

The

Chimes

Newsletter of

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

May 2020

www.HollisChurch.org

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ceding publication.

They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?”

(Luke 24:32)



Dear Friends,

What’s your favorite Bible story? Do you have a particular character whose attributes you resonate with in familiar ways, or specific go-to verses that calm, focus, or re-center you when your life gets rocked?

One of my favorites is the story about the experience a couple of Jesus’ followers had on the road to Emmaus. As the two walked along, talking about the horrors and ambiguities of what had transpired across the past days and weeks, a third person joined them and asked what they were discussing. “Are you the only person in all of Jerusalem who doesn’t know what’s been going on here?” they asked him. They continued walking and talking, and the stranger “interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.” It wasn’t until they were alone again that it dawned on the other two who it was that had appeared to them and helped them understand the writings of their sacred scriptures. But the epiphany was deeply moving to them when they understood it, and it determined what they did next.

Like many Biblical stories, we’re meant to recognize ourselves in the story—to place ourselves in the scene, to understand that we’re one of them who’s talking about, trying to process, the crises and traumas of the world unfolding in and enveloping our world. We’re also the ones who are often oblivious to the fact that the One who journeys with us is helping us to interpret things, with the help of the holy scriptures that describe and illuminate much the divine-human relationship and experience.

It used to be the case that most anyone who went to church was well familiar with the Bible—not least because, prior to the easy availability of books and the rise in disposable income, it was one of the few books that a household would possess. It was the book from which many children learned to read.

(continued on page 7)

From the Faith Formation Office

Just for Kids...

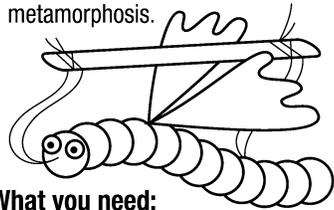
Caterpillar → Butterfly

The butterfly symbolizes resurrection and the new life we have in Christ Jesus. A caterpillar disappears into a chrysalis, is transformed, and emerges as a butterfly. Rising into the sky in its beautiful new body, the butterfly reminds us of Christ's resurrection — and ours.

Make your own! All kids are invited to pick up a bag of the supplies needed to make your own caterpillar that you can transform into a butterfly! Supply bags are in the box at the church's handicapped entrance.

CHANGED!

Make this cute puppet to show and tell the amazing story of metamorphosis.



What you need:

- Needle and string
- 12 small pom-poms
- Wooden craft stick
- Scissors
- Googly eyes
- Glue
- Coffee filter
- Markers

What you do:

1. Sew pom-poms together to make a caterpillar body. Tie off that string.
2. Thread another string up through the first pom-pom, leaving 12" to dangle. Repeat with the ninth pom-pom, leaving two dangling strings.
3. Wrap those strings around opposite ends of the stick, adjusting their length to about 6 inches. Tie in place.
4. Glue on googly eyes.
5. Flatten the coffee filter and use markers to draw a symmetrical design on it. Pleat the filter in the center to create wings.
6. Move the caterpillar puppet by holding the stick.
7. Glue on the wings as you describe the transformation into a butterfly.

Plans for Sunday School *some knowns, and some unknowns...*

Plan on it!

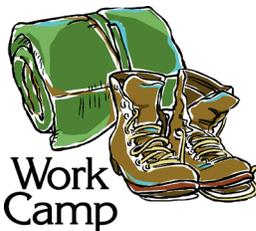
- Kim and Kim will continue to **email lessons to families** on Sundays for the next few weeks
- **Zoom classes will continue!** Each week on Tuesday at 4:00pm, a Sunday School class will be held. Classes will alternate between Grades 3-6 one week, and Kindergarten-Grade 2 the next week. A final schedule with dates will be emailed shortly.
 - Zoom class will consist of a short recap of the lesson sent a couple days prior, as well as some interactive games, and a visit from Reverend Tanya!

Not so sure....

- Please know as soon as the go-ahead is given to resume church activities, we will be full-speed ahead with options for the kids!
- Possible plans include VBS-style class days and family-friendly gatherings. Everything is subject to change, but rest assured the word will be put out as soon as plans are made

Mission Trip News: 2020 Workcamp Canceled

After much prayerful deliberation and with a focus on everyone's safety, the Mission Trip adult leaders made the difficult decision to cancel our participation in the 2020 Reading PA workcamp. On the next page is a portion of the letter that leaders sent out to students on Friday, April 17. After leaders made this decision, Group Mission Trips decided (on Monday, April 20th) to postpone all trips this summer. At this point, the adult leaders are not making a commitment to run a trip in the summer of 2021. We are always so grateful for the congregation's support and will be discussing how to use this year's fundraising in a way that services those in need. Our campers will be receiving a refund of their payment.



