB (or larger) Flash Drives for High School Students
- 2 inch 3-Ring Binders – required in High School
- Loose Leaf Filler Paper
- Tabbed Dividers
- Spiral Notebooks
- Protractor or Multi-piece Drafting Package
- Pencil Boxes/Pouches for Elementary School Children



- Lunch Boxes and Snack Bags for Elementary School Children
- #2 Pencils
- Hand-held Pencil Sharpeners
- Separate Erasers
- Pens
- 12-inch Rulers
- Bottled Glue
- Glue Sticks
- Scotch Tape
- Staplers - Mini or Desk Size
- Student Scissors
- Safety Scissors for Younger Students
- Crayons – Boxes of 24
- Colored Pencils – Bright or Bold
- Washable Colored Markers
- Calculators For High School Students
- Dictionary (one per family)
- Index Cards



For more information or to sign up to volunteer for Backpack Packing or Distribution, go to <https://nsks.org/project/nsks-backpacks-for-back-to-school/> or contact Carol@nsks.org.

Ash Street Shelter Meals



On the second Friday of the month, we provide a dinner for 20-30 people for the Ash Street Shelter. We provide you with a \$75 Market Basket gift card to purchase the ingredients for the meal. We just need you to prepare the meal and deliver it to the Ash Street Shelter in Nashua after 6 PM on the Friday date. We are in need for chefs for months October – December. If you or a group you are part of would like to cook a meal for Ash St Shelter, contact Lee Harper at missionandaction@hollischurch.org.

Ongoing Collections...

- Items for the **Brookline Food Pantry**
- Eyeglasses
- Used Cell Phones
- Travel size Toiletries

Your Dollars at Work

Mission & Action's May donations helped to support:

- *Holy Joe's Café* Coffee for the Troops
- *Strengthen the Church* UCC special offering
- Mercy Ships
- *Bridges* Domestic & Sexual Violence Support
- Heifer International
- Andover Newton Seminary at Yale Divinity School
- Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter
- Meals on Wheels

Our Church Records

Memorial Gifts

In memory of Barbara Henry by:

Peggy and David Gilmour
Eleanora Rosso
Eleanora Rolfe

In memory of Eleanor Whittemore by:

Ann Siglin

In memory of Bob Burns by:

Ann Siglin

...And the Rest is History *Our Church's History Highlights*

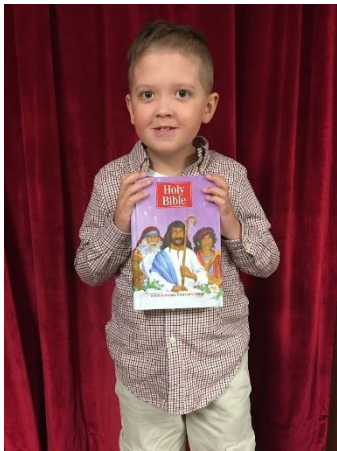
Named Spaces – Final in the Series



This is the final article of the Congregational Church of Hollis named rooms/spaces series, ending with the Adam Verrecchia Memorial Community Garden (AVMCG), located at the far end of the shared library/church parking lot. This article is both the easiest and hardest one I have written. Easy because I witnessed the “history” myself, so I have some first-hand knowledge. Hard because the pain and sense of loss are still all too fresh; not nearly enough time has passed not to feel sadness still. Most of what I write is from the perspective of Adam’s parents, Joel and Kim Verrecchia, who graciously answered many questions for me. I chose to wait until the summer Chimes to publish this article in honor of the 2nd anniversary of Adam’s passing: August 3, 2020.

Adam Michael Verrecchia

March 1, 2011 – August 3, 2020



Adam was an extraordinary child with a very gentle soul who loved nothing more than spending time with family. He loved to play board games, play on his iPad, and read the Bible more than anything else. His favorite verse, which hung on a plaque on his bedroom wall, was “Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9).

In Adam's short nine-year life, he lived in a way that significantly impacted all who knew him. Born in March 2011, the Verrecchias moved to Hollis in 2012, so it is the only place he called "home." In 2014, as a very young boy, he started attending the Congregational Church of Hollis with his parents and brother, Luke. His sister, Josie, was born a year later, and in 2018, Joel and Kim became members of the church, and all three

children were baptized in the church. Also, in 2018, Kim became the Faith Formation co-superintendent. The rest of the church congregation enjoyed watching this young family become active participants in church life and seeing the children grow. Then Adam started experiencing headaches and other health issues less than a year later.



