



# 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  
Director of Faith Formation: Debi Mastroni-Kenyon  
Secretary: Melissa Rosenberg  
Church e-mail: [secretary@mcc-ucc.org](mailto:secretary@mcc-ucc.org)

**August 15, 2017**

## How Long?

*"I waited patiently for the Lord, He inclined and heard my cry. He brought me up out of the pit, out of the mire and clay. I will sing, sing a new song. I will sing, sing a new song! How long to sing this song?" – U2, 40 (How Long?)*

The lyrics above are lifted from the tenth and final track from U2's 1983 album, War. The band had already used an extra week of studio time and needed one more song in a hurry, so Bono opened a bible, read from Psalm 40, and they put it to music. Since then, the song is often played at the end of the band's live performances, keeping the audience singing along after the band has left the stage.

Time, whether spent recording an album or just living an otherwise normal life, seems to speed up the older we get. Maybe that's an effect of the way our brains lay down memories: when we are younger there is much more formation of unique experiences taking place in comparison to when we are older. As the years pass, some experiences are similar to what we already have experienced, which all 'blur together' with fewer unique episodes to mark the passage of time.

This can also be why an adventurous vacation or time away doing something completely different can seem to make the clock slow in comparison to a similar period of "life as usual". When we look back there is so much to remember about the former, and maybe less so with the latter.

*How long?* Or, as my kids and yours ask "are we there yet?" It's the age old question of travelers, but more than that it is a question that resonates with anyone caught in a trap of despair or anguish. Ask those who struggle with a long term decline of a loved one, time can feel fluid in a bad way, too.

I don't know what caused the psalmist to describe their angst in the first verses of Psalm 40. It is a rather effective as a piece of writing, gathering momentum and strength as it builds, recounting the many acts of praise and devotion the writer has performed. It is deeply personal in its appeal to God, and describes a deep faithfulness. Clearly, God is at work both in the life of

the psalmist and in the world, but also there is a tacit acknowledgement that God's time and our desires and timelines may not always align.

We, the objects of God's unfailing love, do not always grasp the bigger picture, even while we struggle to recognize that God has been our "help and deliverer." Indeed, the way our brains function means that our perception of reality depends on a lot of factors that we may not always take into account.

Here the psalmist, despite anxiety at recent events, is able to keep some perspective, to step back and acknowledge that while he feels this way he does not see everything or understand everything in the way that God does. It is trust and faith that provides the foundation for the final verses which turn the anxiety expressed earlier into an affirmation of faith. As such, Psalm 40 provides a model for prayer. It is open and honest; it lays down fears and worries, confesses them to God, and does so in hope and faith. It is a song for all ages and all situations.

*In peace, Pastor Jenn*

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## Deacons

**Doug Halley, Guest Preacher at MCC to preach on September 3<sup>rd</sup>** Doug is a retired engineer and second-career UCC licensed minister in the Fairfield East Association. He is a member of the First Congregational Church in Stratford where he has served on Stewardship, Benevolence, Deacons and Board of Trustees. He also served as Chair of the Lead Gift Team for the church's capital fund drive. He and his wife, Luci, live in Shelton. He will be preaching and leading worship on September 3<sup>rd</sup>. Welcome Doug!

### Summer Sermon Series



**2017 Summer Sermon Series, "Our UCC Faith"** explores in depth the UCC Statement of Faith's seven theological statements that every UCC church holds in common. Included are some scripture texts, which can be used for advance study and reflection.

### **Aug 20 - God Loves, Pushes (and Judges?)**

*You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.*

- Micah 6:6-8; Psalm 130; Matthew 25:31-40

### **Aug 27 - A Seeking, Saving, Still-Speaking God**

*You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.*

- Romans 5:12-21; Mark 10:35-45; Matthew 26:31-35, 69-75; Jeremiah 2:4-13

**Sep 10 - Created in the Image of God** *You call the worlds into being, create persons in your own image, and set before each one the ways of life and death.*

- Genesis 1:1-2:4a; Genesis 2:4b-25; Deuteronomy 30:11-20

## Christian Education

### Come to the Senior PF Car Wash!



Come to MCC Saturday, September 9th from 11:00 am - 2:00 pm for a carwash to support the Senior PF on their 2018 Mission trip. Cost is \$7 per car. Pay at the carwash or buy a ticket in advance at coffee hour, August 27th and September 3rd. We hope you can come!

### Summer Sunday School at MCC



We once again will be having Summer Sunday School for children in Pre-K thru 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. This will be a one room Sunday School set up so all of the children will be together. Our theme this year is "Do What Matters – the United Church of Christ".

