

The

Chimes

Newsletter of

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

May 2021

www.HollisChurch.org

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In this issue

- Moving to “Hybrid” Worship – p 3
- **New Kitchen Ministry** – page 8
- Youth Group Fun! – page 2
- May calendar at a glance – page 4
- Our Church History – page 5
- *Buy a Brick & support the Adam Verrecchia Memorial Garden* – p. 2

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*“Look, I am creating something new.
There it is! Do you see it?
I have put roads in deserts, streams in
thirsty lands.”*
(Isaiah 43:19, CEV)

Dear Friends,

Across the season of Eastertide (the seven weeks after Easter Sunday, where Christians lean into the reality that we represent the Resurrected Body of Christ Jesus today), we’re exploring the **Holy Habit of Serving**.

And that’s appropriate, because one of the surest ways of learning about the power of resurrection—of how God’s power of bringing life from death, of birthing delightful surprises from impossible situations—is by engaging in the activity of serving others. We may go into it thinking we’re doing to others a good thing, but what we invariably discover is that our own soul is also strengthened, our personal and collective life is enriched in unexpected ways. As followers of Jesus Christ, loving and serving God by loving and serving our neighbors is fundamental to our ethical self-understanding.

Across the past pandemic-defined year, we have served others when we’ve sacrificed personal desires and preferences by wearing our masks. By foregoing group gatherings. By agreeing to wait. And now, by contributing to the establishment of herd immunity by getting vaccinated as soon as we’re able. But it hasn’t been easy, and although we’re a faith community, our daily activities are lived in the thick of competing messages and agendas served up by the world around us, where the underlying values are different from our own. Not only that, but keeping our distance in order to keep each other safe has, for many of us, resulted in a diminished sense of connection, communication, and confidence in our relationships. Lots of us are grieving the ways we feel more alienated and isolated from our neighbors not only physically, but also ideologically.

(continued on page 3)



From the Faith Formation Office

Journey to Confirmation

Confirmands are very close to wrapping up their year of study with only a couple classes left. Their last class will be a discussion about Faith; Personal Faith, Faith Journeys, and Creeds. Like the Flock, this group of students has exceeded all expectations by diligently attending classes whether they've been in-person or on zoom, and they have worked very hard! During the last class on May 16, they will be able to let loose and have fun with an end-of-year review game. Congratulations on an amazing year, Confirmands!

May's Bible Memory Verse is:

Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

John 6:35



News from *The Flock*

Only a couple more weeks left of classes for the Flock! We couldn't be prouder of this amazing group of dedicated and enthusiastic kids! They have attended classes faithfully every week via zoom, parents have tirelessly picked up supplies at church, and finally we are closing out the year with in-person classes. What a year!

The school year will end with a unit on the Names of Christ, followed by a party on the last day, May 18th. The students will play Bingo and flock-themed games with prizes!

Thank you to all the Flock families and volunteers who have helped us continue on with faith formation despite all the challenges of this year. We are truly grateful!

~Kim and Kim

Hooray!

Youth Group is BACK!

When: Friday, May 7 at 7:30 pm

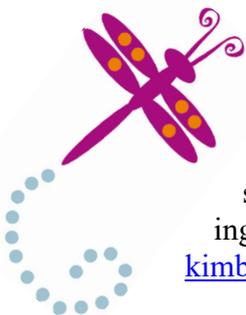
Where: Squires patio

Who: Kids in grades 5-8
(friends welcome!)

Join us for *outdoor fun in the dark!* We will have a portable fire pit for roasting s'mores, some super fun games, and stargazing! Please wear masks.



Buy a brick for placement in the Adam Verrecchia Memorial Community Garden



The garden committee would like to invite anyone in the congregation to buy a brick to memorialize a loved one. The inscribed brick will be placed in one of two walls on either side of the entrance to the AMV Memorial Community Garden in back of the church parking lot. Price for a brick is \$100. If interested, please email Kim Verrecchia at kimberlysu@hotmail.com for more details.

