



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.

March 15, 2016

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

Narrative Lectionary: Remembering the Arc of the Story A few years ago there was an adjunct professor of religion who also taught Bible Study at his local church. He designed his study as a journey through the stories of the Bible, and was surprised to see a committed and enthusiastic crowd show up to learn and share every week. He learned that they loved to make connections between episodes and were able to see the arc of the story clearly, maybe for the first time in their lives. Given his success at church, the professor designed a class for freshman at his university that followed the same path. It was one of the most difficult classes to get into, because spaces filled almost immediately. People were hungry for a broader story.



The professor shared news of his success with his pastor. The pastor wisely asked "Why can't we do this in our church's worship"? The church followed the Revised Common Lectionary, a three year series of readings from scripture used by many

Protestant Churches devised in the late 80's, which tends to skip around. The church put aside the RCL for four years, and instead the pastor preached on major episodes in the Bible arranged in a sequence to help people see the wider story of hope and disappointment, suffering and redemption. And the Narrative Lectionary (NL) was born.

The Narrative Lectionary is a four-year cycle of readings. On Sundays from September through May the texts follow the sweep of the biblical story, from Creation through the early Christian church. The readings show the breadth and variety of voices within Scripture. Listening to the many different voices within Scripture enriches preaching and the life of faith.

I brought back the idea of the NL from the Festival of Homiletics. In fall 2014, MCC joined the growing number of churches who have switched to the NL. We are now in our second year. The feedback has been great, people seem to be picking up threads of the story that they never realized before. To learn more, visit www.workingpreacher.org.

In peace, Pastor Jenn

Farewell from Pastor Barb

fare•well

interj.

1. good-bye; may you fare well: *Farewell, friends. n.*
2. an expression of good wishes at parting: *to make one's farewells.*
3. leave-taking; departure: *a friendly farewell.*
4. a party for a person who is about to retire from a job, depart on a trip, etc. *adj.*
5. parting; valedictory; final.

To Members and Friends of MCC,

As you and I prepare to bid each other farewell, I discovered that "FAREWELL" is really a benediction, good words to share at parting. This is indeed a good-bye, a parting but it also carries the blessing of "may you fare well." I am hoping that many blessings of love, service, holy peace and harmony will be part of your future. I will miss you!!!

Thank you for choosing me seven months ago for the mutual ministry we have shared. I appreciate your warmth and how you welcomed me. Although our time together was shorter than either you or I expected, the Christian Education Board and I were a good team and created some new energy in the faith formation programs. This is a strong and gifted group that will continue to lead you well.

As members of this community full of faith, fun, and enthusiastic fellowship, I know that you will support and continue to create together a vision for your Faith Formation program that will continue to guide you into the future. I have observed that you do a great job "empowering one another as God's people to be God's ministers." May the possibilities for your ministry together and with the new Director of Faith Formation be limitless and exciting.

As I depart from MCC, I will have more "Mom" time. In December, my Mom gave us quite a scare with the combo of congestive heart failure and chronic lung disease. However, in mid-January, she rallied and is now enjoying her full life. She is 87 and every day with her is a gift. My Mom has been my best friend since childhood and I treasure our relationship. Both she and my Dad have been my cheerleaders and supporters through all the ups and downs of my life. And now, I want to be there for her.

My home in Haddam is still on the market and I hope to live close to New Haven and along the shoreline. I look forward to being part of a church family as a member, rather than as an employee. My hope is that my own family and my 4 year old grand-daughter will say "YES" to involvement in a church community and we can worship together.

Although I am an extrovert in many ways, I will have more time to tend my introverted side. In addition to lots of family time, I will have some local bicycle adventures, quilting projects, reading, and golf lessons. After I catch my breath and have some personal Sabbath time during the spring and summer, I will trust and listen to God's holy nudges and look forward to what will come next.

