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

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

#### Office Hours:

Mon. 9am - 5:30pmWed. (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



MONROE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

# September 1, 2024

I am writing this newsletter article a little early, because I am getting ready to go on vacation and finishing all the last-minute things that need to be done. Part of me feels like I have already had a fair amount of time away from the church, because the summer camp has been in session, and I've been working from home or a coffee shop for most of the summer to get some peace.

Things in life tend to pull us out of our regular routines, especially in the summertime. Certainly, a break from routine is not always a good or restful experience, especially if we or someone we love is experiencing family emergencies, illnesses, job changes, or other things.

I have been doing some thinking about Sabbath. The tradition is that even God needed to rest and did so on the seventh day of creation, marking it as holy. Likewise, the Jewish people were expected to keep the Sabbath day, a day of worship and a day of no work. One reason to practice the Sabbath is to honor and acknowledge God, like saying grace at a meal. There are other reasons as well, including the fact that God realized that we need it!



Yes, as we are created in God's image, so it makes sense that we too, like God, need rest now and again. This can seem like a luxury sometimes in our society of constant emails and text messages. I am fortunate that I can take time off, not everyone has such an option. Considering the current American work ethic, it can seem like we are being lazy when we take time to ourselves, but I would argue that is not holy nor is it right. Work is indeed something we need to do, but ultimately God wants us to experience joy in life, and real rest is part of that.

Again, it is easier for some of us to do that than others, but some of us also create work for ourselves. I have known several retired people who are always on the go and seemingly do not take time to rest and relax. Perhaps you can take a day a week, like the Sabbath and truly do no work that day. If that is not something you can do, perhaps you can carve out a sacred hour, or a sacred 15 minutes even, each day where you do absolutely nothing resembling work.

I know it can seem difficult to make time for ourselves, but it is good for us, so much so that it was ordained by God. I will be trying to rest and do very little over the next days, and my hope is that you have found some sabbath too! See you soon.

# **Pledge Envelopes**



If you pledge to the church and would like to use pledge envelopes, please call 203-268-9327 or email Diane at secretary@MCC-UCC.org **before the September 27**<sup>th</sup> **order deadline** –thank you!

(Offering envelopes are available in the pews.)

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

**Deacons** 

# Blessing of the Animals

Join us <u>Sunday, September 29th</u>
at 10 am as we worship outside and bless the animals
that bring us such joy and love! BYOP! (Bring your
own pet!) \*\*Please keep on leash or in a carrier\*\*





# **ALL ARE WELCOME, ALWAYS!**

BEGINS THURSDAY, SEP 5 9:30 AM

Dineson Parlor, come as you are!





# Snack & Chat with NOOMA

Join us in Dineson Parlor after worship on these dates to enjoy some snacks, a short video and light discussion about life's big questions.

No prep necessary and all are welcome!

Sep 29 - SUNDAY

Oct 27 - YOU

Dec 29 - NOISE

Feb 23 - RAIN

Mar 30 - DUST

Apr 27 - FLAME





As we embark on a new season of growth and learning, we are excited to invite interested members to join our **Sunday School Team** and play a vital role in nurturing the hearts and minds of our youth.

# The Opportunity:

Our Sunday School program is more than just education; it's an avenue to share God's boundless love with the younger members of our congregation. We are searching for enthusiastic individuals who enjoy spreading the love of our God and Jesus Christ and who possess a genuine love for working with children and pre-teens. By becoming a Sunday School teacher, you will have the opportunity to make a lasting impact on young lives, fostering spiritual growth, and helping to build a strong foundation of faith.

# **Requirements:**

- A strong desire to share God's love and teachings with our youth.
- Patience, understanding, and a compassionate heart for children of all ages.
- Commitment to serving on Sundays during the Sunday School hours teachers share responsibility and rotate weekends, so no one is left teaching every Sunday, unless they wish to!
- A willingness to collaborate with fellow teachers and align with the curriculum.
- A background check and Safe Church Training.

#### **Benefits:**

- Deepen your own faith through the process of teaching and guiding young believers.
- Develop leadership and mentoring skills in a supportive environment.
- Join a community of like-minded individuals who share your passion.
- Witness the growth and transformation of the children under your guidance.

#### **How to Get Involved:**

- If you feel called to this important work and have a desire to impact the lives of our young members, we encourage you to join us! Whether you have prior teaching experience or are simply eager to invest in the future of our church, your dedication will be warmly welcomed.
- To express your interest or to learn more about becoming a Sunday School teacher, please reach out to Jeanette Cardentey Morales, chair of Christian Education, who can provide further insights into the curriculum, expectations, and answer any questions you might have, <u>jeanettemcardentey@gmail.com</u> or 203-257-9637



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! <a href="https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C48ADAC2CA5FEC61-flowers">https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C48ADAC2CA5FEC61-flowers</a> or MCC-UCC.org



Sign-up Sheet in Wilton Hall!

