

March 17, 2024

Fifth Sunday of Lent

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.*

+++++

Gathering Music

Near the Cross

William Doane, 1869

Welcome & Announcements

Moment of Quiet & Lighting of the Candles

Call to Worship

Leader: Whatever the state of the world, God's call is the same:

People: To love God and neighbor, to do justice and mercy, to walk humbly.

Leader: When we are surrounded by beautiful things,

People: We orient ourselves to living God's word.

Leader: And when all around seems like the end is near,

People: We orient ourselves to living God's word.

Leader: God gathers us in from every situation:

All: We come to answer Christ's call.

Opening Prayer

Emma Campbell, Deacon of the Day

***Our Church's Covenant**

inside front cover of hymnal

Children's Message

***Hymn**

Lift High the Cross (verses 1 & 5)

NCH #198

Students may transition to Sunday School with their teachers.

Call to Confession – Unison Prayer - Silent Prayer (from the Celtic Book of Cerne)

I come before your sight, O Lord, as one accused with my conscience as witness. I pray, not daring to ask what I am not worthy to receive. But Lord, you know everything that drives us to confess to you; what we are ashamed of, and the sins we were not afraid to commit. With these words we yield to you our hearts and minds, and commend to you what we say, but not what we have done. Spare us, O Lord, and forgive the sins we confess. Have mercy on those who call to you. And because my senses are weak in comprehending your mysteries, grant, Lord, the things we do not ask because of the hardness of our hearts, and grant us pardon; through Jesus Christ our Lord. 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

City Called Heaven

Traditional Spiritual

*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

Mark 13:1–8, 24–37, page 925

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

Sermon

Night Vision

Rev. Jennifer Gingras

*Closing Hymn

Just as I Am

NCH #207

*Benediction

Parting Music

Go, My Children, With My Blessing

Welsh Melody

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"

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

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.

Health & Safety: In order to keep our community members healthy (*including children under 12, the immune-compromised and those not yet fully vaccinated*), please stay home if you feel sick or have a fever (catch us on YouTube/Facebook). We have provided hand sanitizer and tissues in the pews, please use carefully as the chemicals are corrosive on wood and other surfaces



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.



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

Thank you for assisting in this morning's worship!

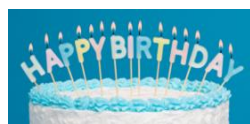
- **Deacon:** Emma Campbell
- **Usher:** Bill & MaryJo Brett
- **Lay Reader:** David Walker
- **Trustee:** Dave Allen
- **Counter:** Mark Barnhart
- **Coffee Host:** Ann Marie Campbell
- **Web Steward:** Scott Young



The flowers this morning are given by Jeanette Cardentey Morales in celebration of her father, Manny Cardentey's 70th birthday!

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](https://www.monroecg.org)



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

Stephen Sentementes ⁽¹⁷⁾

John Goyette ⁽²¹⁾

Michael Pfalzgraf ⁽²²⁾

Mike Riffard ⁽¹⁸⁾

Nicky Sentementes ⁽²¹⁾

Madeline Colegrove ⁽²³⁾



Historian's Notebook: While digging around your treasures this week for contributions to next Saturday's Tag Sale, please keep an eye open for any **Annual Reports and Budgets for the years between 2006 and 2014**. These are missing from our archives and I would greatly appreciate receiving any that you no longer have a need. Leave them in the Historians mail slot in the Church Office.

Gratefully, Gary Thompson

Holy Week at the Monroe Congregational Church



Palm Sunday, March 24th, 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, March 28th, 7:30 pm: A candlelit evening worship service remembering Jesus' mandate to love one another. (Speak with pastor Jenn if you would like to be a reader!

Easter Sunday, March 31st

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

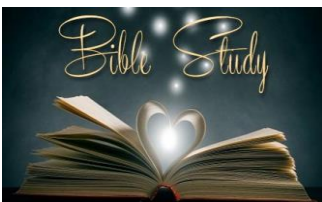
10 am – Easter Celebration Service: Join us at MCC for the Great Easter Celebration! We will also join in singing the Hallelujah Chorus.
After worship we will share a festive Easter Coffee Hour.
Christ is Risen indeed AND Everyone is Welcome.



