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<p>Office Hours: Mon. 9am – 5:30pm Wed. (remotely) 8am - 6pm Fri. 9am – 3:30pm</p>

Senior Pastor: Rev. Jennifer Gingras
Music Director: Will Duchon
Administrator/Bookkeeper: Diane Prall
CE Coordinator: Jeanette Cardentey-Morales
Church e-mail: secretary@mcc-ucc.org

Find us on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/monroecongregationalchurchucc>



THE MONROE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
STEEPLE

April 1, 2023

I'm ready for spring to be here, and I'm sure you all are too. The longer days are so nice now that I have recovered from the daylight savings "spring ahead" (although, I keep finding clocks to reset). The birds are beginning to sing their songs, the buds on the trees are beginning to burst, the sun is on a little higher in the sky, there are salamanders and frog eggs in my backyard vernal pond—it's wonderful.

Easter is fast approaching and I'm looking forward to spending it with all of you, celebrating the depth and meaningful joy of worshiping together on April 9th. We will have two in-person services, Sunrise at 6 at the fire pit on Pierce lawn with campfire cinnamon rolls, and our celebration 10 am service (livestreamed) with lots of great music and a fellowship Special Coffee hour directly following.

Easter is not quite as popular a cultural event as Christmas, it ranks behind Thanksgiving and maybe even Halloween in its relative popularity. Our Puritan/Pilgrim ancestors had no room for either Christmas or Easter (clearly, they were no fun). They viewed them as pagan celebrations and believed they brought out the worst in people celebrating with lots of drinking and laziness.

While Christmas got a "make-over" in the 1800's (thanks to Charles Dickens), Easter had no such luck. As a holiday, it's a little more difficult to deal with in a secular way. The story of empty tombs and frightened, amazed disciples doesn't lend itself to those who don't know the full story. At the same time, the themes of resurrection and victory snatched from the jaws of defeat are ones that if you look, can be found all over the place. The hero who sacrifices everything and gives up his own life, only to be somehow



restored is in popular culture if you look for it (Harry Potter, Narnia, and many others). Celebrating Easter demands celebrating something so miraculous that it cannot be reduced (as Christmas can) to a heartwarming story; its supernatural elements of death and resurrection are on display front and center. I think that's why being here at church as we tell the story of Holy Week is important. We can't rely on the world around us to tell the stories of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, or to retell

the parables that Jesus used to disarm his opponents and detractors in the Temple. You probably won't hear about Judas' betrayal, Peter's denial and the disciple's abandonment unless you really look for it on Netflix. There will probably not be any Easter specials to help frame the message of resurrection and eternal life in a way the kids will understand.

But we'll be doing that here at church. We'll be working extra hard to tell the stories again, to help all of us begin to understand what it means that Jesus suffered and died on the cross. That when it seemed like the worldly powers had triumphed and all was lost, an impoverished First Century woman in the hours discovered an empty tomb just before dawn and encountered the risen Christ. God triumphs after all, and we are blessed because of it. Happy Resurrection day, friends!

Peace, Pastor Jenn



Jam Session Update: We have made a total of 854 jars so far with flavors of strawberry, cherry, very berry, lemon, pineapple and blueberry. We have jalapeno, Satan's delight and rhubarb left to make. Please click on the Sign Up Genius link to find a day where you are needed as a volunteer for two hours: [Jam Makers: JAM Sessions \(signupgenius.com\)](http://JamMakersJAMSessions.signupgenius.com). Contact Susie Cuseo if you have any questions at thecuseos@yahoo.com or 203-268-0280 or if you'd like to sign up.



Strawberry Jam sale! Consider purchasing a couple of jars at \$5 each for your teacher at the end of the school year, or for your mailman, cleaning person, Amazon deliver, or co-worker for their birthday. Jam will be sold during coffee hour during the months of April and May depending on supply. Please contact Susie Cuseo at thecuseos@yahoo.com or 203-268-0280 with any questions.

