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Office Hours:
Mon. 9am – 5:30pm
Wed. (remotely) 8am - 6pm
Fri. 9am – 3:30pm

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

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



THE MONROE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

THE STEEPLE

October 1, 2023



Galaxy Note20 Ultra 5G

We've had a wet season this summer! I was looking at my vernal pond yesterday, amazed that it is filled to the brim right now. Last year at this time, it was completely drained by a summer drought. Maybe that's why all the little frogs and peepers still keep making such music at dusk!

I wish I was a better poet, one who could create thought-provoking and vivid images with the words they write. Nevertheless, this ever-so-brief poem I came across recently made quite an impression on me. It is called, "Forecast" and was written by Luci Shaw:

Planting seeds

Inevitably

Changes my feelings

About rain

There are numerous helpful insights here in these eight words. First, a new perspective on adversity. Commonly, rain

is seen as a nuisance. Of course, it's necessary for life, but rare is the parent who is thankful the ballgame was rained out. Not many among us would choose to picnic, ride a bike, drive a convertible, or play golf in the rain. Instead, we tend to avoid doing much of anything when it rains.

On the other hand, disappointment and adversity can build character. We are all going to go through difficult stages in life. When we do, we might try to look for the good. "For the

moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it" (Heb. 12:11).

Second, this short poem offers a new perspective on labor.

Hard work usually pays off. The investment of time and energy may not be immediately rewarded, but it'll come. So, take the time to plant seeds. Plant seeds of kindness. Plant seeds of love. Jesus often used the imagery of planting seeds in his ministry, from the way people would receive the Good News (Matt. 13:1-23) to the way the Kin-dom would grow (Matt. 13:31-32).

Third, we might receive a new perspective on hope.

Sometimes it is difficult to see past the storm clouds. In those moments, we would do well to remember that without the rain, there is no growth. Let us be patient in all things and trust that God will bless us with blue skies after our storms. *"He who goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him"* (Ps. 126:6).

Plant seeds. Expect rain. Enjoy God's blessings. Happy fall!

In Christ's Love, Pastor Jenn

Pledge Envelopes -LAST CALL!



If you pledge to the church and would like to use pledge envelopes please call 203-268-9327 or email Diane at secretary@MCC-UCC.org
September 30th was the order deadline -thank you!
(Offering envelopes are available in the pews.)

Trustees

Your help would be greatly appreciated on
Saturday, November 4
8:30am – 12:30pm
Call Dave Allen with any questions: 203-767-0883
Thank you!



2023 CAPITAL CAMPAIGN THANK YOU!!!

Thanks to your generous gifts, work has commenced on the exterior painting of the Meetinghouse & Beardsley Hall.

We hope that when you see it, you'll say a little prayer of thanks for all the work that has been done to get it started.



We appreciate your support!

Outreach

St George's Supper Questions?
Contact Stacy
at 203-500-1279
Thank you!

St George's
MEAL PACK

10/8
AFTER
WORSHIP

CHURCH
KITCHEN

Come help Outreach get meals ready for St. George's Supper. Cash donations gratefully accepted at coffee hour.
All are welcome!

A promotional graphic for St. George's Meal Pack. It features a large sandwich with lettuce, tomato, and meat on whole grain bread. The text is arranged around the sandwich, including the event name, date, location, and a call to action.

Outreach Wine Tasting to Benefit CWS Disaster Relief

14
OCT

JOIN US AT THE FRACASSINI'S, 55 MISTY
LANE FROM 6-8PM! BRING AN
APPETIZER TO SHARE AND A GLASS.
PROCEEDS BENEFIT CHURCH WORLD
SERVICE'S DISASTER RELIEF
SUGGESTED DONATION: \$20
TO LEARN MORE, VISIT
CWSGLOBAL.ORG



Please sign up either on the list in Wilton Hall, or online at
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D44A8AC22A2FB6-wine>

The **Mustard Seed Thrift Shoppe** is looking for **volunteers** to help sort, tag and hang donated merchandise on Tuesdays at 1:15 PM. Sales associates are needed on Fridays for shifts from 10-12:30 and 12:30-3 and on Saturdays from 10-12 and 12-2. It's easy to do with a list of procedures that you can read over or visit a volunteer during business hours and they'd be glad to help you with any questions regarding opening or closing. Please contact Susie Cuseo with any questions at thecuseos@yahoo.com or 203-268-0280.





