

34 Church Street
Monroe, CT 06468
Tel.: (203) 268-9327
Fax: (203) 268-3153
www.mcc-ucc.org

Office Hours: Mon. 9am – 5:30pm Wed. (remotely) 8am - 6pm Fri. 9am – 3:30pm

Senior Pastor: Rev. Jennifer Gingras
Music Director: Will Duchon
Administrator/Bookkeeper: Diane Prall
Church e-mail: secretary@mcc-ucc.org

Find us on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/monroecongregationalchurchucc>



THE MONROE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
STEEPLE

August 1, 2024

Catching Up

Recently, I've been recruited to be the Fairfield East Association's Registrar. I'm following a 25-year volunteer in this role, which is only slightly terrifying. The role includes serving as an executive officer, a co-signer on the bank account, main communicator between our closest 20 sister churches, and holder of clergy/church records.

So now, I've inherited 8 file boxes and have no place to put them but the side of my office. I'm not complaining. It's an honor to serve and I've missed being involved deeper in the life of the Association. It will take time to get to know my way around the files, but I'll get there.

About 5 years ago, our historian Gary had a great idea about starting a Victorian Christmas Fair. We'd begin with a historical service with some exciting afternoon events like a hayride and roaming carolers. But an ice storm thwarted our plans. And then, there was a global pandemic that upended in-person gatherings for a time.

Looking around at all our local community has to offer, Gary and I felt it was a good idea to try it again on Sunday, December 1st from 1-5. What makes our event stand out is that we hope to take our guests back in time. Some of the things we're planning are hayrides around the green, roaming carolers, some local crafters selling seasonal items, a Victorian model Train set display, children's games and crafts of the period, and much more.

Please know that our intention is NOT to exhaust everyone with just another fundraiser. Our HOPE is to increase awareness of our church in the community and offer something both fun and educational to do on the first Sunday of Advent. Be sure to read his article later in the Steeple to see how you might get involved. And stay tuned for more opportunities to get to know each other this fall.

Fellowship is planning a Homecoming Picnic on September 15th at Wolfe Park, and a Barn Dance/Pumpkin Carving Event in October (with a professional caller!).

Deacons is looking forward to the first Blessing of the Animals Service on September 29th. Outreach is planning their Wine Tasting for late Sep/Early Oct and their Spaghetti & BINGO night in November. There are so many great things to get involved with at MCC!

Have a restful rest of your summer!

Peace and blessings, Pastor Jenn



Diane is scheduled for vacation on Mondays throughout the summer. She will continue to work from home on Wednesdays where she will receive your voicemail and e-mail messages. **The church office will be open on Fridays.** Thank you!



So you want to join the church?

Join us August 25th for a light lunch and informational meeting at 11 am in Dineson Parlor.

New Members will join during worship Sunday, Sep 8

Trustees



The **Monroe Summer Day Camp** will be renting our MCC campus again this year. The camp will provide added income for the church during the months of June, July and August. If you need to enter the building between 7:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday – Friday please stop into the office and ask Diane to notify the camp director. **If the office is closed, please use the walkie-talkie provided to notify the camp director, Karen, of your presence.** Thank you!



Flowers for Worship: Would you like to honor or remember a loved one, or celebrate a milestone? You can do so, while also helping Monroe Congregational Church continue its tradition of fresh **flowers** on the communion table. You can sign-up in Wilton Hall or online! You may choose to arrange flowers from your garden, purchase an arrangement, or send a check (\$25) to Monroe Congregational Church (memo: "flowers" & the date) or use our website to pay online, and we will order for you. If you are supplying the flowers yourself, please set them up between 9:30am and 9:45am, before worship. Thank you!
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C48ADAC2CA5FEC61-flowers>
or MCC-UCC.org

Christian Education



Love working with youth, want to spread God's love to the children of our congregation in this upcoming **24/25 school year**? **Please consider teaching Sunday School (Pre k - 6th) or being an adult advisor for our Jr PF youth group (ages 11-14).** You can speak to Jeanette with any questions or to express interest. Thank you! See you in the fall!

