



# THE MONROE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

---

# STEEPLE

34 Church Street  
Monroe, CT 06468

Tel.: (203) 268-9327  
Fax: (203) 268-3153

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

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

**November 1, 2018**

\*\*\*\*\*



*Celebrating 50 Years of Rexford House with June Wilkes*

*Have you heard this story? God once sent two angels to the earth on a special mission, with each one of them carrying a basket. One angel was assigned to gather up all of the prayers of petition, and the other was assigned to gather up all of the prayers of thanksgiving.*

*The first angel returned very quickly, and her basket was filled to overflowing with requests. "Ah, yes," reported this angel, "the people of God have remembered well the Bible's counsel: 'Ask, and you shall receive.'" The second angel was gone a long time, and when she finally returned, her basket was nearly empty. "I had a hard time finding people who pray prayers of thanksgiving," she said quietly.*

Like pretty much everyone I know, I have plenty of little slips of paper to place in the first angel's basket. Health, happiness, wholeness – for myself, family, friends, church, community. But at the same time, I do not want to neglect the second angel's basket, so:

- ❖ I give thanks for a God who steadfastly refuses to give up on any of us—a God Who is forever and always at work for good: forming, reforming, and transforming the world, the church, and every human heart.
- ❖ I give thanks for the privilege of being called—along with all of you—to be active participants in the ongoing struggle for peace with justice in our personal relationships, our neighborhoods, and our world.
- ❖ I give thanks for the strength God graciously promises to us amidst our personal trials and tribulations.
- ❖ I give thanks for all of you here at the Monroe Congregational Church, which, for all its quirks and occasional challenges, still offers the world a glimpse of people who keep humbly seeking to learn to live together in love.

So yes, I have my petitions, but I also have my prayers of thanksgiving ... and not just on the fourth Thursday in November. What are yours? *Thankfully, Pastor Jenn*

## Money and Mammon



The Bible calls the allure of wealth "mammon" (Matthew 6:24). This is what money becomes when treated as the bottom-line of what counts. Often forgotten is that money becomes just this not only when taken too seriously but when not taken seriously enough. Then, sooner or later, the need for money and the role it unavoidably plays in life acquire urgent and disproportionate influence. Ask anyone deeply in debt!

Sometimes around the church one gets the idea that money is not a spiritual matter, not an essential concern of faith, and an important emphasis in church life. "If I start hearing talk about money in church, I'm leaving." When this attitude prevails and talk of giving and financial commitment is low-keyed, far from becoming less of an issue, money becomes more of one. No money means no church, no mission – and weak faith. Giving is central to faith and the whole experience of living close to God. It's a matter of where we place our reliance and find our security.

This is clear in over half of Jesus' teaching and in the personal experience of his followers. From the first, they had to reconcile their commitment to him with the loss of security on which they had depended. Ultimately they found joy and "security" beyond measure.

"Make service your first priority, not success, and success will follow" (Robert Greenleaf). What's true of business is also true of the church's business when we follow the way of Jesus. "Strive first for the kingdom of God and all else follows" (Matthew 6:33). While this is no promise of having all we want, it's a promise of having all we need, as it turns out, what we really want after all!

What priorities are reflected in the way I spend and give?

How does my faith speak to my concerns about money?

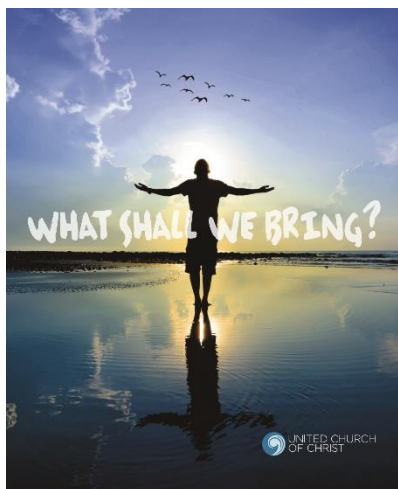
These are questions my husband and I ask this time of year when each of our churches has their pledge drive. Wayne and I are in a unique situation where we each belong to a different church so we divide our pledges according to each of our incomes giving 10% of my income to MCC and 10% of his income to Woodmont United Church of Christ. Financially giving to our churches is one of our foundations for living.

