



The Gargoyle



PASTOR'S MUSINGS

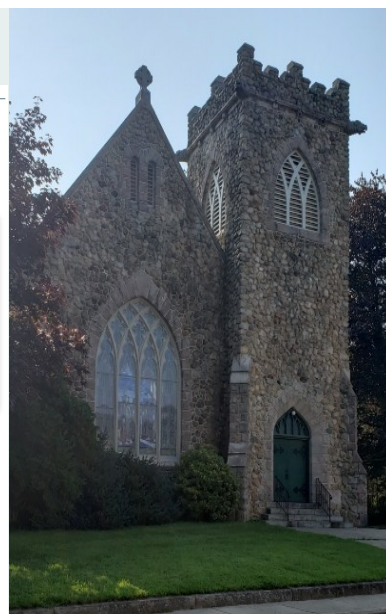
Fall Greetings to you all!

I'm writing as we go through the Nor'easter that has brought it home that summer is surely passed and soon, we'll be celebrating the Thanksgiving holiday. Some have many reasons to give thanks for all the blessings they've received, while others are living through new chapters in their lives with the passing of loved ones or having some high concern of others due to medical challenges.

It's certainly been a challenging year since last Thanksgiving, as we've continued to deal with the reality of the Covid virus, the vaccines, the schools reopening and our weekly services. I'm thankful for all who have been participating in the services, but also doing the work of the committees and boards. After the Semi-Annual meeting where we saw the transition of leadership and during which we went into the moment when the By-Laws were suspended for a year, I'm greatly encouraged by the Spirit of the gathering. So many were filled with thankfulness and a desire to work together to let God's light, love and grace unfold in our midst and help us strengthen our ministry, mission and care for one another and the larger community and beyond. We closed with what has become a favorite Benediction Response to many:

"Go Now In Peace"

Go now in peace, never be afraid,
 God will go with you each hour of every day.
 Go now in faith, steadfast, strong, and true;
 know God will guide you in all you do.
 Go now in love, and show you believe;
 reach out to others with Christ's humility.
 God will be there, with grace from above;
 go now in peace, in faith and in love. Amen.
 (con't pg. 2)



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HIGHLIGHTS

- Holiday Bazaar
- Stewardship Luncheon



PASTOR'S MUSINGS CON'T

As I look at the November calendar, please know that on Oct 31, we did the "Celebration of the Saints" who have passed away this year, due to the way the calendar dates fell. You'll see that the Women's Fellowship can't wait to welcome you on November 13th to the Craft Fair. We are also now in the Stewardship Season and the Committee is inviting you to consider your pledges for 2022 with faith, hope and trust as we go forward and to submit them by November 21st during the service after which The Stewardship Committee is hoping you will then join us for their Luncheon and share in the fellowship we are seeing regularly and/or get reacquainted with those who have been staying home due to the pandemic guidelines. Please note: We give great thanks for two very generous gifts offered this past month to help with our building renovations and our General Fund. Then, on November 28th we move into the First Sunday in Advent!

An Invitation: On January 9th we will have a wonderful opportunity. I've been invited to offer the *Sacrament of Baptism* to two young girls. If you have a child that you would like to have baptized, or you are an adult who has not yet been baptized and would like to have that happen, would you please contact me? I will be pleased to sit and discuss this with you. {I was 23 when I was baptized if that helps you with your decision.}

As we walk together into November, may we especially give thanks for all who are here with us. I appreciate this quote from Katrina Mayer who wrote: "Thanksgiving isn't just a day. It's a way we can live our lives every day."

May we live in that Spirit as the body of Christ here in Groton and share the Good News as best as we can.

Blessings to you all this day,

Rev. Lee

YOUTH GROUP

On Friday, October 22nd, we had a trivia night for 20–40-year-olds! A small group came, eight people making up four teams. Seymour, our trivia MC was super amazing, funny, and relatable. It was wonderful to see more young people in the church for an event like this. Everyone had a wonderful time, and many showed interest in coming back for more events. We are hoping to do more trivia nights in the future, for this group and others!

Youth Group, we will meet on November 21st and 28th, 11:30 am - 1 pm.

