

Ann Marie Levesque
Beacon Editor



The BEACON

*Mary Taylor Memorial
United Methodist Church*



JANUARY 2026

*The Reverend Dr. Roy Grubbs, Pastor
Pastor Adeline Hazzard, Caring/Youth Minister*

Whoever you are, wherever you are on your spiritual journey, you are welcome here!

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**From
the
Pastor**

RESOLUTIONS

In a classic Peanuts cartoon, Charlie Brown says to Lucy, “Someone has said that we should live each day as if it were the last day of our life.” “Aaugh!” cried Lucy. “This is the last day of my life! This is it!” She dashes away screaming, “I only have 24 hours left! Help me! Help me! This is the last day! Aaugh!” “Some philosophies,” says Charlie Brown, “aren’t for all people.”

Living each day as if it were the last day of our life is not a bad philosophy—if you take it the right way. Living each day as if it were the first day of our life might be an even better one.

We are entering a new year with all the possibilities that a clean slate presents. The old year is gone. Mistakes made, obstacles overcome, wrong turns taken are now in the past. A new day has arrived.

Making resolutions is not for all people, either. They can seem arbitrary and overwhelming---a sure formula for failure. On the other hand, resolutions can help us set our priorities and identify our goals.

I like the list prepared by a pastor named Walter Schoedel. He calls them 7-UPS FOR THE NEW YEAR. They have nothing to do with a soda, and everything to do with our attitudes. I’m not always a fan of these cute little sayings, but this list says a lot in a few words:

WAKE UP – Begin the day with God. This is the Lord’s day. Rejoice in it.

DRESS UP – Put on a smile. It improves your looks.

SHUT UP – Watch your tongue. Don’t gossip or judge. Learn to listen.

STAND UP – Take a stand for your beliefs. Resist evil. Do good.

LOOK UP – Open your eyes to God. You may be surprised by what you see.



From the Pastor ~ Continued

REACH UP – Spend time in prayer and devotion with God. It will help all other times.

LIFT UP – Help others: serve, support, share.

I'm sure you have your own list of things you'd like to accomplish this year. Maybe you're FED UP with some things you do and need to FESS UP about your failures. Maybe you're tired of the way the world is MESSED UP and want to pray for it to get CLEANED UP. Or maybe you just wish I'd SUM UP my thoughts and sign off.

With any luck (or grace), you'll get quite a bit done that you need to have done this year. Doing it in the spirit of the "7-ups," though, may help you not only accomplish much, but deepen your soul. And that would make it one of the best years of your life.

Happy New Year,
Pastor Roy

SCHEDULE OF WORSHIP THEMES

- | | |
|------------|--|
| January 4 | <u>Epiphany; Holy Communion</u> |
| January 11 | <u>Remember Jesus' (and our own) Baptism</u> |
| January 18 | <u>Human Relations Day; UM ARMY Weekend</u> |
| January 25 | <u>Answer that Call (Installation of Church Leaders)</u> |
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**9:00 a.m. SUNDAY MORNING PRAYER & BOOK STUDY****Led by Kerline Poulard in the Wesley Center Library****All are welcome!****6:00 p.m. MONDAY EVENING PRAYER CIRCLE****Led by Nathan Williams & Holly Firmender****In the Wesley Center Chapel**

Every Monday at 6:00 p.m. in the Wesley Center Chapel, Mary Taylor Memorial UMC members gather to share stories of how God is moving in their lives and lift up the prayer concerns of our entire church community. It's a sacred time spent in fellowship but not necessarily a somber time – in fact, we spend much of our time together rejoicing in each other's "praise reports." Praise Reports put us in mind of the many ways our lives are blessed each week, and how blessings can surprise us, emerging from all directions! From a special interaction while standing in line at Scratch Bakery, to the joys of reconnecting with family and loved ones, an inspirational Footsteps meeting, or a special moment recalled from the Sunday Service – we celebrate and give praise to God for gifts big and small.

