

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*

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

**THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT
CHRISTMAS SUNDAY
December 20, 2015**

**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 “He Is Born, The Holy Child” D. Paxton

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES
(*Please keep our focus on the worship of God by sharing only items not in the bulletin.*)

INTROIT “Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow”

*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 #228 “He Is Born” Il est ne
(*Il est ne, le divin Enfant*)

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH (*seated*) The Candle of Love
Scott, Holly, Marshall and Michael Firmender

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*) from a service of *Las Posadas*
God all-powerful, grant that we may rid ourselves of the works of darkness, and that we may invest ourselves with the weapons of light in this life, to which your son, Jesus Christ, with great humility came to visit us. In the final day, when he returns in majestic glory to judge the living and the dead, may we rise to eternal life through him, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION AND WORDS OF PARDON

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES Micah 5:2-5a Bible p.849
Reader: The Word of the Lord. People: *Thanks be to God.*

HYMN #242 (*seated*) “Love Came Down at Christmas” Gartan
(*Let the children come forward on the final verse for their message.*)

ESPECIALLY FOR THE CHILDREN

*HYMN #215 “To a Maid Engaged to Joseph” Annunciation

*THE GOSPEL Luke 1:39-55 (*King James’ Version*) Bible p.932
Reader: The Gospel of the Lord. People: *Praise to you, Lord Christ.*

THE SERMON “Time to Travel” Dr. Bodt

HYMN #198 (*seated*) “My Soul Gives Glory to My God” Morning Song

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 Jim Repetsky

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS
Offertory Anthem: “Shepherds, Hurry!” arr. by K. Scott
*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 #249 “There’s a Song in the Air” Christmas Song
(*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 following the pastor or remain seated).

THE WORSHIP IS ENDED: THE SERVICE BEGINS.

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

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|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Ministers | All the People of God | Bishop | The Rev. Jane Allen Middleton |
| 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 | Bruce Rumford | Outreach Pastor | Rachel Duncan |
| Child Care Coordinator | Nicole Ellerbeck | Music Director | Dr. Richard L. Riccardi |

*Grace Notes
December 20, 2015*

Dear Mary Taylor Memorial Church community,

It's a myth.

Don't be alarmed. This statement does not reference the birth of Jesus Christ, although some would have us think so. It doesn't ever reference...well, you know. THAT guy is a western European and American adaptation of St. Nicholas, a bishop of the same name in 6th century Turkey, who went about helping poor folks.

I'm talking travel. At least as measured by air travel, it's a myth that the day before Thanksgiving and the Christmas season are the busiest travel days of the year. In fact, of the top 50 dates since this time last year, 48 were dates in June, July and August! The two exceptions were November 29 (at #2) and December 18 (at #50). It's the same with car traffic, where "peak" varies even more from day to day and region to region.

The bottom line, though, is that we're a nation on the move. So if you're on the move this season, take a deep breath and plan for delays and possible botched reservations. It you get there without either, you are twice blessed. It was the same in the first century, when Caesar Augustus needed a census to assess the need for government services and government taxation. Nothing much has changed, eh?

Well, perhaps one thing. One of those couples on the move had a baby. As babies tend to do, he turned that couple's world upside down. Good news for them and us: that baby turned the world upside down, too! Thank God that Jesus is "the reason for the Season."

Merry Christmas!

Pastor Brian



AT WORSHIP TODAY

Head Usher – Nick Bettencourt

Liturgist – Bev Downing

Bible Bearer – Zoe Browne

Greeters – The Perregaux family

Acolytes – Bryan Thompson and Amanda Repetsky

Cross Bearer – Shannon Thompson

GREETING YOU AFTER WORSHIP are Rev. Bodt and Bev Downing.

ALTAR FLOWERS today are in celebration of Clifford Brown's birthday, from his Mom; and from Scott Corliss and family in loving memory of Connie Corliss who passed away on Friday, December 11th.

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. Ushers collect them on the opening hymn and our Lay Leaders speak them during the Prayer of Intercession and Petition. Please obtain others' permission to share their concerns. Prayers are included in our on-line prayer chain and Monday night Healing Service. You are also invited to speak your concerns when we pray.

TODAY'S LITURGY is taken from Holy Scripture, The United Methodist Hymnal (1989) and The United Methodist Book of Worship (2000). **THE VISUAL BENEDICTION**, prepared by Cathy Cono and Holly Firmender, was first shown at the Christmas pageant on Saturday, December 12th.

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.

