



Milford Presbyterian Church

238 North Main Street, Milford, Michigan 48381

www.milfordpc.org

THE MILFORD messenger

From the Pastor

DECEMBER 2018

Advent is upon us again. Once again, the rhythm of the Christian year brings us back to the beginning: to the work of God beginning again; to the life of God entering existence again; to the presence of God descending again. And once again we—who stand so far removed from the events we remember and celebrate—participate in this beginning. We light candles in anticipation. We immerse ourselves in the words of the prophets who spoke of God's promises fulfilled. We sing hymns and carols that declare the beauty and the love and the drama of the incarnation. Once again.

It is said that we humans are creatures of habit. And it's mostly true. From the way we prepare our coffee (or tea) in the morning to the grand patterns that organize our work, play, and family life. We find comfort, safety, and order in our routines, and we find meaning in them, too. This is why the Christian church has created its own order—its unique routine for the year—which begins with Advent. Year after year, as we participate in this rhythm, we rehearse the work of God in Christ—the great narrative of salvation history. And without always realizing it, the repetition of this narrative shapes us over the years. It inscribes on us and in us the goodness of God and the hope

of salvation.

And this is all really wonderful. But there is a great irony baked into our annual observance of Advent, a paradox that sets our Advent rituals in opposition to the meaning we are ritualizing. This irony is actually quite simple: Advent is an interruption. It is, in fact, the most dramatic interruption that human history has ever known.

History was going about its merry way, and things were reasonably routine and predictable. But the advent of Jesus—the coming of God in the flesh—set everything up on end. Suddenly, the lame can walk, the blind can see, the humble are elevated, and dead people live again. After this interruption, the hope of God's people was revealed to be just a few sizes too small. They had hoped for national strength, for cultural dominance, for political durability—but after Jesus, they hoped for the peaceable kingdom; for the overthrow not just of Roman rule but of all human attempts at power whatsoever; for an end not only to oppression, but also to sadness, grief, sickness, and even death itself.

So Advent has begun again. The rituals that make this season memorable and beloved help us enter in to the story,

the excitement, and the significance of the coming of the Christ child. But let us not make the mistake of thinking that Christmas is a tame, benign affair, soft and gentle as a flickering candle or a tray of warm cookies. Christmas is a shattering of norms and expectations. It is a turning—nay, an overturning—of the tables.

The advent of Jesus is the coming of trouble and beauty. Trouble, because we love our precious routines and the predictability of life, and Jesus has little time for such things. Beauty, because it's not just Jesus who is coming; it is the kingdom of God itself. This kingdom promises to fill the dry places with water, to straighten the ways that are crooked, and to set this broken world to rights.

That sounds like something worth celebrating—again and again.

In Christ,



Youth

Sunday Evening Youth Group

MPC Youth will meet for Sunday evening Youth Group on December 2 and December 9. A free dinner will be provided for the Youth at 6PM. Games and activities will continue until 8PM. All Youth in grades 6-12 are invited. Friends are welcome!

30 - Hour Famine

Eight MPC Youth participated in this year's 30-Hour Famine. Their goal was to endure 30 continuous hours without food in order to raise awareness and funds to help support children in need. This year, all funds raised are being sent to Key of Hope (www.keyofhope.org). At the beginning of our famine weekend, the MPC Youth set a goal to raise more than they raised last year... \$1,400. By the end of the famine, our Youth had surpassed that goal. We are excited to share these funds with the children of Key of Hope. If you made a pledge commitment to one of our MPC Youth, please send your check (made out to Key of Hope) to MPC as soon as possible. Thank you for your support! And special thanks to the adults who volunteered during our famine: Brian Schang, Bob Parrett, Kelly Carey, Chef Neff and Marlene Neff.

Passage Partners

Beginning on Labor Day, six Youth from MPC made a commitment to partner with an adult volunteer MPC member to read the entire Bible over the course of four years. This challenge equates to approximately one chapter per day, six days per week, during the school year. The Passage Partners meet during Sunday brunches to discuss their daily passage readings. Would you like to volunteer as the adult Passage Partner for our next group of Youth who will commit to the challenge? I will help to coordinate a new "class" of Passage Partners to begin in January. Please see Marcus for details.

2019 Happenings

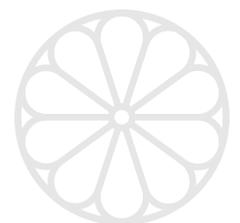
In January, MPC Youth will begin taking orders for the popular SUB SALE! Proceeds from this sale will help support MPC Youth who will attend Spring Hill's winter retreat in February as well as the Presbyterian Triennium event at Purdue in July. Please consider having your Super Bowl parties "catered" by our delicious Subs!

