



***Pastor's Prayer for Our Nation's
 Semiquincentennial***

Gracious and Holy God,

As our nation marks this 250th anniversary, we gather as Your people, mindful that Your prevenient grace has been at work in this land and in human hearts long before we ever realized it. We come before You with humility, acknowledging that while we love the land of our birth or adoption, our ultimate allegiance is to Your global kingdom of love, peace, and justice.

We praise You for the abundant blessings we enjoy—for the beauty of this creation, the incredible diversity of the people who call this nation home, and the foundational ideals of liberty and equality. We thank You for the freedom to worship, to serve, and to seek the common good of all our neighbors

Yet, as followers of the Wesleyan tradition, we know that true holiness cannot be personal without being social. An honest inventory of our history reminds us that we have often fallen short of Your vision for community. We confess that the story of our nation includes chapters of systemic injustice, broken covenants, and deep-seated Divisions that still wound us today. Forgive us

for the times we have been complicit in these failings. Grant us the courage to live out our baptismal vows—to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves—and to pursue genuine reconciliation and healing.

As we look toward the future, we pray for Your continuous, sanctifying work among our people and our nation:

- **Guide our leaders** with Your wisdom, prompting them to govern with humility and a steadfast commitment to the common good, particularly prioritizing the needs of the poor, the vulnerable, and the marginalized.
- **Knit our communities together** in a spirit of connectionalism. Help us to move past bitter polarization, learning to see Your divine image in those with whom we disagree, and seeking ways to build up the human family together.
- **Revive Your church** to be a vibrant witness of Christlike love. Deliver us from the temptation to confuse the cross of Christ with any earthly flag or political power. Keep us focused on our true calling: to offer Christ, to seek social holiness, and to transform the world through acts of piety and mercy.

Remind us daily that Your grace knows no geographic or national borders. Help us to steward the freedoms we have been given to create a more just, merciful, and peaceful society where all Your children can flourish.

We commit our nation, our world, and our lives into Your hands, trusting in Your steadfast love that never lets us go.

In the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Redeemer. **Amen.**

Step Into the Wild: Rainforest Falls VBS is Coming to Monroe UMC!

Get ready for the wildest adventure of the summer! Monroe United Methodist Church is gearing up for **Rainforest Falls VBS**, an immersive jungle journey running from **Sunday, July 12 to Thursday, July 16, 2026**.

Kids will discover the breathtaking nature of God, enjoy high-energy activities, and make lifelong friends along the way.

Step through the mist into a world of towering trees, chattering birds, and wild waterfalls! Beneath a canopy of howling monkeys, kids will plunge into an adventure of faith. This summer, we are exploring what it means to be rooted in a relationship with God, our Creator, who is our safe place in life's storms.

Details

- **Dates:** Sunday, July 12 – Thursday, July 16, 2026.
- **Time:** 5:30 PM – 8:30 PM daily.
- **Location:** Monroe UMC, 206 East Ave, Monroe, OH 45050.
- **Ages:** Kids age 3 (potty-trained) through Grade 6.
- **Cost:** Completely FREE!

What to Expect: Every day at Rainforest Falls includes:

- **Bible Adventures:** Discovering God's nature through interactive storytelling.
- **Crafts & Snacks:** Hands-on creativity and tasty treats.
- **Sing & Play:** Upbeat jungle music and unforgettable skits.
- **Games:** High-energy physical activities to keep the fun moving.



Register Today!

Pre-registration is highly recommended but not required. Secure your child's spot in the jungle by signing up today! Visit our website registration page at <https://monroeumc.org/news/rainforest-falls-sign-up-here>.

Don't let your kids miss out on the wildest rainforest adventure of the summer!

And join us on July 19 for VBS Sunday, celebrating our week together!

BIG VBS Workday Saturday, July 11th

1. At 10:00am, arrive at Cincinnati Church of Christ, (4220 E. Galbraith Rd., Cincinnati) to load stage set and decorations. Please make space in your car, van, or pickup.
2. At 11:00am, deliver and unload in Atchley Hall.
3. From 11:00am-1:00pm, help build stage and transform the gym into a rainforest party room.

YES! There will be 🍕 pizza!

MUMC Children & Youth Ministry



Xtreme Kids Sunday School is for kindergarten and up every Sunday at 9:15. Dismissal is at the end of the first service (usually between 10:30 and 10:45). Let your kids have fun while learning about Jesus! Invite friends too! Engaging activities will help your child grow socially and spiritually.

Nursery: for newborns to 4 years old. Sundays during the 9:30 and 11:00 services.



The Amanda Outreach / Slinky Tutoring Center Tutoring is on Mondays and Wednesdays throughout the school year between 4:20 and 5:30.

Amanda Elementary children and parents appreciate your Christian love and academic encouragement.

LINK Adult Readers

As a tutor for an adult reader, you determine the schedule and meeting place (church or library). Contact Gina for more details (gmatcraft@gmail.com/937-514-3793).



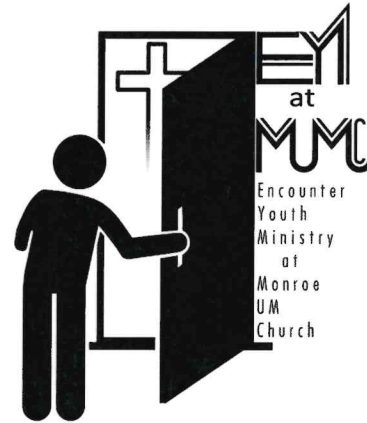
Summer Sundays at the Park!

Every LAST Sunday (May through July), after Sunday school, we will walk to Monroe Community Park (412 Old St.)

Please pick your child up in front of the playground by 12:30pm.



ENCOUNTER YOUTH GROUP



Through prayer, scripture, and service, 5th–12th graders encounter the journey that Jesus set before them.

The YOUTH MISSION PROJECT was a great success! Thank you ALL for supporting our ministry.

Please visit Bull's Run Arboretum in Middletown, OH to walk the trail and enjoy our poems, passages, and artwork. MUMC made it possible.



Beyond the Soundbites: A Pastoral Reflection on America's 250th

Dear Church Family,

As our nation approaches its 250th anniversary, it is almost impossible to turn on the news or scroll through social media without getting caught in a massive cultural tug-of-war. Lately, it feels like we are being forced to choose between two entirely different stories about who we are as a country.



On one side, a prominent narrative claims America was founded as a strictly Christian nation, with the goal of enacting Christian principles into law. On the other side, an equally loud voice insists we were founded as a purely secular nation, where faith is meant to be kept strictly hidden away from public life. Both argue that our nation today should reflect its original foundation.

Walking the middle, we find that *real history is far more nuanced than a soundbite.*

The truth is, the founders weren't trying to build a church, nor were they trying to banish God. While a few orthodox Christians were among them, many key leaders were heavily influenced by the Enlightenment. They were Unitarians or Deists, meaning they believed in a Creator and deeply respected the moral teachings of Jesus, but they did not view Him as the divine Son of God. They drew from a vast mix of sources: Christian morality,

Enlightenment philosophy, and ancient Greek and Roman thought. Their goal was to create a framework for **religious liberty**, a place where people of all faiths, and no faith at all, could live together peacefully without the government enforcing a specific doctrine.

Honesty also calls for humility. We cannot label our founding "purely Christian" when our laws explicitly permitted enslavement of human beings and diminished rights for women and people of other races and ethnicities. *Pointing this out isn't unpatriotic;* it is simply being truthful about human brokenness and our need for God's grace.

As United Methodists, our tradition offers a challenging perspective here. John Wesley lived in an officially "Christian nation" (the Church of England). Yet, looking at the early church in Acts 2, he asked a hard question in his sermon *Scriptural Christianity*: ***"Why then, let us confess we have never yet seen a Christian country upon the earth."***

Wesley argued that unless a nation is completely filled with the Holy Spirit and ensures no one lacks anything because they love their neighbor unconditionally, we cannot biblically call it a Christian country.

Where does that leave us on our nation's 250th birthday?

Our calling is not to seek political dominance or confuse the cross of Christ with an earthly flag. Our job is to live out that Acts 2 vision locally. We celebrate and protect the religious liberty that allows us to worship freely, and we use that freedom to love our neighbors, serve the vulnerable, and practice social holiness.

Let us commit to being a people of justice, mercy, and peace, trusting that God's grace knows no borders.

Grace and Peace, *Pastor Jeff*

Mid-Summer Check-In: Keeping it REAL

July is officially here, and with it comes the beautiful, chaotic rush of mid-summer. Between vacations, family gatherings, and the fast pace of the season, it's incredibly easy for our schedules to fill up while our inner reserves run low. If you've found yourself spinning your wheels or wondering where your peace went lately, you are not alone.



All month long, our worship series **REAL TALK: Honest Conversations with God** is providing a space to hit pause, take a breath, and get honest.

We aren't interested in perfect, polished prayers or pretending we have everything together. Instead, we are looking at real-life struggles—like anxiety, exhaustion, finding purpose, and learning to let go of what weighs us down—and seeing how they connect directly to the familiar phrases of the Lord's Prayer.

The great thing about this series is that **every week stands on its own**. Whether you've been here since the June kickoff or are walking through the doors for the first time, this space is for you. It's a perfect opportunity to reset your weeks with practical, accessible conversations grounded in the things we all actually face.

Throughout July and leading up to August 9, we'll continue tackling the questions that matter:

- How do I find actual peace when my mind won't shut off?
- What do I do when life feels entirely out of control?
- How do I keep moving forward when I'm just plain exhausted?

Bring your real, messy, everyday self and discover a community where you don't have to fake it.

Join the Conversation!

Sundays at **9:30 AM** or **11:00 AM**

In Person: Right here at Monroe United Methodist Church

Online: Facebook, YouTube, or MonroeUMC.org

No perfect people required.

Just room for real life.

Did You Know?

Worship with us later on our **YouTube** channel (**@MonroeUnitedMethodist**). You can read or listen to a message again at **MonroeUMC.org** and click **Sermons**.


Reflections of Monica Bolton...



Thoughts about when we die...

The realization that we will be forgotten in time. Life will go on for those left. Unless we're someone like Billy Graham or Chris Tomlin. They will be remembered.

Our families will remember us a lot for a while and from time to time down the road. And when their generation(s) are gone, we will be thought of no more. This is kind of sad in a way, and may make us feel like, "So what's the point? What difference does any of it make? What's the use?"

But then God revealed to me, it's not about me. It's all about Jesus. It doesn't matter if anyone remembers my name. Only that I pointed to Jesus. As Casting Crowns  sings, "Only Jesus."

So, I won't be sad that no one will remember my name. I will be happy when I leave this world if someone(s) will pass on the story of Jesus because I pointed them to him.

Disciples like Paul and Peter are remembered. But some of us point to Jesus on a smaller scale. As long as we point to the best of our ability according to the opportunities presented to us, even though our name is not remembered, Jesus's name WILL be remembered and that is the point. Let's point to the ONE!



Advice From an Old Farmer:

Keep skunks and bankers at a distance.

Life is simpler when you plow around the stump.

A bumble bee is considerably faster than a John Deere tractor.

Words that soak into your ears are whispered/not yelled.

Meanness don't jes' happen overnight.

Forgive your enemies; it messes up their heads.

Do not corner something that you know is meaner than you.

It don't take a very big person to carry a grudge.

When you wallow with pigs, expect to get dirty.

The best sermons are lived, not preached.

Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer.

Don't interfere with somethin' that ain't bothering you none.

Sometimes you get, and sometimes you get got.

The biggest troublemaker you'll probably ever have to deal with, watches you from the mirror every mornin'.

Good judgement comes from experience, and a lotta that comes from bad judgement.

Don't pick a fight with an old man. If he is too old to fight, he'll just kill you.



