

34 Church Street
Monroe, CT 06468

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

Senior Pastor: Rev. Jennifer Gingras
Director of Faith Formation: Debi Mastroni-Kenyon
Music Director: Will Duchon
Administrator/Bookkeeper: Diane Prall
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, 2020



So many of my favorite moments of everyday church life happen in the kitchen. I love early Sunday mornings when the campus is quiet and I've come over to get a head start on filling up the coffeepot. The party starts in the kitchen when the deacons begin to show up and prepare for communion. One of them shines the silver while the rest slice and dice the bread or use the squirt bottle to fill the small cups. Sometimes, our older children get involved and assist. And, of course, who doesn't love standing for hours around that beloved stainless steel table, husking strawberries for the Strawberry Festival – laughing and chatting and telling stories of the past?

Doing the same activities over and over again with those you care about brings a sense of comfort, peace and belonging. Sadly, because of the pandemic, our rituals around the kitchen and so many other parts of our church home have been disrupted. It is

disappointing for some of you that we're not doing things the way we used to do them. I know, I am sad too. Protecting our community, as best we can, has required sacrifice on all of our parts.

However, I'm so grateful that as a community we have put each other's health and welfare as a priority. We've taken a slow, conservative approach to gathering in-person. Through increased sanitation, staying home when under the weather, following mask/social distance/quarantining guidelines our community numbers remain low. From Bible Study to Wine Tasting to Boy Scout Court of Honor to Virtual CROP Walk, this fall at MCC we are ready to explore even more ways we might be together safely.



I was reflecting with one of our congregation members at a socially distanced coffee hour the other day about the ways we are adapting during this time, and how we might take the gifts of what we have learned into the future. Perhaps as we travel during this period of communal shift, we might give thanks, even in the midst of this global pandemic.

I think one of the things I will remember the most about this time is that the Lord has given us the strength to go through the tough times we have faced together. My hope is that sense of togetherness and strength will continue into this next phase of our lives. We will remember the blessings that we have received. We will remember how we have grown and matured in our faith.

Our memories not only celebrate the past, they prepare us for the future.

In Christ's peace, Pastor Jenn

Seeking Your Windows



Greetings MCC Community believe it or not I have been thinking a lot about Advent. Yes, I know it's 6 weeks away, but I've got an idea that I hope you will be as excited about as I am – it's called Advent Windows.

Advent Windows is an Advent Calendar, but on the windows of your house. Each day a different window, in a different house, will be unveiled depicting an Advent symbol or scene. Folks from the

church and the Monroe community can drive or walk by and see your windows and feel the peace and hope we are trying to convey.

This is where you come in. I am hoping that 24 of you will help me by decorating one window that faces the street for one of the days during Advent. I will provide you with a theme and ideas for the day and leave it up to you to decorate your window any way you wish (paint it, hang pictures, art, etc.). The dates of Advent are November 29th - December 24th.

Please contact me at 203-444-6760 if you are willing to decorate a window in your house during Advent. When 24 people sign up, I will put together a schedule and then a viewing schedule for the season.

Peace to you all – *Debi*



Dear Friends:

Point of clarification re: "Zoom coffee hour hosted by Arlene." I am not really the host! I am merely the Zoom-girl. Pastor Jenn is on the call for whatever time she can be, but she also has many Sunday morning meetings. So, to relieve Pastor Jenn of having to try to figure out how to be in two places at once, e.g., Zoom coffee hour plus Trustees, Zoom coffee hour

plus Deacons, Zoom coffee hour plus Outreach, etc., etc., I am zooming in to provide the technology. So... join us! Stay in touch. We have fun. We talk about everything, nothing, some things of consequence, some not... whatever anyone brings up.

Peace, Arlene Redmond

Christian Education

Worship Bags



Since we are resuming indoor worship, I thought it would be a good idea to have some activities that might keep our younger folks engaged during services. We are offering "Worship Bags" for all children and youth from age 4 through 8th Grade!

Each bag can be colored and personalized and will become their bag, please put their name on it. You will leave the bags in the Narthex and pick it up there each Sunday too.

