

Our Guest Preacher Today

Rev. Irene Monroe is described in O, the Oprah Magazine, as “a phenomenal woman who has succeeded against all odds.” An African-American lesbian feminist public theologian, she is a sought-after speaker and preacher.

Monroe does a weekly Monday segment, “All Revved Up!” on WGBH (89.7 FM), on Boston Public Radio and a weekly Friday segment “What’s Up?” on New England Channel NEWS (NECN). She’s a Huffington Post blogger and a syndicated religion columnist. Her columns appear in 23 cities across the country and in the U.K, and Canada. And she writes a weekly column in the Boston home LGBTQ newspaper Baywindows.

Monroe stated that her “columns are an interdisciplinary approach drawing on critical race theory, African American, queer and religious studies. As a religion columnist I try to inform the public of the role religion plays in discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people. Because homophobia is both a hatred of the “other” and it’s usually acted upon ‘in the name of religion,” by reporting religion in the news I aim to highlight how religious intolerance and fundamentalism not only shatters the goal of American democracy, but also aids in perpetuating other forms of oppression such as racism, sexism, classism and anti-Semitism.”

In inviting Monroe to speak at The United Nations International School at the UN they wrote “Rev. Monroe, your active role in the fight against homophobia and your written activism for human rights has truly made an impact on this world, as well as your theories on religion and homosexuality in the U.S.”

As an activist Monroe has received numerous awards: the 2015 Top 25 LGBT Power Players of New England Award by Boston Spirit Magazine and the Open Door Award for work with HIV/AIDS, Black Church and LGBTQ community; 2013 Bayard Rustin Service Award recipient, and GLAD 2012 Spirit of Justice awardee. She appears in the film For the Bible Tells Me So and was profiled in the Gay Pride episode of In the Life, an Emmy-nominated segment. She received the Harvard University Certificate of Distinction in Teaching several times while serving as head teaching fellow for the Rev. Peter Gomes.

Her papers are at the Schlesinger Library at Radcliffe College’s research library on the history of women in America. You can find out more about Monroe at www.irenemonroe.com twitter handle: @revimonroe

Parish and Pastoral Relations Committee

Committee Members: Tom Mollerus, Fred Moder and Diana Conroy

The Parish and Pastoral Relations Committee is a standing committee chosen by the Board and Deacons that seeks to support and maintain an open and healthy relationship between the pastor/s and members of the congregation. The committee does not seek to take the place of communications between the congregation and the pastoral staff, but rather to help those people who need advice and assistance in talking to the pastors. Congregants who wish to communicate with this committee may send an email to pprc@needhamucc.org.

Please do not use email to discuss sensitive or confidential matters; just use the email to establish contact with the committee, and to set up an appointment for a telephone or in-person meeting.

10:00 a.m.– 5

Board Members

Moderator - Jackie Allen, Clerk - Keith McClelland

Term Ends 2018 Michael Normile, Blair Wentworth, Sharmon Priaulx

Term Ends 2019 Jim Conroy, Diane Rees, Kristin Mollerus

Term Ends 2020 Howard Sesso, Kenneth Allen, Barbra Morton, Amanda Angel

Deacons

Term Ends 2018 Lee McNally, Charlie Baker, Claudia Darmofal, Susan Lively, Kirby Salerno

Term Ends 2019 Rick Devereux, Dibby Moder, Scott Stewart, Carol Miller, Jean Veigas

Term Ends 2020 Kevin Blume, Paul Brown, Jane Clayton- Matthews, Sue Cotton, Lucy Slosser

Rev. Jim Mitulski’s Office Hours

Please contact the church office to schedule an appointment during his office hours of Tuesday & Wednesday 2-6pm; Thursday 2-5pm

*If these times do not work for you please contact the office for alternate availability.

Staff

Interim Senior Minister
The Rev. Jim Mitulski
RevJim@needhamucc.org
781-444-2510, ext. 106

Associate Minister
The Rev. Heike Werder
RevHeike@needhamucc.org
781-444-2510, ext. 105

Director of Children & Youth Ministries
Madelyn Downer
Youth@needhamucc.org
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Organist/Accompanist
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Development Consultant
Irma Bauer-Levesque

Handyman
Bill Donovan

Housekeeper
Sanira Alchaar

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The Rev. Dr. Paul Clayton, Pastor Emeritus

10:00 a.m.– 6



The Congregational Church of Needham

An open and affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ

March 26, 2017 10:00 a.m.

