



THE MONROE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

STEEPLE

34 Church Street
Monroe, CT 06468

Tel.: (203) 268-9327

Fax: (203) 268-3153

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

June 1, 2016

Caring for Each Other: A Lay Ministry Pastoral Visitation Program at MCC

Think of a time when you received care from someone in your congregation...what did that person do to express their concern and love? How did it feel to be cared for by a church friend?

It is true that by vocation, training and call, ordained clergy may be the most highly trained resource in a church when it comes to pastoral care. We take classes in seminary, and we practice by serving as chaplains in hospital settings. But it is also true that we are not the only caregivers in the congregation. Lay people are essential partners in this ministry. What is your vision for caregiving in your congregation? What kind of care do you want to share?

Offering and receiving loving care is the essence of belonging. If you have ever had thoughts of becoming a lay care minister, please consider joining our Lay Ministry Pastoral Visitation Program. Care will be provided in conjunction with myself and the board of deacons.

Once trained, a lay minister will be able to:

- *Visit the ill at home or in the hospital,*
- *Support those going through a life crisis,*
- *Maintain contact with those unable to attend church due to illness or disability,*
- *Support friends and family involved in care giving, and*
- *Comfort the bereaved*

Here is an idea of what will be required:

- *A basic criminal background check, at no cost to you*
- *Attendance at Care Training: 3 modules, 2 hours each on Saturdays in the fall (dates TBD) so that you can...*
- *Maintain monthly visits as long as necessary with one person in need of care*
- *Attend once every other month lay minister meeting to hear and discuss verbatims, train in specific skills and problem solve with other lay ministers*
- *Monthly appointment with me to check in on your call and progress in the program*

Providing care, attention and spiritual support to people in our church, especially the elderly and people with special needs, is a deeply spiritual calling. I am thrilled to speak with anyone who shows an interest in this work. Please call me in the office, 203-268-9327. Thank you for your consideration and support.

In peace, *Pastor Jenn*

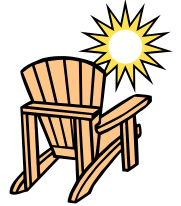
Deacons



Graduation Celebration Sunday is June 12th Is anyone in your family graduating? In worship on June 12th we will celebrate the accomplishments of graduates (high school, technical/trade school, college or graduate programs). Please e-mail Melissa at mccsecretary@sbcglobal.net with the graduate's name, school and degree program and plans for next fall.

Summer Worship with St. Peter's Episcopal Church!

One of the highlights of every summer is joining in worship with our friends from St. Peter's in an outdoor setting. Please bring a lawn chair



- On **July 24th at 10AM** We will host St. Peter's on our side of the green
- On **August 21st at 9AM**. St. Peter's will host us on their side of the green

Outreach



The Bridgeport Rescue Mission is asking for our help. On May 11th, representatives of Bridgeport Rescue Mission visited Morning Circle to talk about their mission. **They are in need of gently used or new coats for men, women & children in all sizes.** Last year they collected 15,000 coats! The coats will be handed out before Thanksgiving. There is a bin located in Rexford Hall to drop off donations. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

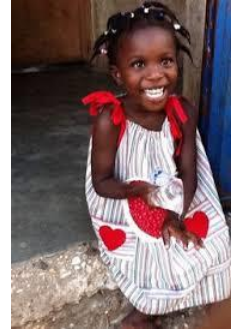
Please Help Support A Project From The Heart. It Would Mean So Much For Our Soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan To Receive Care Packages From MCC. We need toiletries such as deodorant and shampoo, toothbrushes, and non-perishables items such as cookies (in boxes) beef jerky, puzzle books, playing cards and snack items. 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



It's that time again...the next St. George's supper is on June 20th. 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 June 19th at 11am. If you take a tag and are unable to fulfill your commitment please contact the church office 203-268-9327.**



Dress A Girl Around The World Sew-A-Thon Returns July 16th from 10am-3pm~ Join Liz Skarzyinski from Dress A Girl Around The World on July 16th in Wilton Hall to create dresses for little girls overseas. There has been a request from India for dresses for girls there. Our goal will be to make 50 T-shirt dresses, a different style than the sun-dresses but in some ways is a little easier to make. Thank you for your generous donations of fabric. If you would like to contribute we need small toys that can fit in a 2-3 inch square pocket. 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.



