



SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER



MILFORD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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SEPTEMBER 2023

Dear Friends,

I love exploring old houses. When I lived in Bridgewater, NJ there was an abandoned farmhouse near my parsonage and I would always admire it as I drove by. When a "For Sale" sign went up I felt it was an invitation for me to ride up the long driveway, park my car, and take a look around. As I walked the grounds (and peeked through some windows!) I noticed some personal items scattered about the yard. Most were unremarkable, but one in particular caught my eye. It was a small brown Teddy Bear wearing a blue knit sweater, his black bead eyes staring up at the winter gray sky. I tried to pick him up, but he was frozen solid to the gravel. Driving away from the farm I felt consumed with guilt for not being able to rescue that abandoned toy.

For the next two weeks I was haunted by that bear. I found myself thinking about him during church meetings, and even dreaming about him several times. There was a warm spell just before Christmas so I returned to the farm, hoping that the ground might have thawed. He was still there, where I had last seen him, and sure enough I was able to rescue him from the muddy gravel. I brushed him off and brought him home, much to my husband's chagrin.

It was a clergy colleague who helped me better understand my behavior. You see, my mother-in-law was dying. She was in hospice care, and every time I visited her I passed that abandoned farm on my way home. The discarded Teddy Bear came to symbolize my longing to control life and death. There was nothing I could do to save my mother-in-law, but I could rescue that Teddy Bear, and give it a new life.

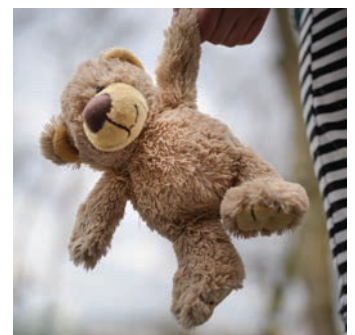
We've each of us experienced hopelessness at some point or other. Grief or anger or despair overwhelms us and we feel our lives spinning out of control. We desperately cling to anything remotely solid, seeking a firm footing on storm-tossed waves. It is in the midst of our darkest trials that we need God most of all, but too often we're so consumed by our own need that we blind ourselves to the light of God's abiding presence. Jesus reminds us, just before his ascension, that he will never abandon us: *"And remember," he says, "I am with you always, to the end of the age."* *Whatever difficult challenge we're facing in life, we don't have to shoulder our burdens alone. We have a church community prepared to support us, and we have the promise of God's abiding presence in the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

If you feel like that discarded Teddy Bear, frozen to the ground, I assure you that there is One obsessing over you, longing to rescue you from your despair. You have not been abandoned, and you are never alone. In the Psalms we read about anger, despair, and grief, but each of those songs ends with a word of hope as the author acknowledges God's abiding love:

*"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long" (Psalm 23:6)*

Blessings,

Pastor Jenn



WAYS TO WORSHIP

COMING UP IN SEPTEMBER WORSHIP

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



John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Movement, was determined to help people live a good and holy life so they could put their faith into action and grow in their walk with God. He came up with **3 Simple Rules** which gave new life to the people of his day, and helped spread the Wesleyan Movement around the world. Join us as we explore how these simple rules can transform our lives today.

Sunday, September 3rd – Holy Communion/ “Do Good”/
3 John 11, Acts 10:38

Sunday, September 10th – “Stay in Love with God”/ *Colossians 2:6-7*



Join us for a new worship series reflecting upon God’s abundance for us in the midst of a scarcity mindset.

