



THE MONROE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

STEEPLE

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Monroe, CT 06468

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

Senior Pastor: Rev. Jennifer Gingras
Associate Pastor of Faith Formation: Rev. Barb Frey
Music Director: Will Duchon
Secretary: Melissa Rosenberg
Church email: secretary@mcc-ucc.org

February 1, 2016

Simply Smiles to Visit MCC on February 7th

Sam Steinmetz, the volunteer coordinator of Simply Smiles, will

share in worship and at coffee hour some updates on their work on the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation on Sunday, February 7th. A group from MCC and Venture Crew 63 will go from July 23rd to July 30th. They will be led by Jan Redfern, who makes her tenth trip with Simply Smiles this summer!



experiences.

The Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Reservation is located in South Dakota and is roughly the size of Connecticut. The town of La Plant lies on the eastern half of the Reservation and that focuses their open skies, sunsets breathtaking. The contrast to the unemployment, insecurity and lack of Lakota people.



Simply Smiles

**bright futures for impoverished children,
their families and their communities**

If you have EVER been interested in volunteering, either in their Fairfield county office or in Oaxaca, Mexico or on the Reservation, you should come and meet Sam to hear more about it. If you have attended a trip in the past, we all can benefit from hearing about your life-changing

is where Simply Smiles is efforts. The rolling hills, wide and sparkling starry nights are natural beauty stands in stark systemic ills of poverty, racism, addiction, food basic shelter that plague the

When we spend time on the Reservation, we are privileged to be welcomed as friends into a beautiful but tragically impoverished setting. We are given a sacred opportunity to help make life better for native children and their families.



Through summer camps, community meals and events, book clubs, music camp, field trips and the morning mile... at the basketball hoop, archery range and horse shoe pits... in quilting club, cooking club



and gardening classes... at pow-wows and drum circles... building safe, dry, warm, tornado resistant houses... we work with our Lakota friends to strengthen their community ties and remind these precious children that they are valued and they have a bright future ahead of them. Please, join us!



February 10th Ash Wednesday Soup Supper and Service: Join us as we begin our Lenten journey towards Holy Week for a light meal of soup and conversation at 6:30pm, at 7:30 we will have a worship service in the meetinghouse with imposition of ashes, ending with a bonfire in front of the church.

Save the Date: Senior PF Chili Cook-off Fundraiser 5pm-8pm February 20th

! Senior PF is preparing for our big mission trip to Kentucky this July! We are excited and looking forward to new experiences, hard work, helping others and being in community with one another. Please join us for a chili cook off where we will have several contestants competing for the title of Chili Master! There will be music and raffles. We are also working on sharing several past mission trips so people can get a glimpse into our week and how important these trips are to our evolving spiritual growth and being of service to others. Please join us and see who should be crowned the Chili Master...



Are you ready for camp?!?! Registration for Summer 2016 conferences is open!! Log on to the [Silver Lake registration site](#) to find conferences for 4th through 12th graders, CIT training weekend, biking adventures, the National Youth Event, a trip to Mexico

with Simply Smiles, and more! It's all waiting for you! *Please see Pastor Jenn for information on scholarships from MCC and the Fairfield East Association!*



Our stewardship campaign is now complete. We are happy to report that we have received pledges from 105 families in the amount of \$208,204 (*My apologies for quoting the wrong number during our annual meeting on 1/31/2016*). A big thank you to everyone who pledged and to all those who give their time and talent to support the mission and ministries at the Monroe Congregational Church, United Church of Christ!

Fulfilling your pledge is easily done using giving envelopes, an automatic payment setup through your bank, or our church's website (www.mcc-ucc.org). To receive giving envelopes, contact Melissa at the church office at 203-268-9327 or by e-mailing stewardship@mcc-ucc.org. To use the church website, click on the menu for "Donate" and then click on the big "Donate Now" button to set up one time or recurring payments through Vanco Services.

In Christ's Service, Scott Young (chair), John Maiolo, Liz Sampson, Trees Whitbeck, and John O'Rourke (receiver) email: stewardship@mcc-ucc.org

Outreach

URGENT: The **MCC Refugee Resettlement Team** needs your help finding housing options for an incoming refugee family. If you know of an affordable and available house, cottage, condo or legal apartment (separate entrance, kitchen and bath), that could provide a safe haven for a refugee family for 6-12 months, please contact Liz Sampson at lizsampson@gmail.com or Kaia Fahrenholz at bardwatcher@gmail.com.

