

March 19, 2023

Fourth 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.

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Gathering Music

The Unicorn Song

The Irish Rovers

John O'Rourke, guitar and vocals

Welcome & Announcements

Moment of Quiet & Lighting of the Candles

Call to Worship

Leader: Keep alert for Christ coming among us.

People: We come with eyes open to see.

Leader: Looking for ways to love our neighbor,

People: We come with hearts open to receive.

Leader: Ready to let our light shine,

People: We come with hands open to serve.

All: We hear your coming and we want to be ready. Come, let us worship!

Opening Prayer

Jessica Pfalzgraf, 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**

Lift High the Cross (verses 1 & 5)

NCH #198

Call to Confession – Unison Prayer - Silent Prayer

Holy One, all time is in your hand, and yet we confess that we want you to work on our schedule. We recognize that the world is not as it should be, and we long for things to be set right. We make excuses about how we are not ready to change. Forgive us, Lord, for our lamps are going out, and we have stumbled in the shadows as we sought our own way. May your forgiveness fill us to overflowing that we may have light to share. Re-ignite our passion for your kingdom, and guide us to faithfully walk with you whenever, and wherever, you lead, for however long it takes

to see your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. 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

Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me

John Edgar Gould

*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

Matthew 25:1–13, pg 903

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

Sermon

YOU Are the Light

Rev. Jennifer Gingras

*Closing Hymn

The Old Rugged Cross (verses 1 & 4)

NCH #195

Benediction

Choral Benediction

Postlude

The Parting Glass

Traditional Irish Folk Song

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.

COVID-19 Safety: In order to keep our community members safe (*including children under 12, the immune-compromised and those not yet fully vaccinated*), please follow these guidelines:

- Please stay home if you feel sick or have a fever (catch us on YouTube/Facebook)
- Masks are highly encouraged
- We have provided hand sanitizer and tissues in the pews, please use carefully as the chemicals are corrosive on wood and other surfaces

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



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.

Thank you for assisting in this morning's worship!

- **Deacon:** Jessica Pfalzgraf
- **Usher:** Maria Barresi
- **Lay Reader:** Kristina Logan
- **Trustee:** Caleb Nealon
- **Counter:** John O'Rourke
- **Coffee Host:** Jeanette Cardentey
- **Web Steward:** Scott Young



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)

John Goyette ⁽²¹⁾

Madeline Colegrove ⁽²³⁾

Cliff Cuseo ⁽²⁵⁾

Michael Pfalzgraf ⁽²²⁾

Rachel Colegrove ⁽²⁵⁾

Susie Cuseo ⁽²⁵⁾

Nicky Sentementes ⁽²¹⁾

Jan Pearson ⁽²⁵⁾



If you are visiting today: WELCOME! It's so good to have you with us!

We hope that this time together is one that helps you feel connected to your community and faith. Our family of faith welcomes you!

We'd love to include you on our e-mail distribution list, so that you get weekly updates about what's going on at MCC along with a monthly newsletter, *The Steeple*.

Please e-mail our Administrative Assistant Diane Prall at secretary@mcc-ucc.org to let us know if you'd like to be included. If you've been visiting with us for a while and you'd like to discuss making a longer-term commitment to the Monroe Congregational Church by becoming a **member**, please speak with a deacon or Pastor Jenn, who can be reached at jenn@mcc-ucc.org or her cell, 203-895-5607.



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.

Senior PF Easter Egg Hunt, Saturday, April 8th, 12 pm: Meet us in Wilton Hall with your little one for a few games followed by an egg hunt. Remember to bring a basket for all the goodies you'll find, hop on over and join the fun!



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!



Help us beautify the Meetinghouse with **Easter Flowers**. Order them in memory, honor, or celebration of a loved one! We have a choice of Daffodils, Lilies, Hyacinths, or Tulips. Each plant is \$20. Please make checks payable to MCC with "Easter Flowers" in the memo field. Please be sure to **complete an order form** (which can be found in Wilton Hall, the church office and in the Narthex) **and send it to the office** (mail, scan & email, or put into the brass mailbox outside of the Rexford House front doors) with a **check** for