Outreach



Heifer International supports families worldwide by using your spare change to make a change in their lives. Purchases of livestock or plants financially support families who turn around and then spreads the wealth, thereby, creating a more self-sustainable community. Find the donation bottle on the serving table at coffee hour. Your change will go

a long way in helping those who have no means to make a better living. Contact Susie Cuseo at thecuseos@yahoo.com or 203-268-0280 with any questions.

St George's MEAL PACK

8/11
AFTER
WORSHIP

CHURCH
KITCHEN



Come help Outreach get meals ready
for our hungry Bridgeport neighbors! Cash
donations gratefully accepted at coffee hour.
All are welcome!

Fellowship



MCC Summertime Coffee Hour Hosts: Are you interested in providing refreshments for our church members and friends following Sunday worship! All you need to do is arrive at the kitchen by 9:45 to get the coffee going (instructions found on kitchen wall). Providing baked goods or other snacks are always welcome (but not mandatory). Please sign up in Wilton Hall. (Although one can do it, it's fun to serve with a friend). Thank you!

HOMECOMING PICNIC

Come enjoy a nice meal, fun & games
and reconnect with your church family!

12-4pm September 15, 2024 at Wolfe Park



SAVE THE DATE

Bring a salad or dessert to share. Drinks, hot dogs,
hamburgers and veggie burgers will be provided.

Summer BOOK CLUB

New summer dates! **3rd Thursday of the month.** We will continue to meet via zoom so that all members can join from wherever they may be. Questions can be sent to Paula via email pjsh55@gmail.com or home phone or 203-452-0850.

The book club selections for upcoming months:

August 22nd at 7pm - The Only Woman in the Room by Marie Benedict

September 18th at 7 pm- Tom Lake by Ann Patchett

October 16th at 7pm - On Beauty by Zadie Smith



Save the date: Young at Heart will meet Thurs., August 22 at noon.
Bill Brett coordinator (203)270-1053 wrbmjb@sbcglobal.net
Location TBD



Do you know what a Prayer Partner is? It's the easiest thing to do. All that's required is filling out an information form that can be found in Wilton Hall at the end of August. In a few weeks you will receive someone else's information in the mail. Use that form to approach them during coffee hour and strike up a conversation, pass them the peace at service or send them a card or note in the mail signed "Your Prayer Partner" using the

church's address (34 Church St Monroe CT 06468) as the return. This is all done anonymously until next May 2025 when we hold the "Big Reveal" potluck luncheon in Wilton Hall. It only takes a few seconds out of your busy schedule to think of your prayer partner and wish them the best for the day. Be in the comfort that someone else is praying for you. Please contact Susie Cuseo at thecuseos@yahoo.com or 203-268-0280 with any questions.



Morning Circle will not meet in August. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, September 11 at 11am in Wilton Hall. These ladies work hard on service projects like Church World Service, Heifer International and the Food Pantry. They provide bean soups, birthday bags, Trick-or-Treat bags and women's hygiene products for the Pantry. They also support the town's Giving Tree program with their generosity. Join them every second Wednesday of the month with the exception of January, February, July and August. Please contact Shari Carrano at 475-342-8145 with any questions, comments or concerns.



Did you miss the Panera Bread fundraiser in June? Well, you have another opportunity to support the refurbishing plan for Dineson Parlor which is used by many groups. Mark your calendars for Saturday, September 21 from 4-8PM. Use a promotion code for online orders any time of that day or at checkout at the Monroe location (205 Monroe Turnpike) when ordering at the counter or kiosk. With your purchase, 25% will go to help brighten up the parlor with new furniture that will stand up to lots of years of use by so many people. Please contact Susie Cuseo at thecuseos@yahoo.com or 203-268-0280 with any questions.

