

February 16, 2025

Seventh Sunday after Epiphany

10:00 am

Monroe Congregational Church is an Open and Affirming congregation.

Our deacons and pastors hope you will feel at home here. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, we welcome you in Christ's name.

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Gathering Music

Celebration

The Bell Choir

Welcome & Announcements

Moment of Quiet & Lighting of the Candles

Call to Worship

Leader: There is a good word for you if you are weary.

People: It is the Word of Love, deeper than every despair.

Leader: There is a good word if you have ever felt unworthy.

People: It is the Word of Hope, "Do not be afraid!"

Leader: There is a good word that needs to be heard.

All: It is the Word of Life, that raises up abundant blessings.

Opening Prayer

Jenn Wissink, Deacon of the Day

***Our Church's Covenant**

inside front cover of hymnal

Children's Message

Students may transition to Sunday School with their teachers.

***Hymn**

Come, We Who Love God's Name

NCH #379

Call to Confession – Unison Prayer - Silent Prayer

Holy One, it is easy to succumb to weariness when our work seems to yield little goodness. A hope-crushing night can seem so long. Yet, you call us to keep facing the reality of our emptiness. Sometimes it is our own making. At other times, pressures beyond have submerged us to the point of losing our breath. So, we will release everything to you. We pray that your promised forgiveness will continue to be trustworthy and true. Let it raise us up for the work of abundance made possible by your grace. We pray this in the name of the one you raised to life, Jesus the Christ. Amen. (silence)

Words of Assurance

***Passing of the Peace**

In order for those tuning in from home to feel included, please turn and greet the webcam as you share signs of peace with one another.

Pastoral Prayer – Silent Prayer -- Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Time for Giving

Invitation

Offertory

Put a Little Love in Your Heart
The Folk Band

Jackie DeShannon, 1969

*Our offering plate will be passed among us today.
You may give online at www.mcc-ucc/donate.*

***Doxology and Presentation**

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Christ, the Word in flesh, born low,
Praise Holy Spirit, evermore,
One God, triune, whom we adore. Amen!*

***Prayer of Dedication**

Scripture

Luke 7:18-35, pg 940

If you would like to read along, Bibles may be found underneath the pew in front of you.

Sermon

The Window

Rev. Jennifer Gingras

***Closing Hymn**

God of All Unity

bulletin page 3

Benediction

Postlude

Go Out With Joy

The Bell Choir

God is still speaking, welcome to all who are worshipping with us today, in-person and online! Worship is live streamed on church’s You Tube Channel under CCLI Streaming License #2169137 on: <https://www.youtube.com/monroecongregationalchurchucc>, as well as on our Facebook page “Monroe Congregational Church, UCC”

We are an **Open & Affirming** congregation of the United Church of Christ, and we invite everyone to join in the full life and ministry of this church. We strive in word and deed to be faithful to Jesus’ model of loving acceptance and welcome to all persons, inclusive of every age, race, ability, economic and social status, nationality, faith background, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital standing and family structure.



If you’d like to **give online** during worship (or anytime), simply scan this QR code, which will take you to our VANCO electronic giving page. Thank you so much for your support.

Assisted Listening Devices: As part of the ongoing Homeland Security grant project, we added four wireless assisted listening units to our sound system in the Meetinghouse. We are thrilled to be able to enhance the experience of those needing greater accessibility. If you are interested in trying one out, asking Scott Young or an usher is a perfect way to get started!



Please join us for a time of **fellowship** following the service in Wilton Hall.

God of All Unity
INSERT

Thank you for assisting in this morning's worship!

Deacon: Jenn Wissink **Usher:** Rob McClenathan **Lay Reader:** Susie Cuseo
Trustee: Glenn Brigham & Michelle Cardentey **Counter:** John O'Rourke
Web Steward: Scott Young **Coffee Host:** Glenn Brigham & Michelle Cardentey



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



to the following people and to anyone we may have missed, we will keep you in our prayers. (Number is birth date)

Jean Moffat ⁽¹⁹⁾

Ashley Malia ⁽²⁰⁾

Nancy Smith ⁽²⁰⁾

Outreach



Do you have a couple of hours to spare on Tuesdays, Fridays or Saturdays? We sort, tag and hang donated merchandise in the Shoppe on Tuesdays at 1:30PM while on Fridays we are open from 10-3 and Saturdays from 10-2. It's easy to do. Just pop on over during any of those time frames and the volunteers(s) would gladly show you the ropes for opening or closing the Shoppe, a list of responsibilities can be emailed to you for your perusal. You can always shadow a volunteer for a couple of shifts until you get the hang of it and then when you're ready, you will be put on the schedule. Monies collected from shoppers' purchases go to mission trips, outreach programs and many more. Please contact Susie Cuseo at thecuseos@yahoo.com or 203-268-0280 with any questions.



