

The Gargoyle

July, 2021

Founded in 1702 and located near historic Fort Griswold, we are an Open and Affirming Church where ALL are welcome.



The Groton Congregational Church
162 Monument St.
Groton, CT 06340
860-445-7409
www.grotonucc.org

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MESSAGE FROM OUR PARISH VISITOR

If you know of anyone in need of a phone call or a visit, please contact Connie Stoddard or the church office.



Ian Ambroise

Sarah Blaisdell

Berta Cadorette

Leslie Christie

Megan Clabby

Bonnie Geisler

Samuel Lambert

Alexandra Orkney



As we come out of the pandemic and return to our live worship services and sharing time together, I would like to invite you into an important opportunity.

Would you consider taking some time to put into writing your reflections on what you experienced in reference to your journey of faith with God and our congregation while you were traveling through the time of sheltering in place? It doesn't have to be lengthy, but this will give you an opportunity to do some personal reflection. Perhaps you will realize it wasn't just a time of separation but a chance to see things through different eyes and seeing what was of value for which you gave thanks in unexpected ways. Of course, there may have been some things from which you were glad to step away and hope we won't ask you to do them again. But there may have been things you experienced that would never have occurred if you hadn't been separated from your friends and family due to the virus.

If you are willing to do such a reflection in writing and are willing to share them, could you please email (pastor@grotoncongregational.org) or mail them to me by the end of July? I imagine these will be fun and fascinating historical documents we can share with one another, but especially with future generations who may wonder what we did during this past year.

Thank you,
Rev. Lee Ireland



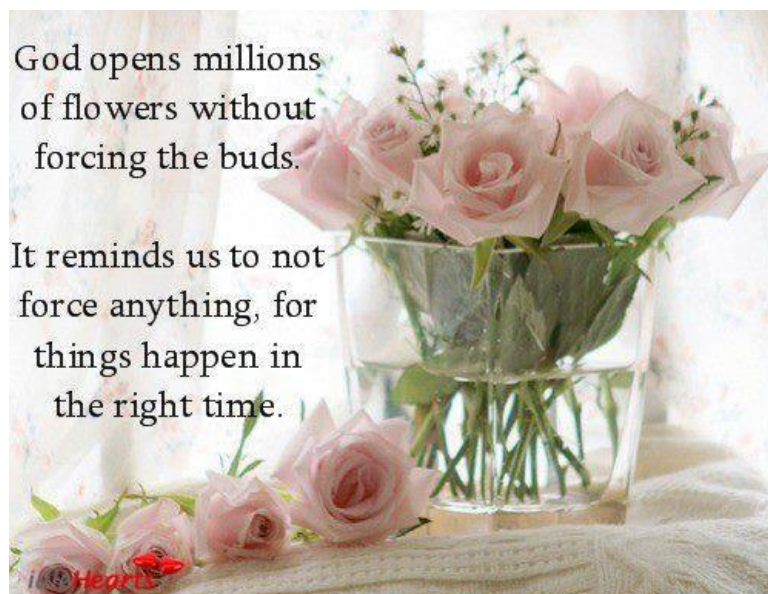
It isn't more light we need, it's putting into practice what light we already have. When we do that, wonderful things will happen within our lives and within our world.

Precious Gems

Christoph Friedrich Blumhardt



Fallen human beings lie in the dirt – yet they are precious stones. A diamond that lies in the dirt cannot glitter. But because it is a jewel, it cannot be spoiled by the dirt. It can be picked up and polished again and sparkle as before. Therefore, when you encounter those who are lying in the dirt, don't think that they are rotten. It is a crime against God's love to think of anybody as being lost or bad. What God has created is never bad.





Weekly Meetings



Sunday Worship Service

July 4th, 11th, 18th, and 25th

10:00am

Regular in-church services have resumed!

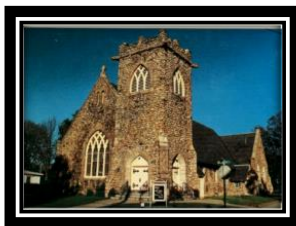
For those who still feel uncomfortable, services are live streamed to the church Facebook page every Sunday at 10:00am. They are uploaded to the church YouTube page on the following Tuesday.