In May 2019, Adam was diagnosed with Glioma, a malignant brain tumor. Family, friends, church members, teachers, and everyone who knew Adam prayed fervently for him. The physical and emotional rollercoaster over the next 16 months was very difficult, but you wouldn't know it from Adam. While the illness wreaked havoc on his small body, his strength of spirit and the love and comfort he provided others during his illness were incredible to witness. Others were caregivers to Adam, helping him with his disease's physical challenges. But HE was the caregiver to us, helping us with the emotional, spiritual, and faith challenges we went through watching this sweet angel go through such difficulties.

Adam lost his fight against brain cancer nearly two years ago, on August 3, 2020. He fought the disease fearlessly and with tremendous faith in God. In the weeks before his passing, Adam said that he knows "everyone has a job to do here on Earth." His job was to bring people closer to God and exemplify what true love and unwavering faith look like. Anyone who knew Adam will attest that he did this job flawlessly.

The Adam Verrecchia Memorial Community Garden

On the day that Adam died, the Verrecchia family met with Rev. Tanya Stormo Rasmussen, sharing ideas about the possibility of a memorial bench somewhere at the church. Since the church was so important to Adam, they thought having a designated memorial place they could go to spend time reflecting and feeling connected to Adam would be wonderful. But it quickly snowballed into the idea of a garden; Tanya mentioned that a garden on church grounds was an idea tossed around for years. The timing just worked out of wanting a space to remember Adam, coupled with the desire for a community garden.

Family and church members formed a committee and began talking about design elements. They decided on the components of a cross-shaped patio with a fountain, pavilion, butterfly garden section, and other surrounding plantings. The vision was to create a place where all are welcome to enjoy the outdoors, feel God's presence in the beautiful surroundings, and take time to remember their loved ones who have passed.

As the committee's garden plans were materializing, many church and community members had already donated money to the church in remembrance of Adam. After officially announcing the memorial garden project, even more donations came in to help fund the creation and maintenance of the garden. Additional funding came from memorial brick orders. In May 2021, the garden committee invited church and community members to buy an engraved brick to memorialize a loved one. In October 2021, the installation of the engraved bricks took place. Between donations and purchased bricks, nearly \$32,000 has been raised. Engraved brick orders are still available now, and in the future, for families who lose loved ones whom they want to memorialize.*

In October 2020, the committee received construction approval for the garden, and tree/brush clearing of the space began. It was basically "completed" (suitable for people to visit and enjoy its purpose) in June 2021. Except in the winter months, the garden averages 3-4 groups or pairs of people who spend time in the garden each day. But like all gardens, it remains a work-in-progress with additional plantings and physical elements added regularly. For instance, recently, an outdoor "message center" was added (similar to the kind you see around Beaver Brook: a roof-covered bulletin board). The message center includes a [letter from Adam's parents on behalf of the church](#), instructions for ordering a memorial brick, flyers of church happenings, and a QR code you can scan with your phone taking you to a webpage with information about Adam and the garden. A planned element soon to come is a granite post with a hanging sign.



What would Adam think of the garden? Kim and Joel said, "He would love that it's a place where people can spend time together. He loved nothing more than spending time with his family- grandparents, aunts/uncles, and cousins. He would have loved seeing our family and friends from church all working together to create the garden, and now that it's done, he would love that it's a place where people can go and spend time together, pray, and feel God's presence."

There are far too many people deserving of thanks for their large and small contributions to the creation of the Adam Verrecchia Memorial Community Garden to individually name. People have contributed financially through donations or buying a brick, and by giving their time and equipment in the clearing, construction, planting, and maintaining of the garden. The Verrecchias want to express their sincere thanks to all who have contributed to the garden and all who visit each day, making the vision a reality, the dream come true.

A formal dedication will take place after worship on Sunday, July 24th.

**To purchase a memorial brick to be placed in the memorial garden, please go to https://hollischurch.org/avmcg_brick to download the order form.*

To see more pictures of the garden, from inception to current day, go to https://hollischurch.org/avmcg_pics





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

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Come enjoy an evening of mellifluous music of the ...

Angel Choir Concert!

Wednesday, June 8th at 7 pm

The free concert will take place in our meetinghouse

On Wednesday, June 8, the Angel Choir from Granville, Ohio will be performing at our church. This is a rescheduled concert from their 2020 tour. For a taste of their sound, search “I Believe by The (Virtual) Angel Choir” on YouTube or go to <https://tinyurl.com/angelchoirdemo>

