



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

October 15, 2016

You know, the Monroe Congregational Church is a pretty amazing place! When my family decided to make MCC our church home we did so because we believed that the people here are making a difference in the world. Our worship life together, the community we experience, and the ways we are encouraged to grow in our walk with Jesus do not happen by accident. They are planned and prepared by leadership and staff who are deeply committed to our becoming who God is calling us to be.

There are many quiet moments of generosity at MCC that “fly under the radar”, like the time someone heard about a family in crisis and dropped off a hot meal at their home. I have (quite literally) hundreds of those kinds of stories of people helping people. The care you extend to your brothers and sisters in Christ is extraordinary, and it makes me feel quite blessed and inspired to serve at your side.

And then there are other times when a group of passionate people get together to serve. Recently a group of us (me, Joanne Malia, Kate Parker-Burgard, Trees & John Whitbeck) reached out to our neighbors in Newtown who have formed *Interfaith Partnership for Refugee Resettlement*, gathering 5 faith communities to welcome and help settle a refugee family. It’s been a thrill making some new friends and getting involved. If you’d like to join us as a volunteer, please let us know.

As individuals and as a church, fall seems to be a time for discernment about many things. I’d like to invite you to consider investing financially in your congregation in a regular way during the next calendar year with a pledge to our fall Stewardship campaign. The decision to give regularly is a choice, and to do so may mean to choose not to do something else like not buying a fancy coffee, or deciding to carry a sack lunch into the office once a week instead of buying lunch. And yet, even with a little sacrifice there is joy to be found in practicing generosity, beginning with a commitment to contribute your time, talent and treasure.

Your gifts matter – It matters to you as the giver, and to the church community that utilizes it as a resource for mission. You’ll hear more about that in the days ahead. For now, I just want to thank you for making the Monroe Congregational Church your faith home. I am so glad to share this path of discipleship with you as together we seek to be a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world.



In peace, Pastor Jenn



Go and Do the Same

Like many people currently in the UCC, I was raised a Roman Catholic. In the area where I grew up the local Catholic parish would assume that everyone in the geographical area was a member of their flock, unless otherwise informed. This made things pretty convenient for young families as there was no “church shopping” that had to be done and membership was pretty much automatic based on where one lived.

The other thing we didn’t have to think too much about was how much to contribute financially to the church. You see they had a formula for this which was something like “here is where you live, you have this many people in your family, and this is what your contribution will be”. (*I do not know if it is still done this way.*) Imagine my confusion and surprise when I joined the UCC as a young adult and first encountered the concept of “pledging”. I determine the financial contribution and the Tithe is just a suggestion. No formula, no “bill”, nothing.

I was bewildered! I had no clue! And in typical New England, Yankee, Congregationalist form no one would openly have this conversation. Sure we had pot lucks, and home visits, we even had “The Pony Express” to gather up folks pledge cards, but I just didn’t get it.

One of the wonderful things about my home congregation was that my Kindergarten teacher, Nancy Brennan, was a long time member and an awesome lady. We sang in the choir together and it was so nice for me to have her there. During one of the church’s Stewardship Campaigns they started to have speakers talk about their personal faith journey with respect to financial giving to the church and she was one of the speakers. I remember what she said, clear as day, as if she said it yesterday; “My father told me that if out of every pay check I put 10% toward the church and 2% toward savings that God would take care of the rest. He was right and I’ve never had to worry about a thing.” The light went on for me! I realized that I had to give to God first and I have done this ever since – about 25 years now.

Now I am not going to tell you that there haven’t been times when I’ve had some sweating going on where finances are concerned, but with the faith that God will take care of me things always seem to work out. With Nancy Brennan as my “Go and Do the Same” example things have worked out pretty well for me. As we enter our time of Stewardship and Commitment here at MCC I ask you if you have a “Go and Do the Same” person.

Who is your example?

Blessings to you all,

Debi M-K

HELLO

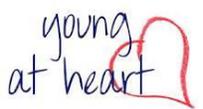
I'm new here.

New Member Informational Meeting, October 23rd. Join the deacons and Pastor Jenn for an informational meeting at 11:15 in Dineson Parlor. Find out more about the history (how we got here), theology (what we believe) and ways you might connect with others and learn more about faith doing so. Prospective Members will join the church in worship on November 13th. Please contact Pastor Jenn at jenn@mcc-ucc.org with any questions.