Inside each bag is a Worship Journal with prompts, games, and coloring pages for each week, a "Bendy Jesus" and Stress Balls too. I would even encourage you to bring something that doesn't make noise from home to keep in the bag too!

Faith Formation Fall Schedule:



Fruit of the Spirit Sunday school

Faith, Fellowship and Fun gathers on **October 25th at 10:00 am**. This gathering is for families to attend (parents/guardians and children/youth, age 4-8th grade). We will gather for a Bible lesson and related activities. In the weeks in between you will receive Faith At Home activities via email and our Facebook group.



Jr. PF

10/03 – Haunted Hayride (this is a Saturday);

10/11 – NO Jr. PF

10/18 – Outdoor Movie Night from 5:30 pm-7:30 pm

10/25 – Outdoor Movie Night from 5:30 pm-7:30 pm

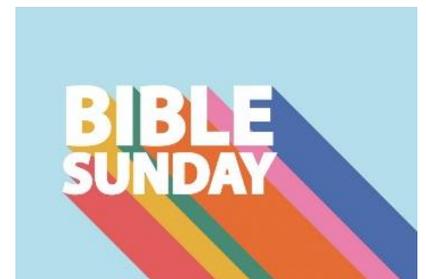
On September 27th Jr. PF had a fire and S'mores in the Parking Lot at church. Thank you to Boy Scout Braeden Goyette for his fire extinguishing skills! Here are a few photos!

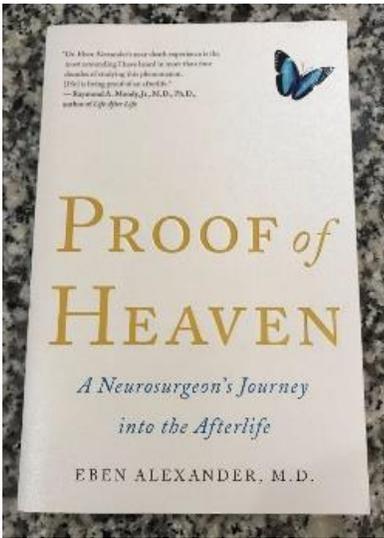


When S'mores weren't enough the Jr. PFers decided to roast some Twinkies!

Bible Sunday

Bible Sunday will be celebrated on Sunday, October 18th! On that day, our 3rd Grade Sunday school students will be receiving their Bibles. If you have a 3rd Grader, please call Debi at 203-444-6760 by October 14th with your child's full name for the Bible plate inscription.





Thursday Morning Bible Study We offer a weekly Bible Study at MCC on most Thursday mornings from 9:30-11 through the program year. Sometimes we'll focus on what will be offered in worship on Sunday, sometimes we'll focus on a particular book of the Bible. Over the next few weeks, we are reading "Proof of Heaven: A Neurosurgeon's Journey Into the Afterlife" by Eben Alexander, M.D. This year, we meet in Wilton Hall so that we can spread out and be safer. Please wear a mask. As always, we invite anyone to come and join us – please speak with Pastor Jenn if you have any questions.



Adult PF is returning to the first and third Sundays of the month 4:00 - 5:30pm. For our October 4 meeting, we'll gather in the overflow parking lot behind Rexford House. More details to come, but you can put October 4 and October 18 on your calendars. For information about Adult PF please contact Don Parker-Burgard. dpburgard@sbcglobal.net

Trustees



All outdoor work: trim shrubs, clean gutters, remove leaves. Your help would be greatly appreciated on

**Saturday, October 24
8:30am – 1:00pm**

Call Dave Allen with any questions: 203-767-0883
Thank you!

*Thank you for your commitment
to the Monroe Congregational Church
during this challenging time.*



Mail or drop off donations to 34 Church Street,
Monroe CT 06468, attn MCC Receiver.



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

Arrange for automatic payments
via your bank



Deacons



Socially Distanced Office Hours Pastor Jenn offers socially distanced office hours by appointment on the parsonage porch, provided the weather holds. If you are unable to leave your home, she can also come to you and stay (socially distanced) outside your storm door for a chat.

