

Groton Congregational Church
162 Monument St.
Groton, CT 06340
860-445-7409



November 2023

The Gargoyle



The Pastor's Musings

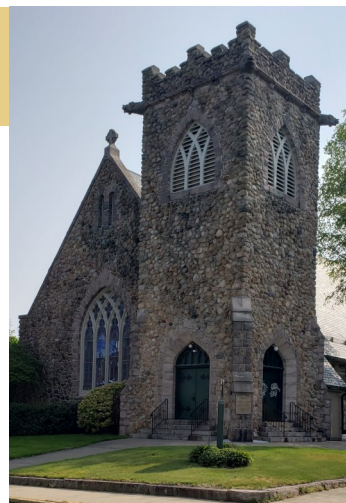
By Reverend Lee Ireland

Greetings to you on this beautiful autumn day.

I imagine you are all like me and feeling the joy of this part of our annual journey together as we gather for some of the most beautiful worship services and events on our church's calendar: moving into the season of Thanksgiving and then Advent. We are here, walking together as a community of faith and the body of Christ where we have all heard and are practicing Jesus' key message: "Love one another as I have loved you."

This coming Sunday, **November 5th** we will come to share a special Worship Service, "**All Saints' Day**" as we honor and remember all the saints of this church as well as those beyond this community who have impacted our church life but even more so our own personal lives. Are there some you would like us to remember? Please call or send us their names so we can include them during the prayer time, giving thanks for the ways in which they offered their gifts to continue the ministry and to love and care for the people.

We will begin this month with the **Women's Fellowship Holiday Bazaar, November 4th**, offering an amazing example of how their individual gifts are blended together to help create the fair – through the various creative crafts, the baked items. It is a beautiful example of the many working together as one toward a larger vision for the well-being of the community. Just like the Senior Choir does each week and the Handbell Choir many weeks, as well as the different boards and committees and the folks preparing the Community Meals. As I shared in a sermon in October, we are weaving together our lives to add our stories to the GCC "Living Tapestry". At the close of that service, I had discovered the words to this hymn which speak volumes to what I hear God hoping for us all as we go forward. Do you hear that invitation as well? In light of these words, let's add daily prayers for world peace - as soon as possible, please.
(continued pg. 2)



In This Issue

Women's Fellowship.....	3
Deacons.....	4
Community Meals.....	5
Missions.....	6
Stewardship.....	3
Christian Education.....	7
Worship Watch.....	14
Calendar.....	15

Highlights

Birthdays.....	2
A Prayer.....	7
Church Events.....	8 & 9
SNEC.....	10 & 11
UCC.....	12
Puzzle.....	13



You Are Always Welcome Here



Groton
Congregational
Church



FLORENCE BARNUM

ANNE CAMPBELL

ALEX HAGAR

GREGORY HOFFMAN

REBECCA JOHNSON

JANICE KIMBALL

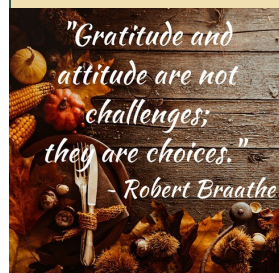
CHRISTOPHER LUND

JONATHAN JAMES
ORKNEY

LYNETTE POTTER

KENNETH SHINN

JENNIFER TURNER



The Pastor's Musings-continued

By Reverend Lee Ireland

"Restless Weaver"

Restless Weaver, ever spinning threads of justice and shalom;
Dreaming patterns of creation where all creatures find a home;
Gathering up life's varied fibers – every texture, every hue:
Grant us your creative vision, with us weave your world anew.

Where earth's fragile web is raveling, help us mend each broken strand.
Bless our urgent, bold endeavors cleansing water, air, and land.
Through the Spirit's inspiration – offering health where once was pain –
Strengthen us to be the stewards of your world knit whole again.

When our violent lust for power ends in lives abused and torn,
From compassion's sturdy fabric fashion hope and trust reborn.
Where injustice rules as tyrant, give us courage, God, to dare
Live our dreams of transformation. Make our lives incarnate prayer.

Restless Weaver, still conceiving new life – now and yet to be –
Binding all your vast creation in one living tapestry:
You have called us to be weavers. Let your love guide all we do.
With your Reign of Peace our pattern, we will weave your world anew.

