



**THE MONROE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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
Director of Faith Formation: Debi Mastroni-Kenyon
Music Director: Will Duchon
Secretary: Melissa Rosenberg
Church e-mail: secretary@mcc-ucc.org

June 1, 2018

I thank my God every time I remember you... It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. (Philippians 1:3, 7)

You know the saying, "if you want something done right, do it yourself?" I think there is something about human nature in which we want to be self-sufficient. Nothing seems to foster respect more than appearing to be a self-made person. But the truth is, no one is truly self-made. From the families we come from, to the communities we live in; our help comes from a wide circle of people. The healthiest people I know are aware of this, honor this, and are thankful.

The Christian life teaches us that ALL of us are dependent on the grace of God, so we try to replace our pride with gratitude. It is the nature of life in general (and of the church in particular) to be communal. We live in relationship with the God we encounter in Jesus and with each other. Autonomy, tempting as it may be, is just not an option for the faithful.

You know this. After all, could any one of us pull off a Strawberry Festival on our own?

The Apostle Paul held no such self-made illusions about himself. He knew that his work depended on the support of others. The Philippian church was especially supportive and generous; his work was heavily underwritten by their love and generosity. He depended on them and was deeply thankful for their companionship and partnership in the gospel.

The temptation to try to believe that we are the only ones responsible for ourselves remains. If we believe that our God is a God of grace, then we are humbled and grateful for the gifts that come our way. We will be thankful to those who have shared them



with us. And we will be generous in sharing them with others, for they were never just ours anyway. Every good gift has come, in one way or another, from God. Happy June, dear ones!
In Peace, Pastor Jenn

Strawberry Festival

Strawberry Festival



Mark your calendars for the **47th Annual Strawberry Festival June 16th & 17th**! The MCC Strawberry Festival is the single largest church fundraiser and service event, providing funds for outreach, faith formation and church events throughout the year. It presents an opportunity for us to interact with the broader community as representatives of Monroe Congregational Church and - most importantly - it's a weekend full of laughter, fun and fellowship!

Don't forget the 6pm Sunday Night Celebration Dinner! Everyone is invited to the Celebration Dinner immediately following cleanup on Sunday evening. 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 Strawberries, Service and Fellowship; *Clark Gingras & John Maiolo*

Calling All Bakers!! We Need You!! 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 15th (please, no frosted items). Thank you, *Strawberry Festival Committee*



Trustees

Save \$ on your Electric Bill - If you would like to save money on your electric bill, and possibly get it for free, while helping MCC lower their energy bills, please stop by and talk with Donna Konkol at 203-209-2974.



Deacons

Calling All Graduates: If you are graduating this year from high school, college, a university, graduate school, or another program, we want to recognize you and celebrate your achievements at the June 10th worship service. Please let the church office (secretary@mcc-ucc.org, 203-268-9327) know if you or anyone in your family is graduating, along with the details of your degree, school, etc. Thank you!



Installation for Rev. Katrina Manzi: June 3 Everyone is invited to attend the installation of Rev. Katrina Manzi at 3pm on June 3rd at the Middlebury Congregational Church, 1242 Whittemore Rd, Middlebury, CT 06762. Pastor Jenn will be preaching, please contact her if you'd like to join a carpool which leaves at 1:30.



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 29th at 10AM** we host St. Peter's on our side lawn (weather permitting), stay for an ice cream social in Wilton Hall following worship!
- On **August 12th at 9AM** St. Peter's will host us on their side of the green

Congratulations to our 2018 Confirmands



We hope that you can join us for worship on June 3rd as we confirm the following students. Stay and join us for cake at coffee hour in Wilton Hall following the service, as we celebrate the faith journey of our confirmands!

Confirmand

Lydia Aguilar

Abby Clausen

Joshua Correll

Olivia Cross

Kyra Siciliano

Gerrit Wissink

Sponsor

Kathy Allen

Ruth Wakeley

Clark Gingras/Paul Coward

Christine Hare

Julia Gutierrez

Mike McEvoy



Faith on Tap, Friday June 1st: Come talk about life and current events from a spiritual perspective at Veracious Brewing Company's from 7:30 - 9pm with your friends from MCC! No formal presentations - just people kicking around a topic, sharing honestly what really matters to them. Anyone is welcome, and no topic is off limits. Agreement not required, but civility is essential. Tea-totelers and soda drinkers welcome too! Call/text Clark ([203-895-5604](tel:203-895-5604)) or Rev. Jenn ([203-895-5607](tel:203-895-5607)) Gingras with any questions. **June 1st theme:** Christianity in Crisis?