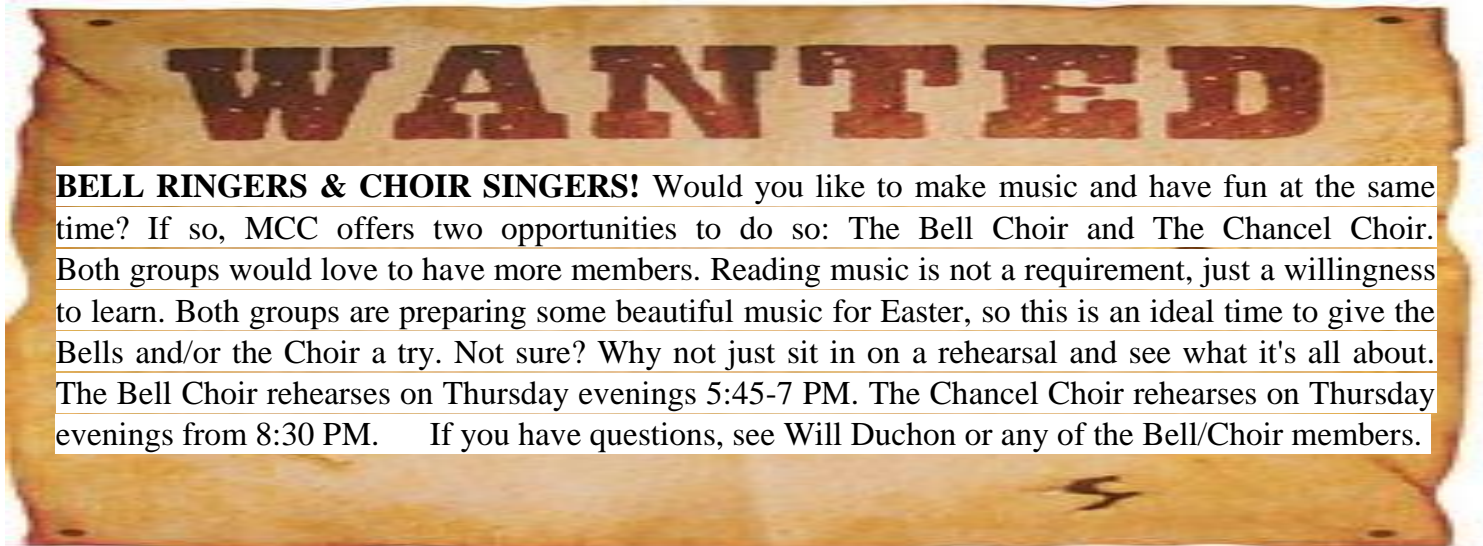
the total amount, made payable to Monroe Congregational Church. Memo: Easter flowers.

You can also pay online: <https://www.mcc-ucc.org/donate.html> (choose flowers) Please be sure the office still receives an order form so that we know how to list your name and honorarium in the bulletin. **All orders must be received by Wednesday, March 26.**



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!

Music Notes



BELL RINGERS & CHOIR SINGERS! Would you like to make music and have fun at the same time? If so, MCC offers two opportunities to do so: The Bell Choir and The Chancel Choir. Both groups would love to have more members. Reading music is not a requirement, just a willingness to learn. Both groups are preparing some beautiful music for Easter, so this is an ideal time to give the Bells and/or the Choir a try. Not sure? Why not just sit in on a rehearsal and see what it's all about. The Bell Choir rehearses on Thursday evenings 5:45-7 PM. The Chancel Choir rehearses on Thursday evenings from 8:30 PM. If you have questions, see Will Duchon or any of the Bell/Choir members.

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 **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.



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.

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

Senior



Sr PF Schedule: Our high school youth group meets most Sundays from 5-7:30 in Dineson Parlor, join us!

March 19 – Open & Affirming

March 25 – Trash Pickup/Lock in

March 26 – Attend church and Bill's after lock-in (no evening PF)

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. A special offering for OGHS will be taken on **March 26th**, or you can contribute on our giving page www.mcc-ucc.org/donate. Offerings will be gathered until April 15th. Learn more here: <https://vimeo.com/795283877> Thank you for your support!



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.

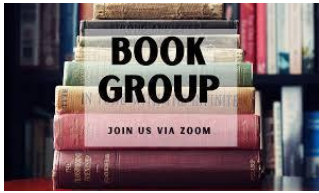
Fellowship



Sowing the Seeds of Peace: A Women's Retreat
April 14-16 at Silver Lake \$150 per person Sign-up in Wilton Hall or call Diane in the office 203-268-9327

Prayer Partners and the "Big Reveal" potluck luncheon - We will meet on Sunday, May 21 at 11:15AM in Wilton Hall. Mark it on your calendar and bring in something to share. Until then we continue to keep each other in our thoughts and prayers. Remember that you can always send a card or note in the mail using the church's address (34 Church Street, Monroe, CT 06468) as the return. Make sure you sign it with "Your Prayer Partner". Consider chatting with them during coffee hour or giving the sign of peace during service. Contact Susie Cuseo at thecuseos@yahoo.com or 203-268-0280 with any questions or concerns.