DEACON'S MESSAGE



Giving Thanks in Times of Pandemic



One of the ways I celebrate Thanksgiving each year is to think over the previous year and identify the things for which I am thankful. Some years, this task is more challenging than others, but one thing I am always thankful for, especially in the darkest times, is the Twenty Third Psalm, and especially for verse 4, which says, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me."

During this time of the Pandemic, we are all walking under the Shadow of Death. We are not promised that we will not die. We are not promised that we will not see or experience evil. Evil and death are and have always been parts of life. What is promised to us is that God is always with us in those darkest, most shadowed, times, and we do not need to be afraid.

For that, I am always thankful.

Doris Pulaski on behalf of the Deacons

WEEKLY MEETINGS

Sunday Worship Service

November 7th, 14th, 21st, & 28th

10:00am

Wednesday Prayer & Bible Study

November 3rd, 10th, 17th, & 24th

6:00pm via Zoom

Handbells:

Thursdays-6:30pm

Sr. Choir:

Thursdays-7:30pm

MONTHLY MEETINGS

DEACONS:

NOVEMBER 16TH

5:30PM

LEADERSHIP

NOVEMBER 16TH

7:00PM

STEWARDSHIP:

TBD

TRUSTEES:

NOVEMBER 7TH

AFTER WORSHIP

MISSIONS:

NOVEMBER 21ST

WOMENS'

FELLOWSHIP:

NOVEMBER 10TH

12:30PM

DUTTON HALL

AGENDA:

HOLIDAY BAZAAR

DETAILS

SEARCH COMMITTEE:

MONDAY EVENINGS VIA ZOOM



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

FLORENCE
BARNUM

ANNE CAMPBELL

ALEX HAGAR

JANICE KIMBALL

CHRISTOPHER LUND

JOHN ORKNEY

LYN POTTER

KENNETH SHINN

AS WE EXPRESS OUR
gratitude,
WE MUST NEVER
FORGET THAT THE
HIGHEST APPRECIATION
IS NOT TO
UTTER WORDS, BUT
to live
BY THEM.

STEWARDSHIP



Rooted in Love

We've begun our 2022 stewardship theme: "Rooted in Love", which is based upon Psalm 1, "They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season."

We hope that you have been and will continue to be able to join us in worship as we present Stewardship Moments centered around the life cycle of planting a seed (your pledge) as it roots (in love), as it is nurtured (by us), sprouts, and grows.

Stewardship letter packets have been mailed to members and friends of Groton Congregational Church. A copy of the letter is included in this issue of the Gargoyle. There are additional packets available in the church office that include the pledge card and return envelope; please call if you need one mailed to you (860-445-7409). If you've changed your address, please call Lisa in the office and let her know!

Your pledge is planted in love and is rooted in love. On Sunday, November 21 – Stewardship Sunday – we will gather together as the family of The Groton Congregational Church for a Stewardship Luncheon to bless and give thanks for the promise you will make (in the form of a pledge) and so faithfully continue to provide.

Thank you for your continued pledges of time, talent and treasures.

"I have found that among its other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver." Maya Angelou

God's blessings be upon you.

Your Stewardship Committee,

Cathy Johnson
Sue Stottlemeyer
Phyllis Meyer
Doris Pulaski



Rooted in Love

Stewardship Luncheon

Sunday, November 21st

After Worship Service

October, 2021

Dear Church Family,



To everything, there is a season, and a time to every purpose, under heaven (**Ecclesiastes 3:1-8**)

And so it is the season for our church's 2022 Stewardship Campaign. What are we campaigning for? We are working in an active way toward a particular goal. The goal? This year's stewardship campaign is working towards a goal of supporting and strengthening the Groton Congregational Church, not just financially, but also spiritually.

Our 2022 theme – “Rooted in Love” – draws inspiration from Psalm 1, “They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season.” Your pledge to the church is the seed of love that is planted and from which the roots develop. Collectively, we tend to the nurture and care of those roots to help them burst through the ground, grow, bloom and thrive. So it is with our

financial gifts in order to meet our physical and spiritual needs at Groton Congregational.

God is still speaking, and He is still planting.

