

# The Gargoyle

A publication of Groton Congregational Church

JUNE 2020



## MUSIC DIRECTOR

If anyone is interested in joining the Sr. Choir or the Handbell Choir, please contact me or the office.

Sue Stottlemeyer



## June Birthdays

Emma Detmer  
Elizabeth Herzig  
Ariana Orkney  
Margaret Shearer

Robin Shinn  
Addison Wall  
Scott Woodruff  
Darlene Woodward

## MESSAGE FROM OUR PARISH VISITOR

If you know of anyone in need of a phone call, contact me or the church office.

Thanks, Connie Stoddard



### MAY UPDATE

A "Thank You" to all who continue to send in your pledges or a portion of them to keep our church running.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE DEACONS

Greetings to all and looking forward to when we can be in worship together in our beautiful sanctuary. Kudos to Pastor Joan and everyone who have contributed to our online worship services.

The current pandemic crisis and quarantines have certainly affected us all in many ways. We know the need for help is on the increase and may do so ever more sharply as the effects on the economy and unemployment could severely impact so many people in the near future.

If you know anybody in need please let them know they can contact the church and Pastor Joan. All requests are kept confidential.

We thank all who have contributed to the Deacons' fund. Please prayerfully consider continuing to contribute to the fund and others as God leads you.

May everyone be well.

## PASTOR'S MOMENT- JUNE

As we move into the summer months, we are coming to terms with the fact that while we thoroughly enjoy being outside in the warm sun, enjoying God's beautiful creation; our world, our lives are very different this summer. Gatherings, traveling, vacations, will all look different. Even worshipping in the sanctuary will not likely happen or will be much different as well. And yet, we are still a church who can worship together, even if in separate places. We are still a church when we reach out and support one another. We are still a church who can be in fellowship with one another.

God is still present in all of this and with each one of us. Let us celebrate that, embrace all that life offers right now, and look for the miracles. Find ways to brighten each of your days, whether it is calling a friend, planting a garden, taking your dog for a walk, playing tag with your kids, spending time in prayer or meditation, listening to a song (I recommend "Love is Still the Answer" by Jason Mraz or "Live Your Life" by Nick Cordero – look up the video, read the lyrics), or whatever brings your heart peace and joy.

Spend a moment reading the prayer below, recently sent to me by a friend. Let the words permeate your spirit. Read the New Beatitudes by Frances Sink which follow the prayer and be grateful for those who are risking their lives so we can live safe and well. Find ways to see and feel God's presence in your lives each day.

And don't forget to join us for Bible Study on Friday's at 11:00 a.m. or Wednesday Evening Prayer Service and fellowship at 5:30 p.m. or Sunday morning Coffee Hour at 11:00 a.m. Just contact the church office if you wish to be included. And be sure to tune into our Sunday Morning Worship services which are on our website, Facebook page and on YouTube under Groton Congregational Church. If you prefer a hard copy of the sermon sent to you, let us know. We will continue with our on-line recorded worship services throughout the month of June so if you wish to participate in any way through music, poetry, story or have ideas, please let me know.

And please contact me if you are in need, emotionally, physically, financially, or if you feel unsafe. Thank you to the staff and the committees of the church who continue to work so hard so that we remain the body of Christ, active in the world.

Be at peace,

Pastor Joan

**MAY YOU FEEL THE LOVING ARMS OF GOD AROUND YOU.**

**MAY YOU ALLOW YOURSELF TO TAKE A DEEP BREATH,  
LET IT OUT SLOWLY, AND NAME THE FEELINGS OF YOUR HEART.**

**MAY YOU GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION TO LET GO, LET DOWN,  
AND ACKNOWLEDGE THIS HUGE SHIFT AFFECTING EVERY PERSON ON  
THE PLANET.**