Fellowship

Save the Date: Mission Trip Memories Potluck Saturday November 19th, 6pm, Wilton Hall Come and celebrate our mission trip memories at a fabulous pot-luck dinner! Please bring a non-perishable food item for the food pantry. Last names beginning A-G please bring an side dish or salad, H-P an entrée and Q-Z a dessert. Please RSVP to the church office 203-268-9327.



Young at Heart's next luncheon will be at My Place, 8 Queen Street, Newtown on Thursday October 27th. All Senior Citizens are welcome to come and join the fellowship, fun, and food. Please RSVP to Betty Heiney by Monday, October 24th 203-268-9576 or Haarald@aol.com If you have never attended before, please come so you can be part of this group. See you there!

New Photo Directory from LifeTouch!



Our church is getting ready to create a new photo directory and we need you to help make it complete! A professional photographer from LifeTouch will be in Wilton Hall on December 1st, 2nd and 3rd to take pictures for our 2017 Photo Directory. By participating, you will receive a free 8x10 photo (and any extra photos you order) in time for Christmas! Of course, you'll also receive our new 2017 Photo Directory.

Sign up for your professional photography session in one of these three convenient ways:

1. Schedule your appointment online at: appt.lifetouch.com
2. Look for sign-up tables on Sunday, 10/30, 11/06 and 11/13 at coffee hour following worship in Wilton Hall
3. Or for further assistance, call coordinator Judy Coward at [203-881-8562](tel:203-881-8562)

Our new 2017 Photo directory won't be complete without you. Sign up today!

Please join us for the MCC Book Club!

- October 19th – 7:30pm** The Little Paris Bookshop by Nina George, Simon Pare (Translator)
Hosted by Julie McClenathan
- November 16th-7:30pm** Everything I Never Told You by Celeste Ng
Hosted by Peggy Villani



Volunteers needed for Prayer Partners!! I currently have 10 members signed up. We need YOU!!! It doesn't take a lot of time, just a moment to think and pray for your partner. Once you sign up, you will receive someone's name in the mail along with their address and interests. You will keep them in your prayers in secret until the "big reveal" potluck luncheon in May 2017. You can send them a card or note in the mail using the church's address as the return. Find them before service to say hi, pass them the peace, strike up a conversation during coffee hour. It's really easy to do. Please consider signing up in Wilton Hall and return your completed form in the slot provided. Look for the mailing during the month of November. Please contact Susie Cuseo at [203-268-0280](tel:203-268-0280) or thecuseos@yahoo.com with any questions or comments.

Morning Circle invites the ladies of the congregation to their next meeting on Wednesday, November 9 at 11:00AM in Wilton Hall. Please bring a sandwich for lunch and a donation for the Food Pantry. We will have Giving Tree gift tags to hand out. Please return your wrapped gift with the tag attached by Sunday, December 9th in the church office. Thank you so much for your generosity and kindness. Contact Jackie Bleakney at [203-268-5275](tel:203-268-5275) with any questions.

Trustees



Fall Workday Saturday, Nov. 12th at 8:00 am - We have plenty of fall cleanup jobs to tackle so please come out and spend a few hours helping to spruce up our campus. Breakfast will be provided. If you are able to assist, please contact Dave Allen at

dallen9457@att.net

Christian Education



Bring Your Bible to Church Sunday! On Sunday, October 23rd, our 3rd Grade Sunday school students will be receiving their Bibles, and we are asking for folks to bring your Bible to church. Whether it is a family Bible or a Bible that you were given by your church when you were a child (or adult), or maybe in another language, bring it along with you. Let's celebrate this day together!

"People Helping People" All-Church Day of Service



One thing I would like to tell you about myself is that I am very passionate about the Church being "One Body". What I mean by that is that I believe the more we do together, across the generations, the more vibrant and alive we become. The more we learn from each other and the more we are in relationship and covenant with each other. On Sunday, October 30th we will

be having a special service day together.