I hope you all will prayerfully consider your love for MCC when deciding your pledges for 2019 and know that God will take care of the rest!

In God's peace,

Debi Mastroni-Kenyon

## Trustees




### What Shall We Bring? 2019 Stewardship Campaign

Throughout our faith journey, we are extended several invitations. From the invitation to come to worship, to the invitation to care for a sick neighbor, to the invitation to bring food to the next church event, our life in a community of faith is full of them! Jesus invites us to bring all that we are and all that we have when we become a disciple. Our faithful financial stewardship is one way we are invited to respond to Christ's invitation. Our generosity funds the mission and ministry of putting our faith in action, as God's realm grows among us.

Recently, letters with commitment cards were sent to all MCC's members and friends. Special speakers will give testimony beginning October 28th through Commitment Sunday on November 25th. Please let us know if you have any questions. Thank you for prayerfully considering how to financially support the Monroe Congregational Church's ministries in 2019.

If your monthly or weekly pledge goes through Vanco, please fill out a pledge card so we can update our records for 2019.

~ Your Stewardship Committee, John O'Rourke (Receiver), Roy Nealon, Liz Sampson, Pastor Jenn



**Fall Workday Saturday, Nov. 3rd at 8:00 am** - We have plenty of fall cleanup jobs to tackle so please come out and spend a few hours helping to spruce up our campus. Breakfast will be provided. If you are able to assist, please contact Dave Allen at [dallen9457@att.net](mailto:dallen9457@att.net).

\*\*\*\*\*

## Deacons

HELLO

I'm new here.

**New Member Informational Luncheon, November 4th** ~ Join the deacons and Pastor Jenn for an informational luncheon at 11:15 in Dineson Parlor. Find out more about the history (how we got here), theology (what we believe) and ways you might connect with others and learn more about faith doing so. Prospective Members will join the church during worship on November 25th. Please contact Pastor Jenn at [jenn@mcc-ucc.org](mailto:jenn@mcc-ucc.org) with any questions.

**Faith on Tap, Friday November 2nd:** Come talk about life and current events from a spiritual perspective at a local pub. We meet on the first Fridays of the month from 7:30 - 9pm at VERACIOUS BREWING COMPANY! No formal presentations - just people kicking

round a topic, sharing honestly what really matters to them. Anyone is welcome at the table. No topics are off limits. Agreement is not required, but civility is essential. Tea-totlers and soda drinkers welcome too!

The November theme is "Convergence". A new form of church has recently gained popularity which combines worship with creating art. We'll take some time for a short



Bible study and do some creative exploration through collage making. Come learn more and join in! Call/text Clark (203-895-5604) or Rev. Jenn (203-895-5607) Gingras with any questions.



**Fall Back! Don't forget to turn your clocks back one hour before you go to sleep on November 3rd!**

**Help Us Paint a Labyrinth! When: Saturday, November 10th, 9 am – 12:30 pm in Wilton Hall** It's day two of the Labyrinth build! We are about a third of the way through penciling the design, and we plan to finish that and paint it on Saturday, November 10<sup>th</sup> from 9 am – 12:30 pm in Wilton Hall (with lunch to follow). Questions? Speak with Pastor Jenn.



Interested in joining the **Junior Choir**? We'd love to have you sing with us! Beginning on November 18th, we rehearse every Sunday after worship from 11:15 – noon in the Meetinghouse. Junior Choir is designed for grade school aged participants who love music and would like to share it regularly in worship with the congregation. Our coordinators are Don Parker-Burgard, Leanne McEvoy, Will Duchon and Pastor Jenn. To sign up, e-mail let Pastor Jenn at [jenn@mcc-ucc.org](mailto:jenn@mcc-ucc.org). Hope to hear you there!