Sunday, September 17th – “God’s Creation”/ *Genesis 1*

Sunday, September 24th – “Blessing?”/ *Genesis 32:22-32*

WAYS TO GROW

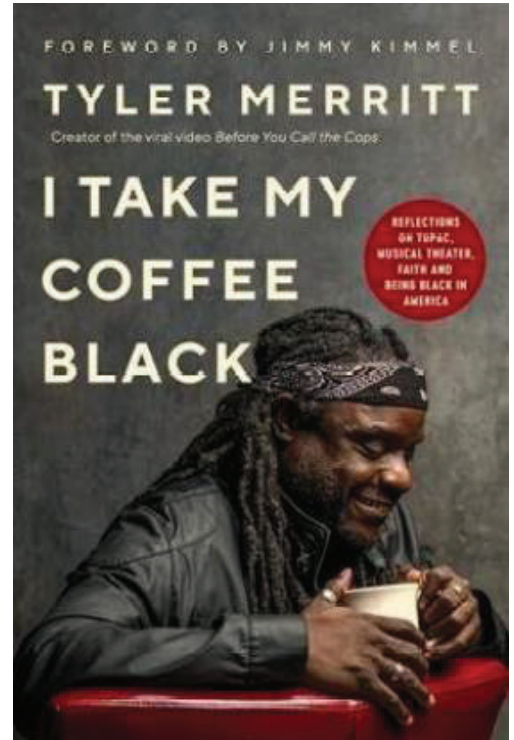
LAY LED BOOK STUDY:

"I TAKE MY COFFEE BLACK" Tyler Merritt

Our Reconciling Ministries Team has been hosting and leading us in several book studies over the past year and these small group gatherings have been a time to have an opportunity for discussion on social concerns of Christians today. At each meeting, attendees are able to get to know one another better and learn from each other. As we truly listen to each other while we share our own stories in context of the selected book subject, we are growing together in faith and with grace. For four Wednesday evenings in September, we will examine racism through the reflections of author, Tyler Merritt, in his powerful memoir, "I Take My Coffee Black". We will examine our own thoughts and questions, such as, 'isn't racism a thing of the past?' and "but, I don't see color...". As Methodists, we are called to "honor the humanity, racial identity, uniqueness and sacred worth of everyone as we live out our baptismal vow." These small groups help us explore how we can live this calling out more fully.

A short video introducing this month's author will be shown during Fellowship Hour this Sunday, Sept 3rd. We hope you will join us for any of these sessions.

Lay Led Book Study: Sept. 6,13,20,27 7PM
In person or via Zoom link, bit.ly/MUMCZoom



Galatians 3:28

There is no longer Jew or Greek; there is no longer slave or free; there is no longer male and female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.



WAYS TO SUPPORT

From the FINANCE COMMITTEE

The finance committee continues to meet on the Tuesday the week before Administrative Council meetings. While we have always had strong support from the members and friends of the church, pledges make up only about 70 percent of our total financial obligations. As we head into the fall we are planning a new Stewardship Campaign entitled Growing GRACE-Rooted Generosity. The pastor will be approaching members to become involved in the campaign and please pray for a successful campaign.

Do you have an idea for a fund-raising event?

Church events are not only about the financial support of our missions and ministries. They are mechanisms that can cultivate relationships, foster stewardship and grow our church by the presence we have in the community. If anyone feels moved to present an idea to the committee, please feel free to reach out to the office or Pastor Jenn.

We are also asking the congregation to view the below video so we can maximize the new program called RaiseRight. You simply make many of your normal purchases through the application at ZERO extra expense, and the church receives a percentage. This is similar to the Amazon Smile program but broader, more convenient and it pays a higher percentage. Please review the introductory video via the link or the QR code below and let's make this program a success. There are also several other videos on the site that explain the benefits. If you have a large home construction project both Home Depot and Lowes participate.

<https://youtu.be/c-v65F0xr2c?si=JZ8k6YVmUkKFkuMg>



“If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” (Matthew 19:21)

These words of Jesus were not given as a general command to all His followers. Rather, they were spoken to a certain rich young ruler who wanted to inherit eternal life. Jesus' concern had to do with the grip the man's wealth had on His heart. If He couldn't let it go, then He could never really surrender everything to God.



We are looking for helpers for this year's Holiday Craft & Bake Sale!

Save the Dates: Nov. 9– 11

More info to follow in October Newsletter and Bulletins

HOLIDAY CRAFT & BAKE SALE!

Friday, Nov. 10 → 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 11 → 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

SHOP EARLY FOR BEST SELECTION!

Credit cards accepted



WAYS TO CONNECT

NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY UPDATE

Thank you to Jan Lucciola, who has volunteered to help create an updated Church Directory. It has been some time since we have updated our directory, and we will be creating a Pictorial Directory so, we will be taking photos each Sunday in September after worship. We will have a backdrop setup and we promise it will only take a moment of your time. If this is not convenient for you, we have two other options; you can email a photo of yours in jpeg format to milfordmethodists@gmail.com or you can drop a photo off to the church office and we will scan it in and convert to jpeg. We hope you will participate and help us make a directory that will make it easier for us to get to know one another better by attaching names to faces.