August 20<sup>th</sup> – "We Give Thanks by Working for a Just and Loving World"

August 27<sup>th</sup> – "We Listen for a Still-speaking God"

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### Trustee

It's summertime, and while many of you will be enjoying summer vacations, the work of MCC continues. Please do what you can to stay current on your pledge payments over the summer months, even though you might not be able to attend Sunday services. You can arrange for electronic payment from your bank, or via the "Donate" page on our web site: <http://www.mcc-ucc.org/donate.html>

Thanks for your support of MCC and have a great summer! Sincerely – John O'Rourke, Receiver



### Help MCC Pave Its Way to a Brighter Future!

Here is your opportunity to help us upgrade the MCC campus and ALSO honor a local business, friend, colleague, family member, or loved one by sponsoring the installation of a personalized, engraved brick! The Trustees are launching a "buy a brick campaign" to help finance the cost of replacing a deteriorated walkway running alongside Rexford House. Each standard-size, 4" x 8" brick is \$125, and allows three lines of text comprised of eighteen characters each. An order form is attached. For further information, please contact the church office or Mark Barnhart at [msbarnhart515@gmail.com](mailto:msbarnhart515@gmail.com).



# MONROE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

## Help MCC Pave Its Way to a Brighter Future! "BUY A BRICK" CAMPAIGN

The MCC Board of Trustees is pleased to extend this unique opportunity to help upgrade the MCC campus and honor a local business, friend, colleague, family member, or loved one by sponsoring the installation of a personalized, engraved brick. The Trustees are launching a "buy a brick campaign" to help finance the cost of replacing a deteriorated walkway running alongside Rexford House. Each standard-size, 4" x 8" brick is \$125, and allows three lines of text comprised of eighteen characters each. To sponsor a commemorative brick, please complete the following information and return to the address provided below.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Each commemorative brick measures a standard 4" x 8" and allows up to 3 lines of 18 characters per line (including spaces) of engraved type. Each brick is \$125.00.

Examples:

*In Loving Memory  
Of Our Parents  
Jones Family*

*Best Friends  
Forever  
Kathy & Jodi*

In the space provided below, indicate the wording of your inscription as you would like it to read on your personalized brick. Please print clearly and use block letters, one letter per block. (For additional bricks, please use multiple forms).


Hand-deliver or mail in this form with a check made payable to Monroe Congregational Church to: "MCC Campus Buy a Brick Campaign" c/o Monroe Congregational Church, 34 Church Street, Monroe, CT 06468. Please contact the church office at (203) 268-9327 or [secretary@mcc-ucc.org](mailto:secretary@mcc-ucc.org) with any questions.

## Outreach

**It's that time again...the next St. George's supper is August 21st .** Please look for the poster in Wilton Hall to sign up to help. We have a variety of needs, including shoppers, and servers. Simply take a tag (or two!) and you will be making a difference for those in need. Please bring all food to the church by August 20<sup>th</sup> at 11am. If you take a tag and are unable to fulfill your commitment please contact the church office 203-268-9327 Or if you would like a tag but cannot make it to church please call Melissa in the office



### **Covenant to Care Book Bags Needed**

This summer won't you shop for a child in need while you shop for your own child! We have 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 coming soon. Please attach the "tag" to your Book Bag and leave it in/by the blue, collection bins outside the church office by Sunday, September 10th -Thank you!

The children thank you for your support!

Sincerely, Diane Prall , Monroe Congregational Church Liaison Covenant to Care



### **Dress A Girl Around The World Sew-A-Thon Returns September 23**

**from 9am- 3pm~** Join Liz Skarzyinski from Dress A Girl Around The World on September 23 in Wilton Hall to create dresses for little girls overseas. Thank you for your generous donations of fabric. Dress A Girl is part of Hope for Women International a non-profit, nondenominational independent Christian organization. If you would like to help or join the team, please call Liz 203-

257-7174 or email [Liz1202us@yahoo.com](mailto:Liz1202us@yahoo.com).



**The Bridgeport Rescue Mission** fights poverty from the inside out as they embrace the urban poor and addicted with the compassion of Christ, offering hope and healing for a changed life. We provide more than 450,000 meals each year though our dining room, food pantry, and mobile kitchens. Can you help? There is a donation bin located in

Rexford Hall.

