



Dear friends –

This winter has been harsh. We have just experienced a blizzard with over two feet of snow in some parts of Connecticut. And yet, as New Englanders, and as people of faith, we persevere. We keep going. And Spring is finally just around the corner!

We are also in the midst of Lent, the season of penitence and preparation as we approach the joy of the Resurrection, which we celebrate on Easter Sunday.

In the meantime, after having to postpone because of the blizzard, we will begin our adult Lenten study on Monday, March 2 at 1:00pm. We will be studying what it means to be a Disciple of Jesus Christ. I hope you will join me!

I will be on vacation from March 11th through March 17th, and out of town. Should you have a pastoral care need during this time please contact a member of the Board of Deacons (James Kerrigan, Jean Young, Chuck Barnum, Sadie Beatrice, Sally Turner, Lew Clark, and Doris Pulaski.)

Holy Week begins on Sunday, March 29th with our celebration of Palm Sunday during our regular worship time. We will have our final adult Lenten study on Monday, March 30th at 1:00pm. On April 2nd, Maundy Thursday, we will join together in evening worship at 7:00pm as we remember Jesus' last supper with his disciples and the institution of the Lord's Supper, which we will partake in that night. On April 3rd, Good Friday, the sanctuary will be open from 12 noon to 3:00pm for silent prayer and meditation. You may drop in anytime during those three hours. I will be there, as well as some of our Deacons, in case you would like someone to pray along with you. And on Sunday, April 5, I will be leading the Easter Sunrise service at 6:30am at Ft Griswold. Then at 10 am we will join together at our regular worship time to celebrate the Resurrection of Christ on Easter, with the reading and preaching of the Word, beautiful hymns and special music, and in the company of friends, neighbors, and guests.

Lent is a special time to focus on prayer and on moving closer to God. I will be praying for all of you during this time. I pray that each of you will find hope and peace, as well as the challenge of what it means to move closer to God during this time of Lent. I hope you will pray for me as well.

Blessings to you all,

Rev. Christine



*“Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.” - James 1:2-4*

We as people and as a congregation will always be “facing trials of many kinds” – that’s how life works. In the preceding bible passage, James “encourages Christians to embrace trials not for what they presently are, but for the outcome God will accomplish through them” (*Got Questions: Count it all joy; Accessed February 24, 2026*)

For the past few months, we have been specifically facing the trial of snow accumulation and its effect on how and when we can physically meet - but we met the challenge and endured and we did so together, with God’s grace and as a community of faith. Thanks be to God and to Groton Congregational Church.

We were finally able to hold our Annual Meeting, and we collectively sighed in relief, and now we move on.

During 2026, the Trustees scheduled meetings will be held on the second Sunday of each month, after service. The next meeting of the Trustees is scheduled for March 8, 2026.

Submitted in love,

Cathy Johnson  
Chair, Board of Trustees





The month of March is an interesting one. Depending on the specifics of the calendar in the life of the Church March is at least in Lent with the possibility of Palm Sunday or Easter occurring in the month as well. In the secular world the month of March is often associated with St Patrick's Day and a celebration of Irish culture either real or imagined. I mention imagined as the modern habit of adopting stereotypical depictions of the leprechaun for St Patrick's day trace their origins back to the discrimination against the Irish in America since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

But amongst the obsession with the wearing of green, taking the day as an excuse to drink alcohol, looking for a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow we sometimes forget that St Patrick's day is actually a religious day. Like many of the Saint days in the church calendar followed more closely by our Catholic siblings of Faith, St Patrick's Day was originally a feast day. To me there always seemed to be either an element of Irish Humor or Irish Genius to place their patron Saint feast day in the middle of Lent.

Lent is typically an austere time of fasting and certainly abstaining from the merriment and drinking seen on St Patrick's Day amongst the Irish Diaspora. March 17 always falls during Lent and even in the Early days of the Catholic church the Irish bishops permitted the feast day celebrations despite the strict rules of Lent. Interesting note is that while March 17 will always fall during Lent, it will occasionally occur during Holy Week from Palm Sunday to Easter. Historically this was seen as going beyond the limit as the Church recognized that this was too much for one week. In these years the date of observance of St Patrick's Day is shifted to earlier in the month which last occurred in 2008 when the day was observed on March 15<sup>th</sup>.

Other interesting factoids:

- The real St Patrick's clover is the Three-Leaf clover. It is said that Patrick upon arriving in Ireland bent down, picked a clover, and used it to illustrate the notion of the trinity using the three leaves. The Four-Leaf Clover as a symbol of luck possibly dates much earlier and is based on the rarity notion that only approximately 1 in 10000 clovers are four leaf.
- The real St Patrick is not Irish, he was a Roman-British born individual who brought Christianity to Ireland. In effect he was first of British conquerors which is amusing when you consider Irish History as a whole.
- St Patrick is not only the patron saint of Ireland but also the patron saint of Nigeria. Interesting to note while the global production of Guinness originates from Dublin, most Guinness is not brewed in Dublin. By volume the country of origin for Most Guinness is Nigeria.

