

34 Church Street
Monroe, CT 06468
Tel.: (203) 268-9327
Fax: (203) 268-3153
www.mcc-ucc.org

Office Hours:
Mon. & Wed. 9 am – 5:30 pm
Fri. 9am – 5 pm

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



THE MONROE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

STEEPLE

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

May 1, 2022



2022 Easter Sunday Worship, photo cred J. Gingras

The Kin-dom of Heaven is like... a Garden

God really seems to have an affinity for gardens. And it's no wonder Jesus uses gardening analogies so frequently. Both Creation (Genesis 2:8-9) and Resurrection happened in a Garden (John 19:41, also see John 20:15 where Jesus is mistaken for a gardener). As Susie recently preached, Jesus compares the Kin-dom to a mustard seed (Matthew 13:31-33), which begins as a tiny seed and grows into a great plant, taking over the garden. It's

interesting how even small seeds planted into good soil grow and produce great harvests. This month let's be sure to get outside, to plant something, to get some soil under our fingernails, walk through a garden and take in all the beauty. As we tend to the work God has given us; as we prepare our lives and plant seeds, may we be cultivate a greater understanding and sense of the Kin-dom.

Site note... why do I use the word Kin-dom and not Kingdom? I believe that "Kin-dom" better reflects the *kind* of society Jesus envisions—as a shared community of equals who serve each other here on earth, and not just in a future heaven. Granted, in the context of that day, the term "kingdom" was easily understood. But when the Apostle Paul planted small house churches, and wrote to them, he called them *adelphoi*—sisters and brothers—united in a kin-group not by blood but in a common loyalty to the Lord Jesus, over against the Lord Caesar. To these tiny outposts, Paul promises the coming victory of God over all other empires, through the return of his representative, Jesus.

I had the opportunity last Sunday to "listen in" on our church's worship, and I was so impressed. Scott has done an amazing job of equipping our meetinghouse on Sunday morning so that remote viewers can feel like they are a part of the Sunday worshipping experience. Being able to sing the hymns, pray with the congregation, and hear our guest preacher Susie speak from the heart was quite a bit of fun for me. Yes, I was still technically on vacation... but I missed all of you and wanted to sneak a peek at what was happening while I was away.

If you haven't already, I encourage you to get acquainted with our online worship before you think of heading off for summer breaks and vacations. Checking in online will ensure you stay engaged with your faith community and give you some spiritual nourishment on your journey.

In Peace, Pastor Jenn



Dear MCC Members & Friends,

It was so fabulous to receive your anniversary wishes on my tenth year of service as your Senior Pastor! I was humbled to receive your generous gifts toward my sabbatical and am eager to wear the preaching robe and stole. Your cards of support and the potluck on Palm Sunday were a sweet reminder of how much I've enjoyed our mutual ministry. Allow me to wish all of you, in return, all the happiness and joy that life can bring.



Fondly, Jenn



Jim & Gretchen Davison’s Memorial Service

The lives of long-term MCC members Jim and Gretchen Davison will be celebrated on Saturday, June 11th at 11 am in the Meetinghouse. A luncheon will take place immediately following in Wilton Hall, please sign up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D44A8AC22A2FB6-davison>.

Interment will be held privately. We hope that you are able to join their children Karen and Jay and their families in remembering and celebrating their cherished parents. Please see Pastor Jenn with any questions.

Board of Deacons Covid-19 Update, 4/21/22

We appreciate your patience as we determine how to best move forward when it comes to masking and other pandemic precautions. As deacons and your pastor, we keep care for each other at the root of our decision making.

Because singing is an important worship experience AND we know it is effective at spreading the virus, we have decided to continue to mask in the Meetinghouse on Sunday morning until the numbers in Monroe reach GREY (the lowest benchmark at less than 5 cases per 100,000) and have remained there at least a week. At that point, we will move to mask-optional (some may continue to mask for their own protection).

Unfortunately, the case rate in the region is sneaking back up again. At this time, the town of Monroe has moved to RED status, with 19.8 cases per 100,000. This is an unfortunate development, and we hope for improvement as spring progresses. To follow the metrics, visit <http://www.monroect.org/covid-19>. Thanks as always for your support!

