



# THE MONROE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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# STEEPLE

34 Church Street  
Monroe, CT 06468

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**Office Hours:**  
Monday – Friday  
9:00a.m. - 3:30p.m.

Senior Pastor: Rev. Jennifer Gingras  
Music Director: Will Duchon  
Secretary: Melissa Rosenberg  
Director of Faith Formation: Debi Mastroni-Kenyon  
Church e-mail: [secretary@mcc-ucc.org](mailto:secretary@mcc-ucc.org)

**August 15, 2016**

*People Helping People: Do justice, love kindness, walk humbly with God*

I was having coffee the other day with a pastor friend of a nearby congregation. Both of us had been working on an annual theme for our churches, one that we would propose to our governing councils. My friend was a little further in his planning than I was, and had already created a thoughtful campaign complete with a preaching series and a stewardship campaign. I shared with him (rather unenthusiastically) a number of ideas. Honestly? None of them excited me much.

“So, what are the big things you see coming next year for your congregation?” He asked.

“Well, I know that my focus will be on inviting and empowering laypeople to do more hands-on ministry. I plan to hold an adult confirmation class (in addition to the youth class), plus a preaching seminar and a pastoral care workshop. We’ve hired a new Director of Faith Formation (Debi) who will be focused on reinvigorating junior PF and Sunday school with a focus on service – I’m pretty excited about that. And since I’m finishing up my fifth year as Senior Pastor, I’m looking ahead to taking a three month sabbatical... those plans are still in development.”

“OK, so as you prepare to leave them, what will you carry with you about who they are?”

“Dude, now you’re getting a little deep. Of course there are no ‘perfect’ churches (or pastors, for that matter), but I think back over the past few years and all we’ve accomplished together: MusicFest, The Giving Garden, VBS and youth programs, mission trips... I think I will most remember their desire to reach others with Christ’s love. Not through any coercive ideology, but by caring and serving. It’s the power of love. This church walks their talk. At the core, they are just people helping other people, and there is something so special and rare about that.”

Serving people is easy when we know who we are and what we are about. I believe our true purpose in life is to give our lives away to others, and that we receive happiness, fulfillment, and meaning in return. Not because for any reward, but because we are called to be the reflection of Christ’s light of love in the world. *People Helping People...* it’s who we are. Sounds like a pretty faithful theme for 2016/2017! Stay tuned for ways we will live this out together. I pray that you enjoy the rest of this glorious summer in peace and health, see you soon!



In Christ’s Peace, Pastor Jenn

*Please note: Pastor Jenn will be on vacation from August 21<sup>st</sup> through September 3<sup>rd</sup>.*

## Homecoming

Dictionary.com defines homecoming as "a return to one's home" and while many of us have been right at our homes this summer homecoming at MCC means a return to our home of faith.

I invite all of you to MCC's Homecoming Sunday on September 11<sup>th</sup> beginning at 10:00 am. We will have homecoming worship, Sunday school first day, Ministry Fair at Coffee Hour, and our picnic at Wolfe Park at 1:30 followed by Sr. and Jr. PF Kick off at 6:30.

Parents, you will have an opportunity to register your children for Sunday School at the CE Table during Coffee Hour – be sure to stop by!

I can't wait to see you all,

Debi

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## Adult Confirmation Class

Adult Confirmation at MCC is a spiritual formation program (based on the youth curriculum) which emphasizes building an authentic faith, but with a focus on the spiritual and developmental needs of people in the middle or later years of their life.

In Adult Confirmation, participants are invited to ask the questions they've always wanted to ask and to explore their faith from an adult perspective. We will cover subjects which may have been glossed over, forgotten, ignored or lost in the midst of time. Our hope is that by the end of the process, each participant...

