



The Outreach

The newsletter of the Milford United Methodist Church
Milford, NH, Rev. Dr. John Whitley, Pastor
January 2025

Pastor's Corner

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Beloved in Christ,

Welcome to a brand new year! 2025 is here and as I sit down to write in this Christmas season I am drawn back to a memory of one of the very first Christmas mornings I can remember. It was the year that it first occurred to me to sneak down to the living room alone and explore the presents under the Christmas tree—feel them and shake them (squish them in some cases), and dream to myself about what might possibly be inside. I think someone planted the idea in my mind that you could do that, but on this one occasion that sealed itself into my memory banks, it was magical and exciting. My imagination was free to roam and there's something about being alone laying down beside the tree with the lights and curious ornaments that still holds an attraction for me in adulthood. When my kids were very young, there were times when I would invite them to lay beside me on the floor so that, with our heads under the bottom branches, we could look up into the tree together and look upward into the lights and shapes.

I don't recall what those dreams were, exactly, or what the presents were that I received that Christmas. Years of hindsight lead me to the strong belief, though, that the squishy one was socks—I always got socks for Christmas growing up, wrapped up like any other present complete with tag and bow. I do, however, recall that sense of joy and mystery and hopefulness. Whatever it was inside those packages, I knew that they were good things and I was ready to make the best of them. In some ways that time I spent dreaming with those gifts before even opening them was the most exciting and the most creative time I probably ever spent with those presents. Once they're open, the dreaming and imagination become so much more concrete, even limiting. No doubt, my 6-year-old self would disagree heartily when I say now: maybe that was the best part.

It occurs to me now that the turn into a new year presents itself to us as a gift in that way. There's so much before us to be unwrapped and revealed. Whether we like what's inside or not, no matter what, it will be so much more concrete once the wrapping paper is bunched up on the floor. But I want to invite us, for this moment at least, to pause over the expectant now. What if we could somehow sneak off on our own—each

Pastor's Corner Continued

one of us—and feel, shake, squish this still-wrapped-up gift of 2025 and dream about it, know somehow that whatever there is in there, there are certainly good things to look forward to. Somehow we know that better when the present is still wrapped. How long, I wonder, can we stay put in that hopefulness and that dreaming before that dream loses its enchantment? What do you hope might be inside? What do you wish could be true about this coming year? Why not just declare this year's gifted-ness at the outset? Why not make the determination now that 2025 won't be the gift that starts losing its mystique as soon as the present is opened? I wish for you that this new year might be the gift that God intends for it to be. Time is precious. Let's cherish it, make the best of it, do all the good we can, love and serve all the people we can, keep a hopeful mindset, and allow our hearts and minds to be full of songs of praise all the way through!

In Christ!

Pastor John

Youth Mission Update

From Tom Knapp

Youth Mission meeting on January 19th, 7 pm, at the church.

Orders for Super Bowl Subs will be taken in the narthex on January 19, 26, & Feb 2. All Subs are \$10 and include, the sub,, a cookie, and chips.

GET A COUPLE FOR
YOUR



A look back at 2024

From VOICE

I know it seems sometimes like individually we're just one small voice shouting in the wilderness, but look at some of the things that we collectively as United Methodists have done in 2024:

Civil & Human Rights - Through the General Board of Church & Society's Faith in Action website blog, topics were posted ranging from immigration rights to white Christian Nationalism and protecting democracy. These writings aided in speaking opportunities in the Iowa Annual Conference and other corners of the Church to help audiences understand critical civil rights issues.

Economic, Health, and Gender Justice - By way of the Grace Over Greed Campaign, United Methodists sent over 11,000 messages to the House and Senate. Throughout the appropriations process, this collective advocacy helped to protect social safety programs against spending cuts for the 2025 fiscal year.

The General Board of Church & Society also assisted with advocacy efforts in support of an expanded Child Tax Credit. Through action alerts from United Methodists, coalition partnership, and seminars like Wednesday Witness, an expanded Child Tax Credit was included in the Tax Relief for American Families and Workers Act of 2024 which was passed by the House.

