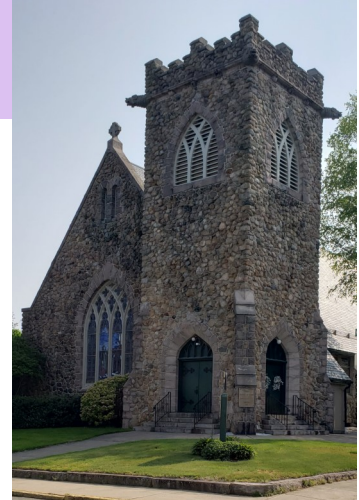
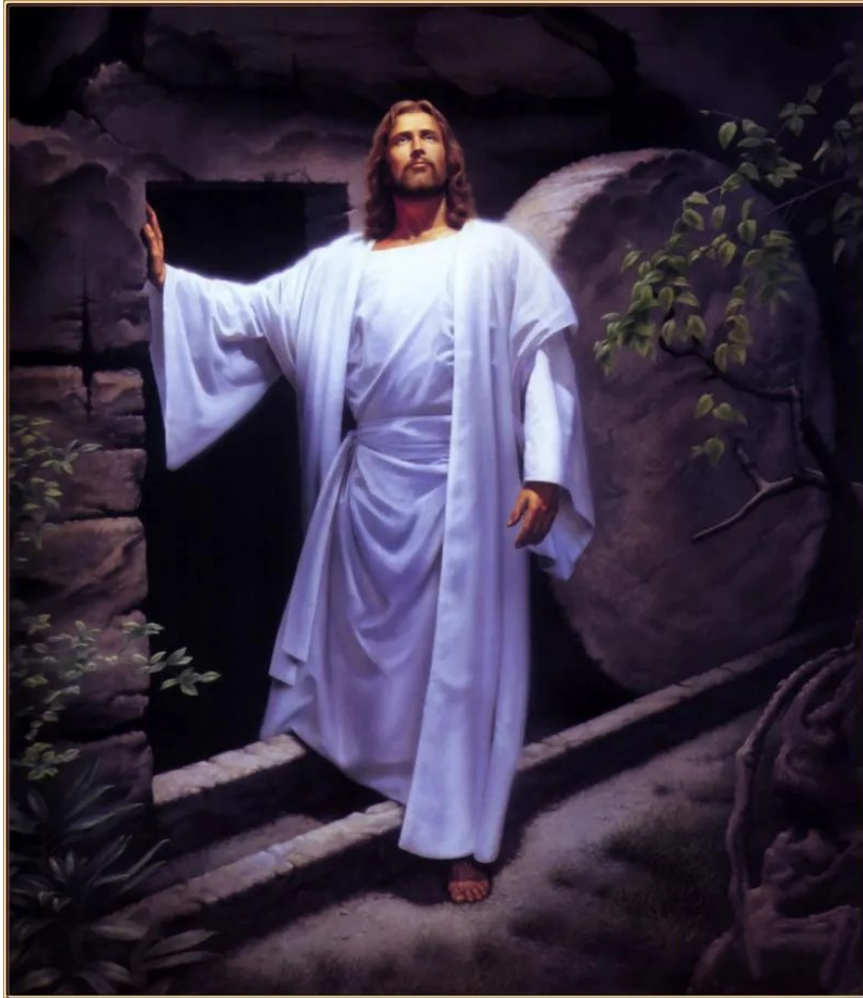


Groton Congregational Church  
162 Monument St.  
Groton, CT 06340  
860-445-7409



March 2024

# The Gargoyle



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CHRIST IS  
**RISEN**

*You Are Always Welcome Here*



Groton  
Congregational  
Church



DAVID BRYTE

ALMA DOUGHERTY

GUS HAGAR

CATHY JOHNSON

ELLEN KERR

JOSHUA  
MEASIMER

NANCY MOFFATT

HENRY SHEPHERD

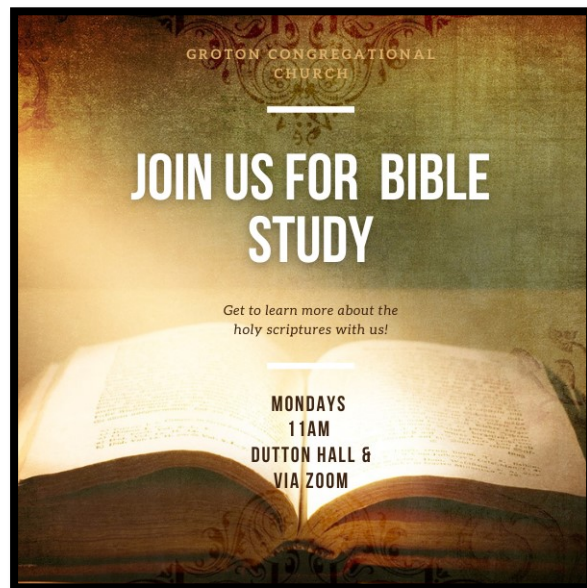
## Deacons

### Hope

A great loss has come about in recent days to a beautiful building in New London that many relied on for worship and gathering. A church collapsed but thankfully no one was hurt. A woman working in the kitchen was able to get out without injury. There were no passerby's or cars damaged around the church either. This truly shows the hand of God looking over His people.

