

January 21, 2024

## Third Sunday after Epiphany

10:00 am

*Monroe Congregational Church is an Open and Affirming congregation.*

*Our deacons and pastors hope you will feel at home here. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, we welcome you in Christ's name.*

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### Gathering Music

Praise God! Sing All Ye Heavens!

W.A. Mozart, 1774

### Welcome & Announcements

### Moment of Quiet & Lighting of the Candles

### Call to Worship

Leader: As we gather for worship, O Lord, help us let go...

*People: Of the things that trap us, the fears that silence us, the anger that haunts us.*

Leader: As we gather for worship, O Lord, help us let go...

*People: Of the worry, stress or anxiety that have filled us since the last time we gathered in your presence.*

Leader: As we gather for worship, O Lord, help us pick up...

*People: The gift of your grace, your love and your life that fills us.*

Leader: As we gather for worship, O Lord, help us pick up...

*People: The gift of each other, the gift of this community, the gift of this time of worship.*

Leader: As we gather for worship O Lord, help us say together;

*All: We are here. We are not alone. Jesus Christ is among us today!*

### Opening Prayer

Leanne McEvoy, Deacon of the Day

### \*Our Church's Covenant

inside front cover of hymnal

### Children's Message

*Students may transition to Sunday School with their teachers.*

### \*Hymn

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

NCH #160

### Call to Confession – Unison Prayer - Silent Prayer

*Holy God, we would rather curse our enemies than see them forgiven and redeemed. Forgive our hardness of heart, O God, and our reluctance to see your divine image in those who hate and despise us. Teach us to love our enemies, that our lives may proclaim your truth—that love is stronger than hate, and mercy is greater than vengeance. We ask this in the name of the Prince of Peace. Amen. ~silence~*

### Words of Assurance

### \*Passing of the Peace

*In order for those tuning in from home to feel included, please turn and greet the webcam as you share signs of peace with one another.*

## Pastoral Prayer – Silent Prayer -- 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.*

## Time for Giving

### Invitation

### Offertory

All Things Bright and Beautiful

John Rutter, 1988

*Our offering plate will be passed among us today.  
You may give online at [www.mcc-ucc/donate](http://www.mcc-ucc/donate).*

### \*Doxology and Presentation

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise Christ, the Word in flesh, born low,  
Praise Holy Spirit, evermore,  
One God, triune, whom we adore. Amen!*

### \*Prayer of Dedication

## Scripture

Mark 5:1-20, pg 914

*If you would like to read along, Bibles may be found underneath the pew in front of you.*

## Sermon

Rev. Jennifer Gingras

### \*Closing Hymn

Blest Be the Tie That Binds

NCH #393

## Benediction

## Choral Benediction

### Postlude

Lead Me Lord

Louise Jefferson, 1972

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*\*Please rise, in body or in spirit*

**God is still speaking, welcome** to all who are worshipping with us today, in-person and online! Worship is live streamed on church's You Tube Channel under CCLI Streaming License #2169137 on: <https://www.youtube.com/monroecongregationalchurchucc>, as well as on our Facebook page "Monroe Congregational Church, UCC"

We are an **Open & Affirming** congregation of the United Church of Christ, and we invite everyone to join in the full life and ministry of this church. We strive in word and deed to be faithful to Jesus' model of loving acceptance and welcome to all persons, inclusive of every age, race, ability, economic and social status, nationality, faith background, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital standing and family structure.

**COVID-19 Safety:** In order to keep our community members safe (*including children under 12, the immune-compromised and those not yet fully vaccinated*), please follow these guidelines:

- Please stay home if you feel sick or have a fever (catch us on YouTube/Facebook)
- Please wear a mask indoors (if you need one, just ask!)
- We have provided hand sanitizer and tissues in the pews, please use carefully as the chemicals are corrosive on wood and other surfaces



Please join us for a time of **fellowship** following the service in Wilton Hall.