On the People Helping People Service Day, worship will be abbreviated to 45 minutes, so that we can assemble and work together on the following service projects:

- **Making Christmas Cards for the children living at Casa Hogar:** The people of Oaxaca (pronounced Wa-Ha-Ka) inspired the creation of Simply Smiles when its founder, Bryan Nurnberger, first volunteered at the Casa Hogar Children's Home in 2003. Making Christmas cards for the children living there is one way MCC can keep our connection with them and bring some smiles to their faces!
- **Decorating Pieces of Ben's Bells:** The mission of Ben's Bells is to inspire, educate, and motivate each other to realize the impact of intentional kindness and to empower individuals to act according to that awareness, thereby strengthening ourselves, our relationships and our communities. Ben's Bells are beautiful, handmade ceramic wind chimes. By the time one Ben's Bell is complete, at least 10 people have been involved in its creation. Ben's Bells are hung randomly throughout the community, in public spaces, for people to find and take home as a reminder to practice intentional kindness.
- **Making and Decorating Birdhouses for Habitat for Humanity:** At the Habitat ReStore facility, gently used furniture and surplus building supplies are sold to benefit Habitat's projects throughout Bridgeport. We'll make Birdhouses and give them to Habitat to sell at the ReStore shop.
- **Winterizing the Giving Garden:** We celebrate all the sustainable, organic produce that was grown this summer, but it is now time to prepare the beds for winter. Come ready to get your hands dirty and help us turn the soil to prepare for next year's growing season.

I hope you will join us for this exciting day of fellowship and service. Blessings and peace to you,
Debi Mastroni-Kenyon

Pumpkin Carving Party

Please join the Christian Education Board on Saturday, October 29th, for a Pumpkin Carving Party! We will gather at 5:00 pm and have pizza and other goodies. We will be taking an offering for the pizza. After we dine we will carve pumpkins in preparation for Halloween festivities and decorations.



This is a BYOP – Bring Your Own Pumpkin – event. We have patterns and tools, but if you have your own tools, feel free to bring them. After carving we can take our works of art outside, light them up, and see how they glow!

ALL are welcome to join in the fun and fellowship!

Jr. Pilgrim Fellowship Calendar

October

16th – Retreat Weekend – NO Regular Gathering

23rd – **Gathering TBD**

30th – Regular Gathering at 6:00 pm (Halloween Party)

November

6th – Regular Gathering at 6:00 pm

13th – Regular Gathering at 6:00 pm

20th – Church Decoration at 6:00 pm

27th – NO Regular Gathering

Sunday School Calendar

October

16th - Regular Sunday school classes

23rd - Regular Sunday school classes

30th – NO Sunday school; Worship and Service for All Ages

November

6th – Sunday school classes grades K-3

13th – Regular Sunday school classes

20th - Regular Sunday school classes

27th – NO Sunday school

Outreach

It's that time again...the next St. George's supper is October 17.

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 October 16th 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**



Give the Gift of Sight - A collection basket can be found on the table during coffee hour until the end of October. So clean out your junk drawer and find these old prescription glasses, cases and sunglasses. They will be cleaned, checked and donated to people of all ages around the world. They will help many to have brighter futures. Please contact Susie Cuseo at [203-268-0280](tel:203-268-0280) or

thecuseos@yahoo.com with any questions.



Habitat for Humanity®

Habitat for Humanity: Please consider volunteering with MCC Habitat coordinator, John Sekelsky on Nov 5 and Dec 10th for Habitat Work Days.

You can choose one day or all days to work-it's up to you! If you would like to volunteer please contact John at johnsekelsky@gmail.com so he can let the Sound Coalition manager know how many from MCC will attend. Thanks for your support of this special work. You can learn more about Habitat for Humanity by visiting: habitatcfc.org/



The MCC winetasting to benefit Habitat for Humanity is going to be November 5th, 6:30pm at the Jesulaitis home 7 Founders Way, Monroe. This annual event is a wonderful opportunity for fellowship with each other and new friends. Everyone is asked to bring a donation of at least \$10 per person, an appetizer or dessert, and a wine glass. For more information please speak with Julie McClenathan juliemcclenathan@gmail.com



Dress A Girl Around The World Sew-A-Thon Returns November 5th from 10:30am-3:30pm~ Join Liz Skarzyinski from Dress A Girl Around The World on July 16th in Wilton Hall to create dresses for little girls overseas. 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.

Community News



Will Duchon will be performing on Saturday, October 15th at 3:00pm at the Gunn Memorial Library, 5 Wykehem Rd, Washington, CT. Admission is Free

Will is also performing on Sunday October 23 at 3:00pm at Newtown Friends of Music, Edmund Town Hal, Newtown, CT. Admission is \$25 per ticket sold at the door.