Environmental Justice – The Environmental Protection Agency was petitioned to pass strong methane rules, including a ban on routine flaring, a waste emissions charge for excess emissions from oil and gas producers, and stronger standards for soot pollution. These common sense updates to the EPA's air emissions regulations will have an immediate and lasting

Our MUMC Family Out in the World

Here are some of MUMC Family spreading Joy in December. Did you ?



Lincoln, Aubrey, & Quinten Biron with



The Diorio Grandkids after tree decorating

Decorating !



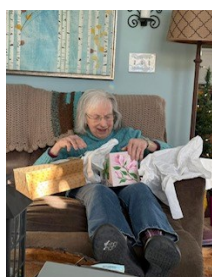
Santinelli's



St. Jean's



Kimner's



Fran Houston was covered in wrapping paper on Christmas day.

Cecil Rowlette's band ringing the Salvation Army Bells



Would love to see how you spread Joy. Friend me on Facebook or send a pic to office @milfordumc.org



Oh Carol, you little Elf you! The Herlihy tree, really? Good thing there was such a special gift under the tree on Christmas morning!

Here's to you finding more JOY in 2025



MUMC Cookbook

These will be available for sale all year. Not one there when you looked? Let the office know and we can print a new one. Just \$5. Proceeds to the Capital Campaign.



In January SHARE Is Collecting.

Toothbrushes & paste, Deodorants, Shampoo & Conditioner, Bar Soap, Feminine Hygiene Products, Diapers, Wipes



Food Pantry Needs

SHARE Collection

Donate Your Christmas Cards, New or Used

The Recycled Card Program thru St. Jude's Ranch is an entrepreneurial teen-run job training program which teaches teens critical employment skills so they are prepared to be productive, wage-earning citizens in the community when they leave the St. Jude Ranch. For the used Christmas cards, they take the fronts off and make new ones out of them which they then sell. The collection box will be in the narthex until the end of January.



Think before you spritz or spray. Someone will thank you.!

Scents can make some people sick.

Noise Offering for Wanakee
January 12,
2025

This collection will hap-



A look Back Cont'd from pg. 2

impact on our climate and air quality.

The VOICE committee has some of those little shouting voices – won't you join us?

Taking an active stance in society is nothing new for followers of John Wesley. He set the example for us to combine personal and social piety.

In Awe of Everyday Joys

Maybe you've heard of making micro-resolutions for the new year. Similarly, health experts recommend becoming aware of — and thankful for — micro-joys we experience and encounter.

In *The Power of Awe*, Jake Eagle and Michael Amster describe the benefits of taking several brief A.W.E. breaks throughout the day:

- **A** is for Attention, as you focus on something that amazes you or seems valuable.
- **W** is for Waiting, as you pause to take a deep breath.
- **E** is for Exhaling, as you breathe out and feel joy and gratitude.

This simple practice reveals how profound the "ordinary" can be, thanks to the generosity of our extraordinary God.



