

The Messenger
April 2019

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 Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 9 AM to 1 PM. Pastor Peter is usually in his office on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 10 AM to 3 PM or by appointment.

Please visit our website and calendar at www.firstchurchmonson.org.

***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.



Sunday, April 7 – Fifth Sunday of Lent

Monday, April 8 – Loaves and Fishes meal served

Saturday, April 13 – Easter Egg Hunt with activities beginning at 10:30 a.m.

Holy Week – April 14 – 20, 2019

Sunday, April 14 – Palm Sunday, Sunday School classes resurrection craft project

Monday, April 15 – Patriots' Day, *Messenger* deadline

Tuesday, April 16 – Church Office closed to commemorate Patriots' Day

Thursday, April 18 – Maundy Thursday, Service of Tenebrae at 7 p.m.

Friday, April 19 – Good Friday

Easter

Sunday, April 21 – Easter Sunday

Sunrise Service at 5:45 a.m., Traditional Worship at 10 a.m.

Continental breakfast after the Sunrise Service

No Sunday School classes and no fellowship

Our Administrative Assistant, Lee, will be on vacation from April 5 to April 13. Telephone and email messages will be monitored and answered.

You are invited to sing with the Choir on Easter Sunday. There will be two after-church rehearsals on April 7 and April 14. If interested, please contact either Director of Music Kiel or Pastor Peter.

Signs of Spring



Aah, Spring is here! A season of growth and renewal. I recently drove into the church parking lot and parked in front of a snowbank. The thermometer on my dashboard said that it was 62 degrees outside and rising. While our New England weather is predictably unpredictable, I chose to view the melting snow as a sign of spring.

Growth and renewal are also happening at First Church. We've had quite a month around here. We've baptized six people, held a chapel wedding, and welcomed new folks into the choir and Sunday School. All good things!

In the past couple of months, several people have expressed interest in becoming covenant members of First Church. Some of these folks have only recently started worshipping with us, others have been here a while or have returned after a long absence. In the next month or so, we will be inviting people to what has been traditionally called a membership class. I prefer to think of it as an exploration class, where we have the opportunity to meet new people and tell the good news about First Church. We will have a reception of new members on Pentecost, June 9.

If you are interested in joining us, or if you know anyone who might be interested, please let me know. We will then set the date for our exploration class.

Our Lenten journey ends in just a few weeks as we move into Holy Week.

May God bless us on the journey,

Pastor Peter



The **Third Annual Easter Egg Hunt** will be held on Saturday, April 13 at 11 a.m. Doors open and activities begin (egg coloring and face painting) at 10:30 a.m. The event is free and all ages are welcome.

There are several ways you can help. We need donations of small toys or wrapped candies to fill the eggs. Helpers are needed to fill the nearly 3500 eggs and extra people are needed the day of the hunt to help keep our little ones safe. Please contact the Church Office at 413-267-3312 or office@firstchurchmonson.org if you can help.

We welcome donations to benefit the Davis Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Baystate Children's Hospital, Springfield. For suggested items, please visit <https://www.baystatehealth.org/giving/how-to-support/bch-toy-donation>. Donated items must be brand new. According to the BHS's website, "the activities and play items you donate directly benefit our pediatric patients, and are so important towards reducing stress and anxiety and providing much needed distraction during their hospital stay."

All donations are greatly appreciated. Thank you!

April's Fruit of the Spirit – Faithfulness



"Do you trust God completely?"

Faithfulness is our complete trust in God's existence, God's deeds, and God's promises. Faithfulness comes from the Holy Spirit working within us.

"Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ ." Romans 10:17 (NIV)



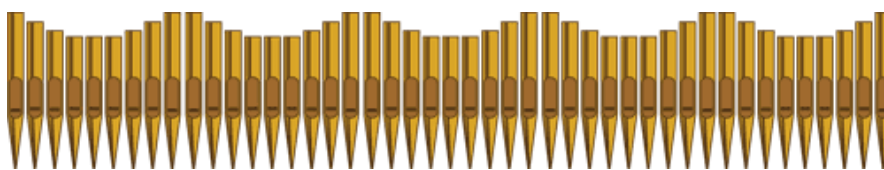
Hearts Willing Club
Wednesday, April 24, 2019
7 p.m. Fellowship Hall

“Laughter Yoga”
program presented by Robert Rivest

Guests are most welcome to attend this program!
Bring a friend!

Refreshments will be served.

On Saturday, May 4, Permelia (Permie) Sears will be a guest recitalist at First Church Monson performing a program “Couperin to Messiaen: Four Centuries of French Organ Music” on the historic 1892 Johnson and Son Organ, Opus 781. The pieces include works by French composers from the seventeenth through the twentieth century. Featured in the eleven compositions will be Choral No. 3 in a minor by Cesar Franck, Prelude in E Major, Op. 99 No. 1 by Camille Saint-Saens, and Suite Gothique, Op. 25 by Leon Boellmann.



The concert will be preceded at 5 p.m. by a lasagna dinner prepared by members of the First Church Music Committee. Tickets for the concert and dinner are \$20.00 and may be purchased by contacting the Church Office at 413-267-3312 or office@firstchurchmonson.org by April 28. Tickets to the 7 p.m. concert may be purchased at the door for \$10.00. Proceeds from this event will be donated to the Eva Farr Fund for the care and maintenance of the Johnson organ.

NEWS & Notes

Members of our church family are invited to have their names included on the church's monthly birthday and anniversary list. Please sign up on the calendar in the Fellowship Room.



At this time, the Monson Open Pantry needs donations of pasta, peanut butter, and canned tuna. Other donations of nonperishable foods are always appreciated! Collection baskets are located in the Narthex.



A reminder to all individuals and groups using First Church: Be sure to turn off all lights and pull the exterior doors tightly closed upon exiting the building!



The daily lectionary readings for April 2019 can be found at
<https://www.macucc.org/files/files/documentsdailylectionary/april+2019.pdf>



Thanks to everyone who donated coins to the Monson Emergency Fuel Fund. The total given was \$836.28. Thank you, Jeanne, for wrapping all those coins!



Think Spring!

Think Easter!

Think Mother's Day!

All are perfect occasions to honor someone special with the gift of a candle – an organic soy candle from Sturbridge Candle Company! Why organic soywax candles?

1. Organic soywax contains no toxins.
2. Soywax burns longer than petroleum-based wax.
3. Soy candles burn with no black smoke.
4. Organic soywax candles are environmentally friendly.
5. Organic soy candles contain no harmful dyes.

Elaine will be selling candles on Sundays, April 7, 14, 28, and May 5 in Fellowship Hall. Sturbridge Organic Soy Candles are handmade and custom blended. Three sizes will be available, 8 oz., 12 oz. and 16 oz. All proceeds benefit First Church. For more information or to order candles, please contact the Church Office at 413-267-3312 or office@firstchurchmonson.org.



The Monson Garden Club is sponsoring its GUEST NIGHT program THE GARDEN TOURIST on Monday, April 1, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. at First Church of Monson on High St. in Monson. Author Jana Milbocker will share a visual tour of some of the best public and private gardens in the northeast with highlights of each and the best times to visit. Copies of her new book *The Garden Tourist* will be available for purchase and signing. This program is open to the public with light refreshments to be served. A suggested donation of \$5.00 is appreciated and will give guests a chance to win door prizes. Also, tickets will be available for the “Garden and Yard” raffle.