

Groton Assembly of God

AUGUST 2026 NEWSLETTER

PASTOR'S PEN Existing vs. Living

We're nearing that time when I cannot use the rototiller in our garden. The squash has taken over, its tentacles spreading past the tomato and pepper plants. If I try to use the tiller, I'll harm the squash. But the weeds that I've tilled under several times, pulled out by the roots, attacked with both hands, continue to grow. If I had done even one of those things to the squash, tomatoes, or peppers, we would be growing only weeds.

Isn't it amazing that weeds grow without fertilizer, without careful planting? They even grow despite what I plant. Wouldn't it be nice if our corn and squash kept out the weeds? If our corn and squash would come back after being trampled, pulled out, or buried?

Now consider people. Unbelievers live without having to work at being unbelievers. They live lives, work, play, argue. But they just keep on going.

Believers, on the other hand, have to study the Word of God, fellowship, pray, and obey God to continue to live spiritually. Just existing is not possible for a Christian. If a Christian tries to just exist, he or she eventually falls away from Christ after allowing the old man to run things (Ephesians 4:22-24; Hebrews 6:4-6), and after grieving the Spirit (Ephesians 4:30).

Just as raising a garden takes a lot of work, living as a Christian who is really going to enter God's presence when He returns requires a lot of work. We work not to be accepted by Jesus but rather to remain in Jesus.

How are you doing these days? Are you existing or working to remain in Jesus? I pray that you are in the Bible, praying, obeying God, and fellowshiping with other believers.

May God bless you!



August Service Schedule

Sunday, August 2

9 a.m. - 9:45 a.m. - Life Groups
10 a.m. - "Discernment"

Sunday, August 9

9:00 a.m. - 9:45 a.m. - Life Groups
10 a.m. - "A Happy Marriage"

Sunday, August 16

9 a.m. - 9:45 a.m. - Life Groups
10 a.m. - "A Healthy Family," with water baptisms
11:30 a.m. - Outreach meeting

Sunday, August 23

9 a.m. - 9:45 a.m. - Life Groups
10 a.m. - "Healthier Workplace"

Sunday, August 30

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

August Birthdays:

4 Mark Manzari, Murphy Webb
6 Christyn Garrow
9 Adele Rinchack
10 Marcia Blanchard, Shelley Jackson, and
Zoey Boothroyd
11 Annette Twitchell, Blanche Volbrecht
12 Christopher Hacker
13 Olena Morse
18 Lily Manzari
19 Sarah Fausel, Shirley Sherman
20 Tammy Conner, Bob Costa
24 Brooke Ostrander
26 Joel "Joey" Rivera
29 Brenda Bennett
30 Sandra Phillips, Sage Diaz

August Anniversaries:

8/5/1978 Rick & Peggy Cortright
8/5/1979 Gunner & Bonnie Kress
8/5/1989 Brian & Annette Twitchell
8/9/1985 Lonnie & Julie Hinkle
8/15/2015 Robert & Christy Johnson
8/16/2008 Mark & Suzanne Manzari
8/18/1979 Ron & Nancy Woodard
8/25/2012 Mike & Jasmine Competillo
8/26/2000 Brian & Karen Scott
8/26/1979 Dave & Linda Hull
8/31/1968 Jim & Mary Flach

Life Groups (nursery-adult)
New Groups in September!
Sundays, 9 a.m. &
Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m.

LifeGroups



Kids
lifegroups

Our God is Awesome

Charlotte Huether

Our God is an awesome God. You should rewatch Pastor Sam's sermon on June 21, 2026, titled "Troubled Waters." During the service, I kept thinking about the testimony I am going to share and how on point the message was.



For those that don't know, I have been praying and studying my way through law school the last 3 years. Praise Jesus, I graduated in May. I've learned a lot about being a lawyer in 3 years but more importantly, I have learned to trust God. And I wanted to share the most recent testimony I have about doing so.

Around the beginning of my final year, I started to pray for the job that God wanted for me. His plan was my plan, because I didn't have a plan. Every day I prayed. Nothing happened in the fall semester of 2025. I kept praying. Spring Semester 2026, I was hearing of classmates who had gotten jobs. I didn't worry because God hadn't given up on me or let me down, and I knew He wasn't going to.

While praying, I did my part. I submitted applications and let God work out whether or not the jobs were for me. He had shown me over the years He was working, even in the little things. I got offers for interviews and I thanked Jesus for the opportunities. If it wasn't the job, I thanked him for the interview experience.

