

The Gargoyle

August 2025

A publication of Groton Congregational Church



*A note
from the pastor*

By the time you read this I will have recently returned from my two weeks of study leave, volunteering as a small group leader at the Montreat Youth Conference in Montreat, NC, and serving as a member of the care team for the Presbyterian Youth Triennium in Louisville, Kentucky. I anticipate that I will

return exhausted, but will also have had a really fun and fulfilling time!

In August I will be leading classes for people who are interested in becoming members of the Groton Congregational Church. If you or someone you know is interested in exploring what membership means, please let me know soon. Attending the classes does not obligate you in any way, but offers a time of discernment to pray and to think about if this is something God is calling you to do. The classes will be held on Sundays at 11:45am in the sanctuary on the following dates: August 10, August 17, and August 24. Please plan to attend all of them, if at all possible, as each one will focus on a different topic. At the end of this time you can decide whether or not you want to formally become a member of this church. If you do, we will set up a meeting for you with the Deacons and then choose a date for you to be received into membership during a worship service. If you decide that membership is not for you at this time, you will still be welcome with open arms to worship and to any or all activities going on in the life of the congregation. Talk to me if you want or need more information.

In September there will be another Bible study or topic study. I haven't decided what the topic will be yet, or the time, although it will probably be a daytime study. I plan to alternate between daytime and evening studies, to hopefully reach as many people in the congregation who want to come as possible. Stay tuned for more information on that soon.

As we relax during the 'dog days'* of summer in this month of August, I invite you to still come to worship. Come and have your spirit renewed and filled. As always, I am praying for you all.

Blessings,

Rev. Christine Caton

*The 'dog days of summer' refer to the hottest, most humid period of the year, typically from early July to early August. (But I think here in New England it lingers into August longer!) While the term might evoke images of dogs panting in the heat, it actually originates from ancient times when the star Sirius, also known as the 'Dog Star,' was believed to contribute to the intense summer heat. Stay cool and hydrated this month, friends!





BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." – 1 Peter 4:10

The Trustees are pleased to report that Ludwig Pulaski's nomination to become a member of the Board has been accepted and they are grateful for his willingness to serve. Ludwig's formal ratification of his nomination will be addressed at the

September 14th Church Council Meeting.

The Trustees' next scheduled meeting is on Sunday, August 3, 2025.

Submitted in love,
Cathy Johnson
Chair, Board of Trustees

The following provides the procedure for publicizing church events and information with the community on social media.

- The different outlets that are currently used by Groton Congregational are Facebook, Instagram, NextDoor and Patch.
- Events and information posted to Facebook are automatically posted to Instagram.
- The only recurring post from the church (posted without a specific request) is a weekly graphic inviting people to worship. This is posted on Facebook, Instagram and NextDoor.
- Simply because an event is on the church/office calendar does not mean it will automatically be posted to social media. To have an event posted, submit a request to the office. Using the "Publicity Request" (included here) is required as well as helpful in the development of the publicity. You can collaborate with the secretary on all aspects of the ad, including if you would like an email blast prepared and sent, a poster or flyer created. Nothing will be posted until the format has been reviewed and agreed upon.
- Facebook, Instagram, and NextDoor: smaller graphic posts are best because post uploads are size dependent. Too large a graphic makes the post difficult to read and could be rejected by the media platform.
- (Groton) Patch is best for events or specific articles. This media outlet is intended to be used as a hub for local news and information relevant to the residents of Groton.
- The New London Day charges for different types of advertising. They require the ad copy be submitted to them a minimum of 4 weeks prior to the event, and unless it is a paid ad, do not place priority on printing or posting it online.
- All events at the church that do not involve the use of the sanctuary require the Trustees' approval of the event and the specifics of the publicity prior to submitting it to the office. Exceptions to this are advertising that the Deacons are responsible for such as Easter and Christmas and other events requiring the use of the sanctuary. **Once the Trustees or Deacons have approved the use**

of the building and/or sanctuary for an event, they will inform the office, and advertising can then be requested.

- To ensure quality and accuracy, all posts must be reviewed and approved by all relevant parties prior to publication. As with most things, earlier submissions are strongly encouraged, the sooner a post is received, the smoother and more efficient the review and approval process will be.
- For information on upcoming deadlines for various publications, refer to the card posted in various locations within the church, including the main bulletin board.

They are:

- Bulletin/Sunday Order of Service: Tuesday by 2:00 pm
- Gargoyle Articles: 4th Tuesday of the month
- Publicity: one month prior to the event.

To begin the process for any of the preceding procedure, start with an email to the office **once approval for the event has been given by the Trustees or Deacons.**

Publicity Request (sample – forms available in Office)

Event _____

Date of Event _____ **Time** _____

Location _____

Contact _____

Other Information (Price, Reservations, etc.)