Even in this loss we can strive for a new beginning with the certainty that God is with us. His ever guiding love and care is there for all of us to see.

Mary Alapa



### **BIBLE STUDY**

Come join us on Mondays at 11am in Dutton Hall. If you can't come in person, join us via Zoom. Invitations are sent out every Friday afternoon. Currently we are studying the Gospel of Luke.

## Stewardship

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Help us decorate the Church's Easter tree this year!

If you would like to commemorate or honor friends or family members this Easter and make a small donation to the church at the same time, we have Easter Eggs, Crosses, and now Pastel Bunnies waiting for you!

Easter Donation Envelopes for this fund raiser may be found in your pew pocket or on the table in the passthrough to Dutton Hall.

On the label on a donation envelope, tell us the name of the person you want to honor, indicate which type of ornament you would like, and how much you are donating.

Then place your donation in the envelope and put the envelope in the collection plate or give your envelope to either Sue Stottlemeyer or Doris Pulaski.

Your ornament with your honoree's name on it will be hung on the Easter tree in Dutton Hall. On Easter, the completed tree will then be moved to the church sanctuary.

After Easter, your ornament will be returned to you.

Thanks to all who participate.

Doris Pulaski



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 .

## Women's Fellowship

---

Women's Fellowship met on February 14th. The final plans for the grab 'n go Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner were completed. The date is March 15th. Dinners can be picked up between 5-6 p.m. the price is \$18. A sign-up sheet will be available in Dutton Hall after the church service on February 25th through Sunday March 10th.

The menu is corned beef, cabbage, onions, carrots, potatoes, parsnips, Irish soda bread and shamrock sugar cookies.

There is also a sign-up sheet for contributions of vegetables for the dinner in the midway.

Bon appetite!

Sally Turner



## A Word of Thanks

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Just a heartfelt thank you to the congregation, especially our leaders and videographers and our secretary, for making it possible for me and many others to hear the Sunday services and your prayers while away or unable to physically attend. It makes a difference to be able to listen and I pray we as a church will continue to offer this ministry. God bless you all!

Janice Kimball



## March Board & Committee Meetings



<b>Deacons</b>	<b>March 10th 11:30am</b>
<b>Trustees</b>	<b>March 12th 6pm</b>
<b>Missions</b>	<b>March 24th 9am</b>
<b>Stewardship</b>	<b>March 24th Noon</b>
<b>Music Committee</b>	<b>March 24th 11:30am</b>





**COMMUNITY MEALS**

Every Saturday from Noon to 1pm in Dutton Hall. Warming the heart, body, and soul with nourishing food and fellowship. Everyone welcome! If you would like to volunteer for this program please contact the church office 860-445-7409.



**Youth Group**

Next meeting March 11, 2024 6pm-8pm in the Youth Group Room.

## Church Council

---

The Church Council met on Sunday February 25, 2024 after the church service. The discussions included the removal of the maple tree located in the parking area at the corner of Meridian and Cottage Streets and grinding of the stump, the removal of limbs on a tree that are overhanging Dutton Hall and the green growth on that side of the building. In the absence of a functional board of trustees, the council voted to have the work done with the \$2500 fee coming from the church preservation fund.



The Restructuring Review Team are currently reviewing the bylaws and gathering information on small church governing. They have to schedule a meeting where they can discuss their findings.

The next council meeting is scheduled for Sunday April 28, 2024 after the worship service. All are welcome to attend.

Respectfully,

Sue Blaisdell, Clerk of the Church

## Revised By Laws

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At a meeting of the Church Corporation on February 18, 2024, the Church Council recommended the by-laws be revised to reduce the requirement of 25 members to establish a quorum of the church corporation to 10% of the total membership. The vote passed unanimously.

Respectfully,

Sue Blaisdell, Clerk of the Church

# Holy Week Schedule



March 24th-Palm Sunday  
10AM



March 28th-Maundy Thursday  
7PM



March 29th-Good Friday  
Sanctuary open for prayers  
Noon-3PM



March 31st-Easter Sunday  
Sunrise Service at Fort Griswold 6AM  
In Church service-10AM



## The Church Easter Tree



Honor your loved ones with a donation to the Easter Tree. Envelopes available in the pews.  
Choose an egg, bunny, or cross ornament to add to the Groton Congregational Church Easter Tree.







