

MARY TAYLOR MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
168 South Broad Street Phone: 203.874.1982
Milford, Connecticut 06460 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 FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
CHRISTMAS SUNDAY
December 18, 2016**

**Order of Worship
10:00 a.m.**

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

INFORMAL CAROL SING (9:45 a.m.)

THE BELL TOLLS – *Welcoming us to worship God*

PRELUDE “People, Look East” R. Hobby

WELCOME TO THE CHURCH

INTROIT “A Star Shone Bright”

*CALL TO WORSHIP (*unison*) Sung to “Good King Wenceslas”

*Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger;
There he lay, the undefiled, to the world a stranger.
Such a babe in such a place, can he be the Savior?
Ask the saved of all the race who have found his favor.*

*HYMN #202, verses 1-3 “People, Look East” Besancon

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH (*seated*) The Candle of Love
Kelly O’Hara

SUNG RESPONSE “People, Look East” Hymn #202, vs. 4

*Angels announce with shouts of mirth him who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east and sing today, Love, the Lord, is on the way.*

°°°
THE PRAYER OF THE DAY (*unison*)

*Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Take away the hindrance of our sins and make us ready for the celebration of your birth, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and forever.
Amen.*

SILENT CONFESSION AND WORDS OF PARDON

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES Isaiah 7:10-16 Bible p.623

Reader: The Word of the Lord. People: *Thanks be to God.*

HYMN #204 (*seated*) “Emmanuel” McGee

(*Sing twice. Let the children come forward for their message.*)

ESPECIALLY FOR THE CHILDREN

*HYMN #171 “There’s Something About That Name” That Name

*THE GOSPEL Matthew 1:18-25 Bible p.877

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord. People: *Praise to you, Lord Christ.*

*HYMN “Righteous Joseph, Spouse of Mary” Irby (Tune: Hymn #250)

*Righteous Joseph, spouse of Mary, mid-wife of Emmanuel
Called by God to be the blood line of the King of Israel
Troubling message how it came
Birth of Christ revealed in shame.*

*Righteous Joseph, not the father of the child of God’s embrace
Quietly resolved he humbly not his Mary to disgrace
Saddening message how it came,
Mary’s child without a name.*

*Righteous Joseph, full of compassion, heard the voice of God in sleep
In the dream, the angel speaking: “Do not fear your promise to keep.”
Healing message how it came
Painful passions God would tame.*

*“Righteous Joseph, Mary’s child is fathered by the Holy Ghost
And his name shall be called ‘Jesus,’” sayeth all the heavenly host.
Saving message how it came,
Our redemption from the Lamb!*

*Righteous Joseph, God is with you, in the Christ, Emmanuel.
So with us our God is living in the news he came to tell.
Gladdening message comes today:
God will always find a way.*

Text: Matthew 1:18-25 Tune: Irby

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THE SERMON “Fashioning the Crib of Christ” Dr. Bodt

PRAYERS OF PETITION AND INTERCESSION

Leader: Lord, in Your mercy,

People: *Hear our prayer.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Hymnal #895

*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.)

STEWARDSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Priscilla James

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Offertory Anthem:

“Come, Emmanuel”

D. Besig and N. Price

(Adult Choir)

*Presentation:

“Sing We Now of Christmas”

Hymnal #237, vs. 5

Gold and myrrh they took there, gifts of greatest price;

there was never a stable so like paradise.

Sing we Noel, the King is born, Noel!

Sing we now of Christmas, sing we now Noel!

*Prayer of Dedication

*HYMN #228

“He Is Born (Il Est Ne)”

Il Est Ne

(During the hymn the choir descends to the Nave.)

VISUAL BENEDICTION

Prepared by Cathy Cono and Holly Firmender

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

*POSTLUDE

“Toccata on ‘Good King Wenceslas’”

G. Young

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

THE WORSHIP IS ENDED: THE SERVICE BEGINS.

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
Christmas Sunday, the Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 18, 2016

Dear Mary Taylor Memorial Church community,

It's here. Wait. No, it's not.

Although the culture has been steam-rolling us for a while with its blitz of marketing and mayhem, Christmas is still a week away. This year's Advent provides the longest possible time of preparation – a full four weeks – with Christmas falling on a Sunday this year.

Have we taken advantage of the extra time to truly prepare? Or have we arrived today to find ourselves frayed and frazzled?

Good news! If we're not ready, there's a week for an end-of-flight correction. Take a breath, determine what's REALLY important, use this week for that, and let the rest go.

