

The Gargoyle

The Pastor's Musings

By Reverend Lee Ireland

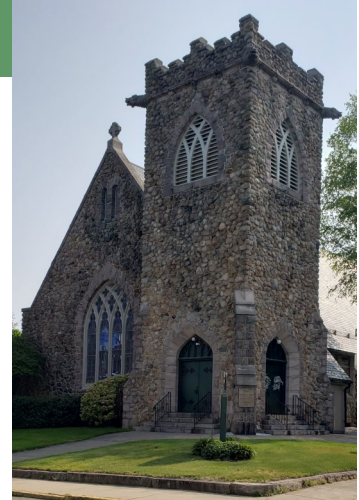
Greetings to you all,

I hope you enjoyed the beautiful month of May as we launch into June with all the graduations, celebrations, anniversaries, and potential weddings, etc.

As we move into the summer months, I know our pace will change as well as our activities. I trust you will have some time to be with family and friends - by the sea, at the beach or on the water or walking, etc. In your times of reflection, I hope you will ponder the time of transition we are in as a nation and as a church. Let's offer prayers for peace and God's guidance to lead us into greater clarity as to what the voice of Love is calling us to see and hear.

We have a rich history here in Groton, embodied in our building, but built through the reality of blood, sweat, and tears, passion and love, joy and sorrow of each person who has been a part - whether a member or not. It's been intriguing to be with you this long and hear many stories; in various moments and especially when I offer funeral services and baptisms. During those experiences, I meet people who have returned into the sanctuary and community of the faithful and given thanks. They've been moved by the warm welcome they've received and the care. I invite you to hold that in your hearts as we go forward this summer.

As a congregational church, we're going into June and scattering a bit. BUT I invite you to reflect and ponder: How do we be the "church/congregation on the corner" — *built in stone, but made up of hearts of flesh*? Expressing our love through service and music and mission; large and small. Delighting in the ability to treasure the gifts we do have, but hearing the invitation to welcome the new and listen more closely for God's invitation to nurture our offerings and perhaps expand them as we go into the unknown of each new day with trust, love, and great curiosity. Is there something new and significant we should consider with all that's happening in our country right now? New needs due to the choices some of the broken hearted are making and causing harm? (Continues pg. 2)



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Groton Congregational Church
162 Monument St.
Groton, CT
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Groton
Congregational
Church



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

The Pastor's Musings-continued

By Reverend Lee Ireland

What creative gifts are waiting to be developed and offered in light of the richness of our people's skills, experiences, talents and treasures? How can we invite others in to share of theirs and strengthen our ministry?

Think about those wanting to make the first airplane fly, or the spaceship that would fly to the moon, or the successful submarine that would take people under the sea and travel across the globe and safely return. They loved to do the creative thinking and challenge themselves and one another to see what solutions would emerge. Day after day, they were trying out this and that; knowing that a failure was not a reason to stop, but to keep on going and let their creativity guide them. I've heard that Edison said it took him 99 failures to get to the 100th try to make a lightbulb work. I love that gem of history - calling us all - not to give up just because something we tried didn't work the first time! The Real gift is opening to the Creator God's whose visions are for the well-being of all people.

With that in mind - what is begging for our attention these days to provide some new next steps in our love together, visioning and programming. We know how to do many things we do well... and several ideas about new options have come up at our brainstorming sessions. I love the question: "What if?" What do you hear within as you bat that question around in your head for a bit?

I personally would like to see us provide some opportunities to discuss the concerns of families and children with the school shootings, those at the malls and elsewhere. I saw on the news that many children are asking not to have to go to summer camps and programs. Hummm....the hunger is to be home - and resting - and having control over their own time and lives. To be with family and not everyone else all the time.

We all know that need— for home and quiet time. In light of that, let's make our summer services such that people feel free to "Come as you are" — and not see them as another obligation? I'll say - "Come to worship and enjoy the joy of seeing one another and share in the fellowship."

"Breathe. Celebrate life." Let's practice Jesus' call to "Love one another as I have loved you."