We are in need of:

Canned green beans, peas, & corn  
Canned sweet and white potatoes  
Canned tuna & chicken

Boxed macaroni & cheese  
Boxed rice  
Boxed cold cereal  
Pasta and sauce

**Have you seen the collection bottle for Heifer International sitting on the serving table during coffee hour?** This is for your spare change that when pooled together is



able to purchase livestock and provide training to end poverty and hunger and to care for the Earth around the world. Your monies help families help themselves and others in their community when they receive animals that they grow and use their products and share their offspring allowing families to share the wealth. Your spare change goes a long way. A large donation check is sent to Heifer at the end of the year from Morning Circle. Please contact Susie Cuseo at [203-268-0280](tel:203-268-0280) or [thecuseos@yahoo.com](mailto:thecuseos@yahoo.com) if you have any questions.

Do you have prescription glasses that you don't use anymore? Have you found some while cleaning out your junk drawers? A collection box for those glasses, cases and prescription sunglasses will be on the serving table during coffee for the month of October. Afterwards they will be dropped off at the appropriate place where volunteers clean, sort by prescription strength and package the glasses. Recycled glasses are distributed to people in need in low and middle income communities where they will have the greatest impact. Your donated glasses will change someone's life. Imagine if you could help a child read, an adult succeed in his job, a senior maintain her independence and provide a community with more opportunities to grow and thrive. Consider donating your used glasses and give the gift of sight to someone who will have a better view of life. Contact Susie Cuseo at [203-268-0280](tel:203-268-0280) or [thecuseos@yahoo.com](mailto:thecuseos@yahoo.com) with any questions.

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**Fellowship**

**Young at Heart will be meeting at My Place 12:00 noon on August 24.** Please contact



Nancy Smith by phone or email to let her know if you will attend. Her phone number is [203-880-5228](tel:203-880-5228) or email at [nancy.s.smith66@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.s.smith66@gmail.com). Sheldon and I will not be in church this month due to his working at the Newtown church, so please contact by email or phone and leave a message. Thank you. Nancy

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

- ✚ **August 16<sup>th</sup>- 7:30pm** Victoria by Daisy Goodwin ~ Hosted by Peggy Villani
- ✚ **September 20<sup>th</sup>-7:30pm** The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane by Lisa See~Host TBD
- ✚ **October 18<sup>th</sup>-7:30pm** Beneath a Scarlet Sky by Mark T. Sullivan~Host TBD

**Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Looking for Prayer Partners!!** Will you be a prayer partner? You don't know what a prayer partner does? Well, all you need to do is complete an information sheet in Wilton Hall and return it in the slot provided. About a



month's time, you will receive a letter and the information sheet of the person who you will pray for while someone else is praying for you. Think of your partner and pray that they have a great day and that they have the strength to work through whatever challenge they may be facing. Seek them out during coffee hour, perhaps strike up a conversation. Offer them your hand while passing the peace during

service. Send them a card or note in the mail using the church's address as the return. It all culminates to the "Big Reveal" potluck luncheon held on May 20, 2018 in Wilton Hall at 11:15AM. Childcare will be provided to those 3 years and younger while older children can dine at the table. It doesn't take a lot of time out of your day. I hope that you will consider being a PRAYER PARTNER. Please contact Susie Cuseo at [203-268-0280](tel:203-268-0280) or at [thecuseos@yahoo.com](mailto:thecuseos@yahoo.com) with any questions or comments. Here's a testimonial from last year:

"There were times when I would be stressed out and (get) caught up in the troubles of life, and I would remember that my prayer partner was thinking about me. It motivated me to find a way to find relief and happiness, and provide love and support to others. This also taught me to be more compassionate and thoughtful and prayerful for my prayer partner and others around me. It taught me to look at life through a new perspective."



**Morning Circle** invites all the women of the congregation to attend our next meeting on Wednesday, September 13 at 11AM in Dineson Parlor. We will have a representative from Union Savings Bank speak about recent scams afflicting our community. Please bring a donation for the Food Pantry as well as a bag luncheon while we have a short business meeting. Our future meetings will include making Trick-or-Treat bags for the Food Pantry in October, bean soup jars in November and collecting Giving Tree gifts for the town in December at the Christmas luncheon. Morning Circle meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 11AM. If you have any questions, please contact Jackie Bleakney at [203-268-5275](tel:203-268-5275).

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### Musicfest Committee

#### 3rd Annual Monroe MusicFest: Sunday, Sept 24, 1-7pm

We hope you will come out and enjoy this great day of music and art at MCC! We are also hoping for your support with a personal donation, purchase of a business advertisement and/or MusicFest tickets. Please note, in order to appear in the program, donations and ads must be turned in by the end of August. Any net "profit" after expenses will be equally divided between MCC's operating budget and Senior Pilgrim Fellowship in support of their next mission trip.