Work
Camp

“We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.”
(Romans 8:28)

Dear Mission Trip Campers:

During these unprecedented times of uncertainty and stress, we rely on our faith to sustain us. Our hearts are breaking for all of you as your classes have moved to remote learning, your sports seasons have been cut short, and your social lives have been disrupted.

We all want things to go back to “normal”, but this disruption in our lives is going to take longer than any of us want it to.

In regards to this summer’s mission trip, your adult chaperones have prayerfully considered the safest option. With everyone’s safety foremost our minds, we have made the difficult decision that we really don’t have any good option except to cancel this summer’s trip.

We really do understand how disappointing this is...and we are so aware of how many disappointments there have been.

We are hoping to be able to do something of service this summer locally and will be in touch regarding this opportunity if we are able to do so.

We are also considering making a donation to a food pantry in the Reading, PA area. If you are interested in contributing a portion of your payment to that, please let us know.

Sometimes it’s hard during difficult times to see truth in the claim that “all things work together for good for those who love God”; usually, the good outcomes are only obvious years down the road. Still, as people of faith in God’s ultimate goodness, we dare to live with hope and confidence in that divine promise.

If you would like to talk to one of us, please feel free to reach out. We are here to listen.

Love,
Kevin, Holly, John, and Tanya

BoV Construction Update

Our church has been very proactive in taking the right steps to protect our members from the risks of the coronavirus. There are no more gatherings or meetings taking place in our building, and there will not be until it is clear that the pandemic risk is substantially over.



Now comes the question of when to start construction.

The decision hinges on several logistical factors:

1. Obtaining the building permit
2. Finalizing and releasing the construction drawings
3. Starting and completing the Request for Proposals (RFP) process
4. Finalizing the financing package

And the decision hinges on several safety factors:

1. Subcontractors – Are they willing?
The subcontractors are anxious to get started, appreciating that we have essentially a vacant building so that there is no issue with COVID-19 contamination from (or to) church members or non-members using the building. In addition, because the workers are concerned for their own health, they are taking appropriate safety measures. They also are anxious for the income stream the project offers.
2. Schedule – Does it lend itself to a safe environment?
The schedule for construction begins in the kitchen with demolition of the plumbing, and then moves to the exterior with the excavation of the east lawn. For the initial weeks of the project the majority of the work will be done outside, and what is done inside is accomplished with a low number of people.
3. Risk – What will the risk of contagion be when we start?
The IHME models (produced by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington Medical School) have been used extensively at the federal and state levels to predict the course of COVID-19 both nationally and for individual states. The update last Sunday showed a reduction in the predicted duration of the coronavirus in NH and a greatly reduced daily mortality prediction reaching zero by the end of April.

Given all of these factors, we believe our best course of action is to be prepared to start the first week of May. When all of the pieces are in place and the date draws closer, the BoV team will consider all sides of the issue and make the prudent decision as to the exact start date



Who Knew???

Young AND Old Dogs CAN Learn New Tricks!

In mid-March, when we first realized that we would have to forego worshipping in the meeting house for some period of time, Jacqueline Wilmot took it upon herself to research available virtual, on-line technologies that we might use in the interim. After reviewing her research, it was decided we'd use the Zoom platform. The lowest paid tier of support on Zoom allows for meetings to last an unlimited time and allows for up to 100 participants. We went through the exercise of "*How many people do you think will join virtual services?*" and came up with "*30-50 seems about right with the possible exceptions of Palm and Easter Sundays, where it could be higher.*"

We have completely and happily exceeded those estimates! Since our first virtual worship service on March 22nd through the April 15th deadline to submit May Chimes articles, Zoom "join ins" have been:

- **March 22** – 48
- **March 29** – 75
- **April 5 (Palm Sunday)** – 83
- **April 9 (Maundy Thursday)** – 53
- **April 12 (Easter Sunday)** – 100*

Keep in mind that a Zoom "join in" often has multiple people in it as couples or families participate as a single "join in". So, the number of participants is probably between 25% - 35% higher than the number of "join ins" listed above.

*On Easter we hit the maximum number of 100 join-ins and unbeknownst to us until after the service, some people tried to join and couldn't (Zoom giving them the message that the meeting had reached the maximum #). We apologize to those who were unable to log into the Easter service; we never, ever expected to even come close to the 100 limit!

