

# Groton Assembly of God

JUNE 2025 NEWSLETTER

## PASTOR'S PEN

### Seek God's Normal

Normal. What is normal? These days in the U.S., children being born in a hospital, children going to pre-kindergarten, children going to school for their education, children learning how to swing on a swing, children learning to ride a bicycle. Do all children in the U.S. have these same experiences? No, but most do.

Now let's consider what is normal for Christians who are Pentecostal.

Normal. What is normal? Receiving Jesus as Lord and Savior, and so becoming children of God. New believers being water baptized by full immersion. New believers being baptized in the Holy Spirit.

"Hold up," you might say. "Being baptized in the Holy Spirit? Is that normal?" My answer: "Well, yes, for someone in a Pentecostal church—and it should be for anyone who has received Jesus as Lord and Savior. And, yes, I know that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is not accepted by all Christians as a separate experience from salvation, but that fact does not mean that God did not intend it to be a separate experience. He does expect it to be a separate experience for each of us."

In Acts 1, we find that Jesus refers to the coming of the Holy Spirit as a promise (Acts 1:4), to people who already had the Spirit. God has promised the baptism of the Holy Spirit to His children, "to all who are far away, as many as the Lord our God will call" (Acts 2:38-39, MEV).

As we read through Acts, we find that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is considered the

normal experience for Christians—and something to be desired (Acts 8:14-19, Acts 10:44-48, Acts 19:1-7). Paul experienced the baptism in the Holy Spirit, as well, when Ananias laid hands on him (Acts 9:17-19), and we know that Paul spoke in tongues because of his testimony in 1 Corinthians 14:18.

You might ask, "Is speaking in tongues normal when someone receives the baptism in the Holy Spirit?" I would answer, "Yes, absolutely. In each of the instances noted above, something happened that was obvious to those around them. In four of the five instances of people being baptized in the Holy Spirit, the bible records that they spoke in tongues, and the fifth states that some obvious manifestation took place so

that the onlookers knew something had happened. Granted, in Paul's case, the bible does not say that he spoke in tongues at that moment, but his later testimony that he did speak in tongues leads us to believe that he had received the gift when he was baptized in the Spirit, as in the other three instances. Thus, we can

conclude that this pattern of speaking in tongues when baptized in the Holy Spirit is normal."

Why would this baptism in the Holy Spirit be normal for Christians? Consider the reason Jesus said we should wait for (Acts 1:4) and seek (Luke 11:9-13) this baptism: "you shall receive power" (Acts 1:8, MEV). Why would we need this power? "You shall be My witnesses" (Acts 1:8, MEV). Also, because we need all of the Holy Spirit's power to help us live for Jesus in this world of temptation (1 John 2:15-17) and because of our own fallen nature, which wars against the Spirit in us (Galatians 5:1, 16-25). (turn over)

Now let's  
consider  
what is  
normal for  
Christians  
who are  
Pentecostal.

Friends, if you have not received the baptism in the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues, please seek Him and wait on Him. He has promised each of us this experience and a greater sense of His presence in our lives. He means for us to have the fullness of the Spirit.

Will you seek His desire for you?

### June Birthdays

1	Adalynn (Addy) Woodard, Ivy Woodard
2	Jeff Haley
4	Jay Northup II
5	Delaney Ayer
11	Jason Prince
12	Arianna Rose George
14	Penny Neno
22	Cheryl Rose, Bruce Stotts
24	Roger Ming
25	Conner Mix
30	Yvonne (Vonnie) Ellis

### Anniversaries

6/1/2014	Scott & Serina Craig
6/7/2003	Justin & Melissa Besler
6/9/2012	Michael & Jennie Rinchack
6/28/2008	Mike & Betsy Sears

### June Service Schedule

#### Sunday, June 1

9 a.m. - 9:45 a.m. – Life Groups  
10 a.m. – Gabbie Kress, AIM

#### Sunday, June 8 (Spring Missions Convention)

9 a.m. - 9:45 a.m. – Life Groups  
10 a.m. – Rev. Jerad Stevens, Home Missions

#### Sunday, June 15 (Father's Day)

8:30 a.m.-9:45 a.m. – breakfast  
10 a.m. – “Heart,” water baptisms

#### Sunday, June 22 (Recognize Graduates)

9 a.m. - 9:45 a.m. – Life Groups  
New Sermon Series: *Encounters with the Holy Spirit*  
10 a.m. – “For Service”

#### Sunday, June 29

9 a.m. - 9:45 a.m. – Life Groups  
10 a.m. – “For Hearing God”

## AGWM: Prayer Requests

### Rolling Coffee in Belgium

In Belgium, AGWM Missionaries Charles and Amanda Gravely have been struggling for a year to get permission for a coffee evangelism ministry on a local campus. Though City Hall approved, they later declined. However, later the Gravelys learned that if their coffee cart was mobile, they did not need permission to evangelize. With the help of another missionary, they attached the coffee cart to a bicycle, and they are back to sharing the gospel on the street. They share that in the past month they have shared with secularists, Buddhists, atheists, Muslims, and one self-professing pagan. They have handed out New Testaments as well. Pray for God's favor over this mobile campus ministry. Pray that simple cups of coffee become catalysts for gospel encounters.