If you'd like to **give online** during worship (or anytime), simply scan this QR code, which will take you to our VANCO electronic giving page. Thank you so much for your support.

### Thank you for assisting in this morning's worship!

- **Deacon:** Leanne McEvoy
- **Usher:** Arlene Redmond
- **Lay Reader:** Lisa Burke
- **Trustee:** Caleb Nealon
- **Counter:** Tom Briggs
- **Coffee Host:** Kristina Logan & Leanne McEvoy
- **Web Steward:** Scott Young



**Flowers for Worship:** Would you like to honor or remember a loved one, or celebrate a milestone? You can do so, while also helping Monroe Congregational Church continue its tradition of fresh **flowers** on the communion table. You can sign-up in Wilton Hall or online! You may choose to arrange flowers from your garden, purchase an arrangement, or send a check (\$25) to Monroe Congregational Church (memo: "flowers" & the date) or use our website to pay online, and we will order for you. If you are supplying the flowers yourself, please set them up between 9:30am and 9:45am, before worship. Thank you!  
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C48ADAC2CA5FEC61-flowers> or [MCC-UCC.org](https://www.monroecg.org)



to the following people and to anyone we may have missed, we will keep you in our prayers. (Number is birth date)

Max Williams <sup>(22)</sup>

Gabriela Gerhard <sup>(22)</sup>

Marian Schmitz <sup>(26)</sup>

Carmela Combs <sup>(23)</sup>

Jonathan Ganino <sup>(27)</sup>

Margaret (Peggy) Villani <sup>(27)</sup>



**Happy Wedding Anniversary** to the following couples and to anyone we may have missed, we will keep you in our prayers.  
(Number is anniversary date)

Mike & Barbara Pellegrino <sup>(24)</sup>

## Church Council



### Call to Annual Congregational Meeting \* January 28, 2024

The members of Monroe Congregational Church are hereby called to attend the Annual Meeting of the Congregation to be held in the Meeting House at 11:15 am on Sunday, January 28, 2024.

The agenda will include the following: Receiving of Reports; Electing Officers, Board Members and Delegates; Adopting the 2024 budget and any other business that must properly come before the Congregation.

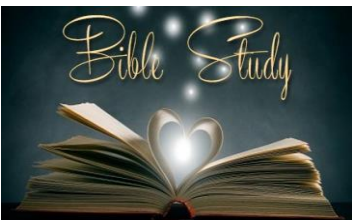
This meeting will be HYBRID; on zoom and in-person.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83723851536?pwd=a2M3WlJlMjg4cmhjVVYwZmh0bnhQZz09>

Meeting ID: 837 2385 1536      Passcode: Strawberry

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## Deacons



**Weekly Bible Study** We cordially invite you to join us each week as we gather together to learn with and through one another. All are welcome in Dineson Parlor, from **9:30-11 am**. After a time of fellowship and prayer concerns, we read and discuss upcoming scripture texts or other faith-related topics. Bring your favorite Bible (whatever version you prefer) and a small notebook.



**Snack & Chat with NOOMA:** NOOMA is a series of 24 short films (less than 14 minutes each) that "blend [events of] everyday with discussion about God". Each short story covers a specific topic on a real-life situation, usually by relating the various experiences from a Christian perspective. The series features Rob Bell, the author of Love Wins. The name NOOMA comes from a phonetic spelling of the Greek word πνευμα (pneuma), meaning "wind or spirit". Join us in Dineson Parlor to enjoy some snacks, a video and light discussion – no prep necessary and all are welcome! **Feb 11 – LUGGAGE**, Mar 17 – OPEN, Apr 21 – STORE