With much love and caring thoughts, my MCC friends, and with a mixture of hugs and tears. I wish you a blessed future. Pastor Barb



HOLY WEEK

at the Monroe Congregational Church

Sunday, March 20th, 10am – Palm Sunday: Join us in the Meetinghouse to celebrate Palm Sunday. If the weather cooperates, we will march around the Green. Our Adult Choir, Junior Choir and several soloists will offer sacred music. At coffee hour, we will say farewell to Pastor Barb.

Thursday, March 24th, 7:30pm - Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service: A candlelit evening worship service remembering Jesus’ mandate to love one another. This service of shadows features sacred readings that anticipate Jesus’ Passion and Holy Communion by intinction.

Friday, March 25th, 12pm – Prayer Walk at Great Hollow Lake. We meet in the Gazebo.

Saturday, March 26th, 11am – Senior PF Easter Egg Hunt: Meet us in Wilton Hall with your little one for a few games followed by an egg hunt. Hop on over and join the fun!

Sunday, March 27th, 6:30am – Monroe Clergy Association Easter Sunrise Service at Great Hollow Lake: We’ll meet on the grass in front of Great Hollow Lake as the shadows shorten and the sun rises. Together we will celebrate that God has conquered death itself, and Jesus is risen! Children are welcome. Please dress warmly, and bring something to share in fellowship afterwards!!

Sunday, March 27th, 8:30 and 10am – Easter Celebration Services: Join us at MCC for the Great Easter Celebration! At 9:30, we will share a festive Easter Coffee Hour. Our 10am worship features the Junior Choir. We will also join in singing the Hallelujah Chorus. Christ is Risen indeed AND Everyone is Welcome!

Spring 2016 New Members Class: Sunday, April 17th



The desire to be a part of something larger than ourselves isn’t an accident. We were created to need community, a place to belong. The local church can not only meet that need, but it can also be a place to discover, develop and use our gifts. Our next New Members Orientation Class at the Monroe Congregational Church will take place on Sunday, April 17th at 11:15 in Dineson Parlor. New Members will join

the church in worship on Sunday, May 8th. Please RSVP with Melissa in the church office (203) 268-9327.



We need ushers and greeters! Ushers and greeters welcome folks to each of the Sunday services and hand out bulletins. It's a great way to meet new friends or perhaps brighten someone's day. Please add your name to the sign-up sheet in Wilton Hall or contact Jessica Pfalzgraf jspfalzgraf@gmail.com. Your help will be very much appreciated.

Outreach



The MCC Mission Trip Team invites EVERYONE in the congregation to attend the annual **Keep Hope Alive** fundraising event on April 1st from 7-9pm at Edmond Town Hall 45 Main Street in Newtown. There will be complimentary cocktails and hors d'oeuvres while we hear about the 2016 initiatives for both Mexico and the Reservation in South Dakota. It is

through your generosity that Simply Smiles is able to continue all of its hard work to improve the quality of life for our friends in Mexico and on the Reservation. There is no cost to attend. We're looking forward to see you there!

- *Scott & Jan Redfern, Lynn & Tom Hyde, Bruce & Debbie Gran and Zack Gingras*

I know you all have been patiently waiting so wait no more -- It's GIVING GARDEN TIME again--woohoo!!!!



As we did last year, we have 3 spaces – MCC, The Monroe Food Pantry and the Senior Center – and we are going to be using our **SEEDLINGS POTS** again for all of our seedlings. So we are once again asking for the Congregation's help in making the Seedling Pots.....I've included link to the video and would love to get at least 10 pots from everyone for all 3 spaces.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7dIGQP81yfo>

We need the pots to be dropped off at church by **April 3** and CE will be planting seeds again with the Sunday School kids. Thank you, thank you, and feel free to call (203-260-0292) or email me with

any questions or suggestions. Peace, Kathy Maiolo



One Great Hour of Sharing: Thanks to your generous donations, we have collected \$902.00 for One Great Hour Sharing. We will be collecting donations until April 3rd. Giving envelopes can be found in the pews or in the church office, or you can donate online through our website by going to <http://mcc-ucc.org/donate.html>.



