



The Outreach

The newsletter of the Milford United Methodist Church
January, 2024 Milford, NH, Rev. Dr. John Whitley, Pastor

Pastor's Corner

Co-travelers in Christ,

I walked into my office for the first time after a couple of days rest from another busy Christmas season afraid of what I'd find. A desk piled high with notes to self, checklists half finished, letters read but not yet responded to, reports, concert music, news articles, books, liturgical paths not taken that may yet become inspiration for another year's worship, reminders of that thing I was going to do but never did, of that action item still pending, of that name that was supposed to go on that list that never made it, of cracks that somehow opened up wide enough through the frantic here and there of the lead-up to Christmas for more than a few things to fall into. Maybe an archaeologist could sift through my Christmas carnage layer by layer and sort out where, exactly, things started to go haywire but, wherever that was, it's certainly ancient history by now. The question that hits me as the best one for now is: where is God in this pile?

I can't be the only one that emerges from the haze after Christmas with one eye to a new year and another to the opened boxes and fallen ornaments near the tree and discovers a new readiness to find the way ahead, to pick up the pieces of progress from the past and mush forward. And I wonder if God isn't somewhere in that—in both the rest and reprieve from work as well as in the pick-up and the reminder of enduring priorities. Is that God whispering in our ears that it's time to take a break, be present to family, and take in the joyful goodness of being alive and is it not also God calling us back to our purpose, to our responsibilities, and to the various different things that we've been entrusted with that we need to return to and attend to faithfully? Where is God's life moving in us and drawing us toward deepened maturity, deepened awareness, deepened involvement through both our times of silence and celebration and our times of reorganizing and getting back to work? Somehow, both ends of that spectrum are what God continuously calls us to and getting stuck at either end without the other threatens to leave us spiritually shallow and disconnected at one end or spiritually disengaged at the other.

As you look back on what has (hopefully) been a restful and rejuvenating holiday season and forward towards another new year in which important things need to be accomplished and your purpose and calling

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Pastor's Corner</i>	1
<i>Choir News</i> <i>Christmas Fair Up-</i>	2
<i>Men's Breakfast</i> <i>Salvation Army</i>	3
<i>From Voice</i>	4
<i>MUMC Family</i>	5
<i>Family Life</i>	6
<i>Share Family Update</i>	7
<i>Finance</i>	8
<i>Birthdays & Anniver-</i> <i>saries</i>	9
<i>Lectionary</i>	
<i>Committees</i>	10
<i>Calendar</i>	11

Pastor's Corner Cont'd

lived out, may you find God's life living in you through the indwelling Holy Spirit drawing you nearer to the heart of God. Joyous New Year!

In Christ!

Pastor John

Choir News **From Jenn Erdody**

Thanks to all our musicians who participated in the Christmas and Advent music, and of course, our Christmas concert!

We also enjoyed working with our children and youth on the morning Christmas Eve service. Our MUMC kids got to try the handchimes on "Joy to the World", learn the first verse of "Stille Nacht" in German, and sing "Silent Night" with the choir. They also got to play shakers with the Praise Band, on "Go Tell It On the Mountain". We had a blast with the kids!



Kids getting their shakers on!

2023 Christmas Fair A

Huge Success! **From Pat Rafter**

What can I say, I love how our church family always pulls together! From the Sunday night of clearing the sanctuary to begin our week of fair prep to the final packing away of our fair decorations.

As of the writing of this article we are now closing in on \$9000! Just simply amazing. The cookie and fudge table did an amazing job! Every cookie and piece of fudge was gone by 11am. How crazy is that and we had 70 packages of cookies! Nice work ladies!!

Most everything in the country cupboard went as well! I would love more jam and jelly makers next year! The cafe was busy from start to finish and sold out of most everything as well. Thank you cafe help! We only have about 10 paper grocery bags with handles left so please save your bags from Hannafords, Trader Joe's and Whole Foods and wherever they give them away. You can drop them off at the church anytime during the year. There will be a bin under the coat rack marked fair donations. You can also return canning jars and snack tin/boxes to this spot.