Historian's Notebook ~ Victorian Christmas Fair

Following worship on July 21 a dozen or so of our congregation members gathered in Dineson Parlor for a kick-off meeting to plan and organize a Victorian Christmas Fair for December 1st from 1-5 pm. Everyone's input was appreciated, and we are cautiously optimistic that this new fundraiser will indeed take place this year. Initial activities include a Victorian Advent Worship service, renting space to (at least) eight local crafters in Wilton Hall, offering a horse or tractor drawn hayride around the Green and a Victorian model train exhibit in Dineson Parlor. We also hope to offer period crafts and games for children's hands-on participation. Roaming carolers *Just Voices* will perform. PF's will have an opportunity to sell Christmas wreaths and possibly more, the Mustard Seed Shoppe may be open for business, and historical tours will be offered in the Meetinghouse.



What food will be for sale needs more planning! Soup, bread and light sandwiches have been suggested, along with scones, gingerbread and Wassel, and white fruitcake loafs. We need a Refreshments leader to figure out what to produce and serve. Our hope is that whatever is made in the kitchen will be "simple" to put together and be sold in Wilton Hall.

A number of volunteers will be needed to help plan, set up, serve and break down the event, so look for signup sheets this fall. In the meantime, please speak with Gary or Pastor Jenn if you have any great ideas and please hold Sunday, December 1st, after worship service until 5:00 p.m. open. Set-ups and baking or cooking may take place the days before the event. The Community Tree Lighting with St. Peter's Grace will culminate the event at 5 pm on the Green, followed by a reception at St. Peter's Grace where hot chocolate and snacks will be served. That is the developing plan for now. Please consider joining our team by volunteering to lead or volunteer in one of the below areas.

1. Crafters: Pastor Jenn & Lisa Bauerle
2. Refreshments: OPEN
3. Victorian Train Display: Bill Brett
4. Horse Carriage / Hay Wagon rides: Glenn Brigham
5. Children's Games: OPEN
6. Children's crafts: Susie Cuseo (ornaments) & Cheri Irwin (gingerbread)
7. Liaison to Lions Club Christmas Drive: Jessica Pfalzgraf
8. Music: Mike Pellegrino/Mike Pfalzgraf for Just Voices
9. Town Permits: Frank Wittenauer
10. Advertising: Pastor Jenn
11. Decorations & Signs: OPEN
12. Logistics: Lisa Bauerle & Jessica Pfalzgraf
13. Meeting House Greeters: Susie Cuseo
14. Liaison to Monroe Historical Society: Gary Thompson
15. White Elephant/Kid's Gift Shop: OPEN

Historically faithful, Gary Thompson



Update
Contact Info

David Walker
(203) 913-9690
Dave.Walker.CT@gmail.com

*A heartfelt
Thank You* ❤️

Marian Schmitz would like to send "a message of gratitude to all the MCC members for their love, support and care through prayer, cards, calls and visits during my latest health challenges. They mean so much to me."
In Christian Love, Marian

Community

Your Are Invited To Join MCC at

Arts In The Park

FREE SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

Get ready to soak up the small town vibes and relish the joy of the great outdoors! **Bring a picnic dinner or snacks, wear a red shirt and find us!**

We can't wait to share these wonderful summer nights with you! **All shows start at 7:30 pm at Wolfe Park in Monroe.**

- 6/28 Raise Your Hands
- 7/19 Psychedelic Relics
- 7/26 Creative Music Studio Showcase
- 8/2 Mass Conn Fusion Band
- 8/9 Simply Swifties Band



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Monroe is part of the Health Improvement Alliance (HIA). Formed in 2003, the HIA helps to address the health needs of Bridgeport, Easton, Fairfield, Milford, Monroe, Stratford, and Trumbull.

As part of the HIA, Monroe is participating in the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). The CHNA is used to understand the current health of our community as well as to identify priorities for future program planning and funding. Throughout town and on our social media pages, we are currently promoting our community members to participate in the CHNA by completing a brief, voluntary survey. The responses

collected will guide us, as your Health Department, in properly addressing unmet health-related needs in Monroe.

This survey closes at the end of August. If you have not already completed the survey, you can do so by clicking here: [2024 Community-Based Assets and Needs Survey \(surveymonkey.com\)](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2024CBANS). If you have already completed the survey, we thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts.