In addition to worship services, every Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. the virtual coffee hour open house has had many people participate. That provides the opportunity to "connect" with the flexibility of joining in and leaving anytime during the hour so you can stay as long or as little as you want. And now the boards and committees are using Zoom for their monthly meetings. Everyone is making the very best of this challenging situation! For the less-techy among us, people have been patient and have stretched their comfort zone considerably!

All of us look forward to the day when we can re-unite physically in meeting house worships and Hardy Hall fellowship. But in the meantime, we should be incredibly proud of our adaptability and our "We can do this" spirit!

Our Church Records

Deaths – April 11, 2020
William (Bill) Huberlie, husband of Mara Huberlie, in Canandaigua, NY. Bill and Mara were active church members in Hollis before relocating to NY several years ago. Should anyone wish to send a card, Mara's address is 3692 Nibawauka Beach, Canandaigua, NY 14424.

Memorial Gifts

In loving memory of Bob Cushman by:

Dee and Bill Wagner

Of patience and pruning

In many parts of America, Mother's Day is the recommended date for planting flowers outdoors. Subjecting blooms to the elements any sooner is risky, though sunny spring days sure make waiting tough. Perhaps that's why poet May Sarton calls gardening "an instrument of grace," for it "slows us down and forces patience."

Courage is also required. Gardeners "must be brave enough to cut back the old and sit with bare branches, awaiting new growth," writes Cheryl Richardson (*Waking Up in Winter*). "And we must trust that it will come."

When God prunes us, we too must trust that new growth and new life are in store ... and then patiently wait.



Pledge Giving Concerns



It comes as no surprise that between the coronavirus pandemic which has resulted in financial insecurity for some, and the fact that we aren't attending worship services in the meeting house where offering

plates are a part of the service, the regular offerings have dropped off considerably. For example, from mid-March 2020, our collected offerings are down about \$6,100 from the same time last year. Unfortunately, the church's expenses continue while we worship virtually.

If able, we ask that you please consider setting up automatic monthly payments for your pledge giving. The "automatic" part means you don't have to remember (remembering is much easier to do when an offering plate goes by you in the meeting house), and it creates more financial stability month-to-month for the church.

Two options to set up auto-payments:

OPTION 1: Give Via Online Bill Pay Through Your Bank

If you have a login with your bank and you can see your checking account activity online, you most likely also have the ability to pay bills online and even set up AutoPay (regular, automatic payments) to any person, company, or organization you set up. **Setting up AutoPay through your bank is the preferred and most reliable way to ensure pledge payments are paid regularly *with no fees incurred by you OR by the church.***

OPTION 2: Give Via Church Online Giving

Donations and pledge payments can be made electronically via our website using your bank account or credit card. This is another great way to ensure your pledge giving is paid regularly, however there are **some fees incurred by the church (NOT you)** for the convenience of this service. The church incurs LOWER fees for online giving using your bank account than for online giving using your credit card.

Fees are modest and we are happy to receive pledge payments via this method, but obviously NO fees (Option 1) is preferred.

Go to:

<https://hollischurch.org/donations/> to initiate Online Giving.

If you are not comfortable setting up auto-payments through one of the two options above, we still gladly accept checks! 😊

Please send your pledge checks to the church main office. Make checks payable to "Congregational Church of Hollis" and mail to 3 Monument Square, Hollis, NH 03049. Please note "pledge offering" in the memo of the check (unless the check is intended for another purpose, such as capital campaign, deacons fund, etc.)

THANK YOU for your support!

Women's Fellowship

The Women's Fellowship has adjusted to the pandemic. **We have suspended our meetings but continue to work on two projects.**

A few of us are making dresses at home for the Dress A Girl Project (They are pretty). The members will get together in the summer to finish out goal of thirty dresses. Thank you again to those of you who donated supplies for this worthwhile endeavor. Thank you to Debbe Shipman who continues to give her talents and treasures so graciously.

Our other current project –the UCC's Hygiene Kits, is ongoing until the end of May or early June. Church World Service distributes the kits throughout the world to needy children.

Everyone is invited to participate in the Hygiene Kit project, we welcome donations of individual items or a complete kit.* Donations may be marked Hygiene Kit and dropped in the collection box outside the front handicapped entrance through the end of May.

Each kit contains these items:

- nail clipper
- wash cloth
- bath-size bar of soap (in wrapper)
- toothbrush (in original package)
- 10 Band-Aids
- wide tooth comb.
- hand towel (no kitchen towels or micro-fiber)

*If donating a complete kit, please place all items in a gallon zip-loc bag and drop in the collection box at the handicapped entrance by the end of May. Thank you for supporting this project!