{The lyrics were composed by Ola Irene Cricket Harrison in 1988}

I invite you to look for the message from the Stewardship Committee who will be hosting a celebration meal after the service on **November 12th**, giving thanks for your commitments in various ways to the ongoing ministry here.

Then on **November 19th**, we will join together in a Thanksgiving Day service before we scatter for the holiday through the next week.

Then on **November 26th**, Kevin Measimer has offered to lead the worship service for the next Laity Sunday.

Peace and blessings to you in this holy season,

Rev. Lee A. Ireland

Transitional Minister

Women's Fellowship

By Sally Turner

Women's Fellowship is looking forward to seeing you all at the Holiday Bazaar on **Saturday, November 4th from 9am-2pm.**

Holiday
bazaar

Our next meeting will be on **November 8th at 10 a.m.** All women of the church are welcome.

Stewardship

By Doris Pulaski



The committee wants to thank the entire congregation for participating with us in this year's Stewardship Drive. Your Stewardship letter, with an enclosed letter, envelope, and pledge card should have arrived at your home by now. If you haven't received your letter yet, contact either the office, Sue Stottlemeyer, or Doris Pulaski.

Either mail your pledge card to us, using the enclosed envelope, or save a stamp by placing it in the collection plate on Sunday. Remember to check the box on the pledge card if you want to receive collection envelopes. We already have them in stock.

And also remember it is never too late to turn in your pledge!

Mark your calendar for **Stewardship Sunday, November 12th** when we will all share a celebratory lunch following the service.

Thanks to you, our church indeed changes lives.



Groton
Congregational
Church

*Sanctuary
Flowers*



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



Deacons

By Anne Campbell

Kindness and Rocks?



With all the tragedy and uncertainty in the world today it is easy to get disheartened and discouraged wondering what our role in all of it is, how can we individually and collectively make a difference? We may not be able to stop war and hatred across the globe, but we all have in our power the ability to share and spread a bit of kindness.

When you Google “Kindness in the Bible” over 40 verses are referenced.

My all time favorite is Micah 6:8: “He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” Justice, Kindness and Humility; these are tall orders to fill. But each of us has the ability to spread kindness in our everyday life.

I work in a public library and each and every day I am amazed at how people respond to the most simple acts of kindness. A smile, nod, eye contact and brief greeting can make someone’s day and sometimes even turn someone’s whole life trajectory.

Simple acts of giving a compliment, doing an act of service for someone else, being respectful, showing and expressing gratitude and saying kind words are easy to do and can make a huge difference.

Kindness is such a wonderful gift. It can be an opportunity to bring joy into someone’s life. Keeping kindness in your heart as you go about your day gives you an opportunity to be a beacon of light not just for those receiving your kindness but also for those who may be observing you. By observing your kindness towards others, more people can learn of the glory of God that lives within you and seek that same light to live within them.

Additionally, studies have shown that being kind can also have benefits for the individual, such as improved mood and reduced stress levels. Kindness is universal.

There are many days devoted to being kind, Random Act of Kindness Week (February) Do Something Nice and National Compliment Days in October and **World Kindness Day on November 13th**. First introduced in 1998 by the World Kindness Movement, World Kindness Day offers an opportunity to highlight good deeds in the community and the common thread of kindness.

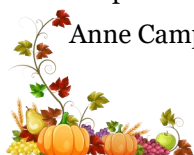
We will be offering an opportunity for the congregation to **create Kindness Rocks on Sunday, November 12th during the Stewardship Luncheon**. Kindness Rocks are an opportunity to spread messages painted on rocks. The motto of The Kindness Rock Project is that “One Message at just the right moment can change someone’s entire day, outlook, life.” You will be able to make one to keep or share.

All supplies will be available for you to create a Kindness Rock to share or keep. Come with your creativity. Most often the messages we most need to hear are manifested through creating art.

“How do we change the world? One random act of kindness at a time.” —Morgan Freeman .

Respectfully and gratefully submitted,

Anne Campbell



Community Meals

By Janice Kimball

As the seasons change, our meals are warming up our church family and community friends with cheer! **November 4th** we will be distributing ready-to-eat bag lunches at the parking lot of **Bill Memorial Library, from 12 noon to 12:30 PM**, but will return to our regular 12-1 PM schedule and Dutton Hall on November 11th for a hot meal.