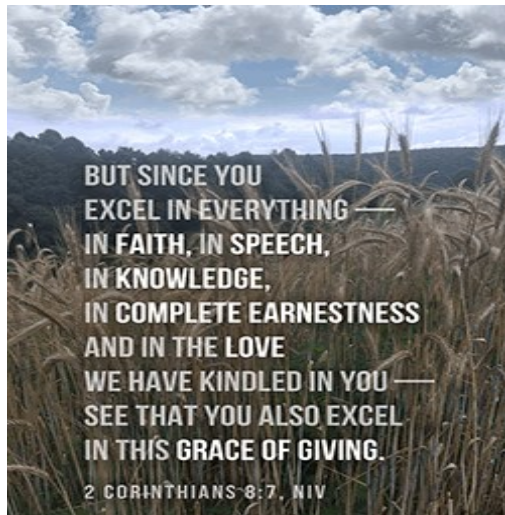
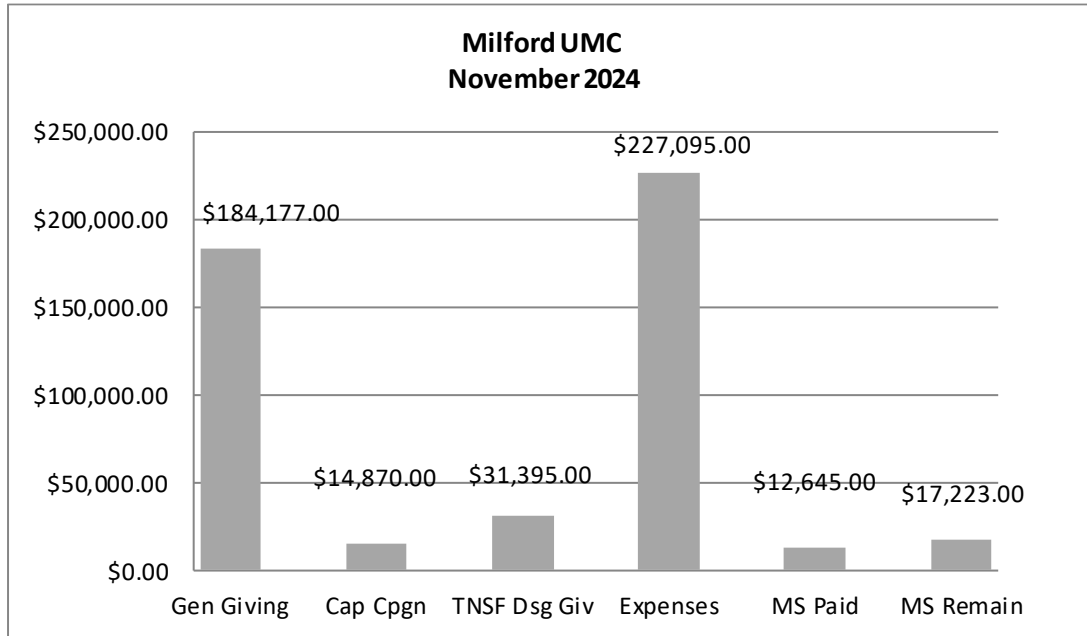
Can we help?



Do you need extra help to hear the service or to read the bulletins or hymnal? Call the office and let us know how we can help you. 603-673-2669. Leave a message with your phone num-

Financial Reports

From Kirk Randlett, for the Finance Committee



YTD Financials

General Giving	\$ 184,177. 00
Cap Campaign	\$14,870. 00
TSF Dsg Giv *	\$31,395. 00
Expenses	\$227,095. 00
Mission Shares Paid	\$ 12,645..00
Mission Shares Remain	\$17,223.00

*Dsg = Designated giving accounts that are being used to fund items that show up in the Expense category.



Milford UMC
Church of Christ
<https://paypal.com/15ABZaWNGao>

The miracle of giving is that giving makes miracles.
—Bishop Robert E. Goodrich

MUMC giving QR Code

Family Life

LeeAnne Steenhoek Director Youth and Family Ministry, MUMC



Jonah, & Tessa Farnsworth and Sybil Whitley, are Jumping for Joy at Children's Church

JOY!



JOY!

See you in 2025 when we will find even more!



From the Pastor's Book Pile

Here are a couple of books that I've been reading (or listening to) lately. If the subject interests you, let's talk about it!

Paul W. Chilcote, *Cultivating Christlikeness: Loving as Jesus Loved*.

This one came in the mail as a gift from the bishop's office, but Chilcote is one of the more prominent and prolific United Methodist theologians and writers today (who I've read before). I expect good things from it and with a theme like this, how could you go wrong?