The Fourth Sunday in Lent Open and Affirming 17th Anniversary Sunday National Weekend of Prayer for Trans Justice

PRELUDE Home Phillip Phillips Youth Band

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Rev. Jim and Rev. Heike

CONGREGATIONAL GREETING

OPENING PRAYER

Open and Affirming Statement as Adopted in 2000

As a covenant community we are committed to the belief that all people are created equal before God. In affirmation of the inclusive love of Christ Jesus, we welcome persons of any race, gender, age, sexual orientation, ability and economic circumstance to full participation in our community life and ministry.

We strive to reflect these beliefs in the language and content of our worship and in our lives together.

OPENING HYMN Ours the journey Julian B. Rush Verses 1-4

TIME FOR CHILDREN
Children leave for Bible Village after Time for Children

CHILDREN’S HYMN #161 (Black, New Century) Amen, Amen
(Selected verses sung by choir)

ANTHEM Namaste Mark Hayes (b.1953)

A Time of Prayer
Imagining a Prejudice Free World Where Everyone is Affirmed

Two minutes of silent meditation,
framed by the ringing of the singing bowl.

10:00 a.m.– 1

Unison Prayer of Reconciliation

Loving Creator, Let the rain come and wash away the ancient grudges, the bitter hatreds held and nurtured over generations. Let the rain wash away the memory of the heart, and neglect. Then Oh God, let the sun come out and fill the sky with beautiful rainbows. Let the warmth of the Sun heal us wherever we are broken. Let It burn away the fog so that each of us sees each other clearly. So that we can move beyond labels, beyond accents, gender, sexual orientation, or skin color. Let the warmth and brightness of the sun melt our selfishness. So that we can share the joy and sorrow of our neighbors. And let the light of the sun be so strong that we will see all people as our neighbors. Let the Earth, nourished by rain, bring forth flowers to surround us with your beauty, and let the mountains teach our hearts to reach upward to heaven. Then, Dear God, grant us comfort, give us peace, and allow us strength to enable us to Stand up, Fight for, and be a Voice for Equality. In Jesus' name, Amen!
(Offered by Rev. Debra J. Hopkins, Black, trans woman, minister at Sacred Souls Community Church in Charlotte, NC)

Gospel Luke 4: 16-30

When Jesus came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: 'The Spirit of God is upon me, because God has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. God has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the God's favour.'

And Jesus rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.' All spoke well of Jesus and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, 'Is not this Joseph's son?' He said to them, 'Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, "Doctor, cure yourself!" And you will say, "Do here also in your home town the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum."' And Jesus said, 'Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet's home town. But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up for three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.' When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. They got up, drove Jesus out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way.

Canticle

The Magnificat
from Holden Evening Prayer
Madelyn Downer, Introduction

You are invited to stand as your are able after the introduction.

Leader: An angel went from God to a town called Nazareth to a woman whose name was Mary. The angel said to her, "Rejoice, O highly favored, for God is with you. You shall bear a child, and his name shall be Jesus, the Chosen One of God Most High." And Mary said, "I am the servant of my God, I live to do your will."
(immediately to "The Magnificat")

The Magnificat
Luke 1: 46-55

SERMON

The Rev. Irene Monroe, Public Theologian

HYMN #195 (Black, New Century)

On a Hill Far Away

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

Concerns and Celebrations

Prayers for Our Friends and Families, Our Church, Our Community, and the World.

Lord's Prayer (please pray whatever form is familiar to you; many choose to pray Our Father, Our Mother, Our Father and Mother, Our Creator, or Our Maker, or Father/Mother God...debts/debtors or trespasses/those who trespass...)

OFFERING OF TITHES AND GIFTS

In each of our pews today is a black friendship book which we encourage you to fill out and pass to the person next to you during the offering. If you have been with us before, just put down your name, but if you are new today, please let us know who you are. Thanks!

Offertory Anthem

I Believe

Mark Miller

I believe in the sun even when it's not shining. I believe in love even when I don't feel it. I believe in God even when God is silent.

*Doxology

text by Isaac Watts (1710)
tune: Hamburg by Lowell Mason (1825)

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication

CLOSING HYMN

Ours the journey

Julian B. Rush
Verses 5-7

BENEDICTION

Rev. Jim and Rev. Heike

Congregational Response Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen!

POSTLUDE

Voluntary in C

John Stanley

Worship Assistant: Gretchen Lanka Allen
Deacons: Susan Lively, Rick Devereux
Altar Guild: Diana Conroy
Ushers: Rob Blauvelt, Craig Morrison, Valerie Kistler
Flowers: Nancy Fischer
Flower Delivery: Jean Veigas

The flowers on the altar are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Al Hyde and Jack Baldwin by Deb and John Baldwin.