Peace and blessings,
Rev Lee

Deacons

By Doris Pulaski

America Still Prays

A national poll about prayer was done in honor of the National Day of Prayer, celebrated this year on May 4. I was surprised and heartened by its findings. Yes, most Americans do pray in some way. According to the poll:

"... 85% say they engage in a spiritual practice to connect with a higher power, whether prayer, meditation, mindfulness, reciting affirmations or spiritually based yoga. Prayer, at 61%, is the most common of the five practices, with 39% of Americans saying they practiced meditation and 38% practicing mindfulness."



Of those who pray, 87% reported that they received an answer within the past 12 months.

The finding that most surprised me was that although 61% of Americans pray, more people pray in their cars than in their places of worship!

So if you pray in your car, don't feel uncomfortable about it. You are not alone.

And your practice conforms well with Matthew 6:6, which says:

"But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you."

Any place you chose to pray is a fine and appropriate place for praying.

Pray on!

1. [Declaration of the National Day of Prayer](#)
2. [Article reporting on the poll:](#)

Gardens at GCC



Top: New gravel and wells along the side of the church.

Bottom Left: Plaque in the garden.

Bottom Right Top: Bleeding Hearts. Bottom Right Lower: Dianthus

We would like to thank Richard Stottlemeyer, Greg Hoffman, the Property Committee and our wonderful volunteers who so diligently keep the church grounds looking great.



The Big Picture

By Cathy Johnson

While a little late in reporting, we did it: we finished the (rather difficult) puzzle in Dutton Hall! Thanks to all who contributed to its completion; we hope you enjoyed some relaxing time by yourself or with others.

Other puzzles have been started - give it a go!

The boxed puzzles are there much like a library book: if you'd like to take one home to work on, please do, and return when done.

"A jigsaw puzzle is a set of numerous interlocking pieces that are assembled together to produce a complete picture, often of nature, landscapes, or a recognizable piece of art. Each piece is unique. When fit together, each piece contributes to the entire puzzle.

A jigsaw puzzle is an apt depiction of the Body of Christ. Each of us represents a unique piece of a puzzle. When our strengths are combined, we make a whole." —*Ministry Insights*

Cathy



Afternoon Tea at GCC



On May3rd an Afternoon Tea was held in Dutton Hall and attended by no less than 28 people. The event was a wonderful success, a good time was had by all. We wish to thank Phyllis Meyer for all her hard work in putting together this delightful event.



Community Meals

By Janice Kimball



Thank you for your continued support of Community Meals at Groton Congregational Church, UCC. Our last dinner for May exceeded 45 attendees, a new record since the COVID pandemic!

Our menus for June include a brunch for June 3rd, and a serving of a special turkey dinner in an early celebration of Father's Day (with thanks to our neighbors at Groton Heights Baptist Church for their thoughtful donation of turkeys).

Please contact me at 860-235-0494 if you would like to donate food or serving items, or if you are interested in volunteering. Thank you!



Missions

By Penny Sullivan

The "Fill the Ark" fundraiser was a big success. Thanks to so many people contributing to this very noble cause. In conjunction with the matching 10x donation promotion offered from Heifer International we were able to distribute 60 chickens, 20 goats, and the ability to make clean water for 10 families.

Thank you so much!

Your Missions Committee



Groton
Congregational
Church

June Meetings

- Trustees
June 12th
6pm
- Deacons
June 12th
6pm
- Council
June 12th
7pm
- Missions
June 18th
11:30am
- Stewardship
June 25th
11:30am
- Women's Fellowship
June 14th
Noon

Sanctuary Flowers



Honor that special person or occasion with a floral donation to the Sanctuary. Contact the church office 860-445-7409 .

Women's Fellowship

By Sally Turner

The May 20th Spring Yard Sale was a great success despite the weather. Thank you to the many who did every task necessary to make the day successful.

The Ladies Night out sign up sheet is posted in the midway. We will be going to Langley's at the Great Neck Country Club in Waterford on June 6th at 6:00 p.m. Hope to see you all there.

Piano Recital

By Janice Kimball

It's time to celebrate the gifts of our students, including our music students! Janice Kimball cordially invites you to come to a free piano recital featuring students of all ages, playing music for pleasure with spirit!

