

The Congregational Church of Hollis, UCC

3 Monument Square, Hollis, New Hampshire

603-465-7797

www.HollisChurch.org



Four Pillars of Our Mission:

Welcome, Worship, Learn, Serve

Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 27, 2022

9:30 a.m.

**Masks Optional and Social Distancing Encouraged
(Services are being recorded)**

The CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF HOLLIS, U.C.C.

Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 27, 2022

9:30 a.m.

All Members of the Church, Ministers

The Rev. Tanya Stormo Rasmussen, Lead Pastor

Julie Oliver, Minister of Christian Music

WE GATHER

PRELUDE

Julie Oliver

WELCOME

Rev. Tanya

Grace, mercy, and peace be with you. I greet you in the name of Christ Jesus, who breaks down the barriers that divide us. It doesn't matter where you've come from, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Tanya

Each week of this Lent season, we are focusing on ways that we can practice a counter-cultural theology that emphasizes the beauty and grace of the reality of life right now, rather than waiting with increasing judgment to reach some vision of a perfected existence. Our ladder-climbing efforts sometimes end up taking us down a rung or two as things don't work out just right. And so let us continue to turn ladders into gardens, nurturing our souls and embracing our holy, "good enough," lives.

INVOCATION

"Good Enough"

(Recorded)

*What in our lives do we dream about for tomorrow, void of sorrow?
Time spent regretting decisions of our yesterdays, mistakes we made?
Sometimes we get what we get,
life disappoints us and yet,
God is still here and somehow, this faith is good enough.*

PRAYER OF APPROACH (Based on Psalm 32)

Deacon

Let us pray together:

Holy One, God of Forgiveness, we call out to you and you surround us with deliverance. You love us infinitely more than we love ourselves or others. Open us this day to your counsel, helping us be more merciful, more grace-filled, so that we might rejoice in simple and good enough moments that fill our days. Amen.

THE CHILDREN LEAD US - INTRODUCTION TO THE THEME

HYMN

We're Part of the Blessing (Tune: *Let All Things Now Living*)

We're part of the blessing of God's new creation;
The world may not see it, but we know it's true.
For God in Christ Jesus has given salvation;
The old life is gone! God makes everything new!
We're part of the blessing, for we are God's children.
We're loved and forgiven! We're welcomed back home.
And now we are called to be part of God's kingdom,
To welcome the children God claims as his own.

A man had two sons and the younger said to him,
"I want my inheritance now! It is mine!"
His father divided the property with him;
That son spent it all and was soon feeding swine.
But then he remembered his father providing;
He thought he would beg to go home as a slave.
His dad saw him coming as he stood there waiting;
He ran out to greet him and welcome and save.

We're part of the blessing of God's new creation;
As we have been welcomed, may we share God's grace.
There's no room for grumbling in God's gracious kingdom;
There's no place to question God's loving embrace.
The outcast, the sinner, the poor, struggling mother,
The addict, the seeker, the one who is lost —
God welcomes them home and invites them to dinner —
God runs out to greet us through Christ and his cross.

TIME OF CONTEMPLATION AND CONFESSION

Deacon

Today we will hear how the Prodigal Son lives high on the hog and then famine strikes in the land of his dream vacation. And so he heads home, tail between his legs, expecting that he has lost it all. To his surprise, his extravagant failure is met with extravagant love and grace. We can be pretty hard on ourselves when things don't go as planned. Guilt, shame, and fear of being seen as a failure can leave us wallowing in the pig pen. Our delusions of a perfectible life keep us disappointed in ourselves. Truth is, life is a big ol' risk every single day and facing whatever each day holds is not only good enough, but worthy of love and grace. Do you find yourself being unrealistically hard on yourself, or others? Let us take a moment of silent reflection for confession, acknowledging the ways we need God's grace in order to accept ourselves and others, and the lessons life is full of...

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Rev. Tanya

(concluding with the unison words) **Thanks and glory be to God!**

GLORIA PATRI

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost!
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be:
World without end! Amen, amen.*

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Beloved, having been reconciled to God, let us share the peace and joy of that relationship with one another! Those of you joining us remotely, please type a greeting in the YouTube Live chat feature with your name and greeting to others if you haven't already. Here in the Meetinghouse, please greet those who are joining us remotely with a wave to the camera (at the back of the Meetinghouse), and then greet those around you with words of peace and connection.

WE PROCLAIM

FIRST READING **Psalm 32** pg. 440

THE WORD IN MUSIC *When Jesus Wept* arr. D. Wagner
Choir - recorded

GOSPEL READING **Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32** pg. 850

A Word of God that is still speaking,
Thanks be to God.

SERMON *Confessions of a Prodigal* **Rev. Tanya**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

LORD'S PRAYER (unison)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

OFFERTORY

*To initiate Online Giving: Go to <https://hollischurch.org/donations/>
Please take a moment to sign our Friendship Register and pass it to your neighbor. If you're visiting with us and would like to be included on our mailing lists for hardcopy or electronic newsletter or remote church information, please be sure to include your contact details. And, as you pass the Friendship Registers, take note of the names of those who are sitting near you and greet them by name following the service if you haven't already.*

DOXOLOGY

*Praise God, throughout these forty days.
Praise Christ, our Lord, whom God did raise.
And praise the Spirit who imparts
God's love in Christ into our hearts. Amen.*

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

WE DEPART TO SERVE

HYMN

This is a Day of New Beginnings

414

A BLESSING FOR BECOMING REAL

Blessed are you who do not despise your realness.
It may hurt. You may not recognize yourself in the mirror.
But this is what we hoped for, right?
To live and love. To be loved.
To have our experiences show on our faces and in our cells.
It is the real life of Jesus in us, being made visible, as all our seams show.

OUR COMMON COMMISSION

Let us now go forth into the world in peace, being of good courage, holding fast to that which is good, rendering to no one evil for evil, strengthening the faint-hearted, supporting the weak, helping the afflicted, honoring all persons, loving and serving the Lord, and rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

BENEDICTION

CHORAL RESPONSE

(Recorded)

POSTLUDE

The flowers this morning are presented to the glory of God in celebration of Matt Kopser's birthday by Naomi and Julie Kopser.

Deacons this morning are Jenna Dakalovic and Tom Hildreth.

Please join us for fellowship and refreshments in Hardy Hall immediately following service. For those joining remotely, please click [here](#) to join via Zoom, the meeting ID is 755502991 and the password 837130.

Worship Notes:

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“A Blessing for When You Realize Everyone is Struggling” from *Good Enough: 40'ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection* by Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie. Used with permission. Purchase the book at www.katebowler.com/goodenough.

Hymn *We're Part of the Blessing*: Text: Copyright © 2019 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. All rights reserved.