



The Outreach

The newsletter of the Milford United Methodist Church
April 2023, Milford, NH, Rev. Dr. John Whitley, Pastor

Pastor's Corner

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Co-travelers in Christ,

As we enter April here on the eve of Holy Week I find myself wanting to hear this week's story again and listen more attentively this time to whether and where Jesus will break character. That's the big test after all—whether he is who he says he is and whether he will be who he says he will be. It's clear that at a couple of points at least in this most climactic of weeks he considered that question himself. Am I really going to enter this city? Am I really going to turn myself over and "drink this cup"? Am I really going to accept this pain, this cross? Am I really that person? It seems to me that the hidden question there is whether Jesus will still choose to be who he intends to be when the road really gets hard, whether the character he enacts is really *his* character or just shtick. What a great word: "shtick." It comes from Yiddish and means something like "a gimmick; a comic routine"—a façade that one can dawn for a time and hang up on the wall like a coat when you get home. Will Jesus reveal something about his true character or just perform good shtick?

I want to watch closely as he wrestles with that because it seems to me that that's a familiar question and a very practical, everyday thing to consider for anyone taking on the life of faith: will I live into my truest character today or will I hang it up when no one is looking as if it were just shtick? The difference is in who we will choose to be, I think. Just as for Jesus Holy Week is the test of who he will choose to be—whether he will live fully into who he intends to be—so we too are continually faced with such questions, but perhaps never more than during Holy Week. Holy Week concludes this season of self-examination with a profound image of Jesus living fully into the grace that he came to model and embody. Who do we intend to be when the week is through? My prayer for myself and for us is: "God, make me (us) into the people you tell us we are. Amen."

Wish you a truly holy week and joyous Easter!

Pastor John

From the Pastor's Book Pile

This month I thought I'd list a few books that I've listened to on Audible over the past couple of months that I thought were good and very relevant for discipleship in the 21st century.

Richard Rohr, *The Divine Dance: The Trinity and Your Transformation*.

Rohr is a widely-read author on things related to Christian spirituality and this is his very practical introduction to the idea of God as Trinity and why that matters to our everyday lives.

Michael J. Sandel, *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?*

Sandel has taught this course on justice at Harvard for decades and it has long been one of the most popular courses on campus. In it he provides an overview on this extremely relevant and important topic to help us get our bearings and find the vocabulary we need to understand the conversations that are being had around us.

Amanda Ripley, *High Conflict: Why We Get Trapped and How We Get Out*.

As the title suggest, this is a book about conflict and how to navigate it beyond the winner-take-all climate of our times.



Milford United Methodist
Children's Church



Come Grow
WITH US

Spring Yard Sale

From Pat Rafter

Spring Yard Sale to benefit youth missions will be held May 13, 8 a.m. -1 p.m. with rain p.m. date/leftovers Sale on May 20 , 9 a.m.-12 if need be.

We will start accepting drop offs on April 22 and May 6, 9-11 a.m. Please respect these times, to allow volunteers to be able to stow things away after 11.

Items we do not take are car seats, exercise equipment, furniture, musty books, encyclopedia sets, magazines or old stuffed animals.

Clothing will be accepted. Items should be clean and in working order.

If you are unable to make drop off date please contact Pat Rafter (603-582-0333) for alternate time or pick up. If you are available to help with pricing and sorting or day of the yard sale. We will gladly accept your help.

Happy Spring cleaning!



Wednesday's at 6:00

POT LUCK

SUPPER

A study starts about 6:30 and is also virtual. Watch your email for a link.

UMCOR Hygiene Kits

From Sue Kostuk

As a part of the church mission meetings currently being held every 2 weeks, we have decided on this mission project as a way to kick off our 2023 mission efforts. It is a mission that can include everyone in the church, who chooses to help.

We would really like to see everyone help with the church goal of sending out 100 hygiene kits for UMCOR before Memorial Day.

There will be a special "tag tree" in the lobby. Please take a tag and return the item by May 7. The tags will call for one of the 10 items we need donated. Donations can be placed in a plastic bin under the "tag tree". Money donations are acceptable also. Everyone has the ability to help in some way, if they choose.

