

The

Chimes

Newsletter of

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

December 2016

www.HollisChurch.org

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The Congregational Church of Hollis (UCC)

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September to May. One edition is
published for the summer months.
All submissions for the newsletter are
due by the 15th of the month preced-
ing publication.

“Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.’”
(John 8:12)

Dear Friends,

When we lived in Copenhagen for a year, I learned about *hygge* (pronounced vaguely like “hooggeh”)—a word that connotes warmth, coziness, a discernible peace and contentment. It’s an experience of assurance that life is fundamentally good, and blessed. *Hygge* is often sought after and created in the winter-time, when the sun rises late, barely crests the horizon, and then sets early, leaving the Danish people shrouded in darkness for up to 17 hours a day. There’s a longing for a gentle light to pierce the long, cold darkness—so candles are plentiful, as are strings of little “fairy lights” or Christmas lights. What you begin to notice is that people who practice creating and enjoying *hygge* spaces and times are more gentle with themselves, and with the world.



I think most of us could do with a little *hygge* just now, and I encourage you to consider making an easy Advent wreath to help with that effort. All you need is some evergreen sprigs, and five candles. Ideally, three or four would be blue or purple (the liturgical colors of royalty, which we use during Advent and Lent, anticipating the Ruler of all creation); and one — if you only use three blue/purple — would be pink (the liturgical color for joy). The blue/purple candles usually represent peace, hope, and love — the order is somewhat fluid, though usually love comes last; and the pink candle, traditionally lit for the 3rd week of Advent, symbolizes joy. Of course, that’s not set in stone, and sometimes churches choose other words to accompany the lighting of each of the candles.

These four candles are arranged around the fifth candle, which is white and usually larger than the other four, and resides in the center: this is the “Christ candle”, and represents the centrality of Christ to all things. The candles are surrounded by evergreens, which symbolize eternal life.
(continued on page 5)

From the Christian Education Office

Pre-Confirmation Calendar

- **December 4** – PreConfirmation Sunday class during 10:30 service . Lesson taught: “Bible Overview Old Testament”
- **December 11** – PreConfirmation Sunday class during 10:30 service. Lesson taught: “The Birth of Jesus”
- **December 18 – January 1** – CHRISTMAS BREAK. No pre-confirmation Sunday class. Pre-confirmation students are encouraged to attend the full Sunday and Christmas Eve church services during this time. *Merry Christmas!*

Angel Loft Thanks!

Thank you to all who donated to, helped set-up, clean-up, and run the Angel Loft at the Christmas Fair on November 19th! In addition to the adult volunteers, we had 7 youth volunteers help and greatly appreciate the time they gave on a Saturday! We had 76 kids visit the Angel Loft and made \$387. Special thanks to Kathryn Hildreth who organized everything and gave so much of her time to make it such a great success!

Featherfood Response

Thank you to all who participated in our Feather Food Sunday Procession. Our neighbors in need are abundantly grateful for all of the fresh produce you contributed to the Thanksgiving baskets. A special thank you to our 5th and 6th grade classes who additionally made pumpkin pies to share!! Together we contributed 40 boxes. The turkey is truly thankful for everyone's enthusiastic response.

Advent – Changing to Purple

The season of **Advent** began on Sunday, November 27th and continues through Christmas Eve. It is a time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus at Christmas. The term “Advent” is a version of the Latin word meaning “coming.” Sunday School has changed to the color purple – the color of royalty. Be sure to take time to notice our purple lights, ornaments, flowers and altar cloths in the Sunday School classrooms and enjoy the glorious celebration of Jesus’ birth.

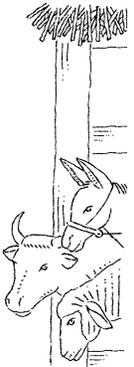


Christmas Tableau

Please join us for the **Annual Children's Christmas Program on Sunday, December 11th** during the 10:30 service. Our children will be telling the story of Jesus' birth through music and scripture. It's a fun but meaningful event that the children and congregation always enjoy!

There's Room in the Stable...