As for next weekend, each service on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day will have different messages, a different format, different translations of scripture and different service music. Yes, we will have candle lighting at both Christmas Eve services and some carols will be similar. I know people have their plans and family commitments – me, too! – but I want you to know that your staff and all the volunteer musicians, liturgists, altar servers, ushers, Communion stewards and healing anointers have prepared their very best to make these services worthy of the Christ whose birth they celebrate. I hope you will attend at least one service and more if possible. Not for me or any one of us that have the privilege of leadership, but for the glory of God and the baby, born in a manger.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Pastor Brian Bodt

Sunday, December 18
 9:00 a.m. Sunday School-Wesley Center
 9:45 a.m. Informal Hymn Singing - Sanctuary
 10:00 a.m. Worship - Sanctuary
 11:00 a.m. Men's Club Soup and Sandwich Luncheon – Dodd Hall
 11:15 a.m. Blood Pressure Screenings - Sanctuary
 11:45 a.m. Caring Ministries – Wesley Center
 3:30 p.m. Ghana Emmanuel UMC worship-Chapel
 4:00 p.m. MYF Christmas Party – 4-6:00p.m. at the Downing's home

Monday, December 19
 7:00 p.m. Blue Christmas Service – Sanctuary

Tuesday, December 20
 7:00 p.m. St. Mary Job Search Support Group – 70 Gulf St. Milford

Wednesday, December 21
 6:30 p.m. Bell Choir rehearsal/7:45 p.m. Adult Choir rehearsal

Thursday, December 22
 10:00 a.m. Office Volunteers
 5:30 p.m. MTMUMC Community Supper – Dodd Hall
 6:00 p.m.- 8:00 p.m. Living Crèche-Rachel Merva Contact
 6:45 p.m. Taize Service – Sanctuary

Friday, December 23
 THE OFFICE IS CLOSED TODAY

Saturday, December 24
 6:00 p.m.- 8:00 p.m. Living Crèche-Rachel Merva Contact
 THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD, CHRISTMAS EVE
 4:45 p.m. – 6:10 p.m. Living Crèche-Rachel Merva Contact
 5:00 p.m. and 10:45 p.m. Christmas Eve Services – Sanctuary

Sunday, December 25
 THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD, CHRISTMAS DAY
 NO Sunday School today
 10:00 a.m. Worship - Sanctuary
 11:00 a.m. Fellowship Time – Dodd Hall
 3:30 p.m. Ghana Emmanuel UMC worship-Chapel

Mon. – Fri., Dec. 26-30
 DODD HALL CLOSED FOR FLOOR REFINISHING

Monday, December 26
 THE OFFICE IS CLOSED TODAY
 7:00 p.m. Healing & Wholeness Worship – Chapel

Tuesday, December 27
 Office open – no activities or meetings calendared

Wednesday, December 28
 9:00 a.m. Office volunteers – Egan Room, Wesley Center

Thursday, December 29
 10:00 a.m. Office Volunteers – Gunn Library

Friday, December 30
 THE OFFICE IS CLOSED TODAY

Saturday, December 31 -
 7:00 p.m. - Alcathon – Wesley Center

Sunday, January 1, 2017
 7:00 p.m.



AT WORSHIP TODAY

Head Usher – Tanner Georgelos

Greeters – Cathy and Pete Liontas

Liturgist – Cathy Cono

Bible bearer – Mary Repetsky

Cross Bearer – Stefano Cono

Acolytes – Carolyn Hollyday and Natalie Rendon

GREETING YOU AFTER WORSHIP are Pastor Brian Bodt and Cathy Cono.

THE ALTAR FLOWERS today are in honor of Paul Downing's birthday, from Lillia and Bev; in honor of Millie Bartolomy, born December 16th, given by Faith Reardon, Cheryl Griffin, and Edie Reichard; and to my friend Cristen West with love and prayers on this coming Sunday, Christmas Day, Love, Susan.

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 Lutheran Book of Worship (1978). "Righteous Joseph, Spouse of Mary" are original lyrics written by Pastor Brian.

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.

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.

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 11th:

Total worship attendance all services: 217; December 11th: 171; GEUMC, 20; Dec. 12th Healing & Wholeness Sing: 26; Total Offerings (minus "Lift Us Up) for December 11th: \$6,481.63; "Lift Us Up" Capital Campaign gifts \$3,411.00; Amount given to Charities and Benevolence \$0; Engaged in Small Groups: 338; Prayer Shawl, Dec. 8: 11; Dec. 10 Christmas Pageant: 120; MYF Dinner and Auction, Dec. 10: 113; Sunday School: 40; Intergenerational Ring and Sing, Dec. 11: 25; No Confirmation class; Bell Choir: 7; Adult Choir: 14; Office volunteers, 8; 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.



"It's the perfect Christmas gift - Hope on a Rope."

OUR ELECTRONIC GIVING OPTION:

Our Finance Committee asks that you remember that our church offers electronic giving as an option for most giving. The "shocking green" brochure in the rear of the church details how to sign up, or you can contact our Treasurer, Eileen Doyle, at ddoyle51@aol.com or 203.874.1982.

You may also scan the QR ("Quick Response") code to the right with your smart phone.



Please note that you cannot use e-giving for flowers, adult study books, soup sales or anything where a good or service is provided.

