

BACKGROUND SECTION

www.sgcongregationalchurch.org

HISTORY

As the early pioneers in South Granville increased and permanent homes were established, plans were formulated to establish the first church there. On December 22, 1789, an Ecclesiastical Council was called, and a list of proposed members was submitted to the meeting for consideration. There were nine charter members of the church. A house of worship was erected in 1789 or 1790, when the church was first established.

The original house of worship was one mile west of South Granville, in Hillsdale, at the intersection of Route 149 and Lee Road. In 1806, when the first building had been outgrown, a new, larger house of worship was built in its present location. Based on additional need for space, the 1806 church was razed and reconstructed in 1847. It was placed on the New York State and National Historical Registries on March 12th, 2005.*

LEMUEL HAYNES

Lemuel Haynes (1753-1833) was the first black, abolitionist Pastor in the United States. He was born in Granville, MA, to a white mother and an African father and was an indentured servant until the age of 21. He was in the militia during the Revolutionary war and was garrisoned at Fort Ticonderoga in 1776. It was his service in the Continental Army that influenced his faith and advocacy. In 1785, he was ordained in the Congregational Church. He served as Pastor in Torrington, CT, for 3 years and in West Rutland, VT, for over 30 years. After a temporary pastorate in Manchester, VT, he moved to South Granville, where he led the congregation from 1822 to 1833. His house is located on a hill just beyond the church and is listed on the Historical Registry. He is buried in the Lee Oatman Cemetery, about a mile from the church.

The Haynes House of Hope is a comfort care home that is located across the parking lot from the church. It was built on the site of the old parsonage. Even though Reverend Haynes never resided in that parsonage, the founders of the Haynes House wished to honor him by giving the facility his name. The home was established in 2010 and is continuing to provide care for the terminally ill and their families.*

*additional information available on website

WHO WE ARE

We are an independent Congregational Church, we are not affiliated with the NACCC. "The object of a Congregational Church shall be to bind together the followers of Jesus Christ for the purpose of sharing the worship of God and in making his will dominant in the lives of men and women, individually and collectively, especially as that will is set forth in the life, teachings, death, and living presence of Jesus Christ.

A Congregational Church acknowledges Jesus Christ as its head and finds in the Holy Scriptures, interpreted by the Divine Spirit through faith, conscience, and reason, its guidance in all matters of faith and practice. The government of the Church shall be vested in its members, who exercise the right of control in all its affairs."+

+ http://www.lesandhelga.com/cong_ism.html

At present, our church has approximately 45 active members and attendees, all of whom are strong seekers and believers who value the church experience. We could be described as good-natured, loving, eager to help the church, friendly, and welcoming. Pre-service conversations are often very animated.

With a range of age groups, the church is predominantly older and somewhat more conservative and traditional. Like most other similar churches, we are loyal, but change can be difficult. Our attendees range from outgoing to shy, opinionated to laid back, and come from a range of economic groups. We have an extremely generous congregation, whether it be deeds, donations, or both.

The 9am service is 60 minutes and is liturgically based, with mostly traditional music. There is a modest, but devoted choir; a wonderful music director who is a retired music teacher and brings additional flute, vocal and piano gifts; and a very talented organist/pianist and performer (inside and outside of the church), who is also a music teacher. We are blessed, indeed.

Our current pastor adopted an 11am service featuring contemporary Christian music and a small worship team with two guitars, bass and vocals. The service is simpler, but heartfelt, and is also an hour long. The pastor gives the same sermon for both services. This second service has been suspended and will be optional at the new pastor's discretion.

We have Trustees, Deacons, a Treasurer, a Moderator, a Women's Group, Light Club (Children's Church), and other special groups, including a Bible Study.

BUILDINGS/GROUNDS

The church is a beautiful country church on a main road out of town. The church has the sanctuary on the main floor (up a few steps-or ramp-from ground level), with traditional pews (with cushions and hand-made pillows), and an elevated pulpit, with a choir loft behind the pulpit.