**MAY YOU HAVE HOPE AND KNOW THAT GOD IS WITH US,  
CALLING US TO ENGAGE IN PRAYER.**

**MAY YOU FIND JOY IN HELPING OTHERS, SHARING YOUR UNIQUE GIFTS  
FOR LISTENING,**

**MAKING MASKS, DELIVERING GROCERIES, DOING CHORES FOR  
NEIGHBORS,**

**WRITING LETTERS, GIVING WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT.**

*May you know the love of God, the spirit of Christ, and the sustaining spirit of  
God Within you, today and every day. Amen.*

## **New Beatitudes by The Rev. Dr. Frances Sink**

Blessed are the doctors, the nurses and orderlies, the EMTs, and chaplains, for they are guarding the kingdom of life even as they must shelter the kingdom of grief.

Blessed are the farmworkers, the truck drivers, the warehouse workers, the checkout clerks, the gig workers, deliverers and stockers, providers of food pantries, and bringers of meals, for they are feeding a nation.

Blessed are the public educators for their dedicated and noble work-- may their so generous giving to their students sustain the still growing minds they guide.

Blessed are those whose lives of racial and economic disadvantage, high-density living, working, and commuting conditions place them at extreme risk for infection-- may the human cost of their servitude shame our hardened society into repair.

Blessed are the out of work and the out of money-- may their tireless phone calls for promised aid be answered.

Blessed are the imprisoned, the congregated, and the closely confined-- may they be released into more protected care.

Blessed are those without shelter and those without healthcare and those without a safety net and no right to benefits-- may they too be known as essential to our collective wellbeing.

Blessed are the postal workers, the Zoomers, the multimedia journalists, reporters, photographers, the poll workers and the census takers for keeping communication open and democracy alive.

Blessed are the builders, the supply chain rerouters, and the retoolers of factories, for their relevant and responsive initiative-- may they open new paths out of chaos.

Blessed are the research and clinical scientists whose answers will break this virus' grip-- may their efforts bring success and restore us to health and freedom.

Blessed are the volunteers, the donors, the neighbors, the tireless, and the relentless caregivers for they sustain our confidence in the human spirit.

Blessed are all who now are named essential to our profoundly interdependent lives, whose necessary contributions and just as necessary needs went unrecognized, the failure of our moral imagination and commitment.

May we all now be seen as essential to each other, the wellbeing of each, precious and essential to the life and care of us all.

# MISSIONS MOMENT

*The Missions Team — Beth Chirillo (chair), Anne Campbell, Phyllis Gregory, Mary Howard, and Penny Sullivan*

Donations are still coming in for **Groton Human Services** emergency food pantry. We sent in \$100 this month. Thank you for supporting this important service, especially during a time when people have greater need. It's not too late to donate: Groton Human Services, 2 Fort Hill Road, 860-441-6760, <http://www.groton-ct.gov/depts/humansvcs/>.

Missions donated \$200 to **Safe Future** in New London. Safe Futures provides services for victims of domestic violence, which is escalating while families are spending more time at home. To donate, contact the shelter at 16 Jay Street, New London, 860-447-0366, <https://safefuturesct.org/>.

Six **afghans** are being put together by church members. If you are interested in making an afghan, contact the church for a kit. Once the pandemic is passed, the afghans will be collected and donated to a worthy cause.

A special thanks to J.C. Ambroise for cleaning up our garden beds and planting some lettuce.

The **Community Meals Program** is up and running, though looking a bit different than it did before COVID-19. We are distributing bags of pre-packaged lunch items from noon-12:30 outside the church every Saturday. We have gotten between 18 and 30 people each week. Items include canned soup and chili (with pull tops for those without can openers), packaged crackers, chips, granola bars, fruit and string cheese. We are accepting donations of cash or individually packaged items. Contact Mary (860-912-9532) or Ellen (860-303-3438) if you would like to donate food or volunteer. Volunteer time is 11:45-12:30, and no clean up! Thanks to the many people who have donated so far.