The items needed are:

- Hand towels (15 x 25 - 17 x 27)
- washcloths (no kitchen, cleaning or microfiber towels or washcloths)
- combs (sturdy, 6 inches)
- fingernail or toenail clippers
- toothbrushes in packages (check expiration date)
- bath soaps (no Ivory or Jergens.). 3 oz.
- 10 band aids (3/4 inch x 3 inch)

There will be a time for all to help (including the children) with assembling these items into plastic bags on May 28.

Any questions, please call:
Sue Kostuk. 203-980-0785
Diane Miller 401-864-1737

Choir News

From Jenn Erdody

Chancel Choir welcomes new singers at any time! Talk to a singer or Jenn or Nancy for any questions. We'd be happy to welcome you in!

We say a fond farewell to Sylvia and Gary Emberger as they move to Pennsylvania. Sylvia has been a valued member of our choir, and we'll miss both of them very much. Good luck, Sylvia and Gary!



Next Crafting Day

April 13, 12:30-3pm

Next Mission Meeting

4/4/23

5 P.M.



Our MUMC Family Out in the World

March was a month of contrasts, warmer weather on the one hand and our biggest snowfall of the winter on the other. We still found many ways to discover the joy!



Rebecca & Brittany Hart, with Kathy at the Palace theater



Annika & Riley Weis live out UM Social Principles at the State House in Concord



Paul, Holleigh, with Gage Tlapa who received the Destination College Scholarship



Doris Houston digs out the car after the big One!



Madison Muller ready for the soccer tournaments



Lily & Jamie Eves celebrate St. Pat's day.



In like a lion!
A bobcat in a backyard.

MARCH



Out like a lamb!
"If We All Said a Prayer"

Have you got pics of you & yours sharing the joy? Let's share here. Send to me; at office@milfordumc.org, or friend me on Facebook and share what you're up to.

Not resuscitation —
resurrection!



In the early years of the U.S. space program, a small but powerful rocket was supported by a metal framework. This "escape tower" was bolted to the capsule in which astronauts awaited takeoff. If disaster occurred, the escape tower was to carry the capsule up and away from the main rocket. A parachute would then float the astronauts safely to earth.

Jesus' resurrection is more than a great escape. If he had merely eluded death, that would be akin to resuscitation. By God's power, Jesus didn't merely survive death but conquered it, once and for all. On Easter, Jesus returns to life not for his own sake but for the sake of all humanity. He reassures the disciples — and us — "Peace be with you."

—adapted from *Homiletics*

In April Share Is Collecting:

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

Share is taking donations at Columbus Ave. To be sure, call ahead for times, 603-673-9898, and they will direct you.

Death Doesn't Win



In the final hours of 2021, a wildfire near Boulder, Colorado, destroyed 1,000 homes, including one belonging to Pastor Bill Stephens. His family, out of town at the time, lost all their possessions. After months of feeling buried in debris, insurance paperwork and mourning, Stephens decided that Easter 2022 would mark a fresh start.

During worship that morning, the pastor shared a photo of vibrant daffodils emerging on his charred property. Burned remnants were visible in the background, just as Easter's backdrop includes the pain and death of Good Friday. But the empty tomb in Easter's foreground means death won't win, reminded Stephens. Even when earthly life "isn't all daffodils," we have hope and eternal life through Jesus.

Easter reveals that God will "give us the joy, and it's going to be in the heart of pain that we go through as well," added the pastor. "And that just makes me draw closer to God."

Youth Mission Update From Tom Knapp

The Youth are planning a spaghetti supper on April 29, from 5-7 p.m., to benefit our mission trip. We are also willing to take on some of your spring yard work tasks for a donation to the trip. Tickets on sale between services. Call or see Tom Knapp if you are interested.

Starting on April 10, we will have another gift card project, just in time for you to gift that 2023 graduate or your mom on her day, May 14th.

We will be helping with the spring yard sale which will benefit the trip as well.