Many of you have said you have costume jewelry to donate as well. The earlier we get those things in, the earlier we can get them priced and be ahead of the game for next year!

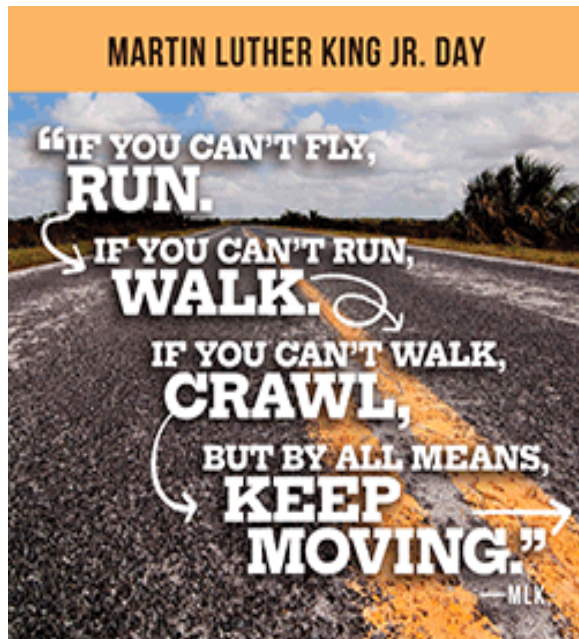
Thanks to the folks who come to craft as well as those who craft and bake at home. This fair is a success because many hands always make light work!

Blessings to all,
Pat Rafter and the fair committee

Salvation Army Update From Pat Rafter

2023 Christmas Season was kicked off by MUMC and friends ringing at Market Basket Jones Road and Milford Shaw's beginning on the weekend of 11/25 thru 12/24. Ringers rang singular or with a partner and a few brought a pet. Cecil Rowlette with a total of 18 musician played at Market Basket on Christmas Eve, as Carol rang the bell, a treat for all. Between the 2 stores the kettle was out for 72 hours and 90 volunteer hours were donated. Tom Knapp manned the kettle 31 hours himself! Thank you Tom! \$9386.50 was raised for this wonderful mission due to the many donations of a very special and supportive community, including a generous gift of \$1000.

Thank you all!



January 15, 2024

MEN'S MINISTRY HOSTS Men's Breakfast

Third Saturday of the Month Each Quarter
8:30-10:30 a.m.

2024 Breakfast Schedule

February 17th

May 18th

August 17th

November 16th

Please RSVP a week before each breakfast so we have a headcount for the meal. Sign up sheets will be posted or contact Jim Lawler at bigdaddy522000@gmail.com

Thank You!

Have a great day!

‘For the same price, have a great life!’”



Noise Offering for Wanakee

January 14



This collection will happen the 2nd Sunday of the month.
Quiet Money is always welcome too!

A Message from VOICE

This was posted on the UMC.org page about social justice – a key tenant of our United Methodist doctrine. From Rev. Ryan Dunn

What is social justice? Is it present in athletic apparel ads? Or fairtrade coffee? Is it a synonym for political correctness? In the social media world, some folks toss around "Social Justice Warrior" as a put-down. It is actually far from a dirty phrase. In fact, "social justice" is quite idealistic. Here's the Business Dictionary definition: "The fair and proper administration of laws conforming to the natural law that all persons, irrespective of ethnic origin, gender, possessions, race, religion, etc., are to be treated equally and without prejudice." I admit, though, this definition sounds political in application. Maybe that is part of the appeal. Personally, it absolves me: if social justice is about the administration of laws, what part do I have to play in that?

But, deep down, I do not believe that I am without a role to play in the fair and equitable treatment of all people. I have a hunch that most would agree with me: we have a role to play in social justice. All of us having a role to play is what makes this kind of justice social.