Spring Hill is happening once again for all Youth in grades 6-12. The total cost is \$190 for the two-day/two-night Youth retreat filled with sledding, rock climbing, zip-lining, basketball, swimming, euro-bungee, dodge ball, food, ping-pong, music, snowball fights, and powerful music and messages! Deposits of \$50 per person are due as soon as possible. Two adult female volunteers are needed to join (volunteers pay \$0). Please see Marcus for more details.

Triennium

Every three years, thousands of Presbyterian Youth gather to celebrate, worship, and experience God's love. In 2019, the event will take place from July 16-20. All Youth entering 9th grade through graduated 12th grade are invited. The estimated cost of \$600 per Youth includes all programming, food, lodging, and transportation for the 5-day/4-night event. We have a goal that each Youth can fund-raise \$200 (think Sub Sale!) and that families can pay \$200. MPC will contribute the remaining \$200.

*Cost should never be a reason that Youth cannot participate in programming or activities. If there is a financial need, please see Marcus or Pastor Bryant.



Music

“Behold, A Savior!”

Christmas Cantata 2018

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, 7 PM

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, 4 PM

It's not too late! If you'd like to join the choir for our Cantata, please see Marcus asap! For those who are singing, please attend all remaining rehearsals: December 2, 11:15am-12pm, December 5, 7:30-9pm, December 9, 11:15am-12pm and December 10, 11, and 12, 7-9pm.

Cantata performances will take place Friday, December 14 at 7pm and Sunday, December 16 at 4pm in the sanctuary. The program will include new and familiar carols, solos, instruments, special readings by characters from the story of Jesus' birth. The performance is free. Donations will be accepted.

*The chancel choir will rehearse Wednesday, December 19, 7:30-9pm but will not rehearse on Wednesday, December 26.

Carol Sing

During the Season of Advent, our Sunday morning services will begin with a Carol Sing. Beginning about 9:55am, members of the congregation are invited to request a favorite seasonal carol or hymn from Glory to God. We'll sing at least one verse of each hymn and continue the Carol Sing until 10AM. If you have a specific Carol that you'd like to hear during the Carol Sing, you can shout out the title or hymn number between songs of you can let Marcus know your request in advance.

Children's Music

We are in a season of transition with the Children's Music program at MPC. During the month of December, there will be Children's Music rehearsals from 9:15-9:45am. The children will prepare songs to be shared during the 7pm Christmas Eve service. All children four and older are welcome!

An adult volunteer is needed to continue our vital Children's Music program beginning in January. If you have a passion for the spiritual growth of the children of this congregation, please see Marcus. Musical skills are helpful, but not necessary. All music materials and needs can be arranged and provided.

Community Notes

In Our Thoughts & Prayers

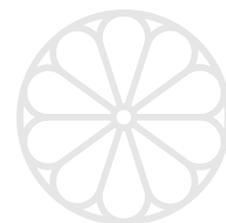
Kim Seagraves, Larry and Pat Teal, Tammy Baker, Christopher Cooper, Alana Hoeft, Janette Gabel, David & Barb Burtch, Liam Klagges, Bill & Linda Baden, Joy Ballard, Steve Baker, Sean McMullen, Jim Burley, Marty Martin, Chrissi & Jerry Emerick, Beaman Smith, Chris Beebee, Marie Webster, Tom Reynolds, Roger Voorheis, Barbara Good, George Wootton, Jim Morrow, Mary Lou Gharrity, Pat Oman, Larry Cepuran, David Renny, Dorothy Bonnell-Tracy, Eddie Bahan, Chelsea Heron, Tom Neff, Adam LaPratt, Ted Rancont, Joanne Hansen,

Dave Matejko, Ted Byrne, Gail Stith, Sandy Cole, Ted Holloway, Jordon Loch, Jan Davis, Sherry Watkins, and all military personnel of our congregation.

Service persons of our congregation:

- Sgt. Maj. M.A. McClenahan
- AP2 Kevin Warford

Please call the church office if you wish to renew or add someone to our Prayer List.



Advent by Candlelight

December 3 and 4, 6:30 pm

THIS IS YOUR INVITATION to Advent By Candlelight. ALL WOMEN ARE INVITED to this spiritually uplifting evening of fellowship and dessert to start the Advent Season right. MAKE YOUR RESERVATION NOW!

If you would like to attend this spiritually uplifting evening, contact Mary McFarland at 248-520-7186 or maryhelenmac@aol.com. Please put "Advent" as the subject line.



Drop & Shop

Saturday, December 8, 10 am

Keep the date! On December 8, from 10am-2pm, drop off your kids while you get some Christmas shopping done. Infants through 5th grade are welcome to join us at church for fun, games, and the opportunity to make Christmas presents for Mom and Dad. Please send a sack lunch for each child. NO PEANUT BUTTER sandwiches, cookies, or snacks. We'll supply drinks and a snack. A volunteer sign-up sheet will be posted.

