

Hi, my name is Charlotte Lyons, call me Char, I'm the historian at South Church in Andover, established in 1711 at 41 Central St. ANY WELCOMES.

This evening I am speaking on the local impact and consequences in Andover and North Andover from the 1692 Witch Trials, where 50 persons from our town/towns here were imprisoned as witches, more than from any other town. For the sake of a map, here is what Essex County looked like in 1692, Salem and Andover were neighbors. **(Show Boundaries)** Andover is about 1/3 of the county, Salem Village is now Danvers, and Salem is still the county seat but much smaller.

My talk tonight is based on a paper by South Church member Graham Long called "The Founding of South Church". We first gave something of this talk 4 years ago when we both had terrible colds and drank icy cold Cokes afterward as a reward, so Graham, I shall slake my throat alone later. He is at choir practice.

The first part of my talk is from his setting the table of what happened in the Massachusetts Bay Colony in the previous 65 years before the Trials, and it's long, so bear with me for 20 minutes.

Then we enter into Andover in 1692 and what the heck just happened in Salem Village, and then what happened in Andover a few months later, and then in the next 17 years before a second parish was established in 1709, which created the Church of the South Parish of Andover being gathered in 1711, and where that led to the growth of our town, and then the eventual split into two towns along parish boundaries in 1855.

A few notes before I begin:

I am not going to give a time line of events or rehash how things happened in 1692, please accept the fact that the hysteria took on a life of its own where our town was ensnared. So I might mess up on facts and details and I'm famous for saying 1962 instead of 1692, etc., or gloss over or lump facts. It's not so much the details here as it is what happened here later, on a personal level, to the citizens here, and where that went.

Also I will be referring to North Parish just for location purposes as we only had one parish at the time, and Southenders as those who lived way down here in what is now Andover. And North Parish is where the town center was by the North Parish Church of North Andover on the green. When I refer to Andover, it is the whole town at the time, I will get to that map in a bit.

Just to make it clear, I am not a professional historian. I am not an authority on the Witch Trials.

I became interested in the history of South Church by figuring out the people in our historic cemetery and learned of our people and legacy along the way. I have simply put some dots together in a soup that gives you the opportunity to ruminate on the factors contributing to the creation of a second parish in the Town of Andover.

When South Church's current and 4th meeting house right down the road, was built in 1860, its 167 foot tall steeple stood as a source of reverence and pride for the new Town of Andover. In 1855, the citizens of the three parishes comprising greater Andover had voted to divide into two towns. The South and West Parishes paid the North Parish (which would become the town of North Andover) for the right to keep the name, and North got the fire engine.

The first meetinghouse of the South Parish was built in 1709, following the incorporation of this second parish in town. The roots of the South Parish and South Church are deeply intertwined with the towns of Andover and North Andover.

So, What is a parish within a town? It's akin to your voting precinct or boundary for your elementary school. It meant there were enough people in that district to finance a meetinghouse- providing a place for worship as a formal Church-, a minister for said church, often a parsonage, a burial yard, and often, a school. New parishes reflected population growth and where you lived.

So let's go back to what set the table for the witch trials, and early 1600s. If you need to nap, now is the time.

First, what is a puritan in England? These people felt the monies used by the Church of England for art was for praying to false idols. They wanted a purified place to worship devoid of the trappings of money and privilege. There is a reason that our ye olde Congregational churches here are essentially a plain white box with a steeple on top, and so plain inside.

The radical Puritans were being persecuted by being shut off from commerce including even food to exist. Several Puritan business men in 1628 formed a for profit company for the Crown, named the Massachusetts Bay Colony which was a land grant between the Charles and Merrimack rivers and westward to, get this, the [Pacific Ocean](#). The careful Puritans received a Royal charter from the king, FOR SELF RULE! AND HE was more than happy to let them leave, which let their religious agenda create a theocracy here in the Congregational Church. Early voyages resulted in the establishment of a small colony on Cape Ann and later at Salem.

In 1630, Governor [John Winthrop](#), with the company charter, guided the arrival of

nearly 1000 colonists on 8 ships called the Winthrop fleet to the New World, this was the beginning of the Great Migration. The initial parties stopped first at Salem, but soon established Boston.