Sunday March 26th	8:30 am 10:00am 11:00am 11:30 am 5:00 pm 6:30 pm	Chancel Choir Rehearsal, <i>Sanctuary</i> Worship Service Rev. Irene Monroe -ONA Sunday, <i>Sanctuary</i> Youth Committee Meeting Friendly Chimers Rehearsal, <i>Sanctuary</i> Bible Study, <i>Conference Room</i> Junior High Youth Group Senior High Youth Group
Monday March 27th	9:00 am 6:00 pm	Cancer Support Group, <i>1154 Reception Room</i> Confirmation Class, <i>Library</i>
Tuesday March 28th	7:00 pm	Outreach Meeting Maddie's Community Office Hours
Wednesday March 29th	7:00 pm	Lenten Vespers, <i>Chapel</i>
Thursday March 30th	12:00 pm	Lenten Lunch, <i>1180 GPA</i>
Saturday April 1st	5:00 pm	Chili Cook-Off, <i>Linden Hall</i>
Sunday April 2nd	8:30 am 10:00am 11:30 am 5:00 pm	Chancel Choir Rehearsal, <i>Sanctuary</i> Worship Service, <i>Sanctuary</i> Quarterly Board/Deacon Lunch Friendly Chimers Rehearsal, <i>Sanctuary</i> Bible Study, <i>Conference Room</i> Junior/Senior High Youth Training
Monday April 3rd	9:00 am 6:00 pm 7:15 pm	Cancer Support Group, <i>1154 Reception</i> Confirmation Class, <i>Library</i> EMT Meeting, <i>1154 Reception Room</i>
Tuesday April 4th	10:00 am 6:00 pm	Prayer Shawl Knitters, <i>1180 GPA</i> Community Dinner, <i>Linden Hall</i>
Wednesday April 5th	7:00 pm	Lenten Vespers, <i>Chapel</i>
Thursday April 6th	12:00 pm 1:20 pm 6:30 pm 7:30 pm	Lenten Lunch, <i>1180 GPA</i> Friendly Society Meeting, <i>1180 GPA</i> Music Team Meeting, <i>Conference Room</i> Choir Practice, <i>Linden AB</i>
Saturday April 8th	8:30 am	Family Promise Walk-a-Thon Guatemala Serve-a-Thon



SPRING VBS Tues., April 18 - Fri., April 21

8:30 AM - Noon
Lunch Bunch - extended
program, pick up by 1:00 PM

Got questions? Email youth@needhamucc.org
or call (781) 444-2510.

Our storybook-themed VBS will offer kids the chance to be brave princesses, adventurous knights, and to explore the continuing story of God's people through arts and crafts, theater, singing, and games. Vacation Bible School is open to students in Pre-K (toilet trained) through grade 5.

VBS DATES are Tuesday, April 18 - Friday, April 21 from 8:30 AM - Noon; Lunch Bunch extended program, pick up by 1:00 PM. Registrations will be accepted until Sunday, March 12, 2017.

Payment is due by April 1, 2017. Students may be wait-listed if program capacity is reached. The cost is \$25 for your first child, \$15 per additional sibling and \$5 for lunch bunch. Scholarships are available. If cost would prevent your student from participating in VBS, please reach out to Maddie at youth@needhamucc.org.

April VBS Registration Form: Please fill out one per child.

Child Name: _____ Grade: _____ Birthday: (mm/dd/yy) _____

Requested friend(s)/sibling(s) in same class: _____

T-shirt Size (All sizes are Youth sizes): S M L XL

Parent/Guardian Name(s): _____

Home Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone(s): _____

Email Address(es): _____

Emergency Contact Name & Number (other than parent(s) listed above): _____

Special needs/medications/allergies: _____

Please check all of the sessions you would like your child to attend.

