

MARY TAYLOR MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**168 South Broad Street
Milford, Connecticut 06460**

**Phone: 203.874.1982
FAX: 203.877.8973**

First Methodist Church in Milford: 1836

Current building dedicated: 1893

Merged with Myrtle Beach Community Church: 1969

Nesting Ghana Emmanuel U.M. Church: 2016

*Whoever you are, wherever you are
on your spiritual journey, you are welcome here.*

**THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD,
CHRISTMAS EVE
December 24, 2017**

**Order of Worship
5:00 p.m.**

(* Those who are able may stand. °°° Late arrivals will be seated.)

GATHERING MUSIC *(A time of prayer and meditation)*

PRELUDE "Still, Still, Still" E. Lorenz

LIGHTING OF THE AISLE CANDLES

THE BELL TOLLS – *Welcoming us to worship God*

*PROCESSIONAL CAROL "O Come, All Ye Faithful" No. 234 *(Verses 1,2,3,6)*

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Listen! I bring you good news of great joy: Christ the Lord is born!

People: *We are happy because God's love is shown in Jesus.*

Leader: So let us sing God's praises for this wonderful news.

People: *In Jesus, everyone shall see the Lord's salvation.*

All: *O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!*

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE *(seated)* *The Repetsky Families
Jim and Phoebe and Barbara, Mark, Elizabeth, Amanda and Mary*

CAROL RESPONSE *(seated)* "Love Came Down at Christmas" No. 242

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THE CHRISTMAS COLLECT *(unison)*

O God, whose Son born in Bethlehem is the Savior of the world: be born again tonight in our hearts, so that as we live the love Jesus showed us, we may shed his light and all may see Your salvation, who is Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE MESSIANIC PROPHECY Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

CAROL "Away in a Manger" No. 217

THE BIRTH OF JESUS St. Luke 2:1-7

CAROL "O Little Town of Bethlehem" No. 230

THE SHEPHERDS AND THE ANGELS St. Luke 2:8-14

CAROL "Angels, We Have Heard on High" No. 238

MARY AND THE SHEPHERDS GLORIFY GOD St. Luke 2:15-20

CAROL "Joy to the World" No. 246

THE MESSAGE "A Tale of Three Trees"
(Adapted from an old folk tale.) Dr. Bodt

THE CHRISTMAS PRAYER

*THE CHRISTMAS PEACE

L: May the peace of the Lord be always with you. P: *And also with you.*
(Greet one another with signs of Christ's peace.)

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Offertory Anthem: "Mary Had a Baby" The Praisemakers
Carolyn Hollyday, Elise Pitts and Mary Repetsky

*Presentation: "In the Bleak Midwinter" No. 221, v.4
*What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
if I were a Wise Man, I would do my part; yet what I can I give him: give my heart.*

*CAROL "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing" No. 240

PRAYER OF DEDICATION *(seated, unison)*

O God, this is the night for giving gifts. We thank you that you already gave us the greatest gift, Jesus Christ. Because you first loved us, we offer these gifts with thanks to you, and we join with saints on earth and saints above in praying as Jesus taught:

THE LORD'S PRAYER No. 895

THE GOSPEL OF LIGHT

John 1:1-5, 10-14

THE LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

(The light will be passed from the Christ candle to the acolytes. They will pass it to the ushers to bring among the people. Please dip the unlit candle to receive the light.)

CAROL

“Silent Night”

No. 239

(All rise as able on the final verse, and lift your candle up.)

***Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing, Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.**

*THE BENEDICTION

*THE BELL TOLLS – *Sending us to walk with and witness for Jesus*

*POSTLUDE

“God Rest You Merry”

W. Held

(During the postlude you may leave following the pastor or remain seated).

THE WORSHIP IS ENDED: THE SERVICE BEGINS.

A Christmas Eve Welcome

December 24, 2017

5 p.m.

Dear church family, friends and neighbors,

Merry Christmas to all! I trust God has blessed you this Christmas.