Money is not a particularly easy thing to talk about. We are all in different financial situations. Despite this, we are a family that has devotedly and continually given of its time, talents and treasures. Perhaps you have not been able to make a sustained commitment and now you can. Perhaps you are able to increase your existing pledge. Whatever you have to offer is graciously received and utilized.

You are being asked to make faithful decisions about your money. Meditate and pray on it. Be as thoughtful and generous a disciple as you are able. Let love be your guide.

Sunday, November 21, is our Stewardship Sunday. On that day, we will offer our pledged gifts to Groton Congregational Church and ask God to guide us as we manage all we are given in order to further His work in our midst. After service, we will gather as a church family for a luncheon to be served in Dutton Hall. If you are unable to come on that day you may, of course, mail in your pledge card. Please indicate on your card if you wish to have collection envelopes.

“Go now in faith, steadfast strong and true. Know God will guide you in all you do” (*excerpt from our closing Benediction Song, “Go Now in Peace” by Don Besig and Nancy Price*)

Thank you.

Your Stewardship Committee,

Cathy Johnson, Phyllis Meyer, Susanne Stottlemeyer, Doris Pulaski



A 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.

Sanctuary Flowers

Honor that special person or occasion with a floral donation to the Sanctuary.



To do so, please contact Lisa at the church office if you would like to have your floral donation dedication printed in the bulletin and announced at worship.

For more information, please contact Janice Kimball.



Holiday bazaar



Groton Congregational Church

162 Monument St., Groton, CT

November 13th 9am to 2pm



**Unique Holiday Gifts, Handmade Crafts, Stocking
Stuffers, Silent Auction, Baked Goods & MORE.**

Hungry from shopping-Grab a Sandwich-to-Go.

Our Holiday Bazaar is coming up fast and we would **greatly appreciate donations of themed gift baskets, gift certificates, and other items of value for the Silent Auction.** Please contact Penny, Sally, or the church office by November 11th if you are able to assist with this endeavor. Thank you so much! We hope to see everyone at the Bazaar on November 13th from 9am to 2pm. There will be lots of one-of-a-kind holiday gifts, stocking stuffers, and other hand-made craft items. Yummy baked goods and sandwiches to go will be available!



Be consistent in your dedication to showing your gratitude to others. Gratitude is a fuel, a medicine, and spiritual and emotional nourishment.



MODERATOR'S MOMENT

Life is a strange journey. We often end up where we least expected to be. There are a lot of experiences that I never thought I would have. Most recently, I became the Moderator of our church. That brings new challenges for me.

The past couple of years have been challenging for all of us, and we've all had to learn new ways of doing things. I keep hearing the same phrase over and over.

"I can't wait to get back to normal!"

What is normal? After 9/11 we never went back to life the way it was before that terrible event. We were changed in so many ways. It is the same now. We are not the same as we were 2 years ago, and we can't go back.

As we approach the start of the church year, we should think of new starts. As a church we have been through a lot. Losing two pastors (in very different ways), a pandemic and losing church members in various ways. We can't go back to "normal." Now is the time to look at our church with new eyes. How do we move forward? What is holding us back? How do we interact with the community? And most importantly, how do we interact more with each other at the church beyond committees and groups?

Advent and Christmas are seasons of expectation and (re)birth. Perhaps we should look at this as a time of rebirth for our church.

Peace,
Ingrid Measimer
Church Moderator

Thanksgiving
blessings  Gatherings
GRATEFUL *Family*
Give Thanks Prayers  Blessed 
Let us come before Him
with Thanksgiving
Psalms 95:2

MUSIC NEWS



We experienced a beautiful celebration of Burt Turner's life on Sunday, October 17. We appreciate having Michael Noonan as guest organist for the service and thank our choir members who sang beautifully.

The music department is planning a service of Lessons and Carols during Advent on Sunday, December 12 during our morning worship. All singers are invited to join us!

Looking ahead to Epiphany, Sunday, January 2, 2022, I am hopeful we can invite children of our church family to participate in this service. In recent years, the children's pageant has been held on Epiphany; and it would be wonderful if we could re-create this celebration! Stay tuned!

