

# The Gargoyle

## Pastor's Moment

By Rev. Lee Ireland

Summer Greetings to you,

I greet you as we enjoy these warm summery days and shed our heavy winter clothing, I think! We sure are on a roller coaster ride with these temperatures right now....and there have been a few recent moments when I've been very grateful that my winter coat and mittens were still in my car as I headed out for a walk!

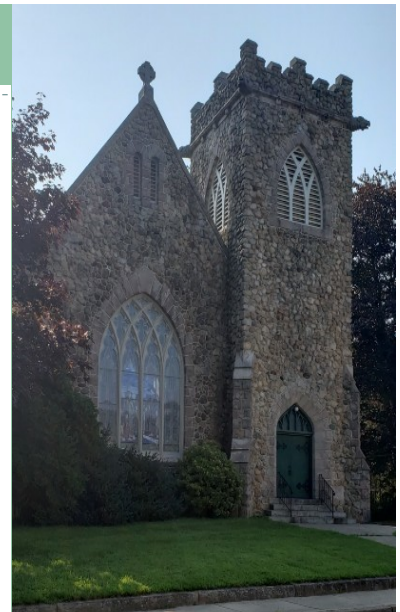
How I have delighted in seeing the beautiful blossoms on the trees and flowers in our church garden and lawns! Thank you one and all for those who have helped! The symbolism of the seasons is such a gift to experience and witness outwardly and help us to remember to be patient as we allow the cycles to occur inwardly as well within our personal lives due to the events of our lives and elsewhere. How grateful I am for the gift of being able to worship with so many of you in person after the season of isolation during the height of the Covid epidemic. Hallelujah! Amen!

I started writing this message last night in what is a sad season in our country. I was watching President Biden offer his response to the mass shooting at Uvalde, TX during which 19 children and 3 adults were murdered by an 18-year-old young man. A senseless loss of innocent lives, by a broken soul. The scene shifted to where Senator Chris Murphy was making a plea on the Senate floor, (having been with the families at Sandy Hook Elementary School all those years before when they were grappling with the loss of their children to a young man who had clearly lost his soul on the path of violence). Senator Murphy was pleading: "This didn't need to happen." He was pleading for his colleagues to join him and find a path forward to bring an end to these mass shootings through gun control legislation. President Biden offered his message of condolence to the parents ...but with a direct charge to the nation's leaders: "we cannot be silent any longer." *I personally ask you to join me in a prayer that will move the hearts of the Senators to find this path so we may finally move out of this season of violence into a season of greater peace and collaboration with one another.*

I am now shifting to write about the conversations I have had with the deacons and the pastoral search committee after the Lenten season, Holy Week and Easter. I was receiving inner messages that have strengthened my sense of Call and ability to be present to you here at this time in history. I feel that the gifts that I can offer to you can help strengthen who you are as a congregation with your walk into the future and help better prepare you more fully for a new pastor down the road. I feel that it would be more helpful if I can stay and offer some stability rather than seeing you feel the need to 'fill the position' and start the cycle all over again in these next few months. Let's nurture the roots for a few more seasons.

I am grateful that as we had the conversations, I heard the members having the same sense, and we realized the opportunity to rewrite my covenant so I will now serve as your Transitional Minister to do this work. I value this time together. In the fall, we will do some specific tasks and work as well on the vision that is here for us now, as I feel it is a different than what you sensed 3-4 years ago. The world is in a different place. Our hopes and dreams have shifted since then, too. Let us find a way to listen together and create a stronger spirit of trusting one another; for then we can give thanks as we watch what unfolds as we let the spirit of God's love and grace guide us as they guided Jesus and the disciples.

Peace and blessings to you all,  
Rev. Lee A. Ireland



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162 Monument St  
Groton, CT 06340  
[www.grotonucc.org](http://www.grotonucc.org)  
860-445-7409



MELISSA BEAUPRE  
EMMA MABLE DETMER  
ISLA GRACE FULTON  
ELIZABETH HERZIG  
LEE IRELAND  
ARIANA ORKNEY  
MARGARET SHEARER  
ROBIN SHINN  
IRMA STREETER  
ADDISYN WALL  
NANCY WOODRUFF  
SCOTT WOODRUFF  
DARLENE WOODWARD  
EMERY YOUNG III

#### **Sanctuary Flowers**

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

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



#### **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.

# Open Conversation-An Invitation

By Rev. Lee Ireland

"Open Conversations" Opportunity.