TODAY

A SOUP AND SANDWICH LUNCHEON SPONSORED BY THE MEN'S CLUB follows

worship today in Dodd Hall. The luncheon is complimentary though free-will gifts are welcome.

BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENINGS follow worship in the sanctuary by Eileen Potkay, LPN.

CARING MINISTRIES TEAM LEADERS meet at 11:45 a.m. in the Wesley Center, 1st Floor. Any member of the Caring Ministries teams (Visitation, Transportation, Healing and Wholeness, Prayer Shawl and Parish Health and Wellness) is welcome to attend.

THE METHODIST YOUTH FELLOWSHIP CHRISTMAS PARTY will be held at the Downing's home, 187 Third Avenue, Milford today from 4-6 pm. Pizza! Bring a dessert to share! We will be doing a Secret Santa (\$10 limit). **Regular meetings resume on Jan. 8th.**

SIGN UP FOR LIVING CRECHE in Dodd Hall today with Rachel Merva (203.641.5088) or Priscilla James (203.804.0279). A Nativity tableau in front of our church reminds Milford of "the Reason for the Season." **Our particular need right now** is for these day/date/times:

- Thursday, Dec. 22, 6:30 – 6:50 pm and 7:30 – 7:50 p.m.
- Christmas Eve, Saturday, Dec. 24, 5:55 – 6:20 p.m.

Our other teams are adequate but we can always use more portrayals. The dates are Thurs. and Fri., Dec. 22 and 23, from 6-8 p.m. (multiple 20 minute shifts) and Christmas Eve between 4:45 and 6:10 p.m., before and after the 5 p.m. worship.

SOCKS FOR SENIORS returns today. There is a collection box Dodd Hall for your new and gently used Adult size (any color) socks for local seniors in need. Any questions please contact Eileen Potkay, LPN directly at 1-203-809-0188 or at Eileenmary68@aol.com.

HELP CLEAR DODD HALL! The Dodd Hall floor will be refinished the week of Dec. 26-30. The Trustees will thank you if you can help. Here's how:

- Take today any unclaimed plates or dishes that belong to you. They are outside the Dodd Hall kitchen serving window. Any remaining on Christmas will be donated.
- Volunteer to help empty the hall on Mon., Dec. 26 at 6 a.m. (yes, a.m.!) Contact Christine Volgmuth at 203.710.9835.
- Do not plan any work or activity in the hall that week.

THE UPPER ROOM DISCIPLINE 2017 books will continue to be distributed after church in Dodd Hall. Additional copies were ordered this week and hopefully will be available today. The price is \$10 cash or check payable to "MTMUMC" memoed "Upper Room Disciplines." Please see Don Hastings if you have questions.

MTMUMC STAFF CHRISTMAS GIFTS may be given to any member of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee. See the enclosed flier for names and details on how to give.

SEE THE WEEKLY CALENDAR FOR MEETING LOCATIONS AND SCHEDULE.

THIS WEEK, CHRISTMAS WEEK, December 18-25

"A BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE," tomorrow, Dec. 19, 7 p.m. in the sanctuary. This service of Christian worship is for all, but especially for anyone for whom the joy and gaiety of the

Christmas season is muted by sadness, loss or grief. Fellowship time follows in Dodd Hall.

COMMUNITY SUPPER, Thursday, December 22, 5:30 p.m. in Dodd Hall. To assist, please contact Deb Dubien 203-449-4601 or Jim Repetsky 203-874-8688.

TAIZE WORSHIP follows Community Supper on Dec. 22nd at 6:45 p.m. in the sanctuary.



“A Blue Christmas Service”

This service of Christian worship is for all, but especially for anyone for whom the joy and gaiety of the Christmas season is muted by sadness, loss or grief.

Monday, December 19, 2016
7 p.m.

Mary Taylor Memorial United Methodist Church
168 South Broad Street
Milford, Connecticut

The worship will be held in the fully handicapped-accessible sanctuary. Signage and greeters will direct you. For those who desire to remain, a time of fellowship and conversation will follow.

This service is a unique offering in our regular series of “Healing and Wholeness” worship services each Monday evening at 7 p.m.

For more information please contact the church office at 203.874.1982 or mtmumc@sbcglobal.net.



This 30 minute contemplative service is a fitting ending to the day.

CHRISTMAS EVE, Saturday, December 24

- **5 p.m.** Family service of carols and candlelight
- **10:45 p.m.** Carols of the Season by the Bell Choir
- **11 p.m.** Candlelight service of Holy Communion

NEXT SUNDAY, December 25th

CHRISTMAS DAY, Sunday, December 25

- **10 a.m.** Service of Lessons and Carols from King’s College, Cambridge, UK

IF YOU WOULD CONSIDER HOSTING A SIMPLE FELLOWSHIP TIME ON CHRISTMAS DAY, please speak with Pastor Brian today or by phone (203.895.3753).

COMING IN JANUARY

“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.