Arrange with her by calling 203-895-5607.



Volunteers are needed to be Prayer Partners!!! Signing up is easy: contact Susie Cuseo at thecuseos@yahoo.com and provide her with the following information:

PRAYER PARTNER INFO SHEET

Name: _____

Address: _____

Birthday: _____

Anniversary or other Special Day: _____

Prayer Requests (For Yourself): _____

Hobbies/Interests: _____

Cell Phone # (to be used by facilitator): _____

A letter will be mailed out in mid-October with an information sheet of the person you'll be praying for. In turn someone else will receive your sheet and will keep you in their thoughts. It's that easy, simple and never time consuming.

Mark your calendars for Sunday, May 23, 2021 when we will have our "Big Reveal" potluck luncheon in Wilton Hall at 11:15AM. We will dine, converse and find out who's been praying for whom. Childcare will be available for those 3 years and under while older kids can dine at the big table.

Here's what one participant had to say about her experience as a Prayer Partner: "It is comforting to know someone is always praying for me."

Contact Susie Cuseo with any questions, concerns or comments at 203-268-0280 or the above listed email address.

Outreach

Outreach Wine & Beer Tasting a Resounding Success!

Thanks for your support of last month's Outreach Wine & Beer Tasting, and to Roy Nealon and Veracious for providing beverages for the evening. As you can see from the pictures, we had a lovely afternoon of fellowship around the campfire on Pierce Lawn. Proceeds (\$955 at last count) will be split between

nOURISH Bridgeport, a feeding program run out of the United Congregational Church that provides a weekly food pantry and 2 days of dinners for a population of about 250, mostly residents of four nearby housing projects and

the Geraldine Johnson School in Bridgeport, to help fund health and wellness supplies related to COVID-19, for the 800 PreK-8 students there. Since the pandemic, their funding has focused on distance learning needs and sanitation protocols, what we raised for them helps them purchase items they need for outdoor recess but can't afford on their own (sports equipment, lawn marking materials, etc.).

Thank you, as always, for your generous support!





Mustard Seed Thrift Shoppe will reopen only on Saturdays starting November 7th from 10-2. The Shoppe is not yet accepting any donations at this time due to the overflow of merchandise we have in storage.

Our plan to reopen the doors and keep our volunteers and customers as safe as possible will include:

- Volunteers will wear masks and gloves throughout their shifts
- Hand sanitizer and wipes will be available for both worker and shopper
- A Plexi-safety screen will be placed at the counter for the consideration of both the worker and shopper
- Dressing room will not be available to use
- A sign will be posted outside the Shoppe indicating that masks **MUST** be worn upon entering and a limit of 5 persons are allowed to shop at one time

Volunteer shifts are 10-12 and 12-2. We have a few volunteers willing to return at this time, but we need a few more to cover each shift. If you'd like to work behind the counter on Saturdays either at 10-12 or 12-2, please contact Susie Cuseo at thecuseos@yahoo.com or call 203-268-0280 and let her know your availability. It's easy and worthwhile for the church and the community.

BRIDGEPORT, CT CROP HUNGER WALK
Sunday, October 18



We're fighting hunger together!
Monroe Congregational Church

DONATE

Virtual CROP Walk Sunday, October 18

The Board of Christian Outreach is asking for your help raising funds for Church World Service CROP hunger walk. CROP helps our neighbors locally, nationally and internationally to overcome hunger, poverty, displacement and disaster. In 2019 CROP supported families in 55 countries emphasizing self-sustaining agricultural practices. Now in 2020 the global pandemic has exacerbated an already dire situation for many. In a matter of mere months, the coronavirus has wiped out global gains that took two decades to achieve, leaving an estimated two billion people at risk of abject poverty.

