A Beacon of Hope
East Granby Congregational Church
The Beacon

Hello October

Pastors Message

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” — Philippians 4:6 (NIV)

Anxiety is one of the most common struggles for me, perhaps it is for you as well. Whether it’s concern about health, family, finances, or the future, my mind often feels like it has a mind of its own! Yet Paul’s words in Philippians 4:6 offer both a challenge and a promise: *do not be anxious*. At first glance, that seems impossible! But Paul doesn’t leave you and me there. He points us to the path of peace: prayer, petition, and thanksgiving.

I often treat prayer like a fire extinguisher—something I reach for after the fire in my mind is blazing out of control. But Paul reminds us that prayer is to be our *first response* to worry. When anxiety begins to rise, we can immediately turn our concerns over to God, trusting that God hears and cares. Paul encourages us to bring our requests before God. Petition means being honest and specific: naming the concerns that weigh us down and the fears that keep us awake at night. And then, we move to gratitude. Gratitude shifts our perspective. Even in seasons of difficulty, we can choose to thank God for past faithfulness, present mercies, and future promises. Thanksgiving doesn’t erase our problems, but it roots us in the assurance that God is still good and still in control.

When we pray, we step into God’s presence. Prayer anchors us in God’s nearness, reminding us that God is with us and for us. But prayer also propels us outward. When God’s peace guards our hearts, we are freed to serve others with compassion, courage, and joy. In prayer, we both rest in God’s love and are equipped to carry that love into a world that desperately needs it.

When we live out Philippians 4:6, we begin to exchange worry for worship, fear for faith, and panic for peace. The verse that follows makes the promise clear: *“And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus”* (v. 7).

As such is my prayer for each of you.

Blessings to overflow,

Rev. Sandra

Council Corner

Welcome Autumn! As we move into the season of vibrant fall colors of red, yellow and orange; EGCC is exploding with opportunities for all to get involved. We just wrapped up Welcome Home Sunday and the celebration of our 1-year anniversary of affirming that we are a congregation that is Open and Affirming. There are many future events to participate in such as All-Church Clean up (also known as Blue Jean Sunday, Café Church, in November a Vendor Craft Fair to benefit the EGCC Nursery School. Keep a close eye on the Sunday Bulletins, email communications, and Beacon for more details. There are many ways to get involved!

The Council met in September to discuss several important subjects; the key topics discussed included:

- The Pastoral Search Team is meeting and working with SNEUCC to update our church profile that will be used for posting the open position. The team is working to ensure our church profile accurately reflects who we are as a congregation and our vision, mission and identity.
- The elevator upgrade started on Monday, August 25th and is very near completion. We hope to be back in the sanctuary no later than early October. Our thanks to Gene for leading this project!
- Emergency Evacuation: The EG Fire Marshall has requested that we create an emergency evacuation plan for exiting the sanctuary. It was decided in council that the Asset Management Ministry would appoint a team to be responsible for creating an EGCC Emergency Response Plan. Once the plan is completed, we will target a fire evacuation drill before year end. We also discussed preparedness in the event any lockdown type emergencies and will continue to explore security enhancements.
- An all-church clean up, known as **Blue Jean Sunday**, will be Sunday, **October 5th and 12th** following church. Look for more information to be shared in the Sunday Bulletins. All ages are welcome! There will be a list of cleaning tasks that you can work on individually, with a friend, or make it a family cleaning team.
- The Asset Management Team is working on preparation steps to sell the Parsonage. There are quite a few steps. We will keep you updated.
- Now that we have been operating under the 2025 update to our bylaws, in the coming weeks, as promised, we will reconvene the Bylaws Team to explore working in some updates that were recommended by the congregation. Once we have a revised draft, it will need to be presented at a future all-church meeting for review and approval.

Council's next meeting will be October 20th.

As always, please reach out to Jan Gibson or me with any questions, comments, or concerns. Have a blessed day.

In His steps,

Adah Todd

EGCC Moderator

Treasurer's Report

Elevator Status as of September 23, 2025

Last month I showed some pictures of the Elevator. I hope these two newer pictures make you smile also. We are really approaching the Finishing Line.

The picture on the left is looking down the hallway from the CEC. This showed the elevator about September 11 when the major physical work was complete and the electrical updates were beginning.

The picture on the right is current. The panel above the elevator door. It says LL and below it scrolling is a message "Out of Service."