(From the Pastor – continued from page 1)

With this in mind, the theme of our next series of worship services (starting on May 30th and going through June) will be: **“I’ve Been Meaning to Ask... A Series for Curiosity, Courage, & Connection.”** My hope is that this series will help us remember to behold each other as images of the divine, and to practice risking vulnerability and authenticity in order to glimpse deeper beauty, hope, and joy. I hope it will strengthen our resolve to remain curious, and deepen our capacity for empathy and compassion as we practice the simple power of asking unassuming questions. I hope it will remind us that courage is rooted in the heart (cf. etymology of “courage”).

May is going to be an exciting month in our worship life! On May 9th, we will celebrate our annual **Mother’s Day Music Sunday** tradition; the choir is already working to prepare special anthems, and we will get a glimpse into what it’s taken for them to produce even a single hymn for us week after week. . . our Choir, and Minister of Music Julie Oliver, have worked so hard and this will be a special day of honoring their gifts.

Across the entire month, we will be transitioning to a “hybrid” worship service. For the first couple weeks, we will practice using our new AV equipment to broadcast the services on Zoom. (Up until this point, we’ve operated using my laptop and someone “stage managing” remotely.) And then, **on May 16th, we will open the doors (and windows) of the Meetinghouse for those who would like to join us in-person, while also allowing you to join the service remotely.** Pentecost, on May 23rd, will be particularly special this year as we remember the gift and movement of the Holy Spirit in the earliest churches—and notice how that Spirit hasn’t stopped creatively doing new things with God’s people, including us, right up to the present moment.

As we’ve done for our few outdoor in-person services, we’ll ask you to **sign up if you’d like to attend in-person, and expect to remain masked and distanced.** Pews will be clearly marked to facilitate all of that. Throughout, we’ll be learning and adapting new ways of worshiping together while apart, ways that allow us to be more inclusive, welcoming, and as one Resurrected Body. Our services of worship will be renewed, as we are continually called to renew our energy for serving. Watch your church emails for updates—I can’t wait!

Yours with faith, hope, and love,

Tanya

Our Church Records

Memorial Gifts

In memory of Frank Whittemore by:
Warren and Karen Coulter and
Laura McCarthy

Update from the Cushmans

Sibyl and I want to say “Thank you” to all who helped with rides for me to and from work in the past months. As of May 1st our new mailing address will be:

One Lyman Street, Apt 447
Westborough, MA 01581.

Email: sarahcushman@spectrum.net

Phone: cell 603-566-3126

landline 508-329-1014

Thanks!

Sarah and Sibyl Cushman

2021 Deacons Home Ministries

Our Easter food basket packing event was a success, once again! So many volunteered to help out with preparations before the packing event, during the packing event and with the deliveries. We managed to pack and deliver another 50 baskets with spiral sliced hams!

A very special Thank You goes out to this year’s confirmation class and their parents for stepping up time and time again to help us pack the food. You’ve made the all the difference!

We will be having one more “Special” food basket packing event on Sunday, May 16 from 12:00-1:30.

We will be purchasing hamburgers and hot dogs, along with fresh fruits and vegetables for each basket.



Several Scouts from Troop 465 have volunteered to help our Deacons pack the baskets and we look forward to working with them!

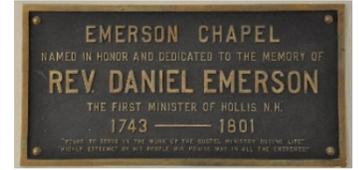
It has been our pleasure to work with you all! Thank you!