NOAH'S ARK

The image of an ark, or boat — often shown with pairs of animals — recalls the story of Noah and the "Great Flood" in Genesis. The floodwaters represent God's judgment on sin, while the ark reminds us of his gracious power to save and redeem. In this account, Christians see a foreshadowing of our baptism into Christ: "And baptism, which [God's rescue of Noah and his family] prefigured, now saves you .. " (1 Peter 3:21, NRSv).



Birthdays & Anniversaries 2025

If you see any of these folks around town, be sure to wish them a happy day!

Birthdays:

January 8:	Don Gutterson
January 10:	Harry Tong
January 11:	Callie McMahon Jimi Eves
January 13:	Stephanie Kimner
January 14:	Anita Merrill
January 15:	Jillian Rafter Sylvia Buttemeier
January 17:	Betty Herlihy
January 19:	Heidi Rocha
January 21:	Gerrie Hopkins Nancy Mackay
January 26:	Nadia Tlapa Ryder Tlapa

There were no anniversaries on my calendar this month. Hope we didn't miss yours.

We would love to include you on the birthday and anniversary list. Won't you share your special dates at office@milfordumc.org



This Month's Lectionary

January 5: Isaiah 60:1-6, Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14, Ephesians 3:1-12, Matthew 2:1-12

January 12: Isaiah 43:1-7
Psalm 29, Acts 8:14-17
Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

January 19: Isaiah 62:1-5, Psalm 36:5-10, 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, John 2:1-11

January 26: Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10
Psalm 19, 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a, Luke 4:14-21



Driving Ministry

If you are in need of a ride and have no place to turn, call the office and we will notify the driving ministry to help you out. This program is primarily directed to our handicapped and seniors, but anybody who needs a ride and can't find one is eligible. There is no charge for this service. Office 603-673-2669 Steve Takacs 603-672-5118
office@milfordumc.org
trumpetchoo@msn.com



Mission News

From Diane Miller

December was a very busy month for missions. With your help, we made one family's Christmas better with our SHARE adoption. We also did our normal monthly purchase of food donations for the SHARE food pantry. Our community did not disappoint with our Salvation Army collection of \$8894.75! Thank you to our 51 volunteers for a total of 98.5 volunteer hours. A HUGE thank you goes out to Tom Knapp for all his hours of ringing the bells! Pat R has been the coordinator for the past 5 years. This year, she headed up the effort with the assistance of others. Next year, Sue K will take over the reins and be the main coordinator. Thanks to both of these ladies.

As you're cleaning up from the holidays, please don't forget to donate the front of your cards to the St. Jude's Ranch collection. Janet had an informative missions moment mid-December on this collection. They will not take Disney or any other trademark or non-profit cards. If you are unsure, drop them in the designated box and they will be sorted out.

We do have some plans for early in the new year, but we'll let you know next



Giving your best!



Like the Magi, we can respond with our best gifts — our industry, our devotion, our very lives. We disciples are Christ's tangible presence in the world. That same Child whose light brought such joy to the Magi now, through us, offers his mercy to every person.

Through us, every day, Christ feeds multitudes; he heals, teaches and guides countless people. Through individual volunteers and major institutions, through simple acts of kindness or worldwide coordinated efforts, the world can encounter, through the Christian community, the enduring, tangible presence of Christ.

—Michael Simone

LET
gratitude
FOR THE PAST
INSPIRE US
WITH trust
FOR THE FUTURE.
—Françoise Fendon