Heifer International is a charity Morning Circle collects spare change for. This year we have sent \$100 in gifts to families in need around the world. Bees and goats are a couple of gifts that can help families support themselves. Offspring of the animals are given to neighbors so that they too can sustain themselves making the community stronger and self-supporting. A collection jar is set out on the table during coffee hour. Contact Susie Cuseo at thecuseos@yahoo.com or call 203-268-0280 with any questions.

Give the Gift of Sight by donating your used prescription glasses, sunglasses and cases. Throughout the month of October a basket will be available by the coffee table. Your gifts will be cleaned, measured and given to someone who will see the world clearly when reading or seeing the face of a loved one. Contact Susie Cuseo at thecuseos@yahoo.com or call 203-268-0280 with any questions.



COVENANT TO CARE Essentials Drive

Help children entering emergency foster care with essential hygiene items and make their landing a little softer.

Most needed (new, full-sized): deodorant, body wash, shampoo/conditioner.

Also needed: toothbrush, toothpaste, hairbrush, baby wash/shampoo, hair & skin care products, shaving cream, razors, feminine products, diapers/pull-ups, wipes.



Jr PF Food Drive

In support of
the Monroe Food Pantry
Collection boxes
in Wilton Hall
from Oct 1 - 31



Thank You!!!!

Deacons

Welcome to our 2023-2024 Confirmation Class!

On October 1, at the 10 am worship service, our next confirmation class will be given their study Bibles. Please make sure to attend church and join us in blessing Griffin, Ryan and Sophina and wishing them well!

Classes will be 6:00-7:00pm on most **Thursdays** through late May. If you have any questions or concerns, please let Pastor Jenn know.

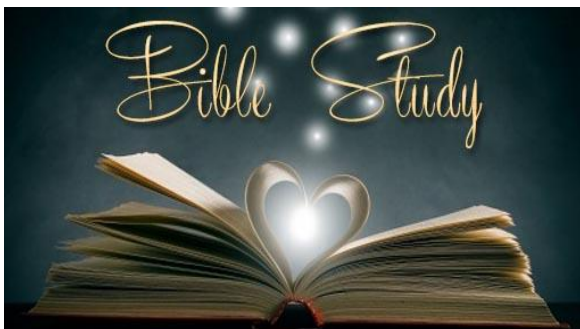


Snack & Chat with NOOMA

Join us in Dineson Parlor after worship on these dates to enjoy some snacks, a short video and light discussion about life's big questions.

No prep necessary and all are welcome!

Oct 29 – SHELLS
Nov 12 – TOMATO
Dec 10 – SHE



Weekly Bible Study, Thursdays 9:30-11 am: We cordially invite you to join us each week as we gather in together in Dineson Parlor to learn with and through one another. 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. Let Pastor Jenn know if you have any questions!



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

Fellowship



Young At Heart: Thursday, October 26 at noon.
Details to be announced.

If the only prayer you said was thank you,
that would be enough. - Meister Eckhart

Have you signed up to be a Prayer Partner yet?

Simply complete an information sheet from Wilton Hall and turn it in. You will receive one in a few weeks with the name of a person you secretly pray for. Keep them in your thoughts, maybe write them a note or card signed by "*Your Prayer Partner*". In May, we will enjoy a "*Big Reveal*" potluck luncheon to find out who's been praying for whom.

Contact **Susie Cuseo** with any questions.



Morning Circle invites the women of the congregation to attend their next meeting on Wednesday, October 11 at 11AM in Dineson Parlor. We'll be putting together Trick-or-Treat bags for the kids who visit the Food Pantry with their families. We are looking for donations of individually wrapped candies (no nuts), small toys, spare change, etc. Please leave any gifts in the collection bin marked Morning Circle located across from the men's room. Please contact Shari Carrano with any questions or concerns at 203-400-3563.

Our calendar of meetings

- Wednesday, October 11 - Trick-or-treat bags for Food Pantry
- Wednesday, November 8 - Bean Soup Jars for Food Pantry - Gift tags
- Wednesday, December 13 - Annual Christmas luncheon - Location TBD
- Wednesday, March 13 - Birthday bags for Food Pantry
- 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 fourth Saturdays 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, 10/28**. Come check it out!