There is a fully restored pipe organ, digitized with chimes, to the left of the pulpit. To the right of the pulpit there is a fully restored Steinway baby grand piano. At the back of the sanctuary, there is an enclosed nursery with a glass window and speakers so parents with active children can still enjoy the service.

The church has a full basement a few steps below ground level (also reachable by chair lift), that is finished with rows of chairs and rectangular tables for special meetings and fellowship after church. There is a full-sized kitchen and a bathroom. A separate children's Sunday room is available as well. There are two TV's, one in the basement for family movies and one in the sanctuary.

The furnace was replaced in 2023 and the church is fully air conditioned. The building and grounds are very well maintained, and there is ample parking for the congregation and visitors. There are numerous photos of the church on the church website.

The church is also the rehearsal and concert home to the Granville Area Chorus and its extensive music library. The 30+ voice ensemble was founded in the 1960's and continues to give three performances a year.

OVERSIGHT

The Board of Trustees oversees the building, grounds and operations of the church. A Board of Deacons is responsible for assisting the worship leader in spiritual matters of the church. A Women's Group organizes fundraisers, events and fellowship gatherings.

It would be fair to say that a great deal of authority over the service and other spiritual matters rests with the Pastor. He/she is expected to provide key leadership in that area, with advisory support from the Deacons.

The church's website contains more details about such items as the current service and Sunday activities, as well as other church activities. There is also more history of the church, our Congregational heritage, the Kids' Church, Ladies' Group and our wonderful pipe organ. For a modest church, we are able to meet our financial needs, including annual donations to local, national and international organizations. There are also funds allocated for emergency donations, which can be made at the Pastor's discretion.

CONGREGATIONAL THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS

To engage our congregation in the search process, we encouraged them to fill out a survey that would provide more information on who we are, what is most important to us, and the attributes/skills most important for a new Pastor. Attached is a summary of the key points, but key results are posted on the church website.

SGCC PASTORAL SEARCH SURVEY
(Data based on returned surveys)

Demographic Information

Age			Marital Status		Gender			Employment Status			Military Service			Children Attending (ages)
Under 19	2		Married	17		Male	10		Employed	8	Army	10		16
19 to 35	0		Single	2		Female	16		Retired	15	USCG	4		13
36 to 50	3		Divorced	1							USAF	21		10
51 to 74	10		Widowed	3							USN	22		8
75+	12													5

Church Connection

# of Years		Status		Attendance		Service Time	
0 to 5	4	Member	20	Regularly	25	9:00 AM	24
5 to 10	2	Attendee	5	Occasionally	1	*11:00:00 AM	5
10 to 20	9						
20 to 30	4						
30 to 40	1						
40 to 50	0						
50 to 60	2						
60+	2						

*Currently suspended and at the discretion of the new pastor

Reasons for Attending

Pastor	9
Family Connection	7
Physical Church/Location	4
Congregation	5
Sermons	3
Music	3
Sunday School	1
Time	1

Elements of Worship Service

#1	Sermons
#2	Prayers
#3	Liturgy
#4	Traditional Hymns
#5	Fellowship
#6	Communion
#7	Special Music
#8	Praise/Worship Music
#9	Light Club

Importance of Pastor's Personal Traits

#1	Honest/open/transparent
#2	Passionate/genuine/sincere
#3	Good communicator
#4	Integrity
#5	Easy to relate to
#6	Uplifting
#7	Humble
#8	Empathetic/good listener/sensitive
#9	Flexible

Church Strengths

The Congregation
Worship service
The Church
Support of others

Future Goals

Member growth/Youth outreach
Offer new programs
(prayer meetings, expand bible study, Christian Fellowship etc.)
Other goals:
Continue to maintain/improve church structure
Get back to our roots
Balance traditional and contemporary ways and ideas
Evaluate the use of technology (particularly in traditional service)

Congregations thoughts regarding new Pastor traits

Bible-based, motivated to teach the gospel
Outgoing, reasonable, ready to fit in, not stand out
Understanding, knowledgeable, energetic, inviting
Committed to the continuation of the Church
Enthusiastic, inspiring, leader in outreach
No politics or gimmicks/TV