Christmas Fair Wrap Up ***From Pat Rafter***

Another successful Christmas Fair was had on Saturday Dec 7. Many helpers gathered the Sunday afternoon before the fair to dismantle the sanctuary and narthex and begin the setting up period. Throughout the week several folks showed up each day to slowly pull the wonder of the fair scene together. By Friday afternoon everything was ready! Saturday morning brought a happy crew of cooks, bakers and waitstaff for the cafe and smiling floor help, greeters and cashiers welcomed the many happy guests, gushing with compliments for a very festive atmosphere. Guests and staff were entertained by several forms of music. All giving a sense of warmth and welcome to our church. Amazingly all was put back together within 1.5 hours and we were already for Sunday worship once again. Thanks to the hands of many...it helps to make the work light and pleasant. This year's fair brought in over \$10,000, which I believe is another record year. Proceeds will go towards mission shares and a portion from the quilting group will go towards the capital campaign. Many thanks to all who helped and supported the fair. Our inventory is very depleted, workshops will be every fourth Saturday 12:30 to 3:30 beginning 1/25/25. Hope to see you, a great time is had by all. There is something for everyone to do! Bring your favorite pair of scissors, readers if needed and ideas! We will have snacks and drinks.

Thanks again, The Christmas Fair Team

MLK on What Really Matters

Exactly two months before his assassination, Martin Luther King Jr. preached his final sermon at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. On February 4, 1968, the civil-rights icon spoke about how he wanted to be remembered at his funeral. He preferred that people recall not his education or achievements but that he "tried to give his life serving others" and "tried to love somebody."

Adapting a 1952 homily by J. Wallace Hamilton, King decried the "drum major instinct — a desire to be out front, a desire to lead the parade." Humans often want to be great and first, as evidenced by the disciples James and John requesting prime seats in paradise. But King urged listeners to focus on the "reordered priorities" of Jesus, who wants us to "be first in love." As Jesus showed, "everybody can serve," King said. Your background or status doesn't matter, as long as you have "a heart full of grace" and "a soul generated by love."



Committees, Groups and Ministries

If you are interested in becoming involved with, or learning more about, a committee or group on the calendar, here's who to talk to.

Administrative (Ad) Council: Steve Kimner

Reviews monthly committee meetings, discusses pending issues and votes on church-wide decisions.

Adult Mission Trip Steve & Pat Rafter

Bell Choir: Heidi Rocha

For adults and older kids interested in hand bell ringing.

Christian Aftercare Ministry: Callie McMahon

Serving primarily men leaving prison, helping them settle in new homes and productive, positive lives.

Chancel Choir: Jennifer Erdody

Open to adults and teens interested in singing in the Chancel Choir at the second service.

Community Supper: Kerri-Lynn Kimner

A supper we host at SHARE in Milford every 6-8 weeks. Volunteer to help bake or prep ahead of time, or to work at the supper itself.

Driving Ministry– Steve Takacs

Provides transportation for those in need of help. Call the church office for contact information.

Finance: Andy Baver

Oversees church financial commitments

Home Groups: Steve Rafter (Thursday) or Callie McMahon (Friday) **Not meeting** Expands spiritual experience in a social context, meeting at a host's homes.

Lamplighters: Carol Rowlette & Elaine Driscoll

A Bible-study group for women.

Nominations: Pastor John. Matches people with the committees they might be interested in serving on.

Outreach: Is now Mission/Outreach Diane Miller

Sue Kostuk Focuses on ways our church can reach out to the local, regional and international community.

Children & Family : LeeAnne Steenhoek

Focuses on involving Children and

Families in church events and spiritual growth.. Family Worship room available during service

Children's Church: LeeAnne Steenhoek
10:40 Sunday morning year round.

Praise Band: Steve Rafter, Lisa Payne, Rudy Rumohr

Contemporary Christian music that plays at the first service on Sunday.

Staff Parish Relations (SPR): Sue Rudolf

This committee acts as liaison between our staff and the congregation.

MUMC Care Team: Callie McMahon

Provides confidential one-on-one Christian care with trained lay ministers.

Trustees: Steve Rafter

Oversees and facilitates the care and keeping of the church building and parsonage.

White Tops: Everett Gale

A social group for retired men of all denominations.

Worship Committee:

Plans and facilitates Sunday service needs and organizes special Sundays

Worship Design: Steve Rafter

Plans music and worship for the contemporary Sunday service.

Vacation Bible School: LeeAnne Steenhoek,

Usually happens in July. A time for the kids to be immersed in learning about Jesus.