The last trip meeting will be May 7th, at the church, 7 p.m. If you are going on the trip, save that date.

Next VOICE Meeting
April 4, 4:30 p.m.
Live only at MUMC

APRIL 21-23, 2023

come together

organized by NEUMC SEACOAST District`

Lay Servant Committee

OPEN TO ALL! Not just Lay Servants.

A FELLOWSHIP RETREAT

WELLFLEET UMC 246 MAIN ST.
WELLFLEET, MA 508-349-7217

Keynote speaker: Rev. Effie McAvoy

QUESTIONS? CONTACT: cdm-
fiore@gmail.com

Lamplighters

From Carol Rowlette

Luke 4:38-39. Jesus heals Peter's mother-in-law. Jesus left the synagogue and went to the home of Simon. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked Jesus to help her. So he bent over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. She got up at once and began to wait on them.

Hebrews 10:23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.

It is amazing that we can read the miracles of Jesus and find much discussion about each one noticing the differences and similarities per gospel writer's observations.



Jesus answers our uncertainties

Thomas didn't believe the other disciples when they said Jesus had risen. The two travelers to Emmaus despaired over Jesus' death, uncertain what might come next.

During our life of faith, we all face questions, doubts and despair. In *Fearless*, Max Lucado says Jesus' responses to us echo his responses to the disciples. His answer to our doubt is the same as with Thomas: "Touch my body" — which we do every time we connect with the church (the body of Christ), wounds and all. As with the Emmaus disciples, Jesus urges us to ponder his story found in Scripture — which we do through Bible reading and study. Today, just as long ago, Jesus meets his followers — in his body, in his Word — and strengthens our faith.

The God who hides

Isaiah declares, "Truly, you are a God who hides himself, O God of Israel, the Savior" (45:15, ESV). But why would God hide? Isn't our knowing God the point? Martin Luther explained that God hides in unexpected places so as not to be found where the world assumes a god would be — in power, status, fame, wealth — but to be found in weakness, humility and places of suffering.

"Those who have found God in the cross of Jesus Christ," said 20th-century theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "know how wonderfully God hides himself in this world and how he is closest precisely when we believe him to be most distant." So God assures us of his presence in the humble manger, among the poor and outcast during his ministry, in the excruciating suffering of the cross, and with us in every struggle.

God hides not to avoid us but so we will discover him precisely where we need him most, and where others need us most.



I can imagine these boys are not just fishing but are also throwing the Pooh sticks mentioned in LeeAnne's article. Can you?

Family Life

From LeeAnne Steenhoek

Family Life

With LeeAnne Steenhoek

Children's Church welcomes young disciples Sunday mornings to learn about God. Blessed with participation from several families. We sing, dance, craft, pray, learn, and grow together.

Family Worship Room (formerly the Toddler Room) welcomes families who wish to listen to the service on audio and play and craft together as they do. Devin is with us to provide care when parents prefer to return to the sanctuary for worship.

Our **Prayground** welcomes the young and the young at heart to worship in the sanctuary. Our prayground is a sensory opportunity for those who receive God best while manipulating squishy balls or Wikki Stix, coloring mandalas or shaking pom-poms to cheer on our worship leaders as they sing, read scripture, pray, and proclaim the Word of God.

Hello Church!

I love the way you love. Passing the peace, sharing the joy of discipleship and being participants in extravagant welcome makes me sing from the hills and rejoice in our new church family.

Spring has sprung! It's time to get your game on and do those things that define Springtime in New England. I invite you to remember to invite God into each activity either quietly or with a BIG VOICE of praise. God knows our hearts and God promises to provide, protect, forgive and love you just as you are. Here are some of my favorite things to do in Spring. Would you join me? I'll have a large mason jar and some colorful strips of paper for you to share with me and our greater MUMC family. It's good to know that we are united in Spirit even when we're not together. Here are a few of my favorite things to do in the Spring:

Play Pooh Sticks (stand on a bridge, throw a few sticks into the water and watch to see which stick is fastest). I love to play this all day!

