

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.*

EPIPHANY SUNDAY

January 1, 2017

Order of Worship

10:00 a.m.

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

THE BELL TOLLS – *Welcoming us to worship God*

PRELUDE

“The First Noel”

W. Held

WELCOME TO THE CHURCH

INTROIT

“Love Has Come”

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: The baby born in Bethlehem is a light for all people.

People: *Gentiles shall come to thy light and kings to the brightness of thy rising.*

All: *Let us worship Christ, whose star still leads wise seekers!*

*CAROL #254

“We Three Kings”

Kings of Orient

PRAYER OF THE DAY (*seated, unison*) “Epiphany”

Hymnal #255

°°°

THE GOSPEL, Part 1:

Matthew 2:1-23

Bible p.877

*HYMN #247 “O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright” *Wie schon leuchtet der Morgenstern*

*THE GOSPEL, Part 2:

John 1:1-18

Bible p.966

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: *Praise to you, Lord Christ.*

THE SERMON

“That Other Christmas Song”

Dr. Bodt

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION AND PETITION



PRAYER FOR LAY COMMUNION DISTRIBUTORS (*unison*)

Gracious God, we remember the apostolic Church which sent representatives from the Lord's table to those unable to be present. Bless and assist these lay visitors who continue this ministry. Nourish and strengthen those to whom this sacrament is brought, that they may know the comfort of your presence and the love of this community of faith. This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your spirit, to give ourselves for others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*HYMN #245 "The First Noel" The First Noel

*THE BENEDICTION

*THE BENEDICTION RESPONSE Carol #242, vs. 3

*Love shall be our token; love be yours and love be mine;
Love to God and neighbor, love for plea and gift and sign.*

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

*POSTLUDE "March of the Kings" G. Young

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

THE WORSHIP IS ENDED: THE SERVICE BEGINS.

THE WESLEY COVENANT SERVICE

HYMN #606 (*seated*) "Come, Let Us Use the Grace Divine" Kingsfold

PROCLAMATION (*by the leader*)

Brothers and sisters in Christ, the Christian life is redeemed from sin and consecrated to God. Through baptism, we have entered this life and have been admitted into the new covenant of which Jesus Christ is the Mediator. He sealed it with his own blood, that it might last forever.

On the one side, God promises to give us new life in Christ, the Source and Perfecter of our faith. On the other side, we are pledged to live no more for ourselves but only for Jesus Christ, who loved us and gave himself for us.

From time to time we renew our covenant with God, especially when we reaffirm the Baptismal Covenant and gather at the Lord's table. Today, however, we meet, as the generations before us have met, to renew the covenant that binds us to God. Let us make this covenant of God our own.

INVITATION (*responsive*)

L: Commit yourselves to Christ as his servants. Give yourselves to him, that you may belong to him. Christ has many services to be done. Some are more easy and honorable; others are more difficult and disgraceful. Some are suitable to our inclinations and interests, others are contrary to both. In some we may please Christ and please ourselves. But then there are other works where we cannot please Christ except by denying ourselves. It is necessary, therefore, that we consider what it means to be a servant of Christ.

Let us, therefore, go to Christ, and pray:

All: Let me be your servant, under your command. I will no longer be my own. I will give up myself to your will in all things.

L: Be satisfied that Christ shall give you your place and work.

All: Lord, make me what you will. I put myself fully into your hands: put me to doing, put me to suffering, let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you, let me be full, let me be empty, let me have all things, let me have nothing. I freely and with a willing heart give it all to your pleasure and disposal.

L: Christ will be the Savior of none but his servants. He is the source of all salvation to those who obey. Christ will have no servants except by consent; Christ will not accept anything except full consent to all that he requires. Christ will be all in all, or he will be nothing.

