



# Pastors Message

Dear Friends,

We have entered the time of year when transitions abound. Among our community we are personally celebrating weddings, graduations, advancements in school and career, retirements, children moving out and others moving back in, housing changes and health challenges. Just so much change. For some of us it is a time of celebration and expectation, while for others a time of uncertainty and apprehension. For most of us, it is a mix.

In the moments when I need to navigate change, I often turn to the wisdom literature in the Hebrew Testament. Meditating on passages such as Psalm 32:8 "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you;" and Proverbs 3:5 "Seek God's will in all you do, and God will show you which path to take" gives me the clarity I need. As a faith community we are facing collective transitions which call us to make wise decisions. Let me encourage each of you to spend time in prayer, seeking God's will for your life and for the future of EGCC. Our God has loving eyes on us, and we can rejoice in that certainty.

Blessings to overflow,

Rev. Sandra



# Council Corner

I'd like to start by extending a huge thank you to our Council and Trustees that served on our Zero Deficit teams. We are hoping that you can attend our special All-Church meeting on June 9<sup>th</sup> to hear more of the details of our work.

It is important that we look at this work in two phases. Our first challenge was to find a way to balance our 2024 budget, and the second phase is to determine how we can have a balanced budget each year moving forward while aligning and right sizing our church, so we are sustainable in the future. Each decision that we make and vote on as a congregation will help us to move forward in that direction, but there is more work ahead to meet and sustain our financial goals. I'm so excited that our congregation is open and willing to challenge ourselves to do this work. In general, churches are struggling, so we are not unique. Personally, in recent months I've spoken with a few friends that have described that their church is discussing closing or merging. But I'm proud to be part of a congregation that is willing to challenge themselves and have the clear and transparent conversations to determine ways that we can continue to be viable financially and ensure that we focus on the mission and programs that we can accomplish based on the size of the membership. Most importantly, we work through all these challenges while ensuring that we focus on our Vision and Mission as a church and hold true to our belief that we are led by our core values of Faith, Acceptance, Community, and Love.

To support all our efforts, the council created 6 sub teams to work on these efforts. Each team had a chairperson and 5-6 members. Again, thank you to all those that were part of these teams. The Zero-Deficit sub teams and their chairpersons are:

1. CEC Facility Usage            Joe Doering
2. Pledge and educate about how a congregational church functions    Gayle Wilcox
3. Trustee Funds Review            Mike Hecht
4. Worship and Caring Alignment            Thelma Wilmot
5. Financial Resource study    Gene Wilmot
6. Post-It Campaign: Brainstorm effort to seek ideas from the congregation to reduce expenses, and/or generate additional income and revenue. – Dave Harrold            Completed.

On April 15, the Council reviewed each Sub-team's draft of recommendations. This date and accomplishment satisfied the requested action as discussed at the Annual Meeting in January. On May 20, the council prioritized the recommendations and created a motion for our June 9 All-Church Meeting. In a congregation church, each member can vote on the key decisions for our church. Please join us to ensure your voice is heard.

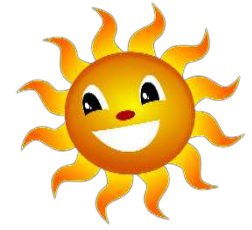
As always, please reach out with any questions or concerns.

In His Steps,

Adah Dionne

EGCC Moderator

# Worship & Caring Ministry



**June 2** Worship with Communion and Blessing the Garden.

**June 9** Worship and Baptisms. Followed by All Church Meeting.

**June 16 Music Sunday** and our annual Strawberry Social for Father's Day.

**June 23 Café Church** We will be studying Sacraments – A Tapestry of Traditions.

**June 30** Rev. Terry Schmitt will be leading us in worship.

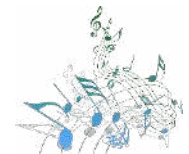
Help us decorate our bulletin board this summer!!

We will provide the supplies; you supply the creativity. The idea is for each of us to decorate a cross. The bulletin board is in the hallway leading to the sanctuary. Supplies will be set out on Sundays before and after the service. Feel free to take some crosses home if you are short on time. Worship and Caring encourages each and every one of you to design your own cross this summer.