Wednesday Prayer Meeting

July 4th, 11th, 18th, and 25th

5:30pm via Zoom



Community Meals Grab n Go



Monthly Meetings

Search Committee	Monday evenings via Zoom
Deacons	July 20th 5:30pm
Stewardship	July 18th 4:00pm
Trustees	If needed this month. Will resume regular meetings in August.
Women's Fellowship	No meeting this month. Will resume regular meetings in August.



Worship Watch

Proper 9 (14) Sixth Sunday after Pentecost July 4, 2021 <i>"Hymn Sing"</i>	<u>2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10</u> <u>Psalms 48</u>	<u>Ezekiel 2:1-5</u> <u>Psalms 123</u>	<u>2 Corinthians 12:2-10</u>	<u>Mark 6:1-13</u>
Proper 10 (15) Seventh Sunday after Pentecost July 11, 2021 <i>Sermon: "The Plumb Line"</i>	<u>2 Samuel 6:1-5, 12b-19</u> <u>Psalms 24</u>	<u>Amos 7:7-15</u> <u>Psalms 85:8-13</u>	<u>Ephesians 1:3-14</u>	<u>Mark 6:14-29</u>
Proper 11 (16) Eighth Sunday after Pentecost July 18, 2021 <i>Sermon: "The shepherd leads the remnant"</i>	<u>2 Samuel 7:1-14a</u> <u>Psalms 89:20-37</u>	<u>Jeremiah 23:1-6</u> <u>Psalms 23</u>	<u>Ephesians 2:11-22</u>	<u>Mark 6:30-34, 53-56</u>
Proper 12 (17) Ninth Sunday after Pentecost July 25, 2021 <i>Sermon: "Fishes and Loaves"</i>	<u>2 Samuel 11:1-15</u> <u>Psalms 14</u>	<u>2 Kings 4:42-44</u> <u>Psalms 145:10-18</u>	<u>Ephesians 3:14-21</u>	<u>John 6:1-21</u>



Pastor's Moment

Pastor's Summer Greetings,

Here we are going into that amazing month of July; a month in which we normally celebrate the joy of the warmer days when we can rest, travel and enjoy some the beauty of life at a slower pace.

This year is a bit different - we're just getting started again as we have had the joy of returning to the sanctuary after that long separation due to the pandemic, and it's a joy to be together and gathering and seeing folks we haven't seen for a long time! I've been so thankful to see so many of you as you've had the ability and freedom to come and worship or visit for the Delightful Treasures' fair, or, especially, for those of you who were able to come for Tom Potter's beautiful Memorial Service. Thank you. Not only were you able to celebrate and honor his life, but many of you had a chance to care for the family and, also, say your farewells to Lyn who will be moving back to be with her siblings in Ohio. Lyn – we thank you for your faithfulness and endless service and wish you God's peace and blessings on your new chapter and reunion with your family.

To tease us as we continue the journey together here, this past Sunday I included the invitation in my sermon to consider how God may be speaking to you in your dreams to help you know how to take your next steps forward in your own personal life, but to listen as well to see if there might be a message for our community of faith. If you have time, look up the dreams of Joseph and Samuel. But here are 2 key passages: In Numbers 12:6 *God said, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, shall make Myself known to him in a vision. I shall speak with him in a dream.*

In Genesis 28:11-22 *Jacob had this dream: He came to a certain place and spent the night there, because the sun had set; and he took one of the stones of the place and put it under his head and lay down in that place. He had a dream, and behold, a ladder was set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it*

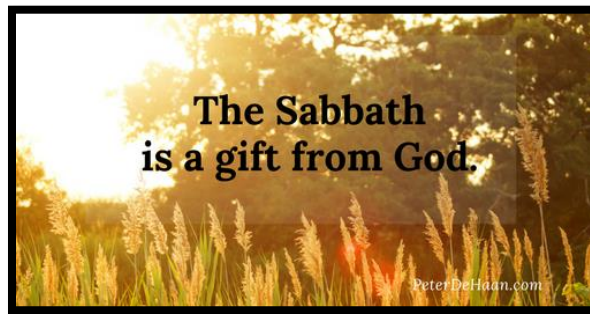
During my sermon, I shared the dream about how Albert Einstein had a dream where he was sledding and as he kept going faster and faster he felt a sense of numinosity and came up with his theory of relativity. Then I shared how Neils Bohr had a dream where he was watching horses at a race track and came up with his theory for the periodic chart of chemicals. Amazing! You never know what messages are coming in your dreams until you choose to listen and work with them. What dreams are coming for you and our community of faith as we come out of the pandemic and regather to worship? :)