11 am - Easter Sunday Celebration Coffee Hour

Fellowship seeks refreshments for our festive Easter Table!

Here are a few ideas: cookies, cakes, fruit, fruit salad, finger sandwiches, veggies, and dips! Please bring your contribution to the church kitchen by 9 am on Easter morning -Thank you!



Weekly Bible Study We cordially invite you to join us each week as we gather together to learn with and through one another. All are welcome in Dineson Parlor, from **9:30-11 am**. After a time of fellowship and prayer concerns, we read and discuss upcoming scripture texts or other faith-related topics. Bring your favorite Bible (whatever version you prefer) and a small notebook.



Snack & Chat with NOOMA: NOOMA is a series of 24 short films (less than 14 minutes each) that "blend [events of] everyday with discussion about God". Each short story covers a specific topic on a real-life situation, usually by relating the various experiences from a Christian perspective. The series features Rob Bell, the author of Love Wins. The name NOOMA comes from a phonetic spelling of the Greek word πνευμα (pneuma), meaning "wind or spirit". Join us in Dineson Parlor to enjoy some snacks, a video and light discussion – no prep necessary and all are welcome! **Apr 21 – STORE**

Outreach

You can still make a donation to One Great Hour of Sharing®

OGHS is one of four special mission offerings of the United Church of Christ. This Lenten Offering supports the disaster, refugee, and development ministries of the United Church of Christ within Wider Church Ministries.

.....



It's time to gather your donations for the Annual

Outreach Charity Tag Sale on March 23! To donate, please bring your items to Wilton Hall on either March 19, 20 or 21st from 9 am until 5 pm when volunteer sorters are present. All items must be clean and in good condition. **Thank you for your generous donations!**

Some items we **cannot accept** include:

- Electronics, including old computers, monitors, boom boxes or phones (of any type)
- Coffee mugs (travel and ceramic), plastic water bottles, Plastic food storage items
- Stuffed toys
- Cribs, car seats or pack and plays
- Encyclopedias, textbooks or VHS tapes
- Bicycles that are not complete and rideable
- Blankets, comforters, or linens that have holes or are not clean
- Anything that is broken or chipped
- Large furniture items like dining room sets, particle board furniture, bookcases or upholstered chairs or couches.

***Please email Julie McClenathan pictures of small furniture items before donating. juliemcclenathan@gmail.com**



Help Needed for the **Mustard Seed Thrift Shoppe!** Do you have spare time on Tuesdays at 1pm? Volunteers come to the back entrance of the Shoppe to help sort, hang and tag merchandise that have been donated. It's easy to do and any of the ladies can help you figure it out. Donations of gently-used clothing, toys, shoes, book and small household products can be left in the collection box just outside the Shoppe, brought in on Tuesdays while the ladies are sorting or during business hours: Fridays 10-3 or Saturdays 10-2. Sales associates are also needed during two-hour

shifts when the Shoppe is open. You can either open or close and it's easy to do. Come visit the volunteer and she'll gladly show you what needs to be done. A procedure list can be sent to you via email by contacting Susie Cuseo at thecuseos@yahoo.com or 203-268-0280, if you need more information or have questions or comments.

Fellowship



Young at Heart will meet Thursday, March 28th at noon

Little Barn, 901 Bridgeport Ave, Shelton

RSVP to Juliana Lavitola (203)445-0284 or JSL.Lavitola@gmail.com



Morning Circle meets on the second Wednesday of the month with the exception of January and February. We work in collaboration with the Food Pantry providing bean soup jars for Thanksgiving, birthday bags for children who visit with their families, collect women's hygiene products and make trick-or-treat bags in October. We put together Church World Service hygiene kits for international families in crisis and collect spare change for Heifer International. Please contact Shari Carrano with any questions or comments at 203-400-3563.

Our calendar of meetings

Wednesday, April 10 - Church World Service hygiene kits

Wednesday, May 8 - Collection of Women's hygiene products

Wednesday, June 12 - Annual June picnic - Location TBD



Please join us for Adult PF the 1st Saturday of the month in Dineson Parlor from 5:30 to 8pm!