Confirm this by a holy covenant. To make this covenant a reality in your life, listen to these admonitions:

First, set apart some time, more than once, to be spent alone before the Lord; in seeking earnestly God's special assistance and gracious acceptance of you; in carefully thinking through all the conditions of the covenant; in searching your hearts whether you have already freely given your life to Christ. Consider what your sins are. Consider the laws of Christ, how holy, strict, and spiritual they are, and whether you, after having carefully considered them, are willing to choose them all. Be sure you are clear in these matters; see that you do not lie to God.

Second, be serious and in a spirit of holy awe and reverence.

Third, claim God's covenant, rely upon God's promise of giving grace and strength, so you can keep your promise. Trust not your own strength and power.

Fourth, resolve to be faithful. You have given to the Lord your hearts, you have opened your mouths to the Lord, and you have dedicated yourself to God. With God's power, never go back.

And last, be then prepared to renew your covenant with the Lord. Fall down on your knees, lift your hands toward heaven, open your hearts to the Lord, as we pray:

COVENANT PRAYER

All: O righteous God, for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, see me as I bow before you. Forgive my unfaithfulness in not having done your will, for you have promised mercy to me if I turn to you with my whole heart.

L: God requires that you shall put away all your idols.

All: I here from the bottom of my heart renounce them all, covenanting with you that no known sin shall be allowed in my life. Against your will, I have turned my love toward the world. In your power I will watch all temptations that will lead me away from you. For my own righteousness is riddled with sin, unable to stand before you.

L: Through Christ, God has offered to be your God again if you would let him.

All: Before all heaven and earth, I here acknowledge you as my Lord and God. I take you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for my portion, and vow to give up myself, body and soul, as your servant, to serve you in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life.

L: God has given the Lord Jesus Christ as the only way and means of coming to God.

All: Jesus, I do here on bended knees accept Christ as the only new and living Way, and sincerely join myself in a covenant with him. O blessed Jesus, I come to you, hungry, sinful, miserable, blind, and naked, unworthy even to wash the feet of your servants. I do here, with all my power, accept you as my Lord and Head. I renounce my own worthiness, and vow that you are the Lord, my righteousness. I renounce my own wisdom, and take you for my only guide. I renounce my own will, and take your will as my law.

L: Christ has told you that you must suffer with him.

All: I do here covenant with you, O Christ, to take my lot with you as it may fall. Through your grace I promise that neither life nor death shall part me from you.

L: God has given holy laws as the rule of your life.

All: I do here willingly put my neck under your yoke, to carry your burden. All your laws are holy, just and good. I therefore take them as the rule for my words, thoughts, and actions, promising that I will strive to order my whole life according to your direction, and not allow myself to neglect anything I know to be my duty.

L: The almighty God searches and knows your heart.

All: O God, you know that I make this covenant with you today without guile or reservation. If any falsehood should be in it, guide me and help me to set it aright. And now, glory be to you, O God the Father, whom I from this day forward shall look upon as my God and Father. Glory be to you, O God the Son, who have loved me and washed me from my sins in your own blood, and now is my Savior and Redeemer.

Glory be to you, O God the Holy Spirit, who by your almighty power has turned my heart from sin to God.

O mighty God, the Lord Omnipotent, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, you have now become my Covenant Friend. And I, through your infinite grace, have become your covenant servant. So be it. And let the covenant I have made on earth be ratified in heaven. Amen.

You are invited to sign your covenant.

*THE 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: "A Covenant Prayer" A. Pote
*Presentation: "The First Noel" Carol #245, vs. 5

**Then entered in those Wise Men three, full reverently upon the knee,
And offered there in his presence their gold and myrrh and frankincense.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.**

*A SERVICE OF WORD AND TABLE III Hymnal p.15
(Music for sung responses is Setting A, pages 17-18 in the Hymnal.)

THE LORD'S PRAYER Hymnal #895

*THE COMMUNION

(The United Methodist Church observes an open table: all are welcome to receive or refrain from receiving. Please come forward at the direction of the ushers. Hymns, as needed, during the Communion are 251, 247, 223 and 246.)