VOICE Giving voice to the marginalized in our community. Janet Hromjak, Claire Holston, Callie McMahon. Esther Thayer, Kerri-Lynn Kimner, Kathy Wood, Annika Weis

Men's Group: Jim Lawler

For men interested in fellowship and service. Meet Sunday Evenings

Youth Mission Trip Tom Knapp

Works with the youth and organizes mission work near and far.



2025

For Virtual Services starting at 10:30 a.m. Sunday, join Us On-Line from our Facebook page Milford United Methodist Church, A Reconciling Congregation or YouTube milfordumc or from the Website milfordumc.org

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

			1 Happy New Year!	2 5:30 –7:30 Choir 7p Bells	3	4
5 8:30 Spirit Celebration 9:40 Children's Church, Adult Sunday School 10:30 Traditional Service 5p Men's Group	6 7p Trustees	7 6p Finance 7 p Praise Band	8 9 Whitetops 1 Lamplighters	9 5:30 –7:30 Choir 7p Bells	10	11
12 8:30 Spirit Celebration 9:40 Children's Church, Adult Sunday School 10:30 Traditional Service 5 p Men's Group	13	14 7 p Praise Band	15 8:45 Coffee w/Pastor. Union Coffee 9 Whitetops 1 Lamplighters	16 5:30 –7:30 Choir 7p Bells	17	18
19 8:30 Spirit Celebration 9:40 Children's Church, Adult Sunday School 10:30 Traditional Service 5 p Men's Group 7 Youth Mission	20 5:45p VOICE	21 7 p Praise Band	22 8:45 Coffee w/Pastor. Union Coffee 9 Whitetops 1 Lamplighters	23 5:30 –7:30 Choir 7p Bells	24	25
26 8:30 Spirit Celebration 9:40 Children's Church, Adult Sunday School 10:30 Traditional Service 5 p Men's Group	27	28 5p Missions 7 p Praise Band	29 8:45 Coffee w/Pastor. Union Coffee 9 Whitetops 1 Lamplighters	30 5:30 –7:30 Choir 7p Bells	31	



Milford United Methodist Church

327 No. River Rd
PO Box 476
Milford, NH 03055
(603) 673-2669
www.milfordumc.org

January 2025

Sunday Worship Times:

8:30a. Spirit Celebration, 10:30a. Traditional Service, 9:40a Adult Sunday School & Children's church. Watch Us Online Facebook & YouTube @10:30 Rev. Dr. John Whitley, Pastor

Milford United Methodist Church

A Reconciling Church

Discover the Joy!

Rev. Dr. John Whitley, Pastor

Our Mission:

The Milford United Methodist Church exists to help **all** people discover the joy of knowing and serving Jesus Christ.

Our Vision:

We will help all people discover the joy of knowing and serving Jesus Christ by:

- Providing joyful and meaningful worship experiences.
- Establishing and encouraging small groups for study, support, prayer, fellowship and service.
- Empowering people to discover, develop, and deploy their gifts for ministry.
- Reaching out beyond our congregation in Christian love and service.

Our Values:

We commit ourselves to:

- Know scripture and live it.
- Act with integrity.
- Be faithful to Jesus Christ, our families, and our church family.

- Strive for excellence in all we do for the Lord.
- Celebrate the ministry of all Christians, lay and ordained.
- Treat all people with respect and sensitivity.
- Encourage people to grow in Christ.
- Care for the spiritual, emotional, and physical needs of all people.

Welcoming & Inclusion Statement:

Milford United Methodist Church is a welcoming and inclusive church which celebrates that all persons are created in God's image and are of sacred worth. We welcome and serve persons without regard to age, race, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, family configuration, religious background, economic status, or developmental and physical abilities. Milford United Methodist Church recognizes the diversity of the Body of Christ and gives thanks to God for this divine gift. We invite ALL to discover the joy of knowing and serving Jesus Christ.