I found a job I thought was a good fit. I applied — two days after the application deadline. (I didn't realize it was past the deadline - I later learned what happened). I focused on finals, believing God would provide. He had gotten me into law school. He got me through law school. He was going to help me find the job, too.

That job I applied to after the deadline? It was in Vermont. I kind of applied as a joke

because of a trip I went on with my aunt and grandmother earlier in the semester. But I guess God has the greater sense of humor because I was asked to interview for THAT job. It was on zoom. I hate zoom, but it was fantastic and went so well. And a subsequent in-person interview was set up for after graduation.

I prayed like mad this would be the job. I told Jesus why I wanted the job and why I thought it would be a good fit but I also acknowledged, if it wasn't the one, I knew He had something else for me that would be better. I truly believed it.

I had the second in-person interview and was offered the position. I was so excited I thanked Jesus from the moment I left the office, and I thanked him down the hallway, in the elevator, out the building, to my car. I am still thanking Him. I was so relieved because the answer to this prayer answered so many other prayers I had.

I'm not sharing this testimony to share that I got a job. I'm sharing this testimony to encourage you to trust Jesus. In the good, in the bad, in the unknown, in the season when it works in your favor, and in the moments where it doesn't. Trust Him through it all. God is there.

Stay focused on Jesus, and you'll be able to hear Him when you're facing these moments. Read your Bible, pray, surround yourself with believers. God hears our prayers and as much as we want things to happen in our timing, our timing is not perfect. God's timing is perfect. Trust Him, and trust His timing. I look forward to seeing your testimonies of how God is working.



Andersons, Ecuador Supported by Groton AG

We thank the Lord for the church services we had between May 3 and July 5. There were lots of great times of fellowship & Tim challenging congregations about starting a "prayer siege" for various areas you want to see the Lord break through on. We gathered more funds and have a team coming in November from Long Island. Thankfully, we travelled safely across 4 states and Canada, and Jesus was always with us.

Tim left July 7th for Ecuador. He is currently in a section of the jungle (across the Pastaza River) doing a medical/dental/eyeglass clinic with two doctors and two dentists. These villages have no electricity, no running water, etc., so the digs have been primitive. They're using a generator for power. Tim is hosting a team in late July which is more of an "exploratory team" with a group of pastors to see about helping with future projects. I will fly there August 4th for three weeks to help with the teams.

Healthwise, Tim is seeing a Functional Medicine doctor who is treating his acid reflux, UTI issues, and overall health. He left here with LOTS of supplements. I think he is feeling somewhat better. He has a procedure scheduled for September to explore issues related to the UTI.

My rheumatoid level was 159 when I started my RA battles in April 2024. It is now down to

32, which I praise God for. Major issues are in my hands, and of course the pulmonary fibrosis in lungs, which has improved as well. Staying out of the 2-mile-high altitude in Ecuador is crucial for me. We have seasons of separation, and it isn't "fun," but it's what's required right now.



Tim will return to NY on September 3rd, and we will itinerate Sept/Oct and then return to Ecuador October 31 together for a few months. Daily, we ask Jesus to continue to help us press on to the High Calling He entrusted to us 4 decades ago. We need believers who are willing to add us to their prayer lists, to storm hell's gates and ward off

the attacks from the enemy and his demonic realm. Consistent prayer is what is needed. How we treasure you faithful intercessors! There are disciples being raised up. Quito Men's and Women's Teen Challenge is marching ahead. The AG Ecuador is penetrating the dark strongholds in the lower Amazon Basin in Ecuador. Jesus wins the battle every time!

In closing, please pray for the safe return of one of our sons who has been deployed since March. Another son is due to deploy in October. My mama's heart trembles a bit when our sons are serving USAF in harm's way. We appreciate and love you!

Names Withheld, North Africa Supported by Groton AG

This summer has been busy and beautiful. We are blessed to have had 8 interns here with us for the last 7 weeks. They have added so much value and life to our team.

A few months ago, we set a new goal as a team to specifically ask more people to study the Bible with us. As we work toward

planting a church and seeing disciples made, we know a key step for everyone is engaging with the Scripture at deeper levels. Over the last few months, our team has asked 25 people to study the Bible, and 5 of those follow-up studies have already happened. One of these is a guy who likes philosophy and enjoys studying St. Augustine. He told us that "the closest person to my personality is Jesus." He meant that he wants to be like Jesus. We have had many beautiful conversations sharing with him about the full picture of Christ's sacrifice. Please pray for this man's salvation.

The holidays give us a natural opportunity to do more house visits. We visited one family—this means grandparents, three of their sons and their families all in one building live together. In the women's living room, I was able to meet the matriarch and about five sisters and sisters-in-law. I was able to share the Gospel story in full and explain why I was a Christian to the 80-year-old matriarch. It was the first time the matriarch ever heard any of these stories. Please pray for more open doors into people's homes and hearts.