Will Duchon will be performing both concerts with cellist Mary Costanza and will include:
Rachmainov: Sonata for Cello and Piano

SAVE

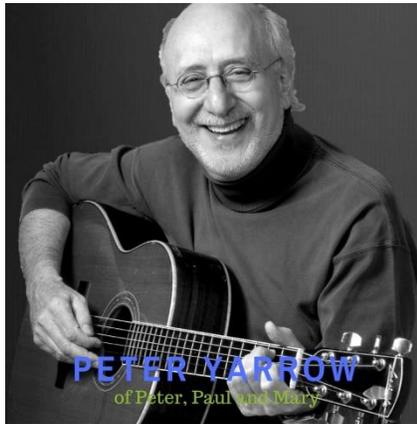
SIMPLY SMILES BENEFIT CONCERT

THE

11.13.2016 | FAIRFIELD, CT

DATE

TICKETS AVAILABLE SOON



Peter Yarrow of *Peter, Paul and*

Mary is a friend of Simply Smiles and has been a social activist for over fifty years.

Frank Waln is a Lakota Hip Hop artist and activist who was featured on MTV's *Rebel Music*. **Kristen Graves** is a humanitarian who was called "the next generation of folk music" in the *New York Times*.

On **November 13th** (4:00 PM showtime) they will be performing at the **Quick Center in Fairfield, Connecticut** to support the work of Simply Smiles. This is an evening not to be missed. **Save the date!** Ticket sales begin soon.

See you at the show on November 13th!

MCC Community Calendar

Week of Oct. 16th

Guest Preacher, Will Duchon

10:00am Worship

11:15am Junior Choir (Meetinghouse)

6:00pm Adult PF at the Parker-Burgard home

Mon. Oct 17th

3:45pm St. George's Supper

6:30pm Leaders meet with CT Conf Kent Siladi

(Dineson)

7:30pm Church Council (Dineson)

Tues. Oct. 18th

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

7:00pm Bereavement Group (Dineson)

Wed. Oct. 19th

6:30pm Adult Confirmation Class (Dineson)

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

Thurs. Oct. 20th

9:30am Bible Study

5 – 8pm Wellness Fair (Chalk Hill)

7:15 Adult Choir

Week of Oct. 23rd

Baptism of Logan & Katlyn Perachio

3rd Grade Bible Dedication

Bring Your Bible to Church Sunday!

10:00am Worship

11:15am Junior Choir (Meetinghouse)

3:00pm Will Duchon Concert (Edmund Town Hall)

6:00pm Sr & Jr PF

Tues. Oct. 25

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Wed. Oct. 26th

6:30pm Youth Confirmation Class (Dineson)

Thurs. Oct. 27th

9:30am Bible Study

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

7:15 Adult Choir

Sat. Oct. 29th

5:00pm Pumpkin Carving Party (Wilton Hall)

Week of Oct. 30th

People Helping People All-Church Day of Service

10:00am Worship

11:15am Junior Choir (Meetinghouse)

6:00pm Sr & Jr PF

Tues. Nov. 1st

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Wed. Nov. 2nd

6:30pm Youth Confirmation Class (Dineson)

Thurs. Nov. 3rd

9:30am Bible Study

7:15 Adult Choir

Sat. Nov. 5th

10:30am Dress A Girl Sew-A-Thon (Wilton)

6:30pm Habitat Wine Tasting (Jesulaitis home)

Week of Nov. 6th

10:00am Worship

11:15am Junior Choir (Meetinghouse),

Lay Pastoral Visitation Training 2 (Dineson)

6:00pm Adult, Sr & Jr PF

Mon. Nov. 7th

7:30pm Rachel's Well (Dineson)

Tues. Nov. 8th

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Wed. Nov. 9th

9:30am Retired Men's Breakfast

11:00am Morning Circle (Dineson)

6:30pm Adult Confirmation Class (Dineson)

Thurs. Nov. 10th

9:30am Bible Study

7:15pm Adult Choir

Fri Nov. 11th

Office Closed in Observance of Veteran's Day

Sat. Nov. 12th

8:00am Fall Clean Up

Week of Nov. 13th

New Member Sunday

10:00am Worship

11:15am Junior Choir (Meetinghouse)

6:00pm Sr & Jr PF

Tues. Nov. 15th

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Wed. Nov. 16th

6:30pm Adult Confirmation Class (Dineson)

Thurs. Nov. 17th

9:30am Bible Study

7:15pm Adult Choir

Sat. Nov. 19^{thcv}

6:00pm Mission Trip Memories Potluck (Wilton Hall)