United Methodist Church of Monroe



MARCH 2018

"Sing lustily and with a good courage. Beware of singing as if you were half dead, or half asleep; but lift up your voice with strength ... Above all sing spiritually. Have an eye to God in every word you sing."

From "Directions for Singing" from John Wesley, 1761

Did you know that there are directions for singing at the front of *The United Methodist Hymnal*? Did you ever wonder why we sing different songs on different Sundays? Do some of them make you cringe? Do some of them make you want to get up and dance?

Music is an extremely important part of our worship experience and is not something that is done willy-nilly. When we plan our worship services we take great care in selecting hymns that complement the theme. Each week we strive to have the prayers, scripture readings, messages and music connect. The Worship Committee hopes that through this we each will be enriched, we will grow, and we will glorify God.

When we have "an eye to God" something happens. It isn't about how we sound and about hitting all the right notes. When we sing lustily and as it says in Psalm 98, 'Make a joyful noise to the Lord," the Holy Spirit gets a hold of us and begins a transformation. Now, that isn't to say that we aren't to use our God given gifts. For those who have been gifted with a beautiful voice, the ability to read music and/or play an instrument, wonderful—please use them to the glory of God—you will definitely enhance our worship service. But for the rest of us, don't let that hold you back. Sing out!

Take time to read the words of the hymns that are chosen. Come early to worship and look them over before the start of service to familiarize yourself with them. Pull them up on YouTube after service and listen again. Re-read the scripture passages and the prayers and see if you can discern a deeper meaning.

Back in 2000 the United Methodist Church released a supplement hymnbook, *The Faith We Sing*, and we have been using songs in this book in addition to the full hymnal in worship. In 2011 another supplement, *Worship and Song*, was published. We sang our first hymn from there on February 18th. Introducing new hymns or new tunes to "old hymns" is a way for us to grow in our faith and to meet the needs of all of God's children. When we introduce a new hymn we will try to do so gradually or repeatedly so that you get to know it. If we decide that we like this hymnal we will seek to purchase them.

And even if you don't love a hymn we sing try to follow John Wesley's rules (come early and read all of them before service next Sunday) because as is attributed to St. Augustine, "He who sings, prays twice." And hey, the more prayers the better, right?

In Christ's Service and Love,







Holy Week Worship





Holy Week services will be held nightly March 26 -30 at 7:00 pm with a special service on Good Friday. Communion will be served on Thursday, March 29. Easter Sunday services will be held on Sunday, April 1, at 10:00 am. Stay tuned for more info about a Sunrise Service.

Waterman Scholarship **Fund**



The Waterman Scholarship Fund (WSF), a trust fund of the United Methodist Church of Monroe, was established in 1982 by UMC Monroe member Ray Waterman in memory of his wife, Mary As Mary was a teacher, the Waterman. Watermans were very supportive of youth activities within the church and of education, in particular. Therefore, the original intent of the fund was to award post-secondary education scholarships to outstanding student members of UMCM. It was also intended by Ray that the value of the fund should increase over its lifetime. Subsequent to Ray's passing, the scholarships have been awarded in the memory of both Ray and Mary Waterman.

The office is accepting applications from those wishing to be considered as a recipient of a scholarship this year (typically our high school seniors). The deadline is May 15, 2018. Please contact the office for an application.

Let's Celebrate March!



03/01 Steven Moore

03/02 Daniel Florin

03/02 Griffin Reynolds

03/04 Brenda Pantalone

03/10 Tori Hagopian

03/12 Patti Early

03/15 Steve Wallace

03/25 Leah Brantley

03/27 Gail Mas

03/29 Patty Hornak



happy birthday



03/08 Betsy and Carl Sword 03/20 Dotti and Lee Hossler

happy anniversary

Please submit additions and corrections to the birthday and anniversary list to the office at umc@umcmonroe.org or 203.268.8395. don't want to miss anyone! Thanks!

