



The Outreach

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

Pastor's Corner

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Beloved in Christ,

I want to share an experience with you that is fresh on my mind as I sit this morning to write. It has to do with pots—specifically, the prayer pots that were fashioned as part of the Lenten mini-retreats I have been hosting on Wednesday nights through this season. The first week, we drew them—imagined that they were us and what we might look like as them (as pots). What kind of form would we take? What decorative flourishes might we exhibit? What flaws? And what are those pots-that-we-imagine-ourselves-to-be holding right now? We wrote about that, drew about that, shared and reflected together on that. The second week was when we prayed our clay pots into shape. Why did our hand produce this? Why did our prayers help to shape this in just this way? What would you have me consider here God? But last night was truly special for me because last night we lit a candle, set out all of those dried prayer pots before us (adding a couple more), and wrote letters, prayers, words of reflection and encouragement to those pots—sometimes to our own, sometimes to those fashioned by others, sometimes to the lot as a group—and in that spiritual exercise (speaking for myself), I experienced something profound.

The ability there to see oneself (one's own pot, that is) as another; to see another as oneself; to see visually the end-product of other people's prayers, hopes, and reflections standing side by side with one's own, almost as if to share in prayerful testimony. What I saw there were images of unfinished prayers and unfinished people in the process of becoming, bravely daring to exhibit themselves as a thought, a hope, a disappointment for one fleeting moment in time. Those pots dried and solidified into final form within 24 hours and, yet, in so many ways remained unfinished just like me, just like you. And how courageous it is to show oneself in the light of day and to express one's momentary thought or prayer knowing that they are unfinished, imperfect. For some reason, it drew me to think about Peter—most especially the Peter we read about in Acts. That Peter is bravely putting himself out there, moving out into the world, sharing his heart, spreading the Gospel and yet, by that time, everyone knows who that Peter is. He is the one who, so often, didn't get it, he is the one confessed but didn't understand, the one who sliced off the ear of Malchus in a moment's fit of rage, the Peter who led, saw Jesus with Moses and Elijah on the Mountain top, and then denied that

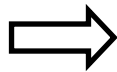
Pastor's Corner Cont'd

he even knew him. The Peter of Acts has no secrets left. He is vulnerable to attack, bare, exposed...and out there anyway. To my mind, kind of like a prayer pot that dares to show itself, tell its story, reveal its imperfections, and shine forth anyway. May we all be like those prayer pots. May we all be like the Peter of Acts.

Bless your hearts!

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.



Italian Night
Saturday April 5
5-7 pm
MUMC
\$10

Benefits Youth Mission trip.



Italian Dinner

Timothy Barnes, *Constantine: Dynasty, Religion and Power in the Later Roman Empire*.

Who was this Roman emperor that was so consequential in the history of the church and still so relevant to ongoing discussions today? The emperor who declared toleration, the emperor who convened the first ecumenical council at Nicaea, the emperor who founded and funded so many famous churches world-wide and, with his establishment of Christianity in the West, left the church with so many vexing questions about how we ought to think about our life in connection with that of the larger society and world. Barnes is regarded as the foremost living authority on Constantine and this book (published in 2014) is something of a capstone on a lifetime of research and publishing.

Oliver O'Donovan and Joan Lockwood O'Donovan, *From Irenaeus to Grotius: A Sourcebook in Christian Political Thought*.

This massive tome has become something of a standard work in the subfield of Christian ethics known as Political Theology, which seeks to understand how the church ought to understand itself, relate to, and act within the various different societies of which we have been a part. This book is something of a primer on the subject including excerpts that span from the early church until the eve of the Enlightenment. It answers the question: what is our mature wisdom on this subject and how does the larger tradition speak? It has been a fascinating read so far and very relevant to many questions of contemporary significance.



Our MUMC Family Out in the World

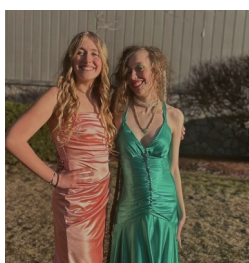
Here are some of MUMC Family spreading Joy in March Did you ?



L. Jenn, Ben & Jacob Erdody filled their Stanley's with ice cream.
R. Cora, Avery, & Em Herlihy go a surprise from Lucky the Leprechaun!



L. Lily and Jamie Eves in St. Pat green!
R. Ivy Rose and Patrick all dressed up for the spring homeschool formal.



L. The handy work of the Bird Bay Knitters and Crocheters where Nancy MacKay winters
R Kathy Gray and her sweet pup. Makes you smile!



