

March 30, 2025

**Fourth Sunday of Lent  
One Great Hour of Sharing**

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**    What Wondrous Love is This    *Southern Harmony*    *The Bell Choir*

**Welcome & Announcements**

**Moment of Quiet & Lighting of the Candles**

**Call to Worship**

Leader: Come, beloved of God, and open your hearts to the call of compassion.

*People: We come ready to hear, to feel, and to respond to God's Word.*

Leader: We are reminded to hear the cries of those in need.

*People: Awaken us, Lord, to the voices of the forgotten and the faces of the unseen.*

Leader: God calls us to build bridges, to love beyond boundaries and share with open hands.

*People: We are ready to answer the call and be bearers of mercy and hope.*

Leader: Let us worship the One who lifts up the lowly, challenges the complacent, and creates beloved community.

*All: Together, we worship the One who leads us into justice and joy.*

**Opening Prayer**

Mike 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**

Thousand Tongues to Sing

NCH #42

**Call to Confession – Unison Prayer - Silent Prayer**

*Compassionate and merciful God, You draw us into a sacred dance, weaving our lives together to span the chasms carved by this world's strife, crafting a tapestry of beloved community. Yet, there are days when our gaze falters, brokenness clouds our sight, and the weight of suffering feels too great to bear. We turn inward, distancing ourselves from the wounds we do not understand, whispering reasons why others must carry their burden alone. Forgive us for clinging to falsehoods that fracture your truth, for walking paths that stray from your kingdom's call. Stir our spirits with your dream today. Kindle the courage within us to live love aloud, to be light bearers in the gathering shadow. May we rise and answer the call of love, fully, wholly, and without delay. 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**

My Song is Love Unknown

Dwight Gustafson, 2016

*Our offering plate will be passed among us today.  
You may give online at [www.mcc-ucc/donate](http://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 16:19–31, pg. 954

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

**Sermon**

The Chasm

Rev. Jennifer Gingras

**\*Closing Hymn**

I Must Tell Jesus

NCH #486

**Benediction**

**Postlude**

Poor Man Lazrus

arr. by Jester Hairston

\*\*\*\*\*

**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.



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.



**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!

**Thank you for assisting in this morning's worship!**

**Deacon:** Mike Pfalzgraf    **Usher:** Clark Gingras    **Lay Reader:** David Walker  
**Trustee:** Mark Barnhart    **Counter:** Scott Young    **Web Steward:** Scott Young  
**Coffee Host:** CE Hosting



**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](http://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)

Brian Coleman (05)

\*\*\*\*\*



**MARCH 30<sup>th</sup> One Great Hour of Sharing®** stands as a cornerstone of the United Church of Christ's special mission offerings. This Lenten initiative provides vital support for disaster relief, refugee care, and development work through Love of Neighbor ministries.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Trustees**

**Spring Cleanup on Saturday, April 26<sup>th</sup> 8:30 – noon**

Whether you can give MCC an hour, or a whole morning, please come and help us beautify and maintain our campus!



**WORK DAY**  
at the  
**CHURCH**



### Holy Week at the Monroe Congregational Church

**Palm Sunday, April 13th, 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 17th, 7:30 pm:** A candlelit evening worship service remembering Jesus’ mandate to love one another.

**Easter Sunday, April 20<sup>th</sup>** – 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!

\*\*\*\*\*

### Close the Gap 5k Challenge



Exciting news! We are about 5k away from reaching our 2025 Stewardship Campaign, *Better Together* goal of \$210,000. And we are grateful for everyone’s pledge of support!

Knowing that we are so close, in appreciation of our church’s ministries (*and Senior PF especially*) an anonymous donor family has posed a challenge to our pledging members and friends.

From now until Strawberry Festival Sunday, anything donated by an individual or household *above and beyond their current pledge* will be matched by the anonymous donor family and given to Senior PF – **up to \$5,000**.