We have already begun plans for a pre-Thanksgiving Day feast on November 18th beginning at 12 noon! Hope you will join us for great dining and congenial company this month.

With thanks to all who cook, serve, share, pray for, and donate for our mission,

Janice Kimball, for the volunteers



To learn more about The Kindness Rocks Project please visit their website
<https://www.thekindnessrocksproject.com/>



Missions



The Red Wagon Mission will be for Groton Human Services.
We are collecting Holiday Food Items including:

- Canned fruits & vegetables
- Instant mashed potatoes
- Stuffing mix
- Cranberry sauce
- Gravy
- Bread/muffin mixes
- Cream of mushroom soup
- Pancake mix
- Syrup

Look for **Grammies Jammies** in the middle of November.
 Will be working alongside Child and Family Services again.



Also, in the middle of November, we will be starting
Adopt-a-Family with Groton Human Services. We will be
 notified of our family the first week of November -look for tags shortly af-
 ter that.

Your Mission Committee

Anne, Beth, Jill and Penny



Christian Education

By Janice Kimball, pro tem superintendent

I would share with you a poem by Mary Luti, from the Stillspeaking Writers' Network of the United Church of Christ (published as "We Believe" on 10/20/23):

"We believe the day is coming when God's grace will change the human heart, and we will live as one with every living thing.

We believe the day is coming when Christ's compassion will fill the earth, and no one will do harm, be hurt, or feel alone.

We believe the day is coming when the Spirit's freedom will unbind our souls, and we will live generous lives for each other with a joy no circumstance can alter.

We believe the day is coming, and we wait and work for it with steadfast hope, for God has promised it, and God is faithful.

Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!"

The Spirit in this poem calls each person to dream that day, live for that day, and give praise to God for the promise of that day, even in a broken world. Let us prepare ourselves and those we love for that day to become reality, in Jesus Christ.

For Christian Education concerns in the Church Council,

Janice Kimball, superintendent pro tem



A Prayer

By Kevin Measimer

He will redeem my soul in peace from the battle which is against me.— Psalm 55:18

+++ +++ +++

Thank you, dear Lord for redeeming our souls through the life and death and resurrection of Jesus and through your divine grace and love.

So many of us know that battle. Thank you for loving us and saving us from our own fallen human nature.

We pray Lord for your guidance and protect from the forces of darkness, demonic and man made.

We thank you in Jesus name. Amen







YOU ARE INVITED....

To attend our **“HOLIDAY MUSIC PLUS,”** recital of children, youth, and adults on Saturday, **December 16th, 2023 at 3 PM in** Groton Congregational Church’s comfortable Dutton Hall! We offer piano music of traditional Christian carols, plus music celebrating the great diversity of our students. The program is open to all free of charge, with a casual reception following the music. Hope you’ll mark your calendar now and plan to join the fun!

Janice Kimball, music instructor

What Really IS Intergenerational Worship?

By Deborah Gline Allen



More and more congregations are reaching out to [the Faith Formation Team](#) with questions about and to request assistance with intergenerational worship. Word is getting out about the tangible benefits of corporate worship with all ages present:

- Intergenerational worship brings together the *whole* Body of Christ.
- The sounds of children remind the congregation that their church is vital and alive.
- Adult worshippers can learn from the trusting and open nature of children that

Jesus told us are qualities of the kin-dom of heaven. [Luke 18:15-17].

- Young worshippers learn through observation and practice during corporate worship.
- Adults can find new ways to praise God, using all five senses, by worshipping with all ages.

Intergenerational worship solves the problem of not being able to recruit enough adult volunteers for children's faith formation programming, *and* [studies show](#) that the resulting growth in faith and commitment to being a part of a faith community into adulthood are vastly more effective than the outcomes from the Sunday School model.

Yet many congregations are wary of trying worship with all ages for the entire hour. This is because the concept of effective intergenerational worship is often misunderstood. Intergenerational worship is not "Children's Sunday" every week. Intergenerational worship is not a dumbing down of worship for the youngest people present. And intergenerational worship is not all balloons and children's performances.