The testing and state inspections are scheduled for the week of October 1. We anticipate that we will be able to RE-INTRODUCE the elevator for usage soon thereafter. Stay tuned.

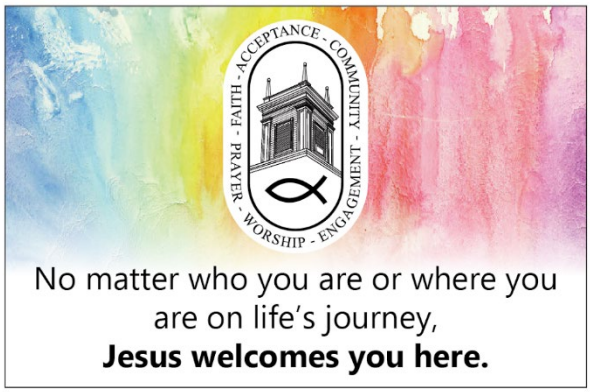
Things to be Aware of

Projects around the church are always available. You will notice an opportunity within the Beacon this month for PAINTING. Try your hand at it – it really helps keeping things neat AND it helps keep expenses minimized. How about removing the shed at the end of the parking lot? I am sure there are lots of other "opportunities." Fellowship exists in many ways.

I look forward is seeing your smiling faces at church on Sunday.

Gene Wilmot
Treasurer

Open and Affirming (ONA) News



Come celebrate! Join us for our one-year anniversary of becoming an "official" Open and Affirming church body. The celebration will take place on **Sunday, September 28th** both during worship and the fellowship hour. Yes, there will be cake! By the time you read this, our celebration may already have occurred. Look for pictures of this anniversary in the November Beacon.

Once again, many thanks for all who contributed to getting us to where we are today!

The original O&A Team: Wayne Korhonen-Chair, Grace Kingsbury, Lennie Turner, Dave Houghton, Kate Boyer and Gayle Wilcox

Our wonderful guest speakers: Rev. Marilyn Kendrix, Elliot Altomare, Candace Low, Rev. Marilyn Sponzo and Rev. Denny Moon

EGCC Church Leadership: Pastor Sandra, Karen Handville and Rob Crocker

The current O&A Team: Jan Gibson, Aaron Weaver (our talented designer), James Crocker, Kate Boyer and Gayle Wilcox

Our entire church family: Collectively all of us followed God's nudges and brought us to now.

Did you notice the addition of 2 feather flags on the south side of the church? Check them out!!!!

Here are some important October dates that involve inclusion of all of God's children. In that spirit:

- EGCC O&A One-Year Anniversary on Sunday, September 28th

- October 10 – World Mental Health Day

A day to raise awareness about mental health and reduce stigma. Communities of faith can play a vital role in offering compassion, support, and inclusion for all.

- October 11 – National Coming Out Day

Celebrates the courage of LGBTQ+ individuals sharing their identities. An opportunity for affirming communities to show love, welcome, and solidarity.

- October 13 – Indigenous Peoples' Day

Honors the history, cultures, and contributions of Indigenous peoples. A time to reflect on justice, reconciliation, and respect for diverse spiritual traditions.

We hope that your autumn season is off to a start that is as spectacular as the weather, filled with new beginnings. Bless you,

Your Open & Affirming Team:
Kate Boyer, James Crocker, Jan Gibson, Aaron Weaver and Gayle Wilcox

A little history:
EGCC's place in East Granby history predates the town being organized!

The first legal description of the original pieces of land for the church building was recorded in the land records of the Town of Granby because the Town of East Granby had not yet been incorporated.

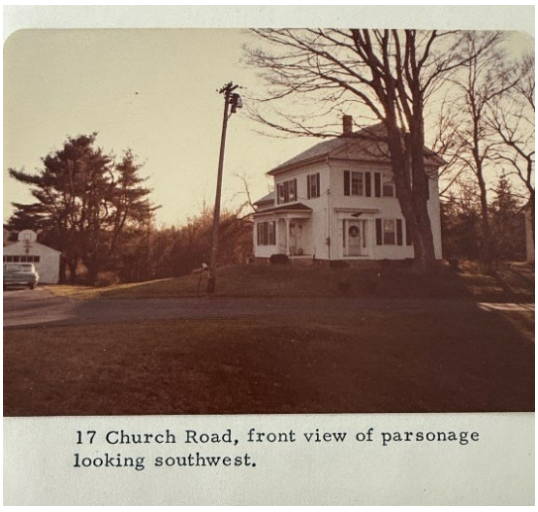
Church Street and Immediate Land Surrounding Church

Grantor: John Viets Grantee: Ecclesiastical Congregational Society of Turkey Hills in said Granby
Volume: 18, page 23-24 Date: ***August 30, 1830***
Then there is the detailed description of the location of the land, owners abutting and distances for boundaries.