**From Our Moderator
Constitution Update**

**Church
Constitution**



As announced at the Annual Meeting this year, a small group is taking on the task of fixing up the constitution of MCC where it needs to be fixed up, e.g., inconsistencies/inaccuracies, archaic practices and positions, and yes, grammar. The committee is small and will reach out to "experts," e.g., ex-moderators, Admin Asst/ Bookkeeper and so on as we need advice. The committee as it stands at this moment is Pastor Jenn, Michelle Cardentey, Barbara Pellegrino, Jessica Pfalzgraf, Gary Thompson, and Arlene Redmond (current Moderator). We are not actually authorized to make any changes. Only you are. Or more correctly all of us are

(2/3rds vote of member attendees of a congregational meeting). Any changes will have to come before the congregation at a congregational meeting, e.g., Annual Meeting. The would be sent out in advance the meeting, of course. If, by any chance you have a passion for the Constitution (!), and would like to raise an issue or make a suggestion for us to consider, please get in touch with Arlene at arlenearedmond@gmail.com or 203-345-3637. Or reach out to another committee member.

Arlene



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. Please review the available slots on Sign Up Genius and click on the button to sign up. If you do not have access to a computer, call Diane in the office 203-268-9327, and she will help you sign up! 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>

Outreach



May 16, 6:30pm – 8:30pm

The Mustard Seed Thrift Shoppe has over 25 boxes of clothing they would like to hang & tag before the Strawberry Festival. It's a huge task, but last time it only took an hour, so they are hoping many hands will make light (quick) work again! Please volunteer to help. Thanks in advance –see YOU on the 16th! Please contact Susie Cuseo at thecuseos@yahoo.com or 203-268-0280 with any questions or comments.

Thank you to everyone who made an Easter Basket or gave a donation for a basket -they were beautiful! I am sure the children were delighted –I know our social worker was when she picked them up to make her deliveries!

With sincere gratitude,

Diane Prall ~ Monroe Congregational Church Liaison Covenant to Care for Children



Thank you for your generous donations to our UCC Ukraine Emergency Appeal. MCC members and friends raised \$1,583.88

for The United Church of Christ's Global Ministries who is collaborating with the Reformed Church of Hungary to bring aid to Ukraine. Hungarian Reformed Church Aid has been offering humanitarian assistance since Russian troops first attacked on Feb. 24, working with elderly and other vulnerable communities inside the country who have not been able to leave. Gifts to the UCC Ukraine Emergency Appeal will provide shelter, food and other care to war refugees and internally displaced people.

If you meant to donate but missed out you can still donate directly online via this link: <https://www.ucc.org/ucc-issues-appeal-for-ukraine-calls-on-u-s-to-provide-humanitarian-aid/>

One Great Hour of Sharing

Each year, people all over the world receive real blessings from this offering: emergency assistance in times of disaster, access to clean water and sanitation, basic health care, and support for sustainable agriculture. Gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing make it possible for the United Church of Christ and our ecumenical partners to respond immediately, wherever the need is, and to continue long term recovery work for as long after other organizations have moved on. May God continue to bless each of our churches and the whole United Church of Christ as together we strive to bring God's love to a hurting world.

MCC raised \$211.00 -thank you!





MCC is participating in the 2021 CROP Hunger Walk to support Church World Service and help families who are struggling with hunger. **We're asking you to join us** - with your steps and your donations - to provide more meals for the growing number of people in our community who need them, and greater food security in communities around the world.

To donate or sign up for the team, go to <https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2022/team/team-mcc-2>

Christian Education



Hello MCC Families -

Please join us **Sunday May 1st** as we celebrate the First Communion of Abigail Coleman, Carmela Combs, Marlo Duva, Kaelyn McEvoy, and Avrie Sheppard. We are looking forward to welcoming these youth to our table and to sharing God's love with them today and always. If your child is making First Communion please have them dress in their

Sunday best as this is an important milestone on their faith journey. All white is not required, nor are veils. God's love embraces us as we are for who we are and so their attire should be a reflection of them and what makes them feel good.

We welcome these youth to our table and to sharing God's love with them today and always. **Please join us for a cake in their honor during Coffee Hour immediately following Worship.**



This Sunday we will recognize and show our appreciate for our Sunday School Teachers:

- Michelle Cardentey
- Larry Wissink
- Don Parker - Burgard
- Kate Parker - Burgard
- Leanne McEvoy
- Autumn Sheppard
- Melissa Coleman
- Jenna Rice

THANK YOU!



Weekly Prayer & Bible Study Group! Every Thursday from 9:30-10:30 in Dineson Parlor, everyone is cordially invited and welcome to join us! Bring your favorite Bible (whatever version you prefer) and a small notebook. Let Pastor Jenn know if you have any questions.

