

The Gargoyle

October 2025

A publication of Groton Congregational Church



Dear members and friends,

I am writing this on the first day of Autumn (or Fall), known as the Autumnal Equinox. The weather today is one of those glorious Autumn days when the sky is a crystal clear blue without any clouds, and the humidity is low. Autumn is my favorite time of the year.

This is also the time when the church calendar begins to get busy again, after a quieter Summer. People are back from vacations and the church starts many of the traditions you have come to love. I've gone back to wearing my pulpit robe, and I know the choir will soon also return to wearing their robes.

On Sunday, October 5th we will hold a Blessing of the Animals at 1:00pm in the church parking area outside. This will give all of you who are pet owners time to go home, get your animals, and return. We don't want a lot of animals in the church building, and we definitely don't want anyone leaving their pets in their cars during worship. Please remember to leash your animals, or bring them in a carrier, which ever is more appropriate for your pet. All kinds of pets are welcome. This will be a lovely time to remember all of God's good gifts to us in nature, especially our animal friends. If there should be bad weather on October 5th, we will hold the event on October 19.

The annual Stewardship campaign kicks off in October as well. The Stewardship committee has been working hard, and members of the committee will bring you a brief message for several Sundays about what Stewardship means for the life of this congregation. On the final Stewardship Sunday I will be talking about Stewardship from the pulpit as well.

I am still very busy with the United Church of Christ Polity and History class I was asked to take by the New London Association of the UCC. The class wraps up in early November.

Enjoy the Autumn air and the beautiful leaves which are slowly beginning to turn colors. Advent will be here before we know it, with another busy time in the life of the church! I continue to pray for all of you, and ask that you pray for me and our congregation as well.

Blessings,

Rev. Christine



1 Peter 4:10-11 Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. (NIV)

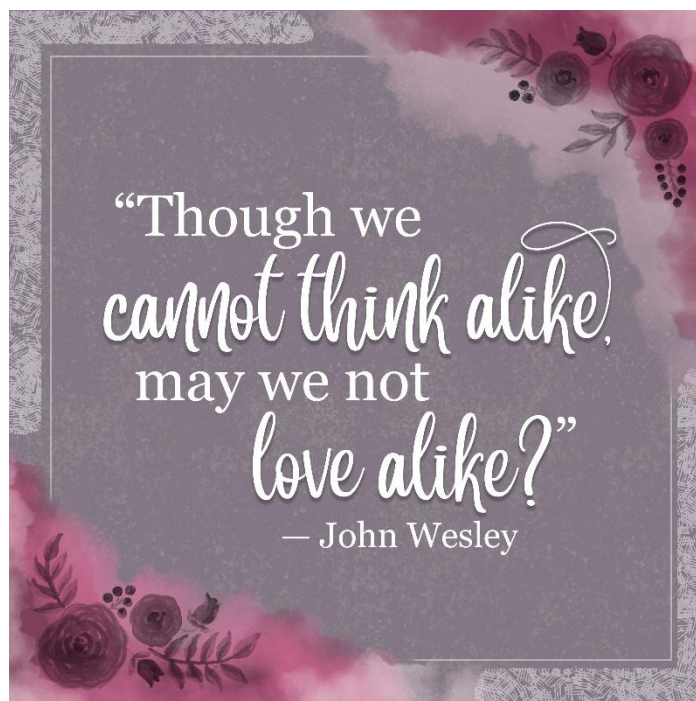
We are coming upon that time of year where you may be asked to serve on a board or committee (or continue to do so) here at Groton Congregational. It is these boards and committees that collectively operate our church and guide us to be the people that God has called us to be. While our numbers may be small, there is always something each of us can do to work towards that call.

Regarding boards and committees: it is important that meeting minutes be submitted to the office after their approval by their respective members. This is per our procedural policies. Thank you.

The Trustees will soon be issuing a notice to the various boards and committees regarding next year's budget. It's not too early to begin discussing what your group feels its budgetary needs will be for 2026.

The Trustees' next scheduled meeting is on Sunday, October 5, 2025.

Submitted in love,
Cathy Johnson
Chair, Board of Trustees





Comfortable or Change

What to do? Remain comfortable or choose change...what to do?

I am sharing the first two paragraphs in chapter one from a novel written by Richard Paul Evans. The name – The Mistletoe Secret.

“Whether we admit it or not, most of us live our lives on autopilot. We wake at the same hour, go to the same place of work or worship, talk to the same people, eat at the same restaurants, even watch the same TV shows. I’m not criticizing this. Habit is stability and stability is vital to survival. There’s a reason farmers don’t change crops midseason. When wisdom does not require change, it is wisdom not to change.