The Puritans had established a Congregational Church based on members rights. Here, they learned that you had to work together which supported their philosophy of every person having a vote. Gradual improvements in living conditions led to an influx of new colonists, mainly English Puritans, that totaled more than 20,000 over the next decade, representing all classes.

As the seaside land became populated, the Great and General Court of the Colony, located in Boston, which is now our House and Senate of the Commonwealth, issued surveys of wilderness areas for further growth by charters to give rights to freeholders to settle a new community, all under the rigid religious and civic control of the Royal Charter, all based on English law.

The survival of any new settlement was dependent on attaining *township* status as quickly as possible. Which meant that a settlement had to comprise at least 10 *freeholders* (A family's *freehold* included a homestead in the settlement and outlying farmland), a *meetinghouse* for worship and town business, and an *able and orthodox pastor*. Only then would the Great & General Court in Boston even consider a settlement's petition to become a town.

To be a "freeman" (meaning a stockholder in the company and a voter) meant membership in the church, not just land ownership as was the case in other colonies. It also meant proof of a conversion experience in joining the church, all part of the Puritan Creed.

Good behavior would not win salvation for them, but it would help them in their current lives to avoid wars, famines, etc... This concern about proper behavior resulted in great interest in the activities of one's neighbors.

Part of the theocracy here, was that all taxpayers paid for the meetinghouse, the pastor, and usually a parsonage. Everyone had to attend church, but joining was by one's choice, a huge difference from the Christianity in Europe where you were born into the Church of England, or the Lutheran Church in Germany, or the Catholic Church in Italy.

Membership was a covenant to see to the enforcement of God's laws in society, and to be a member one had to offer proof of a conversion experience. Since one wasn't born into church membership, each church had to be established as a separate lawful entity to allow women and children and other non-land holders (slaves and indentured servants) as members of the church. The pastor was most often the civil litigant in disputes to be settled before real legal action would be taken. This becomes important later, and gives the pastor a bigger voice in the theocracy than probably should have been given.

So in 1634, surveyors explored this area of the south shore of the Merrimack, maintaining the Indian name of the *Cochichawicke Plantation*. By 1641, a party of 10 colonists from Newbury, Ipswich and Rowley had been granted a charter from the Court to settle. These families settled just southwest of *Great Pond* on what is now the North Andover Common. They should have settled in the center of the Plantation, but the land by the lake was pretty flat, and provided easier access to water than going farther toward the center. The garrison house, meetinghouse, and homes were all built adjacent to one another for safety.

In 1644, the Massachusetts Bay Colony was divided into four counties; Suffolk, Norfolk, Middlesex and Essex (which included Cochichawicke Plantation on its western frontier); each county with its own courts and militias.

By 1645, the Cochichawicke Plantation settlers had built their meetinghouse named *First Church of Christ at Cochichawicke* and their pastor was Rev. John Woodbridge, one of the 10 original families. The following year the Court recognized Andover (named for the English home of one of the settlers) as the Colony's 37th town, which had been purchased from the local Indian leader Roger for 6 pounds and a coat. The original freeholders held hundreds of acres of land each.

Rev. Woodbridge moved back to England in 1649, with the Rev. Francis Dane becoming the second minister, now with 25 freeholding families here. As newcomers arrived, land distribution became increasingly complicated. In addition to a home lot of four to ten acres near the meetinghouse, each freeholder also received three outlying plots.

Since Andover's meetinghouse was located in the northeast corner of the large township, newly assigned plots were increasingly distant from the settlement. The newest arrivals were granted plots which could be several miles away.

Travel by foot or horse to and from one's homestead in the settlement was time-consuming and dangerous. This hardship was compounded by the fact that Andover itself was far removed from the coastal markets for crops and livestock.

Many farmers maintained another home on their outlying property, which often ended up being maintained by a son and eventually his family, and over time, entire families began to move onto their farmland; only periodically returning to their in town lots to attend worship, go to market, and take care of business.

The town was so large and the outlying settlement became so widespread that some of Andover's *chosen* (elected) town offices such as *Constable* and *Surveyor* were split into two positions; one for the north and one for the south.

By the 1660s, Abbots, Ballards, Chandlers, Lovejoys, Holts and other families had settled on their outlying land in the south part of town, near the Shawsheen River. The George Abbot home became a garrison house in the south region, on what is now Central St., almost across from South Church today.