Our Senior Choir and Handbell choir are rehearsing weekly on Thursday evenings. New members are always welcome, so please come join us.

Sue Stottlemeyer

A Prayer for Thanksgiving

Loving God,
We turn our hearts to you on this
day for giving thanks, mindful of
your many gifts.
For each one, we are grateful.
For each one, we are blessed.
For each one we are opened to the
abundance of your love.
May this Thanksgiving Day offer a
reminder to be generous with others,
as you are with us.
We praise you.
We rejoice in you.
We give you thanks.
Amen.

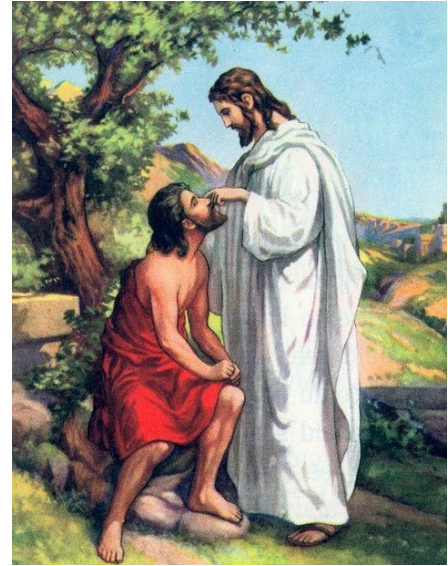
MY TEACHER, LET ME SEE AGAIN

10/18/2021 - by: [Lindsey Peterson](#) - [Starting With Scripture](#)

The Rev. Lindsey Peterson is the Designated Term Minister for South Congregational Church, UCC, in Springfield, MA.

Scripture: Mark 10:46-52 (NRSV)

They came to Jericho. As he and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout out and say, 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!' Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, 'Son of David, have mercy on me!' Jesus stood still and said, 'Call him here.' And they called the blind man, saying to him, 'Take heart; get up, he is calling you.' So throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. Then Jesus said to him, 'What do you want me to do for you?' The blind man said to him, 'My teacher, let me see again.' Jesus said to him, 'Go; your faith has made you well.' Immediately he regained his sight and followed him on the way.



"Study the past if you would define the future."

— Confucius

As a lifelong New Englander, I am indeed a lover of fall. The weather changing awakens my senses; my brain seems to function better, I have more energy with the increasing coolness. And I do love wearing my favorite everyday fall boots (we're not talking winter boots yet)!

Seasons incarnate change. When we live in a place like New England with such pronounced seasons - when we pay attention - we learn that change is part of the ordinary deal and cycle of life

The other day in the early afternoon, I went out into the parking lot of the church I serve. Four South Church folk were gathered in the corner of the building in a small communion service. A much larger circle of chairs was set up closer to Temple Street in the back parking lot; Pioneer Valley Project (PVP) which has its offices at South, was gathered with their state-wide partners from their umbrella organization - Massachusetts Communities Action Network - for a big meeting

As a Deacon at South Church was offering the words of communion *the bread heaven, for you; the cup of salvation*, from across the parking lot, Lizzo's song *Good as Hell* started playing. PVPs cohort was filming something and Lizzo was the soundtrack. Try not dancing when that song is playing! Lizzo's *Good as Hell* incarnates good feelings and movement.

"For the bread of God...gives life to the

world" - John 6:33. The bread of God, the nourishment of God, gives life. It incarnates being itself. Vibrancy, aliveness, action in spite of all that pushes us into the inaction of fear; God incarnates movement, the energy of possibility, the joy of being alive.

I know that life is not always joyful; and God is not absent in those dulled spaces. Sometimes, life is in the rest, and the fallowness. At the same time, *the bread of God gives life to the world*. In the midst of this long and ongoing season of Covid, many of us are in depressed spaces. Many of our organizations are as well. We have lost sight of the vibrancy of the bread of life, and how it changes places and moves with seasons. Where is it incarnate now?

