



# THE MONROE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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# STEEPLE

34 Church Street  
Monroe, CT 06468

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**Office Hours:**  
Monday – Friday  
9:00a.m. - 3:30p.m.

**August 1, 2016**

Senior Pastor: Rev. Jennifer Gingras  
Music Director: Will Duchon  
Secretary: Melissa Rosenberg  
Director of Faith Formation: Debi Mastroni-Kenyon  
Church e-mail: [secretary@mcc-ucc.org](mailto:secretary@mcc-ucc.org)

## On Fads & Faith



One of the first things that Clark told me upon my return to the “real world” from our mission trip in Kentucky was this: *“I can’t believe it. It’s been strange around here! So many kids wandering around the green, around the church, on our lawn, staring at their phones. They are making the dogs bark like crazy!”*

Since I had been living disconnected from the news, I had to ask my daughter Cady to catch me up on this latest fad, a smart phone game called, “Pokemon Go.” As with many electronic games, players move through an artificial reality to find resources, capture monsters, and earn points. What’s different about this artificial reality is that it is tied to the real world. Players have to physically get outside to find these things and earn their rewards. Personally, I think it’s a great idea to get folks out of their homes and into the fresh air!

It’s been so popular that the game makers have struggled to provide enough computer capacity to serve all the players. The major demographic of the game appear to be millennials, who feel a twinge of nostalgia for their childhoods collecting cards and watching Pokemon-based cartoons. Popularity can be a fleeting thing. My youth was spent coveting Jordache Jeans, Cabbage Patch Dolls and trying to finish my Rubix Cube. In my daughter’s childhood it was American Dolls and Beanie Babies. Though some of these fads have remained on store shelves, others have faded away. I expect that something else will come along soon that will overtake this temporary Pokemon Go fever.

Two thousand years ago, an itinerant rabbi and preacher sparked a movement that has endured. He called people to care compassionately for each other, and for religious leaders to relax their restrictions. Through many years of change and adaptation (and despite some major failures to hold to the teachings of Jesus), the Church has continued to share the message of God’s love.

In our day, we face the challenge of distinguishing fads which fade from the movements which endure. Pokemon GO is a fad, even if it does propel more people into the public square. When MCC ceases to be a Pokestop (yes, we’re in the game), I’m confident that our faith will still endure, and hungry souls will still gather here. *Peace to you, Pastor Jenn*



**Greetings - I can't wait to meet you all!**

Now that it is August I have officially begun my journey with you as your new Director of Faith Formation. I have been busy this week immersing myself in the land of Hogwarts at VBS. I have had the opportunity to spend some time with some of your children and it has been a pleasure.

Next week I will be on an already planned vacation, but will return full swing on Sunday, August 14<sup>th</sup>. On that day I will get to meet some of you, but September 11<sup>th</sup> is our Homecoming Sunday when we will welcome all of you back from summer travel and activities, register all Sunday school students for the 2016-17 year, and have our Homecoming Picnic at Wolfe Park. I will be at the picnic and I hope you come too – in fact I invite you to come, this way we can meet and hopefully chat a bit.

Stay tuned for more information about Sunday school Registration! I look forward to meeting you and starting our pilgrimage together to bright horizons!

Blessings and peace to you,

Debi Mastroni-Kenyon

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**Trustees**



It's summertime, and while many of you will be enjoying summer vacations the work of MCC continues. Please do what you can to stay current on your pledge payments over the summer months, even though you might not be able to attend Sunday services. You can arrange for electronic payment from your bank, or via the "Donate" page on our web

site: <http://www.mcc-ucc.org/donate.html>

Thanks for your support of MCC and have a great Summer!

Sincerely – John O'Rourke, Receiver

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**Fellowship**

**Please join us for the MCC Book Club!**

- ✚ **August 17<sup>th</sup> – 7:30pm** Where'd You Go, Bernadette by Maria Semple. Linda Fracassini is hosting
- ✚ **September 21<sup>st</sup> – 7:30pm** The Girl Who Wrote in Silk. Location TBD

**Sponsor a Month of Coffee Hours** Would you like to help the people who come to worship get to know each other? What if we told you that sponsoring a month of coffee hours at the low, low price of \$40 could feed four children for 3 weeks? You will not



only get that warm and fuzzy feeling of doing something generous, but you can use your sponsorship to honor loved ones – a dedication goes on a sign and in the bulletin. Please make checks payable to MCC with "coffee sponsor" in the memo field. Thank you



**It is time for Young at Heart** to gather together again for food, fellowship, fun, and a little laughter (or at least some chuckles). **We will be meeting at 12pm on August 25<sup>th</sup> at Vazzy's, 415 Main Street Monroe** Please RSVP to Ruth or Bill Wakeley at 203-225-6166 by August 23<sup>rd</sup> . If you have never attended before, please come so you can be part of this group. See you there!

