



Milford United Methodist Church

NEWSLETTER

January/February 2025 Issue

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR JENN

Dear Friends,

One of my favorite Christmas stories is Dr. Seuss' "How the Grinch Stole Christmas!". Many people think that the point of the story is the Grinch's revelation that Christmas isn't about presents. The Grinch tries to stop Christmas from coming by stealing all of the food, decorations, and gifts, but when the Whos wake up to find that everything they have is gone, they're still able to hold hands with their neighbors and welcome Christmas in song. "Maybe Christmas" the Grinch thought, "doesn't come from a store. Maybe Christmas ... perhaps ... means a little bit more!"

The true insight of this story is revealed in the last panel of the book when the Grinch is seated at the place of honor among the Whos' feast, and a wreath appears like a halo behind his head. Something holy has happened. Something beautiful has taken place, and how perfect it is that former enemies are now seated around the same table sharing a meal.

From Dr. Seuss' perspective, the meaning of Christmas is the joy of reconciliation. The Whos' Christmas song of joy stirs an echo in the Grinch's heart and he experiences the revelation that God is with him. His response to that revelation is an offer of peace. Because the Whos know the true meaning of Christmas, they are able to forgive the Grinch. Former enemies feast together and celebrate the joy of Christmas.

Joy is the steadfast assurance that God is with us ... Emmanuel. God is with us yesterday, today, and tomorrow; and because of that knowledge, we are able to join hands with our neighbors and raise our voices in song, even in the midst of pain and suffering.

Last month we lit a candle of the Advent Wreath each Sunday at the beginning of worship. Advent is a season of preparation, and a time to remind us of the nature of God's presence with us. We lit the candle of Love as an expression of the past, reminding us of what God has done for us in the person of Jesus Christ. The candle of Peace is our work in the present: putting down our swords and differences, and working toward reconciliation. The candle of Hope projects us into the future when ultimately there will be a new heaven and a new earth. And the fourth candle – the candle of Joy – is a timeless reminder that brings all three together at once. Love, peace, and hope – the past, present, and future – all proclaiming that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are with us always in joy.

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I Am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20)

Blessings,

Pastor Jenn

Blessings,

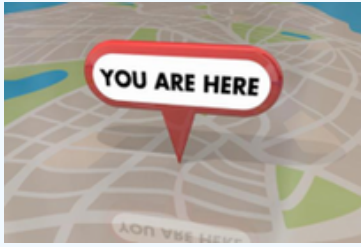
Pastor Jenn

January – February Worship

Join us for 10:00 am Worship on Sundays, in-person, or livestreaming on our Facebook page.

January 5th - HOLY COMMUNION/ Epiphany Sunday/ "Come and Worship"/ Matthew 2:1-12/ Baby Shower for Baby Blessings Pantry

January 12th - BAPTISM OF THE LORD/ "Who's In Charge?"/ Luke 3:15-17, 21-22



This New Year, you are invited to look at where you are – as individuals and as a community. We begin with what is familiar, what we see every day, and what we do week by week. We need to look with a fresh perspective at what we've seen so much that we might take it for granted. And as we look at where we are through the eyes of Jesus, we can learn to embrace the familiar.

January 19th - Where You Are: *Embracing the Familiar*/ "What Concern is That?" /John 2:1-11

January 26th - Where You Are: *Embracing the Familiar*/ "As Was His Custom"/ Luke 4:14-21

February 2nd - HOLY COMMUNION/ Where You Are: *Embracing the Familiar*/ "In Your Hometown"/ Luke 4:21-30

Having considered the familiar, we now raise our vision to the far horizon and ask, "*Where are we going?*" and, "*Who are we becoming?*" Living in the light of the epiphany of the incarnated Christ, we are called to become more—more as individuals certainly, but also more as a community. As we discover God's beloved community we'll consider if this accurately describes who we are and who we want to be. Some of this is within our grasp already, and we celebrate our strengths. But some of it may seem like a far horizon. Join us as we seek the Spirit's strength to grow into our calling as the body of Christ.