_____**Poster** _____**Facebook** _____**Patch** _____**NextDoor**

_____**Bulletin** _____**Gargoyle**

_____**Other** _____

Notes:

Date Request Received: _____

Approved by: (BOT or BOD) _____

Deacons

Faith in Action and Community

We all want our church family to participate in the important work of inviting people to church and sharing our Christian love with them. This doesn't always happen automatically — it takes intentional effort.



Inviting friends isn't just about filling seats but about sharing the love of Jesus and building a stronger Christian community. For most people it's easier to welcome people to church once they arrive, rather than going out of our way to invite someone yourself. It can feel pretty intimidating to directly encourage people to attend or visit church.

Inviting someone to church is a powerful way to share God's love and grow our community. A personal invitation is perhaps the best way to invite someone to church because there's an existing connection for the invitee. There is a comfort level attending a new church when they already know someone there. It can help take away the anxiety of having to navigate around on their own, or the fear of sitting by themselves. Plus, when they visit church because of a personal invitation from someone they know, they already have a point person to answer any questions they may have.

Naturally, the more you invite people, the easier it will become. Even if someone doesn't accept your invitation right away, celebrate the fact that you stepped out in faith, did what God tells us to do, and extended that first invitation. Every effort counts. Don't get discouraged if someone turns down your invitation the first time. You never know how God could be working in their heart, and one day, they might just say yes!

*And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,
not neglecting to meet together...but encouraging one another*

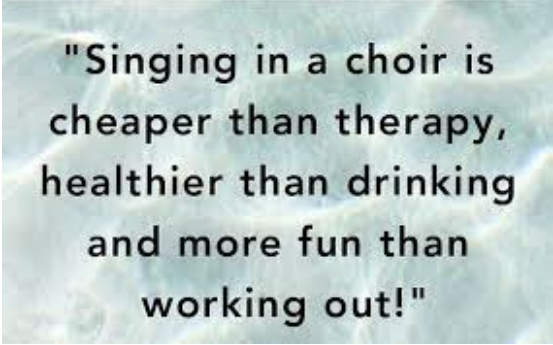
Hebrews 10:24-25



Music Committee

It is hard to believe we are already into August! The summer is flying by but “back to school” sales are a reminder that fall will soon be here bringing cooler temperatures and a return to a busier schedule.

Choir and bell choir rehearsals will begin on Thursday September fourth at 6:30 for bells and 7:30 for the choir. These groups add much to our worship experience and we are grateful for their contributions to the church services. Anyone who would like to take part in this ministry is welcome to come and join the joyful noise.

A quote about singing in a choir, set against a background of soft, out-of-focus flowers. The text is in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

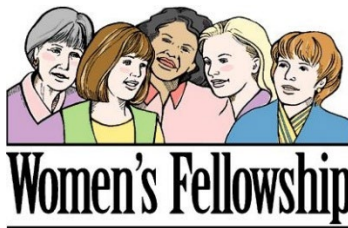
"Singing in a choir is
cheaper than therapy,
healthier than drinking
and more fun than
working out!"

Don't forget you can still join the “pick up choir” at 9:30 on Sunday mornings in August.

A reminder that there is an ongoing fund to repair our beloved organ. So far over \$10,000 has been raised towards the goal of nearly \$38,000. Donations are welcome at any time Just let the treasurer know to deposit the amount in the organ fund. The hope is to have some fund raising activities in the coming months.

Enjoy the rest of your summer!

Florence Barnum, Music Committee



Women's Fellowship meetings will resume on 9/10 at 12noon. We will have a pot luck luncheon followed by the meeting. Hope to see you all there.

Community Meals

Community Meals will be serving on every Saturday in August from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m., except for August 23rd, when a Memorial Service for David Bryte will take place.

Our heartfelt thanks to everyone who donated food, money, and supplies during this last month!

This month we need half gallons of apple juice and other juices. We also need large black garbage bags. We always need fruit.

As a thank you note, here is one of our recipes. It takes advantage of the local fresh squash that is now at the grocery stores. We served it as a side dish on Saturday, July 19, 2025.

Squash Casserole

Ingredients:

6 small yellow squash, thinly sliced (small zucchini would work, too.)

½ cup sour cream

2 large eggs, room temperature

2-3 tablespoons minced onions

½ teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon black pepper

2 cloves finely minced garlic (or 1 tsp. garlic powder)

1-1/2 cup grated sharp cheddar

Topping:

¾ cup Italian breadcrumbs (or panko bread crumbs)

3 tablespoon butter, melted

1 tablespoon Parmesan cheese

1 tablespoon fresh chopped parsley (optional)



Directions:

Preheat the oven to 350 F.

Lightly butter a 2-quart casserole dish or 9x13 inch baking pan.

Wash and thinly slice the squash. Place the slices into a large mixing bowl.

In a medium mixing bowl, combine the sour cream, eggs, onions, garlic (or garlic powder), salt, and pepper. Fold in the grated cheddar cheese.