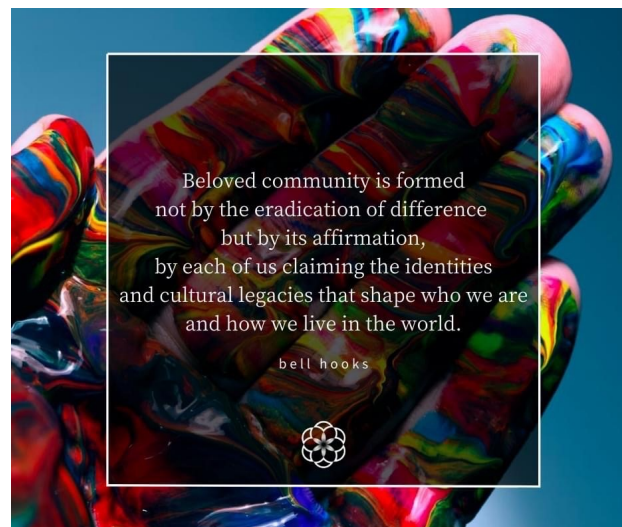
I am thankful for all those who joined us on May 15 for the "Open Conversation" after church. It became a significant conversation, and everyone was grateful for the chance to be together in that kind of setting and get to know each other better.

Many have said, "We need to do this more often!"

**I'm inviting you to our next one on June 12 after church.** Anne Campbell and a few others are also coordinating a simple lunch with perhaps a fun dessert....stay tuned! I hope you can join us.

Gratefully,

Rev. Lee Ireland



# Stewardship Message

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## “Locally Planted”

The above quote was recently seen on the backside of an employee's t-shirt at Burnett's Country Gardens in Salem (you may remember this as Salem Country Gardens). What a great message!! Isn't it great when you find unexpected connection and inspiration while going about your daily life?

Recently, Reverend Lee spoke about branching out (there's that connection to roots again...) to help others outside of our walls and to *love one another* as Jesus loves us. Again, we are rooted in love at Groton Congregational Church.

Thank you for continuing to fulfill your pledges and for the giving of your time, talents, and treasures. If you haven't yet submitted a pledge, cards are available in Dutton Hall and in the church office.

The Stewardship Committee has begun seeking donations to **the month-long raffle that will be held during the month of September**. Again, funds from the raffle will go into the maintenance and restoration fund for our church building (any homeowner knows that there's always something needing attention!). We've already received some donations and it's exciting each time a business or person says "Yes!!" If you have a place or person in mind to approach, please see a member of the committee and we will provide you with the donation request letter that you can present. To avoid duplication of effort, we need to know where you will be going so that we can add it to our growing list. If you'd like to donate money or purchase gift cards that we can use towards filling the raffle calendar, that works – and is appreciated – as well. Ticket sales will begin in August and we will be asking for help in that area.

God's blessings be upon you.

Your Stewardship Committee,

Cathy Johnson, Sue Stottlemeyer, Phyllis Meyer, Doris Pulaski

A poster for a Raffle Fundraiser. It features a blue border and a white central area. At the top, it says "YOUR DONATIONS ARE NEEDED!!" in blue. Below that is a colorful graphic of a raffle ticket with the word "Raffle" in large red letters and "Fundraiser" in a blue banner. Underneath the graphic, it says "COMING SEPTEMBER 2022" in blue. Then, in smaller black text, "STEWARDSHIP IS HOSTING A RAFFLE TO BENEFIT THE BUILDING FUND". Below that, in pink text, "Popular items from years past are: Gift Cards, Sports/Theater/Events Tickets". Then, in bold black text, "ALL Donations Are Greatly Appreciated Including Those of Your Time, Talents, & Skills!". Finally, in pink text at the bottom, "Please contact either Cathy Johnson, Sue Stottlemeyer, Doris Pulaski, or Phyllis Meyer for more information".

YOUR DONATIONS ARE NEEDED!!



COMING SEPTEMBER 2022

STEWARDSHIP IS HOSTING A RAFFLE TO  
**BENEFIT THE BUILDING FUND**

Popular items from years past are:  
Gift Cards, Sports/Theater/Events Tickets

**ALL Donations Are Greatly Appreciated  
Including Those of Your Time, Talents, & Skills!**

Please contact either Cathy Johnson,  
Sue Stottlemeyer, Doris Pulaski, or  
Phyllis Meyer for more information

## Deacon's Message

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### *From the Board of Deacons*

Greetings Brothers and Sisters in Faith,

The Board of Deacons is pleased to announce that, based on a recommendation from the search committee, we have voted to extend our covenant with Reverend Lee Ireland.