Also, come to worship on **Sunday, February 21st** to meet Susan Waschak, a member of the Brookfield Congregational Church's refugee resettlement team. She will share the stories of some of the families they worked with and other information to help us get started. If you are interested in learning more about the Refugee Resettlement Team, please contact Pastor Jenn or Kaia.

St. George's Supper to Be Served February 15th: 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 sign up in Wilton Hall. Please bring all food to the church by February 14th at 11am. If you take a tag and are unable to fulfill your commitment or make it to church, please contact Melissa in the church office at 203-268-9327.



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 are collecting sample size toiletries such as soap, shaving cream, and shampoo to help support their mission.

There is an URGENT need for:

- Gently used or new winter boots for men, women, & children (in all sizes)
- Men's white tube socks (new only)
- New or gently used blankets

Please consider donating one (or more!) of these items. There is a bin located in Rexford Hall to drop off donations. Thank you, Julie McClenathan

Please Help Support A Project From The Heart. It Would Mean So Much For Our Soldiers Overseas 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. There is a bin located in the Rexford house with an extended list of items needed. Please consider donating to this worthy cause. If you have any questions please contact Miriam Zalenski at 203-261-8550 or bigred722@sbcglobal.net



The Annual MCC Tag Sale is coming March 12th!

Please mark your calendars for March 12 from 9 am-1 pm (early birds at 8) in Wilton Hall. This is an enormous event, requiring many people to help with set up, sale and clean up. There are will be all sorts of shifts to suit all schedules, so please consider donating a few hours of your time that week. How you can help:

1--Donate your gently used items. *Please do not donate anything broken or old TVs, computer monitors, large upholstered furniture or clothing.* All other donations can be dropped off at the church starting after noon on Sunday 3/7 and continuing until Thursday 3/10. Drop off during the week is during office hours, and then on Thursday we will have extended drop off hours until 9 pm. Please do not drop off items on Friday.

2--PLEASE sign up to help. This is an enormous event, requiring many help with set up, sale and clean up. There are all sorts of shifts to suit all schedules, so please donate a few hours of your time that week. In addition to being a great help for us, it is a wonderful time for fellowship and fun with each other, so don't miss out. A signup sheet will be posted soon.

3--Spread the word. There are always terrific bargains (and we mean BARGAINS) at this tag sale, so the more people that come, the more successful we will be. 100% of the money earned that day goes to support mission, so everyone benefits from this event.

Christian Education



Generations Together: A Special After-Worship Lenten Program For Children, Teens, and Adults

"The GOD We Can Know" - Exploring the "I AM"

Statements of Jesus

- **Feb 28:** I AM the Light of the World
- **March 6:** I AM the Good Shepherd
- **March 13:** I AM the Resurrection and the Life

Each Session will include:

- 1) A light brunch, a video clip on location in the places Jesus walked, and a gathering activity for all ages.
- 2) Discovering the theme: Children will gather with Pastor Barb for some fun activities, Adults and Teens will gather with Pastor Jenn for a discussion of the scripture and a spiritual practice
- 3) Children, Teens and Adults will share a closing reflection.

*Generations Together: Children, Teens, Adults
We learn so much from each other!*

Junior Pilgrim Fellowship

Welcome Cady Gingras! Cady is a new Jr PF advisor. She is in her Senior year at Southern CT State University, and is graduating in May with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology. She brings lots of new ideas and even more fun to our group. Her cell phone is 203-895-5050.

news
YOU CAN USE!

February 7 6:00-8:30pm. Celebrate the Super Bowl at advisor Dave Rooney's home. Please bring a snack or drink to share. The address is 140 Sturbridge Lane, Monroe and the phone is 203-4591971. Thank you for your hospitality, Dave and family!

February 14 An afternoon trip to Bounce U in Stratford. We also will have "sundaes" that Sunday! Times and cost TBA

February 21 No Jr PF----Presidents' Weekend holiday

February 28 Mystery Dinner Night 6:00-8:30pm

March 6 Ski Trip to Mohawk Ski Area in Cornwall, CT. We will leave MCC at 9am. Permission slips and money will be due by Feb 28 More details TBA

March 13 "GROG" Night 6:00-8:30pm

March 20 A "Bake-Off with a Jr PF twist--Help create some Delicious Fun!
6:00pm-8:30pm

Friends are always welcome!