Giving Gardens

All 3 Giving Gardens are planted!!!! A HUGE thank you to Pat and Donna Rooney O'Hara for once again donating all the soil for each garden, as well as tomatoes, kale, lettuce and peppers!! A shout out to Rob and Julie Aldworth McClenathan, Linda Landen Caballero and Dave Wang and his crew of Good Shepherd church who prepped and planted the gardens.



Our Sunday School kids planted seedlings of bush beans and our own Cub Scout Den #262 led by Owen and Michelle Gagne Correll planted cucumber seedlings. Gingerbread pre-schoolers planted beets and they are at MCC. Multi-generational gardeners!!!

More Exciting news -- Good Shepherd will be breaking ground in the fall for a 4th Giving Garden at their Church!! This is a community coming together for a cause at its finest and demonstrates what it means to live a Christian life. Helping each other is what it's all about, folks, and yes, it does take a village!

So we are looking for folks who want to water and/or harvest. Watering starts right away so please comment below, text me or call me on my cell if you want to help out. 203-260-0292.

Stay tuned for more updates- we are looking to top last year's bounty of 1,536 lbs of food for our friends, Wendy Jolls and the Monroe Food Pantry! Thank you, Kathy Maiolo



Thank you to everyone who participated in the Crop Walk on May 22nd. CROP WALK is still collecting moneys through Sunday June 5th. Thank you walkers for your commitment to walk and raise money to alleviate hunger in our area and around the world. Thank you sponsors for sponsoring our walkers for this very worthy cause. It is not too late; you may add your support <https://www.crophungerwalk.org/bridgeportct/trees>. We will report the totals in the next steeple.



Left to Right: Paul, Theresa, Rob, Vinithi, Kathy, Julie, Cady



Left to Right: Rob, Kathy, and Julie

Fellowship

Please join us for the MCC Book Club!

- ✚ **June 13th – 7:30pm** The Traitor's Wife: The Woman Behind Benedict Arnold and the Plan to Betray America by Allison Pataki. Peggy Villani is hosting
- ✚ **July 13th – 7:30pm** The Summer Before the War by Helen Simonson. Sue Smelzer is hosting
- ✚ **August 17th – 7:30pm** Where'd You Go, Bernadette by Maria Semple. Sue Smelzer is hosting
- ✚ **September 21st – 7:30pm** The Girl Who Wrote in Silk. Location TBD



Retired Men's Breakfast June 8th- Retired Men will meet for breakfast at 9:00am on June 8th at Chips Restaurant 51 Monroe Turnpike (Rt. 111 near Home Depot). All retired men and semi-retired men are welcome. Gary Thompson will be the breakfast host. Please call the office by Tuesday if you need a ride. 203-268-9327

Thank you to all my prayer partners. Last fall 32 members volunteered to take a little bit of their time to consider someone in their prayers or thoughts. They sent cards and notes to each other using the church's address. They reached out during the passing of the peace or while sipping coffee after service. Recently, we had the "big reveal" potluck luncheon where we dined and discovered who was praying for us. I'd like to thank all the ladies who helped me get the

luncheon off to a great start and a very organized clean up. Kudos to the brave Sr Pfers who also signed up and prayed for an older member of the church. My hope for everyone participating as a prayer partner is to continue to keep your new friend in your thoughts. Never forget who your partner is even if you get a NEW one when you sign up again in the fall.

Here's one testimony about being a prayer partner:

"I often thought about what I was experiencing in my day-to-day life, the pressures and stress, and then considered what words, thoughts, comfort would help me get through that and then reflect those thoughts to my prayer partner. Always a spirit-raiser - getting a note/card from my secret partner."

Morning Circle invites all the women of the congregation to our June luncheon on Wednesday the 8th. We will carpool at 11:30AM from the church parking lot and travel to Tazza Cucina in Newtown for a 12:00 reservation. We will have a brief meeting and collect any items for the Food Pantry. We will not meet in July or August. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, September 14 at 11:00AM. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Jackie Bleakney at 203-268-5275.