We are looking for 1 or 2 parent volunteers to coordinate the Live Nativity at 4:45 and 5:45 on Christmas Eve. We are also looking for people to participate in the Live Nativity. No speaking parts required... you just put on costume and become part of the nativity scene. We need shepherds, wise men, angels, Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus. If you can help coordinate 1 or both of the 2 times, and/or if anyone in your family would like to be a part of this experience, please contact Michelle Etchells at metch0222@aol.com or 603-465-3371.



Communion

The 5th and 6th graders will receive communion during the 10:30 service on Sunday, December 4th.

Sunday School Central

In November the kids had their Junior Worship in Hardy Hall, and learned how it takes courage to share what we have, through John 6: 1-14. We learned a new song, and each child took home a feather from the feather food Turkey!

Look for the new “Sunday School Reminders” flier to be handed out by the Sunday School teachers with a list of upcoming events/reminders to parents.

Sunday School Central -- Lots to look forward to in December!

Date	Pre-K – 2 nd grades (Worship Centers)	3 rd – 6 th grades (SPARK)
Dec. 4 Junior Worship	Advent II Tableau Rehearsal	Isaiah 11:1-10 God's Peaceful World Tableau Rehearsal
Dec. 11	Christmas Tableau Teacher appreciation Advent cookie decorating during fellowship	Christmas Tableau Teacher appreciation Advent cookie decorating during fellowship
Dec. 18 Poinsettias	Advent III	Matthew 1:18-25 Angels Visit
Dec. 24	Christmas Eve 4 and 6pm family services (also 8 and 10pm services) Live Nativity 4:45 and 5:45pm No Sunday School	Christmas Eve 4 and 6pm family services (also 8 and 10pm services) Live Nativity 4:45 and 5:45pm No Sunday School
Dec. 25	No Sunday School Merry Christmas!	No Sunday School Merry Christmas!

Adult CE Enjoyed by All!

Reverend Tanya's *Living the Questions* adult education class, which ended in November, was a GREAT success! Here are quotes from some of the 13 people who attended:

"I thought it was the best adult education class I have ever taken!"

"I looked forward to each class. I didn't want to miss any of them!"

"I felt very privileged to be a part of it."

"Challenging topics, questions and discussions that gave me positive support in my faith journey"

"It made me excited about faith again!"

More adult CE classes will be offered in the New Year with a variety of topics being explored. Come see what the buzz is about -- a great New Year's resolution!

Holiday Shopping Online?



Turn your gift buying (and other online purchases) into dollars for the church! Please visit the "Donations" page of the church website for further information. A portion of your online purchases can **benefit the church without costing you a penny.** It's easy! Email your friends and family to do it, too.

Youth Group News (Mission Trip, too!)

We had a great turn out at our bon fire at the beginning of November, with over 20 kids and a whole lot of s'mores! Later in the month our junior youth group packed the Thanksgiving baskets and had pizza together at the church.



This December our **Senior Youth Group** will be hosting a **Parents Night Out event** at the church on **Friday, December 9th**, from 5-8pm. Parents can drop off their little ones and go out and get Christmas shopping done, or maybe go out for a nice dinner! The senior youth group will be providing holiday themed crafts and other activities to entertain the young ones. Pizza will be provided for dinner for volunteers/kids, along with some other fun snacks! **This event will also serve as a fundraiser for our upcoming Mission Trip.** Donations are welcome ☺. Parents who drop off their little ones are encouraged to donate, and all proceeds will support our Mission Trip. Volunteers will be Mission-Trip-goers as well as any members of the senior youth group!

Our **Junior Youth Group** will have a trip to **Launch Trampoline park** in Nashua, on Sunday, December 11th from 3-4:30pm. For information on pricing and directions to Launch, please contact Kelsey! Adult volunteers are welcome at this event!