- Will have developed a caring, trusting, supportive relationship with the other participants
- Will be better informed in the topics of faith, God, Jesus, the Bible, church history, worship, discipleship, church life and covenant
- Will have had pressing questions answered -- or at least addressed
- Will experience a renewed sense of God's presence, guidance, and grace
- Will experience a renewed commitment to Jesus Christ
- Will have acquired the tools, inspiration and support necessary to travel the next leg on her/his journey of faith
- Will be ready to own the MCC Covenant in a new way
- Will be ready to reaffirm his/her baptism, publicly and/or privately
- Will experience a renewed sense of call, within and beyond the church

Please consider joining our next class, which meet one Wednesday evening a month from 6:30-7:30 in Dineson Parlor. Please speak with Pastor Jenn or Debi Mastroni-Kenyon if you have any questions. Below is a tentative schedule with dates and topics.

## 2015 / 2016 Adult Confirmation Schedule

Name	Date
Intros & Questions	September 14
Christian Faith & Spirituality	October 19
God: Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer	November 9
Jesus Christ & Christian Ethics	December 14
The Bible	January 25
Church History & The UCC	February 22
Worship & Prayer	March 22
Discipleship & Covenant	April 19
Celebration Dinner	May 24

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### Covenant to Care Book Bags Needed



This summer won't you shop for a child in need while you shop for your own child! There are children who need our help to give them a good start to the new school year! If you can't shop, please consider a donation to supply a child in the care of our DCF social workers with much needed school supplies & a book bag. *Suggested Donation for Book Bag with Supplies \$25.00 each.* Checks should be made out to M.C.C. and "memo-ed" for Covenant to Care/School.

Check for the children's "tags" in Wilton Hall. Please attach the "tag" to your Book Bag and leave it in/by the blue, collection bins outside the church office by Sunday, September 11th -Thank you!

### Book Bag suggestions:

notebooks, ruler, double pocket folders, blue/ black, red pens, pencils, glue dispenser, glue stick, highlighter, scissors, and a box of Crayola Crayons. (Great for Teen Book Bags, include a Texas Instrument's Scientific Calculator. Small Children would also benefit from instructional work/color books and story books.)

The children thank you for your support! Sincerely, Diane Prall  
Monroe Congregational Church Liaison Covenant to Care For Children

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### A Note from the Receiver

Americans are writing fewer checks and using electronic payments more. In fact, the number of checks has declined by more than 1 billion from 2009 to 2012. By 2012, about two-thirds of consumer and business payments were made by electronic payment transactions and the number continues to grow (*Source: The 2013 Federal Reserve Payments Study, December 2013*).



We all miss a church service from time to time because of vacations, summer breaks or illness. Scheduling routine, automated weekly or monthly contributions online is a good 24/7 alternative for those who are unable to make a worship service. Most importantly, electronic giving supports

a consistent giving pattern, which helps our church better plan our ministry financial plan (budget) by providing steadier funding over time.

Electronic giving to MCC is easy to set-up, just go to the "Donate" page on our web site ([www.mcc-ucc.org/donate](http://www.mcc-ucc.org/donate)) or arrange for electronic payment from your bank. In worship, simply place a recyclable "Alternative Giving Card" in the offering plate. As always, thank you for your support of the Monroe Congregational Church!

Sincerely, John O'Rourke - Receiver

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### Fellowship



**Share Your Good News** Do you have something to celebrate like a new job, grandchild, wedding or other piece of good news? Do you want to share it with the community but are not sure quite how? Let Melissa know at [secretary@mcc-ucc.org](mailto:secretary@mcc-ucc.org), with as much or as little detail as you'd like, so she can include your good news in an upcoming bulletin and steeple.