***See the Jr PF table to add a custom made Strawberry Jam Gift Bag!**



Flowers for Worship: Would you like to honor or remember a loved one, or celebrate a milestone? You can do so, while also helping Monroe Congregational Church continue its tradition of fresh **flowers** on the communion table. You can sign-up in Wilton Hall or online! You may choose to arrange flowers from your garden, purchase an arrangement, or send a check (\$25) to Monroe Congregational Church (memo: "flowers" & the date) or use our website to pay online, and we will order for you. If you are supplying the flowers yourself, please set them up between 9:30am and 9:45am, before worship. Thank you! <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C48ADAC2CA5FEC61-flowers> or MCC-UCC.org



Palm Sunday, April 2nd, 10 am –Join us in our historic Meetinghouse to celebrate Palm Sunday. We will begin with a festive procession around the green.

Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service, April 6th, 7:30 pm: A candlelit evening worship service remembering Jesus’ mandate to love one another.



Easter Sunday, April 9th

6am – Sunrise Service on Pierce Lawn: Dress warmly and join us outside at the fire pit to welcome the resurrection!

10am – Easter Celebration Service: Join us at MCC for the Great Easter Celebration! We will also join in singing the Hallelujah Chorus.

Christ is Risen indeed AND Everyone is Welcome!



Our **Easter Celebration Coffee Hour** will be held on **Sunday, April 9th at 11 am** in Wilton Hall. We hope you can join us for this special annual event! Fellowship needs your help with donations of refreshments to share with the congregation on our festive table. Here are a few ideas: cookies, cakes, fruit, fruit salad, finger sandwiches, veggies & dips! Please bring your contribution to the church kitchen by 9 am on Easter morning and thank you!

Outreach

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS), a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ, involves YOU in disaster, refugee/immigration, and development ministries throughout the world. When a disaster strikes or people are displaced or made refugees by violence or extreme poverty, your gifts to OGHS are part of both the immediate response and of the long-term recovery through development programs including health care, education, agriculture, food sustainability, micro-financing and women’s empowerment. You can contribute on our giving page www.mcc-ucc.org/donate, or mail in a check, or place you donation in the offering plate. **Offerings will be gathered until April 15th**. Learn more here: <https://vimeo.com/795283877>
Thank you for your support!





It's been a while since you've seen the Heifer International collection bottle on the coffee table. We'll have it back out this month where we'll receive **your spare change to help Heifer International's mission to end hunger and poverty** in a sustainable way by supporting and investing alongside farmers and their communities. Your donation provides livestock, plantings and seeds to those individuals far away who in turn share with others so that they too can live better lives. Please contact Susie Cuseo at 203-268-0280 or thecuseos@yahoo.com with any questions or comments. Let your spare change change those in need of improvement in their lives.



Another way to serve at MCC is **volunteering at the Mustard Seed Thrift Shoppe**. There are so many ways to help out here:

- 1) **Sorting, tagging and hanging occurs on Tuesdays** at 1PM, just show up at the Gingerbread door and the ladies will guide you with the process.
- 2) **Manning the counter** - Volunteer for a two-hour shift either on Friday or Saturday with easy step-by-step instructions on how to open or close the Shoppe with everything in between by contacting Susie Cuseo at thecuseos@yahoo.com or 203-268-

0280 to sign up. 3) **Donate your precious goods** - gently-used clothing, toys, books, shoes and small household items in the collection box located outside the Shoppe or drop off during business hours or when the ladies are sorting on Tuesdays.

Monies from sold items go to Outreach programs, pilgrim fellowship and special projects that may come up. It's quite a rewarding experience to see how your efforts provide for the congregation and community.



St George's Supper – Slay Hunger! Monday, April 10th

Please consider a cash donation this month to help us feed our hungry neighbors -any amount would be gratefully received, or take a tag from the poster in Wilton Hall!

Please memo on checks: St George

Please contact Stacy at 203-500-1279 with questions.

Thank you!

Faith Formation



Welcome the Children: The presence of children is a gift to the church, they give us a future filled with hope, and a present filled with joy. We have some Worship Tool Bags filled with art items and quiet toys to help them find worship more engaging and meaningful. Please see an usher or Greeter to obtain one.

Our **Nursery** is open and staffed for children 3 and under.



Our **Sunday School** is available today for pre-school through junior high age children! Simply follow the group that departs after the children's message. If this is your first time visiting with children, you may want to accompany them and get them settled in with the teachers and other students. Welcome!