I will begin the month with a week's vacation, following a family tradition where we gather at a sister's house in W NY and enjoy listening to the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra offer a concert at the foot of a ski resort and then enjoy the fireworks from the top of the mountain. Then I'll enjoy several days with sisters and cousins catching up and just enjoying the beauty of that area. I hope that you will also have a chance to reconnect with your families or close friends, now that it's safe to do so with the gift of the vaccines and the flow of life again after Covid. During my time away, Rev. Janice Kimball is available for pastoral emergencies.

May you find a chance to pause and rest and enjoy the beauty of this part of the world. Wishing you all peace as we walk together in all of God's ways and practicing more fully the beauty that we truly are human beings and not human doings,

Blessings,

Rev Lee





A Gift of Time

The pandemic gave me the gift of a great deal of empty time. I used some of it to clean out my garage. Among my husband's assorted tools, boat accessories, and building materials there was a forgotten box from our last move that I had never opened. In the top of that box was my children's old copy of *Winnie The Pooh* by A. A. Milne. It was an immediate reminder of past good times.

I opened it and read the well-loved first few lines:

"Here is Edward Bear, coming downstairs now, bump, bump,bump, on the back of his head, behind Christopher Robin. It is, as far as he knows, the only way of coming downstairs, but sometimes he feels that there really is another way, if he only could stop bumping for a moment and think of it. And then he feels that perhaps there isn't."

It feels sometimes like this last year has been wasted, but it hasn't been. God has given us the great opportunity to stop bumping our heads and think. Are there better ways we could be living our lives? Are there better ways we could be doing things, both in our personal lives and in our church lives? Do we dare to be better and to find new purpose? I hope so.

Doris Pulaski



Now that we are worshipping God in the church sanctuary, have you a special person you would like to honor or remember,

or a birthday or anniversary, with some additional beauty for the Sunday service?

Please contact Lisa at the church office (860-445-7409 or office@grotoncongregational.org) if you would like to have a floral

donation dedication printed in the bulletin and announced at worship. PLEASE CONTACT LISA THE TUESDAY BEFORE THE SUNDAY

SERVICE YOU WISH TO BRING THE FLOWERS if you want your dedication in print!

Donors are kindly requested to order, bring to church, and dispose of, the flowers. For more information, please contact

Janice Kimball, 860-235-0494 or rwhipple1842@tvconnect.net. Thanks and God bless you!





WOW!

Did you hear? The Women's Fellowship Ladies had a very successful Delightful Treasures Sale on Saturday, June 12th. When all the proceeds were added up, the "coffers" increased by **\$1,754**.

The success was definitely due to the high energy of the workers from unpacking, displaying, folding of clothing, baking to repacking and final deliveries.

I personally would like to thank all the worker-bees for their hard effort as team members. They are: Alma, Anne, Beth,

Bette, Billy, Bonnie, Edward, Ellen, Janice, Jill, Lisa, Mark, Mary Ann, Penny, Rachel, Rox, Sally, Sue S. and Theresa.

God bless our "worker bees"!

On June 8th we had our Ladies Night Out at Tony D's in New London and 27 ladies attended. It was so great to see everyone again and the noise level of happy voices was wonderful.

We will meet again on August 11th at noon at the Shennecossett Beach Club. Members may purchase lunch there or bring their own. We will be discussing plans for the fall.

With Heartfelt Thanks,
Connie and Sally



Crafting

Crafting is Back!



Our first meeting is scheduled July 13th from 10am to 12pm at the Church.

This meeting will be a sharing time to come up with ideas to make for the Women's Fellowship Holiday Festival which is scheduled for November 13th.