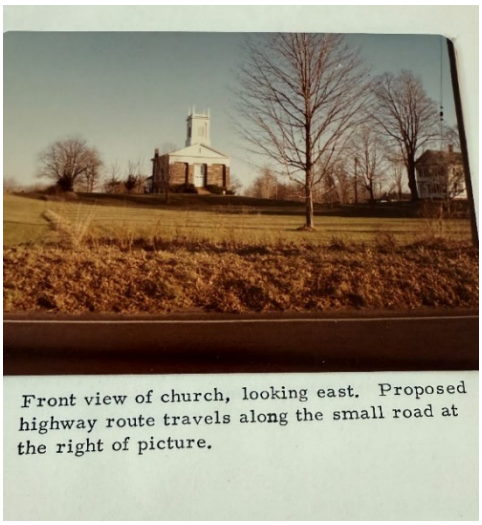
17 Church Road, Parsonage Site

Grantor: John Viets Grantee: Ecclesiastical Congregational Society of Turky Hills in said Granby
Volume 27, page 44 Date: ***October 15, 1855***
"One certain piece of land lying in said Society on each side of the southwest corner of the meeting house lot…….. The quantity of land intended to be conveyed hereby being about thirty-five rods on which a parsonage is now being erected.

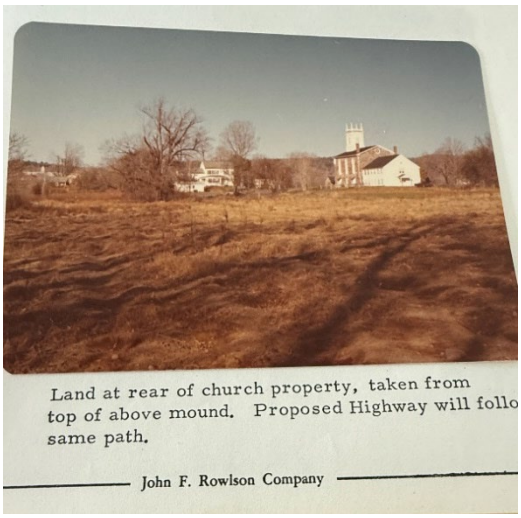
From 1973 appraisal report these are photos of the Parsonage - which was constructed in 1855 - and the church building (an addition had been done around 1955). This was the time when the State of CT was planning to reroute Route 20 to bypass School Street. The church received compensation for the taking of the building and property.



17 Church Road, front view of parsonage looking southwest.



Front view of church, looking east. Proposed highway route travels along the small road at the right of picture.



Land at rear of church property, taken from top of above mound. Proposed Highway will follo same path.

John F. Rowlson Company

Hard to recognize this as we now travel Route 20

Progress on sale of the Parsonage…

2 real estate agents have viewed the property and given evaluations

Attorney contacted to verify legal steps needed

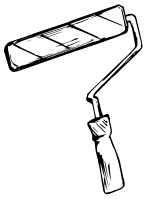
Surveyor hired. His title searcher has begun work to research land records

Water for residence: contacted MDC for more details, located water line from church to Parsonage
Getting a quote for running a separate water line from Rt 187 to Parsonage and getting a quote for drilling a new well

- Attorney recommended this be done by the church so there will be no question of responsibility for water service

These are the people working on the project: Thelma Wilmot, chair; Dave Harrold, Bill McGarry, Pam Turner

Wanted: people who love to paint walls!



We would like to paint Fellowship Hall ----and it's a BIG area with nooks and crannies and short halls and the panels on the lower half. I expect it will need 2 coats of paint.

The more hands the faster it will go.
(There are also bathrooms that need a new look too!!)

Flexible schedules, no required time commitment, good fellowship for sure.

If you are interested, please contact Thelma.

Date: TBD. I am watching for the paint to be on sale again – we have a color picked out.