Stomp in puddles

Find earthworms wriggling in the earth / pavement

Find maple trees tapped for maple syrup

Find a germinated seeds

Walk in wetlands and smell the skunk cabbage

Listen for the Spring Peepers / frogs

Watch for the redbuds

Find a snowdrop, crocus, daffodil or tulip

Delight in the rain and soak in the sunshine

Surely the Holy Spirit is with us as we learn, work and play.

Children's Church

Our children were asked what God is like during Children's Church. Here's a snapshot of what we shared and learned in our lesson:

What is God Like?

Earth is God's own heart.

God is a Spirit.

God has a big heart to love everyone.

God is a river, ever flowing and life giving.

God is a tree, strong and tall with deep roots and pliable branches.

God is a star glowing in the darkness, calling us home.

God is a fort, a safe and cozy place for friends and family.

God is more ubiquitous than a toddler-God really is in all places, at all times.

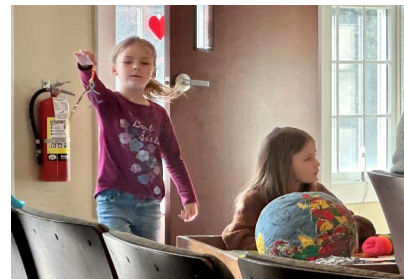
God is at the center of each heart, forgiven and loved

Healed and whole.

Thanks for an energizing start MUMC!

Peace and Grace,

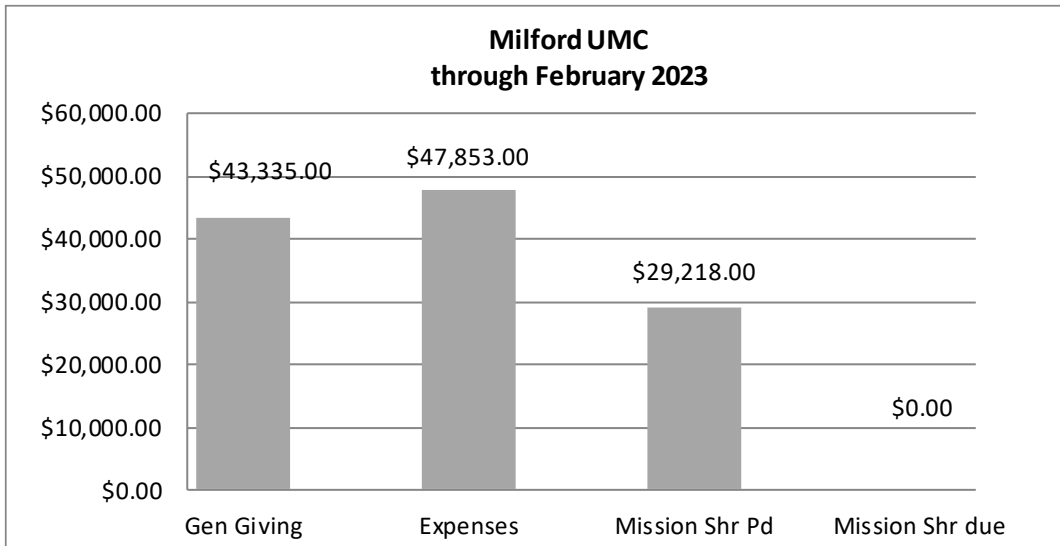
LeeAnne



Cora & Avery Herlihy enjoying the prayground at the Spirit Celebration

Financial Reports

From Kirk Randlett, for the Finance Committee



YTD Financials

General Giving	\$43,335.00
Expenses	\$29,218.00
Mission Shares Paid	\$0,00
Mission Shares Due	\$28,450.00



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

April Birthdays & Anniversaries

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

Birthdays:

April 1:	Alexis Eaton
April 3:	Devin Holland
April 3:	Natalie Lawton
April 4:	Marley Gale
April 5:	Ruth Ann Paden
April 6:	Nancy Rousseau
April 18:	Haylee Lambert
April 18:	Teresa Randlett
April 20:	Aimee LaRiccia
April 21:	Lily Ayotte
April 23:	Abby Tobbe
April 26:	Grace St. Jean
April 28:	Kerri-Lynn Kimner
April 28:	Leila Whitley
April 30:	Lincoln St Jean