Of course, we also lift up the Prayers of the People when we gather. Each week, an email request for prayer concerns goes out to the entire church, asking for prayer concerns that people can share from their hearts. My prayer co-leader (and our fantastic church lay leader), Holly Firmender, gathers these together for us to share prayerfully. If you don't receive the weekly email request for prayers please call the office at 203-874-1982 so we can email you one. All of us gathered in the chapel will lift up your prayers and ask for God's blessing. The technical term for what we are doing is "intercessory prayer," but all that really means is that we are praying on behalf of others. It's an age-old tradition that dates back to the very earliest days of the church.

If you're looking for a peaceful, joyful time in intimate fellowship with the Lord, we warmly invite you to take a break from your busy schedule and join us next week! It's a beautiful opportunity to connect with your church community, share your joys and concerns, and deepen your relationship with God. We look forward to seeing you there! To learn more, please contact any regular leader: Nathan Williams 504-957-5571, or Holly Firmender 203-530-2621 .



7:00 p.m. **THURSDAY EVENING SCRIPTURE STUDY**

Led by Nathan Williams via Zoom

Dial into Zoom each Thursday at 7:00 p.m. for an exploration of the week's **lectionary** scripture readings. Join Nathan Williams for a deep dive into the history, text, and context of the week's readings as we find connections between the scriptures and our lives. Everyone is invited.

10:00 a.m. **FRIDAY MORNING PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY**

Led by Pastor Roy in the Wesley Center Library—

The study will explore II Samuel. All are Welcome!



UNITED IN MISSION -U.M.ARMY Mission Weeks

We are very busy getting ready for our 2026 camp season. Our first camp will be a Pop-Up on Martin Luther King Weekend, January 16th – 18th.

Camp will begin on Friday evening at 5pm and will go until Sunday evening. This is a local camp so local people can go home to shower and sleep.

If sleeping accommodations are needed please speak to Gina Grubbs 914-330-2599 or Laura Perregaux 203-520-8183. Please visit our website umarmy.org for more information.

We are also having camps this summer in Milford CT., Scranton PA and Centerport NY.

Dates for those camps are as follows:

Mary Taylor Memorial Milford CT Mixed Age July 5-11

Centerport UMC Centerport NY Mixed Age July 12-18

Elm Park UMC Scranton PA Mixed Age July 19-25

Registration is now open for these camps. Mary Taylor Youth and Adults will be attending Centerport NY the week of July 12th but if that week does not work for you, you can attend either one of the other weeks.

Any questions please contact Laura Perregaux 203-520-8183. Cost for camps are 150.00 per person for the Pop-Ups and 350.00 for week long camps. We do have scholarships available. Each individual is responsible for the deposit of 75.00.

United
Women
In Faith

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

Submitted by Christine McGregor

“The organized unit of United Women in Faith shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.”

All women of the church are invited to join United Women in Faith. Here at MTMUMC, we meet on the second Tuesday of each month, September through June. We alternate noon and evening meetings to try to accommodate different schedules for the women of this church. Please come to whatever time works for you.

Second Sunday Soup Sale will take place on January 11th. Thank you to all soup makers and soup lovers.



United Women in Faith Christmas Cookie Walk was held on Saturday, Dec. 6th.

Special thanks to Rachel Merva and Sheryl Hollyday who chaired this popular event as well as all the bakers and volunteers. It was a great success raising **\$2,446.!** All proceeds from the sale of cookies support the Missions of UWF focusing on women and children.

United Women in Faith is self-supporting. All our money comes from pledges to UWF and our Second Sunday Soup Sales (and baked goods) and the Cookie Walk. Thanks to this support at our November meeting we were able to distribute **\$3775.** to Food2Kids, Days for Girls, Love 146, BH Care, Diaper Bank of CT, Boys and Girls Village, UMCOR: Jamaica Relief, and Heifer International/Send a Girl to School. If you would like find out about any of these organizations, we would be happy share information with you.