The CE Board Presents:

"A Lenten Table" in Wilton Hall February 14, 21, 28

- Color Lenten Posters
- Create a Lenten Banner
- Choose a Home Lenten Bible Study

Fellowship



Please join us for the MCC Book Club!

February 22nd - 7:30pm Host: Linda Fracassini We are reading *The Nightingale* by Kristin Hannah

March 14th - 7:30pm Host: Julie McClenathan We are reading *A Man Called Ove* by Fredrik Backman

Confirmation News!

Scott Switzer has joined the confirmation teaching team. Scott is an adjunct music professor and professional musician (bassoon). He joined the church five years ago when he married Rev. Kristen Provost-Switzer. He is a member of the 20/30 Clergy club and lives right around the corner in Sandy Hook. Welcome Scott!

Community News

Need A Babysitter?



Experienced mother looking to care for 1 to 2 children on a part time basis. I am a recently retired Monroe resident. Having raised my son on my own, I feel that I am very qualified to take care of children. A

great conversationalist, I am a hard worker who would bring creativity, a sense of humor and a nurturing approach in spending time with your children. References available upon request. Contact Information: Margery – (203)-706-2132 or email - mfox08@snet.net.

If you or someone you know struggles with mental health or addiction, please know that you are not alone and you are welcome here. If you would like to learn more about available resources at the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) at (860) 418-7000 or on their website at:

<http://www.ct.gov/dmhas>

MCC Community Calendar

Week of Jan. 31st

Tues. Feb. 2nd

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag
7:30pm Rachel's Well (Dineson)

Wed. Feb. 3rd

NO CONFIRMATION

6:30 Christian Education (Barb's Office)

Thurs. Feb. 4th

9:30am Bible Study
6:30pm Bell Choir
7:30pm Adult Choir

Fri. Feb 5th-Sun. Feb. 6th

Confirmation Retreat at Silver Lake

Week of Feb. 7th

Guest: Sam Steinmetz from Simply Smiles

10:00am Worship w/Communion
11:15am Junior Choir
6:00pm Junior PF (Rooney's) & Senior PF (Gilberti's)
Super Bowl parties

Tues. Feb. 9th

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Wed. Feb. 10th

6:30pm Ash Wednesday Meal
7:30pm Ash Wednesday Worship

Thurs. Feb. 11th

9:30am Bible Study
6:30pm Bell Choir
7:30pm Adult Choir

Week of Feb. 14th

Dedication of New NRSV Pulpit Bible

10:00am Worship
11:15am Junior Choir
11:15am Lenten Table (Wilton)
11:15am Outreach
Early afternoon Junior PF at Bounce U (Stratford)
6:00pm Senior PF

Mon. Feb. 15th

Office is closed in observance of President's Day
3:45pm St. George's Supper

Tues. Feb. 16th

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag
7:00pm Bereavement Group (Dineson)

Wed. Feb. 17th

6:30pm Confirmation Class

Thurs. Feb. 18th

9:30am Bible Study
6:30pm Bell Choir
7:30pm Adult Choir

Sat. Feb. 20th

5:00pm Senior PF Chili Cook Off

Week of Feb. 21st

Guest: Susan Waschak from Brookfield's Refugee Resettlement Team

10:00am Worship
11:15am Junior Choir
11:15am Lenten Table (Wilton)
6:00pm Adult & Senior PF (No Jr PF)

Tues. Feb. 23rd

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag
7:00pm Divorce Support Group (Dineson)

Wed. Feb. 24th

6:30pm Confirmation Class

Thurs. Feb. 25th

9:30am Bible Study
12:00pm Young at Heart (location TBD)
6:30pm Bell Choir
7:30pm Adult Choir

Week of Feb. 28th

10:00am Worship
11:15am Junior Choir
11:15am Lenten Table (Wilton)
11:15am Generations Together Lenten Program (Wilton)
6:00pm Adult, Junior & Senior PF

Tues. Mar. 1st

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag
7:00pm Rachel's Well (Dineson)

Wed. Mar. 2nd

6:30pm Confirmation Class