Then we can have painting parties!

Worship & Caring

The October Church worship Schedule is as follows

October 5th – World Communion Sunday, Family Worship

October 12th – Season of Generosity Kick-off, Family Worship

October 19th – Café Church – *Where do we go from here?*

October 26th – Handbell's will play, there will be a Fire Drill during the service

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Café Church –

We are asking, "*Where do we go from here?"*

If you have questions about what café church is, the following is a brief description.

"I've Been Meaning to Ask" by Sanctified Art is a creative series designed to foster deeper connection and understanding within communities. Through artwork, reflection prompts, and dialogue resources, the series encourages participants to engage in meaningful conversations about identity, belonging, and faith. It offers churches and groups an invitation to share stories, ask thoughtful questions, and cultivate spaces where everyone feels heard and valued.

Coffee Hour hosts for October: Spiritual Formation & Asset Management

friend to friend
Food Pantry & Thrift Shop

The Food Pantry is currently in need of the following items:
Chef-Boyardee, Progresso soups, Campbells chunky soups, tomato sauce in jars, all kinds of boxed pasta. If you have any questions please feel free to contact Leona Bevins. Thank you for all your help!

Mission & Outreach

Hello from the Missions and Outreach Ministry! There are many opportunities to share our time and talents. Please see below for details, and we look forward to seeing you!

Thank you!

Continued thanks to Jason Fortier and his family for taking on the bulk of the garden project. The **Food Pantry** is extremely thankful for the fresh vegetables they are able to offer members of our community because of their efforts.

Opportunities to Share Time, Talents, and Treasures

October 24th we will be hosting our next blanket making event. This year we will start at 6:00PM and will supply dinner. This event is very successful but requires many hands! The sign-up sheet is on the Missions and Outreach board across from the Kitchen. Please let us know if you can make it so we order enough food. See you then!

September Giving

This month's donations went to support the following:

- EGCC purchased the remaining **Preschool mums** and donated them to the residents of **Higley and Metacomet Village**. Together, these two housing facilities provide over 70 units for senior housing.
- The **Community Renewal Team (CRT)** is dedicated to helping people within Hartford and Middlesex counties take steps toward healthy and economically stable futures. They partner with local elected officials to address community challenges such as hunger, homelessness, unemployment, and poverty.
- **Chrysalis Center** is a foundation the helps those who have found themselves in hard times and are looking for a life transformation and a fresh start. By providing services such as job training, housing, and healthcare opportunities, they help over one thousand people get back on their feet annually. This is a long-standing charity for EGCC.

Continuous Missions and Outreach News

- **Clothing Shed** - EGCC earns money based on the volume of clothes donated. With the elevator fund fully funded the money raised by the clothing shed will begin to fund the Window Renovation.

- **EGCC Tee Shirts available** - Donations accepted but not required. Reach out to any member of Missions and Outreach for more info.

- EGCC hosts a **Red Cross Blood Drive** once a month! You can schedule an appointment by phone 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or on line https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/donation-time No walk-ins allowed

Spiritual Formation Ministry

Moments with Rose

Hello Families!

As we have gotten back into our routines, and adjusted to new ones, it is important to take time to enjoy the beauty of fall. The kiddos have been coming to Sunday School eager to learn and play, and we have been enjoying our time with them. We will be practicing the fire drill with the children this month, and ensuring that they will feel safe and remain calm and confident that their leaders will be reuniting them with parents and guardians once safely outside. If you have any questions about this, please reach out to any teacher or member of the SFM. In just a few short weeks, we will begin pageant planning! We are very excited to get started, and cannot wait to have the kids more involved in the planning this year!

We are in need of shepherds, and substitute teachers for the middle school. If you are interested in volunteering, please reach out to me, Adah, or any member of the SFM.

Happy Fall!

Rose Pizzoferrato

Christian Education Coordinator

Lectio Divina

Hello to Autumn and the beautiful colors soon to appear! Now might be the time to join us on Saturday mornings. 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, come only when you are able. WE WOULD LOVE TO HAVE YOU!!!!

When: Every Saturday morning 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– we will add you to the Zoom invitation

Upcoming Calendar dates: Sat., Oct 4th,Sat., Nov 1st and Sat., Dec 6th.

"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

2 Thessalonians 1:2

Upcoming Faith, Fellowship & Fun Opportunities

Is God calling YOU?