**STRAWBERRY SOCIAL:** after the service on Music Sunday (6/16) in Fellowship Hall



Let's celebrate our wonderful choirs  
and all the dads and dad figures we love.



## CONGRATULATIONS to our EGCC Graduates

High School: Patrick Dunlevy

College: William Pitney, Stephanie Crocker

Postgraduate Degree: Tessa Hecht



Coffee Hour hosts for June: Spiritual Formation and Trustees

# An Update from the O&A Team

## *Vision, Identity and Mission Statement*

*East Granby Congregational Church, UCC, is called to nurture the joy and fullness of Creation with Encouragement, Inclusion and Compassion. Following the teachings of Jesus, we will demonstrate*

*God's love and actively invite all to join us on this journey.*

*We are led by our core values of Faith, Acceptance, Community and Love.*

*We fulfill our calling through Prayer, Worship, Engagement and Service.*

That statement reflects who we say we are. With these words in mind the O&A (Open and Affirming) Team is pleased to continue communicating and how you can participate.

**Complete the O&A survey!!! If you have not done so already, please take a minute and respond.** Exploring the Breadth of God's welcome, the breadth of God's Love, is a big task and our entire church family is needed for this mission.

Now five months into 2024, we have been blessed by five awesome speakers and five insightful talk-back sessions. Rev. Marilyn Kendrix, Elliot Altomare, Candace Low, Rev. Marilyn Sponzo and Rev. Denny Moon have shared their stories from their hearts. We pray that you learned from their presence in our midst. These speakers and events reflect just some of God's children that have been marginalized and have not always felt the breadth of God's welcome from their brothers and sisters.

As you know, it is our intention that these events have aided us as a church family as we ponder whether we will "officially" become an Open and Affirming church. Becoming O&A is not limited to sexual orientation or gender identity. It is inclusive of all of God's children...God's children, all created in God's image. Our Vision, Identity and Mission Statement says that we are called to be inclusive and passionate. It doesn't exclude anyone.

We ask that you prayerfully consider what this will mean for you, for your family, for our church family and submit your survey responses if you have not yet done so. With Micah 6:8 in mind, how will we "do justice, show kindness and walk humbly with our God?" Will we let our lights shine brightly out into the world helping to eliminate the darkness of exclusion and marginalization replacing them with love and compassion?

We have the opportunity for God's light to shine through us and brighten our world, both individually and as a church family. These are important steps for our church as together we "**Explore the Breadth of God's Welcome.**"

Your O&A Team – Wayne Korhonen (chair), Kate Boyer, Dave Houghton, Grace Kingsbury, Lennie Turner and Gayle Wilcox

# Music Director



As I reflect on the completion of my first choir season with you, my heart is filled with gratitude and joy. It has been an incredible journey, and I am deeply thankful for the warm welcome, support, and patience I have received from each one of you. The transition into this role has been made so much smoother by the kindness and enthusiasm of our church community, and for that, I am truly grateful.

First and foremost, I want to express my heartfelt thanks to the members of our music ministry. Your dedication and passion for music are truly inspiring. Whether you are a singer, a ringer, a family member, or a supporter of the ministry, you play a crucial role in making our worship services uplifting and spiritually enriching. Your willingness to embrace new ideas and your commitment to excellence have made this season a success.

I am particularly grateful for your patience as we navigated new repertoire, tried different styles, and worked through the inevitable challenges that come with any transition. Your openness to experimentation and your readiness to learn have been key in fostering a collaborative and harmonious environment. It is through this spirit of cooperation that we have been able to grow together as a musical family, enhancing our worship and glorifying God through our shared talents.

As we look forward to the future, I am excited about the many opportunities that lie ahead. Please join us for our Music Sunday service on June 16<sup>th</sup> (Father's Day). All our musicians have dedicated a tremendous amount of time and energy to help us celebrate sound, and share in the collective effervescence that reminds us of God's presence.

Thank you once again for welcoming me into this wonderful community and for being such an integral part of our music ministry. I am blessed to be on this journey with you and look forward to many more seasons of music, fellowship, and worship.