Nearly all of us have been in a school lunchroom. Many of us can remember the anxiety of figuring out where to sit — or, rather, with whom to sit. Somebody was always left out or cast away. We knew the right thing to do - provide an invitation so no one is left to sit alone. But the actual success of the invitation required something: either space had to be cleared at the table for the castaway to join in, or someone else needed to leave his or her place.

Because social justice is communal, I

asked different parts of the community for a definition of "social justice". I purposefully asked those who would respond from a Christian perspective, for, much like the world at large, I noticed that Christians can be at odds about defining and practicing social justice. I also asked those who have engaged in or expressed opinions on issues of social justice.

One of the first responders was Rev. Gregory Boyle a Jesuit priest who founded the largest gang-member rehabilitation organization in the U.S., Homeboy Industries. He said: "Jesus took 4 things seriously: Inclusion, non-violence, unconditional loving kindness, compassionate acceptance. We want to take seriously what Jesus took seriously. Social justice will be a byproduct of our nurturing of the Beloved community...a community of kinship such that God might recognize it." His position suggests that social justice involves people standing together and relating to one another. Social justice comes with solidarity. It is the byproduct of people really loving each other.

Michael Gungor, a popular spiritual singer responded: "I think it's about seeking shalom in the realm of human relationships and power structures." Shalom is a word that does a lot of heavy lifting, as it means peace, wholeness, and welfare.

Rudy Rasmus, co-founder of Bread of Life and co-pastor at St. John's Church in Houston, Texas said "Social justice relates to the struggle for equality among all people groups in spite of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, education, and mental or physical ability." It is a recognition that all people are looking to take a seat at the proverbial table.

Our MUMC Family Out in the World

MUMC folks are still spreading JOY!

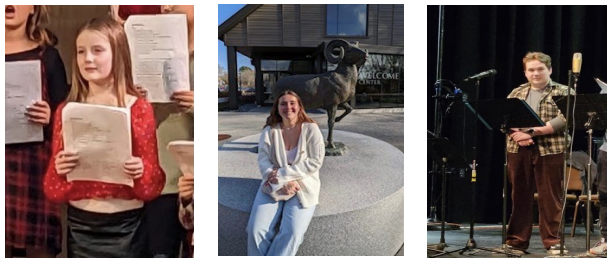


The Lamberts at Christmas
Adorable babies with Santa
More Advent workshop fun
Shannon Short



The Diorio grandkids decorate the Tree!
Carol, the elf at the Herlihy house getting into mischief with friends!
The Harvey-Olson's with Santa!

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.

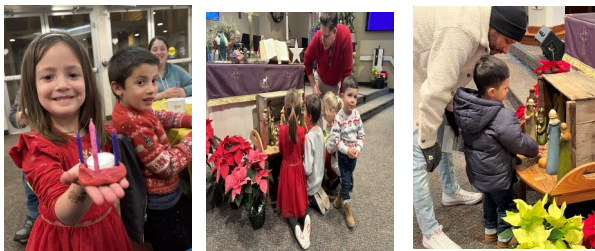


Cora Herlihy at her concert
Grace St Jean at the URI.
Ben Erdody "A Christmas Carol"

**In January
SHARE Is Collecting**

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

Food Pantry Needs
SHARE Collection



Tessa & Jonah Farnsworth at Advent workshop
Kids & a couple of dads at the Manger

Share Supper
Tuesday January 30, 2024

Look for signup sheets in the Narthex

Note: 5th Tuesday this month

COMMUNITY DINNERS

Family Life

***With LeeAnne Steenhoek,
Youth and Family Ministry Di-
rector MUMC***

Friends,

As we continue this Christmas season moving towards Epiphany and enter into 2024 may we bless and be blessed. May we remember to be grateful. May we ask for help when we need it and offer help when we can. May we continue to live Christ's teachings as breaths and heartbeats. May we forgive. May we know we are God's Beloved Children.

Here's a poem offering beautiful perspective:

Magi

By Steve Garnaas-Holmes

Wise one,

you who have come far,

attend to that yearning within you
that is given, as if from above.

Do not cease following that star,
whose light you have seen at his rising.

