

34 Church Street Monroe, CT 06468

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March 1, 2019

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

The Five Thousand Matthew 14:13-21

Radical Generosity

Matthew 14:13-21

Don't you love stories that inspire? I've got one about being radically generous, and it stars MCC! Although I've already told it a couples of times, some of you are not on social media or missed church last Sunday (it was cold and drizzly). I received a surprising e-mail this week which I have permission to share with you.

Dear Jennifer, Thirty years ago today I was ordained at Monroe Congregational Church. I am grateful to MCC for so many things. They embraced me as an adopted son (I grew up Roman Catholic in Monroe). While I served with Mennonite Central Committee in Brazil, they supported me with prayer and SO many letters from church members, many of whom I did not know. Rev. Luther Pierce even did a pastoral visit to Brazil! And then when I entered Andover Newton Theological School, the church made a 3 year commitment to support me financially, which allowed me to graduate from seminary debt free. After seminary I first served a yoked parish in Vermont. Then a church in the Washington DC area. From there I served as Conference Minister in Maine for fifteen years and now I am in my seventh year as Conference Minister in New York. I hope that you might express to the congregation the depth of my gratitude for their loving support. It changed my life and hopefully had a positive impact on the many lives my ministry has touched. To God be the glory.

With deepest gratitude, Reverend David R Gaewski, Conference Minister, New York Conference, United Church of Christ

Although David grew up attending the Catholic church here in Monroe (that's the case for roughly a third of our current PF'ers, by the way), MCC adopted him like he was their own son, working halfway across the world. When David returned from Brazil as a young newlywed, the members of MCC pledged to support him with \$400/month for the next three years of his seminary education. With MCC's help, and his wife Sueli's employment at the seminary, David was able to graduate with a Masters of Divinity debt-free. As someone who JUST paid off her loans, let me tell you that is no small accomplishment!

He also said "I am SO grateful for that mid-sized church on the town green. The church famous for their Strawberry Festival, but did so much more that few people knew about — like changing my life. Four hundred dollars a month in 1985 was a substantial

financial commitment. They were not a huge church and I don't believe they had a large endowment. But they made a commitment to the future of the United Church of Christ's ministry by investing in me. This Sunday, February 24, is Seminary Sunday. It is my prayer that all of the "Monroe's" out there will consider the same investment in the future of our church. Monroe Congregational impacted the course of my life and I will forever be grateful."

It turns out, the Monroe Congregational Church is one of those communities of faith that changes lives and forms leaders. Think of David and all those clergy this church has helped form in just these recent years, and all the lives they have touched:

- Rev. Dana Allen Walsh Senior Pastor, South Church, Andover Massachusetts
- Rev. Kristen Provost Switzer Minister of Youth and Mission, Newtown Congregational Church, Newtown Connecticut
- Rev. Andrew Courtney Chaplain, Army National Guard
- Rev. Katrina Manzi Minister, Middlebury Congregational Church

MCC nurtures leaders. Not just clergy, (although we seem to do that on a regular basis), but also leaders in education, social services, medicine, business, engineering, non-profits, the arts and so much more. That's something to be grateful for and proud of – thank you for that, and thanks be to God!

Each of you has a story about why you are here at MCC. You know there are special connections to be made in community for your neighbor, family member or friend who is searching. When you are willing to bring the story of God's wonder and life at the Monroe Congregational Church, you are standing on the edge of the sea with Jesus, feeding the people. Share it!

In peace, Pastor Jenn

The Importance of Cross-Generational Relationships

So much has changed in society since the 1950's. I personally wasn't around then (I was born in 1970), but I hear such nostalgia in the voices of those who were around when talking about what life was like, especially in the church.

So much that has been held on to as tradition no longer seems important in the face of the busyness of today. This doesn't mean that we buck tradition or throw it away – there is MUCH to be learned from the things held so valuable. There are however, stark realities we must face to meet the needs of today.

By the turn of the 20th Century, the culture of the Protestant Church in America had:

- Little mobility in families Community churches
- Public schools that were "Protestant parochial schools"
- A Protestant ethos and atmosphere
- The Bible was read and prayers were prayed in the home
- Blue Laws

These things no longer ring true. How many of you work on Sunday or have a child involved in a program that meets on a Sunday? Our public schools today are secular where prayer or religious instruction is no longer offered; We live in a multi-cultural, multi-religion, ecumenical world where all faiths and faith expression is affirmed and valued; Families look to the church to instruct their children in matters of faith rather than lead from the home.

Our goals remain the same; however, the means to the end must change.

"To grow up healthy, our youth need to be supported and known by at least five adults in addition to their parents or caregivers who are willing to invest time with them personally and spiritually." Eugene C. Reohlekpartain, Building Assets, Strengthening Faith: An Intergenerational Survey for Congregations, Minneapolis: Search Institute, 2003 "Young people who experience strong developmental relationships are more likely to report a wide range of social emotional strengths and other indicators of well-being and thriving. Young people with strong relationships are more resilient in the face of stress and trauma. Young people do better when they experience a strong web of relationships with many people." I think this is true the other way as well. I believe it is equally important for adults to have relationships with children and youth too.

The CE Board and I are trying to create opportunities for Cross-Generational relationships to form. During Lent we will be offering "Come to the Table" which is a Lenten Communion Journey for all ages. I encourage you to sign up and attend!

"The church does not have an educational program; the church IS an educational program." Maria Harris

Peace, Debi



Ash Wednesday, March 6th

11:30 am - 1 pm Ashes To Go: In order to serve those in the community who would like to receive ashes but are unable to attend worship, Pastor Jenn will be offering a drive-through imposition of ashes in the driveway next to the meetinghouse.

5:30 pm Labyrinth Learn & Walk: Join the Board of Christian Education to learn about the Labyrinth and then walk it. You may also come earlier for an individual walk beginning at 4:00 pm.



6:30 pm "Roots & Branches" Agape Soup Supper: Join the Deacons for a light meal of soup and conversation in Wilton Hall.

7:30 pm Worship Service: We begin our Lenten Journey together in the meetinghouse with imposition of ashes, ending with a bonfire in front of the church

Holy Week at the Monroe Congregational Church

Sunday, April 14th, 10am – Palm Sunday: Join us in our historic Meetinghouse to celebrate Palm Sunday. Our Adult Choir, Junior Choir and several soloists will offer sacred music.

Thursday, April 18th, 7:30pm - Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service: A candlelit evening worship service remembering Jesus' mandate to love one another.

Thursday, April 18th 8:30pm-Friday, April 19th 8:30pm – 24 hour Labyrinth Vigil: in Wilton Hall: Join us for a half an hour to walk the labyrinth, contemplate the Stations of the Cross and reflect. Sign up in Wilton Hall.

Saturday, April 20th 11am – Senior PF Easter Egg Hunt: Meet us in Wilton Hall with your little one for a few games followed by an egg hunt. Hop on over and join the fun!

Sunday, April 21st, 6am – Ecumenical Easter Sunrise Service at Great Hollow Lake: Dress warmly and join us down by the lake to welcome the resurrection! An offering will be gathered for Project Warmth. If you are able to bring a baked good to share for our fellowship time under the pavilion, thank you!

Sunday, April 21st, 8:30 and 10am – Easter Celebration Services: Join us at MCC for the Great Easter Celebration! At 9:30, we will share a festive Easter Coffee Hour. We will also join in singing the Hallelujah Chorus. Christ is Risen indeed AND Everyone is Welcome!



Elisha's Corner

By Gary Thompson, Church Historian From the Archives

Sometime the persons and/or events you are looking for are discovered from sources that one would not even consider; and all of a sudden, there it is; yah! Such findings occurred recently while I was filing away some documents that had been left in the "Historian" mailbox.

There were many at the 50th anniversary celebration for Rexford House that asked who the artist was that drew the pen and ink of the Meeting House that was used for the cover of the church thank-you notes stationary. I did not know and a search through the archives did not provide the answer. Surprisingly, one of the document sets left in the "Historian" mailbox was from Jean Loveland's daughter, Lori. In a note accompanying some copies of the drawing she identified the artist to be William Feeny. Now the question is who is William Feeny; a former member of the congregation, a commissioned professional artist, a Monroe resident? Do any of you know?

Also included in the package of documents was a letter from Jean Loveland, the congregation's first historian, to Paul Jones, who succeeded her. Jean had been asked by Rev. Raymond Ward (1956 – 1966) to be church historian, and she also started the *Steeple* with Rev. Ward. She wrote that she "was so upset over the addition to the church (1984) it just about ruined (her) feeling for the building." Jean wrote, "We were so lucky to have gotten the contract (with Hotchkins Clark & Co, of Derby, CT for the 1847 construction of the 1847 Meeting House) and several other papers. They were being held

by someone in St. Peter's Church after a member of the Congregational Church decided he didn't think anyone in our church would appreciate and preserve them. Twenty five years later, the person who had them brought them to me." The person who returned the documents was Ed Coffey, our town historian.

There was another letter received for filing from William B. Jones, a genealogist in Port Atkinson WI and Sagaponack NY in 1994 to our historian Paul Jones inquiring about the oils of Elisha and Sarah Rexford painted by Richard Jennys in 1799. Both Richard and his son, William, were self-thought, itinerant, portrait artists, called limners. Richard was born ca. 1734 in London, England, into a family of mercantile financiers. Before he was ten years old (probable at age seven) the family migrated to Boston where they established an imported dry goods business. While working in the business he began painting portraits, and like most of the early nineteenth century American painters, with very little formal training. He eventually married a local girl in 1770 and had five children. His second son, William, was born in 1774, and proved to have the same penchant for art. Around that same year he joined the Boston militia and fought in the Revolution. Richard's itinerant career began somewhat involuntarily when his landlady evicted him and his family from their modest dwelling for back rent. He subsequently escaped his creditors aboard a ship bound for Charleston, South Carolina. Not surprisingly his wife divorced him. He was no more successful in Charleston than in Boston. Within five years he fore fitted his acquired properties in Charleston for three years of back taxes and returned to Boston. During the early years of their careers it was difficult to distinguish the paintings of Richard from that of his son. But as William grew older and successfully experimented with lighting, shadings, different textures, and dimension, William's paintings became much better and his portraits appeared more "life like" than his father's. Like many of the early painters in America, Richard Jennys did not sign their works. Thus, the 1799 portraits of Elisha and Sarah Rexford are not signed either which would have undoubtedly identify the artist.

Documents of historical significant to our church's history are more than welcomed and are eagerly solicited. I request only that unlike these two artists when the documents are left in the mailbox or with Melissa, attach a note with your name and phone number, so if I have a question regarding the documents I'll know who to contact; yah, there it is.

Christian Education



Are you ready for summer? It's cold outside, but we at Silver Lake are already dreaming of summer 2019. Check out the <u>2019 Summer Conference</u> <u>Brochure</u> and start dreaming of which conference you will attend. Please ask Debi M-K for a brochure or download one at www.silverlakect.org, Silver Lake is all about life-changing ministry for children and youth in 4th-12 grades where they encounter God's love in creation. There is an Open House scheduled for

Sunday, May 19th, from 1:00-5:00 pm. See Debi M-K for more information. During the Open House you can tour on foot or hay ride, see the cabins and other buildings, check out the ropes courses and the waterfront! It's a chance to "know before you go"!!! Download the brochure online at <u>www.silverlakect.org</u>. Contact Silver Lake Conference Center at 860-364-5526 for registration and scholarship information. Please speak with Debi M-K if you have any questions!!! We can't wait to see you back at The Lake!

Save the Date: Vacation Bible School This summer Vacation Bible School will be held on Monday, August 5th through Friday, August 9th. Be sure to mark your calendars – theme TBD.



Come to the Table: A Lenten Communion Journey. Once a month we partake in Communion or The Lord's Supper, but do we really know what it means? To us? To the Church? To Jesus? Join us on Sundays, March 17th and 24th, and April 7th and 14th from 11:30 am – 1:00 pm as we discuss the history and meaning of The Lord's Supper. Lunch will be provided and <u>this is</u> <u>a journey for people of ALL AGES.</u> Sign up in Wilton Hall.

Each week we will be focusing on a different element of the Story of the Lord's Supper through interactive storytelling and creative projects. Did you know that you can trace this story all the way back into the Book of Exodus? Did you know that at its root the Story of the Lord's Supper is a love story? Come and find out how! Our Schedule is as follows:

Sunday, March 17th – "God's Love Frees" focusing on the Passover Story and Mezuzah making. We will be discovering how Jesus fits into the Passover Story.

Sunday, March 24th – "God's Love Remembered" focusing on the Story of the Last Supper and Communion Chalice making. We will be discovering how this is a love story.

Sunday, March 31st – NO GATHERING

Sunday, April 7th – "God's Love Today" focusing on Communion at MCC and bread and juice making. We will be discovering the roots of Communion here at MCC.

Sunday, April 14th – "From Palms to the Supper" focusing on Palm Sunday and its connection to Communion.

This Lenten Journey is for people of all ages. Each story and project is meaningful across the generations. To grow up healthy, our youth need to be supported and known by at least five adults in addition to their parents or caregivers who are willing to invest time with them personally and spiritually. To maintain youth and vibrancy adults should be known to at least five children and/or youth who are willing to spend time with them. What better way is there to start building relationships than during a time learning about God's greatest love story?

It is important for you to sign up for each week as we will be providing lunch and projects for each participant. We will need to know how many supplies to purchase. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Debi at <u>debi@mcc-ucc.org</u> or 203-444-6760.

March Christian Education Calendars



Fruit of the Spirit Gatherings (Sunday School)

3rd – Joyful Watermelons (Pre-K-2nd Grade) Only

- $\mathbf{10}^{th}$ All Groups Gather
- 17th All Groups Gather
- 24th All Groups Gather

A quick reminder of our Groups:

- Ioyful Watermelons (Pre-K-2nd Grade)
- Loving Lemons (3rd Grade)
- Wind Coconuts (4th & 5th Grade)
- Paithful Fruit Smoothies (6th-8th Grade)

Jr. Pilgrim Fellowship

3rd – Gather from 6:00-7:30 pm

10th – Gather from 6:00-7:30 pm

17th – Gather from 6:00-7:30 pm

24th – Gather from 6:00-7:30 pm

31st – NO Gathering



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Outreach

The Annual MCC Tag Sale is coming! Please mark your calendars for March 23 from 9 am-1 pm (early birds at 8) in Wilton Hall. This is an enormous event, requiring many



(early birds at 8) in Wilton Hall. This is an enormous event, requiring many people to help with set up, sale and clean up. There are will be all sorts of shifts to suit all schedules, so please consider donating a few hours of your time that week. How you can help:

1--Donate your gently used items. Please do not donate anything broken or old TVs, computer monitors, large upholstered furniture or clothing. All other donations can be dropped off at the church starting after noon on Sunday 3/18 and continuing until Thursday 3/22. Drop off during the week is during office hours, and then on Thursday we will have extended drop off hours until 9 pm. Please do not drop off items on Friday.

2--PLEASE sign up to help. This is an enormous event, requiring help with set up, sale and clean up. There are all sorts of shifts to suit all schedules, so please donate a few hours of your time that week. In addition to being a great help for us, it is a wonderful time for fellowship and fun with each other, so don't miss out. A signup sheet will be posted in Wilton Hall. 3--Spread the word. There are always terrific bargains (and we mean BARGAINS) at this tag sale, so the more people that come, the more successful we will be. 100% of the money earned that day goes to support mission, so everyone benefits from this event.

Fellowship

Please join us for the MCC Book Club!

- March 18th-7:30pm The Music Shop by Rachel Joyce ~ Host: Gayle Hammond in Dineson Parlor
- April 15th-7:30pm Beneath a Marble Sky by John Shors ~ Host: Linda Fracassini in Dineson Parlor

Strawberry Festival



JAM SESSIONS-VOLUNTEERS WANTED: Believe it or not, the time is upon us to make JAM for the Strawberry Festival...and we need your help! The dates below for ready for JAM making. A JAM session should have at least 4-5 volunteers.

Saturday March 30 th 9am-12pm & 12pm-	Friday May 10 th 7pm
3pm	Saturday May 11 th 9am-12pm & 12pm-
Sunday April 28 th 12pm-3pm	3pm
Friday May 3 rd 7pm	Saturday May 18 th 9am-12pm & 12pm-
Saturday May 4 th 9am-12pm & 12pm-	3pm
4pm	Saturday June 1 st 9am-12pm & 12pm-
Sunday May 5 th 12pm-4pm	3pm

Anyone interested sign up in Wilton Hall. Let's make the 2019 Strawberry Festival a success for MCC! Thanks in advance for your help!

JAM (John Anthony Maiolo)pure destiny, I guess!

Communion Bread Recipe

On January 6th I had my Member in Discernment Covenant Signing and baked Communion Bread for the Congregation. Many of you enjoyed the bread so here is the recipe! Debi

Preheat oven to 400 degrees Bake 12-15 minutes

Mix Together:

3 cups flour - plus 1/4 cup for kneading (I use my dough hook so I don't knead)

2 tsp. baking powder

1 tsp. salt

1/2 cup vegetable oil

1/2 cup honey

1/2 cup milk

1/2 cup water

Warm honey (microwave 30 seconds on high). Mix honey, oil, milk and water together. Add to flour mixture a small amount at a time, mixing after each addition. Dough may be a bit sticky. Turn dough onto lightly floured surface (using small part of ¼ cup flour) knead and add flour as needed to have smooth, soft dough. Take approximately 1/3 of the dough and roll out to ½ inch thickness. Use pan cover approximately 7 inches in diameter to cut circle. Place cut circle on cookie sheet. Repeat with remaining two thirds of dough. Score each circle to form small squares with knife with serrated edge. Bake and then let cool about one hour. Place in plastic bag once the bread is cool to retain freshness.

This is the beloved, traditional Communion Bread which is used at Woodmont United Church of Christ in Milford, CT.



ITEMS NEEDED AT THE MONROE FOOD PANTRY

At the Monroe Food Pantry, we strive to consistently provide healthy food options for our clients. We accept and appreciate all donations, and encourage **low sodium**, **low sugar**, **low trans fat**, **vegetarian**, and **whole wheat** selections when possible.

- bread crumbs
- instant potatoes
- egg noodles, pasta
- pasta sauce
- macaroni and cheese
- healthy snack items
- hot and cold cereal
- tuna, canned chicken
- rice (brown and white)
- pancake mix and syrup
- peanut butter
- jams and jellies
- canned soup
- canned pasta
- salad dressing
- condiments
- baked beans, refried beans
- broths and stocks
- canned fruit
- canned chili
- canned tomatoes
- canned beans and vegetables

OPERATING HOURS:

Monday 2:00 PM—5:30 PM Wednesday 9:30 AM—1:00 PM Thursday 9:30 AM—1:00 PM One Saturday per month 10:00 AM—12:00 PM (please call for further details)

Monroe Food Pantry

980 Monroe Turnpike ● Monroe, Connecticut Mailing Address: 7 Fan Hill Road, Monroe, CT 06468 (203) 452-2817 foodpantry@monroect.org

Food donations can be received during regular business hours or left in the red bin on the left side of the food pantry after hours. Monetary donations and gifts cards can be received at the Food Pantry during business hours, mailed to the Monroe Food Pantry at 7 Fan Hill Road, Monroe CT 06468, or left at the Monroe Senior Center located at 235 Cutlers Farm Road, Monroe, CT 06468.

- Ensure
- juice
- hot chocolate
- baking supplies: sugar, flour, brownie and cake mix
- decaf and regular: ground coffee, instant coffee
- decaf and regular: black tea, green tea
- Hamburger Helper, Knorr products, Ramen
- household cleaning supplies
- personal hygiene products
- feminine hygiene products
- monetary donations and gift cards to purchase perishable goods, such as: milk, eggs, margarine, frozen vegetables, and fresh produce

Presenting the Broadway hit at the Downtown Cabaret Theatre in Bridgeport

The Faith & Community Award will be presented to: St. John Episcopal Church in Bridgeport For their dedication to combatting food insecurity, their partnership with The Council in pilot programming, and their multicultural mission and ministries

THURSDAY, APRIL 4, 2019

6:15pm Reception • City Lights Gallery • 265 Golden Hill St. 7:00pm Program • Cabaret Theatre • 263 Golden Hill St. 7:30pm • THE SHOW!



Reservations: Go to www.ccgb.org/springfling Contact Helen at 203-334-1121 x10 or helenyeotsas@ccgb.org

nformation about picnic dinners made by our chef and culinary students will be sent to ticketholders closer to the event

MCC Community Calendar

Week of Mar. 3rd

10:00 am Worship w/Communion 11:15 am Junior Choir (Meetinghouse) 5:00 pm Senior & Adult PF

Tues. Mar. 5th 1:30 pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Wed. Mar. 6th 11:30 - 1 pm Ashes to Go (outside Meetinghouse) 5:30 pm Labyrinth Learn & Walk (Wilton Hall) 6:30 pm "Roots & Branches" Agape Soup Supper (Wilton Hall) 7:30 pm Ash Wednesday Worship Service (Meetinghouse)

Thurs. Mar. 7th 9:30 am Bible Study (Dineson)

Fri. Mar. 8-10th Women's Retreat at Silver Lake

Week of Mar. 10th 10:00 am Worship 11:15 am Junior Choir (Meetinghouse)

5:00 pm Senior PF 6:00 pm Junior PF

Tues. Mar. 12th 1:30 pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Wed. Mar. 13th 9:30 am Retired Men's Breakfast (Dineson) 11:00 am Morning Circle (Dineson) 6:30 pm Confirmation Class 7:150 pm Adult Choir

Thurs. Mar. 14th 9:30 am Bible Study (Dineson)

Sat. Mar.16th 10:00 am Dress A Girl (Wilton Hall)

Week of Mar. 17th 10:00 am Worship 11:15 am Junior Choir (Meetinghouse) 11:30 am Lenten Journey (Wilton Hall) 5:00 pm Adult & Senior PF 6:00 pm Junior PF

Mon. Mar. 18th 7:30pm Book Club (Dineson Parlor) **Tues. Mar. 19th** 1:30 pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag 7:00 pm Bereavement Group (Dineson)

Wed. Mar. 20th 6:30 pm Confirmation Class 7:15 pm Adult Choir

Thurs. Mar. 21st 9:30 am Bible Study (Dineson)

Sat. Mar.23rd 8:00 am Tag Sale (Wilton Hall)

Week of Mar. 24th

10:00 am Worship 11:15 am Junior Choir (Meetinghouse) 11:30 am Lenten Journey (Wilton Hall) 5:00 pm Senior PF 6:00 pm Junior PF

Tues. Mar. 26th 1:30 pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Wed. Mar. 27th 6:30 pm Confirmation Class 7:15 pm Adult Choir

Thurs. Mar. 28th 9:30 am Bible Study (Dineson) 7:00pm CE Meeting (Dineson)

Sat. Mar.30th 9:00 am Jam Making (Kitchen)

Week of Mar. 31st

10:00 am Worship 11:15 am Junior Choir (Meetinghouse) 11:30 am Confirmation Field Trip 5:00 pm Senior PF

Tues. Apr. 2nd 1:30 pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Wed. Apr. 3rd 6:30 pm Confirmation Class 7:15 pm Adult Choir

Thurs. Apr. 4th 9:30 am Bible Study (Dineson)

Fr. Apr. 5th 7:30pm Faith on Tap (Location TBD)