Benecasa, Italy **Supported by Groton AG**

Summer is upon us! In Napoli, that means very hot, humid weather, crowded beaches, and reduced traffic. Italians, for the most part, take off the entire month of August and go to the beach or some other destination to relax. For us, it means many visitors will be coming our way! So, we enjoy summer here at Lighthouse Fellowship because we get to meet many new people from the body of Christ, even though they are with us for just a short time.

At the beginning of June, Pastor Patti Bateman of Evangel Church in Wichita Falls, Texas, brought a wonderful team to help us put on our annual Women's Conference. The conference was entitled "Sisterhood" and consisted of 35 women: internationals, Navy personnel, and Italians.

In our last newsletter, we mentioned that our monthly support has dropped. This is the first since we have been on the field. We have made the decision to return to the States for July and August in 2027. We need to replace monthly faith promises that we have lost as well as raise some cash so that we can stay on the field. Please pray for the Lord to intervene.

Names Withheld, Middle East **Supported by Groton AG**

Over 40 kids have come to Kids Club from some of the poorest neighborhoods in the city. We help them with their school subjects: Math, Arabic, English, and French through hands-on learning activities in a safe and loving environment. We have also hosted free haircuts at the center, anemia clinic in the Alewite neighborhood, a Women's group at the center café, as well as preaching for adults and teaching children's church.

A Testimony of a team member:

For months, I asked the delivery man to stay for coffee every time he made a delivery. Finally he came in. We had small talk, and then he mentioned he was living with pain. He had been suffering with herniated discs for ten years. I offered to pray for him in Jesus' name, and he gladly accepted. I prayed. He exclaimed, "There's no more pain! I've had this pain for ten years, and it's gone!" With tears in his eyes he whispered, "Thank you." That night, Jesus gave him a dream. Two days later he called insisting on promptly seeing me. He said, "Three things have proven to me that Jesus is the way: Knowing you, the healing I experienced, and the dream. I'm ready, and I want to know Jesus like you. I'm scared they will kill my family and me for it. But now I know that Jesus is the truth. I'm ready to follow him. But I don't want to live a double life. My family needs to hear about this, too." Tears were streaming down his face as I said, "Welcome to the family of God."

He is now reading his Bible on his phone, learning to pray, and shares with his family what Jesus has done for him. Miraculously, they are all in support, even his eldest son, who recently defended him from slander and accusation. He deeply desires for his family to also encounter Jesus and follow Him. In his words, "I used to live in darkness. But then the Light of the World came to me and brought me into the light. Now I live in the light. But my family still lives in darkness. I want to bring them into the light as I have come into the light."



**John and Theresa Flood, U. S. Missions
to Arizona Native Americans
Supported by Groton AG**

The Native School of Ministry has just started its third course, and the students are doing well overall. I have lost a few students, whose schedules do not allow them to attend classes, but one woman from an independent church heard of the courses and has joined. I now have 8 students, representing 4 Native churches.

Our oldest grandson, Dillion (13), is considering going into ministry and has started reading the Bible in earnest. Sometimes, he calls to ask me biblical and life questions. His questions are keen. I try to avoid answering his questions directly and instead point him to passages that address his questions and help him dig for the answers himself in Scripture.

Please pray for the Apache Tribe to prosper and help those that need support. Pray for God's Spirit to move on the Tribe and help it to move forward and overcome suffering.

PRAY FOR ME VISION:

Every student—elementary, secondary and college --who attends Groton AG would have adult believer(s) serving as their prayer champion.

THANK YOU!

Pray For Me Prayer Champions, 2025-2026

Donna Bernhardt
Jim Burns
Steve Chandler
Linda Competillo
Tammy Conner
Peggy Cortright
Diane Costa
Debbie Fernandez
Rick Fernandez
Faye Hacker
Jim Hacker
Chuck Hendrickson
Penny Hendrickson
Lonnie Hinkle
Julie Hinkle
David Hull
Linda Hull
Erin Neno
Penny Neno
Sam Neno
Sharon Newman
Cliff Ostrander
Sara Ostrander
Jennie Rinchack
Mike Rinchack
Brian Scott
Karen Scott
Elly Starner
Matthew Starner
Tracy Sault
Mike Sears
Sue Sears
Sandy Tanney
Debbie Todd
Annette Twitchell
Beth Underwood Scott
B. J. Stamps
Linda Van Berkom
Joe Wright
Erin Wright