Although Indians had always been a constant presence, things were peaceful until the *King Philip's War*. Although Andover was remote from the fighting, several deadly Indian raids beginning in 1675 nearly led to the town's abandonment. In 1676 Timothy Abbot was captured away from the family home on Central St., and returned 5 months later.

Sentries were stationed everywhere, especially near the banks of the Merrimack where Indians frequently landed. Andover's selectmen began to strenuously enforce the home site restrictions, and a town meeting vote in 1680 forbade living more than a half mile from one's homestead near the meetinghouse under any circumstances. A climate of anger, mistrust, and near-constant fear permeated the town; manifesting itself for years in different forms.

This restriction put a new focus on the location of Andover's meetinghouse put down 40 years earlier. Those farming in the south and west had to walk miles over bad paths. Although church membership was not mandatory, attendance was; or you were fined.

In the middle of this, Rev. Francis Dane was feared a bit infirmed, so in 1681, the town called the young Rev. Thomas Barnard, a Harvard graduate to be an Assistant Minister in the parish. Barnard represented a new breed of Harvard clergy, influenced by Increase and his son Cotton Mather, Boston's and Harvard's most influential religious and steady hands in society.

Those with distant farms used this opportunity to argue that with two ministers, another meeting house should be built in a more central location. Those who lived in and around the village, including Pastor Thomas Barnard, opposed such a move and every time it was voted down. The Town was paying for two ministers in one too small meetinghouse far away from the Southenders.

Ironically, Rev. Dane had farming land abutting now West Parish Church and cemetery, where his son Francis, Jr. lived and one can only wonder what would have happened if a second parish had been established at that time in that location.

So let's talk about what was happening in the Colony while Andover was growing.

The commune-like forces of survival and like spiritual thinking faded as life became easier even in that first generation of Puritans. Their grandchildren were questioning the church and authority, and given the choice to not join the church, by 1662, church membership declined as fewer people were able to offer proof of a conversion experience.

A [Half-Way Covenant](#) was adopted by many churches which recognized the social change that they were no longer persecuted, but independent.

Think about that, these children and grandchildren had not been through a period of fear of worship, so they didn't get the old reasons of why they left the old country for this place. These radical Congregationalist parents were now dealing with teenagers and couldn't believe they wouldn't conform. Which century are we talking about?

The Half-Way Covenant was used to allow membership to a greater number of people by relaxing the conversion experience as a requirement. This became popular in Boston with the larger churches, and the second generation of pastors at churches, like Rev. Dane, nudged their churches toward accepting what the congregation felt.

However, at Harvard, the Puritan creed was taught to the young ministers while they saw the peeling back of things in the field, and there was a building resentment against these older, second generation ministers for being, well, lax.

Add to that that these second generation ministers who had been hired for life weren't dying or retiring, restricting the job pool. This most educated group of ministers ever, were hired at best as Assistant Ministers in the populated towns, even when the Parishes were doubled. Harrumph.

In 1689, after the Crown had grown impatient with its investments here, it revoked the Royal Charter, which had granted self-rule to the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The King appointed a new governor here, William Phips, who responded first to the territory threats in Maine, leaving questions for resolving all sorts of problems in local hands from land disputes and boundaries to civil disputes, quarrels, claims of witchcraft, etc., and after a small pox epidemic in 1690, our neighbors had turned against one another.

Remember, there never was a hierarchy of leadership in the church but a charter of operation giving towns and parishes the hiring rights for their clergy with the oversight by the general court in a legal sense.

So the charter being revoked also threw into question the legality of the hold of this theocracy in the Bay Colony, but the ministers during this tumultuous time took up the mantle to help resolve conflicts from even entering the legal realm. They had always done this sort of thing but now they really stepped up in firmly running their parishes. The threat of the devil was turning neighbor on neighbor. The pastor preached that if you let your guard down, you were giving the devil an opening into your soul and home. This was not unreasonable when you think about the very real consequences of not staying strong and you let the fire go out, or worse, burn down the house, or letting your animals get away, or not see the Indians lurking in the dark waiting to kill you. The talk of the power of the devil and evilness was preached on more than the power and redemption of God.