The book club selections for upcoming months:
October 18th - 7 pm - The Second Mrs Astor by Shana Abe'
November 15th - 7 pm - Come Fly the World by Julia Cooke
December 20th - 7 pm - The Book of Longings by Sue Monk Kidd

As always, we encourage anyone to join us on the 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 or home phone. pjsh55@gmail.com or 203-452-0850

Elisha's Corner

By Gary Thompson, Church Historian

Singing Songs of Praise

"Outward Melody in Religious Singing is no small Help to inward Devotion. In this our [embodied] State the Senses do very strongly impress the superior Power of the Mind; especially the Ear and Eye do variously affect the Heart."

Rev. Cotton Mather penned these words in April of 1721. He was a strong advocate of singing as an integral part of a worship service, following on what John Calvin insisted was an effective and completely valid way to praise God, but only when inspired by God. In the mid-seventeenth century the Puritans in England had dismantled and removed the church organs, believing that the unaccompanied congregational singing was the only acceptable form of church singing. Yet singing was also considered a deterrent to the concentration on God and religious living. The form of verse was thereby thought to be only through the signing of the Psalms. The colonial Congregationalists used published "tune-books" in the worship services. They were divided into "treble", "counter", "tenor", and "bass" voices.

As late as 1809, Rev. William Bentley of the East Church in Salem, Massachusetts, noted in his journal that organs in the New England meeting houses were still a rarity, although some did exist. In an absence of an organ, a violin, viola, cello, German flute, and/or clarinet was used for accompaniment. For lack of ability to sight-read the musical notes from tune-books, "choristers" with some knowledge and ability of it were selected from the congregation to lead the congregation in song. They would "line-out" each phrase and verse. Our first choristers were Samuel Blackman, Nathan Booth, and Elnathon Patterson, "... to set ye Psalm in all public worship" according to our archived records. Each of these men was also among the "memorialist" who petitioned the Connecticut General Assembly for the establishment of a New Stratford Ecclesiastical Society parish (now Monroe).

Those with on or near pitch and/or had a greater ability to sight-read music would eventually be seated together to strengthen the accompaniment acapella for the rest of the congregation, especially in the absence of instrumental accompaniment. Over time, and as the vocal ability grew among others, the choir was thus formed with sufficient ability and voice to sing for the congregation as well as with the congregation. By the twentieth century and the advent of sound recording, the choirs of different denominations recorded selected hymns or secular music to advance the ministry of their churches as well as to raise funds for their ministries. So it was with our Monroe Congregational Church choir.

By the end of the 1960's, our choir had grown to twenty-three members. The Music Committee annual report for 1969 recorded that, "In December 1967 (and under the direction of C. Thomas McCreedy) the choir cut a record of Christmas music and anthems. The record was a booming success and a complete sell-out. 400 records were sold, and 100 more were ordered..... Amount realized was \$794.50. The proceeds were used to buy a baby grand piano for Dineson Parlor". With money left over and added to a generous gift of \$250 from the Sunday School and Curtiss "Bud" Morvec's salary as Choir Director, they were able to buy a second baby grand piano for the Fellowship Hall. The original recording was made by a choir of twenty-three voices (7 sopranos, 8 altos, 3 tenors, and 5 basses) at the Plaza

Music Studios, Rockefeller Center, New York City. For the Palm Sunday evening service, March 30, 1969, this choir presented an Easter Cantata, *Our Risen Lord and King*, by Cuthbert Harris and Herman Von Berge, which was not recorded.



The following year, on March 27, 1970, Good Friday, according to the 1970 Music Committee Annual Report, the choir “presented *The Seven Last Words of Christ*, by Theodore Dubois, under the able direction of Bud Morvec. Wallis Pallis, tenor, and Elvin Campbell, baritone, were guest soloists. [They] were also able to have the help of chorus singers from other churches. Judy Tenney was special organist for the occasion.” Judy was special because she played on the 1950 Baldwin organ located in the closet size room off the chancel out of sight, and which was on its last legs. The organ was replaced in 1985 with a tracker organ during the church expansion and renovation. According to the record jacket, they cut a record during the services in the Meeting House. The number of records “self-produced” and sold from this recording session was not recorded, but the records were available on Easter Sunday.

