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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>

October 1, 2022

Dear MCC Members and friends,



Serving Communion at Silver Lake

Oh my, have I missed you! As I gear up for a return to full time pastoring after a 3-month sabbatical, I thought I would share some thoughts about my time away.

Why did I take a sabbatical? There is no other way to say it - I needed one. I've been deeply involved in ministry at MCC for a little more than fifteen years, and I think it was starting to show. While I've been greatly blessed with my job as your pastor,

the responsibility of being on call 24/7/365 can be taxing (especially given the difficulties of Covid!) The evenings and weekends and extra hours away began to add up and weigh not just on me, but my family as well.

What did I do while I was gone? The goals for this time were straightforward: 1.) go see places of origin 2.) rest and recover 3.) spend time with family

I spent the first week serving as the chaplain at Silver Lake, a volunteer role I'd never done before. In early August, I was able to travel to England with my oldest and see the places our Pilgrim forebears first felt called to leave and find religious freedom. A few weeks later, my youngest and I were off to Maine to see the house my parents are building. I even returned to my hometown of Madison, camping at Hammonasset State Park (and sadly, presiding at a funeral for my best friend's mom at my home church, North Madison Congregational). These times away were mostly relaxing and refreshing for body and soul, every bit the quality time I had hoped for.



Outside Westminister Abbey

In the midst of these short bursts of travel, I spent most of my time to projects on the house and assisting my middle kid in getting settled into civilian life at home. And I took naps... lots of them! I never really did build that hobby farm that I'd hoped for, and that's OK.

What did I (re)learn?

1. Being present is not the same as being involved. Before sabbatical, I was usually home at a reasonable time after each workday, but often found myself often in a state of emotional exhaustion. So, while I might have been in the same room with my family members, I didn't really have much quality, genuine interaction with them. This had become a regular, unhealthy pattern in my life and one that I'm now more aware of and committed to improving.

2. I need to grow. The reality is, for nearly every second of the day, I'm usually the de facto decision-maker, problem-solver, or counsel-provider. And while this comes with the territory of leading in the church and doing my mom thing, I believe it's led to an unhealthy level of emotional exhaustion and compassion fatigue. I've come to realize that I have to find more ways to listen, to learn, and even to be led sometimes.

3. I am blessed. Okay, this is more something I've re-learned. My love for MCC has only grown during these 3 months. I am thankful to have such a supportive church family; including council leaders, deaconate and dedicated staff who have allowed me to take this renewal time. I'm also grateful to Rev. Peggy Allen for holding down the fort while I was gone. All the reports I've gotten indicate she's done a stellar job as a sabbatical supply pastor. Finally, I have such a wonderful life-partner in Clark (and I need to do a better job of telling him that regularly!)



Home Improvements



North Madison UCC

What's next? I cannot wait to return! My first Sunday back will be this Sunday the 2nd and my first day back in the office will be on Monday, October 3rd. I'll spend the first few weeks re-orienting myself with the staff and church lay leader teams while also preparing for this next liturgical season. With some exceptions to how I manage my time as I work to improve my work/life balance, I expect very little to change. Despite some of the challenges that come with being a pastor, it's what I love and what I'm called to, so don't be

afraid to reach out! *See you Sunday! Pastor Jenn*



Dear members of the Monroe Congregational Church. It has been a joy and an honor to serve as your minister during the time that Rev Jenn has been on sabbatical. I have enjoyed our times of worship and fellowship, working with Diane and Will, and reaching out with some pastoral care when needed. You are a faithful and strong community of faith, overflowing with gifts for service. I will miss you, and will keep you in my prayers.

God's peace,
Rev. Peggy

Christian Education



Youth Confirmation Begins!

Freshman year of high school is the traditional time for Confirmation at MCC (although, we are also open to having older students participate!). In Confirmation, participants build a supportive covenant community with

the other members of the class; they explore, understand and own the vows of baptism; and they discover and assume the privileges and responsibilities of adult church membership. Confirmation is an important rite of passage, but we hope it is more than that for them. We hope it is the beginning of a wonderful life-long adult spiritual journey.

A **Confirmation Orientation Meeting** for parents and confirmands will be held on **Wed. Oct 5th at 7:00 pm**. There will be a **Dedication** moment during worship on Sunday, October 16th. **Classes are held from 7-8 on most Wednesdays beginning October 12th**. If you have any questions or concerns, please let Pastor Jenn know.