With gratitude and blessings,

Matt Sczurek

# Friday Night Book Group

June is a busy month for many of us, so the Friday Night Book Group has chosen a shorter, more lighthearted book to read. We will be meeting on (on Zoom) to discuss the novel **Amazing Grace Adams** by Fran Littlewood. A brief description of the book goes like this: "Grace Adams gave birth, blinked, and now suddenly she is forty-five, perimenopausal and stalled - the unhappiest age you can be, according to the Guardian. And today she's really losing it. Stuck in traffic, she finally has had enough. To the astonishment of everyone, Grace gets out of her car and simply walks away. She sets off across London, armed with a cake, to win back her estranged daughter on her sixteenth birthday. Because today is the day she'll remind her daughter that no matter how far we fall, we can always get back up again. Because Grace Adams used to be amazing. Her husband thought so. Her daughter thought so. Even Grace thought so. But everyone seems to have forgotten. Grace is about to remind them ... and, most important, remind herself."

Sound good? Come join us! Our meetings are open to all and we welcome newcomers, even if you want to drop in just once or twice. Our discussions are very laid back, nothing formal, and good fellowship abounds. If you'd like to join us for this month's meeting, please send us your email address so we can include you in the Zoom invitation. Questions about the book or the group can be directed to Wendy Bowers.

If you can't make it this month but would like to get a head start for July, we will be reading "The Exceptions: Nancy Hopkins, MIT, and the Fight for Women in Science" by Kate Zernike.

Hope to see you on June 14th. In the meantime, happy reading!




**The Food Pantry is currently in need of the following items:** Coffee, sugar, laundry detergent, peanut butter, jelly, pasta sauce, crackers, frosting, brownie mix, mandarin oranges, graham crackers, & pancake mix. If you have any questions please feel free to contact Sandy Landolina or Joe Doering our Friend to Friend liaison. Thank you for all your help!

# Spiritual Formation Ministry

As we move into the summer months, Spiritual Formation is completing the September – June Sunday school program and looking at possibilities for informal Sunday school sessions to be held during the July and August summer months. At a recent May 5<sup>th</sup> Parent Meeting this was discussed with good input from many. Right now, SFM is looking for one teacher and one shepherd per week to teach the group, usually outdoors under a maple tree near the church garden. It's quite a nice spot. Interested adults should sign up on **the chart in the CEC** or by using **Signup Genius** at:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E4CA8AB2AA1FFC61-egcc#/>

Or use the link on the EGCC website or in the Eblasts.

**Parents:** Please continue to look for the EGCC Sunday School Newsletter from Miss Erin each week. 

**Buttaro Room:** During morning worship services, the Buttaro Room, at the top of the back stairs, is available for families to use. There is an excellent video feed of the service in that room plus comfortable chairs and a relaxed environment in which to watch the service (just click on with the mouse). For your children, there are two boxes of toys for different ages and a basket with art supplies for them to use. Please feel free to use the Buttaro room at any time during the service. It's ok to go out the door in front of the pastor. She/he will not get upset. Stop by some Sunday morning and familiarize yourself with the room's layout.

## Summer Camp Opportunities for Youth

For parents of older children and teens, there are several opportunities for involvement in camps and programs during the summer.

**Silver Lake Camp and Retreat Center**, Sharon CT. – Nestled in the western CT hills, this camp has several weeks of programming to choose from during July for children entering grade 4 through high school. There is also a family camp for one week in late June – early July. Information is available outside CEC room 5 and <https://www.silverlakeect.org/>.



**Heads Up Hartford:** A week-long overnight community service summer camp that unites urban and suburban youth to improve our communities and develop our leaders. **This year's dates are June 23-29, 2024.** Currently there is a waiting list. More details and registration can be found at <https://headsuphartford.org/info%2C-registration%2C-forms>



Spiritual Formation: Marge Korhonen (Chair), Deb Paskiewicz, and Magdalena Mackay



## Shepherding Our Future

Many thanks to our amazing children, our dear Erin Lampron and our hard-working and dedicated Spiritual Formation Ministry Team for a fabulous Youth Sunday!!! I wrote the following article for the October 2023 Beacon, but neglected to sign it, to own it. After the awesome Youth Sunday worship on April 21<sup>st</sup> I decided to “re-publish” it, word for word, in hopes that my wonderful experience will encourage some new volunteers.