~Two week calendar at Mary Taylor Memorial~

| | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------|--|
| <i>Sunday, December 20</i> | 9:00 a.m. | <i>Sunday School – Wesley Center</i> |
| | 9:45 a.m. | <i>Informal carol singing - Sanctuary</i> |
| | 10:00 a.m. | <i>Worship - Sanctuary</i> |
| | 11:00 a.m. | <i>Fellowship Time – Dodd Hall</i> |
| | 11:00 a.m. | <i>Soup and Sandwich Luncheon – Dodd Hall</i> |
| | 11:15 a.m. | <i>Blood pressure screenings - Sanctuary</i> |
| <i>Monday, December 21</i> | 7:00 p.m. | <i>“Blue Christmas” worship – Sanctuary</i> |
| <i>Tuesday, December 22</i> | 6 – 8 p.m. | <i>“Living Creche” – outside the church, Broad Street</i> |
| <i>Wednesday, December 23</i> | 9:00 a.m. | <i>“Beacon” volunteers – Egan room</i> |
| | 5:30 p.m. | <i>Praisemaker's Children's Choir rehearsal – Dodd Hall</i> |
| | 6 – 8 p.m. | <i>“Living Creche” – outside the church, Broad Street</i> |
| | 6:30 p.m. | <i>Bell Choir/7:45 p.m. Adult Choir rehearsals – Dodd Hall</i> |
| <i>Thursday, December 24</i> | | CHRISTMAS EVE – CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED |
| | 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. | <i>“Living Creche” – outside the church, Broad Street</i> |
| | 5:00 p.m. | <i>Family Christmas Eve worship – Sanctuary</i> |
| | 10:45 p.m. | <i>Bell Choir carols – Sanctuary</i> |
| | 11:00 p.m. | <i>Christmas Eve worship with Holy Communion – Sanctuary</i> |
| <i>Friday, December 25</i> | | CHRISTMAS DAY – CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED |
| | | <i>Read Luke 2:1-20</i> |
| <hr/> | | |
| <i>Sunday, December 27</i> | | CHRISTMAS I |
| | | <i>NO Sunday School today</i> |
| | 10:00 a.m. | <i>Worship - Sanctuary</i> |
| | 11:00 a.m. | <i>Fellowship Time – Dodd Hall</i> |
| | 11:30 a.m. | <i>Caring Ministries</i> |
| | 11:30 a.m. | <i>Creche Take Down – see Rachel Merva</i> |
| <i>Monday, December 28</i> | 7:00 p.m. | <i>Service of Healing and Wholeness – Chapel</i> |
| <i>Tuesday, December 29</i> | | <i>NO Confirmation Class this week – Christmas recess</i> |
| <i>Wednesday, December 30</i> | | <i>NO Choir Rehearsals – Christmas recess</i> |
| <i>Thursday, December 31</i> | 10:00 a.m. | <i>Office Volunteers</i> |
| | 7:00 p.m. | <i>Alcathon – Wesley Center</i> |
| <i>Friday, January 1</i> | | New Year's Day – CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED |
| | | <i>Alcathon – all day</i> |

ONE VOLUNTEER NEEDED at the Beth-El Center to work with me and a supervisor in the soup kitchen, every Monday between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. We prepare and handout "Meals To Go" bagged lunches for the homeless. If you would like more information, please call/ see me, Mary Lou Kampert in the church office at 203-874-1982 or call me at 203-726-0206 on my cell. Thank you.

OUR LIFE IN PRAYER, MINISTRY AND MISSION

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

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 needed for seniors with pets. Also wet and dry dog food 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.

CONTACTING THE PASTORS: Please inform a pastor or the church office (203.874.1982, mtmumc@sbcglobal.net) of pastoral care needs and hospitalizations:

Pastor Brian Bodt can be reached at brian.bodt@yahoo.com; 203.874.1982, ext. 11 or 203.895.3753. He is typically in office **10 am – 1 p.m.**, Mon. – Thurs. Appointments scheduled in advance are always the best way to get his full attention.

Pastor Hal Vink can be reached at 203.878.8977 or vinkhaljane@gmail.com.

Pastor Rachel Duncan can be reached at 203.874.1982 or rachel.e.duncan@gmail.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 13th:

Total worship attendance all services: 239; December 13th: 189; Healing and Wholeness, December 14th: 36; Taize, December 16th, noon: 14 Total Offerings (minus “Lift Us Up) for December 13th: \$7,049.01; “Lift Us Up” Capital Campaign gifts \$2,997.33; Amount given to Charities and Benevolences: \$698.98; Engaged in Small Groups: 200 - (Office Volunteers: 5; Christmas pageant and MYF dinner, Dec. 12: 120; Sunday School: 43; Confirmation: 8; No Praisemaker’s; Bell Choir: 7; Adult Choir: 17). 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.

ACTIVITIES AND INFORMATION TODAY

FELLOWSHIP TIME WITH SOUP AND SANDWICH LUNCHEON follows worship in Dodd Hall (behind the sanctuary). The luncheon is free, hosted by our Men’s Club. All invited. Fellowship Time is hosted today by the United Methodist Women and next Sunday by the Missions Committee. Join us for a few moments of fellowship and conversation.

2016 OFFERING ENVELOPES are available for pick up in the rear of the sanctuary.

BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENINGS are offered after worship in the sanctuary by Sheryl Hollyday, R.N.