Our annual Christmas Party was held on Tuesday Dec. 9th with 28 women attending. Thank you, Leigh, for opening your home for the evening. Everyone had a wonderful time.



Our next meeting will be January 13th at noon. At that meeting we will install our officers for the coming year: Leigh Bak, President; Becky Virgalla, Vice-President; Helene Dellert, Secretary; Lisa Sobolewski, Treasurer; Beth O'Brien, Liz Dillon, Melodie Velez, Nominating Committee.

This is the schedule for the coming year: January 13, noon; February 10, noon; March 10, 7PM; April 14, noon; **Saturday April 18th Binky Blanket Event;** May 12 6:00 PM Mother-Daughter Dinner; June 9, noon.

Christine McGregor



COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND PARISH HEALTH & WELLNESS TEAM

submitted by *Leigh Bak*

Pastor Roy often speaks of our church as the “community church”, with our members (and church as a whole) reaching OUT to the Milford community as well as inviting the community IN. This is not a new concept for Mary Taylor Memorial United Methodist Church.

Did you know that in 1970, the Milford Senior Center came into existence right here at Mary Taylor? MSC had its start in Jesse Lee Hall, in the space of our former Sunday School classrooms (no longer used once Wesley Center was constructed in the early 1960's) and which is now home to Laura's Treasure Trove?

The Milford Senior Center has grown and thrived over the past 55 years, building and expanding their space and services at the 9 Jepson Drive location. Membership in the MSC is open to all Milford adult residents with disabilities or 55 years and older for a mere \$25/year. I like to say that my membership pays for itself after attending just two of Beth O'Brien's Monday evening yoga classes, something I look forward to every week!

The MSC is home to the Milford Food Pantry, a concern that Mary Taylor supports throughout the year and especially with our SOUPer Bowl of Caring event each February. They also offer a daily lunch (for a mere \$4!) for nourishment and fellowship, as well as a Meals-on-Wheels Program.

Their social services staff provides information and referrals in ADA, housing, energy assistance, DMV renewals, Medicare and Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), social security planning, homecare agency referrals, Renters Rebate and more. There is tax assistance during tax filing season, and the STAY (Seniors Technology Assistance for You) program assists with tech issues and helps you make the most of your devices. The Ahrens Respite Program provides a safe and supportive environment for individuals with mild to moderate Alzheimer's Disease or Related Dementia (ADR).

The Center also offers transportation assistance for medical appointments and shopping. There are countless classes in arts & crafts, physical activity including dance, yoga, strength training, pickle ball, etc. and music (vocal and instrumental) offerings as well. Throughout each month, guest speakers are scheduled for special interest sessions on travel, history, art and a variety of health topics. There is truly “something for everyone” at the MSC. Why not check it out in the new year?



Messy Church
January 30, 2026
5:30 P.M. in Dodd Hall
Joshua 6

We will enjoy the story of Joshua and the battle of Jericho, and learn how nothing is impossible with God.



Please RSVP to Pastor Adeline 203-736-4450 or sign-up genius by 11/19/2025.

"I'd Rather be Coloring"
Come Join us!
FRIDAY JANUARY 16TH
3-5pm in The Library Supplies provided Always fun.



Please RSVP to Pastor Adeline 203-736-4450 or use the sign-up genius.



PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY



By Barb Wicks

"When there are no words, a prayer shawl speaks volumes."

Janet Bristow, co-founder of the prayer shawl ministry.

Our meeting held on December 11th was one of changes. Joan Zauner, who has been an integral part of this ministry and has graciously handed over the "knitting needles" to me after so many years of her dedication and countless hours of knitting. It was so fitting for me as a new member to Mary Taylor Memorial, to participate in something I am deeply passionate about and bring my mother along with me to share this sacred time with others. My families have been creating "wool art" for many years and even received awards for their pieces submitted to the *"Great Danbury State Fair"* since the 1950's.