Date	Text
May 5	Binding Covenant, chap 1-3
May 12	Binding Covenant, chap 4-6
May 19	<i>No Bible Study</i>
May 26	Binding Covenant, chap 7-9 Last Day of Bible Study party - 220 Webb Circle



Spring Study: Discovering Our Roots Three study sessions on the MCC history book **Binding Covenant** written by our own church historian, Gary Thompson will be held this spring. A second publishing run was recently completed, so if you do not already have a copy and would like to join the study, please contact Pastor Jenn:

- Virtually on Zoom (May 10th, 24th and June 7th at 7 pm)
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2038955607?pwd=bWxMMDRXN3d6emJNZ2JsVzlsTFp3dz09> Meeting ID: 203 895 5607 Passcode: MeetMe
- In person during Thursday morning Bible Study (May 5th, 12th and 26th at 9:30 am in the parlor)



Sunday School

- May 1 - First Communion (No Sunday School)
- May 8 - Paul & Silas
- May - 15 - Paul's Sermon at Athens
- May - 22 - Partnership in the Gospel
- May 29 - No Sunday School (Memorial Day Weekend)

This Month in Jr PF:

- May 1 - Slime Time
- May 8 - No Jr PF - Mother's Day
- May 15 - Service
- May 22 - Game Night
- May 29 - No Jr PF (Memorial Day Weekend)

This Month in Senior PF:

- May 1 – Youth Sunday Planning
- May 8 – Mother’s Day (No PF)
- May 15 – Youth Sunday, 10 am worship (rehearsal TBD 5/14)
- May 20 – Friday Night Jam with Jenn & Josh, 7-9 pm
- May 21 – Saturday Jam with Jenn & Josh, 9am-12, 12-4pm
- May 22 – TBD
- May 29 – PF at the Park, 2-4:30pm

Trustees



Please give an hour or two and help clean up and beautify our church campus on **Saturday, May 14, 2022 at 8:30 AM**. We have mostly outside work to complete such as spreading mulch, etc. - thank you!

Fellowship



*A heartfelt
Thank You* ❤️

Adult PF will meet for the last time

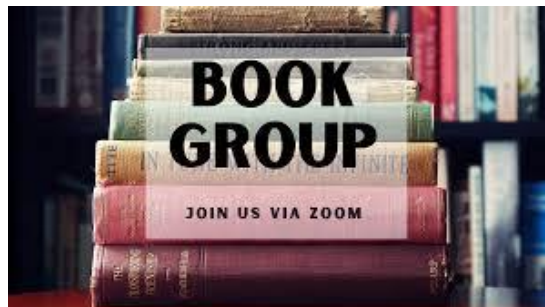
at 274 Wheeler Road this Sunday at 5pm.

A big THANK YOU to Don and Kate Parker-Burgard for organizing and hosting for so very long. We wish you happiness in your new home!



Prayer Partners Unite!!! Can you believe how quickly time flies when you are keeping your partner in your thoughts and prayers? We will meet on Sunday, May 22nd at 11am in Wilton Hall for our "Big Reveal" potluck luncheon. We will soon find out who's been praying for whom. Don't forget that you can still send notes or cards to them using the church's

address as the return (34 Church St, Monroe, CT 06468) and sign it "Your Prayer Partner". Here's an idea: if your Prayer Partner's birthday is after May, consider sending them a card for their half year birthday milestone. Please contact Susie Cuseo at thecuseos@yahoo.com or 203-268-0280 with any questions or comments.



MCC Book Club is open to all church members.

For more information, please call Paula Haggstrom 203-452-0850
email: pjsh55@gmail.com We will continue meet via Zoom.

May 11th, 7 pm - The Indigo Girl by Natasha Boyd, Host: Paula Haggstrom
June 8th, 7 pm - The Island of Sea Women by Lisa See, Host: Sue Smelzer
July 13th, 7 pm - The Last Mona Lisa by Jonathan Santlofer, Host: TBD
August 10th, 7 pm - The Giver of Stars by Jojo Moyes, Host: TBD

MORNING CIRCLE

Morning Circle invites all the ladies of the congregation to their next meeting on Wednesday, May 11th at 11AM in **Dineson Parlor**. We will be putting together birthday bags for the Food Pantry. We will need donations of cake mixes, frosting, birthday candles and birthday napkins. Please leave any donations in the box across from the Men's room. The children who visit the Pantry love receiving these treats. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. Please bring a dish to share as we return to a *potluck style of dining* for lunch while we hold a short business meeting. Contact Jackie Bleakney at 203-268-5275 or Susie Cuseo at thecuseos@yahoo.com or 203-268-0280 with any questions. Many thanks to our members who donated and put together 29 Church World Service hygiene kits in April. Families worldwide benefit from these kits when disaster strikes. In June we will hold our annual luncheon at June Wininger's residence with a catered meal. Mark your calendar for Wednesday, June 8th at 11:30AM. Check the Steeple and/or the bulletin for any date changes.