### Into the mountains of Honduras

In April, AGWM Missionaries Kelly and Jenni Conrady along with their church team, visited the Tolupan people in Honduras. After a 12-hour journey into the mountains to meet this remote tribe, the team hosted a children's ministry and evangelism event. They ministered to nearly 300 children, and 37 indigenous people became Christians. They also distributed 300 bags of clothes and served more than 600 meals. After the evangelism event, the team met the chief of the tribes. He brought them to sacred land—a sign of great honor—and shared his powerful testimony of salvation. The Conradys say, “with a heart ignited by faith, he told us of his dream: to build a church in his community.” The team prayed with the chief, asking God to consecrate the soil and saturate the land. Join them in prayer today for strength for the new believers among the Tolupan people. Pray that the chief's dream comes true, and that a church is planted in this remote community.

## Groton AG EVENTS

**Summer LG** Sunday mornings at  
9:00 – 9:45 a.m.



Nursery/  
Preschool, and  
Children's Life  
Groups.

Combined Adults and Youth LG:  
**Contemporary Issues** in the Youth Hall,  
room 112.



**June 15,  
Father's Day  
Brunch.**

**RSVP by June 8**  
to Annette Twitchell  
(607)745-5077 or

Sign-up in the foyer. Brunch is 8:30-9:45 a.m.



**June 19 Women & Teen Girls  
Gathering, 3:00-4:00 p.m.**

This is an informal time to meet, greet, and  
pray for the needs on your heart in the  
Twitchell home, 79 Floral Avenue, Cortland.

## HONORING GRADS

**June 22**



During the morning  
services, we will be  
recognizing graduates—

both high school and college. Please  
attend, as we will be sending them out to  
follow God's direction for their lives.



**June 29  
Senior  
Moments,**  
Senior Fellowship  
join us for food &  
fellowship.  
11:30-1:30 pm

## VOLUNTEER for 5 NIGHTS

this summer & change lives forever.

**August 10-14**

**BE PART OF  
THE TEAM!**

**Contact Team  
Leader:**

P. Sharon,  
Children's Pastor at (607) 591-0778.



Howdy there, partner! You ready for a  
grand ol' time this summer, discovering the  
wonder of Jesus? If so, grab yer stirrups and  
lasso, and hightail it out west to *Wonder  
Junction* where kids will marvel at Jesus and  
learn that we live for His glory.

You can help reach kids in our community.  
It is a fun-packed five nights of learning  
about Jesus through skits, crafts, songs,  
snacks, drama, and so much more.

Volunteers are needed for this  
evangelistic outreach to our  
community. We need you.

Say **YES** TO **VBS**

## Missions News

### Home Missions

#### John & Caitly Ginnan, Youth Alive

Missionaries supported by Groton AG

This past weekend was one John and I have been part of for many years. We first attended Youth Convention as students, then returned as youth leaders, and later as youth pastors bringing a group. And for over 10 years now, we have served as Youth Alive missionaries, working with churches and leaders across New York to help students share Jesus in their schools and communities.

This year, New York Youth Convention included something a little different than in years past: an outreach in the heart of Syracuse. Around 80 students and leaders from four youth ministries participated, along with our family.

The outreach was covered in prayer. The forecast kept predicting rain right up until the last minute, but God cleared the skies. Activities were prepared, including an Easter egg hunt, bracelet-making, face painting, basketball, kickball, and grilled hotdogs. Our Speed the Light trailer was loaded at Destiny Christian Center and brought to Washington Square Park. Flyers and word of mouth helped spread the word about the event on Friday, April 19, from 2 to 4 p.m.



And people came out! Kids had their faces painted. Bracelets were made. Hotdogs were eaten. Basketball and kickball were played. Most importantly, students shared the gospel.

Each student was equipped with an Alive in 5 gospel-sharing guide and grouped into "Go Groups"—small teams led by an adult and focused on one outreach station. Each group kept a simple tally of their impact during the afternoon.



#### Outreach Impact

- 200 hotdogs served
- 16 gospel conversations
- 33 people prayed for
- 2 decisions for Jesus
- 2 families who attended the outreach visited Destiny Christian Center

on Easter Sunday. We're so encouraged by what happens when the local church engages the community and students step out to share their faith.

#### Please pray:

- For everyone who heard the gospel, that the Holy Spirit continues to move in their hearts.
- For the two who made a decision to follow Jesus, that they would be rooted in their faith and grow.
- For the students who served, that this experience would continue to shape their walk with God and lead to more opportunities to share His love. Thank you for standing with us and for believing in this generation!