Community News

The Monroe Health Department is offering a high blood pressure education series Wednesday evenings until-June 29th from 6:30 to 8:30pm at Monroe Town Hall. Contact the Monroe Health Department for additional information and to enroll in the program. 203-452-2818



Christian Education

Summer Camp at Hogwarts: Vacation Bible School, Aug 1- 5, 2016

Have you ever wanted to experience the wonder of Hogwarts, the deliciousness of Butterbeer, the excitement of magic classes? Our week in the wizarding world will provide all that with other fun activities like House Sorting, Quidditch, Potions Class, and more. If your child is a Harry Potter fan, our VBS will be an incredible chance to indulge his/her love for one of the most iconic series of this generation (and learn a bit more about our faith as we do!) Registration forms are online at mcc-

ucc.org/ministries/vacation-bible-school.html and in the church office. Volunteers also needed, please contact VBS co-chairs Lani Siciliano lanimsis@yahoo.com or Liska Gutierrez at liskag7@gmail.com for more information.



Junior Pilgrim Fellowship

6/5: Our last PF gathering will be at The Sampson's home (3pm) for a cookout party. We will ask each Jr. PF to bring an item of food to share at the party, sunscreen, goggles, a towel and bathing suit.



Strawberry Festival News



Clark and John would like to ***Thank you Berry Much*** in advance for volunteering for the 2016 Strawberry Festival. Please join them for a pancake breakfast following service on June 5th. Take some time to review the festival signup sheets, ask questions about volunteering...all while enjoying delicious pancakes featuring a 'strawberry pancake'. *Will Berry the festival mascot make a special appearance?*

Three weeks to go until the 45th Annual Strawberry Festival on June 18th and 19th ! The

Strawberry Festival



MCC Strawberry Festival is the single largest church event, providing funds for outreach, faith formation and events throughout the year. It presents an opportunity for us to interact with the broader community and - most importantly - Strawberry Festival weekend is full of laughter, fun and fellowship! Please sign up in Wilton Hall today!

Please remember that Everyone is invited to the Celebration Dinner immediately following cleanup on Sunday evening. Generally when we get the break-down done quickly, we eat at around 6. This is a wonderful time for all of us to relax after our fun filled weekend, share a meal together and celebrate! We look forward to working with all of you the weekend of the festival!

Yours in service and fellowship, Clark Gingras and John Maiolo



Calling All Bakers!! We Need You!! Strawberry Festival -June 19th & 20th
The Strawberry Festival depends on your homemade baked goods to stock the Country Store. Please bring your cookies, breads, cakes, & other goodies to: Dineson Parlor by Friday, June 18th (please, no frosted items)
Thank you, *Strawberry Festival Committee*



Summer 2016 at MCC!

June 5th

10am ~ Biscuit Communion
11am ~ "Thank You Berry Much"
Breakfast
3pm ~ Junior PF Party @ the Sampson's
6pm ~ Senior PF Scavenger Hunt

June 7th

7:30pm ~ Rachel's Well @ Parsonage

June 8th

9am ~ Retired Men Breakfast (Chips)
12pm ~ Morning Circle (Tazza Cucina)

June 9th

9:30am ~ Bible Study @ Parsonage

June 10th -11th

Connecticut Conference Annual Meeting,
University of Hartford (www.ctucc.org)

June 12th

10am ~ Graduation Blessing Sunday &
Sunday School Teacher Appreciation
6pm ~ Senior PF Elections @ Gilbert's

June 13th

7:30pm ~ Book Club, The Traitor's Wife,
by Allison Pataki @ Peggy Villani's

June 17th

Strawberry Festival Set Up
(All Day, Senior PF reports by 5pm)

June 18th

10am-5pm ~ 45th Annual Strawberry Festival

June 19th

10am ~ Strawberry Festival Worship
12pm-5pm ~ 45th Annual Strawberry Festival
6pm ~ Celebration Dinner! (Wilton Hall)

June 20th

3:45pm ~ St. George's Supper

June 26th

Summer Sunday School Begins

July 3rd

6pm ~ Senior PF Mission Trip 101/102 Mtg

July 5th

Debi Mastroni-Kenyon's first day in the office as our new Director of
Faith Formation!