### Please join us for the MCC Book Club!

✚ **September 21<sup>st</sup> – 7:30pm** The Girl Who Wrote in Silk. Location TBD

**Sponsor a Month of Coffee Hours** Would you like to help the people who come to worship get to know each other? What if we told you that sponsoring a month of coffee hours at the low, low price of \$40 could feed four children for 3 weeks? You will not only get that warm and fuzzy feeling of doing something generous, but you can use your sponsorship to honor loved ones – a dedication goes on a sign and in the bulletin. Please make checks payable to MCC with "coffee sponsor" in the memo field. Thank you



young  
at heart

**It is time for Young at Heart** to gather together again for food, fellowship, fun, and a little laughter (or at least some chuckles). **We will be meeting at 12pm on August 25<sup>th</sup> at Vazzy's, 415 Main Street Monroe** Please RSVP to Ruth or Bill Wakeley at 203-225-6166 by August 23<sup>rd</sup>. If you have never attended before, please come so you can be part of this group. See you there!

*Congratulations to Young at Heart who are celebrating their 4th Anniversary this month. We did it and we are proud.*

**MCC Welcome Home Family Picnic, 1:30-4:30pm, 9/11/16, Wolfe Park, Cutlers Farm Road, Monroe** Please join our MCC family at the covered pavilion (next to the basketball courts) on Sunday, September 11, 2016 from 1:30pm - 4:30pm.



Burgers and hot dogs will be provided and we encourage you to use your imagination to whip up one of your summer favorites to include in a potluck style lunch to share with all. Last names beginning with A-M please bring a salad/side, Last names beginning N-Z please bring a dessert. Please feel free to bring along tennis rackets, basketballs, Frisbees, etc. A volleyball / badminton

net will be set up as well as a bocce area. If you are an out-of-towner, there is free parking in the overflow lot right next to the ticket-holder lot.

The cost (to cover grilled items, paper goods and drinks) is 10\$ per family or \$5 for an individual. Please Sign up in Wilton Hall.

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**Habitat for Humanity:** Please consider volunteering with MCC Habitat coordinator, John Sekelsky on September 10, November 5, and December 10<sup>th</sup> for Habitat Work Days. You can choose one day or all days to work - it's up to you! If you would like to volunteer please contact John at [johnsekelsky@gmail.com](mailto:johnsekelsky@gmail.com) so he can let the Sound Coalition manager know how many from MCC will attend. Thanks for your support of this special work. You can learn more about Habitat for Humanity by visiting: <http://habitatcfc.org/>



**Please Help Support A Project From The Heart.** It Would Mean So Much For Our Soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan To Receive Care Packages From MCC. We need toiletries such as deodorant and shampoo, toothbrushes, and non-perishables items such as cookies (in boxes) beef jerky, puzzle books, playing cards and snack items. If you have any questions please contact Miriam Zalenski at 203-261-8550 or [bigred722@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bigred722@sbcglobal.net)

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### Monroe MusicFest



The Second Annual Monroe MusicFest is Saturday, October 1st, from 2:00 to 8:45 pm. There are seven performances in the Meeting house, three in Wilton, and four in Dineson, staggered throughout the day. Food will be available for sale. There will also be visual arts and reiki massage available. We hope you can come for this enjoyable, music filled day.

Some of the funds from MusicFest 2015 helped enable Senior PF to make a rural mission trip. PF traveled 16 hours to Henderson Settlements in Kentucky where they made desperately needed repairs to four homes in rural Appalachia. They rebuilt a metal roof to protect and keep dry a disabled carpenter and his family; laid attic insulation and repaired a metal roof so that the elderly homeowner could stay warm in the winter and cool in the summer; laid laminate flooring so that the homeowner could keep her floor neat, tidy and safe; and laid laminate flooring in the living room and kitchen and rebuilt a collapsing bedroom floor for a teenage daughter, which kept the family of four together and their youngest child out of the state's foster care system. Amazing work!