**MCC Welcome Home Family Picnic, 1:30-4:30pm, 9/11/16, Wolfe Park, Cutlers Farm Road, Monroe** Please join our MCC family at the covered pavilion (next to the basketball courts) on Sunday, September 11, 2016 from 1:30pm - 4:30pm.



Burgers and hot dogs will be provided and we encourage you to use your imagination to whip up one of your summer favorites to include in a potluck style lunch to share with all. Last names beginning with A-M please bring a salad/side, Last names beginning N-Z please bring a dessert. Please feel free to bring along tennis rackets, basketballs, Frisbees, etc. A volleyball / badminton net will be set up as well as a bocce area. If you are an out-of-towner, there is free parking in the overflow lot right next to the ticket-holder lot.

The cost (to cover grilled items, paper goods and drinks) is 10\$ per family or \$5 for an individual. Please Sign up in Wilton Hall.

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### Outreach



**Habitat for Humanity** Please consider volunteering with MCC Habitat coordinator, John Sekelsky on August 6, September 10, November 5, and December 10<sup>th</sup> for Habitat Work Days. You can choose one day or all days to work-it's up to you! If you would like to volunteer please contact John at [johnsekelsky@gmail.com](mailto:johnsekelsky@gmail.com) so he can let the Sound Coalition manager know how many from MCC will attend. Thanks for your support of this special work. You can learn more about Habitat for Humanity by visiting: <http://habitatcfc.org/>



**It's that time again...the next St. George's supper is on August 15!** Please look for the poster in Wilton Hall to sign up to help. We have a variety of needs, including shoppers, and servers. Simply take a tag (or two!) and you will be making a difference for those in need. **Please bring all food to the church by August 14th at 11am. If you take a tag and are unable to fulfill your commitment please contact the church office 203-268-9327**



**Please Help Support A Project From The Heart.** It Would Mean So Much For Our Soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan To Receive Care Packages From MCC. We need toiletries such as deodorant and shampoo, toothbrushes, and non-perishables items such as cookies (in boxes) beef jerky, puzzle books, playing cards and snack items. If you have any questions please contact Miriam Zalenski at 203-261-8550 or

[bigred722@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bigred722@sbcglobal.net)

### Monroe MusicFest



Monroe MusicFest is back by popular demand. One of the things that distinguishes this MusicFest from similar events is the quality of the talent. Another is the variety. We will have classical, jazz, rock, steel band, folk, bluegrass, show tunes and more. The schedule is set up so that you can pick and choose. And it is fun.

Saturday. October 1<sup>st</sup>. 2:00 to 8:00 pm. Meeting house. Wilton. Dineson. Food for sale.

Last year donations from the congregation helped defray the costs of putting on MusicFest. Proceeds helped get the PF to their mission trip and some funds went back to the operating account as MusicFest is a cost to the campus.

Contributions at ANY level are welcome, but we also have a contribution schedule as follows: Bronze-\$50, Silver-\$100, Gold-\$150, and Platinum-\$200.

Make your check out to Monroe Congregational Church (or MCC) and be sure to mark it MusicFest. Envelopes are available throughout the Meeting House and there is space for you to indicate your name and how you want your donation listed. Then just drop it in the collection plate. Last year we had donations: "In memory of...", "In celebration of...", "In honor of..."

If you have a business you would like to advertise, this year we are selling ads as per this schedule: Full page: \$200, half page: \$125, quarter page: \$75, and business card size: \$50.

To keep up to date, visit: <http://monroemusicfest.blogspot.com/>

I hear music in the air...

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### Community News

Newtown Congregational Church voted 7/17 to call **Rev. Kristen Provost Switzer as Associate Pastor for Youth and Mission**, starting August 1. Congratulations, Kristen!

**Bible Reading Marathon:** The Monroe Clergy Association is coming together for a Bible Reading Marathon this August at the town gazebo. Pastor Jenn invites everyone (of any age) to join the MCC team during our assigned spots: Thursday, August 18<sup>th</sup> from 10am to noon and Saturday, August 20<sup>th</sup> from noon until 2pm. As is our congregational tradition, the team will discuss what we've read following the group read. Sign-up in Wilton Hall, and bring your Bible on the day of the event. Let Pastor Jenn know if you have any questions, [jenn@mcc-ucc.org](mailto:jenn@mcc-ucc.org).