The Board of Deacons

...And the Rest is History

Reverend Daniel Emerson, Part II

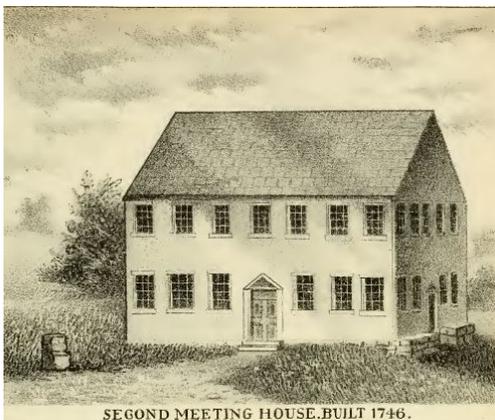
by Cindy Ryherd



This is the second of a three-part series about Reverend Daniel Emerson, first pastor of the what is now the Congregational Church of Hollis (see April *Chimes* for [Part I](#)). Part I ended with Rev. Emerson being ordained in April 1743, building his home ([Emerson House](#)) on the 40 acres of land he was given as part of his contract (overlooking the town common of Monument Square located on the east side of Main Street across Cleasby Lane from Hollis Town Hall), and marrying the love of his life, his second cousin, Hannah Emerson, on Nov. 11, 1744.

Pastor: Since his primary reason for moving to West Dunstable (eventually Hollis), NH was to be their settled pastor, it makes sense to start there. By all accounts, Rev. Emerson was an extremely popular preacher, not just in Hollis, but throughout the area. **Some quotes found in my research about him include:**

- *“His ministry was kindly, conscientious, gentle, and filled with a deep yearning for the salvation of all his people.”*
- *“Mr. Emerson was ordained April 20, 1743, and he continued a faithful, venerated and popular minister of that society till November 27, 1793, a period of more than fifty years, without a change ‘or wish to change his place.’”*
- *“Rev. Mr. Emerson was a man of large and active intellect, a convert of Whitefield, and partaking largely of his spirit, he was uniformly evangelical, and often a very eloquent preacher. His chief excellencies in preaching were sound doctrine, deep feeling and zeal at times almost overwhelming.”*
- *“He was one of the ablest advocates of the ‘New Light’ doctrine and for many years a leading and most influential minister in his section of the country.”* **Note:** The [‘New Light’](#) doctrine was an outgrowth of “the [First Great Awakening](#)” discussed in Part I.
- *“He was a kind of Congregational Bishop in his region. No man in southern New Hampshire was so extensively known, whose influence was so powerful on the surrounding ministers and churches.”*
- *“An able counselor, he was often called from home to aid feeble churches.”*



Changes to the Meeting House during his tenure are certainly, in part, a testament to how well-liked he was. Within just three years of his 1743 ordination, and five years since its construction in 1741, the original 1-room Meeting House (22’ x 20’ x 1 story high) had been outgrown. In 1746, construction of the Second Meeting House began (taking around 3 years to complete). Built in the same location as the First Meeting House, the Second Meeting House was more than double the size of the First Meeting House (50’ x 44’ x 2 stories high with a 2nd floor gallery). In 1799, just two years before Rev. Emerson’s death, the construction of an even larger Third Meeting House began (68’ x 54’ x 2 stories high with a 2nd floor gallery). He would not live to see the completion of the Third Meeting House (finished in 1804),

but from the original 30 families/residents that saw him ordained, the town of Hollis had grown to [1,441 residents in 1790](#) (the year of the first census), and he played a significant role in that growth.

The Third Meeting House ended up burning down in 1923, but in 1890, stained glass windows were added to it and the citizens of the town, through donations, raised money to have one of the new stained-glass windows be a memorial window to Rev. Daniel Emerson. And now, the current (fourth) Meeting House has a side chapel named in honor and memory of Rev. Emerson. As in life, Rev. Daniel Emerson will forever be highly regarded, and he is commemorated for the significant impact he had as first-ordained and longest-serving preacher of the church.