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

Come to the 2025 Souhegan Sustainability Fair April 5th

Milford Boys & Girls Club at 56 Mont Vernon Street from 9am to 1pm. This will be a family-friendly event with learning opportunities and activities for both adults and children. Visitors to this plastic-free event will be invited to bring a nonperishable food item to donate to the local food pantry SHARE. Learn about ideas and best practices around socially and environmentally responsible living, celebrate the natural beauty of the Souhegan Valley and find out about new ideas to protect our natural resources.

Worship Committee From Heidi Rocha

Your Worship Committee meets monthly to address issues and ideas that come our way to spread God's love to everyone. If you have concerns, thoughts or ideas to share with us to enhance your worship experience please do let one of us know. Members on the committee for 2025 are: Pastor John, Sally Landis, Steve Kimner, Nancy Tong, Jenn Erdody, Heidi Rocha, Kathy Holland, Peggy Dotter, Annika Weis, Dana VanBuskirk and Steve Rafter.

In April SHARE Is Collecting.

Canned Fruit, Flour, Sugar, Coffee & Tea, Juice, Instant Rice, Cold Cereal, Instant Oatmeal packets, Individually wrapped snacks




Choir News

From Jenn Erdody

The combined choirs of MUMC and First Church of Christ, Milford will present a cantata as part of our Good Friday worship service. Composed by Mary MacDonald, the cantata is titled "It Is Finished", and is so compelling that it brought the choir to tears during our first rehearsal! The service will be at 6pm at MUMC, on Good Friday (April 19th). We'll have over 30 singers for the cantata.

We have a brand new Easter anthem this year, with organ accompaniment. Titled "Resurrection Hymn (O What A Morning)", it takes the modern song and combines it with elements of Beethoven's "Ode to Joy". For the Maundy Thursday service, we have another new anthem, Jack Schrader's "Remember Me, Remember Me". The work is a moving choral setting of Jesus' words at the Last Supper. We look forward to celebrating Holy Week with this new music!

An interesting musical aspect of the cantata and "Remember Me, Remember Me" is the use of 5 chords. In musical composition, 5 chords consist of the root note and the 5th, so they are neither major or minor. They're "empty" chords, and create a hollow sound. These "empty" chords fit well with Pastor John's Lenten theme. See if you can recognize them as you listen!



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 number.

Earth Day

From Kerri-Lynn Kimner for Voice

April 22 marks the 55th anniversary of Earth Day. It is an opportunity to reflect on the goodness of God's creation and the human responsibility to steward it through worship, education, and action. The Bible describes humanity as stewards of the earth, entrusted with its care and responsible for managing its resources. There are many ways to be good stewards of the natural world.

Our church has been on a journey to be more green and reduce waste. We have been eliminating single-use items such as plastic silverware, cups, and plastic bags. We use mugs for coffee hour, as they can be washed and reused the next week. Simple changes like this help keep items out of landfills.

On April 5, the Boys and Girls Club will host the Souhegan Sustainability Fair: The 2025 Sustainability Fair will bring together members of the Souhegan River Watershed community, individuals, families, schools, town departments, commissions, businesses and private organizations to share ideas and best practices around socially and environmentally responsible living. Together, these groups and individuals will celebrate the natural beauty of the Souhegan Valley, while educating and innovating ideas to protect our natural resources. It is free to the public. Enjoy hands-on activities, live music, guided hikes, and more. Consider attending this free event to learn more about ways we can help protect God's world.