\*\*\*\*\*

**Christian Education**



**T-Shirts Needed!** The Fruit of the Spirit Groups (Sunday school) needs your gently used T-shirts for our Mission Project on November 11th. We are going to make bags which will be filled with emergency placement items for children in foster care. Please bring your shirts to church on or before November 11th. Thank you



- Jr. PF Calendar      November**  
**3<sup>rd</sup>** – Saturday Haunted Hayride at Farview Tree Farm in Shelton  
**11<sup>th</sup>** – Regular Gathering/Welcome new members from 6:00-7:30 pm  
**18<sup>th</sup>** – **NO Jr. PF**  
**25<sup>th</sup>** – Regular Gathering from 6:00-7:30 pm

**Sunday School Calendar November**

- 4<sup>th</sup>** – Gatherings for the Joyful Watermelons and Loving Lemons  
**11<sup>th</sup>** – All Groups Gather – Mission Day  
**18<sup>th</sup>** – All Groups Gather  
**25<sup>th</sup>** – Pageant Rehearsal One during gathering time





## ***Calm and Bright: 200 Years of Silent Night = Advent is Coming!***



The classic hymn, "Silent Night," made its debut 200 years ago on Christmas Eve, 1818 at the St. Nicholas chapel in Oberndorf bei Salzburg, Austria. The melody by composer Franz Gruber is instantly recognizable from the first few notes. The original text by Joseph Mohr has been translated from the original German into over 140 languages.

In 1914, just four years shy of the 100th anniversary of "Silent Night," soldiers fighting World War I along the Western Front held a ceasefire out of mutual respect for the holiday. They exchanged gifts and stories with one another, played games, and sang

carols together, including the beloved hymn "Silent Night." Today, churches all over the world gather together on Christmas Eve to light candles, sing "Silent Night," and participate in a timeless tradition of story and song.

Sometimes it feels as if our communities, churches and world are torn and divided about so many issues. This may cause us to feel that hope, peace, love, and joy are in short supply. This Advent, we are declaring a ceasefire from our own sources of conflict. Instead, we will raise our voices in song to celebrate the birth of Christ with spirits of peace and love that transcends all barriers. We hope that you and yours are able to join us for these special events in our lives together:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| December 2, 10 am<br>5 pm                     | First Week of Advent Worship, "Sleep in Heavenly Peace"<br>Community Tree Lighting (Hosted by St Peter's)  |
| December 9, 10 am                             | Second Week of Advent Worship, "Glories Stream"  |
| December 16, 8:30 am<br>9 am<br>10 am<br>5 pm | Third Week of Advent, "Redeeming Grace"<br>Special Christmas Coffee Hour<br>Christmas Pageant Service<br>Community Caroling with Senior & Junior PF  |
| December 23, 10 am                            | Fourth Week of Advent, "Let Us Sing"   |
| December 24,<br>4 pm<br>7 pm<br>11 pm         | "Calm and Bright" Christmas Eve<br><i>Quiet Service</i> , a contemplative, prayerful service.<br>All are welcome to walk the labyrinth in Wilton Hall following the service.<br><i>Family Service</i> , worship for all ages, come 15 minutes early to enjoy the opening music<br><i>Lessons &amp; Carols by Candlelight</i> with traditional readings, candlelight, and special music, come 15 minutes early to enjoy the opening music |
| December 30, 10 am                            | "Is Born", Young Adult Sunday  |

## Deacon Flocks

Each member of our board of Deacons is assigned a "flock", a group of people that they care for through regular communication and prayer. If you have requests or concerns that you would like to share, your deacon is available. Such requests or concerns might include:

- a need for prayer
- a request for help (transportation to a doctor's appointment or church function, etc.)
- a sorrow (illness, accident, death or other crisis)
- a joy (a birth, graduation, upcoming wedding, etc.)
- something that particularly pleases you, or would better meet your needs in the worship service

Naturally, if you are more comfortable with contacting one of the other deacons, or one of your pastors, please do so. If you do not know your Deacon, ask someone to introduce you. He or she looks forward to meeting you and getting to know you better.