So what do we mean by "intergenerational worship"?

Here are some definitions of current commonly used terms:

- Intergenerational worship: Three or more generations worshipping and interacting with each other in the same space.
- Multi-generational worship: Multiple generations in the same building/space, worshipping and interacting with their own generations/peer groups.
- Child-friendly worship: Worship that provides materials for children (visuals, items to hold, art supplies, etc.) that help them to hear, understand, and participate fully in worship.

[Messy Church](#): a program that is separate from a congregation's weekly service of worship, for all ages, serving as a mission to local families. Congregations that use this term, must register through [Messy Church USA](#), as the name and logo are registered trademarks.

Messy Church model: a Christ-focused gathering for all ages that includes child-friendly activities for families, simple and active worship styles, singing accessible songs, and a shared meal.



What Really IS Intergenerational Worship

By Deborah Gline Allen

Another important definition to add is what it means to be intentionally intergenerational:

- incorporating as many of the five senses as possible, bringing one's whole self to praising God;
- welcoming the developmentally appropriate sounds from children that God recognizes as praise. A congregation provides expectations that those who need to make louder noises (crying, coughing, loud speaking, etc.) have a place to go outside of the sanctuary and are always welcome to return;
- inviting all to sing, pray, and hear/see the Good News, stretching themselves in understanding even if they are not yet developmentally ready to comprehend everything they see and hear; and inviting participation from all ages, offering whatever they are willing and able to give. (All are invited; any may opt out.)

Intergenerational worship with the whole Body of Christ is like a family dinner table conversation — available to all ages, where all are welcome; where the youngest ones present do not need to understand all of the words, as this creates neural pathways for understanding when they are older. (See the work of [Karen-Marie Yust](#).)

Each generation brings its own abilities, needs, and gifts [I Corinthians 12:14]. Intergenerational worship welcomes them all — the energetic, the feeble, the full-bodied, the differently-abled, the new learners, and the seasoned wise ones. Our worshipping community can only worship God fully when it provides the space and opportunity for all to do so together.

Join us for the [Faith Formation Roundtable](#) on Intergenerational Worship on Tuesday, November 7 at noon. [Register Here](#)

More information and resources about worshipping and ministering intergenerationally may be found [here](#) on the Southern New England Conference website.



Debbie Gline Allen

Debbie Gline Allen serves as a Minister of Faith Formation on the Conference's Faith Formation Ministry Team. She also serves as the administrator of the SNEUCC Faith Formation Leadership Program. Her passion for ministry is with children and family...



If We Take Sides

By Matt Laney



How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace
Isaiah 52:7

I write this shortly after Hamas launched their deadliest assault on Israel and the IDF responded with airstrikes; now thousands are dead on both sides. Over one hundred and fifty Israeli civilians, of all ages, are hostages. At least a thousand Palestinian children are dead. The suffering is unimaginable.

I am an outsider to this conflict, but it seems to me that until shared suffering inspires an understanding of the other's pain and trauma, instead of driving more violence toward each other, peace will seem like a pipe dream.

Thich Nhat Hahn, who has stood between two warring factions, said, "To reconcile conflicting parties, we must have the ability to understand the suffering of both sides. If we take sides, it is impossible to do the work of reconciliation. And humans want to take sides. That is why the situation gets worse and worse.

"Are there people who are still available to both sides? They need not do much. They need do only one thing: Go to one side and tell all about the suffering endured by the other side and go to the other side and tell all about the suffering endured by this side. This is our chance for peace."

In recent decades, small groups of Israelis and Palestinians found a way to peaceful reconciliation through shared tears. From what I understand, it takes a deep, resolute commitment to listening with compassion and without reacting. Multiplying such experiences might be the surest way to break the cycle of violence and build lasting peace in the region.

And not only there. Until we all hear the suffering of "the other," how can we hope to hear peace proclaimed from the Holy Land to our own backyards?

Prayer

Holy One, help me to listen more than I desire to be heard.