Pour over the sliced squash. Mix to combine. Transfer the squash and cheese mixture into the prepared baking dish

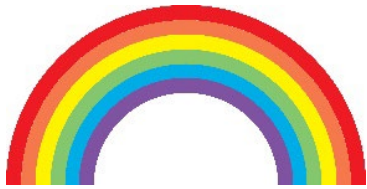
Crunchy Topping

Mix the bread crumbs and melted butter. Sprinkle the topping mixture evenly on the casserole.

Sprinkle with the Parmesan cheese.

Crushed potato chips may be substituted for crumbs for a gluten -free casserole.

Bake 30-40 minutes until the top is light brown, and the cheese is bubbly. Let rest a few minutes before serving. This makes about 10 servings.



Groton Congregational Church has the opportunity to share a booth with the Niantic Community Church at the New London Pride Event at Ocean Beach on Saturday, August 9th. The hours are from 12 noon to 5:00pm. Rev. Christine will be there for the whole event. We would love to have volunteers to help staff the booth and tell people about our church. This is a great way to spread the news about how welcoming our congregation is. If you are able to come for an hour, or longer, to help, please let Rev. Christine know after she returns from study leave. Please note that people staffing booths are still required to pay for parking, so carpooling is encouraged. Let's show our community how much love there is to share in this congregation.

Rev. Caton will be holding classes in August for those who are interested in officially joining this church. Attending these classes does not obligate you in any way to join, but gives you the opportunity to explore what membership means at the Groton Congregational Church. If you choose to join the church at the end of the classes, a meeting will be arranged for you to meet with our Board of Deacons, and then a date will be set up for you to make a public statement of your faith and be received into membership during a worship service. If you are not a member, please prayerfully consider attending these classes. If you have any questions, please talk to Rev Caton.



Schedule for New Member Classes with Rev Caton:

These are all on Sundays at 11:45am, held in the sanctuary.

August 10 - Who Are We?

Explore the history of the Groton Congregational Church and the United Church of Christ.

August 17 - What Do We Do?

Find out more about the ministries and mission of this congregation.

August 24 - What Do You Believe?

A discussion of what, how, and why we believe, and how you individually believe.

Puzzle!

For this cryptogram, use the clues
to decode Proverbs 27:1, NIV.

CLUES:
O = D, T = O

$\frac{O}{T D} \quad \frac{O T}{F D O} \quad \frac{O}{E D B} \quad \frac{T}{P O} \quad \frac{O}{B E D Y O} \quad \frac{T}{O}$

$\frac{T O}{O D U D H H D L} \quad \frac{O}{Z D H} \quad \frac{O}{G D Y}$

$\frac{O}{T D} \quad \frac{O T}{F D O} \quad \frac{O}{N F D L} \quad \frac{T}{L R B O}$

$\frac{B}{T B G U B G E H A F M}$

Proverbs 27:1, NIV

Answer: Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring.
Proverbs 27:1, NIV



Bible Readings for the Month

August 3

Hosea 11:1-11 and Psalm 107:1-9, 43
Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-23 and Psalm 49:1-12
Colossians 3:1-11
Luke 12:13-21

August 10

Isaiah 1:1, 10-20 and Psalm 50:1-8, 22-23
Genesis 15:1-6 and Psalm 33:12-22
Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16
Luke 12:32-40

August 17

Isaiah 5:1-7 and Psalm 80:1-2, 8-19
Jeremiah 23:23-29 and Psalm 82
Hebrews 11:29-12:2
Luke 12:49-56

August 24

Jeremiah 1:4-10 and Psalm 71:1-6
Isaiah 58:9b-14 and Psalm 103:1-8
Hebrews 12:18-29
Luke 13:10-17

August 30

Jeremiah 2:4-13 and Psalm 81:1, 10-16
Sirach 10:12-18 or *Proverbs* 25:6-7 and Psalm 112
Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16
Luke 14:1, 7-14



AUGUST

2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2 12N COMMUNITY MEALS
3 10 AM WORSHIP 11:30 AM TRUSTEES	4	5	6	7	8	9 12N COMMUNITY MEALS
10 10 AM WORSHIP	11	12	13	14	15	16 12N COMMUNITY MEALS
17 10 AM WORSHIP	18 6 PM DEACONS	19	20	21	22	23 11 AM BRYTE MEMORIAL SERVICE
24 10 AM WORSHIP	25	26 GARGOYLE DEADLINE	27	28	29	30 12N COMMUNITY MEALS
30 10 AM WORSHIP						



Groton Congregational Church

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 worshipers from all walks of life. We embrace the belief that no matter who, no matter what, no matter where you are on life's journey, you are invited and 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.

The Reverend Christine Caton
Sunday Worship begins at 10 am
Stay for Coffee Hour After Worship

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

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Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday

9 am to 2 pm