Have you Registered for 2022/2023 Children & Youth Programming at MCC?

Please sign up your child(ren) and youth for the 2022/2023 season; Sunday school, Jr. PF and Sr. PF.

Sign up here

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C48ADAC2CA5FEC61-youth>
or on our website: **MCC-UCC.org**

volunteer with
CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



Love working with youth, want to spread God's love to the children of our congregation in this upcoming **22/23 school year?**

Please consider teaching Sunday School (Pre k - 6th) or being an adult advisor for our Jr PF youth group (ages 11-14).

You can speak to Jeanette with any questions or to express interest. Thank you!



JR PF Schedule

Oct 2	Game Night
Oct 9	PFer's Choice
Oct 14	Legends of Fear - Hayride
Oct 23	Pumpkin Carving
Oct 30	Halloween Party

*See JR PF food drive poster on last page!

Senior



SR PF meets every Sunday at 5 PM -join us!

Trunk or Treat October 30th 5-7:30



MCC TRUNK OR TREAT

JOIN US FOR CANDY, GAMES AND

COSTUME CONTESTS



ON OCTOBER 30TH!



\$12 PER CAR (5 PEOPLE PER CAR)

\$3 FOR ANY ADDITIONAL GUESTS

34 CHURCH STREET, MONROE CT, 06468

5PM-6PM~ 10 AND UNDER

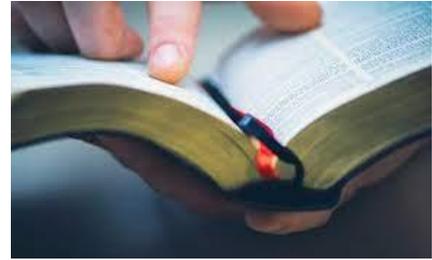
6:30PM-7:30PM~ 10+



Deacons

Share the word of God.

Join a rotational schedule of Sunday scripture readers.
Please email the office at secretarymccucc.org
or call 203-268-9327. Thank you!

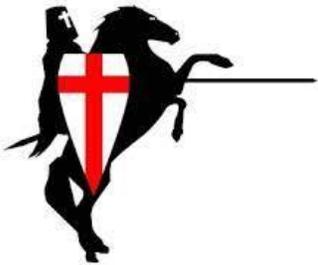


Weekly Bible Study Begins Thursday, October 6, 9:30-11am

We cordially invite you to join us each week in in Dineson Parlor as we gather together to learn with and through one another. Bring your favorite Bible (whatever version you prefer) and a small notebook.



Outreach



St George's Supper – Help Slay Hunger - Monday, October 10th

Please consider signing up to help us serve those in need. All items need to be **delivered to the MCC kitchen by 3:00 pm** on October 10th. Please contact Stacy at 203-500-1279 if you have questions.

Thank you! **Sign up in Wilton Hall!**

Heifer International helps struggling families

learn to sustain themselves with the use of animals and plants. The addition of their animal offspring and the fruit of the plants help other families make a living in order to survive. Your spare change provides the donation that supports those in need worldwide. Make your change the change for the better for families who need it the most. Contact Susie Cuseo at thecuseos@yahoo.com or 203-268-0280 with any questions or comments.



Have you recently cleaned out your junk drawers or come across an old pair of **prescription sunglasses or glasses**? There's a **collection basket on the serving table during coffee hour for your donations**. These glasses will be cleaned and analyzed and then given to someone who will once again see the smile on a loved one's face or be able to read the newspaper with clarity. Give the gift of sight by donating your used glasses, sunglasses and cases. Contact

Susie Cuseo at thecuseos@yahoo.com or 203-268-0280 with any questions or comments. **Please have donations in the basket by Sunday, October 9th.**



The **Mustard Seed Thrift Shoppe** needs YOU! If you have a couple of hours to spare either on Tuesdays, Fridays or Saturdays, we are looking for your help. **Sorting, tagging and hanging is back to on Tuesdays at 1:00PM.** Volunteers will help you with what needs to be done. Sales associates are needed for two-hour shifts starting from 10AM to 3PM on Fridays and Saturdays. A procedure list can be emailed or you can visit the Shoppe when someone is manning the counter. It's fun and quite rewarding. Please contact Susie Cuseo with any questions or comments at thecuseos@yahoo.com or 203-268-0280.