Bring your own beverage and a snack to share. We are excited to bring Adult PF back to MCC in a new format! Each month will be led by different members of the group. It could be a discussion of an article or movie, a game night or a service project for MCC or the greater community, or an outing etc. Your presence and ideas are wanted and welcome. All adults young and old are encouraged to attend. Please reach out to Janie Allen via phone/text/email at 203-522-3686 or janeEallen@sbcglobal.net with any thoughts or questions. **Our next meeting will be Saturday, 4/6. Come check it out!**



We encourage anyone to join us 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

The book club selections for upcoming months:

March 20th 7 pm Demon Copperhead by Barbara Kingsolver

April 24th 7 pm The Queens Fortune by Allison Pataki Host: TBD

May 22nd 7 pm Master Slave Husband Wife by Ilyan Woo Host: TBD

June 19th 7 pm Horse by Geraldine Brooks Host: TBA

.....

Strawberry Festival News

Call all Jam Makers!!! It's time to make the jam for Strawberry Festival. We have several volunteers willing to lead these sessions. All we need is a few extra people to help stir, pour and clean for approximately 2 and half hours. Sign up using this link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E094CAEAA22A4FB6-48041861-jamsessions>. Please contact Susie Cuseo

at thecuseos@yahoo.com or 203-268-0280 for more information or if you have any problems accessing the link. Thank you in advance for your time in making these yummy and delicious jars of sweet goodness in so many flavors.



Are you creative or handy with tools? The Strawberry Festival Committee is bringing back the Gaming Alley. However, some of the original games need to be revamped and we are looking to build new ones.

If you are interested in helping out with this wonderful task, please contact Susie Cuseo at 203-268-0280 or thecuseos@yahoo.com.

Sale on 2023 Strawberry Jam!!! This is the only flavor left from last year. The jars are being sold for \$3 each or 2 for \$5. They make wonderful gifts for hairdressers, bus drivers, teachers, instructors, mail carriers, doctors, etc. This sale will continue until all remaining jars are sold. See Susie Cuseo at coffee hour for your purchases.



Strawberry Festival 2024
will be held on Saturday, June 15 (10am-5pm) & Sunday,
June 16 (11am-5pm).



There's lots to do from jam making, finding coordinators for each section, revamping our games section and prepping for the big event in June to name a few. Every year our festival is a huge success because of our dedicated volunteers who offer up their time to help in all sorts of ways. Consider signing up in Wilton Hall when those sheets go up in May. We will have shortcake for communion and our kickoff for the festival on the first Sunday of June. It is an exciting event that brings our members together where we catch up with each other when we are picking strawberries, hulling the berries, prepping the pie shells, making those delicious pies, tasty shortcake or yummy jams. We celebrate the end of our collaboration with a dinner after we've cleaned up and packed up the materials at each station. We need each and every one of you! Please contact any of our co-chairs: Susie Cuseo, Jenn/Clark Gingras, Josh Post and Frank Wittenauer with any questions, comments or concerns.