The meeting was well attended by eight women around a table, knitting, crocheting and enjoying an hour of fellowship. The time went by far too quickly. Ten shawls were left to be blessed by Pastor Roy. We have currently made 1,616 shawls and we are still counting with multiple works in progress!

All are welcome—those who already know the craft or willing to learn. Please come and join us.

Our next meeting is THURS., JANUARY 8 at 6:00 P.M. in the Wesley Center Library.

Please note the change in time as it is so dark during the winter months.

If there is inclement weather, Barb will reach out to all and update Facebook.

For additional information or if you need a prayer shawl, please call or see Barb Wicks - (203) 994-4669. They are available after church services on Sunday or during the week through the church office.

FINANCIAL AND YARN DONATIONS ARE ALWAYS APPRECIATED.

THE MISSION COMMITTEE is currently collecting fall and winter clothing and foot-wear to offer the members of our community who attend our Community Supper each month.

Personal hygiene items are also gratefully appreciated. There is a box labeled for the donations under the name tags in the side entrance. Please contact Beth O'Brien if you have any questions. Thank you.





PRIME TIMERS

Submitted by Helene Dellert



Our mission is to enhance the spiritual and social lives of adults (55 and older) through fun and fellowship.

THE GAME GURUS.

This group gathers on the **THIRD MONDAY** of the month to play games—all kinds! Although games will be provided, you are welcome to bring your own.

The next meeting will be January 19th at 1:00 p.m. in Dodd Hall

Please contact Linda Sheehan at 203-283-5362 to confirm your attendance and/or for more information.



READERS RENDEZVOUS – QUARTERLY BOOK CLUB

When Breath Becomes Air by Paul Kalanithi

will be discussed at our next meeting –
hosted by Linda Sheehan and Lisa Sobolewski
on Tuesday - February 17th – at 10:30 A.M. in DODD HALL.

Please call or text Lisa Sobolewski at 203-530-9478 to confirm your attendance and/or for more information.

HAPPY FEET WALKING GROUP

Walkers meet every Wednesday at 9:15 AM.



For details, please contact Maryann Petremont at mapetremont@yahoo.com
or at 203-415-0544.

LUNCH BUNCH

WOMEN: 12:30 P.M. – Wednesday - January 7, 12:30 pm Dockside

MEN: 12:30 P.M.—Wednesday—January 14, 12:30 pm SBC

Please confirm your attendance with Helene or Jerry at 203-878-8801.

PUZZLE MAKERS

We've received requests to form a PUZZLE EXCHANGE as many Prime Timers enjoy not only making them but also willing to share them.

Please contact Helene if you are interested in organizing the exchange.



PRIME TIMERS Continued



**Saturday February, 7th @12:30 Dodd Hall
Potluck Luncheon and “Name that Tune”
Featuring : Rick Riccardi**

March 10th: An IRISH COUNTRY CELEBRATION—This show takes you on a musical journey through songs, stories, and the lilt of Irish laughter. A flyer will appear in the January Beacon.



DURING THE MONTH OF JANUARY

We will be collecting **PEANUT BUTTER & PROTEIN BARS**
The collection bins are in the back of the Sanctuary and in Wesley Center.
If you would like to help with the Purple Pantry, please call Shelley Lapadula at 203-258-2777 or email her at m.lapadula@rubens-lazinger.com.

TRANSPORTATION & CAREGIVER GUIDELINES

The Caregiving ministry of the Mary Taylor Memorial UMC provides transportation to members and others to worship on Sunday mornings and other worship opportunities. Transport to other church events such as Community Dinners or committee meetings. This ministry is available for Medical Appointments as well.



If you or a loved one needs a ride, call Pastor Adeline Hazzard on her cell at 203-736-4450. We ask that you give Adeline as much time as possible, 24 hours is most helpful. Of course if there is an immediate need, we will do our best with God's help to serve our members.