All these hardships laid the groundwork for what happened in the spring of 1692. In neighboring Salem Village (now Danvers and Middleton) they experienced an explosion of witchcraft hysteria, all fueled by its pastor Rev. Samuel Parris. Accusations, imprisonment, trials, and hangings all became regular occurrences there that Spring.

Whether intentional or not, this hysteria presented an opportunity for clergy who felt that their influence had been eroded by a changing population. This was especially true for those who presided over divided congregations. In Salem Village, many in his own parish opposed Rev. Parris outright and refused to attend his sermons.

Rev. Parris was hired for his strict orthodox adherence to the Puritan creed and the full

conversion experience for membership. He preached so relentlessly that your soul will be taken, that his youngest 8 year old daughter, an early accuser, was taken away from the home as she had been so scared, she probably did have a nervous breakdown contributing to the hysteria, all because of his persistence.

The powerful families of Salem Village, essentially the 2nd parish of the Town of Salem, were also the people in positions of power in the church and were the deacons and the town magistrate, etc. The trials were held in Salem, the county seat, and this part of the trials is what has been sensationalized as every word was transcribed by Rev. Parris, as almost a diary of the times.

How the afflictions started is a hotly debated topic. I only offer that the conditions were right to happen in that church and community. We know things quickly escalated beyond belief. We also do not know whatever fear and rationalizations were compromised to lead all of Essex County and beyond to believe these that these girls were somehow gifted by God to see inside the spiritual world that others could not, as being the truth! That to me, that these girls were given this fame is one of the wildest part of this, as girls weren't even considered citizens, and now they were being listened too!

As the names flew, magistrates arrested people, the ministers preached, and the situation worsened, the surrounding ministers doubled down on protecting their flock, "Not happening on my watch!"

On high alert, other individuals who fit the usual profile of a witch through history were identified. This was the oddball, the cranky or mean person, the complainer, the one with a troubled past.

One minister in the county who did not have any 'witches' outed in his parish, felt it was his fault, for surely the witches traveled to all the towns by the testimonies already given. He was rewarded for his hard work and fasting when some ten year old grudge held up in court.

So was it how Martha Carrier became Andover's first witch on May 28. She was ornery, didn't like anybody, had trouble with neighbors and the town. When her family brought small pox to town and she wouldn't leave, Cotton Mather already had described her as 'the Queen from hell' and a 'rampant hag'. The fact that Martha's husband and 2 children had survived smallpox, would have been interpreted as proof that Martha possessed special powers, and they blamed her for the thirteen smallpox deaths in town, including two of her children, her sister, and brother-in-law. Add to

that the disapproval of Martha and Thomas not marrying until after the birth of their first child, and you can understand the dislike of her.

Being a good neighbor of the time meant spying and telling on others, and Benjamin Abbot had a boundary argument with her after which he broke out in boils and was on his death bed until after she was arrested. In good conscientious and doing his duty, he offered evidence at her trial.

The jails were filling, and Governor Phips who was busy up in Maine, appointed a special court made up of magistrates, "church members of good prudence" to be in Salem, not Boston, which is another out of the ordinary process in all of this. They were church members but not necessarily lawyers.

Martha was a part of the Salem events recorded and broadcasted by Rev. Parris, one of the many from Essex County. I am only using the example of Martha because she was the one person from Andover involved in this period.

During June and July, the Jury went to work, and by now, the influential clergy in Boston had weighed in, and were terrified by this epidemic spreading like small pox and it had to be stopped.

After the first batch of hangings were done which included Martha, with the usual pitchforks and anger, the fear renewed when some like Cotton Mather said we really need confessions, not just using the spectral evidence provided by the girls that they had seen these witches. He suggested that to get to the devil, interrogators must try to trick the witch, use clever methods.

Martha doesn't confess so they went after her family. This amounted to mental and physical torture with several children of Martha's saying she was a witch, etc., and this played over and over with those on trial at the Salem Court House.

I've not gone into the details for which the Trials are known for because it is wonderful topic to be explored by real historians, and, because the worst is yet to come for our Town.

In July, Joseph Ballard (of Ballardvale and 20 acres of river milling land) had two Salem girls visit his sick wife Elizabeth. His brother John was the constable and had been to the jail and trials, and suggested that he seek out some of the girls, as nothing else had worked to find out why Elizabeth was sick.