Christian Education

Sign Up to Teach Summer Sunday School The Sign up to teach Summer Sunday School have begun! If you have ever wanted to teach Sunday School, this is your chance. We will be using the Spark! Curriculum so you will have straightforward lessons and ideas. Dates available are: July 8th, 15th, and 22nd, August 5th and 19th



Save the Date for VBS Vacation Bible School will be here before you know it! The theme is "God's Big Backyard"; the dates are August 6th-10th; open to all children age 4 thru 5th grade. Registration is available online now at www.mcc-ucc.org. We are still in need of a few volunteers so please contact Debi at debi@mcc-ucc.org if you can lend a hand!

Jr. PF Calendar

June

3rd – Regular Gathering from 6:00-7:30 pm
10th – End of Year Party at the Campbell's House



Sunday School Calendar

June

3rd – Wrapping up plans for Children's Sunday
10th – Children's Sunday – Let's Celebrate!

Outreach

Last March we held our church's annual Tag Sale for charity.

Thanks to everyone who sorted, set up, transported or donated their gently used stuff, or who worked with our Outreach team on the day of the sale. We couldn't do it without you! We made a total of \$2,782.27. We wanted to fill you in on where the money we raised will be spent:



- ❖ \$250 in Home Depot gift cards for the Adult Mission trip to Puerto Rico for paint and supplies
- ❖ \$500 to Strengthen the Church (<http://www.ucc.org/stc>), an annual offering of the United Church of Christ that supports new church plants, awakens new ideas in existing churches and develops the spiritual life in our youth and young adults. This year, 90% of the Strengthen the Church offerings will be given to Silver Lake Conference Center.
- ❖ \$500 for Homes for the Brave (<https://www.homesforthebrave.org/>), which provides the housing and services necessary to help homeless veterans return to a productive and meaningful life.
- ❖ \$500 to Empowering Children and Families (<http://www.empoweringct.org/>), whose mission is to help children and families construct and sustain a healthy foundation for the future.

The remainder we are holding on to, in anticipation of upcoming needs throughout the year. Again, thanks so much for helping out your neighbors at our annual tag sale!

Interfaith Partnership for Refugee Resettlement (IPRR) The Interfaith Partnership for Refugee Resettlement (IPRR) has welcomed its second refugee family. They are originally from the Congo and spent the last 21 years in a Rwandan refugee camp. The family consists of the mother and her 3 sons. The youngest son is hearing impaired and non-verbal. The family is very happy to be here and anxious to begin their new life. They are currently learning or enhancing their English, getting health exams and settling in to a new environment. IPRR is looking for gift cards for Price Rite, Walgreens, Visa or clothing discount stores. Additionally, they are looking for drivers and possible contacts for employment. Further information may be found on the IPRR website <http://www.iprefugeer.org/>, or by contacting the church office or Joanne Malia.



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



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 through our dining room, food pantry, and mobile kitchens. Can you help? There is a bin located in Rexford Hall to drop off donations. Thank you for your generosity.

We are in need of:

- Canned beans, peas, & corn
- Canned sweet and white potatoes
- Canned tuna & chicken & ham
- Peanut Butter
- Jelly in plastic jars
- Boxed macaroni & cheese
- Boxed rice

- Boxed cold cereal
- Pasta and sauce
- Ramen noodles
- Diapers
- Wipes
- Pull-Ups
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrushes

Help is needed at the Mustard Seed Thrift Shoppe - If you are free on Thursdays between 12-3, Fridays from 10-12:30 or 12:30-3 or on Saturdays between 10-12 or 12-2, I need your help manning the counter. It's really easy to open or close the Shoppe. If you are interested, come during one of these shifts and someone will show you what to do. You can also reply to me and I'll give you a tour and put you on the schedule. We will also need help on Saturday during Strawberry Festival June 16th where we require two volunteers manning the counter due to the volume of visitors. Please email Susie Cuseo at thecuseos@yahoo.com or call 203-268-0280 with any interest or questions.