So Much More Than Preacher

Given how important the role of preacher was in any town of Colonial New England, if Rev. Emerson did nothing more than that, he would still be considered a very important person in Hollis' history. However, the fact is, his labors were by no means confined to the pulpit, and included teacher, soldier, public servant, and supporter of the Hollis Social Library.

Teacher: Rev. Emerson was a great supporter of education and did much to provide and enhance education in Hollis and the surrounding region. In the town records for 1771, when Mr. Emerson had been pastor for twenty-eight years, there was a note that he should keep the grammar school as usual "to teach all those in the town that shall present themselves in the languages." This implies that he had thus taught for years, if not during the whole of his past ministry. Scholars came from other towns to prepare for college under Mr. Emerson. So respected was he in that endeavor, in 1770, the Royal Governor of the Province of New Hampshire (pre-Revolutionary War, so not a state yet), [John Wentworth](#), sent his son to Mr. Emerson for instruction. In fact, as a result of Rev. Emerson's preaching, teaching, and inspiring of young minds, there were, before the Revolutionary War, twelve young men from the town that graduated from college, of whom eight became clergymen. For a small, agricultural town, this was an incredible accomplishment!

Soldier: Rev. Emerson served in the [French and Indian War](#) as chaplain of [Colonel Joseph Blanchard's](#) regiment in the [Crown Point](#) expedition of 1755 (Crown Point was a French fortress built in the 1730s with 12-foot thick limestone walls which British forces targeted twice during the [French and Indian War](#)). Nearly two-thirds of the Company of his regiment were also Hollis' men, including, [Peter Powers](#) (first western settler of Hollis) who was Captain. While chaplain in the army at Crown Point, when the men of his regiment were asked to present their arms for inspection, Rev. Emerson presented his Bible to the inspecting officer and commented on it being "his weapon". During this time, he was chaplain to the famous "[Roger's Rangers](#)", of which [Robert Rogers](#) and [John Stark](#) were the officers. Coming home unscathed, Rev. Emerson served again as chaplain for another regiment of New Hampshire troops raised in 1758, commanded by [Colonel John Hart](#) of Portsmouth. He was occupied about six months in each of his two services. **Teaser: During his 1755 service, he wrote a heart-felt love letter to his wife, Hannah, delivered to her by his dog! More in Part III!**

Public Servant: Further demonstrating Rev. Emerson's commitment to the town of Hollis, he served as Town Clerk and Selectman for two years: 1780 and 1781. This may well have been because many of the younger men of Hollis were fighting in the Revolutionary War during those years, including four of his own sons, but he stepped up as needed.

Friend of the Library: The [Hollis Social Library](#) has its own rich history which Rev. Emerson shares a part of. It was originally incorporated in 1799, just two years before Rev. Emerson's death. As someone who believed strongly in education, it's no surprise that Rev. Emerson was one of the original four "[Friends of the Library](#)".

At that time, it involved paying a \$2 initial fee and annual dues of 50 cents. In 1879, the library (at the time, housed in a room in the vestry of the Meeting House) was sold to the Town of Hollis for \$1.00, becoming one of the first public libraries in New Hampshire. The Hollis Social Library has over 220 years of history thanks to the many "Friends of the Library" over the years, including Rev. Daniel Emerson, a founding "friend"!



Grave: In colonial New England, the grave markers of Reverends and other important people were placed lying down (not standing as other grave markers would have been at that time). As such, Rev. Emerson's gravestone is easy to find in the churchyard cemetery. Also in the churchyard cemetery lie the graves of his wife, sister, and 6 of his 13 children, as well as 16 other descendants and their spouses.

The epitaph on his gravestone nicely sums up all that he meant to so many:

Beneath this Monument lies the Mortal parts of Rev. Daniel Emerson. He was born at Reading, Mass., May 20, 1716, graduated at Harvard University, 1739 and was ordained April 20, 1743, to the Pastoral care of the Church and Congregation in Hollis, which then consisted of only 30 Families. .