To participate in the challenge, submit a gift with the notation “**Close the Gap**” so we can keep track. This could have a huge impact on our youth’s summer mission trip, not to mention our ministries here at MCC! Thanks for your consideration.

\*\*\*\*\*



**Loaves & Fishes FryDays!** Join The Monroe Congregational Church & St. Peter's Grace Episcopal Church Fridays in Lent from 4:30-7:30 pm, as Dave Kuban's Planet Pizza food truck serves up hot fried fish, shrimp, french fries, chicken fingers and pizza (GF available) from the church’s parking lot! Either grab & go or stay & enjoy with neighbors and friends. This is a shared fundraiser for BOTH our communities, so the locations will vary. **April 4: St. Peter’s Grace hosts April 11: MCC hosts**

**Save time and pre-order online at <https://loaves-fishes-frydays.square.site/>**

We are seeking **volunteers**! As a volunteer, you will help people get their pre-ordered food, clean up tables and be hospitable! This is a joint fundraiser for both our church communities, so it doesn't matter which site you serve. Please wear your Strawberry or Apple Festival T-shirt :) and sign up online at

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D44A8AC22A2FB6-55203832-loaves#/>

## Outreach

**MCC Outreach Tag Sale, April 5, 2025, 9am – 1pm (early birds at 8 am)**

# WE NEED YOUR TREASURES!



It's time to gather your donations for the Annual Outreach Charity Tag Sale on Apr 5! To donate, please bring your items to Wilton Hall on either Apr 1, 2 or 3 from 9 am until 5 pm. **We would really appreciate it if, when dropping off your items, you could stay and help volunteers sort.**

**All items must be clean and in good condition. Thank you for your generous donations! 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, upholstered chairs or couches.

\*Please email Julie McClenathan pictures of small furniture items before donating. [juliemcclenathan@gmail.com](mailto:juliemcclenathan@gmail.com)

\*\*\*\*\*



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

\*\*\*\*\*

## Fellowship



### **2005 Women's Retreat - Silver Lake Retreat Center**

**May 2-4, 2025** *Picture it:* a weekend away in a beautiful setting filled with laughter, meaningful conversations, peaceful moments of meditation, energizing movement, and connection with some truly fabulous women. Oh, and let's not forget—delicious meals that Chef Lynn gets to prepare for us to enjoy! If you've already signed up, thank you—we can't wait to see you there! If you're considering joining us, there's still time to make it happen. And if you know someone who might enjoy this special weekend away, please invite them along! *For now, here's what you need to know:*

- **How to Sign Up:** Add your name to the sign-up sheet in Wilton Hall or e-mail me your plan ([jenn.gingras@gmail.com](mailto:jenn.gingras@gmail.com)).

- **Planning Meeting:** Join us for a fun brainstorming session on Wednesday, April 2 at 2:30 PM in my office. Everyone's welcome, and together we'll create something wonderful!
- **Cost:** The retreat is \$195 per person. You can pay online or drop off a check at the church—whatever works best for you.

Our Women's Retreat promises to be a refreshing, inspiring, and uplifting weekend. I hope you'll say yes to taking a little time for yourself and joining this amazing community of women. Looking forward to hearing from you! – Pastor Jenn



**Young At Heart** will meet at noon on April 24<sup>th</sup> -details forthcoming



**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:

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

Join us for the monthly Book Club on the **3<sup>rd</sup> 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](mailto:pjsh55@gmail.com) or home phone or 203-452-0850

- April 16<sup>th</sup>** The Glass Maker by Tracy Chevalier Host: TBD
- May 21<sup>st</sup>** The God of the Woods by Liz Moore Host: TBD
- June 18<sup>th</sup>** The Berry Pickers by Amanda Peters Host: TBD
- July 16<sup>th</sup>** Brave New World by Aldous Huxley Host: TBD



\*\*\*\*\*

### Faith Formation



**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! **Mar 30 – Dust**, Apr 27 – Flame

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

4/6 Church Scavenger Hunt

4/13 No Jr PF – Spring Recess, 4/20 No Jr PF – Easter

4/27 Earth Day Service Project



Senior



Sr PF will be selling treat-filled plastic eggs in preparation for Easter again this year. \$25 for 25 eggs; preorder or grab-and-go at coffee hour! Be on the look out for details in early April! Any questions, contact [mccuccseniorpf@gmail.com](mailto:mccuccseniorpf@gmail.com) Thank you for supporting Sr PF!