Seeking Coffee Hour Hosts

It's a wonderful way to support fellowship! Sign up using our new online SignUpGenius registration process -- visit our website and click on the coffee cup and you're ready to host a coffee hour! All of the basics are supplied including coffee, tea, sugar and paper goods. Coffee making instructions are in the kitchen. As host we ask that you make the coffee, heat the tea water, supply the creamer and juice and clean up. Snacks and sweets are not required unless you'd like to provide them. Please consider taking a Sunday and sign up today!



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UPCOMING EVENTS

Friendship Circle returns on Monday mornings, March 5 and 19 at 10:30 am in Meeting Room 1. All are welcome to join us ... and don't forget to bring a lunch! Contact: Lynn Gregory





Blood Pressure Screenings

Heather Henning, Town of Monroe's Public Health Nurse, will be conducting free blood pressure screenings on Sunday, March 11 after worship/during coffee hour.

Social Issues Discussion Group

Join us for a forum where concerned believers discuss their views on various social issues. The discussion is truly open with no agenda or curriculum to follow. Our next meeting is March 18 at 11:30 am in Meeting Room 1. Moderator: David York.





Lenten Fish Fry Dinners

First United Methodist Church of Shelton (188 Rocky Rest Road, Shelton) welcomes all to their dinners on Friday nights, February 16 – March 23 from 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm. They're serving up their famous baked or fried cod, choice of potatoes, pasta, homemade coleslaw, and dessert. No reservations needed. First come first serve, dine in or take out!

\$16 for adults, \$14 for seniors (60+) and \$6 for Children 12 and under.

Contact the church office at 203.929.3537 for more details or visit their website at www.umcshelton.org. Proceeds will support the church's ministries and missions.

If God seems far away, guess who moved.



Two Planks: 2018 Season

Altar Boyz May 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20

Generation Bridge - What is it? What do you want from me?

It's a community event for anyone 35+ years of age dealing with important life questions around life's challenges. Wow - that's vague ... ok, if you are evaluating important healthcare decisions for yourself or loved ones, you should go. If you are planning for retirement or are organizing legal plans (i.e., estate planning) for yourself or loved ones, you should go. If you want information about leading a healthier lifestyle (nutrition, physical and mental fitness) you should go.



We have experts from our area coming in to talk about relevant topics like downsizing, conversations between parents and children for health and financial topics, medical questions and developing an age Friendly approach to "life." The \$20 ticket may not buy a dinner, but could provide you with meaningful answers and strategies to life's challenges that can reduce stress by being "ready."

The topics are growing as we speak but up to the date information can be found on the website at www.generation-bridge.com or on the FaceBook page @generationbridgeUMCMonroe. You can register from there or reach out to Darlene Dobler-Palin or Brian Sherwood via email at generationbridge@umcmonroe.org.





Life Stages Meetings

All are welcome (and needed!) to join us for bi-weekly *Life Stages Meetings* to prepare for our *Generation Bridge* event on Saturday, April 21 from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm at Masuk High School. Meetings are scheduled for Thursday evenings, March 8 and March 22 (and beyond) at 7:00 pm in Meeting Room 1. Contacts: Brian Sherwood and Darlene Dobler-Palin.

Big Y Education Express is Here and EVERYONE can participate!

Do you have children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews or even neighbors? You can support their school by signing up for Education Express.

Education Express is a Family Program to help local schools get FREE, much needed supplies and equipment! If you are a Big Y shopper, remember to sign up for the Education Express program where you can earn points for your favorite school.



Sign up online by going to http://www.bigy.com/rs/educationexpress and click on "Join Education Express". Then, log in or create your own account and choose your school. You can earn points for your school when you purchase participating products. Then, your school redeems points for needed equipment and supplies!

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MISSIONS





UMC Monroe scored BIG during our Food Pantry Football season! Thanks to everyone's hard work and outstanding play we put 3 touchdowns on the board by scoring 213+ food items and +/-\$200 for the Monroe Food Pantry. Way to go TEAM!!!!

Thanks to our youth for hosting the annual "souper" tailgate luncheon and for continuing our tradition of taking up collections for those in need ... a real celebration of our hard-fought games.

