34 Church Street Monroe, CT 06468 Tel.: (203) 268-9327

Fax: (203) 268-3153 www.mcc-ucc.org

Office Hours:

Mon. 9am – 5:30pm Wed. (remotely) 8am - 6pm Fri. 9am – 3:30pm Senior Pastor: Rev. Jennifer Gingras Music Director: Will Duchon Administrator/Bookkeeper: Diane Prall CE Coordinator: Jeanette Cardentey-Morales Church e-mail: secretary@mcc-ucc.org

Find us on YouTube https://www.youtube.com/monroecongregationalchurchucc





Saturday's Opening Prayer Circle

It's All About Community. July

July 1, 2023

The story I've heard is that 51 years ago, a group of ladies from the Monroe Congregational Church decided to bake some strawberry pies to sell. Their hope was to raise enough money to put a dent in a mortgage they had taken out for some needed capital improvements. Jim Davison picked them up at the ladies' homes and delivered them to the church so they could be sold on the front lawn on Father's Day. His daughter Karen says the pies sloshed around the back of their station wagon and made a mess!

Over the next few years, a plan to

make shortcake developed from Sue Zaleha with a secret recipe that only became known to me this year. A craft fair soon became part of the fun, first with church ladies making crafts then later marketing to crafters to rent booths. Then, a plan to make many varieties of strawberry jam developed and the congregation got busy throughout the cold winter months making multiple batches. Other things were tried over the

years (remember the strawberry sno cones and the dunk tank?),

not everything stuck but some things did.



Joyce, Judy & Heather baking pies



Silver Steel Band, featuring Bonnie!

In 2020, our community's heart was broken when a global pandemic shut down everything except for jam sales. The following year was challenging because we had to re-imagine new ways of keeping people safe, among changing protocols. We've had to be intentional about being safe and small. But this year, in another giant step towards normalcy, we were able to re-open the beloved PF Food booth, much to the communities and crafters delight. These young people are to be commended for re-invigorating a part of the festival that had been dormant



The Monroe

since 2019 (meaning, most of them had never done it before!) Hearing PF sing for tips again was out of this world.

And we're so grateful that at the end of the event we were able to make enough to not only cover our expenses and budgeted income, but probably a bit more. In fact, this year's numbers exceeded our 2013 record, grossing \$71,412 before additional Sunday celebration dinner sales or future jam sales. We even supported our town by letting them set up a bicentennial booth and selling 175 "Monroe" Sundaes (a dollar from each sale goes to the town's celebration efforts).

This year, it took about 800 pounds of hand-picked strawberries from Jones Farms (plus much more from Big Y),

over 2,000 biscuits and a whole mess of whipped cream to take care of all the people who came to the Monroe Congregational Church's 51st Strawberry Festival and Craft Fair. Did you know that it takes about 225 people to volunteer each day of the festival? What an incredible scene to find sorters, bakers, hullers, slicers, dippers, smoothie makers and shortcake assemblers working non-stop to keep everything going. Our Jr PF runners and friends *-literally-* ran miles to stock their order tickets from the Country Store. Our 102 crafter guests did well too, despite the two tiny rain events on Saturday afternoon. And the Scouts of Troop 63 were amazing at helping them unload and keeping their tents safe overnight.



Happy hullers!



Crafters galore!

So much of what this past weekend was about was family and community ties. There just are not many places where large cross sections of people get together. Looking around at all the fun, people didn't seem to be in much of a hurry. Multi-generational families sat under the tents and talked, eating shortcake and hot dogs, enjoying music from The Trunk Band, Gunsmoke and Silver Steel. Kids jumped and played in the bounce house; their faces freshly painted by our crew of artists. People toured the inside of the

meetinghouse, delighting in the history of the campus and its people. They supported our local artisans.

For the co-chairs (Clark Gingras, Frank Wittenauer, Josh Post and Susie Cuseo), the festival is the culmination of a year's worth of planning. Their work is to share the excitement, good ideas and passion for serving the entire community with the legions of volunteers of all ages. Although their primary work serving the volunteers and managing the crowds can be very challenging, they try to keep spirits high at this hometown event. And it worked, because I heard again and again from both guests and crafters that everyone from MCC was so nice and welcoming. It was nice to see so many of our guests attend Sunday worship, and pop into the Mustard Seed Shop to support that mission.



Thank you BERRY much!



Thank you, from the bottom of all of our hearts, for everything YOU did to make the weekend such an incredible success. If you missed being a part of the fun this year, we sincerely hope that you will put next year's event on June 15 & 16, 2024 in your calendar. Now, let's all rest up and dream about all the fun we'll have next year at the 52nd!

In peace, Pastor Jenn



Did you miss the opportunity to buy **Strawberry Festival jam** recently? You will get that chance on most Sundays during the summer starting on June 25th at coffee hour. Flavors that are available are: strawberry, blueberry, pineapple and cherry at \$5/jar. See either Susie or Frank to get your delicious, handmade jam that you can put on toast, add it to your smoothies, make a glaze for pork or chicken, add it with cream cheese and crackers to make a yummy appetizer, top it on ice cream, pancakes or waffles and even spread it between layers of cake. There're so many things you can use the jam for. Get some and enjoy!! You can even get vintage 2022 strawberry jam for FREE, while supplies last!

Trustees



The **Monroe Summer Day Camp** will be renting our MCC campus again this year. The camp will provide added income for the church during the months of June, July and August. If you need to enter the building between 7:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday – Friday please stop into the office and ask Diane to notify the camp director. If the office is closed, please use the walkie-talkie provided to notify the camp director, Karen, of your presence. Thank you!

Deacons

Recognition of Graduates & Outdoor Midsummer Worship, July 30th

If you recently graduated from high school, college, a university, graduate school, or another program, we want to celebrate your achievements at our July 30th outdoor worship service. Please let the church office (secretary@mcc-ucc.org, 203-268-9327) know if you or anyone in your family graduated this year, along with the details of your degree, school, etc. Thank you!



For the Outdoor service, please bring a lawn chair or blanket. Leashed and trained dogs are welcome to join us too!



Red rover, red rover, send your preacher on over! St. Peter's Grace Episcopal and the Monroe Congregational Church are doing a **Pulpit Swap** this summer! **On July 9th, Pastor Jenn will preach and lead worship at St. Peter's Grace Episcopal at 9 am (they worship a little earlier than us in the summertime). We are excited for our congregations and community to spend time together in worship and fellowship. May we all learn something new, as we stretch and grow this summer!**



Summer Sermon Series: Bumper Sticker Theology

Have you ever encountered a bumper sticker that vaguely Christiany and wonder what it means? "Bumper Sticker Theology" is a summer preaching series meant to turn us from pithy uses of quick phraseology and dig deeper into how we are shaped and formed by God's word and work in and through us. We will include a talk-back time for folks to share what their thoughts are on the sticker of the day (good, bad or in-between).

Note: Dates that are not listed are Sundays that Pastor Jenn will be away, quest preachers Rev. Peggy Allen or

Rev. Dr. Sheldon Smith will be presiding.

Date	Theme	Scripture
July 30	"God helps those that help themselves"	Mark 10:35-45 Outdoor
_	·	Midsummer Worship
Aug 6	"God needed another angel"	Revelation 21:1-6
Aug 20	"When God closes a door, God often opens a window."	Acts 16:4-15
Sep 3	"It's all part of God's plan."	Jeremiah 29:1-7

Faith Formation

Welcome the Children: The presence of children is a gift to the church, they give us a future filled with hope, and a present filled with joy. We have some Worship Tool Bags filled with art items and quiet toys to help them find worship more engaging and meaningful. Please see an usher or Greeter to obtain one.



Love working with youth, want to spread God's love to the children of our congregation in this upcoming 23/24 school year? Please consider teaching Sunday School (Pre k - 6th) or being an adult advisor for our Jr PF youth group (ages 11-14). You can speak to Jeanette with any questions or to express interest. Thank you! See you in the fall!

Outreach



The **Mustard Seed Thrift Shoppe** needs YOU! If you have a couple of hours to spare either on Tuesdays, Fridays or Saturdays, we are looking for your help. **Summer sorting, tagging and hanging happens on Tuesdays at 9:30AM.** Volunteers will help you with what needs to be done. Sales associates are needed for two-hour shifts starting from 10AM to 3PM on Fridays and Saturdays. A procedure list can be emailed or you can visit the

Shoppe when someone is manning the counter. It's fun and quite rewarding. Please contact Susie Cuseo with any questions or comments at thecuseos@yahoo.com or 203-268-0280.

thecuseos@yahoo.com with any questions or comments.



Your spare change helps end hunger and poverty in a sustainable way by supporting and investing in farmers and their communities. Your gift provides livestock, plantings and seeds to individuals who in turn share with others so that they too can live better lives. Please contact Susie Cuseo at 203-268-0280 or thecuseos@yahoo.com with any questions



MCC Summertime Coffee Hour Hosts: Are you interested in providing refreshments for our church members and friends following Sunday worship! All you need to do is arrive at the kitchen by 9:45 to get the coffee going (instructions found on kitchen wall). Providing baked goods or other snacks are always welcome (but not mandatory). Please sign up in Wilton Hall. (Although one can do it, it's fun to serve with a friend). Thank you!

Fellowship





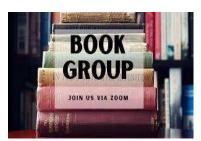


Save the date: Young At Heart Thurs., July 27 at noon. Location and organizer TBD



Please join us for Adult PF the fourth Saturdays 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 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 with any thoughts or questions. Our **next meeting will be Saturday 7/22**. Come check it out!



MCC Book Club is open to all church members. We will continue to meet via zoom on the **3rd Wednesday of each month at 7 pm.** For more information, please call Paula Haggstrom 203-452-0850 email: pjsh55@gmail.com

July 19 Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus Host: Sue Smelzer Aug. 16 The Personal Librarian by Marie Benedict & Victoria Murray Host: TBD



Morning Circle will not meet during the months of July and August. Our next meeting is on Wednesday, September 13th at 11AM in Dineson Parlor. Many thanks to our members for a successful year with service projects. We meet on every second Wednesday with the exception of summer and winter months. We conduct many service projects for the Food Pantry and Church World Service. Please contact Shari Carrano at 203-400-3563 with any questions regarding membership.



Dear Morning Circle Ladies,

Many, many thanks for the beautiful necklaces that you gave us.

In Christian love,

Ann Zeiner and Jackie Bleakney



"Historian's Notebook:



Believing that the original Beardsley Hall sign was removed from over the entry way of Beardsley Hall when the Mustard Seed Shoppe sign was installed in 1974, and knowing that we do not throw anything away, I have been searching its whereabouts for the last few months to no avail. It's not in the Schoolhouse addition's cellar nor in the church cellar that I could see. Nor is it in any Rexford House closets that I could access. **Please, I need your help.** If anyone knows what happened to the old sign, let me know. See me in church or at coffee hour, or call me at 203-414-5838, or E-mail me at mailglt@yahoo.com. I will greatly appreciate it.

Gary Thompson, Church Historian"

2023 CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

PAINTING THE MEETING HOUSE



Our historic campus requires regular maintenance, inside and out. The exterior of the Meeting House (including the Steeple) and front of Beardsley Hall (Mustard Seed) are in dire need of a paint job. The estimated cost is \$25,000, and we are hoping to have the work completed in the Fall. *Thanks for your support!*

To contribute, send a check with the memo: Capital Campaign or donate on our website (choosing Capital Projects)

https://www.mcc-ucc.org/donate.html

COVENANT TO CARE

Essentials Drive

Help children entering emergency foster care with essential hygiene items and make their landing a little softer.

Most needed (new, full-sized): deodorant, body wash, shampoo/conditioner.

Also needed: toothbrush, toothpaste, hairbrush, baby wash/shampoo, hair & skin care products, shaving cream, razors, feminine products, diapers/pull-ups, wipes.

Drop box in Wilton Hall

In Our Prayers

Gary Sippin (Lori Sippin's son); Family and friends of Betty Heiney; Allie (Colegrove's friend); Jennifer Bittar (Loraine Zeiner's friend); Jackie Bleakney; Byron Brown & Bruce Bryant (friends of Will Duchon); Lori Cimeno (Peggy & Ron Villani's Daughter); Dawn (Donna Konkol's Friend); Dot Dralus; Matt Duchon; Elaine (Wendy Colegrove's Aunt); Judy Elmendorf; Bruno Forte (Nancy Hedine's friend); David Fischman (Sue Granello's Friend); Dave Fuller (Gail Olson's brother); Mary & Rachel Heerema (Julia Gutierrez's mom & sister); Bob Heffernan (Ann Zeiner's son-in-law); Brian Hopkins (Donna Konkol's cousin); Vera James (Jenn Wissink's mother); Jonathan (Matt Colegrove's brother); Kelti (friend of Liska Gutierrez); Walter Lane (Marge Fox's brotherin-law); Monica Lynch (Bethany Dupuis' friend); Nicole Malia; Betty McKeown (Donna Konkol's mother); Mike (Janie Allen's son); Jean Moffat; Olivia Morrison (Donna Nickdow's niece); Joe Mumper (Julie McClenathan's friend); Bert Muizilis; Pat Nugent; Ocampo family (friends of Liska Gutierrez); the family & friends of Jennifer Olson (Gail Olson's daughter-in-law); Missy Olson; Osborne (Colegrove's Family friend); 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; 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); Olga Terwilliger (Nancy Hedine's sister-in-law); Ian Thompson (Gary's cousin); 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: Germany: Rachel Hoffman (Vaughan Askue's daughter), Virginia: Chris Meneses (Loraine Zeiner's friend), Georgia: Zachary Peters (Jacob Parker-Burgard's cousin), Kuwait: Jon Sanchez (Don Whiteley's grandson-in-law) Stateside: Joel Smith (250th Engineering Company)

New Members at MCC

On June 11, MCC welcomed the newest members of our church community. These short introductions will help you to learn a little more about our new members. We hope you'll take the time to get to know them and their families personally.



Lisa Bauerle

10 Ann Street, Trumbull, CT 06611

Cell: 203-981-5658

Email: lisabauerle@gmail.com

Birthdate: Aug. 5 Anniversary: July 19

Lisa Bauerle is a senior interior designer with MKDA in Stamford, and is married to husband Yves. Her interests include hiking, home improvement, and gardening. Lisa attends church with her children, Georgia, a freshman in PF, and Quinn, who attends Jr PF. She has participated in the MCC trustee workday, is in

the Bell Choir, has made jam and is on the Crafter committee for the Strawberry Festival. She looks forward to singing in the choir next year (yes, she is a soprano!). Lisa grew up in the First United Church of Stamford United Church of Christ, and Rev. Cynthia Robinson was her youth pastor! Lisa will be getting even more involved in the life of the church as a greeter, usher, and substitute Sunday school teacher. She plans to be involved with St George's Supper and many other Outreach and Fellowship opportunities – lucky us!



Judy Davis

47 Highfield Drive, Monroe, CT 06868

Cell: 310-824-5086

Email: Davis72737@gmail.com

Birthdate: March 24

Judy Davis recently moved to Monroe from Valencia, California, where she was active in the local United Methodist church. She has already found community here at MCC; sorting clothing for the Mustard Seed Shop, attending women's retreat this spring, and making lots of jam with her adult daughter Christy Machan, whom she lives with. Judy is a neighbor of the Young's. She is retired and enjoys golfing, gardening, and crocheting. Thank you, California - she's a keeper!



Betsy Dutton, Michael & Ryan Snyder, Ella Rudewicz

26 Lois Circle, Monroe CT 06468

Cell: 203-257-0574

Email: 3boys4us@charter.net

Birthdates: June 16 (Betsy), July 20 (Kenny), Dec. 2 (Michael), Jan. 4 (Ryan), Dec. 30 (Ella)

Pictured are (left to right) Ella, Ryan, Betsy, Kenny & Michael

Betsy Dutton grew up in Monroe raising her three sons. As a stay-at-home mom, she cares for her disabled adult son, Kenny, full time. The family has been worshiping regularly at MCC for about 6 months and is looking forward to making more connections. Betsy's next oldest son, **Michael Snyder**, is a lifeguard at a special needs camp this summer and attends Eastern Connecticut State University in Willimantic, CT. **Ryan Snyder** is a Junior at Masuk and works at Dairy Queen. Betsy's 13 year old niece, **Ella Rudewicz**, is the newest member of the family, having moved here recently from Florida. We are thrilled to welcome you all to MCC!



Mike Ganino

85 Millbrook Terrace, Monroe, CT 06868

Cell: 203-257-3619

Email: mganino@pkfod.com

Birthdate: June 23 Anniversary: Nov 24

Jon Ganino

85 Millbrook Terrace, Monroe, CT 06868

Cell: 203-892-5443

Email: Jonathanganino2006@gmail.com

Birthdate: Jan. 27

Pictured are (left to right) Deanna, Jo, Gloria, Michael and Mike.

Mike Ganino is an accountant and fraud investigator; he is known around town for chairing the Monroe Playground Committee and moderating the Facebook group 'Monroe Parents'. He is very comfortable organizing and leading fundraising events. The Ganino's are loaning MCC their large charcoal grill and bounce house for the Strawberry Festival! Mike likes camping, traveling, and organizing things. Mike is willing to help out in many ways, including at next year's Festival and other events, as a greeter, trustee, long-range planning, and with St George's Supper.

Jon Ganino is a very committed Senior PF'er and a junior at Masuk. He swims competitively at school and works as a lifeguard/WSI. Jon's interests include chickens, video games, swimming, and running. Jon has many skills and talents and is an enthusiastic volunteer who is willing to help with all aspects of worship and with Outreach projects. The Ganino family also includes wife/mom Gloria who is a nurse at Jockey Hollow, an older son, Michael, who attends college, and daughter, Deanna, a sophomore at Masuk who is also in PF. Thanks Jon and Mike for your willingness in sharing your many talents with MCC!



Robert Gauthier & Melissa Quinn

146 Winnepoge Drive, Fairfield, CT 06825

Robert "Hip" Gauthier

Cell: 203-727-2013

Email: robertgauthier468@gmail.com

Birthdate: Feb. 01

Melissa Quinn

Cell: 203-577-7711

Email: guinmelguin@gmail.com

Birthdate: March 4

Rob Gauthier goes by the nick name "Hip" - there must be a story there! He grew up Roman Catholic and his fiancé, **Melissa Quinn**, grew up in the Eastern Orthodox Church. Rob is a longtime friend of Cardentey's. He is retired and enjoys sports, music, and fishing. Melissa is a teacher's assistant at the Victoria Soto School in Stratford. She likes reading, going to the beach, and helping children, teens, the elderly and doing service work. Rob and Melissa are looking forward to serving as greeters. They are also interested in helping with CE, child care, Jr & Sr PF, and with Outreach opportunities. Melissa would like to help with worship as a lay reader, lay preacher, and giving the children's message. Welcome Rob and Melissa, we are happy to have you join the MCC family!



Happy July Birthday to the following people and to anyone we may have missed we will keep you in our prayers.

George	Massar	07/01	Kate	Parker-Burgard	07/20
Sheldon	Smith	07/01	Carol	Kelly	07/21
Betsy	Gilberti	07/02	Erin	Brown	07/24
Jim	Gill	07/02	Owen	Correll	07/24
Thomas	Hyde	07/02	Ann-Marie	Campbell	07/25
Julia	Telep	07/04	Korene	Dahl	07/25
Geraldine	Esposito	07/05	Campbell	Halloran	07/25
Kim	Rifflard	07/05	Bill	Stadler	07/26
Jane	Allen	07/06	Luisa	Friend	07/27
Carrie	Friend	07/06	Kenny	Dutton	07/28
James	Vance	07/08	Tom	Kelly	07/28
Jessica	Konkol	07/11	Alexa	Sentementes	07/28
Alexander	Gutierrez	07/12	Lynda	Swift	07/28
Therese	Zalenski	07/12	Caroline	Wittenauer	07/28
Coralina	Goyette	07/14	Christine	Wittenauer	07/28
Mark	Malia IV	07/14	Kathryn	Wittenauer	07/28
Mike	Pellegrino	07/15			



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

Mary Jo & Bill Brett⁽⁰¹⁾ Sheila Torres & Warren Stamp⁽⁰⁸⁾ Gar Daniel & Eve Balestriere⁽¹⁶⁾ Matt & Wendy Colegrove⁽¹⁷⁾ Rich John & Trees Whitbeck ⁽²³⁾ Anthony & Diane Prall⁽²⁸⁾ Ton and Dan & Meg Sullivan⁽³⁰⁾

Gary & Gail Thompson⁽¹⁰⁾ Rich & Michelle Correll²⁰⁾ Tom & Kate Briggs⁽²⁹⁾

August MCC Community Calendar



Communion 10:00 am Worship 11:30 am Trustees 5:00 pm Senior PF

Mon. Jul 3rd

Diane on Vacation - Office Closed

Tue. Jul 4th

Independence Day – office closed

Week of Sun. Jul 9th

Pulpit Swap @ St Peter's, with Rev. Jennifer Gingras preaching 9:00 am Worship (NOTE TIME CHANGE) 5:00 pm Senior PF

Mon. Jul 10th

Diane on Vacation - Office Closed 7:30 pm Deacons (Zoom)

Tue. Jul 11th

9:30 am Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

Sat, July 15 - Sunday, July 23rd

Senior PF Mission Trip: H.O.M.E., Maine

Week of Sun. Jul 16th

Pastor Jenn on vacation 10:00 am Worship - Rev. Peggy Allen

Mon. Jul 17th

7:30 pm Council (Zoom)

Tue. Jul 18th

9:30 am Mustard Seed Sort and Tag



Wed. Jul 19th

7:00 pm Book Club (Zoom)

Sat. Jul 22th

5:30 pm Adult PF (Dineson)

Week of Sun. Jul 23rd

Pastor Jenn on vacation 10:00 am Worship - Rev. Dr. Sheldon Smith

Mon. Jul 24th

Diane on Vacation - Office Closed

Tue. Jul 25th

9:30 am Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

Thurs. Jul 27th

Office Open!

12:00 pm Young at Heart

Fri. Jul 28th

Office Closed

Sat. Jul 29th

10 am Betty Heiney's Celebration of Life

Week of Sun. Jul 30th

Graduation Sunday 10:00 am Outdoor Worship

Mon. Jul 31

Diane on Vacation - Office Closed