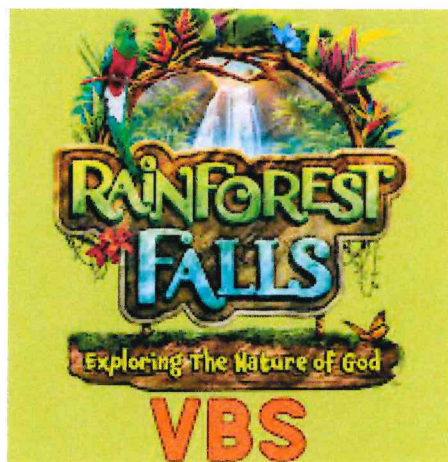
July Birthdays

- 1 – Dillis Bolton
- 8 – Pastor Jeff Motter
- 9 – Ginny Gansheimer
- 12 – Arlene Klemushin
Karen Shaffer
- 16 – Jane McWhorter
- 18 – Dale Short
- 27 – Elaine Garver
Josh Trueman-Motter

July Anniversaries



- 7 – Dale & Eleanore Short (64 years)
Brian & Sheilia Holbrock
- 15 – Ken & Lori Cobb
- 18 – Alan & Denise Dyke

August
Newsletter Deadline
July 22nd



July 12th-16th
5:30-8:30pm



	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28		29 Church Office Closed 6:00pm Yoga/AH 7:00pm Scouts/AH	30 10:00am -12:00pm Sewing Group/Youth Room 10:00am Share Group/Parlor	1 11:00am -12:00pm Yoga/Narthex 6:00pm Youth Group 7:00pm Praise Team/AH	2	3 Church Office Closed	4 
5 Holy Communion	6 Church Office Closed 6:00pm Yoga/AH 7:00pm Scouts/AH	7 10:00am -12:00pm Sewing Group/Youth Room 10:00am Share Group/Parlor	8 11:00am -12:00pm Yoga/Narthex 6:00pm Youth Group 7:00pm Praise Team/AH	9	10 10:00am Exercise/AH 11:00am Yoga/AH	11	
12 5:30pm -8:30pm Vacation Bible School	13 Church Office Closed 5:30pm -8:30pm Vacation Bible School	14 10:00am -12:00pm Sewing Group/Youth Room 10:00am Share Group/Parlor 5:30pm -8:30pm Vacation Bible School	15 11:00am -12:00pm Yoga/Narthex 5:30pm -8:30pm Vacation Bible School	16  5:30pm -8:30pm Vacation Bible School 7:00pm Trustees/Library	17 10:00am Exercise/AH 11:00am Yoga/AH	18	
19 VBS Sunday	20 Church Office Closed 6:00pm Yoga/AH 7:00pm Scouts/AH	21 10:00am -12:00pm Sewing Group/Youth Room 10:00am Share Group/Parlor 1:00pm Finance Committee/AH	22 11:00am -12:00pm Yoga/Narthex 6:00pm Youth Group 7:00pm Praise Team/AH	23	24 10:00am Exercise/AH 11:00am Yoga/AH	25	
26	27 Church Office Closed 6:00pm Yoga/AH 7:00pm Scouts/AH	28 10:00am -12:00pm Sewing Group/Youth Room 10:00am Share Group/Parlor	29 11:00am -12:00pm Yoga/Narthex 6:00pm Youth Group 7:00pm Praise Team/AH	30	31 10:00am Exercise/AH 11:00am Yoga/AH	1	

MONROE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
206 East Avenue, PO Box 310
Monroe, OH 45050

REQUESTED RETURN SERVICE

Mission Statement:

*Shining the light on the hill by connecting with Jesus Christ,
connecting with each other and connecting with the world.*



MONROE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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Larry Daniel, Choir Director
Melanie Flower, Organist
Linda Larkin, Nursery Attendant
Arlene Horton, Treasurer
Jerry & Anne Lapham,
Financial Sec'y

MINISTERS: CONGREGATION

OFFICE HOURS: TUESDAY-FRIDAY 9:00AM-4:30PM



FACEBOOK: *Monroe United Methodist Church*



C/*MonroeUnitedMethodist*



TWITTER: @MonroeUMC