#### Historian's Notebook

# Victorian Christmas Fair Update

As promised, the next Victorian Christmas Fair planning meeting has been scheduled for Sunday, September 8th, following our worship service, at 11:15 a.m. in Dineson Parlor. You are most welcome to be a part of it, just pop into the meeting and hear all about it!

The **Victorian Christmas Fair** will be held on the first Sunday of Advent, December 1st (Yes, two days after Thanksgiving). Why are we doing this? To welcome our wider community to our beautiful church campus and provide a family-friendly Christmas activity that also teaches a bit of history. Funds that are raised will be put aside for future church campus building needs.



- 10 am Victorian Christmas worship service (costumes welcome!)
- Local Crafters in Wilton Hall from 1:00 to 5:00 (get those last-minute gifts!)
- Historical tours of the Meetinghouse
- · Caroling from "Just Voices"
- A working Victorian model train village display
- A visit with Victorian Santa (toy drive for Covenant to Care, photo opportunity)
- Children's crafts and activities
- And more! (to be defined or confirmed)

This will be followed by the tree lighting with our friends from St. Peter's Grace Episcopal on our Centre Green at 5pm.

In the meantime, Bill Brett has already finished laying the track and has fired up the **Victorian model train**. He is now working on completing the village and landscaping of the display. He will need the use of a pickup truck with a 4-footwide bed and is looking for help to transport and help set up the display in Dineson Parlor a day or two before the Fair. If you would like to help Bill please



contact him directly; see him at coffee hour, email him at wrbmjb@sbcglobal.net, or call him at 203-241-8761. He will be glad to hear from you.



#### **Fellowship**



**Young at Heart** will meet Thurs., September 26 at noon. Details to follow.



Silver Lake Retreat Center - weekend of May 2-4, 2025



Do you know what a **Prayer Partner** is? It's the easiest thing to do. All that's required is filling out an information form that can be found in Wilton Hall at the beginning of September. By the end of the month you will receive someone else's information in the mail. Approach them during coffee hour and strike up a conversation, pass them the peace at service or send them a card or note in the mail signed "Your Prayer Partner" using the church's address (34 Church St Monroe CT 06468) as the return. If you don't know who they are I'll be happy to point them out. This is all done

anonymously until May 18, 2025 when we hold the "Big Reveal" potluck luncheon in Wilton Hall. It only takes a few seconds out of your busy schedule to think of your prayer partner and wish them the best for the day. Be in the comfort that someone else is praying for you. Please contact Susie Cuseo at <a href="mailto:thecuseos@yahoo.com">thecuseos@yahoo.com</a> or 203-268-0280 with any questions. Here is a testimonial from a volunteer last year:

"Being a Prayer Partner was a wonderful experience. It kept me focused on my prayer life and to concentrate on others. It keeps you close to our MCC community."

Join us for the monthly Book Culb on the **3<sup>rd</sup>** <u>Wednesday</u> **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 or home phone or 203-452-0850.

The book club selections for upcoming months: **September 18**<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm- Tom Lake by Ann Patchett **October 16**<sup>th</sup> at 7pm - On Beauty by Zadie Smith





**Morning Circle** invites the women of the congregation to our meeting on **Wednesday, September 11th at 11am** in Wilton Hall. We will have Ray Giovanni from Union Savings Bank to discuss the local scams occurring in our town. Lunch will be provided while we hold a short business meeting. Join them every second Wednesday of the month with the exception of January, February, July and August. Please contact Shari Carrano at 475-342-8145 with any questions, comments or concerns. Mark your calendars for the following meetings with Morning Circle:

Wednesday, Oct 9, 11AM Dineson Parlor - Trick-or-Treat bags

Wednesday, Nov 13, 11AM Kitchen/Wilton Hall - Bean Soup Jars/Giving Tree Tags

Wednesday, Dec 11, 12PM - Christmas Luncheon - Location TBD

Wednesday, Mar 12, 11AM Dineson Parlor - Birthday bags

Wednesday, Apr 9, 11AM Dineson Parlor - CWS hygiene kits

Wednesday, May 14 11AM Dineson Parlor - Women's hygiene products collection

Wednesday, Jun 11 12PM - June Picnic Luncheon - Location TBD

\*

#### Outreach





**Covenant to Care** welcomes any donations of NEW backpacks, lunch boxes, and school supplies for all ages! Monetary gifts are always welcome! Please bring whatever you can to the church (marked *Covenant to Care: attention Diane*) as soon as possible so the children can start using your generous donations -thank you!