Please come to DUTTON HALL, GROTON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, SATURDAY, JUNE 17TH, 2023 AT 3 PM, for this program of music for a variety of styles. Everyone is welcome, free of charge, and light refreshments will be shared after the recital.

Pick-Up Choir

By Sue Stottlemeyer

Regular choir rehearsals have ceased for the summer but will resume in the fall. We would like to invite everyone to come and join the Summer Pick-Up Choir. Rehearsals begin at 9:30 every Sunday before Worship. Our first rehearsal will be on June 4th.

Christian Education

By Janice Kimball, pro tem superintendent



The Christian Education committee, Jean Young, chairperson, is happy to promote the Church Council's restoration of the summer Church Picnic on Sunday, June 25th, beginning approximately at 11:30 AM in our church parking lot.

Fun and games for all, including a bounce house for the young and young at heart (thanks to Rachel Candee and friends), with potluck and grilled hot dogs and hamburgers, will be offered (in case of rain, we will move into Dutton Hall)!

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW TO JOIN US ON JUNE 25TH!!!

Stewardship

By Doris Pulaski

Thanks to all who helped us decorate our Easter tree! Those who were unable to pick up their ornaments should by now have received them by mail. If you have not received your ornament yet, please either notify Doris Pulaski or the office.

Even though the summer is just starting, I can see the fall Stewardship campaign is just around the corner. Our committee will definitely need more help with the campaign. If you think you could lend a hand, please notify Sue Stottlemeyer, Doris Pulaski, or the church office.

SILVER LAKE SUMMER CAMP

GRADES 4-12:

Five 1-week sessions of [overnight camp](#)

GRADES 1-3:

1 week of [day camp](#)

PLUS half-week [programs for families](#)

2023 Standard Program*

Tiered Pricing: \$745 / \$670 / \$595

Please contact them for more information.



Church Events



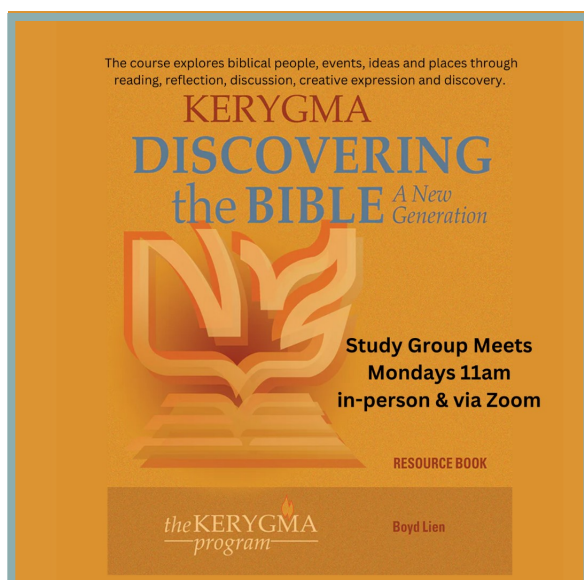
SUMMER OFFICE HOURS

Are in effect beginning Memorial Day and ending on Labor Day



COMMUNITY MEALS

Saturdays from Noon to 1pm



BOOK STUDY

Takes place during the weekly Monday Morning Prayer & Bible Study meeting at 11am. Come in-person or join via Zoom.

Church Events



LADIES NIGHT OUT

Tuesday, June 6, 2023 6pm at Langley's Restaurant in Waterford.

Sign up now in the Church midway.

Carpooling is greatly encouraged so don't hesitate to let us know if you need a ride to this fun event



YOU ARE INVITED

Everyone is cordially invited to come to an enjoyable afternoon of music, presented enthusiastically by piano students of Janice Kimball! We offer a great variety of selections for your entertainment, in DUTTON HALL, GROTON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, SATURDAY, JUNE 17TH, 2023 AT 3 PM.

The program is free and open to all, with refreshments shared after the recital.



CHURCH PICNIC

June 25th-After Worship in the Church Parking lot.

Love IS Your Work

By Rev. Candi Ashenden

Scripture: John 17:1-11 (NSRV)

Jesus Prays for His Disciples

After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, ‘Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

‘I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.