~TWO WEEK CALENDAR AT MARY TAYLOR MEMORIAL~

<i>Sunday, January 1, 2017</i>		<i>NO Sunday School today</i>
<i>Epiphany Sunday</i>	<i>10:00 a.m.</i>	<i>Worship/Communion- Sanctuary</i>
	<i>11:00 a.m.</i>	<i>Fellowship Time – Dodd Hall</i>
	<i>3:30 p.m.</i>	<i>Ghana Emmanuel UMC worship-Sanctuary</i>
	<i>7:00 p.m.</i>	<i>Alcathon ends – Wesley Center</i>
<i>Monday, January 2</i>		<i>OFFICE CLOSED</i>
	<i>7:00 p.m.</i>	<i>Healing & Wholeness Worship – Chapel</i>
<i>Tuesday, January 3</i>	<i>5:30 p.m.</i>	<i>Confirmation – Gunn Library, Wesley Center</i>
	<i>7:00 p.m.</i>	<i>“Ambassador” training, Gunn Library, Wesley Center</i>
<i>Wednesday, January 4</i>	<i>2:30 p.m.</i>	<i>Golden Hill Community Supper-Bridgeport</i>
	<i>6:30 p.m.</i>	<i>Bell Choir rehearsal – Dodd Hall</i>
	<i>6:45 p.m.</i>	<i>Pastors-Lay Leaders meeting – Pastor’s study</i>
	<i>7:45 p.m.</i>	<i>Adult Choir rehearsal – Dodd Hall</i>
<i>Thursday, January 5</i>	<i>5:30 p.m.</i>	<i>Men’s Club Dinner meeting – Dodd Hall</i>
	<i>6:30 p.m.</i>	<i>Missions Committee – Gunn Library, Wesley Center</i>
	<i>7:00 p.m.</i>	<i>Board of Trustees – Egan Room, Wesley Center</i>
<i>Friday, January 6</i>	<i>10:00 a.m.</i>	<i>Office Volunteers – Gunn Library</i>
<i>Sunday, January 8</i>	<i>9:00 a.m.</i>	<i>Sunday School begins with Chapel worship</i>
	<i>10:00 a.m.</i>	<i>Worship - Sanctuary</i>
	<i>11:00 a.m.</i>	<i>Fellowship Time – Dodd Hall</i>
	<i>3:30 p.m.</i>	<i>Ghana Emmanuel UMC worship-Chapel</i>
<i>Monday, January 9</i>	<i>7:00 p.m.</i>	<i>Healing & Wholeness Worship – Chapel</i>
<i>Tuesday, January 10</i>	<i>5:30 p.m.</i>	<i>Confirmation – Gunn Library, Wesley Center</i>
<i>Wednesday, January 11</i>	<i>6:30 p.m.</i>	<i>Bell Choir rehearsal – Dodd Hall</i>
	<i>7:45 p.m.</i>	<i>Adult Choir rehearsal – Dodd Hall</i>
<i>Thursday, January 12</i>	<i>7:00 p.m.</i>	<i>Staff-Parish Relations Committee – Gunn Library, Wesley Ctr</i>
<i>Friday, January 13</i>	<i>10:00 a.m.</i>	<i>Office Volunteers – Gunn Library</i>



MARY TAYLOR MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Telephone: 203.874.1982 Fax: 203.877.8973
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	Kelly O’Hara & Leigh Bak	Superintendent	The Rev. Kenneth Kieffer
Prayer Chain	Stacy Meszaros	Pastor	The Rev. Dr. Brian R. Bodt
Administrative Assistant	Mary Lou Kampert	Pastoral Assistant	The Rev. Harold V.W. Vink
Sexton		Outreach Pastor	Danielle Levine
Child Care Coordinator	Laura A. Brennan	Music Director	Dr. Richard L. Riccardi
		Theologian-in-Residence	The Rev. Dr. Judith F. Bennett

Grace Notes
The Presentation of the Lord, New Year’s Day
January 1, 2017

Dear Mary Taylor Memorial Church community,

The Wesley Covenant Service is the core of today’s worship. It was developed over many years by the Rev. John Wesley, M.A., founder of the Methodist movement in 18th century England. The Wesley Covenant service was influenced by, and based on, the late 17th century writing of Richard Alleine, a Puritan.

