

Priest in Charge Report: July, 2023

Emmanuel Episcopal Church,
Dublin, New Hampshire

Dear Friends at Emmanuel,

It was a joy to spend the month of July with you this year - our ninth or tenth year of ministry together. As always, the month was restorative, joyous, moving, and fun.

This year, I presided over 5 Sundays of worship in the church but was unable to be present for the opening weekend due to a family wedding. When I arrived the church, ground, and rectory were in excellent shape thanks to the diligent off-season work of Buildings and Grounds and the Executive Committee. The roof work completed over the off-season was well done and the church was beautiful and ready for the summer. Over the course of our summer, the roof was tested by a micro-burst tornado and was proven sound and secure.

Bible study was held weekly on Wednesday mornings with strong and regular attendance. The study focused on the readings for the coming Sunday.

Attendance on Sundays was good, but not up to the historical highs of some previous summers. That may be due to the rainy weather which dampened spirits, or perhaps to the long COVID recovery which all churches are experiencing. It is the cause of some concern, as those of us who love Emmanuel all want it to thrive long into the future.

Lower Attendance was surely not due to the lack of beautiful and enthusiastic music at the church this season. As always, the hymns were carefully led by Dr. Englund and his talented student Graham Omrud. Additional music was provided by the Walden School including Aurora Nealand on the Fourth of July weekend, and the Walden Chorus on Sunday, July 16, 2023. Nor was it due to a lack of hospitality following worship - many of which due to weather were held inside the rectory, but all of which were well hosted.

Participation in the shared liturgical and hospitality ministries was well managed and organized by Amy Manley using the Uber Board and electronic communication. The weekly Emmanuel E-pistle was regularly updated and sent by the communications chair, Ellen Avery. In short, all the requisite ministries supported the season beautifully.

There were no pastoral rites, baptisms, weddings, confirmations, or burials, offered this year, although I was able to participate with many of you in the burial rite for Henny Hale at St. James', Keene and the memorial service for beloved parishioner Arria Sands which Kathy George led so beautifully at Jack's home.

Services were recorded in the register of services for archival purposes. Last year, I began a conversation with Ann Conway about purchasing and using a formal parish register to record pastoral rites that occur at Emmanuel. This register has more space for information about baptisms, weddings, and confirmations including dates, presiders, and names of participants and sponsors and it would be a good idea to consider whether the time has come to purchase such a book and try to gather information about past rites that are otherwise unrecorded at Emmanuel.

I was pleased to be able to welcome the Rev. Abby VanderBrug to Emmanuel and the rectory for a visit in July and passed along my usual transition letter to her to set her up for success. I am so glad to hear that her time at Emmanuel was successful.

With every good wish, I remain,

Faithfully yours,

The (Very) Rev. Gideon L. K. Pollach