(From the Pastor – continued from page 1)

Today, with all the options we have for reading material, the Bible is easily set aside in favor of a narrative that doesn't quite as much work to interpret—because, let's face it: much of scripture feels like a foreign language. But, just like a foreign language is learned by spending time with it, learning the words and rhythms, the grammatical and lexical “rules of the road”, so it is with the Bible. And what we inevitably discover is that the investment of time in learning the language unlocks treasure-troves of wisdom, enlightenment, and spiritual understanding. People who regularly read and spend time contemplating the Bible are generally more at peace with the world, less anxious about the future and their own life, and feel more deeply embedded in a bigger picture.

For those of you who've been able to participate in our worship services via Zoom, you'll already know that we've embarked on a new Holy Habit: for the next month, we'll be focusing on the Holy Habit of Biblical Teaching. I hope and pray, during this time of profound and growing crisis and unmooring of so much that felt predictable and routine, that you might choose to take 5-10 minutes at the beginning or end of each day to open your Bible and find something new to read in it, and another few minutes to sit with what you've read and ponder what meaning it might have for life today. If you're overwhelmed by the thought of where or how to start reading, there are countless resources to help you chart an organized approach – email or call me if you'd like some pointers. I guarantee, you will never regret adding this practice as part of your daily routine; reading and reflecting on the Bible will help you feel more connected to God, to your faith, to your own self-understanding—which, in turn, will help you feel more grounded and at peace in the midst of all the swirling chaos in the world.

Yours in faith, hope, and love,

Tanya

Angel Choir Visit Postponed

Unfortunately, as with so many other activities, we've had to postpone the visiting Angel Choir from Granville, OH. No specific time has been scheduled yet, but we expect that they will come next year around the same time. Many thanks to all who volunteered to provide beds for the overnight stay this year – and we hope that you'll be in a position to offer it again next June!

Our Church's Good Works Continue Despite the Pandemic

Here's one example:

Masks, Masks, and More Masks!

THANK YOU to Debbe Shipman, Nancy Bell, Grace Calileo, Carole Kopser, Eileen Widner and other church members for making surgical masks and donating them to a variety of individuals and organizations in need of them. The masks pictured below were donated to SYNERGY HomeCare of Nashua owned by our own Matt Kopser and the masks are for the caregivers' use.



“Normally, a client can be taken aback the first time a caregiver enters the home with a mask on. These colorful masks, and the 'story behind the mask' definitely helps calm the situation. Orders for plain-old blue paper masks have been repeatedly delayed, so these handmade beauties have really helped.” Matt Kopser

Turn the page for another example of our Good Works!

Amazing Easter Food Baskets

Through the truly Herculean efforts of our Deacons (with Rick Guay leading the charge) and many members of the congregation, our church assembled and donated **50 Easter food baskets** to Marguerite's Place, Tolles Street Mission, and to our school nurses to distribute to local families. These 50 boxes (**10 more than in past years**) not only contained the usual Easter dinner makings and additional food items, but also homemade sugar cookies, handmade greeting cards, a roll of toilet paper, and (for Marguerite's Place families) goody-filled Easter baskets! All of this was accomplished within the added confines of social distancing and with a focus on the safety of all involved.

Rick Guay commented, "Our congregation is incredible. Smack dab in the middle of a very rough time, we are getting this done and in a bigger way than we ever have before. A++!!!"

A++ indeed!



Thank You Letter from Marguerite's Place for Easter Food Boxes and Children's Easter Baskets

Thank you for the generous Easter Boxes delivered for our families. They were greatly appreciated by our families and staff have already received the following feedback:

- "Thank you. We all got our boxes this morning! What a blessing to have so many people helping us out like this. We even got eggs and a roll of toilet paper! [My neighbor] was just telling me how she couldn't find eggs anyway so it was perfect timing for us to get some eggs! Happy Easter"
- "Thank you guys so much for the Easter box! ♥"
- "Btw ooommmggg thaaank you!!"
- "This box is awesoomme!!! Full of goodies"
- "They are very good to us. There was a lot of stuff in that box. [My daughter] LOVES popcorn but we've never done the stove top one before. Can't wait to see what she thinks of it lol!"

We are so grateful for the support of Hollis Congregational Church, especially in these difficult times. Wishing you a Happy Easter!

Hannah Stohler

Executive Director, Marguerite's Place

SCAMMING ALERT:

Friends, I'm reading and hearing about growing numbers of scams that are taking place, preying especially on seniors and folks who are vulnerable.



During a time of global crisis, relative panic, and disorientation, it's sadly not a surprise that some misguided souls would seize on the opportunity to take advantage of others, manipulating and ultimately breaking their ability to trust others and even themselves. It's devastating.