Have you heard the good news? Our very own LeeAnne Daggett Steenhoek will be facilitating our October and January retreats. How exciting! A child of our church is coming back to worship with us, minister to and with us. Check out the personal invitation that LeeAnne submitted to this Beacon.

These are the dates that you will want to add to your calendars:

Saturday, October 18th – *Fall into Faith* – a day long retreat 8AM to 4PM at EGCC. The day will include a continental breakfast, lunch and day-long munchies. We are asking for a minimum offering of $40 per person to cover retreat costs. Scholarships are available (contact Gayle Wilcox). There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board across from the office.

Friday, January 16th – Saturday, January 17th - Over Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend we will join together for a short time Friday evening and continue all day Saturday at EGCC.

We invite you to join us. It would be wonderful to bring some new ideas and different gifts and talents to our retreats. We enjoy scripture, learning, questioning, fellowship, food, fun and simply getting closer as a church family. We'd love to spend the day with YOU!

A Future With Hope—Adult Retreat | October 18th

Hello Church!

I'm eager to see new and familiar faces this October 18th for our adult retreat. As some may remember, I grew up in this church, was confirmed in this church and Patrick and I reaffirmed our wedding vows with many of you *in this church*.

Growing up, EGCC was my safe place. I loved Sunday School, Rights of Adult Passage (RAP) and volunteered as a Sunday School Teacher in my teens. I was also invited to participate in the Adult Retreat with the Hillman's AFS exchange student Angelica when we were both 16. Mrs. Rafferty taught us how to shortsheet Mr. Biddleman's and Rev. Buttaro's beds. ☺ Giggle (!)

East Granby's Retreat Ministry has been a constant in my life. I remember Adult and Family Retreats at Ivoryton, Salvation Army, Pilgrim Pines and The Barn.

I've been in church leadership all my adult life and in the last 8 years, I've branched out and worked professionally for UCC and United Methodist Church (UMC) churches for Faith Formation and Family Ministry. I've also become a Spiritual Director as well as a Healing Touch practitioner. I have led retreats for both the UCC and the UMC churches.

I'm honored to be asked by my home church to lead a retreat on Hope and the Future. Boy, do we need hope today. As I pen these words my greater community is reeling with a recent multi-person shooting in Nashua NH at a place where I have celebrated retirements and weddings. If I didn't have God, I'd be lost.

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Here's the thing; I do have God. I mean I have God in my every moment as I sleep and as I rise. Having God in the whole of my heart means I know where my strength lies, and I trust. It doesn't mean I'm never afraid, that's a part of being human. It means that I hold hope in my heart and trust that tomorrow will be okay. Remember this song? *Because He lives, I can face tomorrow, because He lives, all fear is gone, because I know He holds the future, and I can face tomorrow just because he lives.*

Many of the things we have come to trust and rely on are falling apart (!)

Remember:

1. We have one another.
2. There is no resurrection without a crucifixion.
3. We are being called to rise up and we will follow the way of Jesus together.

Please join me on October 18th from 8 am-4 pm

You will need:

1. Something that means hope to you to share.
2. A journal or some paper and something to write with.
3. Your favorite mug or cup
4. Your Bible

Grace and Peace,
LeeAnne

Season of Generosity

A Future with Hope

The Season of Generosity (SOG) is upon us! This year our theme continues to be a Future with Hope. This dovetails beautifully with the Pastor Sandra's Spirit led invitation to embrace, *"Into God's Presence, Into the World."*

We will kick off our SOG on Sunday, October 12th. We will commit our pledges of Time, Talent and Treasure on Sunday, November 2nd. SOG packages will be available for pickup at the church from October 12th until the final week of October. Packages will include some informative documents and pledge cards for time, talents and treasure. The pledge cards may be presented in person on Commitment Sunday or delivered/mailed to the church any time prior to that. Your financial pledges are held in confidence and known only to the Income Recorders.

Please feel free to share your comments or ask your questions.
You may contact Gayle Wilcox.

As we are led by God's presence into the world, let's fully embrace our Future with Hope. We are encouraged to "meet with God" and prayerfully consider how we are being called to be the hands, feet and heart of Christ through the ministries, teams and outreach of EGCC. How best can you/we serve our church family, our community, our world, and our God?