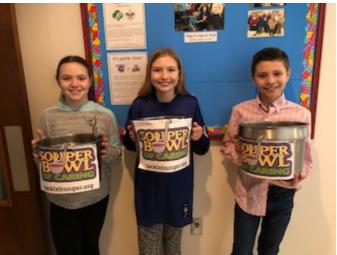
A special thanks to Tanya for grounds and maintenance on the field of play and her scorekeeping for our neighbors. And we couldn't have done it without Coach Rose ... for keeping our eye on the ball with her weekly (and witty) pep talks – thank you!

While the whistle blew on our Food Pantry Football season, our ministry of food donations to our neighbors never ends. Our mini-missions wagon is always available to accept your donations — each month we feature needed food.













MISSIONS



Week 3 Results: Battle of the Backfield

Blitzin' Bakers vs. Special Team Toppers

SCORE: 18 - 19 ... we scored our first touchdown and the ball went back to the 1-yard line looking

for another score!





Photo credit: Tanya Lennon

Week 4 Results: The BIG Game - Souper Bowl of Caring

Lean and Mean Chicken Broths and Soups vs. Tough and Gruff Beef Broths and Soups

SCORE: 75 – 37 (our second score and the extra point was good!)





Photo credit: Tanya Lennon



UMC MONROE YOUTH NEWS



All high school youth welcome! First United Methodist Church, Shelton

Friday, April 20 – Sunday, April 22

An Emmaus weekend offers young people of high school age a short course in the Christian way of life. Those who come to an Emmaus weekend experience Christian community and a time of reflection and insight into their own lives. There is uplifting music, a chance to meet and get to know new friends, opportunity to know oneself, others, and God on a deeper level, and to share the joyful and loving relationship that is central to the Christian experience. If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about Emmaus, please contact Pastor Martha, Patti, Bill or Kathy.



March Youth Group Meetings

Sunday, March 11 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm Sunday, March 25 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm

March Confirmation Classes

 Sunday, March 4
 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm

 Sunday, March 11
 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm

 Sunday, March 18
 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm

 Sunday, March 25
 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Friends are always welcome - no need for them to belong to our church!!



This just in ...

Will and Matt Steese were caught picking up luminary bags that had been buried under the snow along the driveway.



... A BIG THANKS TO THEM!!

Who will be *caught* next?

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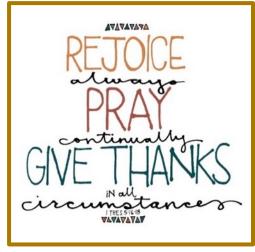
Calling all Prayer Angels!

Friday, April 20 - Sunday, April 22, 2018 First United Methodist Church, Shelton

We've been preparing for South Central Emmaus Weekend XXXIX and it is only a few weeks away! UMC Monroe's Jordyn Harris, Juliana Epstein and Bill and Kathy Schmalkuche are serving "on team."

Please consider being one of our Prayer Angels! A great deal of prayer goes into each Emmaus weekend. While participants are on the retreat, our Prayer Angels lift them and the weekend itself, up in prayer. Your prayer is a wonderful gift to each person on this Emmaus weekend.

To choose a day and time, visit our website www.umcmonroe.org and click on the Emmaus Prayer Angels button or sign up on the registration sheets in our attendance booklets. Include your email and we'll send you a reminder of the day(s)/time(s) you selected a few days before the weekend. Questions? Please contact Patti, Bill or Pastor Martha.



Our weekend scripture



Give back what you're giving up!

In keeping with the season of Lent, our mini-missions theme for March is *Give back what you are giving up*. If you are giving up a non-perishable food during Lent, please donate that item to the Monroe Food Pantry by placing your items in the narthex wagon. Or donate the cash (through the office) that you would have spent on those items or perishable items so the Pantry can purchase needed food. For example, if you give up that daily stop at Dunkin' Donuts or Starbucks, you could purchase coffee to donate or the cash you would have spent at those locations. If what you are giving up is based on using up your time, (ie watching TV, playing video games), you could donate items based on the minutes or hours you aren't spending *on those activities*. Any questions can be directed to a Missions Team member.