Over time congregations change as they respond to various changes in their community, world and, changes in their internal circumstances. Reverend Ireland will be able to help provide unique opportunities for our congregation's self-study, discernment and spiritual growth leading to a focusing on our present reality.

We rejoice in our opportunity to continue to walk this journey with Reverend Ireland as we discover our mission, purpose, and the path for our future.

Light and peace,

Mary Alapa

Chuck Barnum

Sue Blaisdell

Beth Chirillo

Kevin Measimer

Sally Turner



Bench & Lilac Bushes at Groton Congregational Church

## Music Committee

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We thank our Director of Music, Sue Stottlemeyer, for her leadership of music throughout the Lent and Easter seasons!

Sue has also invited the **SHORELINE RINGERS**, a professional handbell ringing organization, to perform on Wednesday, **June 15th at 7 PM** in our church sanctuary. We are grateful to all who have made it possible to offer this program to all, free of charge. A reception in Dutton Hall will follow the concert.

With thanks to the Boards of Deacons and Trustees, we are launching our first **Junior Handbell Festival workshop for ages 7-12** (recommended) for church and area young folks. Please see the flyer-and-registration form for details, included in this issue of the GARGOYLE. Registration is limited, so sign up today!

The next meeting of the **Music Committee will be Sunday, July 17th, 2022, at 11 AM**. All are welcome!

Janice Kimball, chair



The flyer is titled "Junior Handbell Festival" and is set against a white background with a purple border. At the top, a row of colorful handbells (blue, red, yellow, green) is arranged in a semi-circle. The word "FREE" appears in purple on both sides of the handbells. Below the title, it says "For young people 7-12 years of age". The schedule is listed as "Thursday Evenings July 7th-August 11th 6:45pm to 7:45 pm" with musical note icons on either side. The location is "Groton Congregational Church 162 Monument St. Groton, CT". A diagonal banner on the right says "Register by June 20th". The description "Basic techniques for hand chimes & handbells in a fun atmosphere with modern easy music" is in purple. The director information "Directed by Rev. Janice Kimball with GCC Music Director Sue Stottlemeyer" is in black. The contact information "Contact Miss Janice 860-235-0494 to sign up & for more information (texting available)" is in purple.

**FREE** Junior Handbell Festival **FREE**

For young people 7-12 years of age

Thursday Evenings  
July 7th-August 11th  
6:45pm to 7:45 pm

at *Register by June 20th*

Groton Congregational Church  
162 Monument St.  
Groton, CT

Basic techniques for hand chimes & handbells  
in a fun atmosphere  
with modern easy music

Directed by Rev. Janice Kimball with GCC  
Music Director Sue Stottlemeyer

Contact Miss Janice 860-235-0494 to sign up & for more  
information (texting available)





## REGISTRATION FORM

This class is for those 7-12 years of age. It will take **place every Thursday evening from 6:45 pm to 7:45pm July 7<sup>th</sup> through August 11<sup>th</sup>**. These **FREE lessons** in basic handbell and hand chime techniques will be given at **Groton Congregational Church 162 Monument St., Groton, CT**. It is being directed by Rev. Janice Kimball with GCC Music Director, Sue Stottlmyer. Additional adult members of the GCC Handbell Choir may assist during some lessons. A short performance may be held at 10am on August 7<sup>th</sup>.

Participants' Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Participants' Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent/Legal Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Participants' Prior Musical Experience (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please plan to stay in the Church building while your child is receiving lessons.**

**Return this form to the Church Office no later than June 30, 2022.** You may email it to : [office@grotoncongregational.org](mailto:office@grotoncongregational.org) with the subject line "Junior Handbell Festival".

**For additional information contact Janice Kimball 860-235-0494 (texting available).**

## Women's Fellowship

By Sally Turner

There will not be a bake sale in June since we had two bake sales in May. Many thanks to the many who baked, bought, or contributed in any way to make our sales so successful.

**There will be no Women's Fellowship meetings in June or July.**

On **June 7th** (Tuesday) there will be a **Ladies Night Out** dinner at Langley's Restaurant in Waterford. We will meet at 6 p.m. There is a sign-up sheet on the Mid-Way Bulletin Board. This is a really enjoyable evening, and we make a truly JOYFUL noise when we're all together. We will order off the menu, and individual checks will be given to you at the end of the meal. Looking forward to seeing many of you there. All women are invited!!!