Traditional Irish Blessing:

May the road rise up to meet you,  
May the wind be always at your back.  
May the sun shine warm upon your fact,  
The rain fall soft upon your fields,  
And until we meet again,  
May God hold you the palm of His hand.



-James Kerrigan

If you or someone you know is grade 6 to 12 you are invited to come to the youth group meetings for fun and fellowship. If you are interested email Rachel Candee at: [youthgroupdirector@grotonucc.org](mailto:youthgroupdirector@grotonucc.org)



We are entering Lent and approaching the joy of Easter morning. Our choir Director has planned some very special music for this season of the Christian year. The handbell choir will be playing on March 15 and Easter will hold a special musical addition We are hoping weather will cooperate and we will be able to enjoy the musical treats planned.

The Organ Fund is ongoing as contributions continue to come in. We all really appreciate the work our organist is putting into keeping our organ in tune and making the effort to keep it operating as well as she does working within limitations. Look for more fund raisers in the future.

Florence Barnum



**Help** to brighten Mary Alapa's day. Take time to drop a card or letter to her.

Mary Alapa  
235 Lestertown Road Rm 116A  
Groton, CT 06340

We would like to thank everyone for their continuing support during 2026. We cannot do it without you, especially our volunteers.

We will be planning to serve throughout March 2026. Come join us some Saturday at noon and enjoy a meal with us.

We need extra large and medium Nitrile powder-free gloves and apple juice!



**This Easter**, remember loved ones by purchasing a memorial ornament. This year our choices for memorial ornaments for the tree in the sanctuary are: birds, butterflies, flowers crosses and eggs



All donations will go to the general fund unless a donor requests otherwise.

If you have any questions see Doris Pulaski.



Rev Chirstine will be on vacation from March 11th through March 17th, and out of town. Should you have a pastoral care need during this time please contact a member of the Board of Deacons (James Kerrigan, Jean Young, Chuck Barnum, Sadie Beatrice, Sally Turner, Lew Clark, and Doris Pulaski.)



## Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner

March 16

\$20 per Person

5:30 pm Pick Up 6 pm Dine In

Reserve by March 8

[office@grotoncongregational.org](mailto:office@grotoncongregational.org)

860.445.7409

Corned Beef  
Cabbage

Potatoes  
Carrots

Dessert

Dessert

Groton Congregational Church  
162 Monument St., Groton, CT  
[grotonucc.org](http://grotonucc.org)



# ANNUAL MEETING

## 2026 Annual Meeting Recap

The Groton Congregational Church Annual Meeting was held on Sunday, February 15, 2026, in Dutton Hall following a luncheon organized and prepared by Don and Sadie Beatrice, Sue Blaisdell, Cathy Johnson, and Jean Young. Sincere thanks are extended to all who helped in serving a delicious and well-received meal, and those who assisted in the cleanup.

The meeting was attended by 26 members of the congregation, along with several friends and guests. With a quorum present, Moderator Howard Turner called the meeting to order at 11:55 a.m.

All reports from the various committees were accepted as presented. Those wishing to review the detailed reports may refer to the Annual Report.

The Nominating Coordinator presented the proposed slate for 2026. Several additional nominations were made as members stepped forward to fill vacancies on the Board of Deacons, Stewardship Committee, Music Committee, and the office of Historian. One additional change removed a member from the Missions Committee. The nominations were accepted and approved as amended.

The complete 2026 Slate of Officers, Boards, and Committees is posted on the Midway bulletin board. Anyone interested in filling one of the remaining vacancies may contact the appropriate committee or the Clerk of the Church (as the Nominating Coordinator position is currently vacant) to have their name included in nominations at the next Church Council meeting.

The proposed budget was approved as presented. It should be noted that the current budget requires drawing an additional \$48,000 from the investment portfolio (\$4,000 per month) to meet financial obligations and still reflects an approximate deficit of \$13,000.

### Other Business

Cathy Johnson reiterated that snow plowing of the side yard is not included in our contract with Smith Landscaping. Due to the soft ground and gravel in that area, it is not suitable for plowing. Future requests to have the side yard plowed will not be considered by the Board of Trustees.

Cathy also announced that this year's Fourth of July parade theme is "United We Stand." The submission deadline is June 24. Anyone interested in participating should contact her directly.

Additionally, Cathy requested permission to explore membership in the Thames Heritage River Park. The assembly agreed that membership could help raise awareness of our church within the immediate community and beyond. Inclusion would allow the church to be listed on the organization's website and to host tours scheduled through the church. Cathy will serve as the point of contact. The request was approved.

The minutes of the Annual Meeting are posted on the Midway Bulletin board.

