

Ministry of Fellowship

A special welcome to all who are visiting this morning. We're glad to have you sharing in our celebration of worship. Please join us for refreshments downstairs in the Fellowship Hall.

Thank you for serving today: Juliet Silveri and Tom Hanson (Deacons); Mary Hanson and Jeff Barbon (Ushers); Buildings & Grounds Committee (Fellowship Hour)

Prayers this week:

- Cheryl Townsend, recovering from foot surgery.

Our Ongoing Prayer List:

Dottie Bartlett	Chris Laursen	Karen Sands
Megan Bettison	Joe Marchesani	Rudi Schmid
Joel Eaton	Lance May	Diane Thorne
Peg Elwood	Jan Miller	Edie Tompkins
Ellen Hargraves	Helen Misselhorn	Karen and Marc Vandenbulcke
Scott Joyce	Bill Moeller	Laurie Wade
Frank Kanour	Myrtle Murphy	Connor Welles
Julie Kenyon	Betty Rettig	Betty and Liz Waggoner
Hillary Lindquist		

This list is refreshed in January and June. If there is a name you would like to put back on this list or one you would like to add, please let Gail Miller or Carol Zaiatz (978-448-2091 or unioncc@uccgroton.org) know.

Need prayer and need it now? Simply email prayer@uccgroton.org and your request will go to the confidential pray-ers; or call Carol or Gail in the Church Office (978-448-2091) and they will put your prayer request in motion for you. Prayer requests are held in confidence among those who are praying for you, and you may request that your name be withheld.

Welcome Guests and Newer Folk

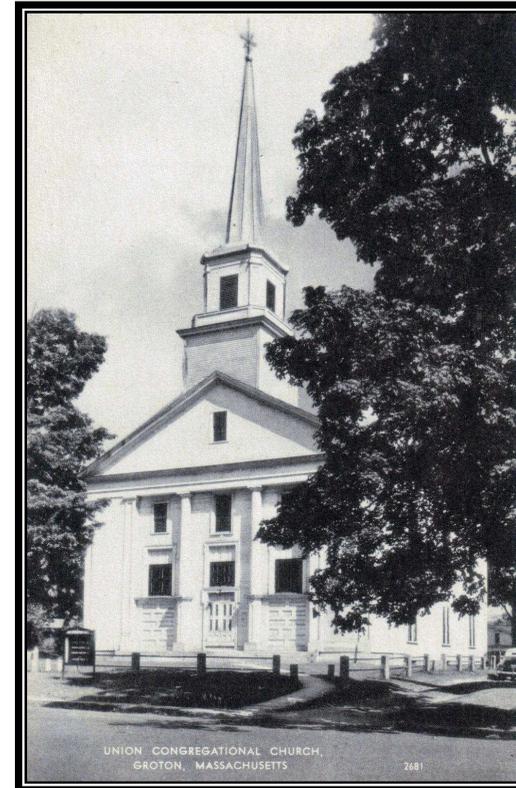
Please fill out the beige cards found in the pew racks before you. This is a good way to let us know a little bit about you, and (if desired) to begin to receive information from us (weekly email, monthly newsletter). You may place the card in the offering plate or hand it to an usher or the Pastor, Gail Miller. We are glad you are here!

Sharing Christ ~ Changing Lives

Creating a Christian foundation for families

Helping people learn more about Jesus

Living our faith beyond our walls by serving others



**The Union Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
Groton, Massachusetts**

The Reverend Gail L. Miller, Pastor
Gary Gumuchian, Pastoral Intern
Bernard Crane, Music Director

**December 30, 2018 10:00 a.m.
First Sunday after Christmas**

Welcome! We are glad you are worshiping with us today. Large print bulletins are available at the back of the Sanctuary or from an Usher. There is a comfortable rocker by the right-side exit door for those who need a more comfortable seat. If your baby or children become restless during worship, feel free to walk with them in the back of the Sanctuary or use the rocker. If you desire childcare, our nursery for infants and toddlers is in parlor downstairs. There is no Sunday School today – children will remain in worship. Feel free to approach an Usher or the Pastor with any questions.

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Preparation

Simon, the aged, held the baby Jesus, one would assume, for less than a quarter of an hour. Yet, he could say that he had seen a light for revelation. Life is so full of brief encounters. ~Roland Bainton, Christmas Letter, 1978

Prelude

***Call to Worship:**

Jeff Kubick

Leader: The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;
People: On those living in the land of the shadow of death, a light has dawned.
Leader: Good Christian friends, rejoice! Today our Lord comes;
People: In love and power, in grace and truth, offering hope and peace.
Leader: Christ is born! Alleluia!
People: This promised one, mighty, though small, is our hope, our strength, and our life.
Leader: Christ is born to save! Alleluia!
People: In hope, let us worship God. Alleluia!

***Hymn #151** *Good Christian Men, Rejoice*

***Unison Prayer of Confession**

Generous God, you give us the greatest gift of all, yourself, but often we find it hard to take notice; we are caught up with our own gifts, given and received. Forgive us for the casual way we treat your gift of love. Cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today. Through the work of our Lord Jesus, who comes among us full of grace and truth, forgive us, heal us, correct us. Then open our lips, that we may sing your praise with the angels, and remake our lives, that we may witness to your transforming love. Through Christ, our Lord, who taught us to pray together saying,

***Our Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us, this day, our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

***Assurance of Forgiveness**

The Psalmist declared that God's steadfast love was established forever — to all generations. (Psalm 89:1, 2) The evidence of that love is surely found in God's entry into the world in Jesus Christ "not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned." **Thanks be to God! Amen.**

***The Gloria** *Angels We Have Heard on High*
Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

*Please Rise

***The Passing of the Peace** (As a sign of reconciliation with God and each other, you are invited to share the peace.)

Leader: The Peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

Announcements

Christmas Songs and Stories

Carols from the Hymnal: #125-166

Scripture Lesson

Luke 2:41-52 (p. 833, pew Bible)

Carols

Story

Brigid's Cloak

Written by Bryce Milligan

(Children are invited forward for the story)

Carols

**The Apostles' Creed* (blue insert)

Ministry of Response

Offering of Gifts and Prayer Requests

Offertory

***The Doxology, #625** (A Christian song of praise from the 16th century.)

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

***Unison Prayer of Dedication**

God of wonder, we offer you these humble gifts, signs of your goodness and mercy. Receive them with our gratitude, that through us all people may know the riches of your love in the Word-made-flesh. Amen.

Offering of Prayers

Song of Preparation (inside Hymnal front cover) *In The Stillness* —E. Tompkins
*In the stillness, Savior, draw me near. In the stillness, teach my heart to hear.
Like a little child I come to Thee, and pray that in the stillness I may rest in
Thee; and know that in the stillness You will speak to me.*

Pastoral Prayer, Lifting Names into God's Light, Silent Prayer

Prayer Response

***Hymn #138**

Go Tell It on the Mountain

***Benediction**

Postlude

Grant O Lord, that what we have heard with our ears and sung with our lips, we may believe in our hearts and practice in our lives. For Jesus Christ's sake. Amen. ~Martin Luther

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Following the *Benediction*, feel free to leave immediately or remain in the Sanctuary to listen to the *Postlude*.

*Please Rise