In our own community, there are several who have been scammed—these are intelligent, competent, caring individuals who genuinely believed that the person/people they were dealing with were either relatives, good friends, or people with legal authority. There should be no shame in responding to a cry for help, or acting in good faith as a response to a legal summons – which is exactly why predators often use the pretense of being a family member or friend in crisis, or being a government official who's threatening severe legal action if there's not an immediate response.

Please, please, please: If anyone approaches you (by telephone, email, or post) suggesting that you need to respond immediately and that you need to rush a bunch of money to them, or you need to give them any of your banking or other personal identity details, **DO NOT DO IT!**

(continued on next page)

Mission & Action News

May Items of the Month: Non-Perishable Food

for Brookline Food Pantry

- ◆ Pasta / Sauces / Rice ◆ Condiments / Sauces
- ◆ Canned Vegetables ◆ Dry Goods / Baking Supplies
- ◆ Snacks ◆ Canned Fruit ◆ Soups
- ◆ Proteins / Beans

Please support the Brookline Food Pantry by dropping your donations of non-perishable foods in the plastic container at the handicapped entrance to the church.



CORONAVIRUS Response Fund

During this challenging and concerning time we want to inform you about an important collaboration taking place to assist the four Southern New Hampshire hospitals in responding to the needs of their patients and front-line workers affected by COVID-19. **Please consider supporting them by donating to frontlinesnh.org.** Their website shares important details and allows you to select which hospitals your gifts will support in purchasing Personal Protective Equipment and responding to the multiple financial needs related to COVID-19.



Ash Street Shelter Dinners

Once a month someone from the church prepares and delivers dinner to the Ash Street Shelter in Nashua. We provide a \$75 gift card to help cover the cost of the meal. **We need a volunteer for June 12.** Please contact Lee Harper at 465-5118 if you are able to provide a meal in June.

Food & Fuel Assistance

If you know of anyone needing assistance with paying their heating bill or feeding their family, please contact Karen Marino at 603-475-3073 or kmarino360@gmail.com.

Diapers, Diapers, and More Diapers!

Please help us collect diapers sizes 4,5 & 6 for Marguerite's Place, the Nashua Soup Kitchen, and Bridges. There is a constant need for our youngest community members! Whenever you can, pick up diapers and we will distribute them to these grateful organizations!



Scam Alert (continued)

Talk to another family member, friend, or even me about it first—ask someone else whether it sounds legit to them. **Especially** if whoever's asking you for urgent attention to the matter, financial or legal or personal, tells you **not** to say anything to anyone—when that happens, the first thing you need to do is tell someone else (including the police) about it.

And, please, please, please: if you have parents or grandparents or neighbors you care about, have this conversation with them—even if you think they would never get duped by a scam artist, you need to have the conversation, being explicit that you hope they'll talk to you or a family member (or both!) if anyone should ever suggest that they're on the line for large sums of money or other personal property. I know too many people who have lost too much to the extremely persuasive and manipulative endeavors of sadly malevolent individuals.

- Rev. Tanya

From the Church Office

Many thanks go to Sue Adams and to Debbe Shipman (who stopped in and volunteered to stay) for helping to prepare your April *Chimes* for mailing – all while maintaining safe social distancing!



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 (United Church of Christ)
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**Come *ZOOM*
 Worship with us!
 Virtual Sunday Worship
 Services & Fellowship**

***Zoom* Sunday worship services and fellowship
 continue on Sunday mornings at 9:30.**

If you are interested in participating in our virtual services and don't already receive church emails, please contact news@hollischurch.org to receive emails with the link to join each Sunday. The link to join the service each Sunday is also posted on the private Facebook group the morning of the service (go to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/hollischurchmembers/> if you use Facebook.). We look forward to virtually seeing you!

In addition to Zoom worship, **we will continue to hold all meetings via Zoom.** If you wish to schedule a Zoom meeting for your board, committee, or ministry team, please send your requested date and time to:
zoommeetingrequest@hollischurch.org.

**Need Help
 with Zoom?**



Are you still hesitant to participate in our virtual worship services because you're intimidated by using the technology? Or are you participating in the Zoom worship services but still experiencing uncertainty/anxiety about how to:

- "Raise Hand"
- "Mute/Unmute"
- turn "Video On/Off"

You're not alone AND several people **HAVE** been helped over that hump through individual or group assistance and they are very happy they did!

Please don't hesitate to reach out for help getting started with or getting more comfortable using Zoom by contacting: zoomhelp@hollischurch.org.

For those just looking for a "cheat sheet" of instructions to teach yourself, go to

<https://hollischurch.org/zoom-help/>