MISSIONS

Submitted by Rachel Merva

January 2026

- Missions Meeting: Our monthly Missions meeting will be held in person on Monday evening just after the prayer time in Wesley Center. Please join us from 7:15PM-8:30PM where we can plan and strategize about the mission and outreach programs we are involved in. Our next meeting is Mon. **Jan. 5th**. These meetings are open to all.
- All In for Milford Monthly Gathering: Thurs., **Jan. 8th**. Please join us for All In for Milford's December Community Gathering! This month we will come together at the Margaret Egan Center, Room 159 at 35 Matthew St in Devon. Doors open at 6PM with refreshments and the program runs from 6:30-8PM. We are working on food insecurity, housing, environmental issues and transportation. Come and join the work!
- Community Supper: We have FIVE Thursdays in Jan., so will have our regular in-person and meal delivery program on **Jan. 22nd**, and invite guests to take a grab and go meal on **Jan. 29th** and either bring it inside in the warmth of Dodd Hall or take it with them as a to go meal. See the sign up genius for more information to volunteer or join us for the meal.
- NO Freeze Overflow Volunteers / Upcoming Training: We are looking for volunteers to set up for the night, stay overnight with guests and break down cots/do light cleaning during the 2025-26 No Freeze season which runs from Dec. 1st to March 31st. Training is required before you can volunteer. See below for January scheduled training dates/times. The Sign Up Genius for filling volunteer slots is here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A054EACAE2EA6FA7-54598401-mtmumc#/> For any questions, please contact Kaylyn Crawford, ph. 917-946-4277:
 - In-person at Trinity Lutheran Church, 21 Robert Treat Parkway on Monday **Jan. 12** from 5-7 PM
 - Virtual (via Zoom) on Friday **Jan. 9th** 12 noon -2 PM

You can **register for training** by emailing Beth-El: Info@BethElMilford.org or by scanning this QR code:



- You can **view the Volunteer Description** here



- Coat Drive continues: We will collect new or gently used coats, warm clothing and socks for **MEN** as well as scarfs, hats and hand warmers again for the month of January. Please bring donations to the bin in Dodd Hall. We will support our local and regional community with these donations, including our community supper attendees.
- Purple Pantry Boxes [see Helene for items to collect]
- UM Army [Laura submitted something]



CAREGIVERS REPORT

Submitted by Pastor Adeline Hazzard

Caregivers are a vital part of the Mary Taylor UMC ministry. We provide transportation for several members who needed rides to Doctor visits, chemo treatments, and day surgeries. Without the dedication of our volunteers all these activities would not be possible. I thank each and everyone of you who so

readily say yes when the need arises.

Communion Visits are provided to those who are shut in or homebound, in a facility or request them because of short term illnesses. These members are unable to worship in person on Sunday Mornings. A time of fellowship a discussion of how God works in our lives and the Lord's Prayer is always offered.

I also want to let anyone know who might be able to take advantage of this special outreach we have tablets to lend to those who may be recuperating at home, or in rehab. They are set up to watch our service on Sunday mornings. Internet is required. Please let me know if you know someone who might be able to take advantage of this offering in which we are so richly blessed.

This caregiving ministry is a blessing not only to those who are provided care and prayer but also for those who are delivering the care and prayer and sacred space for the Holy Spirit to be among us.

My thanks to those who readily volunteer to offer friendly visits, rides, and spiritual support. May God Bless You as you endeavor to do his work in the world that needs light, love, grace, and mercy.

If you or a loved one is in need of our caregiving ministry, please contact the church office at 203-874-1982 or Adeline Hazzard 203-736-4450

Peace and Blessings,
Adeline Hazzard





JANUARY/FEBRUARY UPPER ROOM is available.

Copies are in the Sanctuary, or call the office at 203-874-1982 and I will drop one in the mail for you, or you may stop by and pick one up.