GAME NIGHT



JOIN US FOR GAME NIGHT

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 8 FROM 6-8:00 PM

BRING YOUR FAMILY, FRIENDS AND FAVORITE GAME!

*We will be having Pizza so please RSVP to the Church office by Thursday, September 7th (*Gluten-free option will be available.)*

NEW MEMBER CLASSES STARTING IN OCTOBER

If you are interested in becoming a member of Milford United Methodist Church, or simply curious about us and want to learn more, we invite you to participate in our Fall New Member Classes.

WHEN: Monday, October 2nd and 16th 6:30-8:00PM

WHERE: In-person in the Church Conference Room or online via Zoom Link bit.ly/MUMCZoom

Please register in advance by emailing church office at milfordmethodists@gmail.com by Sunday October 1st.



WAYS TO GROW

SUNDAY SCHOOL FALL SESSION BEGINS

SEPTEMBER 10th



Sunday School age children are welcome to join in the class, which will begin after the children's message during Worship (approx. 10:15am). Our theme is "Celebrate Wonder" and the curriculum is designed to honor the spiritual life of children. It is for ages 3-12 and will engage children in open-ended exploration and inquiry of the bible. This will be a safe space for children to ask big questions and claim their identity as a child of God.

To celebrate the beginning of this very important part of the life of a church, we will be having a breakfast in the Fellowship Hall before church beginning at 9AM! All Welcome! We will have sample curriculum and videos, as well as sign-up sheets for any adults who would like to assist Sunday School Superintendent, Linda Torborg in supporting our children in their spiritual formation.



KIDS CORNER

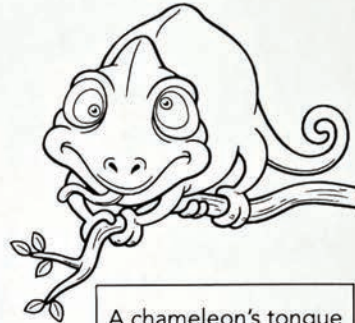
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Interesting Animal Facts – At-Home Activity

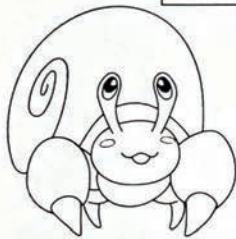
Read the animal facts together. Look up or share any other interesting facts you know about animals. Say a prayer of thanks for God's wonderful and amazing creation!

A polar bear's hair is not white — it's colorless! Its strands are thick, hollow, and reflect light. This is what makes them appear white. Polar bears actually have black skin underneath that thick coat of fur, which helps them soak up the sun's warm rays in the chilly Arctic.

Gorillas have wrinkles on their noses unique to each ape, just like our fingerprints. They are called "nose prints," and conservationists use photos and sketches to keep track of them.



A chameleon's tongue is as long as its body but can grab prey in a fraction of a second!



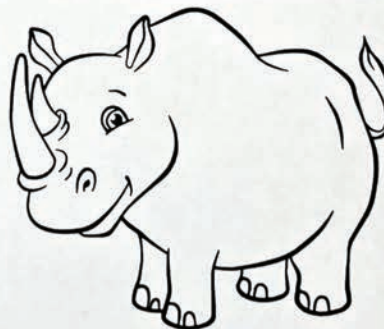
Hermit crabs drink water by dipping their claws into the water and scooping it into their mouths. Can you do this?

Some camels can drink up to 88 pints of water (50 liters). That's like drinking 25 big soda bottles!

Believe it or not, elephants can swim! In addition to using their mighty trunks for eating and drinking, they can use them to breathe like a snorkel when submerged in deep water.

A rhinoceros horn is made of compacted hair, not bone. It contains keratin, which is a fiber-like protein. You can also find keratin in nails, hooves, feathers, scales, and claws.

What interesting animal facts do you know?



VOLUNTEER FOR THE FOOD PANTRY:

Friday, Sept. 29th 6:15-7:45 PM

The Ecumenical Food Pantry is located at 321 Fifth Street. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, or would like to be added to our text messaging group, please email church office at milfordmethodists@gmail.com

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL WHO CAME OUT TO HELP TRUSTEES TO INSTALL OFFICE FLOORING!!!

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