December 2016



	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
	<p><i>No Mission Items of the Month</i></p> <p>Please support The Giving Tree and The Christmas Fund offering</p>					7 pm – Senior Choir 1	2	2pm-4pm - Wreath Decorating workshop 3pm – Handbell practice 3
<p>Second Sunday of Advent ~ Hope 9:00 am – Communion Worship 10:30 am – Communion Worship/Sunday School Pick up ordered wreaths after church! 5-7pm - <i>Christmas Is for Giving</i> All-Church Advent Celebration event 4</p>	<p>7:15 am– Men’s Breakfast at Denny’s 8:00 am – Ladies’ Breakfast at Joey’s Diner 7pm – CE Board meeting 5</p>	<p>7 pm – Stewardship Board meeting 6</p>	<p>Poinsettia orders due 7</p>	<p>7 pm – Choir 8:15 pm – Music Board meeting 8</p>	<p>5-8 pm – SYG “Parents’ Night Out” Volunteers provide Ash St. Shelter dinner 9</p>	<p>3pm – Handbell practice 4pm – Town Center tree lighting & luminaries COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CONCERT 7:00 pm at Hollis Brookline High School 10</p>		
<p>Third Sunday of Advent ~ Joy Giving Tree wrapped gifts due at church 9:00 am – Worship 10:30 am – Worship and Sunday School Christmas Tableau 3-4:30 pm – Jr Youth Group Launch Trampoline Park field trip 11</p>	<p>7:15 am– Men’s Breakfast at Denny’s 8:00 am – Ladies’ Breakfast at Joey’s Diner 7:15 pm – Deacons meeting 12</p>	<p>7 pm – Mission & Action Board meeting 13</p>	<p>5 pm – Facilities Committee meeting 14</p>	<p>7 pm – Choir January <i>Chimes</i> deadline 15</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>3pm – Handbell practice 17</p>		
<p>Fourth Sunday of Advent ~ Love <i>Music Sunday</i> ~ Poinsettia Sunday The UCC Christmas Fund offering taken 9:00 am – Worship 10:30 am – Worship and Sunday School 18</p>	<p>Monday 7:15 am– Men’s Breakfast 8:00 am – Ladies’ Breakfast 7 pm – Trustees meeting 19</p>	<p>Tuesday 7 pm – Church Council meeting 20</p>	<p>Wednesday 21</p>	<p>Thursday 22</p>	<p>Friday 23</p>	<p>Saturday Christmas Eve 4:00 pm – Family Candlelight Service 4:45 pm - Live Nativity 5:45 pm - Live Nativity 6:00 pm – Family Candlelight Service 8:00 pm – Candlelight Service of Lessons & Carols 10:00 pm – Candlelight Service of Lessons & Carols 24</p>		
<p> Christmas Day 10:30 am – Worship <i>One Service only</i> NO Sunday School 25</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	<p> Welcome 2017! 31</p>		

From the Pastor (cont. from p. 1)

It's a rich symbol that many churches and families use during Advent to remind us of our watching and waiting for "the light that shines in the darkness"—and each week, the light grows as more candles are lit. Finally, on Christmas Eve, we rejoice as the Christ candle is lit and we embrace the Love, the Joy, the Peace, and the Hope of God that Jesus Christ revealed in the flesh to all the world.

Each morning (if you rise before the sun does), and/or each evening, take a moment with just the candles lit and reflect on the expressions of hope, peace, joy, and love you've encountered. Take a moment to appreciate how the light gently pierces the darkness, and warms the space. Notice as the weeks go by, how the light grows—and how it changes. Notice how your own mood changes each day, as the light meets you, or perhaps as you feel too distracted to be fully present to the light, etc. And, as you try to be present in that moment (which could be as brief as 2-3 minutes!), see whether it doesn't feel *hygge*.

As we all watch and wait for Christ's appearance in our world, I wish you a *hyggeligt* Advent, a resplendent Christmas, and a richly-blessed New Year!

Yours in faith, hope, and love,

Tanya

Hooray!! The much-anticipated **Strategic Planning Task Force Report is complete!**

Each family is encouraged to pick up a copy at the church, or email the church office for an electronic copy (churchoffice@hollischurch.org) or hard copy to be sent to you. The document includes a proposed Vision Statement, Mission Statement, and Strategic Plan for our community's future direction—and you'll surely want to have a look to see whether you resonate with what's there, or not? We'll be exploring it together on Sunday, January 8th, and voting on whether to adopt it as a guiding document at our Annual Meeting on Feb. 12th.