\*\*\*\*\*

**The Strawberry 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 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](mailto:thecuseos@yahoo.com) or 203-268-0280 with any questions, comments or concerns.



**It's Time to Make the Jam!!**



**Jam Sessions** are led by those experienced in making jam in previous years. Our goal this year is to make about 1,600 jars of jam in 10 different flavors. Can you name all of them? They are strawberry, blueberry, very berry, lemonade, rhubarb, jalapeno, cherry, pineapple, Satan's Delight and vegan. Every last jar was taken within two weeks of the festival ending. Let's start this year's jam supply strong by signing up to make jam!

**Sign-up sheets will be posted in Wilton Hall as well as thru the Sign Up Genius**

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E094CAEAA22A4FB6-54954856-jamsession#/>

Sessions last approximately two and half hours. Your help will be greatly appreciated when you literally see the fruits of your labor. Please contact Susie Cuseo at [thecuseos@yahoo.com](mailto:thecuseos@yahoo.com) or 203-268-0280 with any questions or to sign up.

.....

*A heartfelt  
Thank You* ❤️

Jackie Bleakney would like to express her deep appreciation to everyone who reached out to her with kind words and loving support in the loss of her dear friend Don Whiteley.

# Easter Flowers Order Form

Monroe Congregational Church  
34 Church Street, Monroe, CT 06468

Help us beautify the church for Easter Sunday  
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		
<b>Check Total</b>			<b>\$</b>

**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 & note Easter) Please be sure the office still receives this form.

\*\*The **last day** to place an order is **Wednesday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>**



## In Our Prayers

**Frank Wittenauer and his family on the passing of his Uncle Joel Bowie; 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); **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); **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); **Jill Sapak; 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); **Allen & 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. March 30<sup>th</sup>**

10:00 am Worship  
11:15 NOOMA – DUST (Dineson Parlor)  
5:00 pm Jr & Sr. PF

### **Mon. March 31<sup>st</sup>**

7:30 pm Outreach (zoom)

### **Tue. April 1<sup>st</sup>**

9-5 Tag Sale Setup  
1:30 pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

### **Wed. April 2<sup>nd</sup>**

9-5 Tag Sale Setup  
2:30 Women's Retreat Planning Mtg  
(Jenn's office)

### **Thurs. April 3**

9-5 Tag Sale Setup  
9:30 am Bible Study  
6:00 pm Bell Choir  
7:00 pm Chancel Choir  
7:30 pm Confirmation

### **Fri. April 4<sup>th</sup>**

4:30–7:30 Loaves & Fishes FryDay (St.  
Peter's Grace)

### **Sat. April 5<sup>th</sup>**

8 am -1 pm Outreach Tag Sale

### **Week of Sun. April 6<sup>th</sup>**

10:00 am Worship  
11:15 am Trustees  
12:30 pm Jam Making  
5:00 pm Jr & Sr. PF

### **Mon. April 7<sup>th</sup>**

7:30 pm Outreach

### **Tue. April 8<sup>th</sup>**

1:30 pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

### **Wed. April 9<sup>th</sup>**

11:00 am Morning Circle  
7:00 pm Lenten Zoom

### **Thurs. April 10<sup>th</sup>**

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

### **Fri. April 11<sup>th</sup>**

4:30–7:30 Loaves & Fishes FryDay (MCC)

### **Sat. April 12<sup>th</sup>**

12:30 pm Jam Session

### **Week of Sun. April 13<sup>th</sup>**

*Palm Sunday, Baptism -Colby Kaminski*

10:00 am Worship  
5:00 pm Sr. PF