Today’s service melds Wesley’s 1780 version of his covenant service with Holy Communion. Paraphrasing David Lowes Watson from the “Disciple” Bible Study series, “We covenant to be bound with God in a time of strength so that in a time of weakness we cannot be unbound.” We confirm our resolve in the Covenant by signing it and by receiving the Holy Communion, Jesus’ sacrificial and redemptive covenant with us.

The language of the service is serious but not solemn. Being a disciple of Christ is no small matter and not for the faint of heart. As we begin a new year in challenging times, this historic service reminds us of the depth and breadth of our promises to God, and God’s to us.

May you find it, as Mr. Wesley wrote in his journal, “as usual, a time of remarkable blessing.” (October, 1765)

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Pastor Brian Bodt

AT WORSHIP TODAY

Head Usher – Nick Bettencourt **Greeters** – Carole Degnan and Carol Alex
Liturgists: Priscilla James and Liana Pitre-Dahnke
Bible bearer – Mary Repetsky **Cross Bearer** – Amanda Repetsky
Acolytes – Stefano and Mateo Cono

Communion Stewards: Leigh Bak and Carol Galloway
Communion Celebrants: Pastors Bodt and Vink; Shelly Lapadula and Liana Pitre-Dahnke
GREETING YOU AFTER WORSHIP are Pastor Bodt and Liana Pitre-Dahnke.

THE ALTAR FLOWERS are given in celebration of Rick's birthday on December 31st and Dad's birthday in heaven, given by Stacey Riccardi.

TO ASSIST YOU IN WORSHIP, see our ushers for:

- Large print Bibles, hymnals and bulletins
- Hearing Assist Devices
- Children's bulletins for ages 3 – 6 and 7 – 12

CHILD CARE for children 5 and under is provided in Wesley Center, the building next door. You may also hear the service in Dodd hall should your child become restless. Please note that children over five are expected to remain in the sanctuary; the child care in Wesley Center is not staffed to provide for older children. Our Safe Sanctuary policy requires that children leaving the sanctuary must be accompanied by an adult or guardian.

PLEASE OFFER PRAYER CONCERNS using the "Blue Sheets" in the attendance pads in each pew; or obtain one from an usher. **Please return them completed to an usher or to the center aisle where the ushers will collect them on the opening hymn.** Our Lay Leaders speak them during the Prayer of Intercession and Petition. **You are also invited to speak your concerns when we pray.** Please obtain others' permission to share their concerns. Prayers are included in our on-line prayer chain and Monday night Healing Service. **Please also consider joining our Yahoo e-communication group** (which was created for prayer concerns) to offer immediate posting of intercessory prayer requests. To sign up, contact the church office.

TODAY'S LITURGY is based on Holy Scripture, The United Methodist Hymnal (1989) and The United Methodist Book of Worship (1992).

WELCOME VISITORS! May you experience God's presence today. Please complete a red visitor's card (in the pew racks) and wear the "Visitor" name tag to help us greet you. Our Ambassadors will look for you! **CHURCH INFORMATION** is in the rear of the church.

SERMON COPIES from previous Sundays are in the rear of the church or at www.mtm-umc.org.

OUR LIFE IN PRAYER, MINISTRY AND MISSION

BULLETIN NOTICES are due by noon Wednesday for the following Sunday bulletin.