It seems like we have come full circle today with our liturgical music for worship services. The organ is back in place, we have a gifted professional musician and concert pianist serving as organist and choir director, a strong vocal sound (on pitch) from our choir, instrumentalists to solo and accompany the vocalists, and our own band. And no longer is our form of verse only through the signing of the Psalms. Oh, and yes, the sounds they produce IS worthy of cutting records.



Faithful in History
Gary Thompson
Church Historian

In Our Prayers

Jackie Bleakney, Ed Burke, Clark Gingras; Ron McGlinchey (Pastor Jenn's dad) **Alison Abrams** (Jessica Pfalzgraf's sister); **Griffin Allen; Allie** (Colegrove's friend); **Jennifer Bittar** (Lorraine Zeiner's friend); **Jackie Bleakney; Byron Brown & Bruce Bryant** (friends of Will Duchon); **Lori Cimeno** (Peggy & Ron Villani's Daughter); **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); **Mary & Rachel Heerema** (Julia Gutierrez's mom & sister); **Heidi** (Diane Prall's 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); **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); **Albert Nimons** (Gary Thompson's cousin); **Pat Nugent; Ocampo family** (friends of Liska Gutierrez); **Nancy Olofson; 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); **Regina Roberts** (Kathy Maiolo's niece); **Alfredo Rodriguez** (Osirus Gutierrez's cousin); **Noah Santiago** (Shari Carrano's great-grandson); **Charlie Schwartz** (Carol Kelly's friend); **Carlos Serrano** (Kathy Maiolo's cousin); **Yessika Siccardi** (Sampson family friend); **Bernie Sippin; Gary Sippin** (Lori Sippin's son); **John Skarupa** (Barb Pellegrino's brother); **Christine Stadler; Tom Steen** (Jessica Pfalzgraf's dad); **Rev. Dr. Sheldon Smith; Christian & Dain Steiner** (Julie McClenathan's nephews); **Claire Stenzel** (June & Myron Wininger's granddaughter); **Olga Terwilliger** (Nancy Hedine's sister-in-law); **Richard Turco** (Jack Fracassini's cousin); **Ruth Wakeley; 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** (Lorraine Zeiner's friend), Georgia: **Zachary Peters** (Jacob Parker-Burgard's cousin), Kuwait: **Jon Sanchez** (Don Whiteley's grandson-in-law) Stateside: **CPL Zachary Gingras**, 395th Combat Sustainability Support, Middletown. **Joel Smith** (250th Engineering Company)



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
Loraine	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	Vaglivello	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 Cabbalero⁽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⁾

**October
MCC Community Calendar**

Week of Sun. Oct 1st

Communion

10:00 am Worship
5:00 pm Junior PF
5:00 pm Senior PF

Mon. Oct 2nd

7 pm Outreach (Zoom)

Tue. Oct 3rd

1:15 am Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

Thurs. Oct. 5th

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

Week of Sun. Oct 8th

10:00 am Worship
5:00 pm Junior PF
5:00 pm Senior PF

Mon. Oct 9th

Indigenous Peoples Day - Office Closed
3:30 pm St George's Supper
7:30 pm Deacons (Zoom)

Tue. Oct 10th

1:15 am Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

Wed. Oct 11th

11:00 am Morning Circle

Thurs. Oct 12th

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

Sat. Oct 14th

6:00 pm Outreach Wine Tasting -
Fracassini's Home

Week of Sun. Oct 15th

10:00 am Worship
5:00 pm Junior PF
5:00 pm Senior PF

Mon. Oct 16th

7:30 pm Council (Zoom)

Tue. Oct 17th

1:15 am Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

Wed. Oct 18th

7:00 pm Book Club

Thurs. Oct 19th

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

Week of Sun. Oct 22th

10:00 am Worship
5:00 pm Junior PF
5:00 pm Senior PF

Tue. Oct 24th

1:15 am Mustard Seed Sort and Tag

Thurs. Oct 26th

9:30 am Bible Study
12 pm Young @ Heart
6:00 pm Confirmation Class
6:00 pm Chime Choir
7:00 pm Chancel Choir

Sat. Oct 28th

5:30 pm Adult PF

Week of Sun. Oct 29th

10:00 am Worship
11:15 am Snack & Chat NOOMA
5:00 pm Junior PF
5:00 pm Senior PF

Tue. Oct 31st

1:15 am Mustard Seed Sort and Tag