Everyone is welcome! You don't have to have a specific talent. Just come for the sharing, camaraderie, and laughter. We need all the help we can get to make the festival a successful event.



Stewardship Moment

“Great is Thy Faithfulness”

Great is Thy Faithfulness. We sang this in church recently and it was the theme of Reverend Lee’s sermon. How appropriate for stewardship! Again we thank everyone that gives so faithfully.

Do you remember appearances by the “weird angel” (portrayed for many years by Tom Potter)? His first appearance was made while riding a tricycle down the aisle and was a kick-off to a stewardship campaign. It was memorable and exciting, just as stewardship is and can be.

At our recent Church Council Meeting the financial report showed that we were “doing okay” – we haven’t had to drawdown on our investments and that’s good news. However, as we return to the physical church and change in seasons, we know that expenses will likewise change and that there are building repairs and maintenance that need attention. If you are in a position to give something beyond your pledge, please do. There are a variety of funds to which to contribute.

We’d like to share another excerpt from an online article called “Faithful Stewardship in a Time of Uncertainty”

We are able to be faithful because God is faithful to us first. When we consider faithful stewardship, we are paying attention to the ways that we can respond to God's generous love for us with thoughtful, responsible care for all that God has entrusted to us. We are meant to steward our time, our labor, our resources, and our spirit. Stewardship on each of these dimensions calls for discernment, creativity, and openness to God's direction, and this is especially true in times of change and uncertainty. Faithful response to God requires attention to the dynamic nature of our world, and it will require different things from us in different seasons, as Ecclesiastes reminds us.

May God’s blessings be upon you.

Your Stewardship Committee,

Cathy Johnson, Sue Stottlemeyer, Phyllis Meyer



The Pastoral Search Committee has reviewed seven profiles since we posted the position of settled pastor at the end of August 2020. We have interviewed two candidates, neither of whom the committee felt met our needs.

We have been in contact with the Southern New England Conference for direction and been told that we are not the only church in this situation. The pandemic has impacted the search process and also who we are as a church.

The committee will continue to meet and tweak our profile in light of changes. Rev. Lee Ireland will be working with us as we move forward. Please be assured that we are working diligently to find the best fit for our congregation. In the meantime we are extremely grateful for the leadership and direction that Rev. Ireland is providing us as we move forward as a congregation.

For those interested in reading the current profile, it can be found on the church's website in the Member portal, printed copies can be made available upon request. It is a rather lengthy document and in an attempt to limit the environmental impact I would like to keep printed copies to a minimum.

The active listing for our position is available here:

https://oppsearch.ucc.org/web/fastdetails.aspx?id=4190&KeepThis=false&TB_iframe=true&height=869&width=960

Prayerfully submitted on behalf of your Pastoral Search Committee:

Anne Campbell, Chair

Sue Stottlemeyer, Bill Sullivan, Sally Turner, Linda Wagner, Jack Zuliani : members

Barbara Dutton, ex-officio member



Generosity That's What My Mother Taught Me



In a compilation of stories from over 100 interviews with people who had been identified by their pastors as generous givers, Herb Mather in [That's What My Mother Taught Me](#), shares that for many of us, responding with generosity is something that not only were we taught, but also that was modeled for us. That is certainly true in my experience.

I grew up believing that tithing was an expression of faithful living and that also giving of one's time and talent to a wider community was equally important. While our family was not financially wealthy by many standards, I grew up with the privilege of never wanting for any of life's necessities. I also grew up watching my parents display their generous spirits through giving back to their church, the wider church and their community. One of my mother's lessons for use of our family resources was to "Give back to God first (a tithe), pay yourself next (save) and finally pay your bills." If there wasn't enough left to pay the bills in a pay period, then the bills needed to be reevaluated before the other two were short-changed.

It didn't surprise me then when we worked through the documents our parents had left to settle their estate, we discovered that they had designated a tenth of their accumulated assets to UCC-related institutions. My mother left a final lesson in generosity.