*No Sunday School on April 9- *Easter Sunday*
or April 16 -*Spring Break*.

JR PF Schedule Our junior-high youth group (grades 6-8) meets every Sunday from 5-6:30 in classroom 5, join us!

Apr 2 Easter Celebration - "Potluck"

Apr 9 No PF - Easter Sunday

Apr 16 No PF - Spring Break

Apr 23 Game Night

Apr 30 Firepit Hotdogs & S'mores



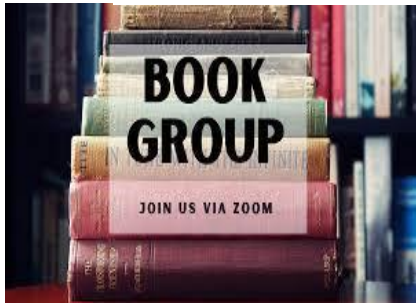
Weekly Bible Study Thursday 9:30-11am

We cordially invite you to join us each week in in Dineson Parlor. This winter into the spring we will be reading together the Gospel of Matthew.

Fellowship

It's Back!

Adult PF will meet at **5pm** in Dineson Parlor every 4th Saturday beginning **April 22nd**
Questions? please contact Janie Allen
janeallen@sbcglobal.net (203)522-3686



MCC Book Club is open to all church members.

We will continue to meet via zoom on the **3rd Wednesday of each month at 7 pm.**

For more information, please call Paula Haggstrom 203-452-0850
email: pjsh55@gmail.com

May 17 *The Cloisters* (Hays) Host: TBD

June 21 *The Library Book* (Orlean) Host: Arlene Redmond

April 19 *The Daughter of Moloka'i* (Brennert) Host: TBD

The "Big Reveal" potluck luncheon will be held on Sunday, May 21st at 11:15AM in Wilton Hall. A sign up sheet will be posted two weeks prior to the event. Please bring a dish to share: appetizers, entrees or desserts. No matter what you bring, everyone enjoys the variety. Can you believe that it's less than two months away? Take a moment to think about your partner and wish them a wonderful day. Don't forget that you can send them a note or card in the mail signed "Your Prayer Partner" and use the church's address (34 Church Street Monroe 06468) as the return. I look forward to seeing you at the luncheon. Please remember that you can contact me with any questions or concerns at thecusesos@yahoo.com or 203-268-0280. I leave you with this springtime poem prayer:



For flowers that bloom about our feet;
For tender grass, so fresh, so sweet;
For song of bird, and hum of bee;
For all things fair we hear or see,
Father in heaven, we thank Thee!
For blue of stream and blue of sky;
For pleasant shade of branches high;
For fragrant air and cooling breeze;
For beauty of the blooming trees,
Father in heaven, we thank Thee!

—Ralph Waldo Emerson (from "We Thank Thee")



Morning Circle invites all the women of the congregation to our next meeting on Wednesday, April 12th at 11AM in Dineson Parlor where we will put together Church World Service hygiene kits that consist of the following items.

Here's what we need:

- One hand towel measuring approximately 15" x 28" to 16" x 32" (no fingertip, bath, dish towel or micro-fiber)
- One washcloth
- One wide-tooth comb removed from the package
 - Must be sturdy with at least 6 inches of teeth
 - No pocket combs or picks
 - Rattail and combs without handles are acceptable
- One fingernail or toenail clipper removed from the package (either one is acceptable)
- One bath-size bar of soap in the original package
- One toothbrush in the original package
- Ten standard size Band-Aids
- Wide-tooth Comb

Monetary donations are also gratefully accepted -please print *CWS Hygiene Kits* on the memo line. Bring a sandwich lunch as we have a short business meeting. Please contact Susie Cuseo if you have any questions at thecuseos@yahoo.com or 203-268-0280.

Mark your calendars for the following meetings:

Wednesday, April 12 at 11AM in Dineson Parlor - CWS Hygiene Kits

Wednesday, May 10 at 11AM in Dineson Parlor - Collection of Women's Hygiene Products for Food Pantry

Wednesday, June 14 at 11AM - Annual June Picnic - location TBD



Young At Heart will meet April **2th** at **noon**

See your Sunday bulletin for updates as they become available.