**Sample Grab and Go Lunch Bag -Thanks to Church Donations!!**

**All prepackaged, nothing made at home.**

# A REQUEST FROM CATHY JOHNSON

## THE RETURN OF BOTTLE AND CAN RETURNS!!

As you may recall (or as an advisement, as the case may be), for many years now, I have been collecting returnable bottles and cans (my family's own and those from the congregation) and redeeming them for cash. I then donate the proceeds (on a rotating basis) to Community Meals, Deacons Fund, Restoration Fund or the General Fund. While it may not seem like much (\$.05 per bottle or can), it does add up and in the process, you are recycling (yeah!).

For the past few months, there has been a hold on redemption of bottles and cans. However, redemption locations are now slowly re-introducing returns. So: I have started to return my returns!

If anyone has *returnable* (i.e., you had to pay a \$.05 deposit on the beverage item) plastic, aluminum and/or glass bottles and cans, I would be happy to pick them up and take them to be redeemed and then donate the proceeds to the various church funds. I am generally in Groton at least once every two weeks (to deliver my pledge). Please give me a call or send me a text (860-204-2104) or send an email ([cblaisdell79@comcast.net](mailto:cblaisdell79@comcast.net)) and I will come and get them from you.

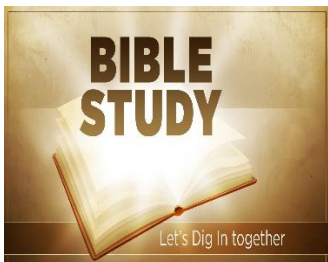
### **I ask only the following:**

- Please make sure that the item is in fact, returnable. Iced tea, lemonade, Snapple, juice and wine bottles and cans are *not* returnable, but they are *recyclable* (please, please recycle if not returnable!). Somewhere on the container will be an imprint (usually on the top of a can) or text (on the side of an item) showing "CT" as a returnable state.
- Please make sure the container is empty. If you can, please rinse out and let dry.
- You can keep the caps on water and soda bottles (but again, please make sure they are empty).
- Please do *not* crush the can or bottle or remove the label. The machine needs to see/recognize the bar code in order to receive the credit.

If you redeem your bottles and cans on your own, I encourage and challenge you to let the money build up and then donate to the church.

Thank you!!

Cathy Johnson



## **BIBLE STUDY**

The Book of Genesis. Friday's at 11:00 a.m. by Zoom. Contact Rev. Joan to be placed on the email to receive the link.

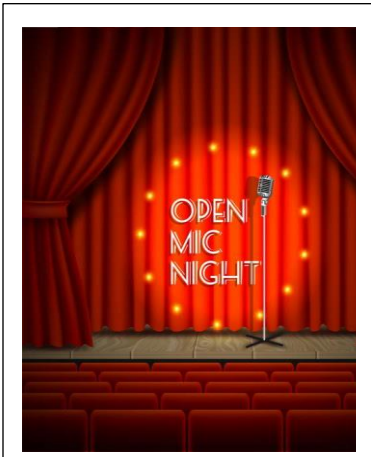


## **CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.**



We are hoping we will be able to get together for a ladies night in June or July.

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## **CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**



## **COFFEE HOUR**

**Visit us on Zoom for our virtual coffee hour at 11:00 a.m. The link is on the Sunday Service email.**





We are so thankful that the weather is getting warmer and that we can be outside or have the windows open. I love waking up and hearing the sounds of the birds communicating back and forth and the wind blowing in the trees. There is such solace in all that God has created and taking the time to stop and listen is such a reward. During this time, I have learned to slow down and enjoy all that is around me and thank God every day for his beauties.

This month I am tasking you with a nature walk and finding time to listen and have conversations with God.