**IT'S TIME TO  
SHARE THE  
LIGHT**

*One Great Hour of Sharing*

*March 10, 2024*

**Supporting Disaster, Refugee, and Development Ministries**

Look for the special donation envelope in the pews



**Corned Beef & Cabbage Dinner**

 \$18.00/each

**Order before March 10th for pick-up  
on March 15th from 5pm to 6pm in  
Dutton Hall.**

Menu:  
Corned beef, cabbage, potatoes,  
parsnips, onions, carrots,  
Irish soda bread &  
shamrock cookies



## Forty Days

---

What has been happening at the Groton Congregational Church during the past ten days of Lent? Did you attend Ash Wednesday service? Did you attend the worship service on the First Sunday in Lent? Have you signed up for the take-away Corned Beef Dinner yet? Did you attend the worship service on the Second Sunday in Lent? Just as importantly, have you felt challenged and wanted to be an active part of our church – the Groton Congregational Church?

So why did I state “Forty Days” and then ask you about the first ten days of Lent? Ash Wednesday – Feb 14, 2024 - is the beginning of Lenten season, which begins the 40 days preceding Easter, not including Sundays. The word Lent is from the Anglo-Saxon word *lencten* meaning spring. It is a period of time for fasting and penitence observed in the church from very early times. By using these days for deepening our devotional life, we become better prepared to enter the sufferings of our Lord, Jesus Christ, a theme throughout Holy Week. The Deacons obtained two different booklets to help you on your walk and devotion through the Lenten season – *Bend*, a daily devotional written and prepared by numerous UCC ministers and published by the Pilgrim Press. The second devotional is *God in on the Cross*, another daily devotional containing reflections on Lent and Easter with translations from the German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Both of these are available for you to use in your daily devotion on your personal journey to Holy Week.

On our First Sunday in Lent, we were privileged to have and hear the Rev Issac Lawson, our Area Conference Minister (ACM) from the Southern New England UCC (SNEUCC) Conference office. (If you were unable to be in attendance Sunday morning to hear him, may I suggest if you haven't already done so to hear him on our YouTube channel.) Following Fellowship coffee hour, he met with the Deacon's Transition Team, officers of GCC and many interested members/non-members of GCC discussing and explaining the process we are going through to eventually finding and calling a settled minister for leading us forward into the future. And in the middle of the service, Rev Lawson performed a double Baptism. Talk about excitement!

On our Second Sunday in Lent, we had Laity Sunday. Do you know how many great Lay Persons we currently have in our Groton Congregational Church family? We started in August of last year having Laity Sundays. Now, the question is not “if” we are going to have a Laity Sunday, but “when” are we going to have a Laity Sunday! There are some you see being actively involved in the worship service while others are actively working behind the scenes in support roles. It is a full team effort. Again, if you were unable to attend worship service, maybe you'll have an opportunity to watch the recorded worship service on our YouTube channel. When it is Laity Sunday, the Lay person presenting the sermon is our “Guest Teacher” and Ingrid Measimer gave a challenging sermon entitled “Are You Listening?” AND, there were over 40 people in attendance to hear Ingrid and Lew and James and Doris. We

The  
Season  
of  
Lent



## Forty Days (continued)

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If you have not been in attendance, then I will extend an invitation to you to come – come back to GCC and hear and feel the awesome happenings. The number of people in worship services is increasing – the last two Sundays there have been over 40. The vast majority move into Dutton Hall for after worship service for fellowship coffee and visit time. It is wonderful to see all the people there who are talking and visiting with each other. Why? That, my friend and Brother/Sister in Christ, that you'll just have to come and find out. There is an excitement – a wanting to know how you are – a walking across the room and extending a hand in friendship or even exchanging a hug. The Groton Congregational Church is alive! The Groton Congregational Church is moving forward! We have much to do.

Forty Days in the Lenten season – and ten days have passed. On our Third Sunday of Lent, the Rev Joan Cianci will be our Guest Minister. We cannot predict the future, but if these first ten days are any indication, the next thirty days are going to be awesome as we move toward Holy Week. No one is holding us back but ourselves and so far, we are moving forward with God at our side.

Peace and Blessings to each of you this day.

Chuck Barnum

Chair, Board of Deacons

## Historian

---

Last month I wrote about the beginnings (the history) of what is now Groton Congregational Church. I've been thinking about our history and what that means. These days, there isn't much you can't find with a Google search.

From Wikipedia: "History is the systematic study and documentation of the human past... "History" is an umbrella term comprising past events as well as the *memory, discovery, collection, organization, presentation, and interpretation* (emphasis added) of these events".