** Are you having fun with our monthly mini-missions themed collections? Do you have an idea that would make a great collection theme? Sign up for a month and help us get creative with our mini missions! Visit the church website for the link to the sign-up page to select your month. **



Add smile.amazon.com to your Our browser's bookmarks! AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support the United Methodist Church of Monroe every time you shop, at no cost to you. Visit our website for a link to AmazonSmile. Be sure to complete the one-time setup by selecting *United Methodist Church of Monroe (EIN: 06-6034463)* and the church will receive donations for qualifying purchases anytime you shop on smile.amazon.com. For more information, please visit our website and search *AmazonSmile* or contact Steve Arnold or Kathy Schmalkuche.



1-2-3 ... say "cheese!"



Lunch with Marilyn ...

What a special afternoon visiting with Marilyn and her daughter Renee. We shared lunch and lots of laughs! Marilyn promised that they would join us for worship *very* soon!





Pedals, Pipes & Pizza Kids explore the King of Instruments – the PIPE ORGAN!

Dan participated in The *Greater Bridgeport Chapter of the American Guild of Organists' Pedals, Pipes & Pizza* event at St. Mary's RC Church in Milford on Saturday, February 3. Youth experienced a fun day of exploring the "King of Instruments," the pipe organ, and then had an opportunity to share their talents by playing a song of their choosing on the organ. Dan treated everyone to the theme song of NBC's popular TV series, *The Office.* Way to go Dan!!

Photo credit: Bill Florin

Remember during the winter season ... Register for inclement weather alerts!



Enroll for text and/or email alerts if you would like to receive notice when UMCM is closed or activities cancelled. Go to our website, click on "Resources", then "Inclement Weather", then "NBC CT Storm Alerts" in the last sentence. It will take you directly to the enrollment page. For breaking news: (1) Tune in to NBC WVIT, CBS WFSB or ABC WTNH; (2) Visit our website at www.umcmonroe.org, or (3) Check our Facebook page @umcmonroe. Be prepared!



Sing-a-Long at Atria

On Sunday, January 28, we shared a fun afternoon at a sing-a-long with Jeanne and her friends at Atria. From patriotic songs to Broadway show tunes to "special requests" ... we covered them all! We appreciated the audience participation, too! Looking forward to doing it again SOON!

















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Valentines for Vets

On Sunday, January 28, our congregation (with an additional "boost" from our Youth Group) made more than 40 Valentines cards to bring to Congressman Jim Himes' office for his 8th Annual Valentines for Vets campaign. The cards were delivered to veterans in local VA hospitals, Homes for the Brave in Bridgeport, and other veterans service organizations in our community. Thanks to everyone who shared their creative talents and sent a message to our Vets for Valentine's Day!















Photo credit: Tanya Lennon



Many thanks to all of our scouts, past and present, who participated in our annual Scout Sunday!

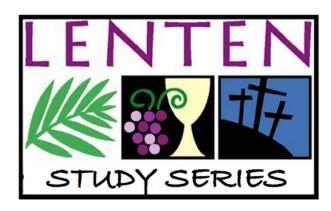








40 Days with Jesus



Thursdays, February 15 – March 22, 2018

Time: 10:00 am - 11:30 am ~ Location: Meeting Room 2

Each week there will be an insert in the bulletin with the scripture passages for the following week and questions to ponder for those not able to attend Bible Study. No book required!

February 15 Greatness in Humanity

February 22 Overcoming Temptations

March 1 Making Friends

March 8 Prayer That Does What Prayer is Supposed to Do

March 15 Experiencing Miracles

March 22 Going Through Suffering

Easter Sunday Seeing for Yourself

Join us ... and feel free to invite a friend! For questions, please contact Pastor Martha.