Music Notes

Chancel Choir members are currently Director Will Duchon - Sopranos Cady Gingras, Nancy Smith and Michelle Cornell - Alto Section, Janie Allen, Julie McClenathan, Linda Fracassini and Jenn Wissink - Tenors Vaughan Askue, Scott Young, Vijay Sampson and Bill Stadler. Bass Section David Walker, Jim Vance, Marc Cardentey and Michael Pfatzgraf. They will sing every Sunday up to and including Easter. The Folk Band and Ed Burke will add to the Sunday music. Members do more than wear robes and sing on Sundays. There are also rehearsals.

A Big thank you to Karen Manuzzi, Bonnie Schneider, Julie and Janie who fixed the Hand Bells. Chimes and Hand Bells will be heard now.



Some members are busy outside of MCC. Julie is a member of the Connecticut Chamber Choir that gives concerts throughout the year. Will gives recitals, directs the Masonicare Chorus in Wallingford, accompanies the Norwalk Chorale, is Music Director for H.S. Musicals and on Friday nights is the Broadcaster on WMNR. Interested in joining the Chancel Choir Family? Attend a rehearsal. While practicing, the choir enjoys laughing and camaraderie. Contact Will, a choir member or me, Betty Heiney bettyh1521@gmail.com

Try it. You will like it.

On March 1220, New Member Sunday, MCC welcomed the newest member of our church community. This short introduction will help you to learn a little more about him. We hope you'll take the time to get to know Glenn personally, and tuck this insert into your church directory.



Glenn Brigham

6 Morgan Road, Danbury, CT 06811

Cell: 914-522-4808

Email: m3brigham@gmail.com

Birthdate: June 5

Anniversary: July 5

Glenn joins us today through reaffirmation of faith. He is a retired elementary teacher who loves sailing, Candlewood Lake, playing guitar, auto restoration, his motorcycle and spending time with his family. He has spent the last 48 years married to his best friend, Geri. The couple have 2 children and 4 grandchildren. Glenn has been attending Monroe Congregational Church for some time. His family was very active in the life of the church years ago. He was confirmed at MCC in 1963 and was a member of Senior PF once upon a time! He looks forward to an active membership once again participating as an usher, greeter, and lay reader. He is willing to help with "1 time" projects with education and Fellowship events, as well as Outreach projects such as Habitat for Humanity, St. George's Supper and assisting church members who may need a ride to church or a church event. Glenn is available to help with carpentry/repairs, groundskeeping/landscaping and kitchen clean up/set up. Wow, are we glad to have you Glenn -thank you and welcome to MCC!

Easter Flowers Are Given with Love by the Following People

Jane Allen	In memory of my parents, Lud and Mia Eschweiler
Vaughan Askue and Arlene Redmond	In gratitude for the MCC community
Michelle Cardentey	In memory of Eleanor & Joseph La Valla and Jose & Carmelina Cardentey
Rev. Jennifer and Clark Gingras	In memory of Rita Sirois
Nancy Hedine and Paul & Susan Granello	In memory of Julie Hedine
Nancy Hedine	In memory of Kyle Granello
Cheri Irwin	In memory of my parents Neil and Dorothea Streams
Leanne McEvoy	In celebration of Elliott and Kaelyn
Gail and Missy Olson	In memory of Robert Olson
Chris and Jan Pearson	In memory of our dear friend, Sue Crea
Mike and Jessica Pfalzgraf	In celebration of our families
The Prall Family	In honor and gratitude for our adult youth group leadership. In memory of Susan, Daddy, Aunt Jean, Uncle Kurt, Dick and all those we have loved and lost.
Joyce and Gilles Rousseau	In memory of their parents, George & Susan Zaleha, Adolphe and Jeanne Rousseau, and daughter, Lauren
Rev. Sheldon and Nancy Smith	In memory of Donald A Spargo, Elsie F. Hedges, Horace S. Smith and Marjorie H. Smith
Aaron, Paige, Lilly and Lark Ribaud-Smith	In memory of Theodore N. Ribaud
Anson, Corryn, Aubrey, Kylie, and Leah Smith	In memory of Maude (Nana) Voigt
Ruth Wakeley	In memory of Bill Wakeley
The Walker Family	In memory of Susan Walker
Myron and June Winger	In honor of our families
Ann Zeiner	In memory of Bob and Carol



Congratulations

100 Years of Service!

Thank you!