TO DONATE ALTAR FLOWERS OR A MISSION CROSS, contact Beth O'Brien at 203.877.8668 or bgobrien11@optonline.net. Flowers are \$20. A donation in lieu of flowers to support missions is honored with a cross and miniature mission scarf on the altar. Checks for either are payable to MTMUMC and mailed to Beth O'Brien, 7 Breakneck Court, 06460.

FOOD BASKET: Please place non-perishable food items in the basket located in the back of the church and monetary donations in the Beth-El envelope.

ANIMAL SHELTER DONATIONS: WET AND DRY CAT FOOD IS ESPECIALLY NEEDED NOW, according to Paul Downing's contact with the animal shelter. "Wet and dry cat food is needed for seniors with pets and for the canine facility. Towels and blankets **are** needed. Animal Control will not take peoples' released pets but will spay and neuter feral cats. Please leave your donations in the designated basket in the back of the Sanctuary. The Youth Fellowship brings these items to Animal Control each week. Bless you for caring for God's children with fur." **If you and your animals are in need, please help yourself to the available donations.**

CONTACT THE PASTORS directly or through the church office (203.874.1982, mtmumc@sbcglobal.net) with pastoral care needs and hospitalizations: **Pastor Brian Bodt:** brian.bodt@yahoo.com; 203.874.1982, ext. 111 or 203.895.3753. He is typically in office **10 am – 1 p.m.**, Mon. – Thurs. **Pastor Hal Vink:** 203.878.8977 or vinkhaljane@gmail.com. **Pastor Dani Levine:** 203.927.9077 or Danielle.levine@mail.com.

"FIX IT BOX" is in Dodd Hall. See a need? Drop a completed form in the box.

WE HOST Alcoholics Anonymous AND Gamblers Anonymous WEEKLY. Please call the church office for the schedule or see it posted on the bulletin boards.

PLEASE NOTE: During a medical or other emergency the Head Usher or a designee will call #911. Please do not call on your cell phone as multiple calls may delay response.

VITAL CONGREGATION WEEKLY REPORT FOR December 25th:

Total worship attendance all services: 488; December 22nd Taize worship: 10; Christmas Eve, 5 p.m.: 180; Christmas Eve, 11 p.m.: 176; Christmas Day, 10 a.m.: 91; GEUMC, 25 ; Dec. 26 Healing and Wholeness worship: 6. Total Offerings (minus "Lift Us Up) for December 25th: \$7,866.00; "Lift Us Up" Capital Campaign gifts \$4,561.00; Amount given to Charities and Benevolence \$450.00; Engaged in Small Groups: 147; Living Crèche, 3 nights: 65; Community Supper, Dec. 22: 46; Office volunteers, Dec. 28: 8; No Sunday School or Confirmation class; Dec. 22 Bell Choir: 8 and Adult Choir: 17; Dec. 29 office volunteers, 3; Total persons received on profession of faith: 0; Total Persons involved in local, national, and international missions: 0.) *Small Groups – please contact the church office mtmumc@sbcglobal.net or 203.874.1982) with your attendance.

MTM MEMBERS Yahoo Group Protocols

Mary Taylor Memorial Church (MTMUMC) has an internal e-mail communication link that we informally call the "Yahoo Group." It is a "closed" group, which means that one needs to request admission into the group by one of the moderators. The process of joining has been described monthly in the "Beacon" for many years and is reprinted below. You may also request membership by contacting Stacy Meszaros, Pastor Brian Bodt or Mary Lou Kampert. Questions may be addressed to them as well by contacting the church office: 203.874.1982.

The purposes of the group, as described when membership approval is granted, are (1) to share prayer concerns and joys and (2) to share information about MTMUMC-related ministries and activities. These are the only purposes for which this group is to be used.

If you would like to join our MTM Members Yahoo Group to receive prayer requests and other messages relevant to our life at Mary Taylor, please follow the directions below:

Type <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo> in your browser

1. Log in to your Yahoo account or create a Yahoo account
2. Select the **Search Groups** box and type **MTM-members** or **Mary Taylor Memorial UMC**

Select **Join Group** (Note: it should take a day or two for access to be granted.)