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 the following items: (all items needed are for men, women, and children)

Gently used jeans or slacks	New or gently used coats in all sizes
Gently used shirts-especially Men's 2x-5x	Boots, shoes, and sneakers in all sizes
New Briefs & Boxers for men	Diapers, wipes, and training pants
New underwear for women-all sizes (no bras)	Blankets, sheets, and towels

New underwear for children- all sizes	Detergent, soap, toothpaste & toothbrushes
New socks in all sizes	Non-perishable food items

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

Time to "HOP TO IT"!



Please remember if you took a tag for our Covenant to Care Easter basket drive for children in care of the CT Dept. of Children & Family Services to bring it in to Dineson Parlor BY **Sunday, Mar. 20th.** - THANK YOU! Diane Prall ~ Monroe Congregational Church Liaison Covenant to Care for Children

Teen Easter Basket Suggestion: sketch book, colored pencils/markers, books, magazine, deck of cards, jewelry, stuffed animal, comb, brush, socks, hair accessories, hand lotions, nail polish, deodorant, Frisbee, Nerf ball, chap stick, small calculator, chocolate bunny, Easter candy, plastic eggs filled with coins! **Or a Gift Card is always appreciated by teens!**

3 - 11 year old Easter Basket Suggestion: crayons, color book, story books, paint book, small toys, jewelry, stuffed animals, comb, brush, socks, hair accessories, chap stick, Frisbee/ball, lotions, nail polish, small calculator, yo-yo, chocolate bunny, Easter candy (all candy must be wrapped), plastic eggs filled with coins!

Toddler Easter Basket Suggestion: picture book, sip cup, bib, stuffed animal, socks, diapers, blanket, tee shirt, baby toys. Please avoid candy for babies' baskets. Hint: check out the dollar stores!

Christian Education



Saturday, March 26th, 11am – Senior PF Easter Egg Hunt Easter is on the way, so let's have some fun at the Senior PF Easter Egg Hunt! If you have a little one and would like to join in the fun; please join us in Wilton Hall for a few games followed by an egg hunt. Hop on over and join the fun!



SAVE THE DATE: Vacation Bible School, August 1st - 5th, 2016 Looking forward to another exciting year of Vacation Bible School at MCC? Mark your calendars for August 1st - 5th and be sure to keep an eye out in the Spring for registration information. We will also be looking for volunteers to help out during the week; if interested, please contact Kate Briggs at kateandtom@mac.com or Kyla Allen at kylawa@earthlink.net for more information. We are looking forward to another great year of VBS!

There will be no nursery care on Easter Sunday. Thank you!

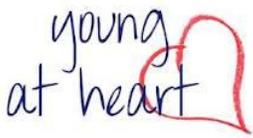
Fellowship



Calling All Bakers!! We Need You!! Special Easter Fellowship Hour, March 27th at 9:30am in Wilton Hall. We need your help with donations of baked goods. Please bring baked goods to the church kitchen by 8:45am Easter morning. We hope you can join us for this special fellowship event.

Please join us for the MCC Book Club!

March 23rd - 7:30pm Host: Julie McClenathan We are reading A Man Called Ove by Fredrik Backman



Young at Heart: The next Young at Heart gathering will be on Thursday, March 24 at noon at the Riverview Bistro (946 Ferry Blvd. in Stratford - next to the Milford bridge). Please let Arlene Redmond (arleneredmond@gmail.com) or Vaughan Askue (vaughanaskue@gmail.com) know if you will be able to attend.

Strawberry Festival

IT'S TIME TO MAKE THE JAM!

It's time for weekend JAM-A-THONS! It's a huge task and I know with YOUR help we'll get it done. Look for the sign-up sheet in Wilton Hall and mark your calendars...