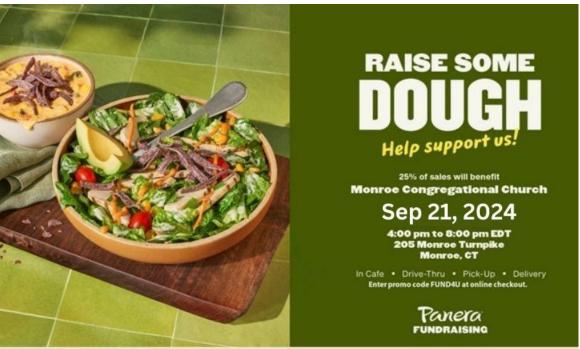


Mustard Seed Thrift Shoppe is looking for volunteers.

You can either help with sorting, tagging and hanging on Tuesdays at 1:30PM starting on September 10th. The women who meet up there have the process down. It's easy to do. The same goes for being a sales associate working behind the counter in the Shoppe. Your shift options are Fridays between 10-12:30 or 12:30-3 and Saturdays 10-12 or 12-2. Responsibilities to open or close are very simple. Instructions

can be sent to you through email or just stop by the Shoppe when it's open and hang out with the volunteer and they will gladly show you the ropes. Please contact Susie Cuseo at <a href="mailto:thecuseos@yahoo.com">thecuseos@yahoo.com</a> or 203-268-0280 with any question or comments.

**Did you miss the Panera Bread fundraiser in June?** Well, you have another opportunity to support the refurbishing plan for Dineson Parlor which is used by many groups. Mark your calendars for **Saturday, September 21st from 4-8PM. Use the promotion code FUND4U** with any online orders any time that day or at checkout at 205 Monroe Turnpike when ordering at the counter or kiosk. With your purchase 25% will go to help brighten up the parlor with new furniture that will stand up to lots of years of use. Please contact Susie Cuseo at <a href="mailto:thecuseos@yahoo.com">thecuseos@yahoo.com</a> or 203-268-0280 with any questions.



Order dinner from Panera in Monroe on Sep 21st between 4–8, use promo code <u>FUND4U</u> and 25% of your order will go towards replacing the well-loved furniture in Dineson Parlor!



Heifer International supports families worldwide by using your spare change to make a change in their lives. Purchases of livestock or plants financially helps families who turn around and spreads the wealth, thereby, creating a more self-sustainable community. Find the donation bottle on the serving table at coffee hour. Your change will go a long way in helping those who have no means of

make a better life. Contact Susie Cuseo at <a href="mailto:thecuseos@yahoo.com">thecuseos@yahoo.com</a> or 203-268-0280 with any questions.



# **Monroe Community Events**

**Lion's Blood Drive:** On September  $24^{th}$  the Lions will be hosting another Red Cross Blood Drive in Wilton Hall from 1 pm – 6 pm.





# Monroe Lions Club



# Fall Blood Drive Monroe Congregational Church

34 Church St. Monroe

9/24/2024

1:00 - 6:00

For an appointment, please visit redcrossblood.org
Or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

**St. Peter's Apple Festival:** Saturday and Sunday September 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> - one of the best ways to start the fall season is to support our neighbors across the green at their annual event which is always filled with food, vendors and fun!



**Monroe Farmers' Market:** Every Friday, 3-6 through October 25<sup>th</sup> – rain or shine- at the Town Gazebo. http://www.monroefarmersmarket.org/



In 2023, we were voted #1 Farmers' Market in Connecticut (AGAIN!), through America's Farmland Trust. We couldn't be more proud or thankful for the support of the community helping us achieve this!

# The September highlights of the Monroe Senior Center.

\*Please stop in to sign up so we have enough seats and refreshments were indicated.

- September 2 closed for Labor Day no programs, no transportation
- September 3 Silver Steel Drum Band outdoor weather permitting
- September 5 TRAID Meeting
- September 5 RW Solutions Senior Dine Sign up and refills
- September 10 Medical Checks by RN Maggie
- September 10 End of Summer BBQ
- September 10 Attorney Roundtable ~ Wills, Trusts and Probate
- September 11 Brain Games
- September 11 Book Club
- September 13 Waterbury Clock Company
- September 13 Chorus restarts
- September 17 AARP Safe Driving Class
- September 20 VFW programs and resources
- September 24 Birthday Celebration
- September 26 Vaccination Education
- September 27 Understanding Bi-Polar Disorder
- September 27 Caregiver Support Group

Kimberly A. Cassia, Town of Monroe, Director of Community & Social Services & Municipal Agent Phone: 203-452-2815 ext. 4 Join Pastor Jenn at the Monroe Volunteer Fire Department's 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony.