Reflection: Love IS Your Work

This scripture is jam-packed with different themes one could explore, but the tentacle that jumped out at me with this week’s reading was that of bringing God glory through my work. Now it’s easy to jump to the assumption that a pastor could bring glory to God by serving faithfully in that role, but what about others? This passage clearly states, “ I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do.” That says nothing about pastors...it refers to ALL of us...and it says nothing about the type of work or even that it means “paid” work.

Our “work” in the world is whatever God has called us to be. We may be parents, or trash collectors, or teachers, or baggers at the grocery store, or lawn rakers, or doctors, or soup kitchen volunteers...the “title” of what we do is not what’s important to God, but rather the spirit with which we do it.

As you go about your daily life and work, does the way you move through the world glorify God? Are you the one offering a friendly smile to one who seems a little discouraged, or a helping hand whenever you see a need? Do you take the time to look into the eyes of a cashier or a customer, depending what side of the register you are on, and really see and greet the person before you? As we walk through each day there are a multitude of ways we can bring hope and light to others.

Love IS Your Work-continued

By Rev. Candi Ashenden



The Sanskrit word “namaste” offers us a beautiful description of seeing one another fully. When one utters this word, often while bowing toward another with hands together as if in prayer, one is actually saying, “The God in me greets the God in you.” And this is our work.

Taking this even further, perhaps God was not talking about “work” as we think of it, in this passage. Perhaps, this scripture is meant to speak of our eternal work... our calling to be people of faith. Perhaps our work is to love one another as Christ loved us. Can it really be that simple? I think it can...and I think it is. I have a dear friend who is like a brother to me, who has a unique ministry: he

owns a liquor store. Yes, a liquor store. And why do I call it a ministry? Because it is. He hires folks who might struggle to get employment anywhere else and then helps them to get a firmer foundation under their feet. He has been known to help some of his patrons to get help when their drinking has become excessive. He has driven customers home who should not be behind the wheel. He has visited clients in the hospital. Can you think of a better way of glorifying God?

Often, we are tempted to blame our circumstances for our attitudes or our actions, but no matter what, God is present right there alongside us and still calling us to serve. All of us can find a way to be kind...and even to be loving...as we go about our daily lives. This is our Christian “work” and this is the work that glorifies God.



Rev. Dr. Candi Ashenden is the pastor of the [Athol Congregational Church](#) in Athol, MA and is currently working with her associate, Rev. Cindy LaJoy, on Keys to Kindness, an initiative led by her congregation and supported by a grant through the SNEUCC, to change the culture in Athol to one of kindness throughout the community...including in the schools, in area businesses, and in the local nursing home.



Groton
Congregational
Church

Our Dad

God took the strength
of a mountain,
The majesty of a tree,
The warmth of a summer sun,
The calm of a quiet sea,
The generous soul of nature,
The comforting arm of night,
The wisdom of the ages,
The power of the eagle's flight,
The joy of a morning in spring,
The faith of a mustard seed,
The patience of eternity,
The depth of a family need,
Then God combined these qualities,
When there was nothing more to add,
He knew his masterpiece was complete,
And so, he called it Dad

Anonymous



Dad Jokes

What did Adam
say the day
before
Christmas?
IT'S CHRISTMAS,
EVE!

Who do mice
pray to?
CHEESUS

Q: Who was the smallest
person in the Bible?

A: Knee high
miah!



Why didn't
Noah go fishing?

He only had
two worms.



Thanks to Stephen Illich (See Genesis 6-8)

05-19-2005

WE WERE TOLD YOU WERE TAKING CREATURES
THAT CAME TO YOU IN PEARS

Celebrate Father's Day

Connecticut
BACON FESTIVAL

June 17: 10am - 7pm
June 18: 10am - 6pm
Maple Farm Park
45 Bozrah St., Bozrah

FOOD TRUCKS
CRAFTERS
VENDORS
MUSIC
ENTERTAINMENT
BACON-THEMED
ACTIVITIES

Event By: 