- Pick a day and location keeping in mind the social distance rules.
- Prepare for your walk getting all the equipment you might want to bring along. For instance, binoculars, camera, sketch pad, and any other material.
- Introduce the following as you are beginning: We are going for a walk today. I want you to think about all the special ways that we can see the work of God in this world around us.
- Choose how you are going to identify God's work; it could be any of the following: collect items that are meaningful, take photos, draw sketches, write poems, record sounds.
- After the walk, share what you have learned and what impacted you. Share so that everyone can listen and learn from each other.
- I am thankful that I have this time to enjoy and reflect on all the joys that we are given. Please reach out and share your observations and thoughts during your walk.

Peace be with you until we see each other soon

Lisa, CE Director



As we move along in this new normal, we try to find ways to be more creative and look for God in all things.

I recently started a garden. I didn't think much of it at first. As my vegetables start to sprout, I am reminded that God can give life to just a tiny seed. Things will bloom again, in their time.

As for the youth group, I have found new creative ways to engage with the kids; in May, we held a week long trivia challenge. We also found new games to play at our Zoom meetings. Of course, I cannot wait to see them again. But I am glad they are still coming to meetings online!!

Rachel Measimer  
Youth Group Director

[youthgroupdirector@grotoncongregational.org](mailto:youthgroupdirector@grotoncongregational.org)

# **MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE**



**The Scholarship Committee is happy to announce that a \$500.00 Scholarship will be presented to Sam Lambert, a 2020 graduate of Fitch Senior School and a very active member of our church.**

**Sam started coming to our church with his family in 2002, attended Sunday School, played in our Youth Band, and volunteered for many of our events and projects throughout the years.**

**He has been active at Silver Lake over the years from being a camper, to helping with clean ups and being a counselor. Sam became a member of our church with the 2019 Confirmation Class.**

**Sam will be attending Worcester Poly Tech in the fall and received an ROTC Scholarship to be in the Navy. We wish Sam the best in the next journey of his life!!**

# STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

**“The building may be closed, but the church is not”**

In her weekly messages, Pastor Joan has reminded us of the above. Groton Congregational Church, as a people, is indeed open.

Thank you for your pledges and donations! Our treasurer reports that the most popular delivery method is mail or by physically dropping them off through the door slot. Please continue as you are able. Whatever works best for you helps us as a congregation to keep our virtual doors open.

You may recall that during the months of April and May, palms were available for Palm Sunday and flowers for Mother's Day were provided at the steps of the church building, and it appears that these were well-received. These offerings to friends, members, neighbors and the curious - while either delivering pledges and donations or walking or driving by as they slow down to see what is there – has provided a gesture of community outreach.

During the month of June, American Flags and Rainbow Flags will be made available and offered in honor of Flag Day (June 14), Father's Day (June 21) and Open and Affirming Sunday (June 28). Groton Congregational Church is an Open and Affirming Church and we welcome all, no matter who, no matter what, no matter where they are on life's journey. If you are so moved, you may leave a donation in the mail slot of the church's door.

We encourage you to take a photo of yourself with the flag (or whatever is being offered at the time) while you're at the church and share it with the congregation! I'll start by sharing the photo below. You can send photos to [office@grotoncongregational.org](mailto:office@grotoncongregational.org).



Please let us know if you have any ideas for continuing this community sharing.

Look for the Stewardship Word Search in this issue of the Gargoyle!

Thank you, and God's blessings be upon you.

Your Stewardship Committee,

Cathy Johnson  
Sue Stottlemeyer  
Phyllis Meyer

## STEWARDSHIP WORD SEARCH

Do you like word games? I do! During our days of social distancing, I have been playing a LOT of online Scrabble and Wordscapes. I like to believe that it helps to keep my brain sharp and to some degree, I think it does. If you play this game on your computer, use the "Comment" tab on the top, then "Draw Tools", then the "line" option and use your cursor to strike-through the words found at the bottom of the puzzle (you can use the same tool to mark the words as you find them). Or, you can print the puzzle and work on paper. Words go horizontal, vertical, diagonally and both forward and back. You will also find words that are not listed. Rest assured that all of the words are in the puzzle. Have fun with it!