*Shepherding is a gift of time and so easy to give. I want to share my thoughts about volunteering to be a Shepard. As we move into the Season of Generosity, a time of contemplation with God as to how we will share our gifts of Time, Talent and Treasure with our church family, being a shepherd is a gift of time to our future, to our children.*

*On Sunday, Sept 24<sup>th</sup>, Bibles were presented to our 3<sup>rd</sup> graders. Marge also made an impassioned plea about being a shepherd. A shepherd is simply someone that assists our teachers and provides ample coverage for our Sunday School classes. No prep is required! You simply show up on Sunday morning and are an “extra adult” in the classroom. The bonus is that there are great rewards – you get to know our marvelous children! They are awesome! Please prayerfully consider serving in this much-needed, very special way!!!*

Gayle Wilcox, “a joy-filled shepherd”

## Lectio Divina

We don't take the summer off! We continue to meet every First Saturday morning via Zoom.

God's word speaks to each of us differently and we learn so much from each other. You don't need to commit to every Saturday morning, come only when you are able. **WE WOULD LOVE TO HAVE YOU JOIN US!!!!**

When: The first Saturday of each month - from 9 to 10:30 AM

Where: via Zoom, so that those out of state can still attend

Topic: the Scripture for the following Sunday worship (that makes it fun to compare the preacher's interpretation of the scripture to ours)

How do I join: please contact Edie Doherty, Carl Pitney and/or Gayle Wilcox and we will add you to the Zoom invitation.

Upcoming Calendar dates: Sat., June 1<sup>st</sup>, Sat., July 6<sup>th</sup> and Sat., Aug 3<sup>rd</sup>.

*“Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”*

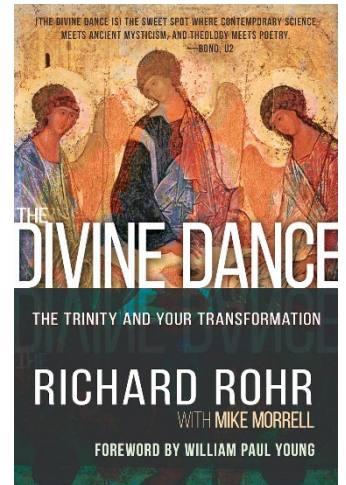
2 Thessalonians 1:2

# The Bible Book Study Club

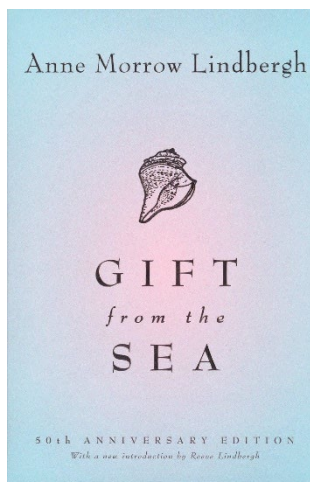
Bible Book Study – 1:00 PM Tuesday via ZOOM

ALL ARE WELCOME! No Knowledge of the bible is needed, just a desire to get-to-know others, read, discuss, and learn about God and how He works in our lives by looking at how he has worked in others. We share doubts, challenges, faith, and friendship.

We are finishing the book **The Devine Dance** by Richard Rohr and Mike Morrell, forward by William Paul Young. We read a chapter or two a week and discuss it. We are finding that this book has a lot of points to discuss.



We will be finishing at the end of June and will begin October 1 with the book, **Gift from the Sea**, by Anne Morrow.



50th ANNIVERSARY EDITION • With meditations on youth and age, love and marriage, peace, solitude, and contentment, here is an inimitable classic that guides us to find a space for contemplation and creativity in our own lives.

"Gift from the Sea is like a shell itself in its small and perfect form ... It tells of light and life and love and the security that lies at the heart." —New York Times Book Review

Drawing inspiration from the shells on the shore, Lindbergh's musings on the shape of a woman's life will bring new understanding to readers, male and family, at any stage of life. A mother of five and professional writer, she casts an unsentimental eye at the trappings of modern life that threaten to overwhelm us—the timesaving gadgets that complicate our lives, the overcommitments that take us from our families.