**Dog Walking Service:** Does your dog need more exercise? Is your dog home alone? I love animals and would love to help! Call Paulette Obertz 203-216-4183 for more information



### **Volunteer Opportunities with Empowering Children & Families**

**Mentor:** ECF's Mentoring Program helps to empower at-risk youth in to make positive life choices that enable them to maximize their potential. The mentoring program uses adult volunteers who commit to supporting, guiding, and being a friend to a young person for a period of at least one year. By becoming part of the social network of adults and community members who care about the youth, the mentor can help youth develop and reach positive academic, career, and personal goals.

- Take the lead in supporting a young person through an ongoing, one-on-one relationship
- Serve as a positive role model and friend
- Build the relationship by planning and participating in activities together
- Strive for mutual respect
- Build self-esteem and motivation
- Help set goals and work toward accomplishing them

**Educational Advocate & Tutor:** ECF's Educational Advocates helps to ensure the optimum educational wellbeing of a child participating in our program. Works with program coordinator to review psychoeducational needs and establish a plan for working with the child. Provides support to child and family regarding school meetings, IEP's, specialized tutoring, and on-going educational planning for the child. This person helps to inform the teacher and school of potential supports to help the child in the classroom and school environment. In the event the child needs extra help, the Educational Advocate helps coordinate tutoring services and/or do the tutoring themselves. The ECF Program Coordinator will help the volunteer to identify necessary supports prior to engaging with the child.

For an application or to learn more please contact Susannah Emra at [semra@empoweringct.org](mailto:semra@empoweringct.org).

*\*Please note, volunteer positions require a minimum 1year commitment.*

## **MCC Community Calendar**

**Mon. Aug. 1<sup>st</sup> -Fri. Aug. 5<sup>th</sup>**

*Summer at Hogwarts Vacation Bible School*

**Sat. Aug. 6<sup>th</sup>**

8:00am Habitat For Humanity Work Day

**Week of Aug. 7<sup>th</sup>**

*Doug Halley, guest preacher*

10:00am Worship

**Week of Aug. 14<sup>th</sup>**

10:00am Worship

**Mon. Aug. 15<sup>th</sup>**

3:45pm St. George's Supper

**Wed. Aug. 17<sup>th</sup>**

7:30pm MCC Book Club @ Linda Fracassini's home

**Thurs. Aug. 18<sup>th</sup>**

10-12 Bible Reading Marathon (Gazebo)  
6:30pm Deacons Planning Meeting @ the Sampson home

**Sat. Aug. 20<sup>th</sup>**

12:00pm Bible Reading Marathon

**Week of Aug. 21<sup>st</sup>**

**9:00am** Worship at St. Peter's,  
Rev. Kurt Huber will preach

**Thurs. Aug. 25<sup>th</sup>**

12:00pm Young at Heart (location tbd)

**Week of Aug. 28<sup>th</sup>**

*Guest Preacher Katrina Manzi*

10:00am Worship

**Week of Sept. 4<sup>th</sup>**

10:00am Worship

**Mon. Sept. 5<sup>th</sup>**

*Office Closed in Observance of Labor Day*

**Sat. Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>**

8:00am Habitat for Humanity Work Day

**Week of Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>**

*Homecoming Sunday*

10:00am Worship

11:15am Confirmation Parent's Meeting (Dineson)

1:30pm Homecoming Picnic at Wolfe Park

6:00pm Jr & Sr. PF

**Wed. Sept. 14<sup>th</sup>**

9:30am Retired Men's Breakfast (Dineson)

11:00am Morning Circle (Dineson)

6:30pm Adult Confirmation Class (Dineson)

**Thurs. Sept. 15<sup>th</sup>**

9:30am Bible Study (Dineson)

6:30pm Adult Choir (Meetinghouse)

**Week of Sept. 18<sup>th</sup>**

10:00am Worship, Confirmand Bible Dedication

6:30pm Jr & Sr. PF

6:30pm Adult PF

**Tues. Sept. 20<sup>th</sup>**

7:00pm Bereavement Group (Dineson)

7:00pm Council Meeting (Classroom 4)

**Wed. Sept. 21<sup>st</sup>**

6:30pm Youth Confirmation Class (Dineson)

**Thurs. Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup>**

9:30am Bible Study (Dineson)

6:30pm Adult Choir (Meetinghouse)

**Week of Sept. 25<sup>th</sup>**

10:00am Worship

6:30pm Jr & Sr. PF

**Wed. Sept. 28<sup>th</sup>**

6:30pm Youth Confirmation Class (Dineson)

**Thurs. Sept. 29<sup>th</sup>**

9:30am Bible Study (Dineson)

6:30pm Adult Choir (Meetinghouse)

12:00pm Young at Heart (location tbd)