Young At Heart

Next luncheon will be on Thursday, **May 26**
 Details to be announced.

Children Snacks are Needed. Those young-at-heart love the treats they get during coffee hour. So while the adults enjoy coffee/tea and a little treat, the kids enjoy theirs. Juice bottles, juice cups and juice bags are also welcomed. Please drop off your donations on the serving counter clearly labeled "Children's Snack". Thank you in advance for your generosity and kindness.



Boy Scouts Storage Shed

You may notice this nice new shed in the back parking lot. The scouts plan to move everything out of the church basement and hopefully one closet in Wilton hall into the shed. This will free up a lot of space for us.
 Dave Allen



Strawberry Festival **JAM Session** Leaders & Volunteers Needed!

It's time to make the JAM and we need your help! All the supplies have been purchased and the kitchen prepared. The kitchen has been reserved for the dates below. Each date needs a *Session Leader* and should have at least 4-5 more volunteers. Please sign up in Wilton Hall or call Diane in the office and she will add your name for you!

Let's make our 50th Strawberry Festival

a huge success for MCC!

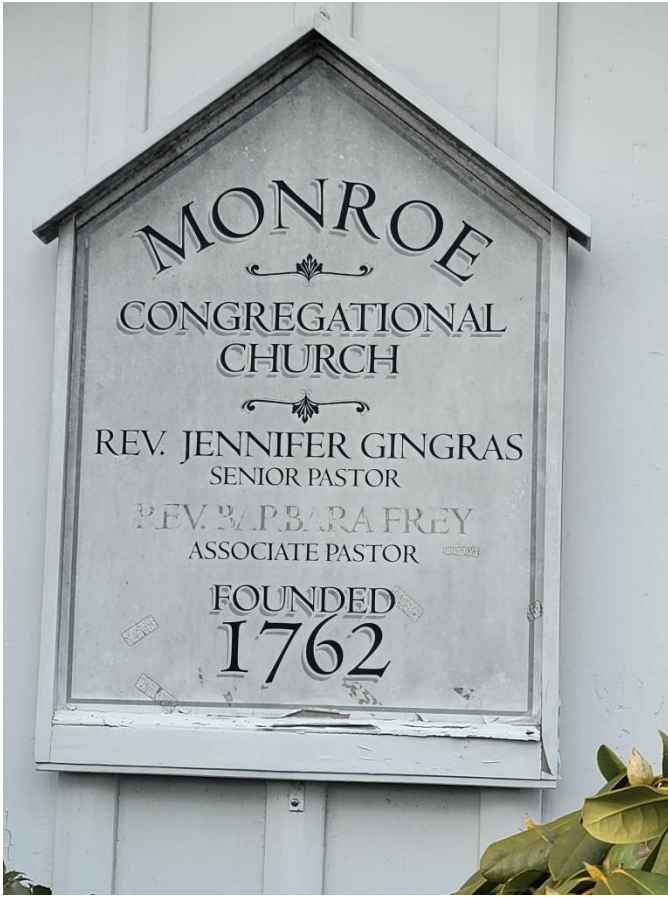
<p>Sunday, May 1st 12pm-4pm</p>	<p>Sunday, May 22th 12pm-4pm (Prayer Partner Lunch 11am)</p>
<p>Friday, May 6th 7pm</p>	<p>Friday, May 27th 7pm</p>
<p>Saturday, May 7th 9am-12pm & 12pm-3pm</p>	<p>Saturday, May 28th 9am-12pm & 12pm-3pm</p>
<p>Sunday, May 8th 1pm-4pm (Mother's Day Tea 11 am)</p>	<p>Sunday, May 29th 12pm-4pm</p>
<p>Friday, May 13th 7pm -Full!</p> <p>Saturday, May 14th 9am-12pm & 12pm-3pm</p> <p>Sunday, May 15th 12pm-4pm</p>	<p>Friday, June 3rd 7pm</p> <p>Saturday, June 4th 9am-12pm & 12pm-3pm</p> <p>Sunday, June 5th 12pm-4pm</p>