It is a simple model that my wife, Julie and I followed when we created a Living Trust for disposing of our assets

upon our deaths. We have made provision in the Robert O. and Julie M. Ullman Trust for ten percent of the proceeds from our estate to be dispersed to UCC-related institutions and organizations. We trust that by sharing in word and deed the lessons we have learned and lived, others will be inspired to become generous givers as well.

In an entry in his Sabbatical Journey diary Henri Nouwen wrote, "I think that generosity has many levels. We have to think generously, speak generously, and act generously. Thinking well of others and speaking well of others is the basis for generous giving. It means that we relate to others as part of our 'gen' or 'kin' and treat them as family. Generosity cannot come from guilt or pity. It has to come from hearts that are fearless and free and are willing to share abundantly all that has been given to us." Lessons learned are passed on. Let us be as generous to others as God has been with us.

Yours in Faith,

Rev. Robert Ullman





Community Events



July 2nd

Paws for a Cause, June 28-Aug. 13, Groton

12:00 pm

The Junior Friends of the Groton Public Library are helping pets in need, and you can too by taking part in their summer pet food drive to benefit Groton Animal Control. Drop off new, unopened donations of dry and canned dog food, dog treats, dry cat food, and wet kitten food at the Library.

Location:

Groton Public Library
52 Newtown Road
Groton, CT

4th of July Parades & Celebrations

11:30 am-Wadawanuck Square, 22 High St, Stonington

11:00am-2:00pm-Poquonnock Plains Park, Groton

10:00am-6:00pm Mystic Seaport



July 3rd and 4th

Niantic Lions 60th Arts & Craft Show and Food Truck Court

East Lyme Town Hall, 108 Pennsylvania Ave, Niantic, 10:00am

Presenting New England's finest artists and crafters displaying their creations of juried fine arts and crafts including paintings, photography, pottery, jewelry, woodworking and paper products. Niantic Lions sponsored Food Truck Court featuring a variety of food trucks serving delectable summer delights will satisfy the most finicky of pallets. Of course, famous Lions Kettle Corn will be on hand.



July 10th

Yard Sale

**The Quaker Hill Baptist Church,
144 Old Norwich Road, Quaker Hill**

9:00am

Items available include books, puzzles, kids/baby toys, small furniture, and glassware. Purchase hot dogs and burgers for lunch or enter a drawing from 11:30-12:30pm to win a free burger or dog! There will be no early bird sales but from 2pm until closing people can fill a box with whatever items are left for a discounted price! Visit www.qhbc.org for more event information.



July 10th

Gramma's Attic Tag & Bake Sale

**Ledyard Congregational Church,
722 Colonel Ledyard Highway**

9:00am

Gramma's Attic will include Holiday Items, Books, CDs, Furniture, Sporting Goods, Kids Toys, Clothes, and a Bake Sale.

Concert in the Park

Every Friday Night in Washington Park

6:30pm to 9:00pm

Food Trucks Onsite!

Classic Car Night

Every Monday at Ocean Beach Park

5:00pm

Dancing on the Boardwalk

Every Thursday at Ocean Beach Park

7:00pm

Boardwalk Magic

Every Wednesday at Ocean Beach Park

7:00pm

Live Bands on the Boardwalk

Every Friday Ocean Beach Park

8:00pm

Visit <https://ocean-beach-park.com/> for more information.

Weekly & Monthly Events

Eat in the Street

Bank Street, New London

July 7th—Pirate Night-Watch out for roaming pirates!

5:00pm-10:00pm

Fireworks begin at 9:00pm

August 4th-Locally Sourced Food w/ Art & Music

5:00pm-10:00pm

Fireworks begin at 9:00pm

September 1st-Latin Heritage

5:00pm to 10:00pm

Visit

<https://downtownnewlondonassociation.com> for more information.

July 2021



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4 Worship Service 10am Independence Day	5	6	7 Prayer Meeting & Bible Study 5:30pm via Zoom	8	9	10
11 Worship Service 10am	12	13	14 Prayer Meeting & Bible Study 5:30pm via Zoom	15	16	17
18 Worship Service 10am	19	20	21 Prayer Meeting & Bible Study 5:30pm via Zoom	22	23	24
25 Worship Service 10am	26	27	28 Prayer Meeting & Bible Study 5:30pm via Zoom	29	30	31

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