All-Church Christmas is for Giving Advent Celebration

**Sunday, December 4th
Hardy Hall, 5 - 7 pm**

The Fellowship & Hospitality team invites you to take a break from your busy holiday preparations to celebrate the joyful season of Advent at the ***Christmas is for Giving Advent Celebration*** and friends in fellowship and service to others. We'll share a meal (with allergy-free/vegetarian options) of soups, sandwiches and dessert, enjoy some Christmas music, and work together in service to others—including animals, military personnel, shut-ins, and the impoverished--by creating special gifts for them. RSVPs greatly appreciated by sign-up in hallway, an email to FandH@hollischurch.org or reply to Carol Birch. Musicians willing to share their talents are also needed!



Music Notes...

Christmas Bells

Anyone interested in playing at the **6pm Christmas Eve** service on Saturday, Dec. 24, please join us!

Practice: 3pm on Saturday, Dec 3, Dec 10, Dec 17

Meet: 5:15pm Saturday, Dec 24

Questions? Contact Janet at janetsterritt@gmail.com or 603-465-7248



Calling all musicians! If you are a musician of any ability level, beginner to professional, and would like a chance to perform publicly to share your talents, the **Music Board is hosting a February concert** to be held at the church.

TIME/DATE: 2-4 pm on Sunday, February 19, 2017
Vocal, instrumental, sacred, secular, popular, ancient, contemporary, classical, solo, ensemble, or any combination of these are WELCOME! You are asked to prepare up to a five-minute piece for the program. Church and community members will be invited to listen to our talent, and refreshments will be served after the concert in Hardy Hall. For more information, or to submit your request for a program spot, please provide your name, email, phone, title, composer, and length of your piece with any production notes (need a stand, want a microphone, how many in group, etc.) to Diane Fallier at dfallier17@gmail.com. More details to follow.



CHRISTMAS EVE

Saturday, December 24

Our **4 p.m. and 6 p.m. family services** focus on celebrating Jesus' birth with narrative and music that is appropriate to our community's youngest members.

Our **8 p.m. and 10 p.m. worship services** are **traditional services of Lessons and Carols.**

On **Sunday, Dec 25, Christmas Day**, Rev. Tanya offers one **service at 10:30** (no 9:00 worship; no Sunday School).

Your church needs your time and talent!

The Nominating Committee is looking for a few good men and women (and teens) to staff some remaining positions starting in Feb 2017. We have openings for Deacons, Christian Education Board, and Stewardship. Most meet just once a month. Email susan.benz@gmail.com or call 759-0179 if you are interested and would like more information. Thank you for considering serving our church!

From the Church Office

My grateful thanks go to Nancy Bell, Marsha Joyce, Freddi Olson, Thelma Pollard, Doris Rafferty and Joyce Toli for preparing your November *Chimes*.

Our Church Records

New Members

November 13, 2016

Beth and Lee Harper

Deaths

November 6, 2016

Alan Blannin

Mission and Action News

Annual Christmas Giving Tree Program

The Mission and Action Board is sponsoring the **Christmas Giving Tree** for needy families in our area. The Christmas tree will be in Emerson Chapel and Hardy Hall **until December 4.**

Here's how it works:

1. Choose a tag (or more than one!) from the tree.
2. Pull the *second* tag off the string, write your name and telephone number on it, and put it in the basket provided.
3. Keep the top tag. It has information about the gift recipient.
4. Go shopping! Use the info and suggestions on the tag as a guide.
5. *Please wrap gifts individually!* This is so the children will have multiple things to open on Christmas morning, and it's a lot more fun to open wrapped gifts!
6. For each tag, **bag the gifts together and attach the tag** containing the gift request information to the bag.
7. The gifts will need to be **back at the church by December 11** to give us time to deliver them.