February 9th - SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY/ Where You Are: *Far Horizons*/ "Left Everything and Followed"/ Luke 5:1-11

February 16th - Where You Are: *Far Horizons*/ "Rejoice in That Day"/ Luke 6:17-26

February 23rd - Where You Are: *Far Horizons*/ "Do Unto Others"/ Luke 6:27-38

Green Team Update

Happy New Year Stewards!

I hope you are all well! I am happy to announce that we have made our first deposit of light plastic to be recycled for the NexTrex Challenge! Special thanks to Mom (Jodi Hancock) & Mrs. Rebecca for putting the plastic from the collection bin outside the office into larger bags, and to Mr. Arlequeeuw for bringing over another shipment to Price Chopper. We will bring another load over next sunday. Thank you all for your enthusiasm, and I can't wait for a new year of caring for God's creation!



Environmentally, Jack



Fellowship Hour

GOES GREEN

Seeing the number of single-use coffee cups that are used at Fellowship Hour, which will ultimately end up polluting our community or in a landfill, we will be implementing a "Mug Library" at Milford UMC. It is a simple way to reduce single-use coffee cup waste by allowing people to borrow a reuseable cup or bring in their own from home. After enjoying your coffee and refreshments, just wash out the mug or bring it home and return it the following week. We hope you will enjoy this next step in becoming better stewards of God's creation by reducing our coffee cup waste.

Ecumenical Food Pantry 2025

These are the dates the Milford United Methodist Team will serve at the Pantry. These are all Friday evenings and the team meets at 6:15 and serves until cleaned up after closing about 7:45. If you are interested in serving, reach out to either Jodi Hancock or Rebecca Masters for more information.

January 17

August 1

February 14

August 29

March 14

September 26

April 11 - EASTER Distribution

October 24

May 9

November 14

June 6

December 5

July 4



Due to the overwhelming popularity of this ministry, our future Monthly Friday Pizza & Game Nights will be held in the Fellowship Hall.

The time remains the same, 6-8PM

Here are the scheduled dates for the rest of 2025:

February 7 March 7 May 2

June 13 July 11 August 8

September 5 October 3 November 7

December 12

TACKLE HUNGER

Healthy Meals, Happy Hearts!



In 1990, a simple prayer, " Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us to be mindful of those without a bowl of soup to eat" launched a grassroots, youth-led movement working to raise awareness, food and monetary donations for food pantries, soup kitchens, food banks and other hunger-relief charities within their community. Don't Forget to bring your cans of Soup to Church!!!

2025 Church Leaders

Church Council 2025

A Message from Church Council Chair, Steven Bloomer-Teague

Hello everyone! As your in-coming Church Council Chair, I am honored to lead our Council toward our church's 200th anniversary in 2026. Any and all ideas for moving our church forward are welcome and wanted. If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions, do not hesitate to find me before or after most Sunday services or through my contact information in our new directory. Thank you all for the opportunity to serve and may we be blessed as we work to spread the word of Christ's love and acceptance of all.

Members of Church Council*

Steven Bloomer-Teague, Chair

Rev. Jennifer Lovallo, Pastor

Liz Steen, Lay Member to Annual Conference, Treasurer/Recording Secretary

Joan Arlequeeuw, Financial Secretary

Richard Bloomer, Trustees President, Reserve Lay Member to Annual Conference

Pam Houskeeper, Lay Leader

Linda Torborg, Sunday School Superintendent

Jack Donson, Finance Committee Chair

Rebecca Masters, Staff Parish Relations Committee Chair

Jan Lucciola, Reconciling Ministries Team Chair

Rhonda Leister, Crafty Ladies Chair

Bill Arlequeeuw, Member-at-Large

Nancy McCallum, Member-at-Large

Max Hancock, Youth Representative, Green Team Chair

- *All Church Council Meetings are Open to All and are held in a hybrid fashion, In-Person or via our Zoom Meeting link found on website and in weekly bulletin.*

*Thank
You*

To all who have served in a leadership role in 2024, we thank you! If you volunteered for committees and events, we thank you all for you time, treasures and talents!