(A-B)	Jim Gill	203-261-8663	gillj39@gmail.com
(Be-Co)	Heather Henning	203-543-3126	heather.henning@sbcglobal.net
(Cr-E)	Sheldon Smith	203-880-5228	revsheldonsmith@yahoo.com
(F-G)	Jacob Parker-Burgard	203-261-8781	japarkerburgard@gmail.com
(H)	Lucas Cuseo	203-268-0280	lmcuseo@gmail.com
(J-Ma)	Larry Wissink	203-723-1930	larrywissink@gmail.com
(Mc-O)	Diane Fraser	203-225-7686	burrberryfarm@icloud.com
(P-Re)	Arlene Redmond	203-345-3637	arleneredmond@gmail.com
(Ri-Sm)	Kristina Logan	203-445-8502	kristinawlogan@gmail.com
(Sp-Wa)	David Bailey	203-261-5940	davidjbaileyinct@gmail.com
(We-Z)	Jane Allen	203-522-3686	janeallen@sbcglobal.net

\*\*\*\*\*

### Outreach



#### **Dress A Girl Around The World Sew-A-Thon Returns**

**November 3rd from 10am- 3pm**~ Join Liz Skarzyinski from Dress A Girl Around The World on November 3rd in Wilton Hall to create dresses for little girls overseas. Thank you for your generous donations of fabric. Dress A Girl is part of Hope for Women International a non-profit, nondenominational independent Christian organization. If you would like to help or join the team,

please call Liz 203-257-7174 or email [Liz1202us@yahoo.com](mailto:Liz1202us@yahoo.com).



**Mission Trip Next Steps:** Hello Everyone! We had a great initial meeting in September regarding a Mission Trip to the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation in 2019 and it's time we take some next steps! We will be having a meeting on **Sunday, November 18<sup>th</sup>**, after worship to discuss dates, covenants, deposits, and fundraising. This trip is open to anyone who will be over the age of 15 the summer of 2019. Please contact Debi at [deb@mcc-ucc.org](mailto:deb@mcc-ucc.org) with any questions or for more information.

**Do you have old prescription glasses or sunglasses that you don't know what to do with?** There will be a basket on the table during coffee hour for the month of November to collect them. They will go to a location where they will be cleaned, calibrated and then sent to places where eyecare is minimal. Your used glasses will give the sight to someone who will be able to read the newspaper, see their loved ones clearly or help them work better. Consider cleaning out your junk drawers and donating them for a worthy cause. Give the gift of sight to another person who will sincerely appreciate it. Please contact Susie Cuseo at [thecuseos@yahoo.com](mailto:thecuseos@yahoo.com) or 203-268-0280 with any questions.

**Covenant to Care Family Special Request** You may recall Debra, JT, and Nancy – a family we have helped in the past with needs. Unfortunately, they are moving to a new apartment in November after a bed bug infestation. The following is a list of items they need for their new home: Extension cords, lamps, towels, bed sheets, pillows, chairs, sofa or love seat rugs, other furniture for her and the children: chest of drawers for her and two kids, dressers, night stands, coffee tables, book cases, shelving, etc. They would benefit a great deal from donations of Stop and Shop gift cards as well. If you have anything you would like to help please reach out to Meral at [meral023@optonline.net](mailto:meral023@optonline.net) (and copy me, [abcdcp@aol.com](mailto:abcdcp@aol.com), for my report to the state). Thank you so much for all you do to help those in need right here in our nearby community of Bridgeport. It is greatly appreciated! Diane Prall

\*\*\*\*\*

### Fellowship

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

- ✚ **November 12<sup>th</sup>-7:30pm** Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens~Hosted by Paula Haggstrom
- ✚ **December 17<sup>th</sup> -7:30pm** How to Find Love in a Bookshop by Veronica Henry ~Hosted by Mary Unger



**Holiday Baking with Sue Zaleha November 13th**

Sue will be sharing her holiday fruit cake recipe and bake with us on Tuesday, November 13, at 1:00pm in our church's kitchen. This is a "hands on" project resulting in a fruit cake to take home. All ingredients will be provided. Please call Heather Henning at 203 453 3126 to confirm your attendance or to have questions answered.