...and the Rest is History
(continued)

He was
an
honest
man,
given
to



Hospitality, an affectional
Husband and tender Parent,
a faithful Friend and Patri-
otic Citizen, an Evangelical,
zealous, and unusually suc-
cessful Preacher of the
Gospel of Jesus Christ.
Highly Esteemed by his
people, his praise was in all
the Churches. A.D. 1793, he
voluntarily relinquished
one-half his Salary to pro-
mote the settlement of a
Colleague, from which time
his pious walk and occa-
sional labors evinced an
unabating love for the cause
of Christ, until nature failed
and he fell asleep in Jesus,
September 30, 1801, aged
85 years.

**Tune in next month to
learn about Daniel Emer-
son: husband and father.
Read about the love story
of Rev. Daniel & Hannah
Emerson, including ex-
cerpts from Daniel's fa-
mous love letter to Han-
nah in 1755 carried to her
from Lake George, NY to
Hollis, NH by his dog!
Their love survived well
over 50 years of 1700s
hardship, including Han-
nah's eventual deafness,
and having 6 of their 13
children pre-decease
them. A story you won't
want to miss!**

Mission & Action News

May Item of the Month:

Brain Games for senior adults

This Month we are supporting Easter Seals by collect-
ing "Brain Games" for Senior Adults like:

- ♦ Large print crossword puzzles
- ♦ Sudoku
- ♦ Word searches

All can be found at the Dollar Tree and other local stores.



Diapers, Diapers, Diapers... Every organization we support has
a need for diapers to take care of their little ones. When you are out doing
your food shopping, pick up a package or two of diapers.

Ongoing Collections...

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

Please Note: We are no longer collecting Greeting Cards and Stationery.

Our partner organization is not currently accepting these donations.

Thank you for supporting our partner organizations. Your generosity
is boundless, and we hope you can continue to contribute. Please place all
donations in the M&A collection bin outside the church's center (handi-
capped) entrance.



Ash St Shelter Dinner Chefs Needed

On the second Friday of the month, our church volunteers
provide a dinner for 20-30 people for the Ash Street Shel-
ter. Mission & Action provides you with a gift card to pur-
chase the foods from Market Basket. We just need you to
prepare the meal. **We are in desperate need for chefs for
the remaining year: June – December.** If you would like
to cook for someone else besides your family, please consider helping out.
Contact Lee Harper at blharper@tds.net

Your M&A \$ at Work...

We have been busy donating monies. In April we gave to:

- St John Neumann Food Pantry
- *Grow Nashua* program
- *Meals Matter* program at Nashua South High School

Coming in June: Red Cross Blood Drive

Mission in Action's next Red Cross Blood Drive will be held on Saturday,
June 12, in Hardy Hall, from 10:00 until 3:00. Please mark your calendars
now and plan to donate! Every two seconds someone in the U.S. is in need
of blood. Register online at redcrossblood.org. If you are unable to
donate blood but would still like to help, please consider **volunteering for
a 2 hour shift at our drive.** Contact Thelma Wigfield at
tr.wigfield@comcast.net or 603-438-3833.



The Congregational Church of Hollis
 (United Church of Christ)
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 Hollis NH 03049

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

New Kitchen Ministry Opportunity!

As we near the end of the BOV construction phase of our church we are entering a new and exciting phase called *Living Our Vision*. The new kitchen has been transformed into a beautiful and efficient work space with all new appliances and equipment. We are excited about living our church’s vision of worship and socialization in our new space.

Lee Harper and Kimber Harmon are forming a **new ministry team called *The Kitchen Ministry***. If you love to cook, to serve others, have the spiritual gift of hospitality or just like to eat, please join us for a **zoom meeting on Tuesday, May 25th at 7 pm** for a time to get acquainted and learn about our vision for the new ministry and the new space. All are welcome — men, women and young adults. We look forward to working with you and the opportunity to grow this new approach to *Living Our Vision!*