Brunch

Sunday, December 16, after worship

You are invited to stay after worship and enjoy a delicious hot brunch in Fellowship Hall provided by MPC's Men's Presbyterian Association. Suggested donation is \$5 per person, \$2 for children under five, and \$10 for the whole family.

MPC Church Ladies Movie Club

Monday, December 10, 6:30 pm

The next movie night will be Monday, Dec 10th at 6:30 pm in the parlor and our Christmas selection will be Max Lucado's "The Christmas Candle". This is the story of a English village where every 25 years an angel visits the candle maker and touches a single candle, whoever lights this candle receives a miracle on Christmas Eve. Please join us to watch this touching holiday movie along with refreshments and fellowship.

Contact me for any questions or concerns and RSVP is always appreciated. Susan Linn 248.310.4493 or SLinn465@aol.com.

Worship

Commitment Sunday

Sunday, December 9

Commitment cards will be provided in worship both for annual giving and for the *Rise Up* capital campaign. Please plan to join us for this important Sunday. If you are unable to attend on the 9th, your commitment cards will be sent to you in the mail.

Christmas Eve Worship

Family Service, 7 pm

This service is designed with children and families in mind. It's loud, and that's the way we like it, so don't

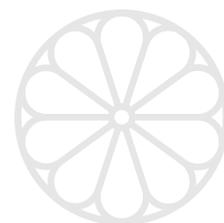
worry if your kids have a hard time sitting still for a church service.

The nursery will be available for children up to 36 months of age.

Candlelight Service, 9 pm

WITH MUSIC FROM OUR CHANCEL CHOIR & BELL CHOIR

This service will celebrate the coming of the Christ child with beautiful music, the singing of carols, readings from scripture, and a Christmas message, and the service will end in candlelight.



A Look Back

A Christmas Wish: Home Alive by '45

With WWII finally coming to an end, the Christmas wish of two million men and women in active duty was to be home for Christmas. But there was one problem—neither the Army nor the Navy had thought much about how to get everyone home when the fighting stopped (they sure knew how to get them there, though). In September 1945, Operation Magic Carpet was launched to bring our servicemen and -women back stateside. As Christmas was approaching, Operation Santa Claus was put into full gear to rush as many home for the holidays as possible.

Stormy seas and the sheer number of troops hindered the plans. Only about 250,000 military people found themselves back on American soil before Christmas, but not quite home. They were in the worst air, train, and automobile traffic jam in history. Surprisingly, the troops were understanding and good-natured. One serviceman, after stepping onto U.S. soil, called it “The best Christmas present a man could have.” Civilians along the west coast opened their homes to them. On the eastern seaboard, 50,000 servicemen and -women were required to eat Christmas dinner at the Separation Center or on the ship. Gladly, ration tins were nowhere to be found.

(It might be a good idea to get a Kleenex before reading the rest of the article.)

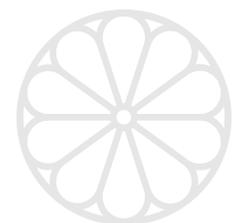
Small towns where the trains had to stop gave impromptu parties. On Christmas Eve 1945, 94% of train passengers were military. Civilians gave up their seats on trains so returning veterans could travel in their place. Christmas dinner with family would be whenever they arrived home. One train load of Vets returned the kindness and raised \$125 (About \$1,700 today) for a local charity in Salt Lake City. The Christmas Spirit went even further. A Colorado trucker drove 35 veterans from Denver to Dallas and 34 points in between. The driver refused payment, telling them to keep the money for presents for their families.

A Los Angeles taxi driver drove six veterans 2,700 miles to Chicago. Another taxi driver drove six from Los Angeles to New York, Pennsylvania and New Hampshire. Both drivers only asked for the cost of gasoline. At the National Tree Lighting Ceremony on December 24, 1945, President Truman proclaimed, “This is the Christmas that a war-weary world had prayed for.” And Americans did everything they could to give their servicemen and -women the holiday they deserved.

While researching this article, I learned that the well-worn comment, “Thank you for your service,” makes a lot of Veterans feel awkward or uncomfortable. Who Knew?? I think I will ask Jerry Mantela or Jack Baker when I see them next and ask them what their thoughts are. Many articles suggested asking them a question instead, such as, “What branch did you serve in?” “For how long?” “What is your favorite memory?” and so on. Hearing their stories and answers can be a lot more rewarding for both of you. Just saying...

Christmas Blessings to all our military personnel and MPC families!

Sandi Muirhead
MPC Historian



Get Involved

Everyone Eats Needs You

We invite you to join us as we prepare and serve lunch to clients at “Everyone Eats” at Spirit of Hope Church in Detroit. We need helpers to travel with us the fourth Wednesday of each month (December 26th, January 23, February 27, March 27, April 24). We meet at the church at 9:15am to load the food and then carpool to Spirit of Hope Church in Detroit. For each of these dates, we will also need 14 dozen cookies. (Donated cookies need to be packed so that they don’t stick together and break into pieces when removing them from the packaging.) Sign-up sheets are on the church office windows. Please select a date or two to help out. Remember many hands make less work for all. If you have questions, contact Virginia Mantela at vae.piemaker@gmail.com or 810-388-8168.