Remember you are loved  
and to Love you shall return

*Ash*

*Wednesday*

February 14, 2024

Open Labyrinth  
Walk 9 am - 8 pm

Ashes-to-Go 12-1:30

Agape Supper 6:30 pm

Worship 7:30 pm

*The Monroe Congregational Church  
34 Church Street \* Monroe CT*

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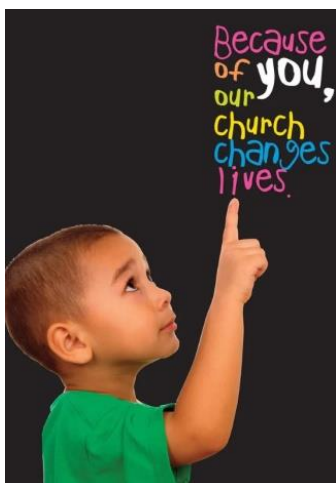
### Trustees

**2024 MCC Stewardship Campaign** In the fall we began our annual pledge drive, an intentional period of stewardship commitment entitled "Because of YOU, our church changes lives".

**To date, we have received 76 pledges totaling \$183,290 against our goal of \$200,000 - Thank you!**

We hope that if you haven't responded yet you will complete and return your 2024 pledge card as soon as possible, either by mail, in the giving plate on Sunday, or by e-mailing your intentions to John O'Rourke at [jorourke224@gmail.com](mailto:jorourke224@gmail.com). Thank you for prayerfully considering how to financially support the Monroe Congregational Church in 2024!

Your Stewardship Committee, John O'Rourke (Receiver), Diane Prall, Rev. Jenn Gingras





## Outreach



**The Mustard Seed Thrift Shoppe is looking for volunteers** to help sort, tag and hang donated merchandise on Tuesdays at 1:15 PM. Sales associates are needed on Fridays for shifts from 10-12:30 and 12:30-3 and on Saturdays from 10-12 and 12-2. It's easy to do with a list of procedures that you can read over or visit a volunteer during business hours and they'd be glad to help you with any questions regarding opening or closing. Please contact Susie Cuseo with any questions at [thecuseos@yahoo.com](mailto:thecuseos@yahoo.com) or 203-268-0280.

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## Fellowship

### **Sign up for the MCC Women's Retreat at Silver Lake Conference Center "Peace Like A River"**

Leaving Friday Evening, **April 5** and Returning Sunday afternoon, **April 7**

\$150 per person

**Sign up** in Wilton Hall or call the office 203-268-9327

A team is being organized to plan the retreat. We hope you'll join in and add your thoughts and ideas! See Pastor Jenn or e-mail her at [jenn.gingras@gmail.com](mailto:jenn.gingras@gmail.com)





**Morning Circle** meets on the second Wednesday of the month with the exception of January and February. We work in collaboration with the Food Pantry providing bean soup jars for Thanksgiving, birthday bags for children who visit with their families, collect women's hygiene products and make trick-or-treat bags in October. We put together Church World Service hygiene kits for international families in crisis and collect spare change for Heifer International. Please contact Shari Carrano with any questions or comments at 203-400-3563.

**Our calendar of meetings**

**Wednesday, March 13** - Birthday bags for Food Pantry  
Wednesday, April 10 - Church World Service hygiene kits  
Wednesday, May 8 - Collection of Women's hygiene products  
Wednesday, June 12 - Annual June picnic - Location TBD



**Please join us for Adult PF** which will now meet on the **1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month in Dineson Parlor from 5:30 to 8pm!**

Bring your own beverage and a snack to share. We are excited to bring Adult PF back to MCC in a new format! Each month will be led by different members of the group. It could be a discussion of an article or movie, a game night or a service project for MCC or the greater community, or an outing etc. Your presence and ideas are wanted and welcome. All adults young and old are encouraged to attend. Please reach out to Janie Allen via phone/text/email at 203-522-3686 or [janeEallen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:janeEallen@sbcglobal.net) with any thoughts or questions. **Our next meeting will be Saturday, 2/3. Come check it out!**



**Young at Heart will meet Thursday, January 25<sup>th</sup> at noon.**  
Barnwood Grill, 5 Queen St. Newtown  
Please RSVP to Gayle Hammond (203)512-4263 or [gayleh1002@gmail.com](mailto:gayleh1002@gmail.com)