Outreach Wine Tasting Fundraiser



Saturday, October 8 (please note date change) **at 6pm** on Pierce Lawn. Please bring a glass for sampling, a folding or lawn chair, a snack to share and a donation. **Suggested donation is \$20.00 per person.**

Proceeds will go to the **Empower House** created by the Center for Family Justice.



The Center for Family Justice, Inc.

753 Fairfield Avenue,
Bridgeport,
Connecticut 06604.

This is a safe transitional home for adults and children exposed to domestic violence. Our new, state-of-the-art facility will offer up to a 60-day stay in highly secure and comfortable surroundings. And with 24/7, 365 days-a-year staffing, on-site counseling and other life rebuilding services, there's no place like [this] home.

<https://empowerhouseproject.org/>

Main number: 203-334-6154
Fax: 203-579-8882

24/7 HOTLINES in English and Spanish
Domestic Violence 24/hour hotline 1-888-774-2900
Sexual Assault 24-hour hotline 1-888-999-5545

Llame gratis en espanol 1-888-568-8332

Fellowship

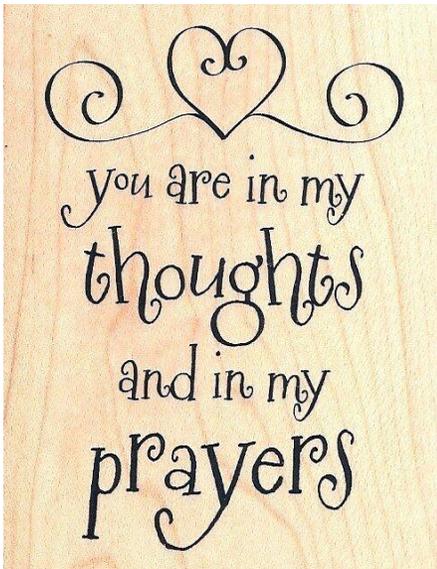


Young At Heart

Next luncheon will be on Thursday, **October 27th at 12 pm**

Details to be announced

Doesn't it feel amazing when you know that someone is praying for you? You can have this same feeling by signing up for Prayer Partners. Just provide the following information:



Address
Birthday
Anniversary
Prayers for Self
Hobbies/Interests

You'll get a letter in the mail from me in early October with the name of someone to pray for while someone prays for you.

Keep them in your thoughts and prayers until we meet in May 2023 when we'll have the "Big Reveal" potluck luncheon in Wilton Hall at 11:15AM.

You can make eye contact with your partner while you pass the peace or strike up a conversation with them during coffee hour.

You can also send them a note or card in the mail celebrating their special day or maybe a half-year birthday signed "Your Prayer Partner" and using the church's address (34 Church St Monroe CT 06468) as the return.

If you have no idea who they are, let me know and I'll do my best to point them out to you. It takes seconds out of your busy day just to think of them and wish them a fantastic day.

I hope you consider signing up.

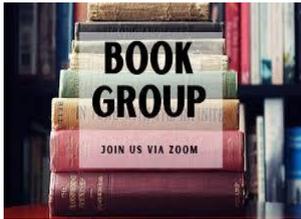
Thank you and have a wonderful day.

If you've already signed up, I thank you from the bottom of my ♥ -Susie

Last day to sign up is Sunday, October 2nd.



The women of Morning Circle invite you to our next meeting on **Wednesday, October 12 at 11AM in Dineson Parlor** to put together Trick-or-Treat bags for children who visit the Food Pantry with their parents. We are looking for donations that may include small items, such as, pencils, erasers, individually wrapped candies, toys, etc. Please bring a sandwich for lunch while we hold a short business meeting. Please contact Jackie Bleakney with any questions or comments at 203-268-5275.



MCC Book Club is open to all church members and meets the 3rd Wednesday of each month via zoom at 7pm. These are the upcoming selections and hosts. For more information, please call Paula Haggstrom 203-452-0850 email: pjsh55@gmail.com

Wed., October 19, The Rose Code by Kate Quinn Host: Linda Fracassini

Wed., November 16, The Pull of the Stars by Emma Donoghue Host: Arlene Redmond

Wed., December 21, Woman on Fire by Lisa Barr Host: Peggy Villani

Wed., January 18, The Midnight Library by Matt Haig Host: Gayle Hammond

Chancel Choir rehearsals Thursdays at **7 PM.**

The Choir is looking for more singers, so please consider giving it a try. A good first step would be to come out to our rehearsal and just sit in or listen. The Chancel Choir is blessed with having a warm and close fellowship, and the satisfaction of preparing and singing beautiful music throughout the church season.