UMC Monroe • 515 Cutlers Farm Road • 203.268.8395

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From the desk of



Ross Williams
CFO and Director of Administrative Services

January 17, 2018

Dear Pastors, Administrative Board Chairs, Finance Chairs, and Treasurers,

I would like to take this opportunity to say "thanks" for your tremendous commitment in honoring the work of our connectional church. As a former church treasurer, finance chair and stewardship chair I am keenly aware of what it means for a church to pay their conference apportionments. It is not a trivial accomplishment, especially in what have been challenging economic times. We ended the 2017 year collecting 90% of all apportionments, which is three percentage points above last year! This is the highest collection rate in the past ten years. Please note that this does not mean that your church did not pay 100%. For those that did, Faithful in Ministry certificates will be given to your District Superintendent to present to your church at your next Charge Conference.

Conference apportionments can sometimes be perceived as a tax or funding of purely administrative costs. But the reality is that apportionments fund healthcare for our retired clergy, community outreach programs such as food kitchens and warming shelters, our Archives and Parish Development activities and the global missions of our denomination in addition to many other areas.

Approximately 25% of all apportionment dollars sent to the Conference are re-directed to the general church to support the seven funds listed below.

- World Service Fund
- Ministerial Education Fund
- Episcopal Fund
- Black College Fund
- General Administration Fund
- Africa University Fund
- Interdenominational Cooperation Fund

Should you have any questions about how apportionments work or how these funds carry out the mission of the denomination, please refer to the attached slides.

Again, I want to thank all of you who have paid your 2017 apportionments whether partially or in full. I hope you will agree that it is money well spent.

Sincerely, Ross

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Here to serve the clergy and laity of the New York Annual Conference



















VISIT US ANYTIME AT WWW.UMCMONROE.ORG!



Flags and Cell Phones

If you have an old, worn flag that you need to dispose of properly, you can do so right at the church. Just place it in the collection box located in the narthex. The Marine Corp League and VFW in Stratford continuously provide this service to the public.

Used cell phones can also be recycled for our service men and women and left in the same box.

Change for Waterman Scholarship

We are collecting loose change for the Waterman Scholarship Fund. There is a jug in the narthex for you to deposit loose change. All coins accepted! Keep an eye on the thermometer and watch it rise with your help!



Prayer Concerns



Our Bishop and cabinet as they make appointments for the upcoming year

Michelle Lambert - lung infection

Those ill with the flu

Tyson - Lynn Abbott's grandson - undergoing tests Jim Eastwood

Those affected by the school shooting in Florida Juliana Sherwood's friends Tony and Danielle struggling with infertility