The Monroe Congregational Church

*Expresses our deepest
appreciation to the
Monroe Fire Dept. for the
last hundred years
of service to our local
community, and our best
wishes for the future!*



Join us
for worship
Sundays at 10 am,
on Father's Day
weekend for
Strawberry Festival!

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In Our Prayers

Dawn (Donna Konkol's Friend); **Jacki O'Conner** (Maria Barresi's daughter); **Alison Abrams** (Jessica Pfalzgraf's Stepsister); **Allie** (Colegrove's friend); **Michael Barresi** (Maria's Son); **Jennifer Bittar** (Loraine Zeiner's friend); **Jackie Bleakney**; **Byron Brown & Bruce Bryant** (friends of Will Duchon); **Lori Cimeno** (Peggy & Ron Villani's Daughter); **Dot Dralus**; **Matt Duchon**; **Judy Elmendorf**; **Bruno Forte** (friend of Nancy Hedine); **David Fischman** (Sue Granello's Friend); **Dave Fuller** (Gail Olson's brother); **Karen Guinness** (Jennifer Nivison's friend); **Sophina Gingras**; **Mary & Rachel Heerema** (Julia Gutierrez's mom & sister); **Bob Heffernan** (Ann Zeiner's son-in-law); **Brian Hopkins** (Donna Konkol's cousin); **Vera James** (Jenn Wissink's mother); **Jonathan** (Matt Colegrove's brother); **Shawn Kadric** (Diane Prall's brother-in-law); **Kelti** (friend of Liska Gutierrez); **Walter Lane** (Marge Fox's brother-in-law); **Danny Larkin** (Donna Konkol's relative); **The family & friends of Matt Littlefield** who passed away (Marge Fox and Linda Fracassini's family friend); **Monica Lynch** (Bethany Dupuis' friend); **Jacquie MacLean** (Jennifer Nivison's friend); **Nicole Malia**; **Mike** (Janie Allen's son); **Mike** (Dot's friend); **Jean Moffat**; **Olivia Morrison** (Donna Nickdow's niece); **Joe Mumper** (Julie McClenathan's friend); **Kathy Nivison** (Andy's mother); **Pat Nugent**; **Ocampo family** (friends of Liska Gutierrez); **Jennifer Olson** (Gail Olson's daughter-in-law); **Missy Olson**; **Osborne** (Colegrove's Family friend); **Dean Perosino** (Gayle Hammond's brother); **Geno Piacentini** (Karen MacDonald's husband); **P.T. Philip** (Liz Sampson's father); **Norman & Jan Ricker** (Linda & Jack Fracassini's friend); **Kim Riffard**; **Regina Roberts** (Kathy Maiolo's niece); **Alfredo Rodriguez** (Osirus Gutierrez's cousin); **Noah Santiago** (Shari Carrano's great-grandson); **Connor Scalia** (Jen Nivison's friend); **Carlos Serrano** (Kathy Maiolo's cousin); **Yessika Siccardi** (Sampson family friend); **Bernie Sippin**; **Peggy Sippin** (Lori Sippin's daughter-in-law); **John Skarupa** (Barb Pellegrino's brother); **Sheldon Smith**; **Christine Stadler**; **Tom Steen** (Jessica Pfalzgraf's dad); **Christian & Dain Steiner** (Julie McClenathan's nephews); **Claire Stenzel** (June & Myron Winger's granddaughter); **Olga Terwilliger** (Nancy Hedine's sister-in-law); **Ian Thompson** (Gary's cousin); **Richard Turco** (Jack Fracassini's cousin); **Charles L. Wynn, Sr.**, (and his mother) **Alleane** (friend of Will Duchon); **Allen Zeiner** (Ann Zeiner's son); **Ann Zeiner**