“But sometimes the evolving terrain of life requires us to evolve with it. When those times come, we usually find ourselves quivering on the precipice of change as long as we can, because no one wants to dive headlong into the ravine of uncertainty. No one. Only when the pain of being becomes too much do we close our eyes and leap.”

Pause. Pause. And re-read. Pause (again)

The word stopping me and causing me to reflect on these two paragraphs is/was – worship! A single word stops me to reflect.

Worship – every Sunday. Habit. Stability. Do you find a challenged feeling of emptiness when worship is missed on a Sunday? My calendar is thrown off kilter. There is an empty spot. BUT, my focus with respect to worship was evolving around the Advent season, because of the novel title. And this is before I even started to read the third paragraph, let alone the novel.

I had a sense of guilt for my pause or actually self-doubting. Doubting is a useful thing. Challenging? Definitely. And what’s fantastic about faith and worshipping each Sunday is the ability to meet the challenges ... the necessary step of going “to the well” for spiritual recharge. So rather than looking at doubting as “the wind in the sails of faith,” perhaps think of it as a kind of recharging the spiritual essence within would be better. Everyone should be honest and reflective about doubts, but they shouldn’t be content to just hang on to those doubts and never move beyond them. Especially with the approaching of the Advent season.

As God sent to us Jesus, God also blesses us every day with His “love”.

Peace to each of you and may you overcome your “doubt” challenges with God’s blessings.

Chuck Barnum, Deacon



Music Committee

Our organ fund is ongoing as the repairs of the swell motor assemblies will be very expensive (about \$38,000). Sue is presently able to compensate for the flawed performance, so these repairs don't need to be done in the immediate future. We have raised approximately \$11,000 so far and expect a long range effort of another year or so to reach our goal.

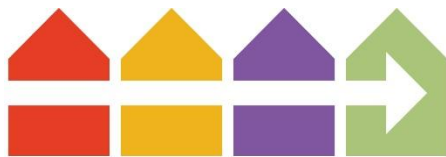
A "harvest dinner" is being planned and hosted by Don and Sadie Beatrice and Jean Young for later this month. Stay tuned for more information and invite friends and family to join in this evening of Fall fun and food.

The committee would welcome any suggestions for fund raising ideas.

Regular practice sessions on Thursday evenings have begun for choir and bell choir. Both groups welcome new members.

Sue is busy planning a very special "lessons and carols" program for December. More about this special Sunday service in next month's Gargoyle.

Florence Barnum



PASS IT ON!

Want to help promote the church? If you are on Facebook or Instagram, make sure you are following our church. Then when you see the posts for the church service or events happening at the church, like the post and more importantly repost the post. The more we interact with the posts, the more FB and IG will show people these posts. When you repost them, your friends will see the posts. If you repost events then we might bring more people to the event. Social media is a way for us to be seen in the community and lets people know we are still here and active. Think of it as planting seeds.

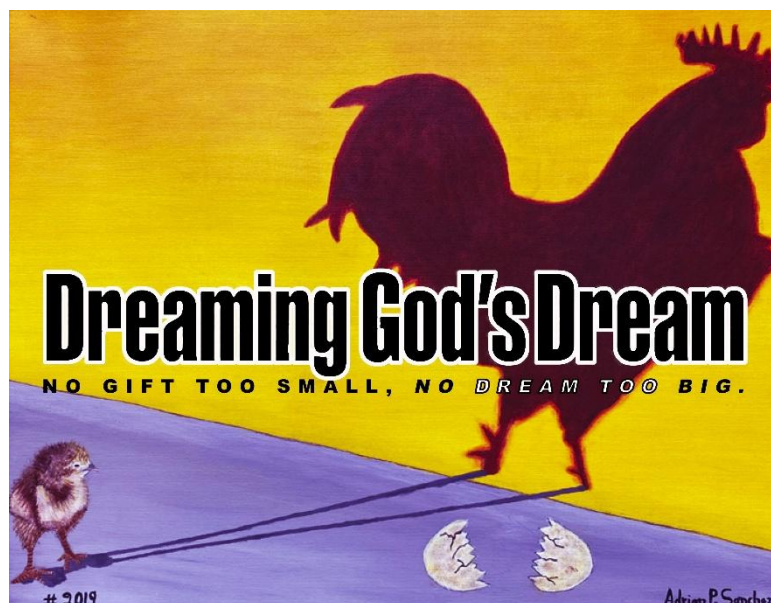
Stewardship



Our 2025 Stewardship Campaign starts in October. You will soon be receiving your pledge letter. You also will be hearing five short Stewardship messages. Please spend some time considering how much support you can pledge to our church in the coming year, and then fill out and return your pledge card.