Kathy Maiolo and the **Center for Family Justice are looking for donation for Camp Hope.** This is a camp for boys and girls ages 6-17 at either Camp Tepee or Camp High Rock. They all come from a background wrought with either domestic violence, child abuse or sexual abuse. This week at camp gives them the opportunity to know that they are not alone in their situation and that there are those who are willing to help and support them. These children get off the bus at camp with just the clothes they are wearing. They need our help in making camp a fun time and a great experience where they can open up and know that there's more to living than what they've been dealing with. Here are some of the things they need:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Large duffel bags | Bug spray |
| Pillows | Flashlights w/batteries |
| Sunscreen | Sneakers-closed toed |
| Water bottles w/handles | Heavy jacket |
| Shoes | Water shoes/shower shoes |
| Backpacks | Ponchos |
| Pajamas | Caps/hats |
| Swimtrunks | |
| Adult sleeping bags | |

Your donations can be left in the Morning Circle bin across from the Men's room. Any item you leave is greatly appreciated. As these children treasure all the donations provided and keep them after camp is over, we will be requesting more donations next year. Deadline for donations is the end of June. Susie Cuseo

Fellowship

Rachel's Well – June 4th, 7:30 pm

The final RW of the season will take place on the parsonage porch! Please bring an appetizer, beverage or dessert to share.



Morning Circle welcomes all the women of the congregation to attend their next meeting on Wednesday, June 6 11AM at June Wininger's residence. Please note the date change. We will be putting together birthday

bags for the Food Pantry. These bags contain cake mix, frosting, party napkins and birthday candles. Kids who visit the Food Pantry enjoy receiving this little gifts. They are really appreciated. Donations of these items are welcome and can be placed in the Morning Circle bin across from the Men's Room. Please contact Jackie Bleakney with any questions at 203-268-5275.



The next Retired Men's Breakfast will be held on Wednesday, June 13th, at **9:00 a.m.**, at Eggs & Co., on Route 25, Monroe (former site of the Rustic Grill). Our host, Ron Villani, needs a head count by Monday, June 11th

Please join us for the MCC Book Club!

- ✚ **June 20th-7:30pm** Love and Other Consolation Prizes by Jamie Ford ~Host TDB
- ✚ **July 18th-7:30pm** The Alice Network by Kate Quinn~Host Peggy Villani
- ✚ **August 15th-7:30pm** The Avalon Ladies Scrapbooking Society by Darien Gee~ Host TBD
- ✚ **September 19th-7:30pm** Lillian Boxfish Takes a Walk by Kathleen Rooney~ Host TBD

Dress A Girl Dresses were recently delivered to an Orphanage in Uganda

Can you spot a dress you made?



MCC Community Calendar

Week of June 3rd

Communion & Confirmation Sunday

10:00am Worship

3:00pm Installation of Katrina Manzi at Middlebury Congregational Church

5:00pm Senior PF

6:00pm Adult PF

Mon. June 4th

7:30pm Rachel's Well (Parsonage)

Tues. June 5th

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Wed. June 6th

11:00am Morning Circle (June Winger's home)

Thurs. June 7th

7:15pm Adult Choir

Sat. June 9th

10:00am Dress A Girl (Wilton)

Week of June 10th

Children's & Baccalaureate Sunday

8:45am Deacons Meeting (Dineson)

10:00am Worship

5:00pm Senior PF

5:00pm Junior PF @ the Campbell home

Mon. June 11th

7:30pm Council Meeting (Dineson)

Tues. June 12th

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Wed. June 13th

9:00am Retired Men (Eggs & Co. Monroe)

Thurs. June 14th

7:15pm Adult Choir

Fri. June 15th

Strawberry Festival Set-up

Sat. June 16th

10:00am Strawberry Festival

Week of June 17th

Strawberry Festival

10:00am Worship

12:00pm Strawberry Festival

Tues. June 19th

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

7:00pm Bereavement Group (Dineson)

Wed. June 20th

7:30pm MCC Book Club (Location TBD)

Week of June 24th

10:00am Worship

11:00am Trustees (Classroom 4)

5:00pm Senior PF

Tues. June 26th

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Week of July 1st

10:00am Worship

5:00pm Senior PF

6:00pm Adult PF

Mon. July 2-7th

Adult Mission Trip to Puerto Rico

Fri. July 6th

7:30pm Faith on Tap (Veracious)

Week of July 8th

10:00am Worship

5:00pm Senior PF

Sat. July 14-22nd

Senior PF Mission Trip to Vicksburg, Mississippi

47th Annual STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL CRAFT AND FINE ART SHOW



Saturday, June 16th, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sunday, June 17th, 12 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Over 75 Exhibitors, Local Artists,
Strawberry Jams, Pies, Baked Goods,
Children's Games, Live Entertainment and
**Strawberry Shortcakes made with
our famous homemade biscuits**

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