

GROWING IN

Grace

The Monthly Newsletter of Morning † Star Lutheran and Monroe United Methodist Churches

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May 2023

Greetings Easter Siblings in the name of the Risen Christ,

*“Alleluia! Christ is Risen!
 Christ is Risen indeed! Alleluia!
 Come, Holy Spirit!
 Kindle in us the fire of your love!”*

This we will proclaim on Pentecost Sunday, May 28th. As the Season of Easter culminates on the fiftieth day, Pentecost (“the fifty”) with the continued celebration of the Spirit of the resurrected Jesus poured upon us to sustain us the church to rejoice, proclaim, love and serve the world. On Pentecost Sunday many worshipers wear red recalling the red flames of the Holy Spirit

On **this** Pentecost Sunday we continue to listen to God’s calling and to be open to that calling and the abundant gifts given by The Holy Spirit. As we move ahead as **“United in Grace”** (a blended ministry of the United Methodist Church and The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America), previous formally named as Morning Star Lutheran Church and Monroe United Methodist Church, it will indeed mean and require lots of risk taking and even more prayer as we listen to God’s dream for us.

The wind of the Holy Spirit both forms the church, as we gather, and then sends us outside the walls of the church with urgency to carry out the mission and ministry of Christ in the world. God is on a mission to love and bless the whole world and God has gifted us and called us here at United in Grace to be God bearers of a loving and grace filled God for our world. We have no other mission than this one!!

We will need to remember that on Sundays we do church as we gather so that during the week, we are the church in and for the world. Today, as we move ahead it may be our default stance and be far too easy to look backwards with a romantic eye and call them the ‘good old days’ Yet, in this new time, we are called to be creative and entrepreneurial as we look to a new reality in our daily lives and the life as Gods beloved people, the church, and our mission.

The God who has been faithful through the years is faithful today and will be faithful tomorrow. Perhaps our challenge and work in this time and place will be to listen to the calling of God through the Holy Spirit and have the trust and the faith of a mustard seed. Together we will be living out the Gospel in our world in new ways and creating new and blended ways of being and doing. Is it possible as we look back in 3 or 4 years we will say: “This is who we are and this is the way we have always done this work of the Holy Spirit together”.

God is a God of abundance, and so as Pentecost people we live and serve others out of this abundance, because we are Easter people first. We are people of hope and a certainty of the future because Jesus the Christ stands in the gaps of our lives. This gap, is the gap of God’s grace and love, the gap that our world so desperately needs filled as they encounter God’s Easter people, *us*, in their lives. We have something the world needs!

We are indeed Easter People! And God is indeed up to something here! Will we dare to live in God’s amazing grace? Will we dare to expect God to show in surprising and new ways?

Remember to wear Red on Pentecost Sunday - May 28th

“He is risen indeed”

Pastor Malcolm

RESULTS OF APRIL 9 FEDERATED/UNION VOTE

The results of the vote were **2** in favor of a Federated Church and **24** in favor of a Union Church.

CONGREGATION MEETING

MAY 21 - 11:00 A.M.

The next step in our journey is to vote on the **Plan of Agreement** that will be presented to the NWWA Synod of the ELCA and the Pacific NW Conference of the United Methodist Church.

The Plan of Agreement will be read and a vote taken at a brief congregation meeting held upstairs immediately following worship on May 21.

You must be present to vote.



MAY SUNDAY MORNING MINISTRY SCHEDULE



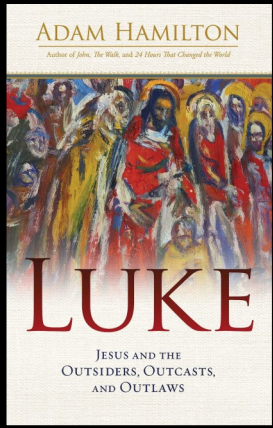
You are welcome and encouraged to serve wherever you see the word **“OPEN”**. No experience necessary—on the job training is provided! You’ll find this form in the church narthex (lobby) under the “Sign Up To Serve” sign.