On July 15th, the girls came and claimed that several neighbors had bewitched her. Wouldn't you know it, Elizabeth died 5 days later, and word is out that she had indeed died of witchcraft, and elderly Ann Foster, her daughter and granddaughter were accused. The mental torture was applied, and they confessed to everything, including flying around with Martha. This gave the Court ample reason to move ahead with the process, and to them, it underscored the severity of scope of this net of the Devil.

The confession was important because they believed that if a person confessed it meant that the devil was no longer in control of their body, by denying it meant the devil still had control of them.

The policy for the hanging of those who did not confess had come to this:

It was believed that if you pled *not* guilty it meant that the devil still had control of you. Some ministers then protested the hanging of anyone who pled guilty, that since they were no longer controlled, the ministers felt it was better to save a guilty person just in case they were innocent by not knowing what they were doing. Got that? So declaring innocence was proof the devil still had control of you, and you were condemned to death.

Through July and August, more accusations were lodged across the county, and especially in Andover.

Like Rev. Parris, Andover's Rev. Thomas Barnard, a protégé of Cotton Mather, welcomed the opportunity to confront *the evil hand of the devil* in his parish. His predecessor Rev. Dane didn't believe in witchcraft, and Dane had dealt with the claims earlier himself.

In 1658, Job Tyler went to Rev. Dane to get a wrong righted accusing a day laborer with a sketchy past that he had been put under a spell and this witch took his money, but Dane told him he had only fallen for a scam, it wasn't witchcraft, and sent Tyler home with his tail between his legs, and Tyler fumed.

Now, by the middle of August in Andover, 14 people, including several of the Carrier family were incarcerated. Abigail Dane Faulkner, the daughter of Rev. Francis Dane is jailed next, and 3 others are imprisoned on August 15th, including Samuel Wardwell, another Southender, and by the way so were the Carriers and the Fosters.

Samuel was known to be a bit of card in a time when no one laughed when your uncle pulled a quarter out of your ear, and he fancied to tell fortunes, like the sex of your next child, an easy 50-50 chance, but what people remembered was when he was right. He had come to Andover as a carpenter who had married a well off widow, he was not a townie. By the way, Samuel was also one of the first to complain about the distance to the meeting house.

Soon his wife Sarah and two daughters were also imprisoned and Southender families took in Samuel and Sarah's children, and later apprenticed the boys in useful trades, and helped them regain their rights and property 19 years later.

A few girls from Andover were now among the afflicted and also gifted to see what others could not, including Martha Sprague, who just happened to be the granddaughter of Job Tyler. hmmm.

On August 25th , 10 complaints were made by her stepfather and step uncle, Joseph and Moses Tyler, after afflictions were suffered by the girls. Five more on Sept. 1st, and others claimed afflictions as well. Holy smokes! Fear and paranoia gripped Andover as it appeared the very devil himself was centered here, and it was time to stop it.

Rev. Barnard's back was up against it, and was time to come out of the shadow of Dane. On Sept. 7th, the congregation was gathered at the meetinghouse to root out the devil agents in their midst. I do not know who called the meeting, Barnard? The Selectmen? Deacons? But I do know the result, and Rev. Dane was absent.

Rev. Barnard opened with a prayer. Was it sanctioning what was to come or simply because he always opened every gathering with prayer? That day, the Touch Test and Andover became a part of history.

What was the Touch Test?

Led by the prevailing thought that if a person confessed, it meant that the devil was no longer in control of their body, by denying, it meant the devil still had control of you. Therefore, when the girls in fits placed their hands on you and the fits stopped, it meant you were in control of the fits, thus the devil was working through you. This was evidence enough to cause the arrest of the accused as witches.

The accused Mary Osgood, wife of Capt. Osgood later recounted, "We were blindfolded, and our hands were laid upon the afflicted persons, they being in their fits and falling into their fits at our coming into their presence, as they said. Some led us and laid our hands upon them, and then they said they were well and that we were guilty of afflicting them; whereupon we were all seized, as prisoners, by a warrant from the justice of the peace and forthwith carried to Salem" Mind you the girls knew who they were touching.

The elite of [Andover](#) were caught off guard. The leaders of the church urged their friends and family members to confess, believing that confession was the way to eternal life, and it was for the good of the community to rid us of the devil.