You may also send an e-mail to: mtm-members-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

For this option an e-mail will be sent back to the person making the request with a link to sign in.

Once you are a member of the group, posting messages is as simple as sending an e-mail addressed to MTM-members@yahoogroups.com. You may also post messages to the group by signing in with your "Yahoo" username and password. Thank you for your interest in the prayer and ministry life of MTMUMC.



TODAY

FELLOWSHIP TIME TODAY is hosted by Holly Firmender and Barbara Repetsky. Next Sunday's hosts will be Gay/Straight Alliance.

2017 OFFERING ENVELOPES are available for pick up in the rear of the sanctuary.

SOCKS FOR SENIORS continues under the leadership of Eileen Potkay, LPN a member of our Parish Health and Wellness team. There is a collection box in Dodd Hall for your new and gently used Adult size (any color) socks for local seniors in need. Any questions please contact her directly at 1-203-809-0188 or email her at Eileenmary68@aol.com.

ALTAR FLOWER ORDERS FOR 2017 are now being accepted. Please contact Beth O'Brien at 203.877.8668 or bgobrien11@optonline.net. Flowers are \$20 per vase.

THE UPPER ROOM DISCIPLINE 2017 devotional books are still available from Don Hastings at \$10 each.

TRASH AND TREASURES needs 2 hollow-core doors (prefer unpainted) without windows for display purposes. Please call Dolly Bonisch at 203-783-9952 before bringing them down.

SEE THE WEEKLY CALENDAR FOR MEETING LOCATIONS AND SCHEDULE.

BETH-EL SHELTER COLLECTION

January is the month that we support the Beth-el Shelter with paper goods, kitchen and other supplies. It is our ongoing commitment to support the shelter in the work that they do in providing a safe and warm shelter for those less fortunate. Please help to provide the necessary and most needed items below:

Kitchen and Paper Supplies: Paper towels, hot/cold cups (*6oz or 8oz*), 8oz bowls, tall kitchen garbage bags (*13 gal*), paper placemats, paper napkins, food storage bags (*gallon, sandwich and snack size*), plastic wrap, heavy duty aluminum foil, toilet paper, facial tissue and large heavy duty garbage bags (*55 gallon*).

Cleaning Supplies: Anti-bacterial household cleaners such as; Lysol/Pine-Sol, bleach (gallon), kitchen wipes, glass cleaner, dish detergent, dishwasher detergent (liquid), scouring pads and sponges.

Other items: Hand soap, feminine hygiene products, band aids, gauze, medical tape, surgical masks, Vinyl (no latex) powder-free gloves (*s, m, l*) and **hand sanitizer**.

There will be a collection box in Dodd Hall for the month of January.

THIS WEEK

THE CHURCH OFFICE is **closed tomorrow** and will reopen on *Tuesday, Jan. 2 at 9 a.m.*

HELP US UNDECORATE THE CHRISMON TREE. It's time to put away our incredible Chrismon Tree that has graced our sanctuary throughout the Advent and Christmas seasons. Can you join us this *Monday, January 2nd at 10 a.m. in the sanctuary?* Bob & Becky Virgalla note that many hands make light work and allow us to finish the job quickly.

If you can let us know ahead of time that you can join us, please contact Nancy Bennett (203-530-0176, nancy516@aol.com) or Leigh Bak (203-215-0470, leighb619@gmail.com).

AMBASSADOR TRAINING will be held on *this Tuesday, January 3, 7 – 8 p.m.* in the Gunn Library. “Ambassadors” are MTMUMC members committed to greeting newcomers, introducing them to one of the pastors, and inviting them to Fellowship Time. While we hope that ALL MTMUMC members do this at times, these disciples make an intentional six-month commitment to do so. If you are interested in attending – you may attend the training without a commitment to become an Ambassador – please contact Pastor Brian at 203.895.3753 or brian.bodt@yahoo.com.