Anniversaries

April 17: Jim & Kaleen Fortunato

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

April 2: Isaiah 50:4-9a, Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 (UMH 839), Matthew 21:1-11, Matthew 26:14-27:66

April 9: Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 (UMH 839), Acts 10:34-43, Colossians 3:1-4, Matthew 28:1-10 John 20:1-18

April 16: Acts 2:14a, 22-32, Psalm 16 (UMH 748), 1 Peter 1:3-9, John 20:19-31

April 23: Acts 2:14a, 36-41, Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19 (UMH 837), 1 Peter 1:17-23, Luke 24:13-35

April 30: Acts 2:42-47, Psalm 23 (UMH 754 or 137), 1 Peter 2:19-25, John 10:1-10



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



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: Janet Hromjak

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. **Restart Coming Soon***

Driving Ministry– Steve Takacs

Provides transportation for those in need of help

Finance: Andy Baver

Oversees church financial commitments

Home Groups: Steve Rafter (Thursday) or Callie

McMahon (Friday) *hold due to covid*
Expands spiritual experience in a social context, meeting at a host's homes.

Lamplighters: Elaine Driscoll & Carol Rowlette

A Bible-study group for women.

Nominations: Pastor John. Matches people with

the committees they might be interested in serving on.

Outreach:

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..

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.

Stephen Ministry: Callie McMahon

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

Sunday School/ Education Team: Elizabeth Whitley

Chooses curriculum, helps prepare teachers, runs the Sunday School from September-June.

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: Carol Rowlette

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: TBD

VOICE *Giving voice to the marginalized in our*

community. Janet Hromjak, Claire Holston, Callie McMahon. Esther Thayer, Kerri-Lynn Kimner

Youth Group: Tom Knapp

Organizes and hosts Youth Group for middle and high school kids in our congregation. Runs September-May.

Youth Mission Trip Tom Knapp

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



2023

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
2 Palm Sunday 8:30 Spirit Celebration 9:30 Adult Sunday School 9:40 Children's Church 10:30 Traditional Service 7 Mens Ministry	3 6 SPRC	4 7 Praise Band 5 Mission	5 8:45 Coffee w/Pastor. Union Coffee 9 Whitetops 1 Lamplighters 6 Potluck 6:30 Prayer /	6 7:Chancel Choir Maundy Thursday Service 7 p.m.	7 Good Friday service 7 p.m.	8
9 Easter 8:30 Spirit Celebration 9:30 Adult Sunday School 9:40 Children's Church 10:30 Traditional Service 7 Mens Ministry	10 7 Trustees	11 7 Praise Band	12 8:45 Coffee w/Pastor. Union Coffee 9 Whitetops 1 Lamplighters 6 Potluck 6:30 Prayer /	13 7:-Chancel Choir	14	15
16 8:30 Spirit Celebration 9:30 Adult Sunday School 9:40 Children's Church 10:30 Traditional Service 7 Mens Ministry	17 6 Voice 7 Finance	18 7 Praise Band	19 8:45 Coffee w/Pastor. Union Coffee 9 Whitetops 1 Lamplighters 6 Potluck 6:30 Prayer /	20 7:-Chancel Choir	21	22 9-11 a Yard Sale Drop Off
23 8:30 Spirit Celebration 9:30 Adult Sunday School 9:40 Children's Church 10:30 Traditional Service 7 Mens Ministry	24	25 7 Praise Band	26 8:45 Coffee w/Pastor. Union Coffee 9 Whitetops 1 Lamplighters 6 Potluck 6:30 Prayer / Study Zoom	27 7:-Chancel Choir	28	29 Spaghetti Supper 5-7 p
30 8:30 Spirit Celebration 9:30 Adult Sunday School 9:40 Children's Church 10:30 Traditional Service						



Milford United Methodist Church

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

April 2023

Sunday Worship Times:

8:30 Spirit Celebration, 10:30 Traditional Service
or 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.