Documented history is recorded history. In the context of the church, it is our written history.

Given that our congregation began in 1702, that is some old documentation!

In 2010, our then Historian, Lorraine Chappell, worked towards preserving our early written records. In that regard, following are two of her articles from The Gargoyle during that time period:

### May 2010

At our Annual meeting, as Historian, I asked for \$1,000 to copy our oldest records. That has been accomplished. Bridgeport Bindery of Agawam, MA has copied 337 pages, our oldest 4 books. We have 2 copies in the church for your enjoyment, one book each to be donated to the Groton Public Library and Bill Memorial Library. We also have 2 digital CD's, one to stay in the church and one for the safety deposit box.

As described in our by-laws, the historian is charged with "care for documents of current and historical value". I feel I have done at least half of that charge in copying our documents. However, we must go further in protecting our antique records. It was my hope to gift the old books to the Connecticut State Library where they would be kept in a climate-controlled setting. Seven hundred churches in CT have done this and had we done this years ago we would have had copies of them. In the 1920's the LDS Church (Mormons) came through and copied all the records at the library.

At the meeting a motion was made, seconded, and passed to keep our old books and not gift them to the CSL. I would ask what the congregation would have us do to protect our valuable documents. Our local banks do not have a safety deposit box large enough to accommodate them and they are not climate controlled. Our lateral file is no protection as heat as low as 250 degrees would destroy them.

In gifting our original records plus one copy of the CD our books will be safe. The public will only get to use the CD and our church historian will always have access to the books.

Do we own history? Shouldn't it be available for **all** descendants of this church, Groton, and future historians?

(continued next page)

## Historian (continued)

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July/August 2010

The congregation has voted to gift our four oldest records to the Connecticut State Library. We have two volumes of the 337 pages of those archives in our church for your use or enjoyment. They are fascinating to read. On June 15 I am taking the books up to Hartford and put them in the care of our state archivist, Mark Jones. Carol Ganz, historian at our daughter church in Ledyard, has asked to buy a copy of our book for Ledyard Congregational Church and also to donate one to the Connecticut State Library to put in the stacks for anyone to research. Leslie Evans, curator of the Avery-Copp Museum, has also asked to buy a book for the museum. I have contacted Bridgeport Bindery regarding another printing of our book. If any of our congregation would like to order a book, please contact me by July 15 and I will order more. The cost will be \$60.00 per book.

I for one, say “Thank you, Lorraine!”

A copy of the Deed of Gift to the State Library is included, here.

As 14 years have passed since those records have been deeded, I became curious how they are doing in their new home.

I contacted our current State Archivist, Lizette Pelletier and posed a few questions; here are her responses; hopefully the questions I asked can be inferred without re-stating them:

The records donated by the Groton Congregational Church are part of Record Group 70 Series 82. Information on the records can be viewed in our online finding aid at:

<https://cslarchives.ctstatelibrary.org/repositories/2/resources/568>

Currently, the original records are only available in person here at the Library. These records are stored in our secured storage area and researchers must request to view them through the History & Genealogy unit. Information on how someone would access records is available on our website at <https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/hg/using-archival-records>.

This includes the hours the History & Genealogy unit is open to the public, how to obtain an Archives Pass, and other pertinent information.

Given staffing and space limitations, we do not routinely display items in our collections. We are currently collaborating on a project with the Congregational Library and Archives (CLA) in Boston as part of its New England’s Hidden Histories project to scan the Congregational Church records in our collection. The four volumes for Groton have been scanned, but I don’t know when they will be available online as there is additional work that has to be done to make them searchable. Here is the link to the Connecticut church records currently on their site. <https://www.congregationallibrary.org/nehh-church-records>

(continued next page)

## Historian (continued)

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We do not keep statistics on researcher requests for each records series so I cannot answer how many people have access them since we received them. (*Note: I had asked if there was a record on how many requests to see our records had been made*).

We currently have 89 churches represented in RG 70, I don't have a breakdown of how many of those are Congregational churches specifically. We also have records related to individual congregations scattered among some of our other record groups including early colonial records, town records, genealogical research papers, personal and family papers, and court records to name a few.

We appreciate that the Groton church chose the Connecticut State Archives as the repository for these valuable records.

So, if you'd like to see our (and other) original records, you can do so at the Connecticut State Library (231 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, 860-757-6500) – just first check on the protocols, which can be done by accessing the foregoing cites.