Please consider sharing the link with others in the community! <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2024CBANS>

In addition to completing the survey, **we are seeking 15 individuals** from our town's various community groups and organizations to form a focus group. This focus group will meet once, in-person, this fall. During this focus group meeting, we will discuss the results of the survey as well as engage in in-depth discussions on community health, behavioral health, social determinants of health, access to care, and other issues to help direct future programming.

If you are interested in joining this focus group, please email kmccarthy@monorect.gov. I look forward to hearing your valuable input on where we, as your health department, can strive to better meet your health needs!

Kelsi McCarthy
Sanitarian/Health Program Planner I
Town of Monroe
7 Fan Hill Road
Monroe, CT 06468



Happy August Birthday to the following people
and to anyone we may have missed we will keep you in our prayers.

Brian	Campbell	08/02	Danielle	Rooney	08/12
Karen	Coffey	08/02	Van	Smith	08/12
Margery	Fox	08/02	Heather	Hisey	08/13
Beverly	Shaffer	08/02	Donna	Konkol	08/13
Kate	Briggs	08/04	Franklin	Renz	08/13
Nick	Caballero	08/04	Kelsey	Kaminski	08/14
James	Halloran	08/04	Mary	Renz	08/15
Lisa	Bauerle	08/04	Donald	Whiteley	08/16
Tyler	Zalenski	08/05	Mary	Unger	08/19
Jeff	Vargovchik	08/07	Daniel	Hyde	08/22
Jenn	Nealon	08/08	Eva	Viggiano	08/22
Anthony	Prall	08/08	George	Cunningham	08/24
Sophina	Gingras	08/09	Richard	Draus	08/24
Bella	Pinto	08/11	Jennifer	Wissink	08/25
Wendy	Colegrove	08/12	Nicole	Malia	08/28
Amy	O'Rourke	08/12	Sue	Waters	08/28



Happy August Wedding Anniversary the following couples and to anyone we may have missed, we will keep you in our prayers. (Number is anniversary date)

Jack & Linda Fracassini⁽⁰⁵⁾ Tom & Carol Kelly⁽⁰⁵⁾ Cliff & Susie Cuseo⁽⁰⁵⁾
 Joe & Betsy Gilberti⁽⁰⁹⁾ Heather & Chris Hisey⁽¹⁹⁾ Manny & Michelle Cardentey⁽²¹⁾
 Kenneth & Nancy Olofson⁽²²⁾ and Rob & Kelsey Kaminski⁽²⁴⁾
 and Kristen Prall & Nicholas Boronski⁽²⁹⁾