Here is our schedule:

Date	Speaker
Oct. 5	Janice Kimball - No Gift Too Small
Oct 12	Sally Turner - Gratitude for Our Church
Oct 19	Sue Stottlemeyer - No Dream Too Big
Oct 26	Emily Miller - Imagining
Nov. 2	Doris Pulaski - Dreaming God's Dream
Nov. 23	Stewardship Lunch and Collection of Pledge Cards





Community Meals will be serving every Saturday in the month of October.

October 4 - kielbasa and baked beans, vegetable, salad, dessert

October 11 - Chicken Drumsticks, mashed potatoes and gravy; vegetable dish, salad

October 18 - Ham and Mac and cheese, vegetable dish, salad and dessert

October 25 - TBD

In times like these, we are especially grateful for donations of food, money, and volunteers' time to help us provide tasty meals to all who are our guests at Community Meals.

In thanks, here is our recipe for:

Apple Crisp

Heat oven to 375 F.

Topping Mixture:

1/2 cup dark brown sugar

1/2 cup white sugar

3/4 cup old fashioned oats; quick oats can be used, but it may yield a slightly different texture

3/4 cup all-purpose flour

1 tsp ground cinnamon

pinch of salt

1/2 cup cold butter, diced into small cubes (one stick)



Apple Mixture

2 pounds tart cooking apples (about six medium apples). If apples are not tart, add one can unsweetened applesauce.

2 Tbsp white sugar

3/4 tsp cinnamon

1 1/2 tsp. lemon juice

Make Apple Mixture:

Pare apples and cut into slices. Add lemon juice to keep apples from discoloring. Mix 2 Tbsp sugar and 3/4 tsp. cinnamon, and add mixture to apples. Taste one slice. If it is too sweet, add unsweetened applesauce. Place apple mixture in buttered 9" x 9" square pan.

Make Topping:

Mix 1/2 c. dark brown sugar, 1/2 c. white sugar, 3/4 cup oats, 3/4 c flour, 1 tsp. cinnamon, and a pinch of salt.

Cut butter into small chunks and add to oatmeal mixture. Use a pastry blender or two knives to cut the butter into the dry mixture. The mixture should resemble small peas.

Put topping over apples and bake 30 to 40 minutes until apples are cooked.

Serve with ice cream or whipped cream.



Women's Fellowship is planning a Harvest Sale on November 1, 2025 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. There will be posters available for people in the congregation to take and distribute in their own neighborhoods.

Donations may be received on October 28th-the 31st from 9 a.m. to 2. p.m.

We look forward to seeing you all there. We do need your support.

Sally Turner



MISSIONS

Thanks to all for their very generous support of our Summer Fun drive. We donated over 50 items to the Early Childhood Development Center.

We are now starting our fall Red Wagon Drive to support Groton Human Services. They are looking for canned vegetables, canned fruits, stuffing mix, instant mashed potatoes, gravy, cranberry sauce, muffin/bread mixes, cream of mushroom soup, pancake mix, french fried onion to fill their Thanksgiving Food Baskets.

Next month look for our annual Grammys Jammies and Adopt-a-Family drives.

Thanks again for everyone's support – you make our mission drives possible.

Your Missions committee-

Beth, Jill, Penny, Don, Anne



Harvest Sale

November 1, 2025 9 am to 2 pm

Bake Sale Books
Holiday Items Attic Treasures
Puzzles & Games Household Goods

Groton Congregational Church, UCC
162 Monument St
Groton, CT 06340

office@grotoncongregational.org
grotonucc.org 860.445.7409

Keep a look out for an upcoming fundraiser
at the end of October.

More information coming on
the Midway bulletin board and weekly bulletin



Blessing of the Animals

5 October at 1pm

Parking Lot

Groton Congregational Church
162 Monument Street, Groton, CT

grotonucc.org
860.445.7409

office@grotoncongregational.org





OCTOBER



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2 6:30p Bell Choir 7:30p Choir	3	4 12n Community Meals
5 World Communion Sunday 10a Worship 11:15a Trustees 11:15a Stewardship 1 pm Blessing of The Animals	6	7	8	9 6:30p Bell Choir 7:30p Choir	10	11 12n Community Meals
12 10 am Worship 1 pm Memorial Service for Bill Sullivan	13 6p Deacons	14	15	16 6:30p Bell Choir 7:30p Choir	17	18 12n Community Meals
19 10 am Worship 11:15a Missions	20	21	22	23 6:30p Bell Choir 7:30p Choir	24 Possible Fundraiser <i>More Details to come.</i>	25 12n Community Meals
26 10 am Worship 11:15a Music	27	28  Gargoyle Deadline	29	30 6:30p Bell Choir 7:30p Choir	31 Halloween 	



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.

162 Monument Street
Groton, CT 06340
860-445-7409

www.grotonucc.org
office@grotoncongregational.org
pastor@grotoncongregational.org

Office Hours
Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday