

May 25, 2025

Sixth Sunday of Easter

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

Give Me Your Tired, Your Poor

Irving Berlin, 1949

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 let go . . .

People: Of grief, sadness, or a desire for something else.

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

Arlene Redmond, Deacon of the Day

*Our Church's Covenant

inside front cover of hymnal

Children's Message

*Hymn

This Is My Song

NCH #591

*Students may remain with their families, there is no Sunday School today
(the nursery is open for the littles)*

Call to Confession – Unison Prayer - Silent Prayer

*God of new life, you offer us a fresh start in Christ, but we confess how easily we slip
back into old patterns. We rely on our own strength, try to earn your love, and expect
others to meet you on our terms. Forgive us for rebuilding the very walls you've already
torn down, walls that separate us from you, and from each other. Forgive us for getting
so focused on our own path that we lose sight of both the journey and the destination.
Forgive us for letting fear of judgment keep us from living out the gospel we say we
believe. By the faithfulness of your Son, bring us back into step with you. Make us faithful,
as you are faithful. Amen. ~silence~*

Words of Assurance

***Passing of the Peace**

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

Celebrate!

By Keith Hampton

*Our offering plate will be passed among us today.
You may give online at 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

Galatians 1:13-17, 2:11-21, pg 1059

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

Sermon

Grace and the Furious

Rev. Jennifer Gingras

***Closing Hymn**

Guide Me, O My Great Redeemer

NCH #18

Benediction

Postlude

God of The Ages

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.



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.

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



Assisted Listening Devices: As part of the ongoing Homeland Security grant project, we added four wireless assisted listening units to our sound system in the Meetinghouse. We are thrilled to be able to enhance the experience of those needing greater accessibility. If you are interested in trying one out, asking Scott Young or an usher is a perfect way to get started!

Thank you for assisting in this morning's worship!

Deacon: Arlene Redmond **Usher:** Melissa Quinn **Lay Reader:** David Walker
Trustee: Frank Wittenauer **Counter:** Mike Ganino **Web Steward:** Scott Young
Coffee Host: Sara Alvarez & Ann-Marie Campbell



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

Muriel Hastedt ⁽²⁸⁾

Kaelyn McEvoy ⁽³⁰⁾

Melissa Coleman ⁽³¹⁾

Rebecca Young ⁽²⁸⁾

Scott Whiteley ⁽³⁰⁾

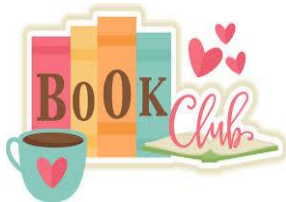


Happy Wedding Anniversary to the following couples and to anyone we may have missed, we will keep you in our prayers. (Number is anniversary date)

Nancy and Sheldon Smith ⁽²⁸⁾

The flowers this morning are given by Myron & June Winger in celebration of their 73rd Wedding Anniversary on May 24th!





Fellowship

Join us for the monthly Book Club on the **3rd Wednesday of the month at 7 pm.** 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 or home phone or 203-452-0850.

June 18th The Berry Pickers by Amanda Peters Host: TBD

July 16th Brave New World by Aldous Huxley Host: TBD

Morning Circle invites the women of the congregation to join them every second Wednesday of the month (except January, February, July and August). Please contact Shari Carrano at 475-342-8145 with any questions, comments or concerns.

Wed., Jun 11 12PM - June Picnic Luncheon - Location TBD



Trustees

There are four orange highway safety cones missing from the Rexford electrical room. If found/borrowed, please return them to the office or Wilton Hall - they are needed for the Strawberry Festival. Thank you! Dave Allen, MCC Property Manager



Deacons

Smash the 100 Ceiling: A Talk by Jim Hisey, June 8th after worship in Dineson Parlor

Like many churches today, we find ourselves at a pivotal moment. We have a strong, loving congregation, but how do we grow? How do we invite more people into our community while deepening our impact? In my upcoming presentation, *Smash the 100-Member Ceiling*, we'll explore these questions together. This is a conversation about **building a thriving church that grows, welcomes, and sustains new members in meaningful ways.**

During this session, we'll talk about: **Why churches hit attendance ceilings** – and how to break through them. **The power of invitation** – practical ways every member can help grow our church. **The mindset of a thriving congregation** – shifting from "small church" thinking to "big impact" vision. **Simple, actionable strategies** – easy-to-implement steps to help Monroe Congregational Church flourish.

This event is for **church leaders, long-time members, new attendees, and anyone who believes in the future of our congregation.** No matter your role, you have a place in this movement. The goal isn't just about numbers—it's about creating a **strong, engaged, and spiritually vibrant church** that continues to serve and inspire for generations to come. I invite you to join us for this vital discussion. Blessings, Jim



Graduate Sunday, June 8, 2025

Have you or a loved one recently completed high school, college/university, graduate school, or another educational program?

Join us for Worship on June 8th so we can celebrate your achievement!

Contact the church office secretary@MCC-UCC.org with the details and let us know where you are headed next!

53rd Annual Strawberry Festival 2025

will be held on Saturday, June 14 (10am-5pm) & Sunday, June 15 (noon-5pm).

The Strawberry Festival is nearly upon us! We've quickly reached our maximum capacity of 110 crafters on the Green, our entertainment is scheduled, strawberry dipping chocolate has arrived, ice cream is ordered, over 1,400 jars of jam are made, and strawberry bread was made this week!

Monroe Congregational Church



But there is still so much to do leading up to the festival and the days of the festival! **A great festival is attributed to all our volunteers who help out!** See the signup sheets in Wilton Hall or the link below to claim your favorite spot(s) such as berry picking, sorting, dipping, shortcake making, country store help, face painting, manning the prize table, helping out with games, making smoothies, giving tours of the

Meetinghouse, cleaning and everything else in between. Your time and dedication to the festival are what will make it a huge success. Our kickoff will be on Sunday, June 1 after service where we will have cake, sell jam and festival paraphernalia! Please contact Clark Gingras, Pastor Jenn, Frank Wittenauer or Susie Cuseo with any questions, comments or concerns. Sign up for a wonderful weekend of community and camaraderie in support of MCC in our largest fundraiser of the year. Link on next page.

Strawberry Festival Volunteer Signup Link!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E094CAEAA22A4FB6-56666921-strawberry>

In Our Prayers

Donnajean Fredeen, James Brown, Alison Abrams (Jessica Pfalzgraf's sister); **Allie** (Colegrove's friend); **Jennifer Bittar** (Loraine Zeiner's friend); **Jackie Bleakney; Lisa Cody & Dave Barton** (friends of Julie and Rob McClenathan); **Debbie Cuseo** (Cliff's sister-in-law); **Kevin Daly** (Gary Thompson's friend); **Dealmira** (Jonathan Ganino's grandmother); **Dan & Laura Dimauro** (Cuseo friends); **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); **Mary & Rachel Heerema** (Julia Gutierrez's mom & sister); **Brad Heines** (Susie Cuseo's friend); **Bob Heffernan** (Ann Zeiner's son-in-law); **Heather Henning; Brian Hopkins** (Donna Konkol's cousin); **Vera James** (Jenn Wissink's mother); **John** (Donna's father); **Jonathan** (Matt Colegrove's brother); **Kelti** (friend of Liska Gutierrez), **Samia Khoury** (Will Duchon's friend); **Cindy Kovacs; Monica Lynch** (Bethany Dupuis' friend); **Jonathan Malia; Nicole Malia; the Manuzzi Family; Mary** (Kate Brigg's Mother); **Betty McKeown** (Donna Konkol's mother); **Meghan** (Mary Unger's niece); **Mike** (Janie Allen's son); **Olivia Morrison** (Donna Nickdow's niece); **Pat Nugent; Ocampo family** (friends of Liska Gutierrez); **Nancy Olofson; Missy & Gail Olson; Donna Parratt; Regina Roberts** (Kathy Maiolo's niece); **Alfredo Rodriguez** (Osirus Gutierrez's cousin); **Noah Santiago** (Shari Carrano's great-grandson); **Palma Senatore** (Sara Alvarez's grandmother); **Carlos Serrano** (Kathy Maiolo's cousin); **Ed Simonovich** (Nancy Hedine's friend); **Bernie, Lori & Gary Sippin; John Skarupa** (Barb Pellegrino's brother); **Sheldon & Nancy Smith; Christine Stadler; Claire Stenzel** (June & Myron Wininger's granddaughter); **Timara** (Mary Unger's friend); **Tom** (Wendy Colegrove's dad); **Wayne Thompson** (Gary Thompson's brother); **Richard Turco** (Jack Fracassini's cousin); **June Wilkes; Natica Williams** (Will Duchon's friend); **Allen & Ann Zeiner**

The concerns of our world: The people of **Gaza & the West Bank; Israeli hostages** and their families, the people of **Ukraine, Sudan, Syria** and the **Middle East; 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**.

Those serving in the military, veterans & their families: **Lt. Col. Rachel Hoffman**, Tacoma, Washington (Vaughan Askue's daughter), **Zachary Gingras**, 395th Combat Sustainability Support, **Joel Smith**, 250th Engineering Company, **Chris Meneses** (Loraine Zeiner's friend), **Lance Corporal Taylor Smith** (Cheri Irwin's Nephew)

MCC Community Calendar

Week of Sun. May 25th

10:00 am Worship
1:00 pm Memorial Day Parade
5:00 pm Sr. PF

Mon. May 26th

Memorial Day – Office Closed

Tue. May 27th

1:30 pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Thurs. May 29th

9:30 am Bible Study
7:00 pm Chancel Choir
7:30 pm Confirmation

Week of Sun. June 1st

Youth Sunday

10:00 am Worship
11:30 am Trustees
5:00 pm Sr. PF

Mon. June 2nd

7:30 pm Outreach (Zoom)

Tue. June 3rd

1:30 pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Wed. June 4th

6:30 pm Confirmation Celebration

Thurs. June 5th

7:00 pm Chancel Choir

Sat. June 7th

11:00 am Don Whiteley's Celebration of Life

Week of Sun. June 8th

Confirmation Sunday

10:00 am Worship
11:00 am 'Crush the 100 Ceiling'
5:00 pm Sr. PF

Mon. June 9th

3 pm St George's Supper
7:30 pm Deacons (Zoom)

Tue. June 10th

1:30 pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Wed. June 11th

11:00 am Morning Circle Picnic

Thurs. June 12th

7:00 pm Chancel Choir

Fri. June 13th

Strawberry Festival Setup



June 14th & 15th



523rd Annual Strawberry Festival

Week of Sun. June 15^h

Father's Day, Strawberry Festival Sunday

10:00 am Worship

Tue. June 17th

1:30 pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Wed. June 18th

7:00 pm Book Club

Thurs. June 19th

6:00 pm Bell Choir
7:00 pm Chancel Choir