Thank you to all who have stepped forward to serve and who remain committed to the governance and ministry of our church. Your dedication strengthens our community and our shared mission.

*Hebrews 10:24–25 (NIV)*

*"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."*

In His Service,  
Sue Blaisdell, Clerk of the Church

## 2026 SLATE OF OFFICERS, BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<b>Moderator</b> ~ Howard Turner (27)	<b>Treasurer</b> ~ Bill Blaisdell (26)	
<b>Asst. Moderator</b> (26)	<b>Asst. Treasure</b> ~ Rachel Candee (26)	
<b>Clerk</b> ~ Sue Blaisdell (26)	<b>Historian</b> ~ Doris Pulaski (26)	
<b>Board of Trustees (3 Yr)</b>	<b>Board of Deacons (3 Yr)</b>	<b>Missions Committee (2 Yr)</b>
Sue Blaisdell (26)	Lew Clark (26)	Don Beatrice <b>C</b> (26)
Bonnie Giesler (26)	James Kerrigan <b>C</b> (26)	(26)
Cathy Johnson <b>C</b> (26)	Sally Turner (26)	Sadie Beatrice (27)
Richard Stottlemeyer (26)	Charles Barnum (27)	Jean Young (27)
Don Beatrice (27)	Sadie Beatrice <b>SRT</b> (27)	James Kerrigan (27)
Phyllis Meyer (27)	Jean Young <b>VC</b> (27)	
Ludwig Pulaski <b>SRT</b> (27)	Doris Pulaski (27)	
<b>Property Committee (2 Yr)</b>	<b>Stewardship Committee (2 yr)</b>	<b>Ushering Committee (2 Yr)</b>
Richard Stottlemeyer <b>C</b> (??)	Janice Kimball (26)	(26)
Bill Blaisdell (??)	Doris Pulaski <b>C</b> (26)	(26)
Sue Blaisdell (??)	Emily Miller (27)	(27)
Sue Stottlemeyer (??)	Patty Hensley (27)	
	Amaya Redecki (27)	
<b>Music Committee (2 Yr)</b>	<b>Nominating Committee (3 Yr)</b>	<b>Delegates (2 Yr)</b>
Steve Tavernier (26)	(28)	Chuck Barnum (27)
Joan Jordan (26)	(28)	(27)
Florence Barnum <b>C</b> (27)	(28)	
Janice Kimball <b>SRT</b> (27)		
Sally Turner (27)		

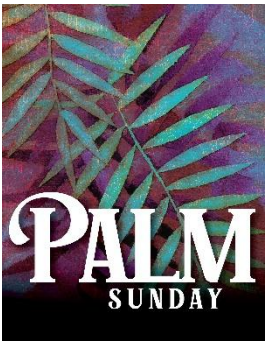
Ad Hoc By-Laws Review Committee (appointed 3.16.2025)

Sadie Beatrice  
 Sue Blaisdell  
 Cathy Johnson  
 Kate Purinton  
 Jean Young

- \*The positions of moderator and assistant moderator are 3 year terms and cannot serve on any other boards or committees
- \*The positions of treasurer, asst. treasurer, clerk and historian are 1 year terms
- \*Members of the boards of deacons and trustees must be members of the church
- \*Only committees that have volunteers are showing as populated on this slate



## Holy Week



March 29

10 am

Palm Sunday Service

April 2

7 pm

Maundy Thursday Service



April 5

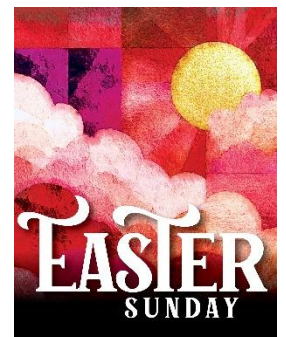
6:30 am

Easter Sunrise Service  
at Ft Griswold





April 5

10 am

Easter Service



# MARCH 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 10a Worship	2 1 pm Bible Study	3	3	5 6:30p Bell choir 7:30p Choir	6	7 12n Community Meals
8 10a Worship 11:30a Trustees	9 1 pm Bible Study 6 pm Deacons	10	11 12 p Women's Fellowship	12 6:30p Bell choir 7:30p Choir	13	14 12n Community Meals
15 10a Worship 11:15a Missions	16	17 	18	19 6:30p Bell choir 7:30p Choir	20	21 12n Community Meals
22 10a Worship 1:15a Stewardship 11:15a Music	23 1 pm Bible Study	24  Gargoyle Deadline	25	26 6:30p Bell choir 7:30p Choir	27	28 12n Community Meals
29  10a Worship	30 1 pm Bible Study	31				



**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

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[office@grotoncongregational.org](mailto:office@grotoncongregational.org)

[pastor@grotoncongregational.org](mailto:pastor@grotoncongregational.org)

Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday

9 am to 2 pm