July 9th -17th

Senior PF Mission Trip to Henderson, Kentucky
(<http://hendersonsettlement.com>)

July 13th

7:30pm ~ Book Club, The Summer Before the War,
by Helen Simonson @ Sue Smelzer's

July 16th

10am Dress A Girl Work Day (Wilton Hall)

July 20th

7pm Harry Potter Movie Night (side lawn)

July 23rd - 30th

Adult Mission Trip with Simply Smiles to the Cheyenne
River Sioux Reservation, SD

July 24th

10am ~ Summer Worship with St. Peter's
(on the Green, MCC Hosts)
11:30am ~ All-Church Read Convo "Why Did Jesus, Moses,
the Buddha, and Mohammed Cross the Road?" by Brian McLaren

August 1st -5th

9am-12pm ~ "Summer Camp at Hogwarts"

August 15th

3:45pm ~ St. George's Supper

August 17th

7:30pm ~ Book Club, Where'd You Go, Bernadette,
by Maria Semple @ Sue Smelzer's

August 18th-20th

Bible Reading Marathon (more info to come)

August 21st

9am ~ Summer Worship with St. Peter's
(on the Green, St. Peter's Hosts)



September 11th

10am ~ Homecoming Sunday
1pm ~ Welcome Home Picnic (Wolfe Park)

All are welcome, always.

For more info, see www.mcc-ucc.org
or call 203-268-9327

Summer Camp at Hogwart's

August 1st to August 5th, 9 AM to Noon

2016 Vacation Bible School Registration



Ready to head to Hogwarts? Platform 9 and 3/4 has just opened. Register now for this can't-miss-it experience. Ages 4 through entering 5th grade welcome. \$10 per child to cover supplies. Now accepting counselors in training in 6th & 7th grade. CIT's will work with staff but also be able to participate for crafts and snack. Cost is \$5 each CIT.

Attach a check payable to Monroe Congregational Church with "VBS 2016" in memo line and return to the church office with this form. Please also complete The Hogwarts Sorting Hat Questionnaire on the back of this form. We do not wish to exclude any interested child(ren) due to financial considerations. Please contact Rev. Jennifer Gingras regarding scholarship assistance at (203) 268-9327.

Parent/ Guardian: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Phone: _____

I give my child(ren) permission to participate in the MCC 2016 VBS _____

Name of child	Age	Grade in fall	Allergies, other?

I will be willing to help before VBS with preparations: ___Y ___N

I will be willing to help during VBS ___Y ___N (circle days) M T W Th F All

In order to volunteer, I will need childcare for my child age 3 or under ___Y ___N

Name and age of child(ren) _____

Please let us know about any health concerns or physical limitations we need to be aware of.

My child will bring an epi pen to VBS. ___Yes ___ No

Our Sustenance Director will contact parents of those with food allergies regarding the snacks provided prior to the event. Please let us know a direct number to reach you: _____

The Monroe Congregational Church, UCC * 34 Church Street, Monroe CT 06468

The Hogwarts Sorting Hat Questionnaire

The Sorting Hat, bless its frayed brim, is taking a quick rest. So in the interim, we think a placeholder is best. New Hogwarts students, worry not! We'll find a home for you. But instead of that charmed chapeau, this quiz will have to do.

1.) You are given a test at school that has questions that teacher hasn't covered yet. In the middle of the test you notice that your friend next to you has a cheat-sheet. The teacher doesn't notice.

- ☐ Ask to share the cheat-sheet. This test isn't fair, so why should you be?
- ☐ Good for them, they beat the system.
- ☐ Confront them after the test and try to convince them not to cheat anymore. You don't want them to get in trouble.
- ☐ Confront them after the test and force them to tell the teacher they cheated, or you will tell on them. They must pay for their misdeeds.
- ☐ Inform the teacher right in the middle of class that they are cheating. Cheaters never prosper!