**We encourage anyone to join us on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month.** We will continue to meet via zoom so that all members can join from wherever they may be. Questions can be sent to Paula via email [pjsh55@gmail.com](mailto:pjsh55@gmail.com) or home phone or 203-452-0850

The book club selections for upcoming months:

**February 21<sup>st</sup>** - 7 pm - This Tender Land by William Kent Kreuger  
**March 20<sup>th</sup>** - 7 pm- Demon Copperhead by Barbara Kingsolver

# Sr PF Coat Drive

Let's Help Our  
Neighbors at the  
Bridgeport  
Rescue Mission!

Please bring your gently  
used coats to Wilton Hall  
by Monday, January 31st



*A heartfelt  
Thank You ❤️*

The hip replacement went well and I am doing well. I no longer have pain and am becoming more mobile with exercise and walking. I want to thank you all for the love, support, and care I received in the form of prayers, cards, calls and visits. I truly felt all the thoughts which meant so much to me.

With gratitude and Christian love,  
Marian Schmitz

Why not make your New Year resolution  
to make more friends at MCC's

## ADULT PF?



*Re-scheduled*

**5 PM**  
**FEBRUARY 3, 2024**  
**Dineson Parlor**  
**BYOB and a snack to share!**

Theme: Arlene  
will give a  
presentation  
of her trip to  
Norway!



## **In Our Prayers**

**Alison Abrams** (Jessica Pfalzgraf's sister); **Allie** (Colegrove's friend); **Jennifer Bittar** (Loraine Zeiner's friend); **Jackie Bleakney**; **Byron Brown & Bruce Bryant** (friends of Will Duchon); **Lori Cimen** (Peggy & Ron Villani's Daughter); **Kevin Daly** (Gary Thompson's friend); **Dawn** (Donna Konkol's Friend); **Dot Dralus**; **Matt Duchon**; **Elaine** (Wendy Colegrove's Aunt); **Bruno Forte** (Nancy Hedine's friend); **David Fischman** (Sue Granello's Friend); **Dave Fuller** (Gail Olson's brother); **Lehre Fuller** (Gail Olson's sister-in-law); **Clark Gingras**; **Peter Hallgren**; **Mary & Rachel Heerema** (Julia Gutierrez's mom & sister); **Heidi** (Diane Prall's sister); **Brad Heines** (Susie Cuseo's friend); **Bob Heffernan** (Ann Zeiner's son-in-law); **Heather Henning**; **Brian Hopkins** (Donna Konkol's cousin); **Bill Irwin** (Cheri's husband); **Vera James** (Jenn Wissink's mother); **Joey** (Calvert Locks); **Jonathan** (Matt Colegrove's brother); **Kelti** (friend of Liska Gutierrez); **Walter Lane** (Marge Fox's brother-in-law); **Monica Lynch** (Bethany Dupuis' friend); **Nicole Malia**; **Ron McGlinchey** (Pastor Jenn's dad); **Betty McKeown** (Donna Konkol's mother); **Michael** (Gary Thompson's cousin's great grandson); **Mike** (Janie Allen's son); **Jean Moffat**; **Olivia Morrison** (Donna Nickdow's niece); **Bert Muizulis**; **Joe Mumper** (Julie McClenathan's friend); **Pat Nugent**; **Ocampo family** (friends of Liska Gutierrez); **Nancy Olofson**; **Missy Olson**; **O'Rourke family**; **Dean Perosino** (Gayle Hammond's brother); **Geno Piacentini** (Karen MacDonald's husband); **P.T. Philip** (Liz Sampson's father); **Regina Roberts** (Kathy Maiolo's niece); **Alfredo Rodriguez** (Osirus Gutierrez's cousin); **Noah Santiago** (Shari Carrano's great-grandson); **Carlos Serrano** (Kathy Maiolo's cousin); **Yessika Siccardi** (Sampson family friend); **Bernie Sippin**; **Gary Sippin** (Lori Sippin's son); **John Skarupa** (Barb Pellegrino's brother); **Christine Stadler**; **Tom Steen** (Jessica Pfalzgraf's dad); **Rev. Dr. Sheldon Smith**; **Christian & Dain Steiner** (Julie McClenathan's nephews); **Claire Stenzel** (June & Myron Wininger's granddaughter); **Wayne Thompson** (Gary Thompson's brother); **Richard Turco** (Jack Fracassini's cousin); **Ruth Wakeley**; **Charles L. Wynn, Sr.**, (and his mother) **Alleane** (friend of Will Duchon); **Allen Zeiner** (Ann Zeiner's son); **Ann Zeiner**