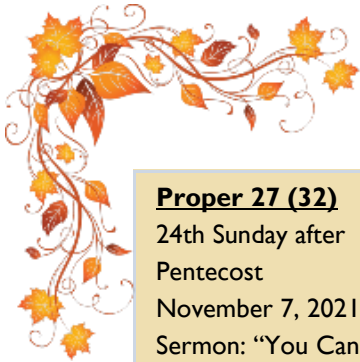
As the leaves fall, I ask myself what I need to let go to let God's life force work through me in new ways, changed as I am. As the weather cools, I listen to where the energy of movements, of people in action for just and loving change are, and I release some of my own fears to join in their work however I can; to be warmed by participation.

As church, may we see the bread of life, the cup of salvation being broken and poured out in places we might not think to look and join in the celebration of life there.

PRAYER

"Dance then, wherever you may be, I am the Lord of the Dance said he, and I'll lead you all wherever you may be, and I'll lead you all in the dance said he."

NOVEMBER WORSHIP SERVICES



<u>Proper 27 (32)</u> 24th Sunday after Pentecost November 7, 2021 Sermon: "You Can't Outgive God"	<u>Ruth 3:1-5; 4:13-17</u> <u>Psalm 127</u>	<u>1 Kings 17:8-16</u> <u>Psalm 146</u>	<u>Hebrews 9:24-28</u>	<u>Mark 12:38-44</u>
<u>Proper 28 (33)</u> 25th Sunday after Pentecost November 14, 2021 Sermon: "The New Covenant"	<u>1 Samuel 1:4-20</u> <u>1 Samuel 2:1-10 **</u>	<u>Daniel 12:1-3</u> <u>Psalm 16</u>	<u>Hebrews 10:11-14,</u> <u>(15-18), 19-25</u>	<u>Mark 13:1-8</u>
<u>Reign of Christ -</u> <u>Proper 29 (34)</u> 26th Sunday after Pentecost November 21, 2021 Sermon: "What is Truth?"	<u>2 Samuel 23:1-7</u> <u>Psalm 132:1-12, (13-</u> <u>18)</u>	<u>Daniel 7:9-10</u> <u>13-14</u> <u>Psalm 93</u>	<u>Revelation 1:4b-8</u>	<u>John 18:33-37</u>
<u>First Sunday of</u> <u>Advent</u> November 28, 2021 Sermon: "Be Alert"	<u>Jeremiah 33:14-16</u>	<u>Psalm 25:1-10</u>	<u>1 Thessalonians 3:9-</u> <u>13</u>	<u>Luke 21:25-36</u>



November 2021

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

	1	2	3 Prayer Meeting via Zoom 6pm	4	5	6
7 Worship Service 10am	8	9	10 Prayer Meeting via Zoom 6pm	11	12	13
14 Worship Service 10am	15	16	17 Prayer & Bible Study via Zoom 6pm	18	19	20
21 Worship Service 10am	22	23	24 Prayer & Bible Study via Zoom 6pm	25 Thanksgiving Day 	26	27
28 Worship Service 10am	29	30				

LOCAL EVENTS



12th ANNUAL FRIENDS & FAMILY NIGHT

NOVEMBER 5TH 6:00PM TO 9:00PM



1650 HARTFORD-NEW LONDON TURNPIKE
 OAKDALE, CT



Beautiful Bazaar

Mystic Congregational Church



November 3rd 5:30pm to 7:30pm

November 4th 11:30am to 4:00pm

LOCAL EVENTS



Red Sleigh Bazaar
Ledyard Congregational Church



November 20th
9:30am to 2:00pm



REFLECTIONS-GOD IS ONE

God Is One

10/25/2021 - by: [Johanna Hattendorf](#) - [Starting With Scripture](#)

Scripture: Mark 12:28-34 (NRSV)

One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, he asked him, 'Which commandment is the first of all?' Jesus answered, 'The first is, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." The second is this, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." There is no other commandment greater than these.' Then the scribe said to him, 'You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that "he is one, and besides him there is no other"; and "to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength", and "to love one's neighbour as oneself",—this is much more important than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices.' When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God.' After that no one dared to ask him any question.

Reflection: God Is One

One of the many hats I wear, is Tai Chi and QiGong instructor. One of the classic symbols in Tai Chi is the Yin/Yang of a circle divided by two "apostrophes"—one white, one black. Each half also has a bit of the other in it. The white half has a black dot, and the black half has a white dot to remind us that nothing is just one thing or another. In fact, everything is united in the oneness of all.

When I read these familiar Words of scripture, I am reminded of this ancient concept of Oneness: "The Lord our God, the *Lord is one*." God isn't just one God. God **IS** ONE. God is *Oneness*. Oneness that unites all divides. Oneness that encompasses everyone, everything, and all of the universe, galaxies, planets, creation. All of it is **THE** One. All of it— "The Lord our God, the *Lord is one*."

In our world and our society, the pandemic has brought to the surface the many ways that we are divided and polarized. By politics, by vaccination status, by gender or sexual orientation, or race, or. . . .It's hard to resist the pull of the divide when we confront it in every moment of every day. It's hard to remember that not only are there polarities—there is also Oneness.

And yet, that is exactly what we are called to do.

When we remember that God Is One, what we discover is Love. Not valentine's day love, but a love that IS ONE. Like in the Yin/Yang there comes a sudden stab of realization that there is darkness in the light, and light in the darkness. That what I point at in you, is also in me. The Love that is One allows us to recognize that even though we are separated, we are united in the ONE. And we are called, compelled to Love. With a love that is emotion (heart), and thought (mind), and justice/action (strength), and into the depth of our very being (soul). Not just for others, but for ourselves. To love our neighbor as we love ourselves.

This is what we strive for—to see the unity in all the polarity—to know God as One. To know that in the ONEness, we can and must love.



Rev. Johanna Hattendorf is a UCC pastor and Licensed Massage therapist, who now has a unique ministry of healing for survivors of trauma and abuse, using hands-on bodywork and teaching Tai Chi and QiGong.

A SONG OF EARTH AND STARS



A Song of Earth and Stars

Johanna Hattendorf, June 21, 2021

Underneath it all,
The deep thrumming of the bass,
The pulse of the Universe
The heartbeat of the Cosmos,
Pulsing,
 throbbing,
 driving me forward.

Do you feel the depth--
 The ground beneath your feet?
Listen, it's there.
Not just under your feet,
 In your heart.
Listen.
 Listen.
 Listen.

And then the Stars join in,
The heavens singing their eternal refrain,
Over and over and over.
It's love.
Love.
Love.

The love to wrap us up in ourselves
To take us on this crazy ride
to meet, and greet,
Ourselves.
Everywhere.
Everywhere.

Stars and Earth United

Joined for this song:

*Gather the pieces,
The broken pieces
Pick up the stardust
Gather it in your arms
And know that You,
Yes! You!
And me--
We !
We are the beat
the pulsing earth,
The singing soaring stars
And yes
You
And me,
WE
Are on this crazy train--
This life of being and doing and seeing and knowing
And we somehow are each a star
And All the earth.
Together.*

And the beat, beat, beating
Keeps moving us forward
To live,
To love
To pulse,
Just as we are.

Our Vision

To continue our three-hundred year tradition of spiritual presence and service to the community

To live and grow in the spirit of Jesus Christ

To share our time, talents and resources in support of community and other missions, through which Jesus Christ might be made known to others

To welcome into the Groton Congregational Church family all those who share our love of Jesus Christ and our mission of community service.

To continue a tradition of caring, comfort and support for all those within the Groton Congregational Church family.



162 Monument Street
Groton, CT 06340
860-445-7409
www.grotonucc.org
office@grotoncongregational.org

Bring Your Family to Our Family. We are here to celebrate Jesus Christ with you.

Located near historic Fort Griswold, by the banks of the Thames River, The Groton Congregational Church welcomes you with open hearts, minds, and arms. We offer a warm and progressive environment for worshippers from all walks of life. Our motto is; *No matter who you are or where you are Life's Journey you are always welcome here.*

If you want to know the love of God and the wonderful plans God has in store for you, come and celebrate the love of Jesus with us through the spoken word and the joy of music.

Sunday Worship begins at 10am.

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

Mailing Address Line 1
Mailing Address Line 2
Mailing Address Line 3
Mailing Address Line 4
Mailing Address Line 5