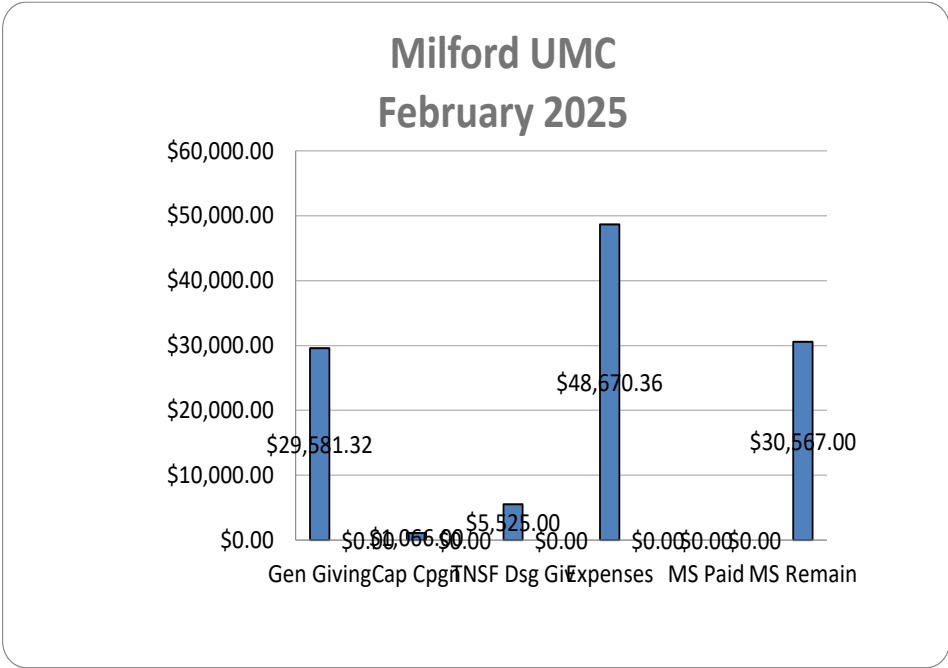
Noise Offering for Wanakee

April 13, 2025



Financial Reports

From Deb Santinelli, for the Finance Committee



Please consider volunteering to be a money counter on Sunday mornings. This job only takes about 20 minutes after the service. It is required that 2 people be present to count cash. Once we have a few volunteers, we can rotate serving so no one is burdened every week. See Callie or Andy, if you are interested.

YTD Financials	
General Giving	\$29,581.32
Cap Campaign	\$1,066.00
TSF Dsg Giv *	\$5,525.00
Expenses	\$48,670.36
Mission Shares Paid	\$0.00
Mission Shares Remain	\$30,567.00

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



Milford UMC
 Church of Christ
<https://pay.com/1A8ZaWNC2c>

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

MUMC giving QR Code

Family Life with LeeAnne

Psalm 23: We continue learning Psalm 23 in Children's Church using prayer beads. Each bead ties into a line in the psalm. I invite you to memorize Psalm 23 along with us.

Family Spotlight Events Mark your calendars!

Tye Dye

Join us Sunday April 27th from 2-4 to make tie-dye shirts for Family Ministry. Wear them at VBS, CROP WALK or out and about and invite friends to join us at MUMC.

Vacation Bible School VBS 2025 Road Trip!

Friday July 11, Saturday July 12 and Sunday July 13th is our VBS Family weekend!

Did you mark your calendar? Do please invite a friend!!!

Lenten Study

Each session stands on its own. Join us!

Tuesday mornings at 11:00 March 11-April 15

Join me in *READING THE BIBLE THROUGH POETIC EXPRESSION* *How to live a life of Faith* by Layne Case. This study comes highly recommended by Pastor Jeff Hunt. Come if you love poetry and come even if you don't and you're the least bit curious. We're going to make the scripture come alive in new ways as we read and write our way through new and familiar passages and share. The text is written for 12 and up. I can offer a response to scripture through watercolors if our little ones can join us. Big ones are welcome to respond to

scripture through watercolor as you wish as well. All are welcome.

Family Ministry Spotlight Event: Resurrection Gardens

Join me to create a resurrection garden for your family Sunday Morning April 6th during Children's Church 9:40-10:20. We'll make one per family. Please sign up by texting (603)864-9005 so we can reserve materials for you!

What happens in your heart shapes the world. What happens in your heart shapes the world. What happens in your heart shapes the world.

Friends,

I'm uplifted in recent weeks by the many ways people are coming together to help one another. We are creating UMCOR bags in the Narthex this week and gathering donations for the 6 families that lost their homes in the fire at the end of Clinton Street in Milford. Friends and family are engaging in rallies to promote peace and make their voices heard in government. We lift up our hearts and expand them in love and we promote peace and healing.

Grace and Peace,

LeeAnne



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

Scents can make some people sick.



This Month's Lectionary

April 6: Isaiah 43:16-21, Psalm 126
Philippians 3:4b-14, John 12:1-8

April 13 Isaiah 50:4-9a, Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29, Psalm 31:9-16, Luke 19:28-40

April 20: Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24, Acts 10:34-43, 1 Corinthians 15:19-26, John 20:1-18

April 27: Psalm 118:14-29, Acts 5:27-32
Revelation 1:4-8, John 20:19-31



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



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

Birthdays:

- April 1:** Alexis Eaton
- April 2:** Devin Holland
- April 3:** Natalie Lawton
- April 4:** Marley Gale
- April 5:** Ruth Ann Paden
- April 18:** Haylee Lambert
- April 18:** Teresa Randlett
- April 23:** Abby Tobbe
- April 23:** Jerry Hoppe
- April 26:** Grace St. Jean
- April 28:** Leila Whitney
- April 28:** Kerri-Lynn Kimner
- April 30:** Lincoln St. Jean

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



MUMC's Got Talent From Callie McMahon

We are excited to be having a **Variety show** on May 9, 2025 at 7 p.m. Proceeds will go to the Mortgage fund.

We know how much talent God has blessed MUMC with but we have only seen a few of you sign up to entertain us,. We also know that we have friends and other family with tons of talent. What a fun time if they all got together! Won't you ask them to join the fun?