There are still many records in the Historian's Office. One that I had hoped to have found (my holy grail, so to speak) is a copy of the sermon that Reverend Aaron Kinne gave on the Sunday after September 6, 1781: the battle of Fort Griswold, in which so many members of our church fought and died. This would have been September 8, 1781. As a side note, this "scene" (Kinne giving his sermon to families of the dead) was what we used as our Groton 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade float theme in 2002 and for which we won the Best Use of Theme Award (see the plaque on the wall in the church basement!). The idea for this came from Joan Orkney; Reverend Kinney was portrayed by Howard Turner and members of the church depicted parishioners.

Back to the sermon search: a few years back, I did do some investigation and while I honestly can't remember how I got to this point (Google, probably!), I found that Reverend Kinne spent his last years in Ohio. Another inclusion here is an index of the "Pierson Collection" and you will note my highlight regarding sermons. I did call the librarian and she did look for the sermon in question, but she did not find it. The search goes on....

Enjoy our history; it continues with each of you.  
Cathy Johnson, Church Historian

# Historian (continued)

**State of Connecticut**  
**Connecticut State Library**  
231 Capitol Ave - Hartford, CT 06106



**Deed of Gift to the Connecticut State Library**

I, Lorraine A. Chappell, on behalf of Groton Congregational Church  
(Name of Donor) (If applicable, name of company or institution)

have given and delivered to the State Archivist, acting on behalf of the State of Connecticut, State Library Board, the following: 4 oldest records of church 1727-1881  
(Attach additional descriptive sheets if necessary) 1 CD of records

To carry out this gift to the fullest extent possible, I hereby give, release, and quit-claim to the State of Connecticut, State Library Board, all right, title, interest and ownership in and of the above-mentioned archival records, including all copyright or right to copyright therein throughout the world, with the intention to vest all such rights to said records irrevocable in the State of Connecticut, State Library Board.

State Library may use content on CD in any way it deems appropriate.

Lorraine A. Chappell  
Signature of Donor

6-15-10  
Date

The donor hereby affirms that he or she is an authorized representative of Groton Congregational Church and is vested with full authority to donate the above-mentioned materials.  
(If applicable, name of company or institution)

The gift from Lorraine Chappell, acting on behalf of Groton Cong. Church of archival records described above to the State of Connecticut, State Library Board, is hereby accepted on behalf of the State of Connecticut, State Library Board, by the State Librarian in accordance with provisions of Chapter 188 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

The undersigned has determined and declares that such gift is in the best interest of the State.

6/24/10  
Date

[Signature]  
State Librarian

# Historian (continued)

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**PIERSON COLLECTION**  
**Special Collections, Akron – Summit County Public Library**

**ACCESSION #:** 2002-2

**ACQUISITION:** The collection was donated by William A. Pierson, 1998, in memory of Albert Waring Pierson.

**ACCESS:** Restricted access: materials fragile; access by request at Main Library archives only; material does not circulate.

**VOLUME:** 1 storage box and books, 2 linear ft.

**SCOPE AND CONTENT:** Consists of books, folders, and pamphlets written by Reverend Aaron Kinne (1744-1824) of Groton, CT. **Most of the materials are sermons.** Also included are several pamphlets concerning the Battle of Groton Heights during the Revolutionary War. Rev. Aaron Kinne was born at Newent, CT, September 26, 1745 and graduated from Yale in 1765. He was ordained and made bishop of the Congregational Church in Groton, CT on October 19, 1769. He died on July 14, 1824 at the home of his son-in-law, Dr. Amos Wright, in Tallmadge, OH and is buried in the Tallmadge Cemetery.

**ARRANGEMENT:** By type of item.

**CONTAINER LIST:**

**BOX 1:**

FOLDER 1: Biography of Albert Waring Pierson.

FOLDER 2: Correspondence.

FOLDER 3: Keney/Kinne genealogical data.

FOLDER 4: Letter to Mr. Pierson found inside the book, An explanation of the principal types... by Aaron Kinne, A. M.

FOLDER 5: Mailing envelope and wrapper from journal of Rev. Aaron Kinne.

FOLDER 6: Miller genealogical data.

FOLDER 7: Photograph from inside of pamphlet, *Sesquicentennial of Groton Heights...*, 1931.

FOLDER 8: Prospectus for publication-sermons by the late Rev. Aaron Kinne, A. M. and subscription lists.



## Historian (continued)

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### BOOKS:

Caulkins, Frances Manwaring, The stone records of Groton, Gilman, Emily S. ed., Free Academy Press, Norwich, CT., 1903. Occasional Publications Volume 1, the New London County Historical Society. Limited edition, no. 190 of 300.

Kinne, Aaron, An explanation of the principal types, the prophecies of Daniel and Hosea, the Revelation, and other symbolic passages of the Holy Scriptures. Printed by Samuel T. Armstrong, Boston, 1814.

Note: on inside of front cover is hand written note; "Presented to Albert W. Pierson June 28, 1911 by Mrs. C. A. Chatfield of West Stockbridge Mass. Rev. Aaron Kinne's only living grandchild, born Feb. 10, 1818."