Chime Choir rehearsals Thursdays at 5:45 PM. We will be preparing music for Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas.

Questions? Please see Music Director, Will Duchon.

Elisha's Corner

By Gary Thompson, Church Historian

A Green Anniversary



On October 22nd of this year the Monroe Congregational Church and St. Peter's Episcopal Church will have been co-owners of the Monroe Centre Green for 150 years. On that day in 1872 the Treasurer of Park Association of Monroe, William A. Clarke, a member of St. Peter's, deeded "... about three quarters of an acre, be the same more or less, ..." of "the Park" to the churches for \$175 (nearly \$4,000 today). Until that day the existing Green consisted only of less than the half acre that Capt. Joseph Moss and Nehemiah de Forrest jointly conveyed to the inhabitants of the New Stratford Parish of the Ecclesiastical Society in 1780. The Moss deed was for 40 square rods, one quarter (0.25) acre and the de Forrest deed (most recently found and now in our archives) was for 24 square rods, one fifth (0.15) of an acre. Both of these deeds were conveyed on the same day;

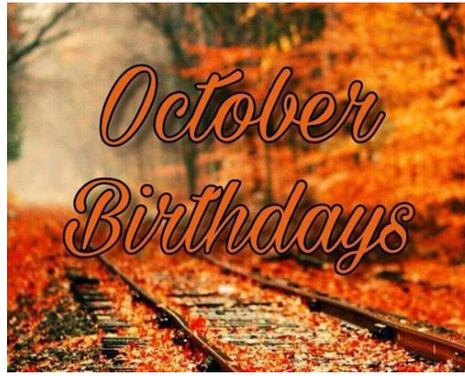
December 5, 1780; but the 0.40 acre Green was not formally established until April 21, 1784, when both deeds were received and recorded at the County Court of Fairfield.

On that same October day in 1872, an additional one-half (0.50) acre parcel was deeded to the Park Association and annexed to the south end of the then existing Green. The Association purchased that parcel for \$100 (over \$2,100 today) from the home property of widow Hepsey Beach, a member of the Congregational Church. In turn, on the same day, it sold the full 0.90 acreage of the Green to the two churches. The transaction must have gone without much fanfare, for no articles exist in either of the two Bridgeport newspapers of the time and there were no other newspapers around Monroe that would have carried the event.

It is unclear whether the Park Association was a public association or was privately operated. There is no evidence as to the membership of the Association, either. It is not recognized in the Historical Society's archives, nor listed in the Town Clerk's archives. It only appears on the deeds conveyed on October 22, 1872. It is quite possible that it was created prior to when the Town of Monroe was established in 1823. One can only speculate that it was made up of members from both churches. It is interesting that the deed to the churches, signed by William A. Clarke, was witnessed by E. A. Clarke, and Homer E. Clarke (Justice of the Peace). The deed to the Association signed by Hepsey Beach was witnessed by William A. Clarke and Hepsey's son, John D. Beach. Not only was Hepsey's land adjacent to William's, but he was also a distant relative to Hepsey's sister, Sally French, who married William's second or third cousin, John Clarke. Today it is the only town Center Green in Connecticut that is privately owned by two churches. From the beginning it was set up "to be used wholly and exclusively as a Public Park"

Our Centre Green has been depicted in the 1836 sketches and prints by John Warner Barber and in 1996 by local artist David Merrill's lithograph mural of Monroe displayed in the Edith Wheeler Memorial Library. Barber's sketch of a near half acre rectangular piece of land (east and west), across the road from our 1769 Meeting House shows an easement, like a foot path, extending diagonally from Old Tannery Road to Fan Hill. They do not depict the topography. However, a Monroe Historical Society file picture of the Green prior to 1872 gives evidence that the Green was rough, uneven, and full of rocks, and with a flagpole. A picture, taken after 1872, shows an iron rail fence around a neater, more inviting Green. Today, the rocks, flagpole and rail fence are long gone. Over the years since its purchase both congregations have been worthy custodians keeping the Centre Green as pristine as possible. Faithfully, too, we have been helped by the Town Park and Recreation Department who mow the grass, provide a fall clean-up, and clean up storm related debris. Most recently, in the spring of 2018, the lawn was reclaimed around the trees, holes and depressions filled, grass seeded, and the lawn fertilized.

