

The Messenger
July and August 2018

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.**

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



...And the living is easy.

As it turns out, May was an excellent month to move to Monson. Following my time of interviewing with the search committee, and the wonderful candidating weekend, Monson, both town and church is beginning to feel like home. It was a joy to lead worship and break open the word with you on my first Sunday, June 17.

Over the course of the summer, I hope to get to know you all a little bit better, and that this time will be fruitful as I settle into life here in Monson.

Many thanks to you all, and especially to the search committee and other leaders who made my arrival so memorable. And thank you to all who traveled to Quincy for my ordination.

We have a long and exciting road to travel as we begin our journey together. God has blessed us with this summer-time to prepare for the start of the program year in September.

Faithfully,

-Pastor Peter Johnston



The Board of Deacons and Pastor Peter are working out a mutually agreeable office schedule to allow for office coverage and good office communication. Pastor Peter has only been officially the minister of First Church for two days as this is being written so adjustments may get made. For the month of July, our church administrative assistant will be in the office on Monday, Thursday, and Friday from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. Pastor Peter will be in the office on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, hours to be announced, except for the end of July when Pastor Peter will be at Silver Lake Conference Center.

A message can always be left on the church answering machine when the office is not staffed. In the case of an emergency, please contact Pastor Peter or any deacon.

For current information about First Church happenings, please visit our website and calendar at www.firstchurchmonson.org or find us on facebook at www.facebook.com/firstchurchmonson

Please don't let Monson Open Pantry donations dwindle during the summer months. There is always a need for nutritious, non-perishable foods. Especially needed now, **canned fruits!** Food can be dropped off any Sunday; collection baskets are in the narthex. Thank you and have a blessed summer.



Canned-Food
Drive

Traveling this summer?

If you are traveling this summer and visit other churches, please bring back copies of Sunday bulletins, newsletters, welcome packets, or informational pamphlets to share with boards and committees here at First Church Monson. We are always looking for new ideas to improve our ministries. Materials may be given to the Church Office for Lee to distribute to the appropriate group.



Social Time After Sunday Service



With the caring support of our members and friends, on most Sundays after our morning service, we are able to share conversations with one another in the Fellowship Room while enjoying some treats and beverages.

Please sign-up for an up-coming Sunday so that this ministry might continue. There is a sheet in the Fellowship Room or you can call the Church Office, 413-267-3312, to check on available dates.

Many thanks to the people and groups who have supported this ministry by hosting fellowship thus far this year, some several times.

Pastor's Discretionary Fund



The discretionary fund is running low on monies. This fund is used by the pastor to help the less fortunate in our area. If you would like to donate to the fund, please use a pew envelope, mark it "Discretionary Fund" and either drop it

in the offering plate or mail to the Church Office at 5 High Street, Monson. Thank you, Deacons



Dear First Church members and friends,

Enjoy the Fourth of July festivities and support First Church! Our Summerfest booth will be selling the traditional strawberry shortcake, homemade lemonade and bottled water.

Again this year, we are offering parking for a five dollar donation in the church parking lot for Fourth of July Summerfest attendees. Volunteers are needed to collect donations. Space is available on a first come, first served basis. Please contact tsisley@firstchurchmonson.org to volunteer.



The trustees are pleased to announce that we have selected a painter for the exterior of the church. Cameron Painting, which also did the painting of the church after the tornado, will begin work after the July fourth holiday and complete the job in approximately six weeks. This painting is sorely needed and costs a great deal. The trustees hoped to wait until the Church had enough money to pay for the job, but the condition of the wood necessitated that we take action now by borrowing from Church funds. Paul Hatch and Suzanne Kelley solicited painters; then after interviewing them and analyzing their bids, Paul recommended Cameron. Thanks to everyone who recommended painters.