It will shine in all darkness,
and no darkness will overcome it.

Let no other glitter distract you,
no tiresome journey dissuade you.

Fearful powers will try
to make use of your pilgrimage.

Do not cooperate.
Follow love alone.

In that light
you will find the child, always.

You will kneel in unfamiliar places,
you will uncover gifts.

And you will continue to journey, to
search,
to look with love-lit vision.

Under that star
there will always be home,

always another road,
and you will never travel alone.

Grace and Peace,

LeeAnne



Share Family Update From Pat Rafter

Thank you to those of you who gave to this year's SHARE Christmas Family giving tree. I am sure each gift brought a smile to a child's face. We gave to 2 families with 3 children each and also gave each family a family game. SHARE Inc. recorded a new high in requests from families this holiday season. So glad MUMC was able to respond to those needs.

Three powerful prayers

Amy Carmichael (1867-1951), an Irish Protestant missionary, served in India for 55 years. Much of her work was with children, especially rescuing them from sexual slavery. Carmichael wrote 35 books and many articles about her mission work. The Church of England remembers her on January 18, the anniversary of her death.

The following brief but powerful prayers are attributed to Carmichael:

- May thy grace, O Lord, make that possible to me which seems impossible to me by nature.
- Holy Spirit, think through me, till your ideas are my ideas.

God, hold us to that which drew us first, when the cross was the attraction, and we wanted nothing else.



Voice cont'd pg 4

So in answer to questions about social justice and athletic ads or fair-trade coffee: we observe an invitation to social justice in such things, but they do not achieve social justice. **For social justice is achieved when one person comes alongside another to ensure mutual welfare and well-being.** To come alongside another human being does not necessarily mean that we get to invite into our place of comfort. Rather, it means entering into another's suffering. We cannot experience a shared sense of justice until we have recognized where injustice occurs — until we have recognized where inequality exists because of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, education, legal status, economic background, and mental or physical ability.

Because social justice exists in relationship, it implies that those of us who engage in relationships (really, all of us) participate in social justice to a degree. We are all warriors by the degree to which we are willing to be in loving relationship with those who are of different races, genders, ages, sexual orientations, religions, nationalities, educational backgrounds, legal statuses, economic backgrounds, and mental or physical abilities. Quote this: We are all social justice warriors to one degree or another.

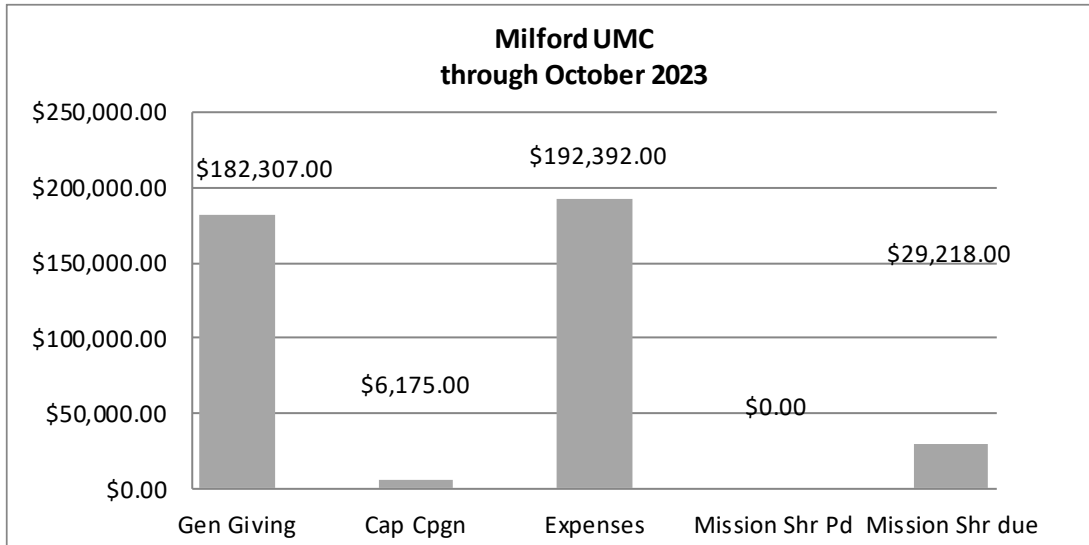
We can argue about what exactly social justice means. But if we begin with loving relationships, then, as Rev. Boyle suggests, social justice may occur and the benefits to all will be inarguable.