**Retired Men will meet Wednesday, November 14th at 9:30 a.m.** Our host will be Rev. Sheldon Smith. Morning repast based on original Austrian/Bavarian recipe. *Guten Appetit*. Please RSVP to Sheldon at [revsheldonsmith@yahoo.com](mailto:revsheldonsmith@yahoo.com) or the church office 203-268-9327 by Monday, November 12th.



**Morning Circle invites all the ladies of the congregation to attend their next meeting on Wed, Nov 14 at 11AM.** We will be in the kitchen while we make bean soup jars for the Food Pantry. Please bring a sandwich for lunch and a donation for the Food



Pantry. We will also be handing out gift tags for the Giving Tree. All gift donations are to be wrapped with the tag attached and dropped off in the church office by Sunday, Dec 2nd. Our last meeting of the year will be a Christmas luncheon on Wed Dec. 12th offsite at a restaurant TBD. We will carpool from the church's parking lot at 11:30AM for reservations at 12. Please contact Jackie Bleakney with any questions at 203-268-5275.



**Save the Date!** Young at Heart- November 29<sup>th</sup> at 12noon. Location to Be Determined. Our hosts are Arlene Redmond and Vaughan Askue



**Prayer Partners** are now keeping someone in their thoughts as they read this article. If you have not received the name of your prayer partner, please contact Susie Cuseo at [thecuseos@yahoo.com](mailto:thecuseos@yahoo.com) or 203-268-0280. If you would like to send them a card or note during a

holiday or special occasion, use the church's address as the return. Greet your partner before service, shake hands with them during the passing of the peace or strike up a conversation at coffee hour. If you do not know who your partner is, find me and I will try to point them out for you. We will meet on Sunday, May 19, 2019 for the "Big Reveal" potluck luncheon in Wilton Hall. The nursery will be available to those 3 years and younger while older kids can dine at the big table. Prayer is an exercise of faith—knowing and believing that God hears and answers according to His good will and love for us.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Community Notices

**Flowers** *From our Flower Coordinator, Ann Zeiner:* You may notice the communion table flowers look a little different lately. We are no longer doing business with Irene's Flowers in Monroe. After 30 years they have started to charge a \$12.95 delivery fee which would make our weekly arrangements go from \$25 a week to \$37.95 per week. Going forward, we have decided to get bouquets from Big Y so we can keep the price affordable at \$25. Thank you for your understanding!

### A Note from the Heiney Family

The Heiney family. Betty, Greg and Sue, thanks everyone for their prayers, understanding, support and comfort during the illness and passing of our dear beloved Karen. They were needed and they did help.



## A Note from Jackie Bleakney

Allen Crosnier's Eagle Scout Court of Honor November 17<sup>th</sup> at 11am in the Meetinghouse. Lunch will follow in Wilton Hall. We hope you can attend.



**Speaking with Men:** Thursday, November 15th, 7:30-9:00 am

Please join me at the Center for Family Justice's "Speaking with Men" breakfast as we discuss the role men play in eliminating violence against women and girls. The keynote will be delivered by Ted Bunch, Chief Development Officer of A Call to Men. Breakfast will be served and there will be a session with Ted on topics like discussing healthy relationships with young men, consent, and speaking out when we see incidents occurring. Join me as my guest at the event (no cost to you), my goal is to fill a table or two with like-minded men who can be role models in our community.