Easter Flowers Are Given with Love by the Following People

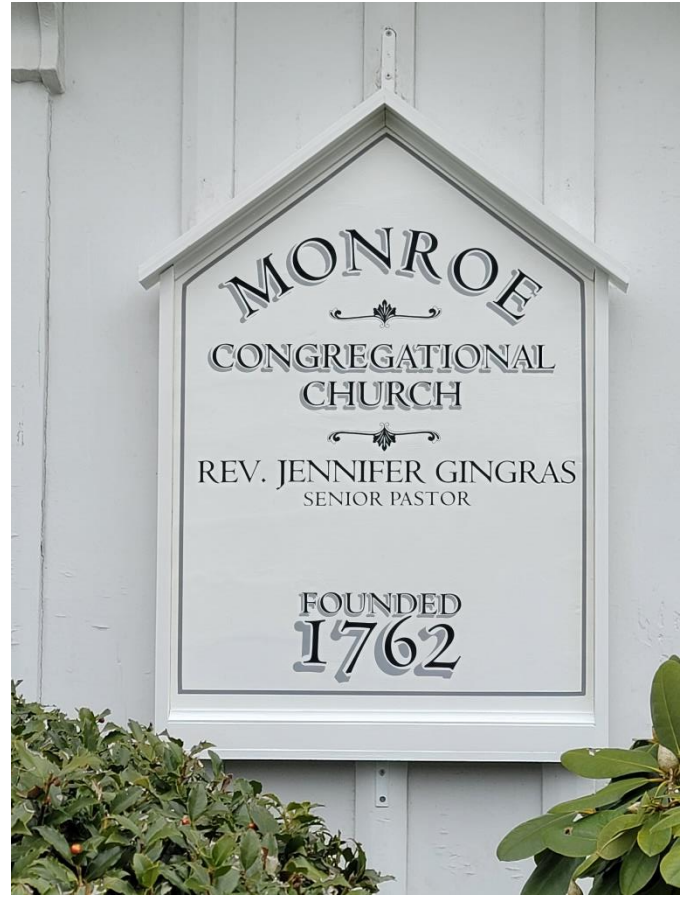
Jane Allen	In honor of family and friends
Vaughan Askue and Arlene Redmond	In memory of William & Elizabeth Askue and Dorothy & Frederick Redmond
Michelle Cardentey	In memory of Eleanor and Joseph La Valla
The Cuseo family	In memory of Joe & Nancy Cuseo & Leo Ket-Ying
Amy Duva	In memory of Megan Cichowski
Linda and Jack Fracassini	In memory of our parents, and Linda's sister, Jean
Rev. Jennifer and Clark Gingras	In memory of Rita and Armand Gingras
Cheri Irwin	In memory of my grandmother, Dahlia, who loved flowers
The Logans	In memory of Ellie Weiss and Cedric Logan
Joanne Malia	In memory of her parents, John and Ellie Swindlehurst
Mark Malia	In memory of his parents, Mark and Maggie Malia
Chris and Jan Pearson	In memory of our parents
Mike and Jessica Pfalzgraf	In memory of Doreen Steen In honor of Peggy Pfalzgraf, Jane Steen, and Marge Woodruff
John and Cindy O'Rourke	In memory of John's sister, Valerie O'Rourke Foley
Jenna Rice	In memory of Esther Temple
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 Ribaldo-Smith	In memory of Theodore N. Ribaldo
Anson, Corryn, Aubrey, Kylie, Leah Smith	In memory of Maude (Nana) Voigt
Ruth Wakeley	In memory of Bill Wakeley
Myron and June Winingar	Happy Spring
The Whiteley family	In memory of Janice
Ann Zeiner	In memory of Bob, Carol and Val

Have you seen the new MCC signage lately? Troop 63 Eagle Scout candidate Liam Lafond recently replaced or refurbished five of our worn church signs for his final community service project. His work definitely helps our communities "curb appeal" while informing visitors and beautifying the campus. He had to stay true to the original design (since we are in a historic district) and we think he's done a tremendous job. Thanks for all your hard work, Liam!

Old Sign



New Sign



Old Sign



New Sign



After a long journey of fundraising it is finally time to get the show on the road!!!
The **Monroe Playground Foundation** is looking for volunteers to help with the **playground build, May 10 – 16th**. Please click this link <https://www.monroeplaygroundfoundation.org/> or email the Volunteer Coordinator, Amanda Bean at amanda.mpfvolunteers@gmail.com to sign up or for questions.