In Our Prayers

Edith Maclean, Jean & Ben Schweid (Marge Fox's mother, sister, and nephew); **Alison Abrams** (Jessica Pfalzgraf's sister); **Allie** (Colegrove's friend); **Jennifer Bittar** (Loraine Zeiner's friend); **Jackie Bleakney; Byron Brown & Bruce Bryant** (friends of Will Duchon); **Lori Cimeno** (Peggy & Ron Villani's Daughter); **Dave Coffey; Kevin Daly** (Gary Thompson's friend); **Dawn** (Donna Konkol's Friend); **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); **Clark Gingras; Peter Hallgren; Mary & Rachel Heerema** (Julia Gutierrez's mom & sister); **Heidi** (Diane Prall's sister); **Brad Heines** (Susie Cuseo's friend); **Bob Heffernan** (Ann Zeiner's son-in-law); **Heather Henning; Brian Hopkins** (Donna Konkol's cousin); **Bill Irwin** (Cheri's husband); **Vera James** (Jenn Wissink's mother); **Joey** (Calvert Locks); **Jonathan** (Matt Colegrove's brother); **Kelti** (friend of Liska Gutierrez); **Walter Lane** (Marge Fox's brother-in-law); **Monica Lynch** (Bethany Dupuis' friend); **Nicole Malia; Betty McKeown** (Donna Konkol's mother); **Mike** (Janie Allen's son); **Jean Moffat; Olivia Morrison** (Donna Nickdow's niece); **Bert Muizulis; Joe Mumper** (Julie McClenathan's friend); **Pat Nugent; Ocampo family** (friends of Liska Gutierrez); **Nancy Olofson; Missy & Gail Olson; Dean Perosino** (Gayle Hammond's brother); **Mike & Jessica Pfalzgraf; Geno Piacentini** (Karen MacDonald's husband); **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 Sippin; Gary Sippin** (Lori Sippin's son); **John Skarupa** (Barb Pellegrino's brother); **Christine Stadler; Tom Steen** (Jessica Pfalzgraf's dad); **Christian & Dain Steiner** (Julie McClenathan's nephews); **Claire Stenzel** (June & Myron Winger's granddaughter); **Wayne Thompson** (Gary Thompson's brother); **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: Stateside: **Justin Riffard**, Pensacola Naval Air Station, **Zachary Gingras**, 395th Combat Sustainability Support, **Joel Smith**, 250th Engineering Company Germany: **Rachel Hoffman** (Vaughan Askue's daughter), Chicago: **Chris Meneses** (Loraine Zeiner's friend), Kuwait: **Jon Sanchez** (Don Whiteley's grandson-in-law)

Saturday, March 23, 2024

Dave Kane's **Rotary** Club of Monroe



Reluctantly Presents

JOKES MY IRISH FATHER TOLD ME



Come join in the fun, as comedian Dave Kane brings you a laugh-filled presentation of jokes, one-liners and stories that celebrate the warmth and resilience of the Irish sense of humor.

**PROCEEDS TO PROVIDE CARE & COMFORT SUPPLIES FOR THE
MONROE ANIMAL CONTROL SHELTER**



*Fun!
Raffles!
BYOB!*

Rexford House at
Monroe Congregational Church
34 Church St., Monroe

\$25

Doors Open: 6:00PM
Showtime: 6:30 PM

SCAN FOR TICKETS:



TICKETS: Scan QR Code or go to: <https://square.link/u/AlYKwKoZ>
Questions? RotaryClubMonroe@gmail.com

BRING YOUR OWN FOOD & (ADULT) BEVERAGES!

MCC Community Calendar

Week of Sun. Mar 17th

10:00 am Worship
11:00 am Fellowship Meeting Conference Room
11:15 am Nooma
5:00 pm Senior PF

***Tag Sale Setup Mar 18th - 22nd ***

Mon. Mar 18th

7:30 pm Council

Tue. Mar 19th

1:00 pm Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

Wed. Mar 20th

7:00 pm Book Club

Thurs. Mar 21st

9:30 am Bible Study
6:00 pm Confirmation Class
6:00 pm Bell Choir
7:00 pm Chancel Choir

Sat. Mar 23rd

7:00 am – 3:00 pm Outreach Tag Sale

Week of Sun. Mar 24th

Palm Sunday

10:00 am Worship
11:00 am Junior PF Service (Pizza)
11:30 am JAM Session
5:00 pm Senior PF

Tue. Mar 25th

1:00 pm Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

Thurs. Mar 28th

12:00 pm Young at Heart
5:30 pm Maundy Thursday Deacon Setup
6:00 pm Bell Choir
7:00 pm Chancel Choir
7:30 pm Maundy Thursday Tenebrae

Fri. Mar 29th

12:00 pm JAM Session

Sat. Mar 30th

10:00 am JAM Session

Week of Sun. Mar 31th

Easter Sunday

6:00 am Sunrise Easter Service
10:00 am Easter Worship

Mon. Apr 1st

7:00 pm Outreach

Tue. Apr 2nd

1:00 pm Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

Thurs. Apr 3rd

9:30 am Bible Study
6:00 pm Confirmation Class
6:00 pm Bell Choir
7:00 pm Chancel Choir

Women's Retreat Apr 5th-7th

Sat. Apr 6th

5:30 am Adult PF