While the painters are on the job, Suzanne will be the only one to have contact with them. All other people – whether trustees, members of the Church, employees, or merely interested spectators – are NOT to speak to the workers or the project manager. No one should be inside the work area nor touch the wood, the paint, the lead paint chips, or any equipment that belongs to Cameron. When Cameron Painting last worked at First Church, Cameron’s employees were constantly asked questions and given “advice” about how their job should be done. This was not appreciated and cannot occur this time. If anyone has important concerns to address, he or she should contact the Church Office so a message can be given to the Chair of Trustees . She will then speak to the owner of Cameron Painting or the onsite project manager if necessary.

Thank you for your cooperation. We will all be happy next fall when we see the church looking beautiful again!

Chair of Board of Trustees

The trustees of the H. Leonora Stiles Thomas Educational Trust are pleased to announce one Dorcas scholarship recipient this year. The student recently graduated from Minnechaug Regional High School and plans to attend the University of Northern Florida. Congratulations and best wishes to him!

Monson Town-wide Tag Sale Saturday, September 1, 2018



First Church of Monson is hosting the Annual Town-wide Tag Sale. We need lots of volunteers starting right after Summerfest to make this another successful community event. The Town Wide Tag Sale and community cook-out has become the single largest fund raiser for the church so we need help from everyone who can participate.

This year Adams Supermarket is helping us raise funds to support the TWTS by asking for change round out at their cash registers. And, like last year, they will also help us with the cookout at the church. We are planning some other fun events at the church that Saturday so there is a lot going on. Please plan to help out.

As usual, we will be registering tag sale locations, selling the maps, hosting a Hearts Willing bake sale and cooking up hamburgers and hot dogs.

If you plan to hold a tag sale, the deadline for registering your site is August 26, 2018. Applications will be various businesses around Monson and may be dropped off or mailed to First Church at 5 High Street. For more information or to register your tag sale location, please email TWTS@firstchurchmonson.org. You can also register at our website at www.monsonlife.com.

The July and August Daily Lectionary Scripture readings can be found at

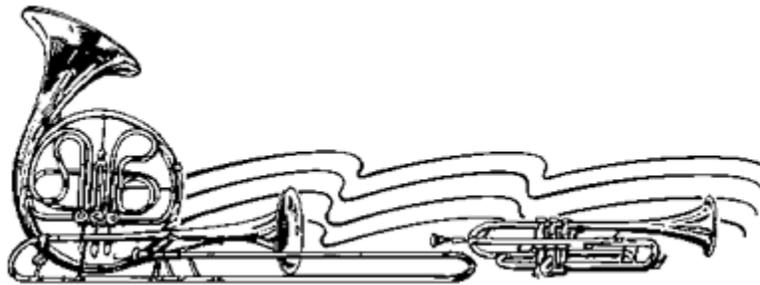
<https://www.macucc.org/files/files/documentsdailylectionary/july+2018.pdf>

<https://www.macucc.org/files/files/documentsdailylectionary/august+2018.pdf>

Nursery care will not be available during the summer months. Families with little ones are welcome to use the Nursery Room as long as the children are not left unattended. The Nursery Room is equipped with a speaker so that the worship service can be heard.

Sunday School classes and nursery care resume on Rally Sunday, September 9, 2018. Please consider volunteering as a teacher or nursery care provider.

Jazz Bones Coming to First Church



David Neil will be bringing Jazz Bones to First Church of Monson on Friday, September 28 at 7 PM. The Music Committee is planning a dinner before the concert at 6 PM. The menu will be meatball grinders, salad, and brownie sundae for dessert. Watch for more details in the September *Messenger*.

Dear Members and Friends,

It would be an understatement to say that First Church of Monson is loving, faithful, and generous to a fault. The sentiments you expressed on June 3 in worship and after, in Fellowship Hall, left me speechless. In addition, I am grateful for the showering of gifts (First Church of Monson throw, resurrection cross, model of a 1965 Shelby Cobra, cash, and a gift certificate to the Tap House). Most of all, thank you for your card with your kind words of farewell. It has been a great ministry and wonderful adventure at First Church of Monson.