Jenn Erdody will be our coordinator and help us put together a great evening of fun. Rudy Rumohr has agreed to be our sound booth person, but we would love to have help for him, just in case he also wants to share his talent in the show.

If you get this newsletter electronically, please sign up here [Variety Show Signup](#) If you are reading this in paper format, please contact the office at office@milfordumc.org or call 603-673-2669 if you want to show your talent or work behind the scenes. Thereis also a QR code on the flyer posted in the Narthex that takes you right to the sign up link.



Spring Yard Sale From Pat Rafetr

You may have noticed the gray carport was damaged by the heavy snow fall. Part of our proceeds will go towards cost to replace that cover and the cover for the extra large one, that is currently sitting out in the back forty! That cover was destroyed in late summer winds. I think it may be best to take the extra large cover off when not in use to save it from winds and UV damage. If you need to use that extra large canopy you will need to make arrangements for the cover to go on and off. It goes quickly and easily, but requires several bodies.

Drop offs for the spring yard sale will be May 3rd and 10th, from 9am to 11am. Looking for volunteers to help with pricing and sorting and putting in their designated areas. Yard Sale day is May 17 8am to 1pm. Helpers needed for the sale as well. Remember all donations must be clean and in working order. No furniture, magazines or musty books. Stuffed animals with original tags will be accepted. No exercise equipment or electronics. Gently used clothing and shoes will be accepted. If drop off dates do not work for you please contact Pat Rafter 603-582-0333 or Tom Knapp 603- 809-5413 for alternate dates and times. PLEASE try to have all donations in by May 12 at the very latest! Happy Spring cleaning.

I'm grateful for the mix of doubt and faith the disciples exhibited; it puts me in good company. Jesus, bless me with increased belief, even when I cannot see you in person.

Handbell Choir
From Heidi Rocha

I hope you have all enjoyed hearing the bell choir.

We would love for new members to join us. There is ALWAYS a spot for you.

Please let Heidi know if you are interested!!!



Blankets for Grads
From Kerri-Lynn Kimner

Every year, we present graduating seniors with tied fleece blankets made by members of our church. We are collecting fleece for this project. Each piece should be 2 yards long. We need patterns and solids. If you want to donate, please place fleece in the container in the lobby. If you have any questions or would like to make a blanket, contact Kerri-Lynn Kimner. (kkimner@gmail.com)



Good Friday Cantata
April 19, 2025, 6 pm at MUMC

Milford House Fire Collection
From Pat Rafter

Missions/Outreach team will be collecting donations for those affected by the house fire in South Street in Milford on March 23.

We will be collecting \$25 visa or Mastercard gift card. Or if preferred we will accept cash donations and purchase the cards. These cards will then be given to SHARE Inc and they will distribute. Please give your donations to either Pat Rafter or Sue Kostuk. We will be collecting through 4/27. There may be requests for other used household items at a later date. We will keep you posted.

Youth Stuff
First Friday 4/4
Mission Meeting 4/6 5-7p
Are you looking for yard work help? Contact Tom Knapp

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.

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: Heidi Rocha
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, Callie McMahon, Kerri-Lynn Kimner, 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	2	3	4	5 5-7 p Italian Night
6 8:30 Spirit Celebration 9:40 Children's Church, Adult Sunday School 10:30 Traditional Service 5p Men's Group 7 youth Mission	7 6 SPRC virtual	8 7p Praise Band	9 8:45 Union Coffee with Pastor 9 Whitetops 1 Lamplighters	10 12 Hybrid Study 5:30 –7:30 Choir 7p Bells	11	12
13 8:30 Spirit Celebration 9:40 Children's Church, Adult Sunday School 10:30 Traditional Service 5p Men's Group	14 4 Worship 7 Trustees	15 7p Praise Band	16 8:45 Coffee w/ Pastor. Union Coffee 9 Whitetops 1 Lamplighters	17 12 Hybrid Study 5:30 –7:30 Choir 7p Bells	18	19
20 8:30 Spirit Celebration 9:40 Children's Church, Adult Sunday School 10:30 Traditional Service 5 p Men's Group HAPPY EASTER	21 5:45p VOICE 7p Finance	22 7p Praise Band	23 8:45 Coffee w/ Pastor. Union Coffee 9 Whitetops 1 Lamplighters	24 12 Hybrid Study 5:30 –7:30 Choir 7p Bells	25	26 Crafting 12:30 –3 pm
27 8:30 Spirit Celebration 9:40 Children's Church, Adult Sunday School 10:30 Traditional Service 5 p Men's Group	28	29 5p Missions 7p Praise Band	30 8:45 Coffee w/ Pastor. Union Coffee 9 Whitetops 1 Lamplighters			



Milford United Methodist Church

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

April 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.