Saturday, March 19th : 8:00am-6:00pm

Saturday, April 30th : 8:00am-6:00pm

Saturday, March 26th : 8:00am-6:00pm

Saturday, May 14th : 8:00am-6:00pm

Saturday, April 16th : 8:00am-6:00pm

Saturday, May 21st : 8:00am-6:00pm

Saturday, April 9th : 8:00am-6:00pm

Saturday, April 23rd : 8:00am-6:00pm



Community News

T'AI CHI AT MCC ON SUNDAYS AFTER EASTER SUNDAY

David Bailey, world renown T'ai Chi instructor (at least, that's what HE claims), will be teaching T'ai Chi at MCC for six successive Sundays, starting on April 3rd, and running through May 8th. Sessions will run after Worship Service, starting at around 11:30 and lasting for 45-60 mins. per session. They will be held outdoors, so weather will be a factor here.



If you're interested, please let David know, either via email: davidjbaileyinct@gmail.com, or via a Facebook message, or in person.



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.

DRESS A GIRL AROUND THE WORLD SEW-A-THON



*Imagine a World where every little girl
owned at least one dress!*

What if that dress was made you ?

When: May 7, 2016 10:30am-3:30pm

Contact Liz Skarzynski to register

203-257-7174 or Liz1202us@yahoo.com

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



Hope 4 Women International
P.O. Box 8061
Tempe, AZ 85281

CALLING ALL CRAFTERS OR WANT-TO-BE CRAFTERS!

Materials List:

- Lightweight fabric, but not see-through, double wide bias tape, ½" elastic, and any decorative trim you have hanging around.

Extra Materials Needed:

- Sewing machines, irons, ironing boards & cutting boards.

Materials Provided:

- Patterns, Scissors, & Power Cords .
- All the support you need and some chow to keep us going.

MCC Community Calendar

Tues. Mar. 15th

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

Wed. Mar. 16th

6:30pm Confirmation Class (at Spadaccino's)

Thurs. Mar. 17th

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

Sat. Mar. 19th

8:00am Jam Making (kitchen)

Week of Mar. 20th

Palm Sunday, Farewell Cake with Rev. Barb Frey
10:00am Worship w/Palm Processional
11:15am Junior Choir
6:00pm Adult, Junior and Senior PF

Mon. Mar. 21st

7:30pm Church Council (Dineson)

Tues. Mar. 22nd

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

Wed. Mar. 23rd

7:30pm MCC Book Club @ Julie McClenathan's home

Thurs. Mar. 24th

9:30am Bible Study
12:00pm Young at Heart @Riverview Bistro in Stratford
7:30pm Maundy Thursday Worship

Fri. Mar. 25th

12:00pm Good Friday Prayer Walk @Great Hollow
7:00pm Cantata @ Trumbull Congregational

Sat. Mar. 26th

11:00am Senior PF Easter Egg Hunt
8:00am Jam Making (kitchen)

Week of Mar. 27th

Easter
6:30am Sunrise Service @ Great Hollow Lake
8:30am Easter Worship
9:30am Special Coffee Hour
10:00am Easter Worship

Tues. Mar. 29th

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Wed. Mar. 30th

6:30pm Confirmation Class

Thurs. Mar. 31st

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

Fri. Apr 1st-Sun. Apr. 3rd

5:00pm Women's Retreat at Guest House

Week of Apr. 3rd

Guest Preacher Doug Halley
Mission Moment: CROP Walk
10:00am Worship w/Communion
6:00pm Adult, Junior and Senior PF

Tues. Apr. 5th

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

Wed. Apr. 6th

6:30pm Confirmation Class

Thurs. Apr. 7th

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

Sat. Apr. 9th

8:00am Jam Making (Kitchen)

Week of Apr. 10th

Baptism of Lee Gawel
10:00am Worship
11:15am Junior Choir
6:00pm Sr & Jr PF

Tues. Apr. 12th

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Wed. Apr. 13th

9:00am Retired Men (Dineson)
11:00am Morning Circle (Dineson)
6:30pm Confirmation Class

Thurs. Apr. 14th

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