May God continue to bless your ministry!
Pastor Rob

Dear First Church of Monson Congregation,

You have made our time here in Monson at First Congregational Church a joy from beginning to end. We appreciate all you have given to help make the music program a success, excellent instruments in good repair, people to sing in the choir, extra musicians when needed, and above all your support. The bags with a picture of the organ are wonderful and will always remind us of our time among good friends. The flowers were beautiful and the "organ" cake was really over the top! We certainly will miss all of you, and thank you again for everything.

Yours in Christ,
Permie and David

Prayers offered by David and Permie Sears
Farewell Worship Service
June 3, 2018

“God of the ages and Lord of this moment, I am grateful for the ministry you called me to in this place. For the loving people here at First Church with whom I have enjoyed working, for the joy in watching the choir grow in its ability and in its spirit, I am thankful. For granting me the opportunity for the gifts of music you have instilled within me to find expression through this superb instrument and this wonderful sacred space that allows its pipes to give voice to your glory, I am most thankful.

It is my prayer that this church continues to be blessed with the loving spirit in which it is enfolded. May the church be blessed with a choir that continues to blossom and offer music that will lift up and inspire all you who worship here. May your blessings, O God, continue to rain upon your people here at First Church.” – Permie Sears

“God of the ages and Lord of this moment, I am grateful for the ministry you called me to in this place. I have never known a more Christian group in my years of music ministry. It has been a joy to work together as a team; musicians and pastor. I am thankful for the choir; such dedicated and hard-working singers. Their trust that what we ask of them, can indeed happen has meant much. For the Music Committee who have supported us without question I am grateful. Finally, O God, I lift up this congregation, many of whom have spoken words of encouragement to me on Sunday mornings. And it hasn't hurt that I have enjoyed one of the finest organs in New England.

It is my prayer that this church to be blessed with a solid foundation of faithful living; to be open to change while holding onto the values that make this congregation who they are, to celebrate and use the resources they have been blessed with, from organ, to piano, to voice and instrument, may none of them ever fall silent, to keep what they believe is right for them regardless of convention or politic, to welcome everyone and to be joyous in worship. May your blessings, O God, continue to rain upon your people here at First Church.” – David Sears

Together, As One



At the June 15-16 Annual Meeting of the Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island Conferences of the United Church of Christ, the delegates voted overwhelmingly to form a new, unified Tri-Conference to do ministry together, as one.

The Reverend Traci Blackmon, UCC Executive Minister of Justice and Local Church Ministries asked, “Have you ever trusted God enough to step into the water, not knowing how you would make it across?” Her words resonated with many in attendance, who referred to getting their feet wet as a metaphor for daring to step into a new future together.

To find out more, please see Tiffany Vail’s article posted on the MACUCC website, www.macucc.org.

Interested in Vacation Bible Camp (VBC)?

Wilbraham United Church will present “One in the Spirit” VBC for ages 4 to 11 during the week of July 30 to August 3. Camp hours are 9 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. at the church, 500 Main Street, Wilbraham. Registration prior to July 19 is \$30/child; late registration is \$40/child. Adults who volunteer at least two full days during the week may have one child attend for free. Registration forms may be obtained by calling 413-596-2511, ext. 105 or printed from the WUC website, www.wilbrahamunitedchurch.org.

Our Staff and Other Contacts

Pastor

The Reverend Peter Johnston
pastor_peter@firstchurchmonson.org
Emergency # 617-750-2063

Director of Music
Open

Church Administrator

Lee Brahen
267-3312
office@firstchurchmonson.org

Church Custodian
Linda Whippie

Sunday School Superintendent

Carolann Smart

Kitchen Manager
Joseph Wholley Jr.

Church Treasurer

Ted Sisley
treasurer@firstchurchmonson.org

Loaves & Fishes Co-ordinators
John Plaster & Christine Sterritt

Our Mission

STATEMENT
STATEMENT
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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.