The concerns of our world: The people of **Ukraine**; **LGBTQ+ children and their families** facing discrimination; those who serve or live in **war** or **conflict zones** around the world; **first responders** and those who serve in **law enforcement**; those who suffer **discrimination**; those who struggle with **mental illness, addiction, divorce** or **separation**; **Caregivers**; the **homeless, homebound** and **refugees**; Our friends living on the **Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation** and in **Oaxaca, Mexico**

Those serving in the military, veterans & their families: Germany: **Rachel Hoffman** (Vaughan Askue's daughter), Virginia: **Chris Meneses** (Loraine Zeiner's friend), Georgia: **Zachary Peters** (Jacob Parker-Burgard's cousin), Kuwait: **Jon Sanchez** (Don Whiteley's grandson-in-law) Stateside: **Joel Smith** (250th Engineering Company)



Happy Birthday to the following people
and to anyone we may have missed we will keep you in our prayers.

Brian	Coleman	04/05	Samantha	Post	04/19
Kyla	Allen	04/08	Albert	Jesulaitis	04/21
Donna	Gill	04/08	Todd	Heffelfinger	04/24
Vida	Stone	04/08	Juliana	Jesulaitis	04/24
Linda	Fracassini	04/09	Jennifer	Nivison	04/24
Evelyn	Goyette	04/10	Emily	Rooney	04/27
Julie	McClenathan	04/10	Joseph	Konkol	04/28
Noah	Friend	04/13	Jessica	Pfalzgraf	04/28
Myron	Winger	04/14	Aiden	Clausen	04/29
Adam	Bartlett	04/19	Donald	Elmendorf	04/29
David	Bartlett	04/19	Michelle	Correll	04/30
Joseph	Bartlett	04/19			



Happy Wedding Anniversary the following couples and to
anyone we may have missed, we will keep you in our prayers.
(Number is anniversary date)

Deborah & Jeff Vargovchick ⁽⁰⁷⁾ Ryan & Dana Firmender ⁽¹⁰⁾
Melissa & Brian Coleman ⁽¹⁷⁾
Joanne & Mark Malia ⁽²⁰⁾ and Jennifer & Jim Halloran ⁽²⁹⁾

April
MCC Community Calendar

Week of Sun. Apr. 2nd

Palm Sunday / Communion

10:00 am Worship

11:30 am Trustees

5:00 pm Junior PF

Mon. Apr. 3rd

7:00 pm Outreach (Zoom)

Tue. Apr. 4th

1:00 pm Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

Thurs. Apr. 6th

Maundy Thursday

9:30 am Bible Study

6:00 pm Deacon Setup

7:30 pm *Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service*

Sat. Apr 8th

4 pm Fellowship Setup

Week of Sun. Apr. 9th

Easter Sunday

6:00 am Sunrise Service (Pierce Lawn)

10:00 am Worship

11:00 am Special Easter Fellowship Hour

Mon. Apr. 10th

Easter Monday – Office Closed

Tue. Apr. 11th

1:00 pm Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

Wed. Apr. 12th

11:00 am Morning Circle

Thurs. Apr. 13th

9:30 am Bible Study

5:45 pm Chime Choir

7:00 pm Chancel Choir

Fri. Apr. 14th – Sun. Apr. 16th

Women's Retreat

Week of Sun. Apr. 16th

10:00 am Worship

5:00 pm Junior PF

Mon. Apr. 17th

7:30 pm Council (Zoom)

Tue. Apr. 18th

1:00 pm Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

Wed. Apr. 19th

11:00 am Morning Circle

Thurs. Apr. 20th

9:30 am Bible Study

5:45 pm Chime Choir

7:00 pm Chancel Choir

Sat. Apr. 22nd

5:00 pm Adult PF (Dineson)

Week of Sun. Apr. 23rd

10:00 am Worship

5:00 pm Junior & Senior PF

Tue. Apr. 25th

1:00 pm Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

Wed. Apr. 26th

7:00 pm Confirmation

Thurs. Apr. 27th

9:30 am Bible Study

12:00 pm Young @ Heart

5:45 pm Chime Choir

7:00 pm Chancel Choir

Week of Sun. Apr. 30th

10:00 am Worship

5:00 pm Junior & Senior PF