The unsuspecting persons confessed saying they simply didn't know they had been possessed, believing they were telling the truth, and 17 people were arrested that day. Andover was under siege, so when our magistrate Dudley Bradstreet was writing the warrants and threw down his pen in disgust, the pitchforks of fear came out and his family was run out of town... and their dog hanged as well!

Hysteria had griped Andover, no one was safe. Cotton Mather said "in this town was discovered the most horrid crew of witches that ever disgraced a New England Town".

So once numerous wives and children were in prison, the church pillars began to comprehend the full implications that they were going to be tried. They turned to their older minister, [Reverend Frances Dane](#), and formed a resistance movement. Under his guidance they started a campaign to free the imprisoned members of their families.

Dane sent letters to other ministers identifying the methods used for confessions and that these good people were victims of entrapment. He drafted a petition with the affected families which was signed by 53 men and women including Dudley Bradstreet and Rev. Barnard. The petition held up that these people were of God by word and deed.

Whether they did it deliberately or not, they cleverly used the words of faith and community and never once spoke of witchcraft, evilness, or the devil. It's something to be proud of that these people came to together to use the power of the word of God positively to stand up for their loved ones. This was presented on Oct. 18th, 325 years ago yesterday.

This was the beginning of the end of the trials as other ministers corroborated that thought, including Increase Mather. Even his son Cotton Mather had started to believe that innocent people were being arrested, let alone hanged.

During the next 6 months the cases were processed without the benefit of spectral evidence and hearsay, yet the names of the convicted were not cleared. They had no legal rights and could not reclaim their property. Governor Phips changed the jurors from all local Salem church members to ordinary representatives from all of Essex County, not needing church membership. This was the first break in the hold of theocracy on the legal system, and became the basis for the rights of citizens to be innocent until proven guilty.

During the course of the legal proceedings, some 80% of our residents had been drawn into the witch hunt, with 50 people or 12% of the population, mostly women and children, formally accused of having made a covenant with the Devil.

Three Andover residents, Martha Carrier, Mary Ayer Parker, and Samuel Wardwell, were convicted and executed. Five more either pled guilty at arraignment or were convicted at trial. These included Mary Lacey Sr., Abigail Faulkner Sr., Sarah Wardwell, Elizabeth Johnson, Jr., and Ann Foster. Those who were not executed were later granted reprieves by Governor William Phips. Unfortunately, Ann Foster died in prison before she could be released. Rev. Dane ended up with 10 members of his family accused, the most of any family in the county. He referred to this time as "The Sin of our Ignorance." Andover also had the most confessed witches, mostly due to the Touch Test, and the highest number of children arrested.

Abigail Dane Faulkner was pregnant at the time so not hanged, and was reprieved by Phips, but remained under sentence, and was unable to regain her 'former rights and reputation.' She was terrified of being accused of witchcraft again, and relentlessly petitioned the Great & General Court for 19 years to reverse all the convictions, and reimburse the survivors and families of the victims.

All could not go back to before.

In many other towns where the accused and families were shunned, many simply moved away to start life over, as they were in such minority.

But in Andover, after four generations of inter-marrying families sprawling across all parts of town and the sheer number of people involved, most people stayed, and with the bogus Touch Test affair, just which group of people should be moving away? How did Rev. Barnard heal from the pulpit or did he? But he did hire Abigail's family to tend his home and farm land, as they lost everything.

In the following years, the same hardships and threats and distance to the meetinghouse stayed the same, but apologies never came from the government. 4 years later there was growing pressure by Boston ministers to hold a fasting day in recognition of the injustice and mistakes of the trials. Judge Sewell actually wrote an apology called the Dawn of Tolerance that included this line, "The late tragedie raised among us by Satan and his Instruments, through the awful Judgment of God," doesn't sound like much of an apology to me, he spread the blame around to everyone, so we must be now be tolerant of these people.

Tolerant of what? Well, even though this was a legal matter, for those who confessed to being witches, well they had lied, before God, under oath. You sinned, but we will tolerate you. Guilty one way or another.

This sort of fall out and later consequences in Andover, with irreparable damage done to families, reputations, livelihoods, and perhaps the most harm from the distrust among neighbors and who you worshipped with, contributed to eventually creating a second parish and a boundary in 1709 which defined the future Towns of Andover and North Andover.