Community Sharing

The MPC Mission Committee invites members to donate a 11-15 oz box of name brand cereal for Community Sharing each month. Having some brand name cereals donated along with the usual generic ones provided by organizations such as Gleaners will provide a special treat as well as show our respect, dignity, and Christian love for their clients. Of course, other food items are always welcome as well. There is a bin both outside the church office and at the bottom of the stairs at the Liberty street entrance to collect cereal and other food items.

Deacons Dedication

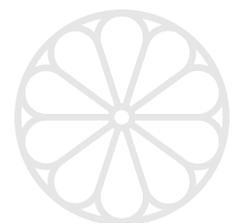
Meal Train Opportunity

One of the services the Deacons provide to those in need is to provide a few weeks of meals, every other day in most cases, to help families through a short illness, the loss of a loved one, or just to ease a particularly burdensome time. If you or someone you know could benefit from this service, please contact any one of the Deacons or Pastor Anderson so that we may contact the family to provide assistance.

If you would like to be added to the list of members willing to provide meals when the need arises, please send your email address to Kelly Carey at kcarey@milfordpc.org.

Snow Birds

Please let the church office know if you are leaving town for the winter. We would love to stay in contact with you while you’re away. Call 248-684-2805 or email lnathan@milfordpc.org with your winter address and phone.



Thank You!

Everyone Eats Thank You

On Wednesday, November 28 we served a lunch of meatballs with brown gravy, mashed sweet potatoes, cole slaw, roll & butter, punch and cupcakes to 120 clients at the Spirit of Hope Church in Detroit. Many thanks to Mike Nave, Leslie Nave, Chuck Cardinale, Betsy Cardinale, Bob Parrett, Debi Parrett, Cheryl Perrine, Carol Smith, Janet Heidrich, Tom Combs, and Sandi Muirhead for their volunteer service. We also offer our thanks to all those who baked cupcakes for dessert.

Thanks and blessings,
Virginia Mantela

Special Thank You

MPC contributed \$1,050 to Community Resource Sharing for the purchase of Thanksgiving Turkeys. Thanks To Everyone!

Deacons

Can't thank you enough.....

The Brotherly Love Truck Ministry wishes to thank the MPC congregation for the donation to our homeless ministry. Each month we provide services to three different organizations; The Second Chance Ministries (church for the homeless), NSO Tumaini Center (only 24 hour homeless shelter in Detroit), and the Second Mile Center of Detroit (community outreach program). These monthly events keep us busy along with other various ministries that regularly ask for our help and support. Your generous donations help us to provide these much needed and appreciated activities to the people of Detroit.

Susan Linn and Dave Muirhead
Brotherly Love Truck Ministry

This 'n' That

Chancel Flowers

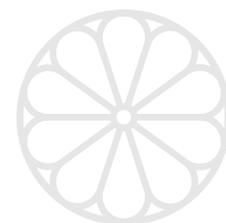
If you would like to purchase flowers for the chancel in honor or memory of a loved one or in celebration of a special event, forms are located in the narthex. You can also complete the form online at milfordpc.org/forms.

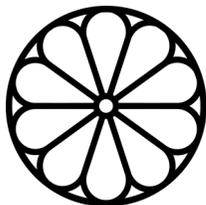
Izzard Memorial Garden

Niches are available for members and their immediate family in the Izzard Memorial Garden. If you are interested in more information, contact Hanne Bishop (248-882-4415 | haneloreetb@gmail.com).

Retirement Giving Option

If you must take a "Required Minimum Distribution" (RMD) from your retirement plan, you might want to consider making a "Qualified Charitable Contribution" directly from the plan. With the tax change this year, it may be more advantageous than in the past. **Check with your tax preparer.**





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Time Value

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who brings good news!"

Isaiah 52:7

Staff & Contact

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banderson@milfordpc.org

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kcarey@milfordpc.org

Marcus LaPratt, Music Director

mlapratt@milfordpc.org

Marcus LaPratt, Youth Director

Rick Moore, Organist

Lisa Nathan, Office Administrator

lnathan@milfordpc.org

Dianna Speier Wedding Coordinator

diannaspeier@comcast.net

Harold Swenson, Treasurer

hswenson@milfordpc.org

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Web: milfordpc.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/milfordpc



Dates to Remember

December 8

Drop & Shop

December 9

Commitment Sunday

December 14 & 16

Christmas Cantata

December 16

Sunday Brunch

December 24

7p Christmas Eve Family Service

9p Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