Hear ye! Hear ye! Hear ye! **Prayer Partners will meet on Sunday, May 18th at 11:15AM in Wilton Hall for the "Big Reveal" potluck luncheon.**



Let's feed hungry neighbors!

The **Feel The Warmth mobile community hot supper** needs 6-8 volunteers to cook a delicious and nutritious meal for 250 hungry neighbors on Thursday, February 20th.

Prep time in the kitchen is at **nOURish's** main headquarters, 2200 North Avenue, Bridgeport from 3 to 5:30 pm.

It's then transported to the Harrison Apartments on 651 State Street, Bridgeport and served to the displaced and homeless population from 6 to 7 pm.

Please join us! Sign up in Wilton Hall



VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS FAIR RE-CAP MEETING!

FEB | 23 | 11:15

DINESON PARLOR

Please join us for a quick meeting to discuss what went well, what needs a little work and dream up new ideas for next time!

Trustees



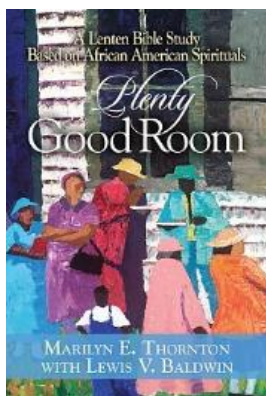
2025 Stewardship Campaign: Better Together We're making progress with **80** pledges received totaling over **\$202,351.57**, but there are still a number of members who we haven't heard from yet regarding their donation plans for 2025. If you have pledged in prior years, we're counting on your pledge for 2025 and hope you will consider increasing your pledge to help us achieve our goals.

If you have not pledged before, but contribute to the church, please consider making a pledge for 2025, as this will help the church maintain our outstanding programs and meet our budget goals. And if you provide a recurring donation via Vanco, we still need confirmation of your donation plans for next year.

Please fill out your pledge card and bring it to worship this Sunday or return it via mail to the church office Attention: Receiver. Alternatively, you can email your pledge commitment to me at jorourke224@gmail.com Thank you for considering a financial commitment to MCC for 2025 and please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. Thank you for prayerfully considering how to financially support the Monroe Congregational Church in 2025!

~ Your Stewardship Committee, John O'Rourke (Receiver), Diane Prall, Rev. Jenn Gingras

Christian Education



Lenten Study: Plenty Good Room

This unique short-term Bible study combines an in-depth look at Scripture, American history, and the music and lyrics of six African American spirituals. The six-session study provides biblical, social, and historical analyses of the spirituals: *'Ev'ry Time I Feel the Spirit*," *"This Lonesome Valley*," *"Bow Down on Your Knees*," *"Plenty Good Room*," *"Ain't Dat Good News*," and *"Were You There?"*. Purchase a paperback or download from Amazon. There will be two ways to participate:

- **Thursday morning Bible study** will read and discuss on Mar 6, Mar 13, Mar 20, Mar 27, Apr 3, Apr 10
- **Online** discussions will happen on Zoom at 7pm on Mar 12 (Chapters 1-2), Mar 26 (Chapters 3-4), April 9 (Chapters 5-6)
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2038955607?pwd=bWxMMDRXN3d6emJNZ2JsVzlsTFp3dz09&omn=88010082173> Meeting ID: 203 895 5607 Passcode: MeetMe



Snack & Chat with NOOMA The name NOOMA comes from a phonetic spelling of the Greek word πνευμα (pneuma), meaning "wind or spirit". Join us in Dineson Parlor after worship for a series of short films (less than 14 minutes each), snacks and a light discussion about life's big questions – no prep necessary and all are welcome! **Feb 16 –Rain**, Mar 30 – Dust, Apr 27 – Flame



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

2/23	TBD
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Weekly Bible Study Thursday 9:30-11am

We cordially invite you to join us each week in Dineson Parlor.