Kinne, Rev. Aaron, Journal of Rev. Aaron Kinne, dated from January 1, 1775 to December 25, 1777.

Kinney, Hannah, A review of the principal events of the last ten years in the life of Mrs. Hannah Kinney: together with some comments upon the late trial. Written by herself, J. N. Bradley & Co., Boston, 1841.

### PAMPHLETS:

Burnham, Rev. H. E., *The Battle of Groton Heights: a story of the storming of Fort Griswold and the burning of New London on the sixth of September, 1781*. Containing also the narrative of Rufus Avery from the original manuscript and statement of Avery Downer, M. D. together with biographical of Col. William Ledyard and Mother Bailey, including a poem by Leonard Woolsey Bacon delivered on the centennial anniversary of the Battle of Groton Heights, Sept. sixth, 1881. E. E. Darrow, Printer, New London, CONN, 1926.

Burnham, Rev. N. H., *The Battle of Groton Heights: a story of the storming of Fort Griswold, and the burning of New London, on the sixth of September, 1781*. Containing also the narrative of Rufus Avery, from the original manuscript. E. E. Darrow, Printer and Book Binder, New London, CT, 1894.

Copp, John J., *The Battle of Groton Heights; the Massacre of Fort Griswold; and the burning of New London*. Historical sketch by John J. Copp, Esq. of Groton, and Address by Leonard Woolsey Bacon of Norwich on the ninety-eighth anniversary, Sept. 6<sup>th</sup>, 1879. Published by authority of the Groton Heights Centennial Committee, December, 1879.

"John Woodhouse Seward" [Biography]

Kinne, Aaron, *Alamo. An address, delivered to the singing schools, in the First and Second Societies in Groton*. Printed by S. Green, New-London, 1798.

## Historian (continued)

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Kinne, Aaron, minister of the gospel, *A display, of scriptural prophecies, with their events, and the period of their accomplishment. Compiled from Rollin, Prideaux, Newton, and other eminent writers.* Printed by H. Willard, for the author. Stockbridge, 1813.

Kinne, Aaron, *Sarah and Hagar; or an explanation of the scripture allegory, with particular reference to infant baptism.* Printed by Samuel Green, New London, 1801.

Kinne, Aaron, *Sermon IV*, hand written manuscript. Undated.

Pierson, Frederick Lockwood, *The descendents of Stephen Pierson of Suffolk County, England, and New Haven and Derby, CONN, 1645-1739.* Walsh and Griffin, Printers. Amenia, NY, 1895.

Rogers, Hon. Ernest E., (compiled and edited) *Sesquicentennial of the Battle of Groton Heights and the burning of New London, Connecticut, September 6 and 7, 1931.* Published by the Fort Griswold & Groton Monument Commission, New London, September, 1931.

*Sketch of the life and pastorate of Rev. John A. Woodhull, pastor of the First Church of Christ, of Groton, Connecticut. 1872-1880.* Delivered April 12<sup>th</sup>, 1903 by John J. Copp, on presenting a Memorial Window to the church. A gift of Eliza M. Woodhull.

Wheelock, Eleazar, pastor of a church in Lebanon. *A continuation of the narrative of the State &c. of the Indian Charity School, at Lebanon, in Connecticut; from Nov. 27<sup>th</sup>, 1762 to Sept. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1765.* Printed by William and Samuel Draper, Boston, 1765.

Woodhull, J. A., the pastor. *A review of the Congregational Church of Groton, Conn., with sketches of its ministers. 1704-1876.* Press of the New London Telegram, 1877.

## Churches in New England and Poland Inspire One Another to Help Civilians in Ukraine and Gaza

By Rev. Kazimierz Bem



After Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24, 2022 thousands of UCC churches nationwide rallied to support refugees from Ukraine fleeing to surrounding countries. Coordinated by [First Church in Marlborough \(Congregational\) UCC](#) 42 congregations mostly from the Southern New England Conference raised over \$182,391 in aid to those refugees who fled to Poland and were helped by 11 Lutheran, Methodist and Reformed congregations either directly or via the Lutheran Church Diakonia in Poland. [All in all, we helped them help over 550 refugees.](#)

One of the congregations that has housed refugees from the very beginning was the 35-member strong [Żychlin Reformed Church](#). Their pastor, Rev. Tadeusz Jelinek is Polish army chaplain works with US Army and other NATO chaplains. The congregation is in regular contact with First Church in Marlborough, where the author of this post is pastor, who was born in Poland and has family there.