### GCC WORD SEARCH

N S A P G D G W E H Z A R A Q W S G L B I P L S F  
J W L N I N B I E V A B I V Y T E R A S Q E C N Z  
A V O L O A I X N L Q G O D H C A A N T R Q J O I  
T M Z M E I N R N O C A H T O N R T M O D R E C G  
O Q P N E B T O E C M O C M I X C I Y N V U S A M  
O P E N A N D A F F I R M I N G H T H E L N U E T  
T N F V C C S E G C F U E E C M C U N S O F S D R  
C V B R H H L F O E N O X S E B O D R I O L A P U  
N P Q U F B I M E I R Z Y M T T M E S A H D K D S  
Z L R A I E M L T L P G O D O O M S H B C F O H T  
O C I B K U L Y D I L R N W N A I R O T S I H G E  
H T H X N I M Y H R I O E O F M T T Z U Y U N Y E  
H M P I C E L S Y A E R W S C Y T F N T A S N G S  
P T O N A I D L L K D N Z S L R E U X A D G N O P  
T N U L M R H C A E R T U O H M E Y D G N W X L M  
J O S A A Y R O T I S I V H S I R A P R U E T O H  
C K F W Y O U T H G R O U P V G P I U O S G V X O  
B L E S S E D N E M A G A R G O Y L E T A Z D O V  
W T A S J N R O T S A P R A Y E R K P O L B O D C  
S F N W H U P V Y M T R C I S U M R Q N O R G A N

AMEN  
BLESSED  
CHURCH  
CONGREGATION  
DEACONS  
FAMILY  
GOD  
HISTORIAN  
MEMORIAL  
OFFERING  
OUTREACH  
PIANO  
SERMON  
SUNDAYSCHOOL  
WELCOME

BELLS  
CHILDREN  
COMMUNION  
COUNCIL  
DOXOLOGY  
FELLOWSHIP  
GRATITUDE  
HYMNAL  
MISSIONS  
OPENANDAFFIRMING  
PARISHVISITOR  
PRAYER  
STEWARDSHIP  
TOWER  
WOMENSFELLOWSHIP

BIBLE  
CHOIR  
COMMUNITYMEALS  
COVENANT  
FAITH  
GARGOYLE  
GROTON  
JESUS  
MUSIC  
ORGAN  
PASTOR  
SEARCHCOMMITTEE  
STONES  
TRUSTEES  
YOUTHGROUP

Created by [Puzzlemaker](https://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com/code/BuildWordSearch.asp) at [DiscoveryEducation.com](https://discoveryeducation.com)

# MUSIC COMMITTEE

Thanks to our Director of Music, Sue Stottlemeyer, Burt Turner, and members of our Adult Choir who continue providing music for the online worship services led by Pastor Joan. We look forward to celebrating Christ together in times to come.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Kimball, Chair

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR HISTORIAN

Don't forget to send me your story on how you are coping with the COVID 19 pandemic. It will be an important part of our church history in years to come.

I am cutting out the articles in our local paper, but personal stories on how we as church members were affected, will be so important. So please take a few minutes to jot down your feelings now or when this crisis is over.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Maranda, Historian

# **OUR PASTORAL SEARCH & CALL COMMITTEE**

The Search Committee continues to meet weekly online. We are looking forward to tabulating the questionnaires and having a completed church profile ready to submit to the UCC by June 15<sup>th</sup>.

We value everyone's input and patience during these unprecedented times.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Anne Campbell



## CHURCH PHOTOS – DURING OUR LOCKDOWN



Finished product from an afghan kit. We have many more, please call the church and arrange to pick one up to assemble. They will all be donated to a worthy cause once they are all finished. One to donate and one for yourself, many different colors and styles!! Janice Maranda has already completed two and is working on a 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>!!



If you know of anyone who could use a prayer, please contact the office or our email with a name.



A thank you heart to our first responders made by Phyllis Meyer (with a little help from Dick Stottlemeyer).