About the Author

Matt Laney is the Senior Pastor of Virginia Highland Church UCC in Atlanta, GA and the author of *Pride Wars*, a fantasy series published by Houghton Mifflin Har-



Thanksgiving Search

D C M X P C O C O A L G C F X
 M A P T H A N K S G I V I N G
 F A W M U M S T U R K E Y S P
 F W S D M R E B I M N T Z C L
 W H S H P A E G N L Z W F O Y
 C I P C E I Y S H W P N R R M
 R P T U E D L F T M P W I N O
 E P H H M S P G L F I W E U U
 A E A A F P W O R O E K N C T
 T D N R A G K B T I W K D O H
 I C K V M R Y I K A M E S P R
 O R F E I A A U N W T S R I O
 N E U S L V M J W F N O P A C
 N A L T Y Y S Y B U G D E I K
 C M T W A M P A N O A G N S Y

Mashed Potatoes

Whipped Cream

Wampanoag

Pumpkin

Cocoa

Friends

Yams

Thanksgiving

Mayflower

Thankful

Turkey

Mums

Family

Plymouth Rock

Cornucopia

Pilgrims

Harvest

Creation

Gravy

Rest

Pie



Worship Watch

November Worship Services

November 5, 2023

23rd Sunday
after Pentecost
All Saint's Day

Joshua 3:7-17 Psalm 107:1-7, 33-37 Micah 3:5-12 Psalm 43

1 Thessalonians 2:9-13 Matthew 23:1-12

November 12, 2023

24th Sunday
after Pentecost
**Stewardship
Sunday**

Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25 Psalm 78:1-7 Wisdom of Solomon 6:12-16

or Amos 5:18-24 Wisdom of Solomon 6:17-20 **or** Psalm 70

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 Matthew 25:1-13

November 19, 2023

25th Sunday
after Pentecost
**Thanksgiving
Sunday**

Judges 4:1-7 Psalm 123 Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

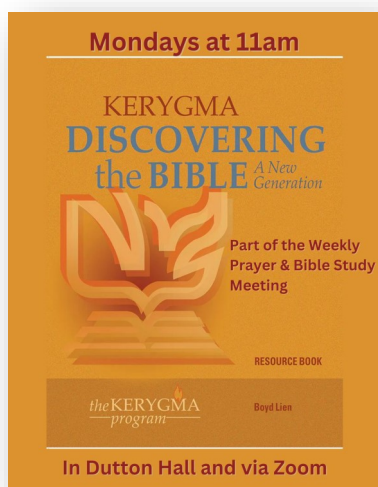
Psalm 90:1-8, (9-11), 12 Matthew 25:14-30

November 26, 2023

26th Sunday
after Pentecost
**Guest Preacher-
Kevin Measimer**

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24 Psalm 100 Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24

Psalm 95:1-7a Ephesians 1:15-23 Matthew 25:31-46



Every Monday Morning beginning at 11am.
Come to Dutton Hall or join us via Zoom.



Groton Congregational Church



Community Meals serves hot, fresh, and delicious sit-down meals in Dutton Hall every Saturday from Noon to 1pm. Volunteers are always appreciated. Please contact Janice Kimball for more information.

The Gargoyle

November 2023

November 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<i>1</i>	<i>2</i> Handbells 6:30pm Choir 7:30pm	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i> Holiday Bazaar 9am-2pm Community Meals (Bill Library)
<i>5</i> Worship 10am	<i>6</i> Prayer & Bible Study 11am Youth Group 6pm-8pm	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i> Women's Fellowship 10am	<i>9</i> Handbells 6:30pm Choir 7:30pm	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i> Community Meals Noon to 1pm
<i>12</i> Worship 10am	<i>13</i> Prayer & Bible Study 11am Youth Group 6pm-8pm	<i>14</i> Trustees 6pm Council 7pm	<i>15</i>	<i>16</i> Handbells 6:30pm Choir 7:30pm	<i>17</i>	<i>18</i> Community Meals Noon to 1pm
<i>19</i> Missions 9am Worship 10am	<i>20</i> Prayer & Bible Study 11am Youth Group 6pm-8pm	<i>21</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>23</i> <i>Office Closed</i> 	<i>24</i> <i>Office Closed</i>	<i>25</i> Community Meals Noon to 1pm
<i>26</i> Worship 10am	<i>27</i> Prayer & Bible Study 11am Youth Group 6pm-8pm	<i>28</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>30</i> Handbells 6:30pm Choir 7:30pm		

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, 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