Adam Bartlett - struggling

Anita Stabler- Hussey's boss Dave

Laura Galbraith - UMC Pastor - chemo for colon cancer

York's twin granddaughters - Alexa and Patience continued recovery from injuries

Dexton - additional radiation

Leila – 2-year old with a muscular degenerative disease

Gail Mas' friend Betty Tomackek - MS and lung cancer

Adam Godlewski, Age 27 - continued healing from traumatic brain injury

Suzette - Gail Mas' niece

David Marks - pancreatic cancer

Ben Abercrombie – football player with broken neck

Audrey Stabler - kidney disease

Marilyn Jones

Dotti Hossler's brother Roger

Joe Lennon's brother Michael - colon cancer

Lauren - continued addiction battle

Shaun - battling addiction

Pastor Martha's friend Cassandra's husband Wayne -

Stage 3 throat cancer

Debby Couture - pancreatic cancer

Gail Mas' granddaughters: Sara and Amanda

Dr. Bill - overseas missionary work

Sue Simmons' brother Jeff

Jeanne Baklik

Dotti Hossler's sister Loretta - severe concussion

Kathy's great-aunt Marie Houdek - hospice

Fromm's friend Radovan Frzop

Caleb

Roy G - child with serious epilepsy

Wallace's friend Audrey Scott - needs kidney transplant

Friend of Billy Schmalkuche - Jill - long-term rehab

Jeff York

Tom Boomershine

Darcy and Cameron

Robert Ellis - co-worker of Claudia Wallace - cancer

Greg - Gail Mas' nephew - cancer

Evelyn Sweetnam - hospice care

Linda Summa - Turner's daughter - cancer

Olivia - Juvenile Diabetes

Sue Simmons' friend Debbie - MS

York's daughter-in-law - Lori

Jodi Kles - Sheryl's cousin - living with rare form of

Military personnel

Unemployed

First responders, firemen, policemen

Persons dealing with serious medical issues

Caregivers

Covenant to Care and all foster children

Those who do not have anyone to pray for them

Christians around the world persecuted for their faith

Drug epidemic - addiction and deaths

Refugees

Unspoken burdens that reside upon people's hearts

Youth - effects of social media and those being bullied

Wisdom for world leaders

Children with mental illnesses

Unity and peace around the world

Those suffering from depression and/or loss

If you would like to add a person to our prayer list, or to receive a weekly copy of the joys and concerns email prayerrequest@umcmornoe.org, call the office or leave your request in the collection plate. Names will remain on the prayer list for 3 weeks. If you would like your name or that of a relative or friend to stay on the list longer, please contact the office.



REMINDER: The deadline submit information Denise to (umc@umcmonroe.org) for our monthly newsletter is the 15th of each month. When making your submission, please include all content and provide a contact name. Any submission received after the deadline is not guaranteed publication and may be deferred to the next month. Thank you! Page 16 of 17

Mar 2018 (Eastern Time) 2pm - Winter Cooking Class 2pm - Winter Cooking Class 2pm - Winter Cooking Class 9:30am - Organ Rehearsal 2pm - CROP Walk Rally @ 3pm - Michelle Lambert -5:30pm - First UMC Shelton 5pm - Winter Cooking Class 5:30pm - First UMC Shelton 16 5pm - Winter Cooking Class 5pm - Winter Cooking Class 5:30pm - First UMC Shelton 30 23 5:30pm - First UMC Shelton 7 pm - HOLD: TPTC Cabaret 7 pm - Good Friday Service 15 22 59 7pm - Life Stages Meeting 7pm - Life Stages Meeting 7pm - Life Stages Meeting 10am - BS: Lenten Study 7pm - Holy Week Service 10am - BS: Lenten Study 10am - BS: Lenten Study 10am - BS: Lenten Study 7:30pm - Two Planks 7:30pm - Two Planks 7 pm - Two Planks 4 28 28 21 7pm - Holy Week Service 11:30am - MM: Missions 5pm - Organ Rehearsal 5pm - Organ Rehearsal 5pm - Organ Rehearsal 6pm - Kindergarten GS 5pm - Organ Rehearsal 6:30pm - Girl Scouts @ 7 pm - Two Planks 7 pm - Two Planks 7pm - Two Planks 7 pm - Two Planks 13 27 50 27 7:30pm - Monroe Womens' 7pm - Holy Week Service 7pm - Meeting with Rev. 7 pm - Hills of Monroe 7 pm - Hills of Monroe 7:15pm - CC: Church 7 pm - Two Planks 7 pm - Two Planks 7 pm - Two Planks 12 56 26 6pm - Cub Scouts Meeting 6pm - Cub Scouts Meeting 6pm - Cub Scouts Meeting 7pm - Holy Week Service 10:30am - Ladies Group 10:30am - Ladies Group 4pm - YG: Youth Group 7pm - Daniel Plan 7pm - Two Planks 7pm - Two Planks 7pm - Two Planks 7pm - Two Planks United Methodist Church of Monroe 25 11:15am - SI: Social Issues 10am - SS: Sunday School 10am - SS: Sunday School 10am - SS: Sunday School 11:30am - SPPRC Meeting 10am - SS: Sunday School 10am - SS: Sunday School 3 pm - Confirmation Class 3 pm - Confirmation Class 11:15am - Sunday School 3pm - Confirmation Class 3 pm - Confirmation Class 10am - Worship Service 11:15am - Social Issues 10am - Worship Service 10am - Worship Service 10am - Worship Service 4pm - YG: Youth Group 1pm - YG: Youth Group 11:15am - Free Blood Communion Sunday 2pm - Two Planks 2pm - Two Planks

3pm - Confirmation Class

4pm - YG: Youth Group

10am - Worship Service

2pm - Two Planks

7 pm - Two Planks

^{**} Please visit our website for the most up-to-date information about our activities. **