In January 2024 the congregants in Żychlin saw that First Church in Marlborough was collecting money for the Al Ahli Anglican Hospital in Gaza (a partner of Global Ministries), they had sprung into action. Knowing very well from their own experience how important it is to have spiritual and financial support in the face of a humanitarian disaster, the small Polish church decided to donate its whole collection to the Al-Ahli hospital too. “Carry each other burdens” they quoted Paul’s Letter to the Galatians 6:2 as their motivation. The money was transferred to the [American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem](#) that helps support the hospital in Gaza.

But that was not the end of the story... News got out.... The 12-member [Reformed group in Wrocław](#) decided to take up the mantle. In the spirit Christian solidarity and peace-witness they too held a collection for the Gaza Anglican hospital. That is not all... The pastor who led worship that Sunday is from Warsaw, and he said that the [Warsaw Reformed Congregation](#) might also do the same.

Both the United Church of Christ and the Polish Reformed Church are members of the World Communion of Reformed Churches. While their history and membership are vastly different what has united them all is their shared Christian faith, witness and faithfulness. It is indeed a grace and a blessing to see how we can all inspire one another in this broken and violence filled world. To God be praise and glory!

First Church in Marlborough is still collecting funds for Ukrainian refugees in Poland. If you would like to contribute and support the outreach of the churches in Poland, please send your donations to First Church with a note “Ukraine Relief” in the memo line.

**The Rev. Kazimierz Bem is the Pastor of the First Church in Marlborough (Congregational).**

## March Worship Services

<p><b>Third Sunday in Lent</b> March 3, 2024</p>	Exodus 20:1-17 Psalm 191 Corinthians 1:18-25 John 2:13-22
<p><b>Fourth Sunday in Lent</b> March 10, 2024</p>	Numbers 21:4-9 Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22 Ephesians 2:1-10 John 3:14-21
<p><b>Fifth Sunday in Lent</b> March 17, 2024</p>	Jeremiah 31:31-34 Psalm 51:1-12 or Psalm 119:9-16 Hebrews 5:5-10 John 12:20-33
<p><b>Liturgy of the Palms</b> March 24, 2024 <i>Sixth Sunday in Lent</i></p>	Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 Mark 11:1-11 or John 12:12-16
<p><b>Liturgy of the Passion</b> March 24, 2024 <i>Sixth Sunday in Lent</i></p>	Isaiah 50:4-9a Psalm 31:9-16 Philippians 2:5-11 Mark 14:1-15:47 or Mark 15:1-39, (40-47)
<p><b>Maundy Thursday</b> March 28, 2024</p>	Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14 Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 John 13:1-17, 31b-35
<p><b>Good Friday</b> March 29, 2024</p>	Isaiah 52:13-53:12 Psalm 22 Hebrews 10:16-25 or Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9 John 18:1-19:42
<p><b>Easter Vigil</b> March 31, 2024</p>	<p><b>Old Testament Readings and Psalms</b>            Genesis 1:1-2:4a and Psalm 136:1-9, 23-26            Genesis 7:1-5, 11-18; 8:6-18; 9:8-13 and Psalm 46            Genesis 22:1-18 and Psalm 16            Exodus 14:10-31; 15:20-21 and Exodus 15:1b-13, 17-18            Isaiah 55:1-11 and Isaiah 12:2-6            Baruch 3:9-15, 3:32-4:4 or Proverbs 8:1-8, 19-21; 9:4b-6            and Psalm 19            Ezekiel 36:24-28 and Psalm 42, 43            Ezekiel 37:1-14 and Psalm 143            Zephaniah 3:14-20 and Psalm 98</p> <p><b>New Testament Reading and Psalm</b>            Romans 6:3-11 and Psalm 114</p> <p><b>Gospel</b>            Mark 16:1-8</p>
<p><b>Resurrection of the Lord</b> March 31, 2024 <i>Easter Day</i></p>	*Acts 10:34-43 <b>or</b> Isaiah 25:6-9 Psalm 118:1-2, 14-241 Corinthians 15:1-11 or Acts 10:34-43 John 20:1-18 or Mark 16:1-8

March 2024

# CELEBRATE EASTER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Community Meals Noon-1PM
3 Worship Service 10 AM	4 Bible Study 11 AM	5	6	7 Handbells 6:30 PM Choir 7:30 PM	8	9 Community Meals Noon-1PM
10 Worship Service 10 AM	11 Bible Study 11 AM Youth Group 6-8p	12 Trustees 6PM	13 Women's Fellowship 12:30 PM	14 Handbells 6:30 PM Choir 7:30 PM	15	16 Community Meals Noon-1PM
17 Worship Service 10 AM	18 Bible Study 11 AM	19	20	21 Handbells 6:30 PM Choir	22	23 Community Meals Noon-1PM
24 Palm Sunday Worship Service 10 AM	25 Bible Study 11 AM	26	27	28 Maundy Thursday 7PM	29 Good Friday Sanctuary Open Noon-3PM	30 Community Meals Noon-1PM
31 Easter Worship Service 6 AM & 10 AM						

## Symbolizing children killed in Gaza, hundreds of hearts from Bethlehem delivered to Congress by UCC volunteers

By Renee DeLuca

More than 500 olivewood hearts accompanied by a postcard, like the one pictured, were delivered to congressional offices.