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tuesday April 18
<input type="checkbox"/> VBS 8:30am-noon
<input type="checkbox"/> Lunch: noon-1pm | Wednesday April 19
<input type="checkbox"/> VBS 8:30am-noon
<input type="checkbox"/> Lunch: noon-1pm | Thursday April 20
<input type="checkbox"/> VBS 8:30am-noon
<input type="checkbox"/> Lunch: noon-1pm | Friday April 21
<input type="checkbox"/> VBS 8:30am-noon
<input type="checkbox"/> Lunch: noon-1pm |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Forms and fees can be dropped off at or mailed to:
The Congregational Church of Needham, attn: VBS
1154 Great Plain Ave, Needham, MA 02492



2nd Annual Chili Cook-Off! Saturday, April 1 @ 5:00 PM

Tickets on sale in Fellowship Hall
Mid March. See Rev. Heike or
Maddie Downer for more
information.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

March 26, 2017



The Congregational
Church of Needham

TODAY! ONA INTERVIEW 11:30am - March 26th, Linden Hall

ONA celebrates our 27th anniversary in March. The Rev. Irene Monroe will be our guest preacher today. **An African-American lesbian feminist public theologian, she is known nationwide and does a weekly Monday segment, "All Revved Up!" on WGBH (89.7 FM), and a weekly Friday segment "What's Up?" on NECN.** She's also a Huffington Post blogger and writes a weekly column in the Boston LGBTQ newspaper Baywindows. After worship, she and Rev. Jim will share an in-depth interview.

SAVE THE DATES! April 6 and May 21 for a CELEBRATION OF FRIENDLY SOCIETY

FRIENDLY SOCIETY, as current members have known it, will close this chapter of it's remarkable history after the May 21 meeting. Plans are being considered to continue the spirit and some activities of Friendly by other church women and Reverend Heike. Stay tuned.

April 6, Thursday, about 1:20 - Friendly Society invites former and current members to an afternoon meeting of reminiscences about Friendly Society through the years. Come share your stories, photos, and memorabilia. We plan to put together Friendly's story in a church-wide celebration of Friendly Society on May 21. Please make a special effort to attend and bring along friends who used to be active in Friendly. Place: 1180 GPA, Time: after the last Lenten soup lunch and cleanup. (Come join us for Heike's famous soups and warm fellowship at 12 pm.)

May 21, Sunday, 10 am and 11:30 am - Everyone-- Friendly members, church members and friends-- is invited to join in a celebration of Friendly Society at church. Come hear the Friendly Chimers play during the service (Be sure you're here by 10 am.), be part of the recognition of Friendly Society during church and afterwards join us for lunch and our well-loved strawberry shortcake for dessert. Music tributes will also be a part of this festive occasion.

Faith Circle Book Group Meets in the Reception Room at 1154.

We will be reading **Faithful** by Alice Hoffman and will meet on Thursday, April 27 from 10:30-12:00 to discuss. If you have any questions or concerns or need help obtaining a copy of the

book, please email Christine Weitzel at cweitzel@verizon.net. Thanks so much and look forward to seeing you soon.

Interfaith, Intergenerational Common Read

You are invited to join the Congregational Church of Needham, UCC, First Baptist Church in Needham, and First Parish of Needham Unitarian Universalist for a joint book reading of *March*, by Representative John Lewis. *March* is the story of the Civil Rights Movement in three parts, and each Book will be discussed at a different congregation. You have plenty of time to read it even if you have never read a graphic novel. Be adventurous! Take a risk! Book One's reading was completed in February and Book Two was just completed this March. The date for and Book Three is as follows:

Book Three, April 25th at 7 pm (Congregational Church of Needham)

2nd Annual Chili Cook-Off—Saturday, April 1 @ 5:00 p.m.

Are you a chef or a taster? Do you make a mean pot of chili and want to join the contest? Be a judge or chef at our great Chili Cook-Off! Tickets on sale in Fellowship Hall beginning in Mid March. Call the office, email office@needhamucc.org or speak with Rev. Heike.

Guatemala 'Servathon' Coming Up April 8th

Sponsors/Workers Needed: The Guatemala Partnership is seeking sponsors and volunteer workers for our day of community-service work at the church and around Needham. Please consider supporting a volunteer who may ask for your pledge. For questions or to work, please contact Nancy Lane at: nrlane6@hotmail.com.

FAMILY PROMISE Walkathon, Saturday, April 8

Family Promise's largest fundraiser of the year. To **REGISTER TO WALK** with our 'Needham Congregational Church' team or to **DONATE** go to <http://www.familypromisemetrowest.org>. Walkathon Team Formation and Fundraising *through the month of March*. Please stop by our coffee hour table. **Support Week** First Congregational Church Natick, *April 30-May 7* There will be a Training at The Dover Church, *Tuesday, March 7* for those interested in volunteering who have not yet attended a training. Thank you, Susan Kirk susanckirk@comcast.net

Interfaith Book Read: May 3, 2017 7:00PM

Toxic Charity— How Churches and Charities Hurt Those They Help

by Robert D. Lupton

Mission/Outreach/Benevolence groups of churches, temples, religious communities and anyone interested in giving to those in need in meaningful, uplifting and caring ways while minimizing any unintended negative effects of heartfelt charity.