Jesus said "come to me, all you that are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." His invitation is both to us and for us. I must consider whose burden I am trying to ease. Whose burden are you feeling called to ease?

Financial Reports

From Kirk Randlett, for the Finance Committee

Look for updated financial data next month.



YTD Financials

General Giving	\$182,307.00
Mortgage Fund	\$6,175.00
Expenses	\$192,392.00
Mission Shares Paid	\$0.00
Mission Shares Due	\$29,218.00

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



OR Code



JANUARY Birthdays & Anniversaries

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

Birthdays:

January 5:	Genevieve Steenhoek
January 6:	Easton Rafter
January 10:	Harry Tong
January 11:	Jimi Eves
January 11:	Callie McMahon
January 13:	Steve Kimner
January 14:	Anita Merrill
January 15:	Jillian Rafter
January 17:	Betty Herlihy
January 19:	Heidi Rocha
January 21:	Gerrie Hopkins
January 21:	Nancy MacKay
January 26:	Nadia Tlapa
January 26:	Ryder Tlapa
January 26:	Tessa Farnsworth

Anniversaries

The office calendar shows no anniversaries 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 7: Genesis 1:1-5, Psalm 29. Acts 19:1-7, Mark 1:4-11

January 14: 1 Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20), Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18, 1 Corinthians 6:12-20, John 1:43-51

January 21: Jonah 3:1-5, 10, Psalm 62:5-12, 1 Corinthians 7:29-31, Mark 1:14-20

January 28: Deuteronomy 18:15-20, Psalm 111, 1 Corinthians 8:1-13, Mark 1:21-28



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 handi-capped 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

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. Call the church office for contact information.

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: 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:
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: 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: LeeAnne Steenhoek, Karin Harvey Olson
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



January

2024

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	3 8:45 Coffee w/ Pastor. Union Coffee 9 Whitetops 1 Lamplighters 6 Potluck 6:30 Prayer / Study Zoom	4 12 Hybrid Study 5:45 Bells 7:- Chancel Choir	5	6
7 8:30 Spirit Cele- bration 9:40 Children’s Church, Adult Sunday School 10:30 Traditional Service 7 p Men’s Group	8 7 Trustees	9	10 8:45 Coffee w/ Pastor. Union Coffee 9 Whitetops 1 Lamplighters 6 Potluck 6:30 Prayer / Study Zoom	11 12 Hybrid Study 5:45 Bells 7:- Chancel Choir	12	13
14 8:30 Spirit Cele- bration 9:40 Children’s Church, Adult Sunday School 10:30 Traditional Service 7 p Men’s Group	15 5:45- VOICE 7—Finance	16	17 8:45 Coffee w/ Pastor. Union Coffee 9 Whitetops 1 Lamplighters 6 Potluck 6:30 Prayer / Study Zoom	18 12 Hybrid Study 5:45 Bells 7:- Chancel Choir	19	20
21 8:30 Spirit Cele- bration 9:40 Children’s Church, Adult Sunday School 10:30 Traditional Service 7 p Men’s Group	22	23	24 8:45 Coffee w/ Pastor. Union Coffee 9 Whitetops 1 Lamplighters 6 Potluck 6:30 Prayer / Study Zoom	25 12 Hybrid Study 5:45 Bells 7:- Chancel Choir	26	27
28 8:30 Spirit Cel- ebration 9:40 Children’s Church, Adult Sunday School 10:30 Traditional Service 7 p Men’s Group	28	30	31			



Milford United Methodist Church

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

January 2024

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.