# Annual September 11<sup>th</sup> Remembrance Ceremony



The Monroe Volunteer Fire Dept. Invites Members of the Community to Join First Responders for a Brief 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony

Monroe Fire Dept. Headquarters – 18 Shelton Rd (RT 110)

Wednesday September 11, 2024 at 7:00pm

- Reflections by Local First Responders
  - Remarks by Elected Officials
    - Bell Ringing Ceremony
  - Complimentary Light Refreshments
- Parking on Side Lot and Field Across the Street





# You can help build a healthier community

In partnership with the Health Improvement Alliance (HIA) and DataHaven, we are collecting data on Monroe's well-being, equity, and quality of life. Your input will help inform us about the strengths and resources of the community, different ways that people seek services, and the different issues that impact the health and wellbeing of our residents. Collecting this important information directly from community members will assist us in creating new programs and making important changes to existing ones, all with the goal of improving the future of those living in Monroe.

Participation in previous years' surveys has resulted in small amounts of notable data. We urge you to participate in 2024's survey in order for us to generate a greater number of significant statistics. It is important we receive as many responses as possible to get a more accurate representation of our community.

Scan here to take the survey





203-452-2818



kmccarthy@monroect.gov

IN 2022...

30% OF MONROE RESIDENTS hypertension

# WHAT WE DID ...

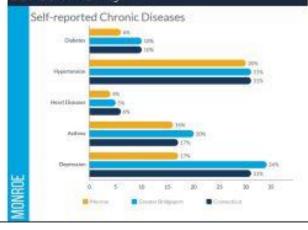
The Monroe Health Department has implemented Know Your Numbers Events throughout the year, promoting healthy lifestyles with blood pressure checks.

17% of Monroi RESIDENTS

REPORTED GROE depression

# WHAT WE DID...

The Monroe Health Department promotes mental health and offers an abundance of resources in partnership with The Hub. We have also become Mental Health First Aid and QPR certified to bring life-saving classes to our community.





# 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment



Join us for an important conversation on how we can improve the lives of people in our region.

September 9, 2024 @ 5:00 PM Monroe Emergency Medical Service 54 Jockey Hollow Rd, Monroe, CT 06468

#### **BUILD CONNECTION**

Connect with neighbors who are passionate about their community.

#### **GET REWARDED**

Each participant will be given a \$25 gift card at the end of the session for their time and participation.

#### PROVIDE VALUABLE INPUT

Help us understand community strengths, challenges, and opportunities to address

#### **BE PART OF LASTING CHANGE**

With your ideas, we can create programs that improve the future of those living in Greater Bridgeport.

Light refreshments will be provided

To register, please contact: kmccarthy@monroect.gov

HTTP://WWW.HIA-CT.ORG

#### **In Our Prayers**

David Coffey; Ron Villani & family, on the loss of his brother Bob last week; Alison Abrams (Jessica Pfalzgraf's sister); Allie (Colegrove's friend); Jennifer Bittar (Loraine Zeiner's friend); Jackie Bleakney; Lori Cimeno (Peggy & Ron Villani's Daughter); Kevin Daly (Gary Thompson's friend); Dawn (Donna Konkol's Friend); John Dominic (Pfalzgraf's neighbor); 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); Holly Hallgren; 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); Jonathan (Matt Colegrove's brother); Kelti (friend of Liska Gutierrez), Samia Khoury (Will Duchon's friend); Monica Lynch (Bethany Dupuis' friend); Nicole Malia; Mary (Kate Brigg's Mother); McKeown (Donna Konkol's mother); Mike (Janie Allen's son); Jean Moffat; Olivia Morrison (Donna Nickdow's niece); Joe Mumper (Julie McClenathan's friend); Pat Nugent; Ocampo family (friends of Liska Gutierrez); Nancy Olofson; Missy & Gail Olson; Dean Perosino (Gayle Hammond's brother); P.T. Philip (Liz Sampson's father); Regina Roberts (Kathy Maiolo's niece); Alfredo Rodriguez (Osirus Gutierrez's cousin); Noah Santiago (Shari Carrano's greatgrandson); Carlos Serrano (Kathy Maiolo's cousin); Yessika Siccardi (Sampson family friend); Ed Simonovich (Nancy Hedine's friend); Bernie Sippin; Gary Sippin (Lori Sippin's son); John Skarupa (Barb Pellegrino's brother); Sheldon & Nancy Smith; Christine Stadler; 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); June Wilkes; Natica Williams (Will Duchon's friend); Don Whiteley; Allen Zeiner (Ann Zeiner's son); Ann Zeiner