If you are a visitor, we thank you for being in worship with us. If you do not have a spiritual home, we invite you to consider this church and learn more about us at www.mtm-umc.org. Our active congregation welcomes and supports people of all races, genders, sexual orientations and gender identities, ages, nationalities, ethnicities, abilities and socio-economic situations.

If you are a member who has been away for a while, welcome back! May this Christmas be an opportunity to renew a vital relationship with Christ.

If you are an active member, seek out someone tonight whom you do not know and ask, "Are you new, or new to me?" May the welcome we promise be incarnate in you!

May God, who is rich in mercy, enfold us all with the love that came down at Christmas.

Christ the Savior is born!

Pastor Brian

MARY TAYLOR MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Website: www.mtm-umc.org www.facebook.com/MTMUMC

E-mail: mtmumc@sbcglobal.net

Ministers	All the People of God	Bishop	The Rev. Thomas J. Bickerton
Lay Leaders	Shelly Lapadula and Beth O'Brien	Superintendent Pastor	The Rev. Dr. Alpher Sylvester The Rev. Dr. Brian R. Bodt
Prayer Chain	Stacy Meszaros	Pastoral Assistant	The Rev. Harold V.W. Vink
Administrative Assist.	Mary Lou Kampert	Outreach Pastor	Danielle Levine
Sexton	Andy Thomas	Music Director	Dr. Richard L. Riccardi
Child Care Coordinator:		Theologian-in-Residence:	
	Laura A. Brennan		The Rev. Dr. Judith F. Bennett

AT WORSHIP TONIGHT

Ushers – David, Lorraine, Josh and Nate Carr

Greeters – Phoebe and Jim Repetsky

Liturgists – Pastor Dani Levine, Leigh Bak

Cross Bearer – Josh Paton

Acolytes – Jackie Paton and Marshall Firmender

Bible Bearer – Mary Repetsky

Praisemaker's Director: Barbara Repetsky

TO ASSIST YOU IN WORSHIP, see our ushers for:

- Large print Bibles, hymnals and bulletins
- Hearing Assist Devices

NOTICES

A FESTIVAL SERVICE OF LESSONS, CAROLS AND COMMUNION will be held tonight. The Bell Choir plays carols at 10:45 p.m. and the formal service begins at 11 p.m. Please consider returning for this different service.

OUR SANCTUARY WAS DECORATED by Leigh Bak, Flo Berrien, Nancy Bennett, Pastor Brian Bodt, Bev Dean, Eileen Doyle, Joyce Haig, Lodemia Lopes, Kelly O'Hara, Shauna Paton, Rich Perregaux, Brenda and Ed Pineau, Bob Virgalla, Ken Wilhelm and the children of the church.

THE CHURCH OFFICE IS CLOSED TOMORROW, Christmas Day and Dec. 26, St. Stephen's Day. **We will reopen on Wednesday, December 27 at 9 a.m..**

NO HEALING AND WHOLENESS WORSHIP ON CHRISTMAS DAY. Healing and Wholeness Worship will resume New Year's Day, January 1, 2018 at 7 p.m. in the Chapel, Wesley Center, 2nd Floor.

2018 OFFERING ENVELOPES are on the rear table. Please take yours. If you do not have envelopes and desire them, e-mail Mary Lou Kampert at mtmumc@sbcglobal.net.

RECENT SERMONS are in the rear of the church or at www.mtm-umc.org.

NEW YEAR'S EVE WORSHIP on ***Sunday, December 31 at 10 a.m.*** will be the historic "Wesley Covenant Service" with the message "Looking Forward" based on Luke 2:22-40. Worship will close with our ritual of prayer and healing anointing. **THERE WILL BE NO SUNDAY SCHOOL NEXT SUNDAY.**



**A
Very
Merry
Christmas,
the joy of a rich
Christmastide and
a happy and healthy
New Year to all our members,
friends and visitors; from your staff at
Mary Taylor Memorial United Methodist Church:**

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**Rick,
Andy,
Laura,
Mary Lou,
Pastors Brian,
Hal, Dani and Judy**