In Our Prayers

Alison Abrams (Jessica Pfalzgraf's sister); **Allie** (Colegrove's friend); **Jennifer Bittar** (Lorraine Zeiner's friend); **Jackie Bleakney; Byron Brown & Bruce Bryant** (friends of Will Duchon); **Lori Cimeno** (Peggy & Ron Villani's Daughter); **Kevin Daly** (Gary Thompson's friend); **Dawn** (Donna Konkol's Friend); **John Dominic** (Pfalzgraf's neighbor); **Dot Dralus; Matt Duchon; Elaine** (Wendy Colegrove's Aunt); **Bruno Forte** (Nancy Hedine's friend); **David Fischman** (Sue Granello's Friend); **Dave Fuller** (Gail Olson's brother); **Lehre Fuller** (Gail Olson's sister-in-law); **Bryan Garvin** (Mike Pfalzgraf's cousin); **Holly Hallgren; Mary & Rachel Heerema** (Julia Gutierrez's mom & sister); **Brad Heines** (Susie Cuseo's friend); **Bob Heffernan** (Ann Zeiner's son-in-law); **Heather Henning; Brian Hopkins** (Donna Konkol's cousin); **Vera James** (Jenn Wissink's mother); **Jonathan** (Matt Colegrove's brother); **Kelti** (friend of Liska Gutierrez); **Monica Lynch** (Bethany Dupuis' friend); **Nicole Malia; Betty McKeown** (Donna Konkol's mother); **Mike** (Janie Allen's son); **Jean Moffat; Olivia Morrison** (Donna Nickdow's niece); **Joe Mumper** (Julie McClenathan's friend); **Pat Nugent; Ocampo family** (friends of Liska Gutierrez); **Nancy Olofson; Missy & Gail Olson; Dean Perosino** (Gayle Hammond's brother); **Josh Post; P.T. Philip** (Liz Sampson's father); **Regina Roberts** (Kathy Maiolo's niece); **Alfredo Rodriguez** (Osirus Gutierrez's cousin); **Noah Santiago** (Shari Carrano's great-grandson); **Carlos Serrano** (Kathy Maiolo's cousin); **Yessika Siccardi** (Sampson family friend); **Ed Simonovich** (Nancy Hedine's friend); **Bernie Sippin; Gary Sippin** (Lori Sippin's son); **John Skarupa** (Barb Pellegrino's brother); **Sheldon & Nancy Smith; Christine Stadler; Christian & Dain Steiner** (Julie McClenathan's nephews); **Claire Stenzel** (June & Myron Winger's granddaughter); **Wayne Thompson** (Gary Thompson's brother); **Richard Turco** (Jack Fracassini's cousin); **June Wilkes; June Winger; Don Whiteley; Charles L. Wynn, Sr.** (and his mother) **Alleane** (friend of Will Duchon); **Allen Zeiner** (Ann Zeiner's son); **Ann Zeiner**

The concerns of our world: The people of **Ukraine** and the **Middle East; LGBTQ+ children and their families** facing discrimination; those who serve or live in **war or conflict zones** around the world; **first responders** and those who serve in **law enforcement**; those who suffer **discrimination**; those who struggle with **mental illness, addiction, divorce or separation; Caregivers**; the **homeless, homebound and refugees.**

Those serving in the military, veterans & their families:

Stateside: **Lt. Col. Rachel Hoffman**, Tacoma, Washington (Vaughan Askue's daughter) **Justin Riffard**, Pensacola Naval Air Station, **Zachary Gingras**, 395th Combat Sustainability Support, **Joel Smith**, 250th Engineering Company **Chris Meneses** (Lorraine Zeiner's friend)

Kuwait: **Jon Sanchez** (Don Whiteley's grandson-in-law)

August MCC Community Calendar

Pastor Jenn Vacation, Aug. 18 - 24

Fri. Aug 2nd

7:30 pm Arts in the Park Meetup

Pastor Jenn Vacation, Aug. 4 - 10

Week of Sun. Aug 4th

Communion Carra McFadden,
Guest Preacher

10:00 am Worship

11:30 am Trustees

Mon. Aug 5th

Diane on Vacation - Office Closed

5:30 pm Outreach Planning (K.
Allen's Home)

Tue. Aug 6th

9:30 am Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Fri. Aug 9th

7:30 pm Arts in the Park Meetup

Week of Sun. Aug 11th

10:00 am Worship

11:00 Pack St. George's Supper

Mon. Aug 12th

Diane on Vacation - Office Closed

3:00 St George's Supper

7:30 pm Deacons (zoom)

Tue. Aug 13th

9:30 am Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Week of Sun. Aug 18th

Guest Preacher, Jim Hisey

10:00 am Worship

Mon. Aug 19th

Diane on Vacation - Office Closed

6:00 pm Council Planning

Tue. Aug 20th

9:30 am Mustard Seed Sort & Tag

Thur. Aug 22nd

12:00 pm Young @ Heart

6:00 pm Bell Choir

7:00 pm Book Club

Sat. Aug 24th

1:30 pm Jr PF Picnic (Morales'
Home)

Week of Sun. Aug 25th

10:00 am Worship

11:15 New Member Informational
(Dineson)

Mon. Aug 26th

Diane on Vacation - Office Closed

Tue. Aug 27th

9:30 am Mustard Seed Sort & Tag