The concerns of our world: The people of Gaza; the people of Ukraine 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:

Stateside: Lt. Col. Rachel Hoffman, Tacoma, Washington (Vaughan Askue's daughter) Justin Rifflard, Pensacola Naval Air Station, Zachary Gingras, 395th Combat Sustainability Support, Joel Smith, 250th Engineering Company Chris Meneses (Loraine Zeiner's friend)

Kuwait: **Jon Sanchez** (Don Whiteley's grandson-in-law)



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

Mia	Briggs	09/02	David	Rooney	09/19
Liska	Gutierrez	09/02	Jeff	Swift	09/19
Vinathi	Sampson	09/02	Colleen	Konkol	09/20
David	Bailey	09/03	Marisa	Pinto	09/20
Mathias	Aoaeh	09/05	Vandana	Sampson	09/20
Elliot	McEvoy	09/05	Grace	Hisey	09/21
Paul	Adams	09/08	Mary	Massar	09/21
Lorraine	Sippin	09/08	Daniela	Combs	09/24
Becky	Unger	09/08	Kristen	Prall	09/24
Edward	Dotoratos	09/09	Nancy	Hedine	09/26
Laura	Cuseo	09/10	Priscilla	Cunningham	09/29
Noelle	Swift	09/10	Katherine	Logan	09/29
Andrew	Logan	09/14	Heather	Henning	09/30
Joshua	Post	09/16	Laurel	Post	09/30
Ronald	Villani	09/16			



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

Jenna & Stephen Rice<sup>(04)</sup> Cheramie & Victor DiMenna<sup>(08)</sup> Kim & Mike Rifflard<sup>(14)</sup> Reggie & John Hastedt<sup>(16)</sup> Julia & Osiris Gutierrez<sup>(16)</sup> Shirley & Jamie Dotoratos<sup>(16)</sup> Gay & Hubert Muizulis<sup>(25)</sup> Jan & Chris Pearson<sup>(29)</sup> Kate & Mark Barnhart<sup>(29)</sup>

# **September MCC Community Calendar**

# Week of Sun. Sept 1st

Communion

10:00 am Worship

11:30 am Trustees

7:30 pm Mass Fusion Reschedule Concert

# Mon. Sept 2<sup>nd</sup>

Labor Day - Office Closed

# Tue. Sept 3rd

9:30 am Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

7:00 pm Safe Church Training

# Wed. Sept 4th

6:30 pm Council Planning (Redmond)

# Thur. Sep 5<sup>th</sup>

9:30 am First Bible Study of Season (Dineson)

# Week of Sun. Sept 8th

New Member Sunday

10:00 am Worship

11:15 am Victorian Christmas Meeting

5:00 pm Senior PF (Parlor)

5:00 pm Junior PF (Classroom 5)

# Tue. Sept 10<sup>th</sup>

1:30 pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

# Wed. Sept 11th

11:00 am Morning Circle

### Thur. Sep 12<sup>th</sup>

9:30 am Bible Study

# Week of Sun. Sept 15th

Homecoming, New Member Sunday

10:00 am Worship

12 – 4 pm Homecoming Picnic (Wolfe Park)

5:00 pm Senior PF

# Mon. Sept 16<sup>th</sup>

7:30 pm Council

# Tue. Sept 17<sup>th</sup>

1:30 pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

# Wed. Sept 18th

7:00 pm Book Club

# Thur. Sept 19<sup>th</sup>

9:30 am Bible Study

# Sat. Sept 21th

4:00 - 8:00 pm Panera Bread Fundraiser

# Week of Sun. Sept 22<sup>nd</sup>

10:00 am Worship

11:15 am Confirmation Orientation

5:00 pm Junior & Senior PF

#### Tue. Sept 24th

1:30 pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

1-6 pm Blood Drive at MCC

# Thur. Sept 26th

9:30 am Bible Study

12:00 pm Young at Heart

7:30 PM Confirmation Class

# Week of Sun. Sept 29th

Blessing of the Animals, Confirmation Dedication

10:00 am Outdoor Worship

11:15 am NOOMA

5:00 pm Junior & Senior PF