DID YOU CHANGE YOUR PHONE NUMBER OR YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS ??
PLEASE LET THE OFFICE KNOW SO WE CAN UPDATE
OUR DATA BASE. 203.874.1982 THANKS!



ANIMAL SHELTER DONATIONS:



Wet and dry cat food and wet dog 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, or drop them by the office during the 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.

PARISH HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Will administer Blood Pressure Screenings on the 3rd Sunday of each month
In the Sanctuary after service.



Thanks to our blood pressure team:

Leigh Bak, Adeline Hazzard, Sheryl Hollyday, Anne Marie Levesque
and Nancy Sengstacken

PLEASE WEAR YOUR NAME TAG during Sunday service.
Are you new? Have we met?

The name tags are at the entrances to the church.
If you don't have one, please call the office at 203-874-1982 or see
Holly Firmender so that we can make one for you. Thanks!





ALTAR FLOWERS AND MISSION CROSS ORDERS are welcomed anytime.



Flowers are **\$35**, payable to MTMUMC and mailed or given to Mary Lou Kampert at the church office. A donation in lieu of altar flowers is honored with a cross and miniature mission scarf placed on the altar. If you would like to place an order please contact Mary Lou at 203-874-1982 or mtmumc@sbcglobal.net to arrange a suitable date.



A REMINDER ABOUT CARE BY THE PASTOR....

CONTACT THE PASTOR—

for pastoral care needs, or if you just want to talk!

Reach out for yourself, or tell them that someone you know needs a call.

You can contact our pastor through the church office at 203.874.1982, mtmumc@sbcglobal.net, or directly to Pastor Roy at 914.330.1789



NEW OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday—Friday

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.



COMMUNITY SUPPER AT MTMUMC

THURSDAY, JANUARY 22ND 5:30 P.M. IN DODD HALL



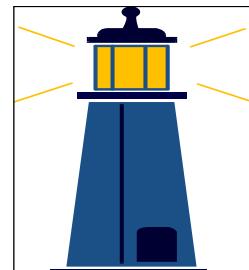
THURSDAY, JANUARY 29TH—GRAB & GO

If you can help, please contact Rachel Merva at 203-641-5088



FEBRUARY BEACON DEADLINE IS THURSDAY, JANUARY 15TH

Please submit materials on or before this date to mtmumc@sbcglobal.net or a hard copy to the church office.





WE'D LIKE TO WISH YOU A HAPPY BIRTHDAY....



....but we can't if we don't have it in our database.

It is always possible that these special dates were previously provided us. If so, you have our apology for any oversight and our request to please try again. And whenever your special day is, may God who has blessed you with this milestone smile on you and your celebration.

Sincerely,

Mary Lou Kampert (mtmumc@sbcglobal.net; 203.874.1982, ext. 110)



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS



MTM CLUB 80 MEMBERS—are listed below in **bold**.

If your birthday is not listed and should be, or if there are other birthdays needing changing, please call the Office at 203-874-1982.

Thank you!

1st Connor Perregaux
2nd **Joyce Haig**
4th Adam Perregaux
Janet Mockler
5th Selena Gonsalves
6th Stephen Arnold
Vilma Castano
7th Sheryl Hollyday
Beth Artz
9th Emily Clark-Sutton
10th Beverly Dean
11th Jacquelyn Carter
Oscar Campbell
12th Karyn Doherty
13th Lyndsey Thompson
16th Louise Brown
19th Tyler Walsh



20th Edie Reichard
Ted Sobolewski
21st Lydia Smith
22nd **Jim Page**
Michael White
25th Millicent Craig
26th Donna Venditti
27th **Hector Arnold**
Jim Repetsky
28th Joan Zauner
Edward Carroll
29th Marshall Firmender
Teresa Cermignani
30th Margaret Lontas
Barb Wicks
31st Richie Perregaux
Lauren Dilulio



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JANUARY

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

2026