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

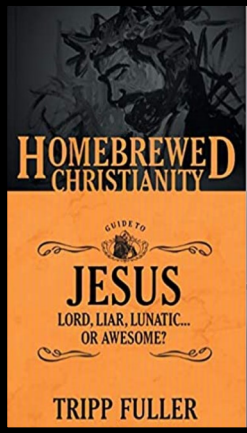
1 Corinthians 12:27 NIV

	MAY 7 5 TH EASTER	MAY 14 6 TH EASTER	MAY 21 7 TH EASTER	MAY 28 PENTECOST
Worship Assistant	Nancy Franke	Nancy Franke	Missy Maxson	Jasmine Ray-Symms
Greeter	Harriet Barr	Shannon Burke	Valerie & Perry Cole	Denny & Diana Coates
Ushers need 2	OPEN	OPEN OPEN	Ric Hart OPEN	OPEN OPEN
Acolyte	Ric Hart	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
Reader	Jasmine Ray-Symms	Joel Garrison	Missy Maxson	Kathleen Sallee
Serve Communion need 2	OPEN OPEN	Joel & JoLynn Garrison	OPEN OPEN	Kathi Cooley OPEN
Communion Prep.	Harriet Barr	JoLynn Garrison	OPEN	Kathi Cooley
Coffee Hour	OPEN	OPEN	Amy Halgren	Kathleen Sallee
Altar Flowers	Missy Maxson	OPEN	OPEN	Jill Sumpter
Soundboard	Kathi Cooley	Charlie Brown	Kathi Cooley	Charlie Brown

GET CONNECTED - FELLOWSHIP AND STUDY OPPORTUNITIES




Jesus and Java
 Sunday Mornings beginning May 7th at 8:30am in the Fellowship Hall
 It is not necessary to purchase the book. Drop-ins are welcome!



BIBLE NERDS: FOOD FOR THE SOUL
 Meets the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month Beginning May 10th.
 Dinner at 6:00pm
 Bible Study at 6:30pm in the Fellowship Hall
 Questions? Ask Jasmine

Books, TV & Movies!



May 16 - 6:30pm - Host - Lori Johnson
 Come for great discussion, snacks, and drinks at this month's BTM. You'll find Lori's address in the directory or call her at 425-985-7254



United Women in Faith
 Saturday June 3rd
 10:30am
 In the Fellowship Hall
 Theme: Bold Women of Faith

- May Birthdays & Anniversaries ***
Happy Birthday and Congratulations!
- 1 Bethany Johnson
 - 4 Anna Wegenast
 - 8 Ken & Cindy Gross/ Gulbranson *
 - 8 Joel Garrison
 - 11 Gary Lottermann
 - 15 Timothy Gray
 - 15 Bev Rice
 - 18 Teresa Jarnot
 - 18 Lilliya Wardell
 - 22 Doug Brender
 - 23 Chris & Kari Gray *
 - 23 Dan Wegenast
 - 24 Rene Cook
 - 24 Wendy Fantoni
 - 27 Mackenzie Gray
 - 28 Charlie Brown



Come and join us for

FAMILY FRIENDLY

Proceeds to Benefit

HAZEL'S LITTLE FREE PANTRY

A place to help those experiencing food insecurity by giving a no-barrier, 24/7 access point to food.

RAINBOW

BINGO

AT UNITED IN GRACE

MORNING STAR LUTHERAN & MONROE UNITED METHODIST CHURCHES

342 S. Lewis St. Monroe



Staring Seattle Celeb:
Crystyl Jewyl Box!

**SATURDAY, MAY 20
DOORS OPEN AT 5:30 PM
EVENT STARTS AT 6:00 PM**

GREAT PRIZES!



Tickets online at: <https://bit.ly/40iSmmE>
\$25 includes bingo cards and pasta dinner
50/50 raffle with proceeds benefiting Hazel's Free Pantry

The Power of God

Have you ever been so tired you literally can't move? Standing up after you sit down to rest seems Herculean in effort and you have to use every ounce of will to accomplish it. That's how I'm feeling as I write this. I'm not giving myself good odds to get anything else done today! But it's times like this that I rely on God to get me moving again. I trust Him to help me get through today, and tomorrow, and the next day.

My mother recently fell, breaking her femur for a second time, this time at the hip. We realized it was time to change her living arrangements to provide more care, so she is moving in with me. This involves packing up her condo with decades of memories. It means sorting and cleaning, deciding what needs to be given away and what is too precious to part with.

Philippians 4:12-13 states, "I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength."

People interpret these two verses in varying ways but to me, they provide comfort. No matter what I face, God is with me. When I am so tired, I just want to give up, God provides the strength to keep me going. When I "dig deep", I am tapping into the power of God. I am trusting Him to get me through whatever life throws at me. When I am weak, He is strong.

Jasmine Ray-Symms
www.jasmineraysymms.com




**The last Sunday of the month is
 Hazel's Little Free Pantry Day!**



Special offerings are taken on that day to buy food for the pantry. Specially marked envelopes are in the backs of the pews, or you may mail your offering to the church if you're unable to attend.

Thank you for your continued support of this Untied in Grace Ministry!



Nathan's Donation Station
 in the garage behind the parsonage, could use help with sorting clothes and other simple tasks on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.

It's easy and it's fun!
 Sign up in the narthex.