## Missions News

### World Missions

#### Dan & Deanna Klepel, Thailand,

Missionaries supported by Groton AG

#### Wedding in Rayong.

Dan did a first! He performed renewal of vows for 13 couples! Most of these couples got together before coming to Christ. They wanted to have a Christian wedding where Christ was honored.

In February, the Global Evangelist Alliance held a three-day conference in Bangkok. Over 2,500 pastors, evangelists, and missionaries gathered to pray and strategize for everyone in Thailand to be saved.

Liberty church in Chiang Mai was Dan's home church all the time he lived in Chiang Mai. He has seen it grow from almost nothing! Your faithful giving has helped this congregation build their own building.



#### Testimony: Deanna Richardson Klepel

[Editor's note: Deanna Richardson Klepel is the daughter of Pastor Robert and Linda Richardson. The Richardsons pastored Groton AG for 18 years.]

Since high school, I have felt the call of God on my life to be involved in full-time Missions work. I went on my first missions trip to

Argentina the summer before my senior year. After high school, I attended Central Bible College in Springfield, MO, where I majored in missions. During my college years, I went on my second missions trip to the Marshall Islands. It was on this trip I felt God directing me toward the Asia Pacific region. After college, I worked as a Children's Pastor at Yonkers Christian Assembly, Yonkers, NY, for four years. In 2000, I first went to Thailand. During the 25 years I have been in Thailand, I have primarily been involved in children's ministry.

In addition to Children's Ministry, I have been involved in a program called APSAI, Asia Pacific Student Abroad Initiative. This program gives college students in America the chance to be involved in a study abroad program, where they can continue their education while experiencing a new culture, as well as being involved in ministry in a foreign country. Bible school training has also been a part of my work in Thailand—"telling the next generation" (Psalm 78). In 2005, I began working on my master's degree through Asia Pacific Theological Seminary (Baguio City, Philippines). I took most of my classes in Bangkok via extension. I graduated in 2009. In 2011, I decided to continue my education and began working towards a Master of Divinity (MDiv). I completed my M.Div. in 2016. Starting in 2014, I have also been heavily involved in Children's Ministry Institute (CMI), a two-week training program for children's workers throughout Asia Pacific region.

I married AGWM Missionary to Thailand Daniel Klepel on December 11, 2021. My passion is to see the next generation of young people in Thailand, and beyond, come to faith in Christ and live for Him each day of their lives. It is also my desire to help train and mentor the next generation of young ministers and missionaries reaching the Thai people.

## Board Briefs

April 10: The meeting was opened in prayer and a devotional was shared. A motion was made to receive the minutes from the previous month's meeting. A financial report was given. Amy, our treasurer, shared that a \$20K CD was coming due and the board moved that it be reinvested for three months at 4% interest. Pastoral care reports were given to P. Sam.

Updates were given about the fellowship hall, our safe deposit box, and our copier. P. Sam shared that the fellowship hall will not be ready by Easter (due to a scheduling conflict with the floor installers), and we would work around that for the Easter breakfast by holding the breakfast in the foyer with a variety of finger foods. The board decided to close the safe deposit box that we rent at the First National Bank of Groton. It was mentioned that if either of the individuals who are allowed to access the box passed away, we would not be able to get into it. The church purchased a safe in which we will place the items that were in the safe deposit box. Regarding the copier, P. Sharon reported that she made numerous attempts to contact someone about trading our copier. She was told that we have a contractual agreement for 90 days, but she never got any notification about this. We have the copier for another three months and will be changing the company that we work with after that.

There was a leak by the stairway in the lower lobby. P. Sam updated the board about what has been done. Other building concerns include the benevolence building—replacing the shed (next to it), removing the tree (behind it), and replacing the roof.

Pastor shared his vision to recalibrate for 2025 and that he wants to focus on the ministries of the church. He also wants to finish updating the Administrative Handbook.

Miscellaneous items discussed: The board is again addressing the question about window coverings for the nursery windows. Reboot is going very well, and will be offered again in the fall. The door coming into the downstairs lobby has not been latching, leaving the building unsecured. If you exit through the lobby door, please check to make sure the door is latched when you leave. There was concern raised about using microphones during the water baptisms.

## Finger Lakes Pregnancy Centers Banquet (FLPC)

Four individuals attended the FLPC Banquet with me (Laurie Wright). It was a wonderful evening with great testimonies and an anointed speaker.

A total of \$1,031.34 was collected during the months of January-March, with \$1,129.58 taken to the Cortland Center, and the remainder \$98.24 mailed in check form to the Auburn Pregnancy Center along with the two baby bottles that were turned in to me. I got a cute note from the director (Lynn) in Auburn. She wrote, "Thank you so much for your kindness in getting the bottles and donation to us. I think the bottles could tell us a story. From the labels I could tell that they've been "out of circulation" for about 10 years! One time one of our bottles was used to feed a new calf! So funny."

Thank you for your support of life through the outreaches of the local pregnancy centers.



**Volunteer for VBS! Contact P. Sharon today.  
More details on page two of this newsletter.**