 **MOHEGAN SUN**
FOOD, MUSIC, BBQ COOK OFFS, & MORE!

 *10 Years & Still Lit!*

SATURDAY FIREWORKS
LIVE BANDS
WICKED COOKOFF TOURNAMENT
FAMILY FRIENDLY FUN!
BEER GARDEN

 JUNE 17TH 11AM-10PM \$15.00 
JUNE 18TH 11AM-5PM \$10.00

Classic Car Show

FOOD  MUSIC 



JUNE 18TH 10:30AM-1:00PM **FAMILY FUN**
CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH
16 ELM ST
WESTERLY, RI

Worship Watch

June Worship Services

June 4, 2023 Trinity Sunday First Sunday after Pentecost	Genesis 1:1-2:4a Psalm 8		2 Corinthians 13:11-13	Matthew 28:16-20
June 11, 2023 Proper 5 (10) Second Sunday after Pentecost	Genesis 12:1-9 Psalm 33:1-12	Hosea 5:15-6:6 Psalm 50:7-15	Romans 4:13-25	Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26
June 18, 2023 Proper 6 (11) Third Sunday after Pentecost	Genesis 18:1-15, (21:1-7) Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19	Exodus 19:2-8a Psalm 100	Romans 5:1-8	Matthew 9:35-10:8, (9-23)
June 25, 2023 Proper 7 (12) Fourth Sunday after Pentecost	Genesis 21:8-21 Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17	Jeremiah 20:7-13 Psalm 69:7-10, (11-15), 16-18	Romans 6:1b-11	Matthew 10:24-39

June 2023



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4 Worship Service 10am	5 Prayer & Bible Study 11am Youth Group 6pm-8pm	6	7	8	9	10
11 Worship Service 10am	12 Prayer & Bible Study 11am Youth Group 6pm-8pm Trustees 6pm Deacons 6pm Council 7pm	13	14	15	16	17
18 Worship Service 10am Missions 11:15am	19 Prayer & Bible Study 11am Youth Group 6pm-8pm	20	21	22	23	24
25 Worship Service 10am Stewardship Church Picnic 11:30am	26 Prayer & Bible Study 11am Youth Group 6pm-8pm	27	28	29	30	

Commencement

By Rev. John Dorhauer



This is a season in which students who have been studying for years, who have been preparing themselves for something coming, end their season of preparation and set out to make a life. This is the season of their new beginnings.

As I write this, I am one day away from speaking at the commencement ceremony for the UCC related Elmhurst University. My colleagues Traci Blackmon and Karen Georgia Thompson are likewise speaking to graduates at Spellman College and Heidelberg College respectively. In

this time of new beginnings, when graduates are called upon to commence – to start, to begin – there is a responsibility for leaders like myself and Traci and Karen Georgia to speak a word that inspires graduates to use their time in preparation to launch a lifetime of commitments to the common good.

This is the moment of which Robert Frost wrote when he penned his poem “The Road Less Taken,” using the convergence of two roads diverging in a yellow wood as a metaphor for that moment when we must decide which pathway we will spend our days walking.

That is what is meant by commencement. While we all tend to see graduation as a ceremony marking an ending, an accomplishment, a termination something entirely different is actually happening. The call is for the graduates to focus less on what they have done and more on what they will do.

The order of the day is not to reflect but to commence; not to end but to begin.

I want to use this time now to congratulate all graduates. Those donning their robes in the days and weeks ahead have come to this moment by living through the collective trauma that was COVID. Almost their entire educational career was spent not only learning new and important concepts, but learning how to learn those new and important concepts in an environment neither they nor their professors had any idea how to navigate. They invented a whole new way of getting an education and have come out the other side of it maybe wounded, maybe scarred, but fully educated, fully prepared to begin, and deeply aware of their capacity to not only survive trauma but thrive through it. That may be their most important learning as well as their most significant contribution to their future success in life.

And so to the graduating class of 2023 we all say Commence!

Begin!

Choose your path and start your life.

We await your wisdom.

We covet your contributions.

We desire your passion and energy and enthusiasm and hope.

The world is in want of what you have been given in terms of ability, talent, vision, and preparation. Whatever journey you take, may it enrich the communities in which you dwell and grant you the joy of labors loved and lives changed. The world itself is gratified by your commitments and celebrates your calling.

Commence. We stand ready to receive all that you have to offer on this, our journey ...
Into the Mystic.

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
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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, 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.
Stay for After Worship Coffee Hour**

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

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