	Text
February 20	Luke 7:36-50
February 27	Luke 9:28-45

Fellowship



Silver Lake Retreat Center - weekend of May 2-4, 2025

Soon a team will be organized to plan the retreat. We hope you'll join in and add your thoughts and ideas! See Pastor Jenn or e-mail her at jenn.gingras@gmail.com

Morning Circle invites the women of the congregation to join them every second Wednesday of the month (except January, February, July and August). Please contact Shari Carrano at 475-342-8145 with any questions, comments or concerns. Mark your calendars for the following:



- Wednesday, Mar 12, 11AM Dineson Parlor - Birthday bags
- Wednesday, Apr 9, 11AM Dineson Parlor - CWS hygiene kits
- Wednesday, May 14 11AM Dineson Parlor - Women's hygiene products collection
- Wednesday, Jun 11 12PM - June Picnic Luncheon - Location TBD

Young At Heart will meet at **noon on February 27th** at **LongHorn Steakhouse**, 838 Bridgeport Ave., Shelton **RSVP** to Juliana Lavitola (203)414-7877 or JSL.Lavitola@gmail.com



Join us for the monthly Book Club on the **3rd Wednesday of the month**. We will continue to meet via zoom so that all members can join from wherever they may be. Questions can be sent to Paula via email pjsh55@gmail.com or home phone or 203-452-0850

- February 19th** The Keeper of Hidden Books by Madeline Martin
- March 19th** Lady Tan's Circle of Women by Lisa See Host: TBD





It may be February, but the **start of Strawberry Festival prep is just around the corner** in the form of JAM MAKING!! That's right!!!! Last year we made over 1,300 jars of 10 varieties of jam that were all sold. There's nothing left in storage this year. Can you believe that? We'll start jam production in mid-February with **sign-up sheets posted in Wilton Hall as well as online**. Want to be Jam Leader who's in charge of a jam session? Sign up with a veteran jam maker and learn the ropes. It's fun and you get to chat while stirring the jam, and stirring the jam, and stirring the jam.

This year the festival will take place on Saturday, June 14 and Sunday, June 15. We'll need everyone's help to make it as successful as last year's. There's plenty to do: strawberry picking at Jones, prep/setup on Friday on campus and kitchen, hulling strawberries, sorting, dipping, children's games, crafter hospitality, face painting, kitchen help, smoothies, meetinghouse greeters, PF food tent, country store, shortcake assembly, order runners, bounce house, prize table, Berry Mascot, table clean up and trash collection. Every part of the Strawberry Festival is important and every volunteer's time is greatly appreciated. Please contact Susie Cuseo at thecuseos@yahoo.com or 203-268-0280 with any questions, comments or concerns.



⚡ MCC SR PF PRESENTS ⚡

CHILI

COOK-OFF

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 22
5:30-7:30 PM
The Monroe Congregational Church
Rexford House
34 Church St. Monroe CT
Live Music!



\$8/person
Kids
Under 5
Free!!

**Between the Keys
Playing Live!**

- 12 Contestants
- Raffle baskets
- Bake sale
- Band Between the Keys playing Live!