In 1977, Town Historian, Edward Coffey, eloquently described our *Centre Green as "the heart of the community ... a memorial to the town's early fathers whose foresight recognized the need for such a gathering place and whose gift provides the bustling modern generation with an island of serenity and reminiscence of a worthy heritage."* It stands worthy of this 150th Anniversary. Two families, one from each church congregation, the French's and the Clarke's, made it all come about.



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

Andrea	Crosnier	10/01	Audra	Logan	10/15
Vinay	Sampson	10/01	Karen	Matysczak	10/15
Gayle	Hammond	10/02	Ginger	Bartlett	10/19
Julie	Heussner	10/05	Carl	Haggstrom	10/19
Lorraine	Zeiner	10/07	Shari	Carrano	10/21
Lucas	Cuseo	10/08	Juliana	Lavitola	10/21
Robert	McClenathan	10/08	Lois	Spence	10/22
Jacqueline	Bleakney	10/10	Alan	Vaglivelo	10/25
Joseph	Gilberti	10/12	Zachary	Gingras	10/26
Elizabeth	Sampson	10/12	Hubert	Muizulis	10/26
Richard	Bauer	10/13	Lynne	Hyde	10/27
Brian	Correll	10/13	Shirley	Dotoratos	10/29



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

Lois & David Spence ⁽⁰⁶⁾	Christine & Gary Hare ⁽⁰⁶⁾	Clark & Jennifer Gingras ⁽¹⁰⁾
Kyla & Bill Allen ⁽¹²⁾	Linda & Nick Callero ⁽¹⁵⁾	Michael & Jessica Pfalzgraf ⁽¹⁷⁾
Mary & Franklin Renz ⁽²³⁾	Frank & Christine Wittenauer ⁽²³⁾	James & Donna Perrone ⁽²⁶⁾
Tom & Lynne Hyde ⁽²⁶⁾	Mary & George Massar ⁽²⁷⁾	and Andrea & Bruno Crosnier ⁽²⁸⁾

MCC Community Calendar

Welcome back Pastor Jenn!

Week of Sun. Oct 2nd

10:00 am Worship Pastor Jenn Returns!

11:00 am Special Coffee Hour

5:00 pm Junior, Senior PF's

Mon. Oct 3rd

7:00 pm Outreach Meeting

Tue. Oct 4th

1:00 pm Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

Wed. Oct 5th

7:00 pm First Confirmation Orientation Meeting (Dineson)

Thurs. Oct 6th

9:30 am First Bible Study Class

6:00 pm Chime Choir

7:00 pm Chancel Choir

Sat. Oct 8th

6 pm Outreach Wine Tasting (Pierce Lawn)

Week of Sun. Oct 9th

10:00 am Worship

5:00 pm Junior, Senior PF's

Mon. Oct 10th

Office Closed -Indigenous Peoples' Day

7:45 pm Deacons' Zoom

Tue. Oct 11th

1:00 pm Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

Wed. Oct 12th

11:00 am Morning Circle

7:00 pm Confirmation

7:00 pm Book Club (Zoom)

Thurs. Oct 13th

9:30 am Bible Study Class

6:00 pm Chime Choir

7:00 pm Chancel Choir

Week of Sun. Oct 16th

Confirmation Dedication

10:00 am Worship

11:30 am Trustees (Zoom)

5:00 pm Junior, Senior PF's

Mon. Oct 17th

7:30 pm Council (Zoom)

Tue. Oct 18th

1:00 pm Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

Wed. Oct 19th

7 pm Confirmation

Thurs. Oct 20th

9:30 am Bible Study Class

6:00 pm Chime Choir

7:00 pm Chancel Choir

Sat. Oct 22

150th Anniversary of Deed of Center Green

Week of Sun. Oct 30th

10:00 am Worship

5:00 pm Junior, Senior PF's



MCC's Jr PFER's are hosting their annual food drive in support of the
Monroe Food Pantry

Drive runs from Oct 2 – Oct 31st
Boxes will be in Wilton Hall for collection
starting Sunday Oct 2nd.
Thank you!!