## Missions

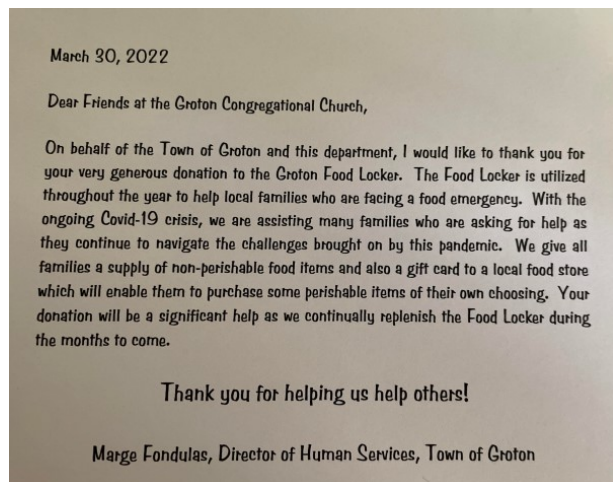
By Beth Chirillo

Thank you to all who have been donating to our red wagon. Missions has taken over 140 items and a supermarket gift card to the Groton Food Locker and the New London Homeless Hospitality Center. We have received a nice thank you card from the town of Groton. (see below)

Missions would like to know if there is a project/mission that you would like to see us support. Please see one of us or email [missions@grotoncongregational.org](mailto:missions@grotoncongregational.org).

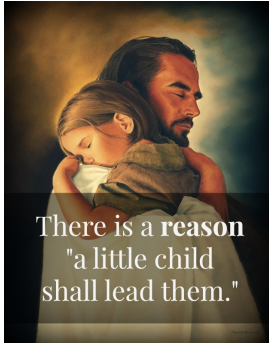
Also, we would like to extend the invitation to anybody who would like to join us as we have open spots on our committee.

**Our next meeting is June 12 at 9 AM.**





## Children in Church



A Sunday school teacher asked her children as they were on the way to church service, "And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?" One bright little girl replied, "Because people are sleeping."



Six-year-old Angie and her four-year-old brother, Joel, were sitting together in church. Joel giggled, sang, and talked out loud. Finally, his big sister had had enough.

"You're not supposed to talk out loud in church."

"Why? Who's going to stop me?" Joel asked.

Angie pointed to the back of the church and said, "See those two men standing by the door? They're hushers."



A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons, Kevin 5, and Ryan 3. The boys began to argue over who would get the first pancake. Their mother saw the opportunity for a moral lesson. "If Jesus were sitting here, He would say, 'Let my brother have the first pancake, I can wait.'"

Kevin turned to his younger brother and said, "Ryan, you be Jesus!"

## Search Committee

The committee has met faithfully for over two years, mostly on a weekly basis, following the process set out by the UCC. We have reviewed several profiles which did not fit.

The church, and the world have undergone many changes since we initially created our profile in 2020 and the committee agrees that now is not the current time to continue our search.

We are thrilled that Rev. Lee Ireland has agreed to walk with us as we discover who we are now and how we can best serve the future.

Respectfully submitted,  
Anne Campbell, Chair



Garden Box at Groton Congregational Church

# Worship Watch

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## June Church Services

### Day of Pentecost

June 5, 2022

Sermon: The Spirit of Truth & Peace

Acts 2:1-21 or Genesis 11:1-9

Psalms 104:24-34, 35b

Romans 8:14-17 or

Acts 2:1-21

John 14:8-17, (25-27)



### Trinity Sunday

June 12, 2022

### First Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon: Wisdom Born of Pain

Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31

Psalms 8

Romans 5:1-5

John 16:12-15



### Proper 7 (12)

### Second Sunday after Pentecost

June 19, 2022

Sermon: Guest Preacher—Chuck Barnum

1 Kings 19:1-4, (5-7), 8-15a

Psalms 42 and 43

Isaiah 65:1-9

Psalms 22:19-28

Galatians 3:23-29

Luke 8:26-39



### Proper 8 (13)

### Third Sunday after Pentecost

June 26, 2022

Sermon: You Are Called to Freedom

2 Kings 2:1-2, 6-14

Psalms 77:1-2, 11-20

1 Kings 19:15-16, 19-21

Psalms 16

Galatians 5:1, 13-25

Luke 9:51-62

# June 2022

## Additional Meetings:

After Worship Coffee Hour—Every Sunday after Worship  
Pastoral Search—Monday evenings as the need arises