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

Young At Heart will meet **March 23rd at noon**
Vazzy's, 451 Main Street, Monroe
Please RSVP to Linda Fracassini if you plan to attend
203-261-5484 or e-mail: lindafrac@gmail.com



Morning Circle would like to invite the women of the congregation to our next meeting on Wednesday, April 12th at 11AM in Dineson Parlor where we will be putting hygiene kits for Church World Service. **Monetary donations are graciously appreciated just by writing Morning Circle Hygiene Kits on the memo line.** Bring a sandwich lunch while we hold a short business meeting. Contact Jackie Bleakney at 203-268-5275 with any questions or comments.

Mark your calendars for the following meetings:

Wednesday, May 10 at 11AM in Dineson Parlor - Women's products for Food Pantry
 Wednesday, June 14 at 11AM - Annual June Picnic - location TBD



Have you ever made jam before for the Strawberry Festival? It's one of the most popular products at the festival. All it takes is two hours of your time. It's fun, hard work and you get to conversate with others doing the same thing. Sign up using the link below. Please include your cell number in case the person leading the session needs to get in touch with you. At the end you'll be glad that you had a hand in making those yummy, tasty jars of sweet goodness. You can

also contact Susie Cuseo at thecuseos@yahoo.com or 203-268-0280 to join a session. Thank you to those who've already started the jam-making season with 148 jars during the first weekend.

link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e094caeea22a4fb6-jamsessions#/>



New 2023 Member directories are ready.

They are available in both regular and large print. You can:

- Pick a copy up in Wilton Hall during Coffee Hour
- Call (203-268-9327) or email (secretary@MCC-UCC.org) Diane to pick one up from the church office on a Mondays or Fridays.
- Diane can also put one into the brass mail box right outside the front doors of the Rexford House for you to pick up at your convenience.
- Diane can also email you a copy!

2023

Monroe Congregational Church
 Member Directory

In Our Prayers

The family & friends of Matt Littlefield who passed away (Marge Fox and Linda Fracassini's family friend; **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); **Monica Lynch** (Bethany Dupuis' friend); **Jacque 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)

Easter Flowers Order Form

Monroe Congregational Church
34 Church Street, Monroe, CT 06468

Help us beautify the Meetinghouse
in memory, honor, or celebration of a loved one!

Plant	Cost Each	Quantity	Total Cost
Daffodils	\$20.00		
Lilies	\$20.00		
Hyacinth	\$20.00		
Tulips	\$20.00		
		Check Total	\$

Given by _____

In Memory, Honor or Celebration of (**circle one**):

*Please send the office **this form** (mail, scan & email, or put into the brass mailbox outside of the Rexford House front doors) with a **check** for the total amount, made payable to Monroe Congregational Church. Memo: Easter flowers

You can also pay online: <https://www.mcc-ucc.org/donate.html> (choose flowers) Please be sure the office still receives this form.

The **last day to place an order is **Sunday, March 26**

MCC Community Calendar

Week of Sun. Mar. 19th

Fourth Sunday in Lent

10:00 am Worship

5:00 pm Junior & Senior PF

Mon. Mar 20th

7:30 pm Council (Zoom)

Tue. Mar. 21st

1:00 pm Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

Wed. Mar. 22nd

7:00 pm Confirmation

Thurs. Mar. 23rd

9:30 am Bible Study

12:00 pm Young @ Heart (Vazzy's)

5:45 pm Chime Choir

7:00 pm Chancel Choir

Sat. Mar. 25th

4:00 pm PF Service project & Lock-in

Week of Sun. Mar. 26th

Fifth Sunday in Lent/Baptism/OGHS

10:00 am Worship

2:00 pm Crop Walk Rally

5:00 pm Junior PF

Tue. Mar. 28th

1:00 pm Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

Wed. Mar. 29th

7:00 pm Confirmation

Thurs. Mar. 30th

9:30 am Bible Study

5:45 pm Chime Choir

7:00 pm Chancel Choir

Week of Sun. Apr. 2nd

Palm Sunday / Communion

10:00 am Worship

5:00 pm Junior & Senior 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

11 am PF Easter Egg Hunt

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

7:00 pm Confirmation

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 & Senior 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

7:00 pm Confirmation

Thurs. Apr. 20th

9:30 am Bible Study

5:45 pm Chime Choir

7:00 pm Chancel Choir