Valentine's Day found members of several Washington, D.C.-area United Church of Christ congregations participating in the delivery of over 500 olivewood hearts — each representing one beating heart of the nearly 12,000 Palestinian children killed in Gaza since Oct. 7.

These hearts were crafted by artisans in Bethlehem, Palestine, and were blessed in an ecumenical [prayer service in Bethlehem in December](#). The hearts were [accompanied by a letter](#) signed by several groups — including the UCC, Global Ministries and Palestinian partners — urging Congress to “raise your voice for peace and reconciliation in the Holy Land. True peace can only be achieved through the pursuit of justice for all parties involved.”

The Rev. Michael Neuroth, director of the UCC's [Office of Public Policy and Advocacy in Washington, D.C.](#), helped prepare for this delivery, and said it was an emotional undertaking.

“We printed off the names of the 12,000 children who have been killed. I know it isn't complete, but as it is, it is 87 pages double-sided and single-spaced,” he said. “The list itself had a sacredness to it, and I watched as volunteers paged through the document, reading name after name, often overcome with emotion and the grief and horror of what it represents.”

Maryn Goodson, left, of [Westmoreland Congregational UCC in Bethesda, Md.](#), and the Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss, pastor of First Church UCC in Washington, D.C., write the names of children who have been killed in Gaza.

“As a parent, I cannot imagine the collective grief being experienced by these families,” he continued. “As people of faith, as Christians, we must continue to escalate our calls to bring an end to this violence, to the loss of so many innocent lives. We are one human family, one community. We must end this collective punishment and call for a permanent ceasefire and a lasting peace.”

### **‘We must end this war’**

The Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss, senior minister of the [First Church UCC in D.C.](#), helped with the project.

“As I penned the names of children killed by the bombardment of Gaza on paper hearts to be delivered to members of Congress, I wondered about the quiet life behind each name,” she said. “What did their laughter sound like, whose hand did they reach for during the long nights of explosions and fear, how would their families grieve and remember them? Each life, carrying the spark of the divine; each child's sacred worth demanding that their basic human needs be met, including the need for safety.”

“We must end this war.”

Volunteers help prepare the hearts for delivery to Congress.

(continued next page)



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By Renee DeLuca

Emily Parker, a member of the [Cleveland Park Congregational UCC](#), also in D.C., was a participant as well. “I am grateful and humbled to have been able to personally deliver these beautiful hearts, made with love and grief, by our siblings in Palestine as well as the message to our elected leaders to stop participating in the slaughter of children,” Parker said.

A large portion of the delivering was done by representatives from [Rock Spring Congregational UCC in Arlington, Va.](#) Pictured standing together, from left, are Gail Burnaford, Kathy Hale and Rev. Laura Martin.

“This effort has been a collective effort with the UCC’s Palestinian partners through Global Ministries,” who commissioned these hearts, said Neuroth. “I heard from several volunteers that they witnessed the congressional staff receiving and holding the hearts gently and tenderly as they instinctively understood that each heart represented a child. It was a beautiful witness that I pray moved the hearts and minds of members of Congress.”

The accompanying letter asked members of Congress to keep these hearts nearby and to remember their purpose: “As you deliberate on matters related to Israel and Palestine, we ask you to remember these hearts, each symbolizing the life of a Palestinian or Israeli child.”

### Group effort

Peter Makari, Global Ministries’ global relations minister for the Middle East and Europe, said it was an important group effort.

Peter Makari, left, Global Ministries’ global relations minister for the Middle East and Europe, prepares the symbolic hearts for delivery to Congress along with Rev. Mike Neuroth.

“Through our engagement with partners in Palestine, including the Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center in Jerusalem and Kairos Palestine, we were made aware of this effort to send hearts from Bethlehem to the U.S., and were ready to offer to participate in the delivery of the hearts — and the message with names of child victims — to elected officials in Washington, to humanize the consequences of the ongoing tragedy, enabled and supported by the U.S.,” Makari said.

On the same day, Ash Wednesday, Hendler-Voss, Parker and others from area UCC congregations [participated in a public witness in front of the White House](#). The ecumenical gathering launched a weekly Lenten ceasefire campaign.



**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.



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Stay for After Worship Coffee Hour**



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Mailing Address Line 4  
Mailing Address Line 5