Date: May 3, 2017

Time: 7 to 8:30 pm

Where: Congregational Church of Needham, 1154 GPA

Please come to the group having read the book. This event is free and open to the public, but we ask you to RSVP to the office at the Congregational Church of Needham (office@needhamucc.org or at 781-444-2510) to allow us to plan for

seating and snacks. Books are available in the church library and at Amazon.com

Announcements

Easter Flower Donations

Due by April 10th

Offering envelopes are available in the pews and in the main office for donation this Easter season to the Flower Fund in honor of loved ones. We are grateful for the flowers/plants that decorate our church and will acknowledge your generous offering in the Easter Sunday Bulletin.

Please return offering envelopes from the pews to the office to Danielle Jurdan's mailbox in the office by April 10th.

BABY BASICS

Baby Basics is celebrating its 20th Anniversary with an evening reception at TripAdvisor on March 31st from 6:30-9:00 pm. Limited tickets are available and must be purchased in advance. For more information, please visit www.babybasicsinc.org or contact Jennifer Haggerty @ info@babybasicsinc.org. Thank you!

Flower Team Opportunity

The Flower Team is looking for a special someone to take responsibility for our altar flowers for a month during the year. This person will coordinate the donation of these arrangements. In addition we decorate the church for Easter and Christmas - the most festive seasons of the year. This is a great time of fun and fellowship. If you think you might be interested contact Debbie Wentworth at bmwfac@comcast.net to find out more.

Chancel Choir

Please come sing with us! Chancel choir rehearsals for the month of March and April will be at 8:30 on Sunday morning in the sanctuary. We would love to have you be part of our choir!

Christian Education & Youth Ministries

Communion Workshop Open to students in grades 2 and above

Would your student like to learn more about Communion? Why is it bread and grape juice? Why do the ministers say what they do before we eat it? Find out at the Communion Workshop!

The workshop will be held in April and we will decide the day based on those who are interested - if your child would like to participate, send Maddie an email at youth@needhamucc.org. We will take a doodle poll to find out which day/s will work best for those interested!

SPRING VBS Sign up for Spring VBS: Kids of the Kingdom!

Our storybook-themed VBS will offer kids the chance to be brave princesses, adventurous knights, and to explore the continuing story of God's people

through arts and crafts, theater, singing, and games. Vacation Bible School is open to students in Pre-K (toilet trained) through grade 5.

Tuesday, April 18 - Friday, April 21

9:30 AM - Noon; Lunch Bunch extended program, pick up by 1:00 PM

Register by Sunday, March 12, 2017.

Scholarships are available. If cost would prevent your student from participating in VBS, please reach out to Maddie at youth@needhamucc.org.

VBS: Volunteers needed!

Volunteers are needed to help with all aspects of VBS - checking students in and out, preparing snacks, setting up classrooms, teaching, and shepherding. Whether you like cooking, games, crafts, or are up for anything, your help is needed! 2 adult volunteers (18+) are needed for each day of VBS. Students in grades 6 through 8 can participate in VBS as volunteer counselors in training. Students in grades 9 through 12 can sign up as counselors and are paid \$25/day. Please contact Maddie at youth@needhamucc.org if you are interested in participating as an adult volunteer, volunteer CIT, or High School counselor.

Junior High Youth Group meets most Sundays from 5:00 - 6:30 PM.

Senior High Youth Group meetings are Sunday night.

Please join us from 6:30 - 8:00 PM

New or Visiting Our Church

For updates on church life, our family ministries, Christian Education and Youth Ministries follow us at: **@NeedhamUCC on Instagram**
Congregational Church of Needham UCC on Facebook
@needhamucc on Twitter www.needhamucc.org

Welcome to all who are new or here for the first time. Please silence your cell phone before attending the service. You can Check In on Facebook and let people know you are here. Feel free to Tweet or Instagram during the service. If you would like or need a hearing device an usher will be able to assist you. Children's Childcare is offered for infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers in the Nursery located downstairs during the service. After Time For Children, students are dismissed to their classrooms for Bible Village. On Communion Sundays, students attend Bible Village first and then join the Worship Service for Communion.

Stewardship

3/19/2017 Collections* = \$4,911 3/19/2017 Worship Attendance = 103 People

Please contact the church office 781-444-2510 or office@needhamucc.org to find out how you can give electronically.

*Collection amount does not include additional pledges received electronically.