All Proceeds benefit our 2025 youth mission trip!
?'s - mccuccseniorpf@gmail.com

In Our Prayers

The family of Ken Post, who passed away on 2/11; Alison Abrams (Jessica Pfalzgraf's sister); **Allie** (Colegrove's friend); **Jennifer Bittar** (Lorraine Zeiner's friend); **Jackie Bleakney; Kevin Daly** (Gary Thompson's friend); **Dealmira** (Jonathan Ganino's grandmother); **Dan & Laura Dimauro** (Cuseo friends); **Dot Dralus, Matt Duchon; Elaine** (Wendy Colegrove's Aunt); **Bruno Forte** (Nancy Hedine's friend); **David Fischman** (Sue Granello's Friend); **Dave Fuller** (Gail Olson's brother); **Lehre Fuller** (Gail Olson's sister-in-law); **Mary & Rachel Heerema** (Julia Gutierrez's mom & sister); **Brad Heines** (Susie Cuseo's friend); **Bob Heffernan** (Ann Zeiner's son-in-law); **Heather Henning; Brian Hopkins** (Donna Konkol's cousin); **Vera James** (Jenn Wissink's mother); **Jonathan** (Matt Colegrove's brother); **Kelti** (friend of Liska Gutierrez), **Samia Khoury** (Will Duchon's friend); **Cindy Kovacs; Monica Lynch** (Bethany Dupuis' friend); **Jonathan Malia; Nicole Malia; the Manuzzi Family; Mary** (Kate Brigg's Mother); **Betty McKeown** (Donna Konkol's mother); **Meghan** (Mary Unger's niece); **Mike** (Janie Allen's son); **Jean Moffat; Olivia Morrison** (Donna Nickdow's niece); **Pat Nugent; Ocampo family** (friends of Liska Gutierrez); **Nancy Olofson; Missy & Gail Olson; Dean Perosino** (Gayle Hammond's brother); **P.T. Philip** (Liz Sampson's father); **Regina Roberts** (Kathy Maiolo's niece); **Alfredo Rodriguez** (Osirus Gutierrez's cousin); **Noah Santiago** (Shari Carrano's great-grandson); **Carlos Serrano** (Kathy Maiolo's cousin); **Yessika Siccardi** (Sampson family friend); **Ed Simonovich** (Nancy Hedine's friend); **Bernie, Lori & Gary Sippin; John Skarupa** (Barb Pellegrino's brother); **Sheldon & Nancy Smith; Christine Stadler; Claire Stenzel** (June & Myron Winger's granddaughter); **Timara** (Mary Unger's friend); **Tom** (Wendy Colegrove's dad); **Wayne Thompson** (Gary Thompson's brother); **Richard Turco** (Jack Fracassini's cousin); **June Wilkes; Natica Williams** (Will Duchon's friend); **Don Whiteley; Ann Zeiner**

The concerns of our world: The people of **Gaza & the West Bank; Israeli hostages** and their families, the people of **Ukraine, Sudan, Syria** and the **Middle East; 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**.

Those serving in the military, veterans & their families: **Lt. Col. Rachel Hoffman**, Tacoma, Washington (Vaughan Askue's daughter), **Zachary Gingras**, 395th Combat Sustainability Support, **Joel Smith**, 250th Engineering Company, **Chris Meneses** (Lorraine Zeiner's friend), **Lance Corporal Taylor Smith** (Cheri Irwin's Nephew);

MCC Community Calendar

Week of Sun. Feb 16th

10:00 am Worship

11:15 am NOOMA

5:00 pm Sr. PF

Mon. Feb 17th

Presidents Day – Office Closed

7:30 pm Council (Dineson)

Tue. Feb 18th

1:30 pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Wed. Feb 19th

7 pm Book Club

Thurs. Feb 20th

9:30 am Bible Study

6:00 pm Bell Choir

7:00 pm Chancel Choir

7:30 pm Confirmation

Sat. Feb 22th

5:30-7:30 pm Chili Cook Off

Week of Sun. Feb 23rd

10:00 am Worship

11:15 am Victorian Xmas Check-in

5:00 pm Jr & Sr. PF

Tue. Feb 25th

1:30 pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Thurs. Feb 27th

9:30 am Bible Study

12:00 pm Young at Heart (Longhorn)

6:00 pm Bell Choir

7:00 pm Chancel Choir

7:30 pm Confirmation

Week of Sun. March 2nd

10:00 am Worship

11:30 am Trustees

5:00 pm Jr & Sr. PF

Mon. March 3rd

7:30 pm Outreach

Tue. March 4th

1:30 pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Wed. March 5th

Ash Wednesday

12-1:30 pm Ashes-to-Go

6:30 pm Agape Dinner

7:30 pm Ash Wednesday Worship

Thurs. March 6th

9:30 am Bible Study

6:00 pm Bell Choir

7:00 pm Chancel Choir

7:30 pm Confirmation

Week of Sun. March 9th

10:00 am Worship

5:00 pm Jr & Sr. PF

Mon. March 10th

7:30 pm Deacons

Tue. March 11th

1:30 pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Wed. March 12th

11:00 am Morning Circle

7:00 pm Lenten Zoom