Trustees Update

In the United Methodist Church (UMC), a trustee is a member of the Board of Trustees, which is responsible for the care and supervision of the church's property and equipment. Trustees are stewards of the property, ensuring that it is maintained and used effectively to support the church's ministries. This is just part of what these amazing volunteers do for our church.

Board of Trustees for 2025

Richard Bloomer, President
Franz Tresenreiter, Vice President
Laurie Oszczepinski, Treasurer
Gregg Rhodes, Recording Secretary
Dave Oszczepinski, Trustee
Carolyn Krejmas, Trustee

As we begin the new year, we thank all who served on the Board of Trustees, especially Bill Arlequeeuw, who served for many years and will continue to serve in a consulting and advisory capacity, as well as performing feats of carpentry and physical work.

The trustees were very busy in 2024. They have been able to complete several projects and are always working to improve and maintain both the Church and Parsonage.

Our biggest accomplishment this year was the installation of the handicap ramp and the modifications made to one of the bathrooms in the Education Wing. This included new plumbing, fixtures, doorways and flooring. The project was supported by a grant provided by Human Resource Development

In order to ensure safety in the play area and parking lot, four diseased trees were taken down and removed.

In the Education Wing, the exterior steps were painted and batteries replaced in 5 Emergency lights, overhead lighting was updated to LED lighting and the door of the Conference Room was enlarged to become ADA compliant.

A stained glass window in the Sanctuary was repaired.

In the Fellowship Hall Kitchen, the ceiling and light fixtures were replaced. The latest project, just getting started is the additional upgrade to the kitchen, to include new flooring, sink and stainless steel work tables. All kitchen upgrades were paid for by a generous donation from our Crafty Ladies!!!

Finally, the Trustees will be preparing the Apple Alley rental house for sale in 2025.

If you see a Trustee.....give them a high five!

Accessibility Update



Mr. Daniel Card from Human Resources Foundation presenting a check for \$10,000.00 which was a Grant for a new ADA Compliant Ramp to the Education Wing of the building. In addition to the ramp, the entry door, Community Room, Conference Room doors were updated to be ADA compliant, along with a ADA update to one of the existing bathrooms. The interior work was funded by the Trustees ADA Fund.

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A Big Thank You to all who showed up to help us on Saturday the 18th to move cabinets and put items in attic storage and clean out closets! We could not have done without YOU!!!

Who Is the Church?

Trustees Green Team
Liturgists Bakers
Food Pantry Team
Nursery Attendants Choir
Sunday School Teachers
THANK YOU
Volunteers Reconciling Ministries Team
Fellowship Team
Tellers Pastor Pledgers
Ushers Worship Team
Crafty Ladies Music Director Bell Choir
Custodian Greeters



Pray

Our God of love and humility , tonight we come to you in a world which you know well, a world very much like the one you sent your son Jesus into. It's a world full of sin, full of hatred and injustice, a world in which man treats his or her fellow man with emotions unbecoming a loving heart. And because of that we ask your prayers for our world, our nation and our community. Just as in Jesus time, we also live in a world in which you offer each of us the greatest gift, that of love, especially your love. In an environment sustained by love and peace, we each hold the potential to be our true selves, to love who we are and whom we want, to live in peace and in respect and worthiness of one another. While we live in the human world, you provide for us a chance to see a better world, and so, tonight, we pray for the time when your kingdom reigns on earth. We give thanks to you for the love that suffocates hatred, for the peace that conquers anxiety ,and for the light that takes any and all darkness.

Read at Transgender Day of Remembrance by Gregg Rhodes

Milford UMC
206 East Ann Street
Milford, PA 18337



SAVE THE DATE
STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL & VENDOR FAIR
Saturday June 7th

Milford United Methodist Church
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(570) 296-6124

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