CHURCH ATTENDANCE





APRIL 2023

In Person: 40 Online: 16



From the Spirit, May 2023

Some synonyms for GATHERING that I found on the internet include: *association, caucus, collection, conclave, conference, congregation, convention, crowd, function, group, mass, meeting, party, throng, acquisition, affair, aggregate, aggregation, band, body, bunch, clambake, company,*

concentration, concourse, congress, convocation, crush, drove, flock, gain, heap, herd, horde, huddle, junction, knot, levy, meet, muster, parley, pile, rally, roundup, society, stock, stockpile, swarm, turnout, union, get-together, social function.

Some of these GATHERING words sound positive to my ears (group, party, social function), some sound political or corporate (caucus, acquisition, convention, meeting), some sound a little scary (crush, drove, horde, swarm) and one just makes me smile (clambake). How is a clambake like a GATHERING? I'd love to hear your answer!

We are excited that this year we are having two GATHERINGS. As a congregation, you are welcome to choose either May 13 or May 20 to GATHER with people throughout the synod. While there is no limit on the number of people who may attend from your congregation, we do have to cap registration at 300 each Saturday, so we hope that you are coming and that you are already registered as you read this! Here is the link for more information <https://www.lutheransnw.org/events/synod-gatherings/2023-05-13>.

At these two GATHERINGS we will have ample opportunity to learn together, laugh together, share information together, collaborate together, sing and play together, eat together, engage in possibility and vision-thinking together, pray together, plan together, and, especially to GATHER together in the Spirit of Christ.

For too long we have tried to do things alone. For too long we have tried to figure things out on our own. For too long we have not looked to others for collaboration and community. But Ecclesiastes 4:9 reminds us, "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up the other; but woe to one who is alone and falls and does not have another to help."

These last few years have shown us that there is nothing better than GATHERING with the body of Christ, especially in-person. We are excited for all of us in our synod to come together as we share our God-given gifts and wisdom. We are excited for the knowledge that will be shared and, even more, the Spirit of hope, generosity, and anticipation for what is next.

We are excited to see you and your congregation at one of the GATHERINGS this year. We can't wait to GATHER together with you on May 13 or May 20 and into the future!

Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee / bishop@lutheransnw.org



An Easter blessing from Bishop Cedrick Bridgeforth

Hello, I'm Bishop Cedrick Bridgeforth, the resident bishop of the Greater Northwest Area of The United Methodist Church. And I'm grateful to share with you just for a few moments today. I'd hoped by now I'd have an opportunity to share a more comprehensive message

with you. But I began January 1 and I have been busy. In fact, just a few weeks ago, I had the privilege of journeying to Anchorage, Ak. where we chartered Ola Toe Fuataina, a Samoan congregation. It was a grand celebration, where we joined together with other United Methodists from around the Anchorage area to celebrate this new beginning.

During this time, I've also hosted many meet and greets, both in person and online. And I've gotten a chance to hear from many laity and clergy about some of the hopes and dreams that you have in your local churches, your community and even for our greater area. And I'm thankful for those of you who have taken time to reach out to me, to share with me during this time. I got the chance to meet with all of our conference leaders, and hear from them about the great work that they're doing to make a difference in our area.

And beyond our local United Methodist churches, I've also had the opportunity to meet several of our ecumenical and interfaith leaders. And I've appreciated the ways in which we've maintained partnerships throughout the years. And I look forward to opportunities to build upon those relationships, and even to strike out and start new ones.

In the time that I've been with you, I've learned a lot, and there's so much more for me to get to know, I don't know everything there is to know about your systems, about policies of the Greater Northwest area. But I am learning. I also can share with you that I know quite a bit about myself. I know that I'm committed to having a positive impact wherever I serve. I know that I am open and willing to work with everyone who's willing to do the work that helps us achieve our mission. I also know that I am focused on the resurrection. I am focused on what new life looks like for each and every one of us, whether we're talking about clergy, laity, our congregations, but most especially the communities that God has called us to serve.

In this Easter season. I think it's very important for us to take an opportunity to look out around us and see those who are calling out for us to come alongside them, to look out and listen for those voices of those who are calling out seeking partnership and collaboration. Those who are calling out for a light and new life, because we can bring that, we can offer that, we are called to bring that and offer that.

So as we enter this Easter season, may you seek opportunities to bring new life, in your congregations and in your communities. May you seek opportunities to know more about yourself and those that God has called you to serve. May you be blessed and may you be a blessing this Easter season.

Thank you.

Bishop Cedrick Bridgeforth

MAY 2023 - MONROE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Happy May!