**The concerns of our world:** The people of **Ukraine**; **LGBTQ+ children and their families** facing discrimination; those who serve or live in **war** or **conflict zones** around the world; **first responders** and those who serve in **law enforcement**; those who suffer **discrimination**; those who struggle with **mental illness, addiction, divorce** or **separation**; **Caregivers**; the **homeless, homebound** and **refugees**; Our friends living on the **Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation** and in **Oaxaca, Mexico**

**Those serving in the military, veterans & their families:** Stateside: **Justin Riffard**, Pensacola Naval Air Station, **Zachary Gingras**, 395th Combat Sustainability Support, **Joel Smith**, 250th Engineering Company Germany: **Rachel Hoffman** (Vaughan Askue's daughter), Chicago: **Chris Meneses** (Loraine Zeiner's friend), Kuwait: **Jon Sanchez** (Don Whiteley's grandson-in-law)

## **MCC Community Calendar**

### **Week of Sun. Jan 21<sup>st</sup>**

10:00 am Worship

5:00 pm Junior, Senior PF

### **Tue. Jan 23<sup>rd</sup>**

1:00 pm Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

### **Thurs. Jan 25<sup>th</sup>**

9:30 am Bible Study

12:00 pm Young at Heart

6:00 pm Confirmation Class

6:00 pm Bell Choir

7:00 pm Chancel Choir

### **Week of Sun. Jan 28<sup>th</sup>**

*Heritage Sunday*

10:00 am Worship

11:15 am Annual Meeting

5:00 pm Junior, Senior PF

### **Tue. Jan 30<sup>th</sup>**

1:00 pm Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

### **Thurs. Feb 1<sup>st</sup>**

9:30 am Bible Study

6:00 pm Confirmation Class

6:00 pm Bell Choir

7:00 pm Chancel Choir

### **Sat. Feb 3<sup>rd</sup>**

5:30 pm Adult PF

### **Week of Sun. Feb 4<sup>th</sup>**

10:00 am Worship w/communion

11:15 Outreach (Kitchen)

11:30 am Trustees

5:00 pm Junior, Senior PF

### **Tue. Feb 6<sup>th</sup>**

1:00 pm Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

### **Thurs. Feb 8<sup>th</sup>**

9:30 am Bible Study

6:00 pm Confirmation Class

6:00 pm Bell Choir

7:00 pm Chancel Choir

### **Week of Sun. Feb 11<sup>th</sup>**

10:00 am Worship

11:15 am NOOMA

11:30 am Trustees

5:00 pm Junior, Senior PF

### **Mon. Feb 12<sup>th</sup>**

7:30 pm Deacons

### **Tue. Feb 13<sup>th</sup>**

1:00 pm Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

### **Wed. Feb 14<sup>th</sup>**

*Ash Wednesday*

9 am – 8 pm Labyrinth (Wilton Hall)

12:00 – 1:30 pm Ashes To Go

6:30 pm Agape Soup Supper

7:30 pm Ash Wednesday Worship

### **Thurs. Feb 15<sup>th</sup>**

9:30 am Bible Study

6:00 pm Confirmation Class

6:00 pm Bell Choir

7:00 pm Chancel Choir