Where: Bridgeport Holiday Inn, 1070 Main Street, Bridgeport, CT

Please contact me directly to sign up as part of my group: Scott Redfern, 203-258-4123, [Sdredfern64@gmail.com](mailto:Sdredfern64@gmail.com)

## **MCC Community Calendar**

### **Thurs. Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>**

9:30am Bible Study (Dineson)

### **Fri. Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup>**

7:30pm Faith on Tap @ Veracious

### **Sat. Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup>**

10:00am Dress A Girl (Wilton Hall)

### **Week of Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>**

*Second Sunday in Stewardship*

10:00am Worship w/Communion

11:15am New Member Informational (Dineson)

6:00pm Adult & Junior PF

### **Tues. Nov. 6<sup>th</sup>**

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

### **Wed. Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>**

7:15pm Adult Choir

### **Thurs. Nov. 8<sup>th</sup>**

9:30am Bible Study (Dineson)

### **Fri. Nov. 9<sup>th</sup> – Sat. Nov. 10<sup>th</sup>**

5:30pm Confirmation Lock In (Dineson, Wilton Hall, & Kitchen)

### **Nov. 10<sup>th</sup>**

9:00am Labyrinth Painting (Wilton Hall)

### **Week of Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>**

*Third Sunday in Stewardship*

10:00am Worship

11:15am Reception for Shane Watson (Wilton Hall)

5:00pm Senior PF

6:00pm Junior PF

### **Mon. Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>**

*Office Closed in Observance of  
Veteran's Day*

### **Tues. Nov. 13<sup>th</sup>**

10:30am Baking w/Sue Zaleha (kitchen)

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

### **Wed. Nov. 14<sup>th</sup>**

9:30am Retired Men (Dineson)

11:00am Morning Circle (Dineson)

6:30pm Confirmation Class (Dineson)

7:15pm Adult Choir

### **Thurs. Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>**

9:30am Bible Study (Dineson)

7:00pm CE Board Meeting (Dineson)

### **Sat. Nov. 17<sup>th</sup>**

11:00am Allen Crosnier Eagle Scout Court of Honor  
(Meetinghouse & Wilton Hall)

### **Week of Nov. 18<sup>th</sup>**

*Fourth Sunday in Stewardship*

8:45am Deacons Meeting (Dineson)

10:00am Worship

11:00am Mission Trip Meeting (Dineson)

11:15am Jr. Choir (Meetinghouse)

2:00pm Senior PF

6:00pm Adult & Junior PF

### **Mon. Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>**

7:30pm Council Meeting (Dineson)

### **Tues. Nov. 20<sup>th</sup>**

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

7:00pm Bereavement Group (Dineson)

### **Thurs. Nov. 21<sup>st</sup> & Fri. Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup>**

*Office Closed for Thanksgiving*

### **Week of Nov. 25<sup>th</sup>**

*Stewardship Commitment Sunday*

*New Member Sunday*

10:00am Worship

11:15am Pancake Breakfast (Wilton Hall)

11:15am Junior Choir (Meetinghouse)

5:00pm Senior PF

6:00pm Junior PF

### **Tues. Nov. 27<sup>th</sup>**

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

### **Wed. Nov. 28<sup>th</sup>**

6:00pm-8:00pm Labyrinth walk

6:30pm Confirmation Class

7:15pm Adult Choir

### **Thurs. Nov. 29<sup>th</sup>**

9:30am Bible Study

### **Week of Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup>**

10:00am Worship w/Communion

11:15am Junior Choir (Meetinghouse)

5:00pm Community Tree Lighting

5:00pm Senior PF

6:00pm Junior PF & Adult PF

### **Tues. Dec. 4<sup>th</sup>**

1:30pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

### **Wed. Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>**

6:30pm Confirmation Class

7:15pm Adult Choir

### **Thurs. Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>**

9:30am Bible Study

### **Fri. Dec. 7<sup>th</sup>**

7:30pm Faith on Tap (Veracious)