Does a community build a new playground or does a playground build a new community?

In 1992 hundreds of volunteers came together to build something amazing. The Kids Kreation playground.

They gave their time, their tools, and their energy to create something new. That had never been done before in Monroe. It was an amazing project and an amazing structure that stood for 30 years. The spirit of the original project and the original playground lives on in the new playground. It's designed by the same architects and we're building it the same way.

As a community. As a team. A whole new generation of people that can come to the park, play on the playground, and say, "I helped build that!"

Join us and let's build this together!



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

Chuck	Schneider	05/01	Nicole	Williams	05/14
Allen	Crosnier	05/02	Mark	Barnhart	05/15
Joyce	Rousseau	05/03	Shaina	Stamp	05/16
Jenna	Rice	05/05	Marissa	Maiolo	05/18
Hank	Allen	05/06	Linda	Caballero	05/20
Kristina	Logan	05/06	Susan	Walker	05/23
Gay	Muizulis	05/06	Bethany	Dupuis	05/24
Gilles	Rousseau	05/06	Linda	Rooney	05/24
Gary	Thompson	05/06	Stacy	Andrejczyk	05/25
Will	Duchon	05/07	Debra	Hansen	05/26
Alexa	Unger	05/07	Justin	Rifflard	05/27
Tyler	Vaglivello	05/07	Muriel	Hastedt	05/28
Corey	Schneider	05/08	Rebecca	Young	05/28
Kelly	Halloran	05/09	Kristen	Provost-Switzer	05/30
Jonathan	Hyde	05/12	Scott	Whiteley	05/30
Cindy	O'Rourke	05/13	Melissa	Coleman	05/31
David	Spence	05/13	Warren	Stamp	05/31

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

Carrie & Josh Friend ⁽¹⁰⁾ John & Kathy Maiolo ⁽¹⁴⁾
Lorrie & Bernard Sippin ⁽¹⁴⁾ Ann-Marie & Brian Campbell ⁽¹⁷⁾
Myron & June Winger ⁽²⁴⁾ Sheldon & Nancy Smith ⁽²⁸⁾
and Kristen & Scott Provost-Switzer ⁽³⁰⁾



MCC Community Calendar

Week of May 1st

Teacher Appreciation/1st Communion Sunday

10:00 am Worship

1:00 pm Crop Walk

5:00 pm Junior, Senior PF

5:00 pm Adult PF

Tue. May 3rd

1:00 pm Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

Wed. May 4th

6:30 pm Confirmation (Dineson)

Thur. May 5th

9:30 am Bible Study (Dineson)

6:00 pm Chimes & Bells Rehearsal

7:00 pm Chancel Choir

Week of May 8th

10:00 am Worship

11:00 Mother's Day Tea

Tue. May 10th

1:00 pm Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

7:00 pm Binding Covenant, Chap 1-3 (Zoom)

Wed. May 11th

11:00 Morning Circle

6:30 pm Confirmation (Dineson)

7:00 pm Book Club (Zoom)

Thur. May 12th

9:30 am Bible Study (Dineson)

6:00 pm Chimes & Bells Rehearsal

7:00 pm Chancel Choir

Sat. May 14th

8:30 am Spring Church Clean Up Day

Week of May 15th

Youth Sunday

10:00 am Worship

11:00 am Music Committee (Dineson)

11:30 am Trustees (Zoom)

5:00 pm Junior

5:00 pm Adult PF

Mon. May 16th

7:30 pm Council (ZOOM)

Tue. May 17th

1:00 pm Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

7:00 pm Bereavement Group

Wed. May 18th

6:30 pm Confirmation Celebration Dinner

(Wilton)

Thur. May 19th

6:00 pm Chimes & Bells Rehearsal

7:00 pm Chancel Choir

Week of May 22nd

Confirmation Sunday

10:00 am Worship

11:00 am Prayer Partner Luncheon

5:00 pm Junior, Senior PF's

Tue. May 23rd

1:00 pm Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

7:00 pm Binding Covenant, Chap 4-6
(Zoom)

Thur. May 24th

9:30 am Bible Study (Dineson)

6:00 pm Chimes & Bells Rehearsal

7:00 pm Chancel Choir

Week of May 29th

Memorial Day Weekend

10:00 am Worship

2-4:30 pm Senior PF at the Park

Mon. May 30th

Memorial Day – Office Closed

Tue. May 31st

1:00 pm Mustard Seed Sort and Tag