Donations from the congregation made all this and the MusicFest possible. A contribution to MusicFest can be made "in memory of," "in honor of," or however you want to dedicate it. Contributions at ANY level are welcome. In addition, we have a contribution schedule as follows: Bronze-\$50, Silver-\$100, Gold-\$150, and Platinum-\$200, if you are interested in being listed in the program at one of those levels. Make check out to Monroe Congregational Church (or MCC)

and mark it MusicFest. Envelopes are available throughout the Meeting House and there is space for you to indicate your name and how you want your donation listed. Then just drop it into the offering plate. To keep up to date, visit: <http://monroemusicfest.blogspot.com/>

*I hear music in the air...*



Paulette Obertz will be selling homemade applesauce to support the 2016 Musicfest. Each jar sells for \$5.00. Please contact Paulette at 203-216-4183

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### Community News

**Dog Walking Service:** Does your dog need more exercise? Is your dog home alone? I love animals and would love to help! Call Paulette Obertz 203-216-4183 for more information.



### Al & Bev Shaffer have moved!

Beverly and Al Shaffer  
5201 Ashlar Village  
Wallingford, Ct 06492

1 (203) 679-2184

## **MCC Community Calendar**

### **Tues. Aug. 23<sup>rd</sup>**

6:30pm CE Meeting (Classroom 4)

### **Week of Aug. 28<sup>th</sup>**

*Guest Preacher Katrina Manzi*

10:00am Worship

### **Week of Sept. 4<sup>th</sup>**

10:00am Worship

### **Mon. Sept. 5<sup>th</sup>**

*Office Closed in Observance of Labor Day*

### **Sat. Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>**

8:00am Habitat for Humanity Work Day

### **Week of Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>**

*Homecoming Sunday*

10:00am Worship

11:15am Confirmation Parent Meeting  
(Dineson)

1:30pm Picnic at Wolfe Park

6:00pm Jr & Sr. PF

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

9:30am Retired Men's Breakfast (Dineson)

11:00am Morning Circle (Dineson)

6:30pm Adult Confirmation Class (Dineson)

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

9:30am Bible Study (Dineson)

6:30pm Adult Choir (Meetinghouse)

### **Week of Sept. 18<sup>th</sup>**

10:00am Worship

Confirmand Bible Dedication

6:00pm Jr & Sr. PF

6:00pm Adult PF

### **Tues. Sept. 20<sup>th</sup>**

7:00pm Bereavement Group (Dineson)

7:00pm Council Meeting (Classroom 4)

### **Wed. Sept. 21<sup>st</sup>**

6:30pm Confirmation Class (Dineson)

### **Thurs. Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup>**

9:30am Bible Study (Dineson)

6:30pm Adult Choir (Meetinghouse)

### **Week of Sept. 25<sup>th</sup>**

10:00am Worship

6:00pm Jr & Sr. PF

### **Wed. Sept. 28<sup>th</sup>**

6:30pm Adult Confirmation Class (Dineson)

### **Thurs. Sept. 29<sup>th</sup>**

9:30am Bible Study (Dineson)

6:30pm Adult Choir (Meetinghouse)

12:00pm Young at Heart (location tbd)

### **Sat. Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>**

2:00pm-8:00pm MusicFest

### **Week of Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup>**

10:00am Worship

6:00pm Jr & Sr. PF

### **Wed. Oct. 5<sup>th</sup>**

6:30pm Confirmation Class (Dineson)

### **Thurs. Oct. 6<sup>th</sup>**

9:30am Bible Study (Dineson)

6:30pm Adult Choir (Meetinghouse)

### **Week of Oct. 9<sup>th</sup>**

*Baptism Lina & Braeden Birn*

10:00am Worship

6:00pm Jr & Sr. PF

### **Mon. Oct 10<sup>th</sup>**

Office Closed Columbus Day

### **Wed. Oct. 12<sup>th</sup>**

9:00am Retired Men's Breakfast (Dineson)

11:00am Morning Circle (Dineson)

### **Thurs. Oct. 13<sup>th</sup>**

9:30am Bible Study

7:30 Adult Choir

### **Fri. Oct. 14<sup>th</sup>-Sun. Oct. 16<sup>th</sup>**

Senior PF Retreat to Silver Lake

Junior PF Retreat to Silver Lake