With great wisdom and insight, she describes the shifting shapes of relationships and marriage, presenting a vision of a life lived in enduring and evolving partnership. A groundbreaking work when it was first published, this book has retained its freshness as it has been rediscovered by generations of readers and is no less current today.

Join us in our journey at 1:00 PM on Tuesday via ZOOM.

Contact Grace Kingsbury or Edie Doherty.

# Missions and Outreach

The Missions and Outreach Board has been updated with images from the events held so far this year. Thank you to everyone for your help in making each of these successful.

## Opportunities to Share Time, Talents, and Treasures

**Gardening season** has arrived! Thank you to Jason Fortier for prepping the garden and to the many volunteers that helped plant the flowers and starter plants after service over Memorial Day weekend. A **sign-up sheet** is on the Missions and Outreach board across from the kitchen. Please consider signing up for a week to help grow vegetables that will be shared with the food pantry throughout the growing season.

We will be hosting a **toiletries collection** again this year on **Father's Day** to support the Friend-to-Friend Pantry. M&O will match the items collected. Below are the items they are most in need of:

Shampoo  
Conditioner

Deodorant  
Body Wash

Disposable Razor  
Shaving Cream

## East Granby Congregational Tee Shirts Available

East Granby Congregational Church now has EGCC shirts available. Donations accepted but not required. Reach out to any member of Missions and Outreach for more info.

## May Giving

- Heads Up Hartford is a weeklong summer camp that brings teens together from every background and neighboring community, to work together to make a difference in the greater Hartford area.
- Appalachian Service Project offers disaster recovery and rebuild support to families on the Mid-East coastline. More than 20 new houses are built every year and over 350 families are helped with home repairs.
- Silver Lake Camp hosts roughly 1,000 campers each summer. Through a balance of worship and play, they come together to celebrate their unity in Christ while respecting the individual faith journey of all God's children.

## Clothing Shed Reminder

Did you know that EGCC earns money based on the volume of clothes donated to the clothing shed? Keep spreading the word and helping support EGCC one bag of clothes at a time!

## Heads Up! Hartford (HUH) News

The time is NOW – camp week is this month, June 23<sup>rd</sup> through June 29<sup>th</sup>! Our outreach to the community and the teens alike continues to be life-changing! Our needs remain the same – we still need your help! This will be the 21<sup>st</sup> year of Heads Up! Hartford and the 20<sup>th</sup> year that EGCC has sent a team of “missionaries” to Heads Up! Hartford, along with financial assistance. We look forward to your continued support of this valuable outreach to teens!

**YOU**, too, can STILL be a part of this important mission project! There are so many ways to serve!

- **Most importantly**, please hold the HUH team, and those we serve, in **prayer**, now, before, during and after camp - Sun., June 23<sup>rd</sup> through Sat, June 29<sup>th</sup>.
- You can **donate snack foods – PLEASE No Nuts – No Peanut Butter!** **Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>** will be an “all-church” opportunity to bring your non-perishable snacks to worship. Salty snacks, fruit chews, Twizzlers and packaged cookies are high on the list for our teen campers. There will also be a box in the kitchen marked “HUH snacks”. Perishables can also be brought to our camp site, Ethel Walker School in Simsbury, during the week of camp. Veggie or fruit trays are a team favorite!
- HUH has been chosen to be the “**Community Bag Fundraiser**” recipient for the month of June at **Stop & Shop, 498 Bushy Hill Rd., Simsbury**. This means that HUH will receive a \$1.00 donation for every \$2.50 reusable community bag sold during the month of June. Stock up on bags at Stop & Shop in Simsbury!
- Given the continued difficult economic climate, we have many teens throughout the HUH program seeking financial aid. Especially our urban families struggle to cover their tuition costs. Historically, HUH has never turned anyone away. Last year was the largest percentage of tuition scholarships provided by HUH. In order to retain this approach and still cover camp expenses, we are looking to others who might wish to contribute towards tuition. The weeklong camp costs \$525.00/camper. What a bargain for a week of overnight camp and yet what a burden for so many of our families. **Perhaps you can serve by covering tuition or a partial tuition**. Please contact Gayle Wilcox, if God is calling you in this way.
- Attend the closing ceremony at Ethel Walker School on Saturday, June 29<sup>th</sup> at 5 PM to support these amazing teen volunteers.

