

The Gargoyle

A publication of Groton Congregational Church



JULY 2020



MUSIC DIRECTOR

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

Sue Stottlemeyer



July Birthdays

Ian Ambrose
Nancy Barnhart
Sarah Blaisdell
Berta Cadorette
Danielle Chirillo
Leslie Christie

Megan Clabby
Bonnie Giesler
Sam Lambert
Janice Maranda
Lexi Orkney

August Birthdays

Leah Bencks
Levi Bencks
Carol Brown
Beth Chirillo
Rob Funk

Julie Jolicoeur
Joan Orkney
Sally Turner
Emily Turner
Wendy Walther

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

JUNE UPDATE



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

PASTOR'S MOMENT- JULY

Dear Members and Friends of Groton Congregational Church,

Over two years ago I was asked to guest preach here and the next thing I knew, I was agreeing to become your Transitional Interim Pastor. We have traveled a long way these past two years, and you have worked very hard, through grief, pain, joy, forgiveness, acceptance and signing a covenant together in love. It has not been easy, especially with the pandemic of the last three months! But your willingness and dedication to this church is admirable. Though I was scheduled to leave May 31, the pandemic put everything on hold. Now that things are settling into a new normal, I believe it is time for me to leave and begin a new adventure – after some rest of course. Sunday July 26 will be my last Sunday, and July 31 will be my last day with you all.

The Search Committee is up and running, and Deacons are working on hiring a Bridge Pastor – to handle the gap between the Interim Pastor and the new Settled Pastor. I am confident you will be in good hands.

Please know that it has been an honor and a privilege to serve among you. I thank you for opening your hearts and your homes, your hospital rooms and recovery places to my presence. I thank you for wandering into my office and sharing your life stories and your concerns and allowing me to sit with you in prayer. I thank you for laughing at my silly Children's sermons and sermon stories, your willingness to take part in the life of this congregation, and those who have served in leadership during this time. It has been remarkable to be a part of a congregation of such historical heritage and with some of you whose families have been here for generations. I thank you for attending Bible Study, participating in Stewardship beyond one Sunday, sharing in Discovery Meetings, and adjusting to having a part-time pastor. I thank the youth who were a part of the Confirmation Class last year. They were so open and willing to learn and participate.

It has also been an incredible gift to serve with the amazing, exceptional, caring staff here – Phyllis, Sue, Lisa, Rachel, Gay and Connie. They have all been an incredible support as well as an inspiration to me.

May God continue to bless this congregation and may you all be a blessing to others, may you be a light in someone's darkness, and may you bring the love of Christ into the lives of one another.

Lovingly in Christ,

Pastor Joan

DEACON'S MESSAGE

Greetings all during this unprecedented Summer of an unprecedented year.

We will be announcing our bridge minister shortly if we have not done so already by the time you read this issue of the Gargoyle. The bridge minister will serve as pastor bridging the time Pastor Joan leaves until the arrival of the next minister we hire as settled pastor. We anticipate this will be in the near future.

The church leadership continues with plans for phase one of reopening the church. Stay healthy everyone.

Kevin Measimer

Chair, board of Deacons

A MESSAGE FROM THE TRUSTEES

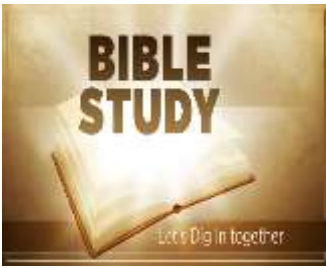
TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR GROTON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

As you probably are aware, Congress passed a stimulus bill package (CARES Act for Nonprofits) that allowed churches to apply for funds that would assist them with covering the cost of payroll (staff salaries and benefits), operations (such as utilities) and debt service during the shut-down caused by the Coronavirus. While referred to as a “loan”, employers that maintain employment for the eight weeks after the origination of the loan are eligible to have their loans forgiven-essentially turning the loan into a grant.

As it was probable that Groton Congregational Church would be financially affected by the consequences of the virus, the Trustees felt it would be prudent to apply for this assistance, and we did. The application was approved, and the church received \$19,242 to be used to supplement the income of pledges, which is our primary source of income.

Please keep in mind that this is a temporary source of income, only, for the church and as such, it is important that pledge payments continue. By doing so, we will be in a better position to ensure that the physical doors can be re-opened, whenever that may be. The Trustees ask that you please continue making your pledges, as best as you are able, during these unusual times.

Thank you and stay safe,
The Board of Trustees



BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study is over for the summer. Hopefully, we will resume in the fall.



CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER

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

We are hoping we will be able to get together for a Ladies night in June or July. We are trying to arrange a meeting at the Shennecossett Beach Club for August. More information to come at a later date.



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 looking for volunteers to do the children's message for three Sundays over the summer. The dates are:

July 18th

August 22nd

September 5th

The messages are recorded and sent to the pastor during the week. Please reach out to Rachel, Phyllis or, myself. It can be anything from a skit, reading, activity, etc.

Thanks

Lisa Lambert, CE Director

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

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

If ever our church needed a slogan, it would appear that the foregoing statement fills the bill!

A continued “thank you” to all that have been able to continue with pledges and donations. The Treasure reports that since March, pledges have been coming in with regularity. Some have been able to cover back pledges, and some are paying forward. The good news is that we have not had to take a drawdown on our investments and bills are being paid as they come in. The not-so-good news is that we have not been meeting our budget for pledges.

In the “before” times, summer months were traditionally lower in terms of pledges and donations. People take vacations and attendance is generally down. The church – in whatever form it takes – does not take a vacation. Please continue to send your pledges as you are able and by whatever means works best for you. In addition to pledges, donations are also appreciated for the Deacons Fund, Community Meals, Memorial Funds, etc. so that we can continue to spread and share our stewardship.

We are swimming in uncharted waters and learning as we go along as to how best to keep the church open. We want and need to be in a good financial position once our physical doors open once again.

We offer an excerpt from our Covenant of Intentionality: “Today and in the future, we commit to offering our support, our concerns and our prayers for discernment in all aspects of our life together.”

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

Your Stewardship Committee

Cathy Johnson
Sue Stottlemyer
Phyllis Meyer

MUSIC COMMITTEE

The Music Committee appreciates the efforts of our Director of Music, Sue Stottlemyer, Dick Stottlemyer, Burt and Sally Turner, Kathy Janacz, members of the choirs, volunteers young and mature, for their musical contributions to the online worship services this spring and summer lead by Rev. Joan Priest.

Thanks to all for keeping the Spirit of Christ moving among us.

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 soon.

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

Respectfully Submitted,
Anne Campbell

CHURCH PHOTOS – DURING OUR LOCKDOWN



A great big THANKS to J.C. Ambrose for the beautiful vegetable garden he has planted and maintained. All are welcome to come and take the vegetables. The lettuce is ready to be cut now and there is squash, peppers, string beans and potatoes to come.