How did the hard feelings and grudges manifest itself? In a study by Tulane University, they found that out of all the children under the age of 20 in Andover in 1692, there was only ONE marriage between an accuser and an accused families. A stunning social statement of consequence. Think on that.

The meetinghouse issue became a priority again in 1705, when Andover's citizens finally voted that we needed a larger one. However, in vote after vote it became clear that there was still no possibility of a consensus on its location. The established interests and original family homesteaders in the north refused to accept any change in location, they were the first!

The Great and General Court mediated for two years of this and running short on patience, the Court requested that Rev. Barnard state and defend his preference for a location. When he did not comply, in November, 1708, the Court ruled that the population of Andover had become large enough to support two parishes. A committee drew up the boundaries which were approved in 1709. By the way, two of those boundaries ran along Foster and Wardwell land. You know where Foster Circle is off Elm? It ran up to Merrimack College, and Ann Foster's son reportedly buried her somewhere on the property telling no one, fearing desecration. The Wardwells were on Prospect Rd. off Rt. 125 going north to the Town line near the Walgreens store. Hmm.

The first official meeting of the new precinct was called on June 20, 1709 by George Abbot, Jr., John Abbot, Joseph Ballard, Francis Dane Jr., Henry Holt, William Lovejoy and John Russ. They elected leaders and allocated land donated by John Abbot (the brother of Benjamin the accuser and husband of Sarah Barker who's family was jailed) for the meeting house and parsonage. And the land used for our burial yard was... Joseph Ballard land. Think on that, 17 years later. So much to consider, but probably not a coincidence, in my opinion.

The Meetinghouse of the South Parish of Andover was quickly completed at a cost of 108 pounds, officially *accepted* on October 18, 1709, 308 years ago, and in a coincidence, as the same date of Rev. Danes petition 17 years earlier. Worship commenced using the services of interim *supply pastors*, with a Harvard Divinity student Samuel Phillips from Salem first preaching in April of 1710. The Parish wanted this young man but gave Barnard one more chance to choose which parish he wanted, but didn't get a response, so the South Parish called Samuel Phillips as the first minister.

I believe they wanted a fresh start with a young pastor who did not grow up with or experienced the trials. Samuel was only two years old in Salem at the time of the trials.

Phillips accepted on December 10th, under the condition that the new Church not be officially *gathered* until he had been finish his studies to be ordained. On December 13th he recorded the first burial in the South Yard, which has been considered the first burial period, but we now know that since the location was determined, it was probably influenced by the fact that the Abbots had been burying on their homestead for decades, which is kitty corner to the church on Central St.

Rev. Phillips' ordination occurred on *October 17th, 1711*, 306 years ago Wednesday, and South Parish's legal organization followed within hours. Coincidentally again, The Great and General Court on that same day issued its long-overdue *Reversal of Attainder* which had been petitioned by Abigail Dane Faulkner to help the victims of the Witch Trials by reversing all charges and convictions, and distributed 598 pounds to the petitioners and their families. This reversed the earlier position and declared that the legal system had been in error, and blamed the tragedy on the "proliferate and vicious" young accusers. Most of the names were cleared.

At the Meetinghouse that day, the Covenant of Faith was signed by the original 35 members to form The Church in the South Parish of Andover. 14 men, and 21 women. The subscribers were 'called by God to join together in communion' to be a coven of people gathered by this solemn agreement to make and be a church by God's divine presence and grace. The Covenant of Faith contains this poetic vow "to walk together as a Church of Christ ... promising in brotherly love to faithfully watch over one another's Souls."

Joining this church was a choice by declaration of faith which brought with it great responsibility to *one another*.

The Covenant also doesn't contain any negative language, it is all positive action words. No talk of what we won't do, all action of what we are doing, not what we kinda of hope to strive to maybe do. It is "we will", no 'the devil made me do it' exemptions, no mention of the devil, or work against evil, but this is what and who we are, not who we aren't. How many double negatives did you count there? Whew!

Again,

It was a choice by declaration of faith which brought with it great responsibility to *one another*.

Which still rings true today at South Church in Andover. Today we throw open our doors and echo the words of the Covenant “to walk together as a Church of Christ.” And...Worship is at 10:30, try the veal...

SKIP

During the American Revolution, our Moderator Col. George Abbot declared that our quarrel was with the government, not any Loyalist neighbors. All were welcome to worship God together.