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2-Prayer & Bible Study 11am  Handbells 6:30pm Choir 7:30pm	3	4
5 Worship Service 10am	6	7 Ladies' Night Out 6pm Langley's Restaurant	8-	9-Prayer & Bible Study 11am	10	11
12 Missions 9am Worship Service 10am Open Conversation 11:30am	13	14- Leadership 7pm	15-Shoreline Ringers 7pm	16-Prayer & Bible Study 11am	17	18
19 Worship Service 10am	20	21 Deacons 5:30pm	22	23-Prayer & Bible Study 11am	24	25
26 Worship Service 10am  Stewardship 11:30am	27	28	29	30-Prayer & Bible Study 11am		

## Into the Mystic: Your Own Heart's Integrity

By John Dorhauer

In the *Sayings of the Elders*, a collection of writings from the early mystics who populated remote monasteries, we find these words:

***"...whatever path you find your soul longs after in the quest for God, do that, and always watch over your heart's integrity."***

I remember learning about the theologies embedded in scripture while taking my very first class in OT theology as a Freshmen in High School. I was somewhat surprised to learn that there were multiple theologies that, quite frankly, were somewhat incompatible with one another.

The Elohist and the Yahwist, the Priest and the Deuteronomist: each one espousing not only that there was a God, but also how to access Her and what Her primary characteristics were.

Was God removed from us, ensconced in the heavens: immortal, invisible, omniscient, all-knowing? Or was God rugged and accessible, able to be wrestled with, willing to sit with us under the shade of a tree while enjoying a meal together? Or was God present in our sanctuaries where priests alone could commune with the sacred, making sacrifices on our behalf to expiate our sin? Was God the overseeing judge, giver of the law and distributor of justice who meted out punishment for disobedience and offered rewards for good behavior?

The answer to all of that is yes. And though it is suspected that each author of texts that disclose to us their understanding of the sacred wanted us to believe their view was the right one – when the canon was completed the arbiters of what would be kept in the text and what would be eliminated were perfectly comfortable giving voice and credence to multiple expressions of sacred theologies that were hard to reconcile with each other.

In other words, "whatever path you find your soul longs after in the quest for God, do that, and always watch over your heart's integrity."

For some the lofty cathedral walls with soaring stained glass windows, walls echoing with the magnificence of exquisite pipe organ tones, and altars adorned with gold chalices and elaborate candelabras fill them with a sense of the sacred.

For some, a quiet walk along a mountain path with the rippling trills of a nearby stream and the whistling of the wind through the trees is exactly what makes their heart sing and their soul soar.

For some, sitting in a rustic and somewhat modestly furnished chapel on the hard wood of a back pew with no sound at all interrupting the solitude of the moment is where they feel closest to God.

For some the smile of a child, the hug of a loved one, the kindness of a stranger, the clever turn of phrase in good poetry, or the pleasure of a good melody will call to mind the goodness of God.

For every one of us, God is accessible.

There are as many pathways to God as there are people walking the Earth. No orthodoxy should inhibit the freedom one needs to explore their pathway to the sacred. God is love – and the discovery of God will call forth love. And it is love that will save us from the fear, hatred, and warfare that seem to plague us when our sententious orthodoxy is forced upon another.

So, explore. Whatever path you find your soul longs after in the quest for God, do that, and always watch over your heart's integrity on this, our journey Into the Mystic."



## Go Tell It On The Mountain: A Messy Church

By Tiffany Vail

In another episode of *Go Tell It On The Mountain*, The Rev. Elizabeth Chandler Felts tells Executive Conference Minister the Rev. Darrell Goodwin that the search committee that called her to serve described their church - Beneficent Congregational Church UCC, in Providence, RI - as a "messy downtown church."

"I said: that's the church for me. I'm ready for messy," said Rev. Felts, who had served six other churches and as a hospice chaplain in various parts of the country prior to coming to Providence over three years ago.