The Christmas Fund – Offering taken Dec 18

This annual Christmas Fund offering is a 111 year old tradition of sending a monetary gift to those who have served the Lord and His Church. Gifts to the Christmas Fund help provide Pension and health premium supplementation to lower - income retired UCC clergy and lay employees, emergency grants to the families of clergy and lay employees, and Christmas "Thank you" gift checks to hundreds of annuitants. Please watch for the **special envelopes inserted in your bulletin on December 18th** and consider making a contribution to the Christmas Fund.

Heating Assistance Available

Cold weather is here! We have heating oil certificates available for those needing help with paying for heating oil as well as funds for kerosene and propane heating fuel. If you know of anyone needing this assistance please contact Coleen Brady at 603-598-8049 or cbrady27@comcast.net. Oil is generously donated by our partnering oil supplier, and we purchase additional oil with our Christmas Eve offering.

M&A Updates:

November donations sent to CareGivers and Save the Children.

The **October Blood Drive** was very successful, collecting **26 pints** and exceeding the goal! Many thanks to those who donated blood or volunteered to help with the drive.

Twelve Freshman Care packages were sent to college freshmen in our congregation. Thank you for helping to send some cheer to our young people while they are away from home!

The holiday season is quickly approaching and the Hollis Woman's Club, Hollis Brookline Rotary Club, Hollis Agricultural Commission and NorEasters are sponsoring a new holiday tradition

Hollis Holiday Luminary Night

Saturday December 10th

This is an event that will prelude the Hollis Town Band's Concert that benefits our Deacons Fund. The Hollis Agricultural Commission, Hollis town people and volunteers will place the luminary bags around the square at 1:00.

At 4:00 p.m. we will **light the candles** and anticipate **Santa's arrival in the tractor parade** at 4:30.

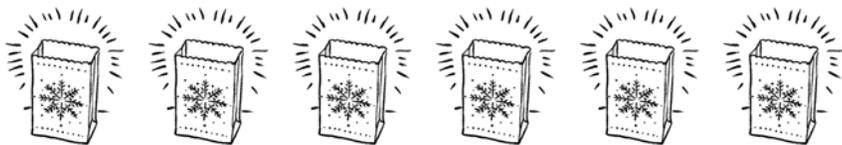
Starting about 4:15, our own **church chimes will ring with Christmas music** and the Meeting House will be open to warm our cold visitors. **Santa** will then be dropped off at the Lawrence Barn where he will greet his young visitors and listen to their wishes as parents take pictures. Small donations will be pleasantly accepted to help offset the cost of the festivities.

We encourage visitors to drive through Monument Square and see the village all aglow. After viewing and admiring our twinkling village, make your way to Hollis Town Band's **annual Holiday Concert** at the Hollis Brookline High School auditorium at 7:00p.m. Your admission is a donation of canned food goods. Monies raised at the goodies table also help offset the costs of the Deacons' Christmas food baskets.

We can always use helpers! At 1:00 p.m. Saturday afternoon we will be placing thousands of bags around the square and at 4:00 p.m. the candles will be lit. Clean up will be a breeze with your help starting on Sunday morning at 9:00 a.m.

For more information contact Kimber Harmon at 465-2742 or KimberHarmon106@gmail.com

Come and enjoy the spirit of the season with us as we light up our country village and listen to festive music with a holiday sing along.



Christmas Poinsettias

To place Christmas poinsettia plants in the church on December 18th 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 _____
(\$7.50 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 second service on Sunday, December 18, 2016.

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

DEADLINE FOR ORDERS — WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2016



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

Non-Profit Organization
 U.S. Postage Paid
 Permit No. 1
 Hollis, NH 03049

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



*The Hollis Town Band and
 Community Chorus*

invite you to our...

***Holiday
 Concert***

Saturday, December 10, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

Hollis Brookline High School auditorium

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

Admission: non-perishable food items

All food items will 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 drop them at the church office on the morning of Friday, Dec. 9.

Bakers
 Needed



Won't You Help?

- **Bake** and donate a few goodies.
- **Come to the concert!** Bring your non-perishable food items to donate and buy some sweets at intermission.