***“What would you have me do, Lord? How would you have me serve You?”***



## The Preschool Preamble

**The end of the school year!** We can hardly believe that our school year has come to a close. It has flown by so fast! This past month, we had our marvelous art show, with art by our students that filled the CEC ("Round Room") and also filled our classroom walls. All our families came in to see their children's work, and the kids were tremendously excited to show what they'd made.



**Funny Fairy Tales and Favorite Books:** We wrapped up our year with studies of humorous takes on fairy tales (the teachers' pick was Mo Willems' *Goldilocks and the Three Dinosaurs*), and favorite stories. Several children brought in books to share, and we read a lot of class favorites - including old standards such as *Corduroy*, and new treasures like Spike Lee's *Please, Baby, Please*. Our graduation will be on June 25, and while we will miss our Bluebirds heading to kindergarten, we're looking forward to our new kids in the fall. Speaking of which...

**Registration for fall 2024:** Enrollment is now open for the 2024-2025 school year. Classes are filling quickly - please help us spread the word!

**Calling all potential Board members!** We are seeking new folks for our Board, to help guide our school. Have you ever considered serving? We meet monthly via Zoom, and have a few fun social and fundraising events during the year - it's a great way to make a difference in the lives of our preschoolers! Please see Board members Deb Paskiewicz or Becca Dean if you are interested.

Have a great month! – *Suzanne and Linda*

# EGCC Information

## Staff

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Sandra L Fischer  
Christian Education Director: TBD  
Sunday School Teacher: Erin Lampron  
Director of Music: Matthew Sczurek  
Administrative Assistant: Karen Handville

## Officers

Moderator, Council Chair: Adah Dionne  
Vice-Moderator: Joe Doering  
Treasurer: Gene Wilmot

## Ministry Chairpersons

Abundant Life:	Gayle Wilcox	Financial Resources:	Joe Doering
Human Resources:	Rebecca Dean	Missions & Outreach:	Kathy Mock
Spiritual Formation:	Marge Korhonen	Physical Resources:	Bill Hoerle
Worship & Caring:	Kim Hecht	Income Recorder:	Pam Turner
Expense Recorder:	Dave Harrold		and Dave Houghton

## Key Church Communication Info

Office Hours: Tuesday - Friday 9:00 am – 2:00 pm Phone: 860-653-2987

Email [Office@egchurch.necoxmail.com](mailto:Office@egchurch.necoxmail.com)  
[Pastor@egchurch.necoxmail.com](mailto:Pastor@egchurch.necoxmail.com)

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East Granby Congregational Church, UCC  
P.O. Box 390  
East Granby, CT 06026

Web Site [www.egchurch.org](http://www.egchurch.org)  
For Donations: Mail checks, Donate on the Website  
or use QR Code:



## Meeting Information

EGCC Ministry meetings are held as scheduled by the Ministry Chairperson.  
EGCC Council meetings are held on the 3rd Monday of each month.  
Contact the Council or Ministry Chairperson if you wish to attend.

## Beacon Information

The Beacon is published on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. Beacon Deadline for articles is the 23<sup>rd</sup> of the month for next month's publication. A Word document is the preferred format for submitted articles and will be subject to editing/formatting. Articles should be sent to Karen at:  
[Office@egchurch.necoxmail.com](mailto:Office@egchurch.necoxmail.com)

**Volunteer Opportunities** Sign-up online at [egchurch.org](http://egchurch.org) or

**Sunday Sanctuary Flowers:** <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e4ca8ab2aa1ffc61-egcc2#/>  
Or use the sign-up sheet on the bulletin Board across from the office or Contact Karen in the office.

**Sunday Worship Teams** need Lay Leaders, Ushers, Greeters. To sign up, go to:  
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040d4faca628abf49-worship#/>

**Sunday School Shepherds** are needed. To sign up, go to:  
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e4ca8ab2aa1ffc61-egcc#/>