"Beneficent is a bit of an anomaly in New England," she said. "It's robustly multiracial. It is aggressively open and affirming. It has a huge spectrum, theologically, everything from confirmed atheists to old line liberals to Pentecostals to people who also practice Judaism and ancestor worship and Rastafarianism and Buddhism and other things. It's a great range of ages. And it also has a huge socioeconomic spectrum. There are folks who are very comfortable financially, but there are others who are just patching it together with whatever they can - section eight, SNAP, food, banks, kindness of strangers. And then there's everything in between."

"We have more than our share of dreamers and idealists, artistic people, gifted people, creative spirits, outside the box thinkers, misfits, and scoundrels," she said. "And of course, it's Rhode Island, which means people like to find their own way to do things. They don't always follow the bylaws. It's a restless, passionate bunch of people with really strong opinions and very high ideals. And they are always on an urgent mission. They have really done the work for 278 years. It's just an amazing, energetic, wonderful place to be."

"The name 'beneficent' - it means generous in doing good and that's the sole reason they exist," she said. "I'm so excited about how they've really lived into that mission all the way along."

Rev. Felts said the church gives out a lot of scholarships for students at colleges and vocational and technical schools, and the church houses a music school that gives free music lessons to primary and secondary school students. The church also does a lot of crowd funding for nonprofits. Rev. Felts said the church also is in the midst of replacing their failing organ pipes with pipes donated by a closing church in Maine, and they are working to remodel their kitchen.

"Last year we got a couple of generous bequests from the estates of people who admired Beneficent, and when the church council was pondering what to do with that money, I said: why don't you form a working group that is only millennials and gen Z folks and let them decide what to do with the money? And they were immediately excited about that idea because this is how we teach people to be disciples by giving them responsibility and authority. And this is also how we get to hear their voices and find out what matters to them," she said.

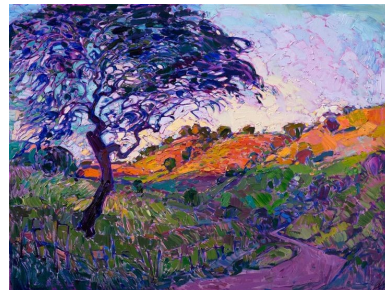
Rev. Felts said a recent Providence Journal article reported that 22 percent of college students in Providence reported skipping meals because they cannot afford them.

"Food insecurity is higher than I have ever seen it here right now, and within two blocks of us, we have two different college campuses," she said. "So I hope there's a ministry there."

The lay leaders in the church, she said, will figure that out.

Rev. Goodwin thanked Rev. Felts for raising up the importance of lay leadership empowerment, and said the Conference staff is working to develop a Lay Leadership Academy to help provide resources to those leaders who he said "are carrying so much of the justice load" and who are working to determine how their congregations can be relevant in their communities.

"I heard you saying, and I hope that the people at Beneficent hear you, championing the empowerment of the laity. And really not just championing it, but it also sounds like it's really valuable to you to hear the perspective and the wisdom of the table. That kind of welcomes more people in and I would imagine creates buy-in for how the church moves forward," he said.





We regret to announce that the **Strawberry Social** being planned for June 15<sup>th</sup> as a fundraiser for local charities **has been canceled.**

## Church Events

LANGLEY'S RESTAURANT

# LADIES' NIGHT OUT!

June 7, 2022 6PM



*Ladies'*  
Night Out

ENJOY AN EVENING  
OF WOMENS'  
FELLOWSHIP    SIGN UP AT THE CHURCH

Meals will be ordered off the menu. Separate checks will be given at the end of the night.



JUNE 12TH AFTER WORSHIP

# FOOD & FELLOWSHIP SUNDAY

Join us for a gathering of Sharing, Faith & Fellowship

**Grinders, Chips, & Soft Drinks**

**Let us Feed Our Bodies & Our Souls**



# Red Wagon Food Drive

Bring in your donations of goods every Sunday and help us help others!

**Benefits  
Groton Social Services**



GROTON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH PRESENTS

# The Shoreline Ringers

A FREE Concert for the Whole Family

**JUNE 15, 2022 | 7PM TO 8PM**  
**162 MONUMENT ST. GROTON, CT**





## Community Events



### 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.

## Bring Your Family to Our Family..

Located near historic Fort Griswold, by the banks of the Thames River, Groton Congregational Church, an Open & Affirming 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.**



162 Monument Street  
Groton, CT 06340

860-445-7409  
[www.grotonucc.org](http://www.grotonucc.org)  
[office@grotoncongregational.org](mailto:office@grotoncongregational.org)

PLEASE  
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Mailing Address Line 3  
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