In 1840, South Church adopted anti-slavery language. Differing opinions on how to uphold this stand against slavery led to a mutual agreement for tolerance for all opinions. It left individuals free to their own activities and opinions by deferring to the original Covenant of 1711 as long as they upheld our common faith and honored worship for all. All were welcome to worship God together.

In 2004, South Church in Andover voted into our Bylaws inclusive, open and affirming language welcoming all persons to partake fully in worship and the sacraments of this church. All were welcome to worship God together.

Where these positions to respect different voices were and are often unpopular, it has led to ways for all to worship meaningfully before God. It has allowed for all to partake in a peaceful service where the doors are closed on the noise outside, leaving one with God and neighbors.

Today, worship at South Church provides a time of spiritual centering, of praise, of singing; of opportunities to meditate, to share sacraments, and to share as neighbors and friends in fellowship.

Today we throw open our doors and echo the words of the Covenant “to walk together as a Church of Christ.”

PICK UP AGAIN

Those who lived in the south of Andover, were instrumental in correcting the injustices that had been committed.

Abigail's brother Francis Dane Jr. became one of the 35 founding members of South Parish and supported her petitions.

Others followed him in joining the new church, such as William and Rebecca Wardwell, who had seen their father Samuel, accused, tried and hanged while they were children, and were taken in by the future founding families of South Parish. These families helped the Wardwells regain their property by being a part of the Reversal of Attainer.

Another early South Parish member was Thomas Carrier, a son of Martha's who lived over 6 miles away from the meetinghouse on the county line. He joined the new church twenty years after Martha's trial and execution. He had been tortured to give up his mother.

The names of the 35 read like our street signs of **Phillips, Abbot, Osgood, Chandler, Foster, Holt, Johnson, Lovejoy, Ballard, Chandler**, etc. All but three had been members of the North Parish Church.

All were members here until their deaths, but only six have headstones remaining in our graveyard.

Christopher Osgood is the only original member to be buried with his family in the old North Parish Burial Yard.

The South Parish Church grew quickly. In its first 5 years, almost 100 new members joined the original 35 in the Church. A larger meetinghouse was needed by 1734, and Rev. Phillips continued to serve the parish for 60 years, until his death in 1771. A third larger meetinghouse was completed in 1788, followed by the current one in 1860, on the same footprint of the first.

Rev. Phillips's legacy is why when the Town split in 1855 that this part of town remained Andover, and the North Parish split off.

South Church members and the Phillips family put Andover on the map by establishing Phillips Academy in 1778, the Andover Theological Seminary in 1808, and The Abbot Female Academy in 1828. The American Missionary movement started here in 1810 and by the 1830s-50s, if you were anybody in the theological world, you spoke or taught here. Btw, PA bought the land from the seminary in 1908, it's a part of the campus now.

Andover was on the map internationally. Most of the population lived in the South and West Parishes, which was established in 1826 on the land also considered for the second site in 1709.

In 1855, when trying to get votes for a new school in the North district failed, Northenders threw up their hands knowing they would never get votes for their parish, and they petitioned to create their own town. Problem was, as they were in the minority and the name ANDOVER was associated with the South Parish, so they took the name of North Andover, sounding as if it was established secondly. Again, Andover paid North Andover \$500 for the name rights and North Andover got to keep the fire engine.

In 2001, Gov. Jane Swift cleared the last final five names of those accused and convicted and hanged, inappropriately on Halloween, perpetuating the legacy of the witchcraft at the expense of the victims.

A few years ago, Carol (director of the North Andover Historical Society) and I mused over the fact that the second wave concentrated here isn't not part of history, not even here! How sad is that! And yet if we look to the Town of Salem, which has capitalized on the Trials being held there, and has made Halloween into a tourist attraction, I think we are all humbled to be glad our history has not gone that way. However, I do wish that the side of reckoning with the hysteria was told.

Note I give Rev. Barnard a great deal of latitude here, where most of history blames him for the Touch Test, not conducted anywhere else, and not stopping the second wave in its tracks. Whatever his intents, the Town of Andover was irreparably consequenced that day.

Where the consequences contributed to the troubles between the North and Southenders, it did not cause the separation, but the hard feelings toward Barnard certainly contributed to it.

I leave the dots for you to connect or simply see them as coincidences.