Friday Night Book Group

The Friday Night Book Group will be meeting on Oct 10. We are reading American Jezebel: The Uncommon Life of Anne Hutchinson, The Woman Who Defied The Puritans by Eve LaPlante. Join us for good conversation and fellowship.

Gatherers

Calling all Cookie Lovers and Bakers!

Our annual fun(d) raiser, Cookies by the Pound, will take place on **Saturday, December 13th**, with a snow date of December 14th. It seems so early to be thinking about Christmas, but it's less than 3 months away! It might be a good time to stock up on some of the key ingredients for your favorite recipes. You might also want to check your calendars and set a date with friends to have a cookie baking party night.

For years Judy Goff has encouraged everyone to take part and recommends that you make at least 5-10 dozen cookies! You might make this a family endeavor—creating a new Christmas tradition or continuing one that is tried and true. The more cookies we have the better!

We hope that you will be able to bake, set-up, work the day of the sale and/or clean-up. It's a weekend of fun, fellowship and fun(d) raising. So, please mark your calendars and make some Christmas cookie plans!

Thank you, Becca Dean and Gayle Wilcox

EGCCNS Preschool ...gentle learning through play

9 Rainbow Road, East Granby, CT 06026 ♥ egccns9@gmail.com ♥ (860 653-3913)

The Preschool Preamble

Fall Friends

School has begun, and we are loving this year's students! We have spent time learning about each other and our school, and exploring apples (their origins, harvest, and delicious foods!). We are now embarking on our units on community helpers and helping out at home, and we're so excited to have visitors to our school - the Granby ambulance with EMT's, our fire marshal, a local police officer, a calm therapy dog and his handler, and a beekeeper will all be joining us to teach about their jobs!

We are still hoping for more Bluebirds (4- and 5-year-olds) at our school. Encourage your friends to check out our school! Our registration form is available here: https://egccns9.wixsite.com/egccns-preschool

Mums and Craft Fair

Thank you to everyone who purchased mums from our fall fundraiser! While nourishing your blossoms at home, you are helping *us* nourish little ones at our school.

We have a huge craft fair coming up on Saturday, November 22, from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. in the CEC (the "round room"). We could still use some vendors for our tables - if you are crafty and would like to sell your wares, please see Rose Pizzoferrato (know any crafty friends? Send them her way!).

We'll see you soon! – *Suzanne and Linda*

Open and Affirming Covenant

"No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!"

We, the East Granby Congregational Church (EGCC), value and welcome a diverse congregation. In keeping with our Vision, Identity and Mission statement, EGCC strives to follow the teachings of Jesus and demonstrate God's love. It is in this spirit that we endeavor to create a safe space for all of God's beloved children. We are an Open and Affirming congregation with love and respect for all persons regardless of age, ethnicity, race, nationality, marital status, family configuration, political affiliation, economic circumstance, mental or physical ability, sexual orientation, gender expression or gender identity. We celebrate the God-given gifts that each person brings, share in the sacraments and invite all to join us as we journey together relying upon the unconditional nature of God's love and grace as our guiding light.

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.

EGCC Information

Staff

Pastor:	Rev. Dr. Sandra Lea Fischer
Christian Education Director:	Rose Pizzoferrato
Sunday School Teachers:	Erin Lampron & Tessa Hecht
Director of Music	Matthew Sczurek
Administrative Assistant:	Karen Handville

Officers

Moderator, Council Chair:	Adah Todd
Vice-Moderator:	Jan Gibson
Treasurer:	Gene Wilmot

Ministry Chairpersons

Human Resources:	Rebecca Dean	Missions & Outreach:	Kathy Mock
Spiritual Formation:	Kate Boyer	Physical Resources:	Bill Hoerle
Worship & Caring:	Kim Hecht	Income Recorders:	Pam Turner
Expense Recorder:	Dave Harrold		and Dave Houghton
Asset Mngmt:	Mike Hecht		

Key Church Communication Info

Office Hours: Tuesday - Friday 9 am – 2 pm
Phone: 860-653-2987
Email: Office@egchurch.necoxmail.com
Pastoregcc@gmail.com

Mailing Address:

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

Web Site 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 1st of each month. Beacon Deadline for articles is the 23rd 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

Volunteer Opportunities Sign-up at egchurch.org or use the links below.

Sunday Sanctuary Flowers: https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e4ca8ab2aa1ffc61-egcc2#/
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#/