Thank you! - *Your MusicFest Team*

If you **donate**, there are defined levels (Platinum = \$200+; Gold = \$150 – 199; Silver = \$100 – 149; Bronze= \$50 – 99; Other = \$Any). Of course, any level of donation is more than welcome. There are small colorful envelopes in most of the pews. Write how you want your dedication to appear (*in honor of, etc.*), fold your check (payable to MCC with the memo line "MusicFest") and pop it in the collection plate or church office.

If you want to place a **business advertisement**, your company's information will also appear in our very attractive program. To place an ad, please contact Vaughan ([vaughanaskue@gmail.com](mailto:vaughanaskue@gmail.com), [203-345-3637](tel:203-345-3637)) or any other member of the team.

And don't forget the most important part... **buy tickets and attend!** Invite your friends, neighbors, family and co-workers; make a night out of it! You'll be glad you did. Tickets will soon be available for purchase at coffee-hour. For information on all the fabulous performers or to buy electronic tickets, visit <http://monroemusicfest.blogspot.com/>.

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**Thank you from June Winger**



Thank you all so much for your well wishes and singing for me for my birthday. I really appreciate all the love you show to me and everyone else. I tell everyone what a lovely family church we have. In Christian Love, June Winger



## MCC Community Calendar

### Week of Aug. 20<sup>th</sup>

10:00am Worship

### **Mon. Aug. 21<sup>st</sup>**

3:45pm St. George's Supper

### **Tues. Aug. 22<sup>nd</sup>**

9:30am Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

6:00pm Council Planning Meeting (Parker-Burgard Home)

### **Thurs. Aug. 24<sup>th</sup>**

12:00pm Young at Heart (My Place, Newtown)

### Week of Aug. 27<sup>th</sup>

*Baptism of Gabriela Gerhard*

10:00am Worship

12:30pm Outreach Planning Mtng (Maiolo Home)

4:00pm Senior PF at Cheramie Lee's house

### **Tues. Aug. 29<sup>th</sup>**

9:30am Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

### **Wed. Aug. 30<sup>th</sup>**

7:00pm Trustees Planning Meeting (location TBD)

*Pastor Jenn is on vacation from Sept 1<sup>st</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup>*

### Week of Sept. 3<sup>rd</sup>

*Guest Preacher Doug Halley*

10:00am Worship with Communion

### **Mon. Sept. 4<sup>th</sup>**

*Office Closed in Observance of Labor Day*

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

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

### **Thurs. Sept. 7<sup>th</sup>**

7:15pm First Adult Choir Rehearsal

### **Sat. Sept. 9<sup>th</sup>**

11:00am Senior PF Car Wash

### Week of Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>

*Baptism of Burton Francis V*

*Homecoming Sunday*

10:00am Worship

11:15am Confirmation Informational (Dineson)

5:00pm Senior PF

6:00pm Junior PF

### **Tues. Sept. 12<sup>th</sup>**

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

### **Wed. Sept. 13<sup>th</sup>**

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

11:00am Morning Circle (Dineson)

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

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

7:15pm Adult Choir

### Week of Sept. 17<sup>th</sup>

*Confirmation Dedication Sunday*

10:00am Worship

11:15am Outreach Meeting (Dineson)

5:00pm Senior PF

6:00pm Adult & Junior PF

### **Tues. Sept. 19<sup>th</sup>**

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

7:00pm Bereavement Group (Dineson)

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

6:30pm First Confirmation Class (Dineson)

7:30pm MCC Book Club (Location TBD)

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

9:30am Bible Study (Dineson)

7:15pm Adult Choir

### Week of Sept. 24<sup>th</sup>

10:00am Worship

1:00pm Music Fest

### **Tues. Sept. 26<sup>th</sup>**

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

### **Wed. Sept. 27<sup>th</sup>**

6:30pm Confirmation Class (Dineson)

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

9:30am Bible Study (Dineson)

7:15pm Adult Choir

### Week of Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>

*Neighbors in Need/World Communion Sunday*

10:00am Worship

5:00pm Senior PF

6:00pm Adult & Junior PF

### **Tues Oct. 3**

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

### **Wed. Oct. 4<sup>th</sup>**

6:30pm Confirmation Class (Dineson)

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

9:30am Bible Study (Dineson)

7:15pm Adult Choir