NEXT COMMUNITY SUPPER AT GOLDEN HILL CHURCH, BRIDGEPORT: *this Wednesday, January 4th, 2:30 – 5 p.m.* We prepare the meal, led by Maryanne Meehan Jordan and Bob Jordan. Golden Hill Church is about 20 minutes away: I-95 to Exit 27A to Exit 2 off the Route 8/25 connector. **Golden Hill and Maryann Meehan Jordan would like to express their thanks to everyone who served in 2016. Thank you for making a difference in the lives of those less fortunate.**

THE MEN'S CLUB will have their 2017 event planning meeting *this Thursday, Jan. 5th, 5:30 p.m.* in Dodd Hall. A catered dinner will be served. **All men** of the church are invited to attend.

AN OPEN INVITATION FROM THE MISSIONS COMMITTEE: Are you interested in participating in a mission and becoming more involved in our community? **“CONNECT”**- “Congregations Organized for a New Connecticut” - will present at the next Missions Committee meeting on *this Thurs., January 5th, 6:30 p.m.* We meet in the Gunn Library, Wesley Center, 2nd Floor. We will discuss ways YOU and our committee can be more involved. **CONNECT** is an organization made up of 25 religious and civic institutions, multi-faith, racially and ethnically diverse, in New Haven and Fairfield counties. They negotiate with business and government leaders about issues that affect their members. If we decide to join, a “core team” will need to be created to participate in the work of the organization. **CONNECT** has had an important impact on Health Insurance Premiums, Restraint and Seclusion, Police Reform and many other issues. If you cannot make the meeting but would like to be involved, please contact Maryann Petremont (203.877.0612, mapetremont@yahoo.com) or Lorraine Carr (203.931.0516; carrain@yahoo.com).

NEXT SUNDAY, January 8th

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD – Sunday School resumes at 9 a.m. with Chapel worship. We remember Jesus' baptism in Matthew 3:13-17 along with the promises of Psalm 29, Isaiah 42:1-9 and Acts 10:34-43. The message is an original short story by Pastor Brian entitled “When Jesus Was Baptized and What Happened Then.” We will install our 2017 church officers and a Mission Moment will be presented by Jim Repetsky on the Men's Club's mission commitments. After worship, our United Methodist Women will hold their “Second Sunday Soup Sale.”

METHODIST YOUTH FELLOWSHIP will resume its regular Sunday meeting schedule *next Sunday, January 8, 4-5 p.m.* in the Youth Lounge, Wesley Center. All youth grades 6-12 are encouraged to attend.

COMING SOON

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION SESSIONS will be held in January based on the availability of those interested. The sessions will either be Wednesdays, Jan. 11, 18 and 25 from 7-8 p.m. or Sundays, Jan. 8, 15 and 22 from 11:45-12:45 p.m. All will be in my office in the Wesley Center. You may attend the sessions without a commitment to join. If interested in considering church membership, please contact me at 203.895.3753 or brian.bodt@yahoo.com.

Pastor Brian

“FAIR ON THE GREEN” ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING: *Sunday, January 15,* immediately after worship in the Wesley Center.

“THE GREAT BIBLE EXPERIMENT”, second unit, “Introducing the Old Testament,” will be taught in January. The study follows our typical Tuesday at 7 p.m., Wednesday at 10 a.m. format, with students choosing one or the other but with the option to alternate as personal schedules require. **The six study session begins Jan. 17/18 and ends Feb. 21/22**, the week before Lent begins. If you are interested in attending, please register through the church office (203.874.1982 or mtmumc@sbcglobal.net).

SANCTUARY WINDOW RESTORATION PROJECT, Phase 2, will begin in mid-January. Five windows will be removed and returned after Easter. Details were in the December “Beacon,” page 15 and reappear in a shorter form in the January issue.