This year instead of gathering at Seaside Park we will walk in our own communities on Oct 18. To date we have a team made up of Julie and Rob McClenathan, Don and Kate Parker-Burgard, Kristina Logan and Jeanette Cardenty. If you would like to join the walk and help raise funds please contact Julie McClenathan 203-261-0360. If you are moved to sponsor a walker please see one of the folks listed above. Thank you as always for your generosity, Julie McClenathan, Board of Christian Outreach The MCC team page's URL

<https://www.crophungerwalk.org/bridgeportct/Team/View/135727/Monroe-Congregational-Church>



The bathroom team has begun to purchase materials for the **Ladies' Bathroom Renovation project**. Originally scheduled to begin construction on October 1st, the project has been pushed back a week due to some delivery issues the contractor had with his prior project. Thank you again for your generosity that allowed this project to proceed. We can't wait to see the finished bathroom - we hope that is by the time of the next Steeple!

The Ladies' Bathroom Renovation Team (Dave Allen, Kyla Allen, Julie McClenathan, Arlene Redmond)



Join the MCC ZOOM Book Club

Transatlantic by Colum McCann

discussion via Zoom on Wednesday, October 7th
7pm

Questions -contact Mary Unger (203) 268-5754



Morning Circle invites the ladies of the congregation to their next meeting on **Wednesday, October 14 at 11AM in Wilton Hall**. We will be putting together Trick-or-Treat bags for the Food Pantry. We are looking for donations of spare change and small items

(pencils, erasers, stickers, toys, plastic rings, individually wrapped candies, etc.) to put into those bags. The children who visit the Pantry with their parents love receiving these little gifts during the Halloween holiday. Please contact Jackie Bleakney at 203-268-5375 with any questions or comments.



SENIOR PF INVITES IT'S CHURCH
FAMILY TO THE 1ST EVER

TRUNK OR TREAT

PUT YOUR COSTUMES ON AND JOIN US FOR RAFFLES,
CANDY, AND FAMILY FUN!

October 30, 2020 | 5:30 PM - 8:30 PM Monroe Congregational Church

ADMISSIONS: \$5 PER KID \$12 PER FAMILY

all proceeds go to our 2021 Mission Trip

MASKS REQUIRED

We are looking for 13 cars, to sign up or RSVP, email
Kelsey at mccuccseniorpf@gmail.com

Community News

**Oktoberfest at the Masonic Lodge:
A Fundraising Event to support Project Warmth**

2-5 pm, October 11, 2020

RSVP to Roy Nealon at roy_nealon@yahoo.com

The image is a promotional poster for an Oktoberfest event. At the top, it features a central illustration of a large glass mug filled with golden beer and topped with a thick white head of foam. The mug is flanked by two green leafy branches. Below the mug is a dark blue banner with the word "Oktoberfest" written in a white, stylized font. The background of the poster is light blue with a repeating pattern of small, faint Masonic symbols. At the bottom, there is a white rectangular box with a blue checkered border containing event details. Below this box is a dark blue banner with the text "Come & Join!" in white.

Oktoberfest

Come and Join me for a great afternoon of all you can eat made on premise Pizza, Salad, OktoberFest style beer, Gelato, Espresso and Cappuccinos.
Where: 1 Fan Hill, Monroe CT at the back lawn of the Lodge.
When: 10/11/2020 between 2:00 and 5:00PM
It is my private event to welcome the fall season but all are welcome to attend. \$25 per person (kids under 15 are free)
All proceeds will be donated to Monroe project warmth
We will keep all social distancing guidelines and the will be NO access to the lodge (except for bathrooms)

Come & Join!



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	Al	Shaffer	10/14
Vinay	Sampson	10/01	Jeffrey	Vargovchik	10/14
Gayle	Hammond	10/02	Audra	Logan	10/15
Thomas	Siciliano	10/03	Karen	Matysczak	10/15
Andrew	Young	10/03	Ryan	Swift	10/18
Julie	Heussner	10/05	Ginger	Bartlett	10/19
Lorraine	Zeiner	10/07	Carl	Haggstrom	10/19
Lucas	Cuseo	10/08	Kristen	Manuzzi	10/19
Robert	McClenathan	10/08	Shari	Carrano	10/21
Jacqueline	Bleakney	10/10	Juliana	Lavitola	10/21
Joseph	Gilberti	10/12	Lindsey	Dubois	10/22
Pete	LaQuesse	10/12	Lois	Spence	10/22
Connor	McCormick	10/12	Kerri	Swift	10/22
Nick	Obertz	10/12	Jocelyn	Allen	10/24
Elizabeth	Sampson	10/12	Alan	Vaglivello	10/25
Richard	Bauer	10/13	Zachary	Gingras	10/26
Brian	Correll	10/13	Hubert	Muizulis	10/26
Simon	Rice	10/13	Lynne	Hyde	10/27
Vincent	Forte	10/14	Shirley	Dotoratos	10/29
Dona	Perrone	10/04	Alison	Cross	10/30



Happy September 20th Wedding Anniversary to Robert & Marilyn Schultz.

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⁾ Clark & Jennifer Gingras⁽¹⁰⁾ Michael & Jessica Pfalzgraf⁽¹⁷⁾
 Mary & Franklin Renz⁽²³⁾ Frank & Christine Wittenauer⁽²³⁾ **Tom & Lynne Hyde⁽²⁶⁾**
 Mary & George Massar⁽²⁷⁾

MCC OCTOBER Community Calendar

*Worship may be found on our new YouTube Channel, streaming live on Sundays by 10am or later on demand
<https://www.youtube.com/monroecongregationalchurch>

Week of Oct. 4th

World Communion Sunday
10:00 am Worship - First Communion
11:30 am Zoom Coffee Hour
4:00 pm Adult PF
5:00 pm Senior PF

Wed. Oct. 7th

6:30 pm Confirmation Class (Parsonage Porch)
7:00 pm Zoom Book Club

Thurs. Oct. 8th

9:30 am Bible Study

Week of Oct. 11th

10:00 am Worship
11:30 am Zoom Coffee Hour
5:00 pm Senior PF

Mon. Oct 12th

Closed for Columbus Day

Wed. Oct. 14th

11:00 am Morning Circle
6:30 pm Confirmation Class (Parsonage Porch)

Thurs. Oct. 15th

9:30 am Bible Study
7:00 pm CE

Week of Oct. 18th

Virtual CROP Walk
10:00 am Worship
11:30 am Zoom Coffee Hour
11:15 am Outreach
12:30 am Trustees
4:00 pm Adult PF
5:00 pm Senior PF
6:00 pm Junior PF - outdoors

Mon. Oct. 19th

3:00 pm St George's Supper
7:30 pm Church Council

Wed. Oct. 21st

6:30 pm Confirmation Class (Parsonage Porch)

Thurs. Oct. 22nd

9:30 am Bible Study

Week of Oct. 25th

10:00 am Worship
10:00 am Faith, Fellowship & Fun
11:30 am Zoom Coffee Hour
5:00 pm Senior PF
6:00 pm Junior PF -outdoors

Thurs. Oct. 29th

9:30 am Bible Study

Fri. Oct. 30th

5:30 – 8:30 pm
Trunk or Treat! Hosted by Senior PF

Week of Nov. 1st

****DAY LIGHT SAVINGS**

10:00 am Worship -Communion
Sunday
4:00 pm Adult PF
5:00 pm Senior PF
6:00 pm Junior PF

Thurs. Nov. 5th

9:30 am Bible Study

Fri. Nov. 6th – Sun. Nov. 8th

Senior PF Retreat, YMCA Camp Hazen

Week of Nov. 8th

10:00 am Worship
5:00 pm Senior PF

Wed. Nov. 11th

11:00 am Morning Circle
6:30 pm Confirmation Class

Thurs. Nov. 12th

9:30 am Bible Study

Week of Nov. 15th

10:00 am Worship
11:15 am Outreach
4:00 pm Adult PF
5:00 pm Senior PF

Mon. Nov. 16th

7:30 pm Church Council

Wed. Nov. 18th

6:30 pm Confirmation Class

Thurs. Nov. 19th

9:30 am Bible Study
7:00 pm CE

