

The Messenger

May-June 2024

The First Church of Monson, Congregational/UCC

5 High Street, Monson MA 01057

413-267-3312

office@firstchurchmonson.org

www.firstchurchmonson.org

www.facebook.com/firstchurchmonson

The Church Office is usually open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Interim Pastor Jack Kraaz is in the office Tuesday and Thursday morning or by appointment.

Please visit our website for additional information.

***No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!***

Our Mission

The Mission of the First Church of Monson is
to praise God through prayer,
to share the Word and love of God by promoting fellowship in the community,
and to serve as stewards of God's creation –
all in a manner that glorifies God and emulates Christ.

You are invited to join your church family for any or all of these May/June Happenings at First Church

Saturday, March 11 – Tag and Craft Sale from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Please support our vendors.

Saturday, May 18 – Music Committee Dinner and Concert

Haddock Dinner at 5:30 p.m. – Tickets are \$20.00 for the dinner

Wings of Song Community Chorus Concert at 7:30 p.m.

“Rough Seas, Safe Harbors” directed by Nym Cooke

Sunday, May 19 – Pentecost Sunday

“Bring a Friend to Church” Sunday

Thursday, May 23 from 4 p.m. to closing

Main Street Tavern Night

Sponsored by the Board of Deacons

Sunday, May 26 at 11:30 a.m.

All-church Gathering

Friday, May 31 – Fancy Friday Youth Dances

Grades 4 to 6 from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Grades 7 to 12 from 8 to 10 p.m.

Admission is \$5.00

Sunday, June 16 – Children’s Sunday

Thursday, June 20 from 4 p.m. to closing

Main Street Tavern Night

Sponsored by the Outreach Committee

Sunday, June 23 at 11:30 a.m.

All-church Gathering

Pastoral Search Committee News



Your Pastoral Search Committee continues to meet twice a month to work on our Church Profile for the United Church of Christ Southern New England Conference (SNEUCC). We have asked you to respond to questions posted in the Fellowship Room, attend in-home meetings, and complete a demographic survey on April 21, the last piece of information we will request. Thank you for your help! It is so important to include information about our church family in searching for your minister. The committee's goal is to complete the Church Profile by the end of May and send it to Conference Minister Terri Yasuko Ogawa for review. Yeah!! Once approved by Rev. Ogawa the SNEUCC will send our Profile nationwide and it will be available to all ministers looking to come to Monson. The next steps will be reviewing resumes and interviewing. A long process, but important in finding the right person. Please continue to pray for this committee's work.

Thank you.

Your Search Committee,

Lisa, Elaine, Laurie, Roy, Keith, Deb, David, Judy, and Chris

United Church of Christ Special Offering

On Pentecost, May 19, we will be collecting for the UCC Strengthen the Church special offering. Your gifts will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches, and develop the spiritual life in our youth and young adults.

Thank you to all who contributed to our Lenten collection, One Great Hour of Sharing. We raised \$526.00!

Rough Seas, Safe Harbor: Wings of Song Presents Free Concert at First Church

This area's premiere community chorus, Wings of Song, will present its spring concert "Rough Seas, Safe Harbor" at First Church on Saturday, May 18 at 7:30 p.m. The concert will take audiences on a huge sea voyage, much of it aboard a 19th century whaling ship that might have left from Portsmouth, New Hampshire - or Portsmouth, England - and sailed practically around the world, separating the crew members from their families for as much as a year or two.



Nym Cooke, Music Director, has combined 29 stirring, eloquent songs of the sea into a seven-part odyssey. The individual sections of the program are titled "Home Port," "Setting Sail," "At Sea," "Shipwreck!," "Foreign Ports," "Women at Home," and "Return and Reunion." Music Director Cooke has also arranged several pieces of music that weave a moving tapestry of life at sea and also of life at home for those left behind.

There's a dockside street cry, "New Oysters!," and the part-song "To Portsmouth"; both are sung as rounds, and both hail from 17th century England. There are classics of the sea-faring repertory, songs such as "What Shall We Do With the Drunken Sailor?" and "Blow the Wind Southerly." There's an 18th century New England "fuging tune," "Ocean" by Supply Belcher of Farmington, Maine, and the U. S. Navy's signature hymn tune, "Eternal Father, Strong to Save."

This is sure to be an unforgettable adventure—both musically and imaginatively—and the concert venue is sure to be crowded, so be sure to arrive early for a good seat and attempt to car pool. Admission is free, but a freewill offering will be collected at intermission. First Church is handicap accessible.

Audience members are invited to join the chorus for tasty (and free!) refreshments after the concert. The concert is sponsored in part by the Monson and Sturbridge Cultural Councils, local agencies supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

The Music Committee will be hosting a dinner prior to the concert at 5:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. The menu features baked haddock, baked potato, homemade coleslaw, and for dessert, apricot squares with whipped cream. Tickets are \$20 and available by calling the Church Office at 413-267-3312. Deadline for dinner tickets is Tuesday, May 14, 2024. Hope to see you all at this special evening event!

We have two more months of Let's Eat breakfasts before we take a break for July and August: Pentecost Sunday, May 19 and Father's Day, June 16. Please join us. Free will gratefully received.



Have you done spring cleaning and wish you could have a tag sale, but don't have a good location? Been working all winter making crafts? Here's your chance to sell your unwanted goods. Set up a tent in our parking lot near the center of town. We have approximately 25 10'x10' spots available for \$25.00 each to set up your tag sale and/or craft booth. The event will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 11 (rain date May 18). You may begin to set up your booth at 7 a.m. If you are interested in renting a space, please visit our website at www.firstchurchmonson.org and click on the Tag/Craft Sale logo.

Hearts Willing
End-of-the-year Banquet
Wednesday, May 22, 2024
6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall



Announcing a change this year! The May banquet will be held at First Church in the Fellowship Room. Celebrate our 2023-2024 program year before we break for the summer with a meal that includes appetizers, salad, entrée, and dessert. Cost is \$10.00 per person. There is a sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Room for reservations by Sunday, May 19, 2024.

The **First Church Prayer Shawl Ministry** meets on the first and third Thursday of the month from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. You are welcome to join us. Do you need to learn to knit or crochet? We can help! We pray for those in need of comfort, healing, and warmth. Please let the Church Office (413-267-3312 or office@firstchurchmonson.org) know of anyone in need of a prayer shawl. Prayer shawls can be delivered locally.



Thank you from
Charlotte, Carrie, Donna, Ginny, Jane, Jamy, Lyle, Sarah, and Tammy



We know you love to sing, so we are inviting you to join our adult choir. Add your voice to the angels who lead our hymns, sing our anthems and introits, and embrace the power of music in worship. Choir rehearsals are Thursday evenings from 6:30 until 8 p.m. in the Julia Sprague Chapel upstairs under the direction of Kiel Krommer, Director of Music Ministries at First Church. We hope you will take this opportunity to use your talent to enrich our worship through song. There is no need to audition or sign up, just come.



Electronics and Household Goods

Saturday, July 27, 2024

9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

First Church parking Lot

Fees range from \$5.00 to \$40.00, depending on the size and type of item.

Please visit GreenDayRecyclingMA@gmail.com for the complete fee schedule