“**LIVING CRECHE**” **40th ANNIVERSARY SIGN-UPS** are today in Dodd Hall. See Rachel Merva (203.641.5088/rmerva@optonline.net) or Priscilla James (203.804.0279/pcjames60@gmail.com). We need your support in these ways:

- **Be in the crèche** as part of the tableau of Holy Family, shepherds, magi. Times are **Tues., Dec. 22 and Wed., Dec. 23 from 6 – 8 pm** and **Thurs., Dec. 24 from 4:30 – 6:30 pm.**
- **Dismantle the crèche** after worship on **Sun., Dec. 27.** We need five or more people.

ONLY 4 LEFT! COMMEMORATIVE CHURCH PLAQUES designed by Cat’s Meow are for sale at \$20 after worship in Dodd Hall from Jane Vink. Proceeds benefit Missions work.

STAFF APPRECIATION GIFTS are due today to me or any member of Staff-Parish. We customarily give our staff a Christmas gift. Please see the notice in the centerfold and respond if you are able.

Dennis Darak, Staff-Parish Relations Chair

SEE THE WEEKLY CALENDAR FOR MEETING LOCATIONS AND SCHEDULE.

CHRISTMAS WEEK WORSHIP

BLUE CHRISTMAS WORSHIP: Monday, December 21, 7 p.m., sanctuary. This quiet service of prayers, carols and candle lighting is especially for those feeling loss or sadness this season as we place the “sad” as well as the “glad” before the Christ Child. This special service is part of our regular Healing and Wholeness worship on Mondays at 7 p.m.

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD, CHRISTMAS EVE, December 24.

At 5: 00 p.m. our service of carols and candlelight is for the young and young at heart with the traditional story of Jesus’ birth (Luke 2:1-20) and the story “When You Wish Upon a Star.” Our Praisemakers Choir will provide choral music. The Advent wreath and Christ Candle will be lit by the three generation Darak family.

At 10:45 p.m our Bell Choir rings in to worship with carols of the Season. At **11 p.m.** traditional carols, candlelight and Communion mark our late Christmas Eve service with music by the Adult and Bell Choirs. The message “Time to Marvel” is based on Isaiah 9:2, 6-7; Luke 2:1-20 and John 1:1-5, 10-14. The Advent wreath and Christ Candle will be lit by the Doyle family.

NEXT SUNDAY

CHRISTMAS I – The message by the Rev. Harold V.W. Vink, Pastoral Assistant will be “The Mystery Continues” based on Luke 2:41-52. Our liturgist will be Betty Daneault. Prayer and healing anointing will be offered during the closing hymns. Following worship, the Caring Ministries team will meet.

ADDITIONAL MINISTRY INVITATIONS

FELLOWSHIP TIME the first Sunday of the month is hosted by church members or friends rather than a church committee. We hope to involve others in this hospitality ministry. **The next open Sunday is January 3.** An instruction guide is available and others will help you. To serve, sign up in the Dodd Hall kitchen or call the church office (203.874.1982, ext. 10)

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.

MARY TAYLOR MEMORIAL UMC TRANSPORTATION CAREGIVER PROGRAM

The intent of the Transportation Caregiver Program is to provide transportation to worship on Sunday mornings and at other days and times that worship is held (Ex: Good Friday). Transportation would also be available to church events that may occur at other times and days of the week (Ex: Club 80 Luncheon) and other needs that may arise.

To procure a ride, a member should call Don Hastings (203-877-4554) or Michelle Craig (203-877-4332) or Judy Darak (203-874-5881). If at all possible, at least a **24-hour notice** would be helpful, but an attempt will be made to deal with last minute situations or emergencies.

COMING IN JANUARY

ADULT STUDY WITH PASTOR HAL on the books of Jeremiah and Lamentations begins **January 5th and 6th, 2016.** You may attend this four week course **either** Tuesday evenings from 7-8:30 p.m. **or** Wednesday mornings from 10-11:30 a.m. in the Gunn Library, Wesley Center, 2nd Floor. See or contact Pastor Hal to attend (vinkhaljane@gmail.com/203.878.8977).

LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION: Come Mountain Climbing with Us! Complimentary lunch and Leadership Program on Sunday, January 10, 2016, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. in Dodd Hall as we peak our readiness for God’s call! To register for this creative and fun approach to our *Long Range Plan*, contact the church office 203.874.1982, ext. 10 or mtmumc@sbcglobal.net.



NOTICE TO OUR CONGREGATION



It’s time to think about a Christmas Gift for our Staff

As in previous years, your Staff/Parish Relations Committee will be collecting monetary Christmas gifts for our staff.

If you wish to contribute, you can do so by cash or check. Present your gift to any member of the SPRC. Checks should be made out to Mary Taylor Memorial UMC, with “staff x-mas gift” on the notation line. Cash should be placed in an envelope with your name and “staff x-mas gift” on it.

The members of the SPRC are: Dennis Darak, Eileen Doyle, Tina Gage, Rich Perregaux, Edie Reichard, Becky Virgalla, Bob Volgmuth and Wil Wright. Also you may give your gift to one of our Lay Leaders, Leigh Bak or Kelly O’Hara.

We will be collecting your gifts until Sunday, December 20th.

At this joyous and giving time of the year, we thank you.

Dennis J. Darak
SPRC Chairperson