It was a busy month at MUMC /MSLC – United In Grace – last month with all the festivities of Lent and culminating in a beautiful Easter Sunday Service! Thanks to Kathi and Pr. Malcolm and Bryce and the Worship Team and all who helped make the season and the services so beautiful and meaningful! Thanks, too, to Jodi Fowler and Velma Smith for supplying flowers and making the beautiful flower arrangement on the cross for Easter and to everyone who brought potted flowers to decorate the alter – it was very special!

Along with the season when we celebrated the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus, we also said good by and held memorial services for Carol Smith, wife of Brent Smith (Velma’s son), and Paul Smith, husband of Carole and brother in law of Velma, will hold an upcoming memorial service for Bobbie Phillips, wife of Powell and mother of Missy, on May 6th. While we all grieve the loss of our friends and loved ones, it is a blessing and a comfort to know from or recent celebration of the resurrection, that Carole and Paul and Bobbie most assuredly were welcomed to their new home by our Loving Lord.

With so many memorial services that have been taking place, it has prompted many of us from both MUMC and MSLC to discuss the forming of a Memorial Committee to take on certain tasks when the need of our church family arises. This used to be done by the woman’s group of each church, but now that that group is combined, we hope to do the same with this much needed committee. If you are interested in helping on the committee in any capacity, please let me or Rhonda Morgan know and we will let you know when the meeting will be to discuss this. We are at our best when we come together to help our church members in their time of need.

So many things being done around the church as well! Thanks to Ric Hart for the new forsythia bushes he donated and planted next to the annex deck, and to Ric and Jerry for installing new anti-slip strips on the annex ramp! We also appreciate Jay Moran who is fixing the automatic coffeemaker, and brought the water heater up to code in the annex, and to our Official Handy-man, Bryce Cooley, who permanently fixed the toilet in the men's room downstairs and the ancient vacuum cleaner that our custodian uses (and if anyone has a good working one that they might be replacing, don’t forget that the church can always use one!)

The March treasurer report is listed below. Running a little short, but we know that you are all doing what you can to support the church and it is so appreciated! Thanks to everyone for your prayers, your time and your tithes to help keep us moving into the new light of day as Untied In Grace!

See you in Church!
Nancy Franke
MUMC Financial Secretary

<u>2023 MUMC LAY LEADERSHIP</u>	
Board of Trustees Chairman	Ric Hart 360-794-7772
Treasurer	Tanya Hubbard 360-793-8959
Financial Secretary	Nancy Franke 360-794-6954
Staff-Parish Relations Committee	Judie Esqueda 951-201-0061
Membership Secretary	
Lay Leader to Annual Conference	Margaret Ray 509-432-3029
UMW President	Jasmine Ray-Symms 425-223-9866
Recording Secretary	Margaret Ray 509-432-3029

MONROE UNITED METHODIST
TREASURER'S REPORT
FOR MONTH ENDED MARCH 31, 2023

	March	YTD
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$ 5,859.34	\$17,260.38
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	\$ 7,928.70	\$23,103.25
SHORTAGE	- \$ 2,069.36	- \$ 5,842.87


MAY 2023 - MORNING STAR LUTHERAN CHURCH

2023 NON-DESIGNATED OFFERINGS AND EXPENSES

	2023 Budget	February Actual	March Actual
Offerings	\$ 8,917	\$ 7,474	\$ 6,607
Expenses	\$10,384	\$10,037	\$10,627
Surplus/deficit		-\$ 2,563	-\$ 4,020

2023 MSLC COUNCIL

Administrative Dir.:	Missy Maxson	206-437-2535
Ministry Director:	Kathleen Sallee	425-387-2638
Treasurer:	Brian Johnson	425-503-8352
Community Relations:	Jill Sumpter	360-348-7231
Worship:	Kathi Cooley	425-293-8694
Facilities:	vacant	
Secretary:	vacant	

 Morning Star Lutheran Church

 Monroe United Methodist Church

412 South Lewis Street
Monroe, WA 98272-4149



LOOKING AHEAD:

- **Pentecost Sunday—May 28—Wear RED!**

May 7: FIFTH EASTER ~ COMMUNION ~ Scripture: Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16; Gospel John 14:1-14

May 14: SIXTH EASTER ~ COMMUNION ~ Scripture: Psalm 66:8-20; Gospel John 14:15-21

May 21: SEVENTH EASTER ~ COMMUNION Scripture: Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35 Gospel John 17:1-11

May 28: DAY OF PENTECOST ~ COMMUNION Scripture: Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35 Gospel John 17:1-11

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Music Director: Jill Sumpter

Live stream/editor: Bryce Cooley

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MORNING STAR LUTHERAN

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Website: www.unitedingrace.org

10:00 SUNDAY MORNINGS IN-PERSON
AND LIVE STREAMED ON YOUTUBE



unitedingrace.org