2.) While walking down the street you see a wallet on the side of the road. It has a small amount of money in it, but no identification of any kind. There is nobody in sight.

- ☐ Leave it there. Someone is probably looking for it.
- ☐ Pocket the money. You don't know who it belongs to, so finder's keepers.
- ☐ Take it to the police in case anyone ever reports it.
- ☐ Take the wallet, and go around the area asking anyone if they have lost a wallet recently.

3.) Someone has played a prank on you which involves your public embarrassment and everyone begins laughing at you. However, you doubt they meant any harm by it.

- ☐ Laugh along with the crowd. You love a good joke even if it's at your expense.
- ☐ On the outside you'll laugh because you don't want anyone to know that they really hurt your feelings by making you look stupid in front of everybody.
- ☐ You get upset and run away from the crowd. How could they be so mean?
- ☐ Pretend that all is well, but you won't forget this. They're going to pay for what they did! How dare they publicly humiliate you.

6.) A kid accuses you, in front of a whole crowd people, of stealing his toy which you did not do. You are twice his size, but he won't back off.

- ☐ How dare he insult me in front of all these people? I'll show him how things work in the real world!
- ☐ Explain to him that I didn't take his toy and give him fair warning that he'll have a black eye if he doesn't drop it.
- ☐ Try to rationalize with the kid. Tell him you didn't take the toy and refuse to fight him even if he takes a few swings at you.
- ☐ Tell him you didn't take the toy and direct him to someone who can help him find it.
- ☐ Explain to him you didn't take the toy and offer to personally help find the person who did.

MCC Community Calendar

Week of May 29th

Wed. June 1st

7:30pm Adult Choir

Thurs. June 2nd

9:30am Bible Study

6:30pm Bell Choir

Week of June 5th

Biscuit Communion Sunday

10:00am Worship

11:15am Junior Choir

11:15am Strawberry Pancake Breakfast
(Wilton Hall)

3:00pm Jr PF at the Sampson's

6:00pm Adult, Senior PF

Tues. June 7th

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

7:30pm Rachel's Well (Parsonage Porch)

Wed. June 8th

9:00am Retired Men (Chips)

12:00pm Morning Circle (Tazza Cucina)

Thurs. June 9th

9:30am Bible Study (Parsonage)

6:30pm Bell Choir

7:30pm Adult Choir

Week of June 12th

Graduation & Teacher Appreciation Sunday

10:00am Worship

11:15am Junior Choir

11:15am Trustees Meeting (Classroom 4)

6:00pm Senior PF Elections (Joe's House)

Mon. June 13th

7:30 MCC Book Club @Peggy Villani's home

Fri. June 17th

Strawberry Festival Set Up (5pm Sr PF sets up Tent)

Sat. June 18th –Sun. Jun. 19th

Strawberry Festival

Week of June 19th

Strawberry Festival Sunday

10:00am Worship

6:00pm Celebration Dinner (Wilton)

Mon. June 20th

3:45pm St. George's Supper (Bridgeport)

Tues. June 21st

7:30pm Bereavement Group (Dineson)

Thurs. June 23rd

12:00pm Young at Heart (Location TBD)

Week of June 26th

10:00am Worship

11:15am Deacons Meeting (Dineson)

6:00pm Senior PF

Mon. Jun. 27th

7:30pm Council Meeting (Dineson)

Tues. June 28th

7:30pm Divorce Support (Dineson)

Week of July 3rd

10:00am Worship w/Communion

6:00pm Senior PF 101/102 (Dineson)

Mon. July 4th

Office closed in observance of Independence Day

Sat. July 9th –July 17th

Senior PF Mission Trip

Week of July 10th

Guest Preacher Katrina Manzi

10:00am Worship

Sat. July 16th

10:00am Dress A Girl (Wilton Hall)

Week of July 17th

Guest Preacher Katrina Manzi

10:00am Worship

Senior PF Returns from Mission Trip

Wed. July 20th

7:00pm Harry Potter Family Movie Night (Side lawn)

Sat. July 23rd –July 31st

Adult Mission Trip to Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation