



THE MONROE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

STEEPLE

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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
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May 1, 2019

Busy Signals



Our foster daughter came to us with a broken cell phone. Her former foster mom gave it to her, probably to quell the insistent and constant request “*Can I have a phone?*” This phone is a hot mess – the screen is shattered and the face is dark. When it is charged, it sounds an alarm at 1:30 in the afternoon. When she hears the “music” she takes the phone, lifts it to the sky and twirls in a circle.

Other than this daily reminder, the phone is about as useful as a rock. And yet, when she gets home, she searches for the last place she put it, just so she can carry it around. She walks around outside talking to it as if there is someone on the other end. She tries to take “selfie videos”, pretending she is a teenager with her own YouTube channel.

After weeks of this, I finally had the bright idea to ask her WHY she is so attached to a broken phone. “*I just want to be cool*” she said. The world has changed a lot since Clark and I parented the first time. Our oldest was a freshman in high school when we got her an “unsmart” flip phone. Our son was never too into it in the first place and only saw his phone as a tool. Our PF’ers tell me that her behavior (for a 9 year old) is normal.

I get it - our lives are busy. Our phones are busy. Our family members are busy. Our friends are busy. And our minds are busy. It makes me wonder, with all these busy signals, is there still space for the Holy Spirit break through and make a connection?

Turning off our phones may not be feasible for many of us, because they are a tool that connects us with ways we sustain and provide for ourselves and loved ones. But it’s also true that the loudest, most incessant buzzes demanding our attention can also be the least nourishing for our souls. We get used to answering them out of habit or a sense of obligation. I’m sure you can think of a few annoying and energy wasting distractions that technology has gifted us with (telemarketers come to mind!)

Perhaps it sounds mundane; but unplugging from only a few distractions can make us feel much freer. When we eliminate the unimportant, we find the time to give to that which is important, like our journey of faith, our relationship with God and other people, and appreciating and caring for this precious earth. May you, in this Eastertide, find ways to unplug and be present.

In peace, Pastor Jenn



Children are the ~~future~~ of the church RIGHT NOW

Intergenerational aka

- Cross-generational
- Multi generational
- Communal
- Experiential

Throughout Lent some of us gathered after church to explore the meaning of Communion in an all ages gathering. This gathering was such a positive experience for the group that it is one of the reasons we are having "VBS 2.0".

"God's Children at Play: too cool for school" is a summer offering for us to come together and experience Jesus and his Parables in an active and fun way.

We will be gathering on Wednesday evenings on July 24th and 31st and August 7th and 14th from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm. We will gather for dinner for half an hour then move on to storytelling, crafts, service projects, music, and MORE!

Sign-up sheets are up in Wilton Hall. You can come every night or just one or two nights. Come as you are – Come as you can! If you have any questions or would like to help, please contact me at debi@mcc-ucc.org or 203-444-6760.

Think Big; Act Bold; Be Brave! Debi

Stewardship & Budget Update from the Trustees: The 2019 Stewardship Campaign has received 92 pledges for a total of \$190,169. Unfortunately, this is \$10,000 short of the \$200,000 the congregation committed to for pledge income at the annual meeting. Members of the congregation made the observation that it would only take a little bit more from those participating to close the gap, we're not that far away from reaching the goal we set forth. Thanks to those who have increased their pledge already! If YOU are interested in increasing your 2019 pledge, or if you still want to submit a pledge, please contact John O'Rourke, MCC



Receiver at jorourke224@gmail.com. While this year's anticipated shortfall may require us to draw more funds from our investments to fill the gap - the board of trustees will continue to work with MCC leadership to find ways to increase our income, reduce our costs and grow our endowment so that the church's future will be more secure. Please reach out to the Trustees if you have any concerns or questions

Spring Workday Saturday, May 11th at 8:00 am - We have plenty of spring 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 email Dave Allen dallen9457@att.net



Elisha's Corner: *Mystery Solved*

By Gary Thompson, Church Historian

There's nothing like a good "who-done-it". The stories that ask the questions "Who"? "What"? "When"? "Where"? and "Why"? I started a little who-done-it in the March *Steeple* when discussing the pen and ink picture of the 1847 Meeting House and left you with the question, "... who is William Feeny?"



1847 Meeting House by
William D. Feeny

It's like putting a genealogy search into an historic event. So now who is he? Bill Feeny was born on April 14, 1930 in the Bellerose section of Queens, New York. He graduated from Adelphi College and became an artist. In 1958, Bill and his wife Fredrika moved to Monroe with their young family: Elizabeth, William, Edward, and Brian. According to conversations with those of you who remember them, they lived on Elm Street, near Purdy Hill Road. On December 7, 1958, the Reverend Raymond Ward received Bill and his wife as new members of our congregation, and until 1964/65 Bill served as a Deacon.

Not only was he an artist, Bill was remembered by some of you as an aviator. Flying out of the Monroe Airport, on Moose Hill Road (now a cemetery) Bill introduced many of the local teenagers to the experience of small craft flight. He is credited with organizing the Monroe Cadet Squadron of the Connecticut Civil Air Patrol. While in town he authored and had published *In Their Honor: True Stories of Fliers from Whom United States Air Force Bases Are Named*. He also illustrated this 223 page book in pen and ink. In 1969 the Feeny family moved to Madison Wisconsin where Bill joined the art faculty of Madison Area Technical College. His career success there earned him the college's Distinguished Teacher of the Year award in 1990. He retired in 1992. So that is the "Who" of our mystery story.

It was in 1964, while living in Monroe, when Bill pen and inked the picture of the 1847 Meeting House. That's the "What", "When", and "Where" of our story. So now we have all of answers to the mystery except one. All good mystery events have a motive. WHY? Two clues finally came to surface while investigating this picture; Lori Loveland's note with the picture that she sent to me and the date 1964. In that year Bill was asked, or maybe volunteered, to illustrate the cover of Lori's mother's booklet *Historic Sketch of the Monroe Congregational Church*, which she authored and had published in 1964. No doubt that is why Lori had it among her mother's files. The booklet and the cover illustration were printed to commemorate the 200th anniversary of our congregation. Now why should I have not known that to begin with? On the inside back cover of the booklet the credits indicate, "Cover artist, William D. Feeny". Later in the 1960's when the Ladies Fellowship needed a cover for their thank-you note stationary, which was sold at the Christmas Bazaars, Bill's rendering fit their need perfectly. So there you have it; mystery solved.

Keep in mind now that the definition of conviction is an unwavering strong certainty of belief, whereas convention is a current custom or traditional practice of one's belief. What is it that has raised Bill Feeny's church sketch to this level of inquiry? It is that it has become the iconic image of the congregation's Victorian era when life was, if not altogether easier, then at least more simple and refined, and when conviction still mattered more than convention.

William D. Feeny died on his birthday in Fitchburg, Wisconsin on April 14, 2007 at the exact age of seventy-seven.

Outreach



CROP Walk: May 5th from 1:30 to 4pm Join us at the CROP walk at Seaside Park and raise funds to end hunger for our brothers and sisters locally and around the world. CROP Hunger Walks help to support the overall ministry of Church World Service, especially grassroots, hunger-fighting development efforts around the world. In addition, each local CROP Hunger Walk can choose to return up to 25 percent of the funds it raises to hunger-fighting programs in its own community.

CROP Hunger Walks help to provide food and water, as well as resources that empower people to meet their own needs. From seeds and tools, to wells and water systems, to technical training and micro-enterprise loans, the key is people working together to identify their own development priorities, their strengths and their needs something CWS has learned through some 70 years of working in partnership around the world.

How it works: To join the MCC team, please take an envelope from Kathy Maiolo and start collecting donations from sponsors. If you cannot walk, but still want to participate, please sponsor a walker at coffee hour. *Please note: All contributions are tax deductible.* www.cropwalk.org

Dress A Girl Around The World Sew-A-Thon Returns May 11th from 10am- 3pm~

Join Liz Skarzyinski from Dress A Girl Around The World on September 15th 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.



One Great Hour of Sharing: Thanks to your generous donations we raised \$874. Thank you to everyone who participated!

Deacons



Celebrating All Graduates: If you or someone you love is graduating this year from high school, college, a university, graduate school, or another program, we want to recognize celebrate your achievements at the June 16, Strawberry Festival Sunday worship service! Please let the church office (secretary@mcc-ucc.org, 203-268-9327) know if you or anyone in your

family is graduating, along with the details of your degree, school, plans for future, etc. Thank you!

Strawberry Festival

Strawberry Festival



Mark your calendars for the **47th Annual Strawberry Festival June 15th & 16th**! The MCC Strawberry Festival is the single largest church fundraiser and service event, providing funds for outreach, faith formation and church events throughout the year. It presents an opportunity for us to interact with the broader community as representatives of Monroe Congregational Church and - most importantly - it's a weekend full of laughter, fun and fellowship!

Crafter Co-Chair Needed! This will be Kate Briggs' last year as co-chair of crafters. We are looking for a volunteer to help Katie Young with the 2020 Strawberry Festival. For more information and to shadow our chairs in this year's festival please contact Katie Young at ktyoung1@gmail.com.



Fellowship

Please join us for the MCC Book Club!

- ✚ **May 13th 7:30pm**-Bear Town by Fredrik Backman~Host: Arlene Redmond in Dineson Parlor
- ✚ **June 17th- 7:30pm** The German Girl by Armando Lucas Correa~Host: Paula Haggstrom in Dineson Parlor
- ✚ **July 15th-7:30pm** The Life She Was Given by Ellen Marie Wiseman~Host: Julie McClenathan in Dineson Parlor
- ✚ **August 19th-7:30pm** The Huntress by Kate Quinn~Host: TBD in Dineson Parlor



Retired Men's Breakfast-May 8th at 9:30am in Dineson Parlor. Rev. Sheldon Smith will host. Please call the church office if you need a ride. 203-268-6327

On Sunday, May 12th the Fellowship Committee invites the congregation to High Tea after worship. A sign-up sheet will be posted in Wilton Hall **Donations of the following items are needed:**

Jams (strawberry, raspberry, apricot, blueberry, blackberry)
Variety of teas
Butter
Clotted Cream
Scones
Baked goods (brownies, cake, cookies)
Finger Sandwiches
Pastries
Tea Pots (to borrow)



Morning Circle invites all the ladies of the congregation to attend our next meeting on Wednesday, May 8th at 11AM in Dineson Parlor. We will be collecting women's hygiene items for women suffering from abuse. A list of items will be forthcoming. Our June meeting will be the picnic at a place to be announced. Please contact Jackie Bleakney with any questions at 203-268-5275.



The Prayer Partner "Big Reveal" potluck luncheon is right around the corner: Sunday, May 19th at 11:15AM in Wilton Hall. The sign-up sheet is posted in Wilton Hall this Sunday. Make sure to sign up and list what you plan on bringing to share. Please keep your partner in your thoughts and prayers while we approach this event. Consider sending them a card or note in the mail using the church's address as the return letting them know that you are excited to reveal yourselves to each other. I look forward to seeing everyone over a delicious meal. Please contact Susie Cuseo with any questions at thecuseos@yahoo.com or 203-268-0280

Christian Education

May Calendars



Fruit of the Spirit

- 5th – ALL Groups Gather
- 12th – CE Celebration Sunday
- 19th – Youth Sunday
- 26th – NO Gatherings

Jr. Pilgrim Fellowship

- 5th – NO Gathering
- 12th – NO Gathering
- 19th – Gather from 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm
- 26th – NO Gathering



CE Sunday Celebration Join us on Sunday, May 12th, for our CE Sunday Celebration. On this day our children in Pre-K-8th grade will be leading worship and appreciating their teachers. After the service we will be having a celebration High Tea hosted by our Fellowship Committee. ALL are welcome to these celebrations!



Are you ready for summer Silver Lake is all about life-changing ministry for children and youth in 4th-12 grades where they encounter God's love in creation. Check out the [2019 Summer Conference Brochure](#) and start thinking about which conference you might attend. There is an **Open House** **scheduled for Sunday, May 19th, from 1:00-5:00 pm.** During the Open

House you can tour on foot or hay ride, see the cabins and other buildings, check out the ropes course and the waterfront! It's a chance to "know before you go"!!! Contact Silver Lake Conference Center at 860-364-5526 or www.silverlakect.org for registration and scholarship information. Please speak with Debi M-K or Pastor Jenn if you have any questions.

Michele Cardentey's Morning Glory Muffins

First Sampled at Silver Lake on Women's Retreat, March 2019

PREHEAT OVEN TO 350

WARM

3 cups of honey

1 ½ cups of melted butter

POUR OVER

1 cup of shredded coconut

1 cup of uncooked quick oats

1 cup of raisins/craisins

1 cup of grated carrots

2 grated apples

Optional – 1 cup of nuts



ADD

2 cups of orange juice

2 eggs

1 tbsp Vanilla

MIX DRY INGREDIENTS

4 cups of flour

1 tsp of salt

1 tbsp of baking powder

1 tbsp of baking soda

1 tbsp of cinnamon

MIX WET INGREDIENTS INTO DRY INGREDIENTS

Bake 15-20 minutes

Makes about 4 dozen regular sized muffins

MCC Community Calendar

Wed. May 1st

6:30 pm Confirmation (Spaduccino's)
7:15 pm Adult Choir

Thurs. May 2nd

9:30 am Bible Study (Dineson)

Fri. May 3rd

7:00 pm Jam Making (kitchen)

Sat. May 4th

9:00am Jam Making (Kitchen)

Week of May 5th

New Member Sunday

10:00 am Worship w/Communion

12:00 pm Jam Making (Kitchen)

1:30 pm Crop Walk

4:00 pm Senior PF

6:00 pm Adult PF

Tues. May 7th

1:30 pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Wed. May 8th

9:30 am Retired Men's Breakfast

11:00 am Morning Circle

6:30 pm Confirmation Class

7:15 pm Adult Choir

Thurs. May 9th

9:30 am Bible Study (Dineson)

Fri. May 10th

7:00 pm Jam Making (kitchen)

Sat. May 11th

8:00 am Spring Clean Up (MCC Campus)

9:00 am Jam Making (kitchen)

10:00 am Dress A Girl (Wilton Hall)

Week of May 12th

Baptism of Elizabeth Francis

10:00 am Children's Sunday Worship

11:15 am High Tea (Wilton Hall)

Mon. May 13th

7:30 pm MCC Book Club (Dineson Parlor)

Tues. May 14th

1:30 pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Wed. May 15th

6:30 pm Confirmation Class

7:15 pm Adult Choir

Thurs. May 16th

9:30 am Bible Study (Dineson)

Sat. May 18th

7:00 pm Jam Making (kitchen)

Youth Sunday Rehearsal (time TBD)

Week of May 19th

Youth Sunday

10:00 am Worship

11:15am Prayer Partner Potluck Lunch (Wilton)

5:00 pm Adult PF

6:00 pm Junior PF

Mon. May 20th

7:30 pm Council Meeting (Dineson Parlor)

Tues. May 21st

1:30 pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

7:00 pm Bereavement Group (Dineson Parlor)

Wed. May 22nd

6:00 pm Confirmation Dinner (Wilton Hall)

7:15 pm Adult Choir

Thurs. May 23rd

9:30 am Bible Study (Dineson)

Week of May 26th

10:00 am Worship

2:00 pm Senior PF in the Park

6:00 pm Junior PF

Mon. May 27th

Office Closed in Observance of Memorial Day

Tues. May 28th

1:30 pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Wed. May 29th

7:15 pm Adult Choir

Thurs. May 30th

9:30 am Bible Study (Dineson)

Sat. June 1

9:00 am Jam Making in the Kitchen

Week of June 2nd

3rd Graders Receive Communion

10:00 am Worship

5:00 pm Adult PF & Senior PF

6:00 pm Junior PF

Tues. June 4th

1:30 pm Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Wed. June 5th

7:15 pm Adult Choir

Thurs. June 6th

9:30 am Bible Study (Dineson)

Fri. June 7th

7:30 pm Faith on Tap (Location TBD)