



*The order of service is subject to change at the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Italicized Bold print invites congregational response in unison.

*Means you are **invited to stand** if able and comfortable.

Large print hymnals, large print bulletins, service script, pew cushions, and Listening Assistance Devices are available at the entry of the Sanctuary

You're encouraged to check-in at New Milford UMC on Facebook & share our livestream.

WE GATHER TOGETHER

Prelude Harlan Otter

Words to Ponder:

Even in our weakness, Christ arrives with strength and courage. Even in our sorrow, Christmas comes to bring hope and joy. May this promise take root in our souls, as we wait with patience for Christ and Christmas to arrive.

Welcome and Announcements

Introit "Only A Baby Came" Chancel Choir
by Natalie Sleeth

Lighting of the Advent Wreath Omar Lora & Family

***Call to Worship** Rosaura Frias

Rejoice! God's promises are ever near.

We wait for Christ's birth with patience.

Rejoice! God's strength is with us.

We rest in the power of God's mighty love.

Rejoice! We gather in the joy of our salvation.

In this love, we gather to worship and pray.

***Opening Prayer**

Promised One, enter our hearts anew. Enter our worship with your promised presence, that we may know you better. Enter our lives and our world, that we may proclaim your presence and sing your praises. With joyous gratitude, we pray in your blessed name. Amen.

***Hymn of Praise** "Prepare the Way of the Lord" (x2) UMH#207

***Passing of the Peace Of Christ** Pastor Ed

Children's Message Pastor Ed

WE HEAR THE WORD

Prayer of Confession (in unison) Rosaura Frias

God of promise, be with us in our hour of need. Grant us hope, when despair overwhelms us. Grant us healing and mercy, when illness and injury sap our strength. Grant us life and growth, when death and stagnation threaten us. Grant us patience and perseverance, when we grow weary of awaiting the coming of your kingdom. In Christ's holy name, we pray. Amen.

Words of Assurance Pastor Ed

Hymn of Response "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear" UMH#218

Scripture Reading Isaiah 35:1-10 Rosaura Frias

The Return of the Redeemed to Zion

35 The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus **2** it shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and shouting.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the LORD,
the majesty of our God.]]^[a]

3 Strengthen the weak hands
and make firm the feeble knees.

4 Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
"Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you."

5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;

6 then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert;

7 the burning sand shall become a pool
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;^[b]
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

8 A highway shall be there,^[c]
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,^[d]
but it shall be for God's people;^[e]
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.

9 No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.

10 And the ransomed of the LORD shall return
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

(Musical Interlude)

***Gospel Reading** Matthew 11:2-11

Messengers from John the Baptist

Rosaura Frias

2 When John heard in prison what the Messiah^[a] was doing, he sent word by his^[b] disciples 3 and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” 4 Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: 5 the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. 6 And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

Jesus Praises John the Baptist

7 As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? 8 What, then, did you go out to see? Someone^[c] dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. 9 What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet?^[d] Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. 10 This is the one about whom it is written, ‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’

11 “Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

Reflecting on God’s Message “In the Desert Places of our Lives” Pastor Ed

Prayers of the People Pastor Ed

Invitation of the Offering Pastor Ed

Offertory Anthem "Go Tell It on the Mountain" Chancel Choir
Arr. Maurice Gardner

***Doxology** “Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow” UMH # 95
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, Ye heavenly Host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Amen

Offering Prayer Pastor Ed

God of promises and joy, receive these gifts we return to you now. Bless this offering, that our gifts may be signs of joy and hope for others in need.

WE RESPOND TO THE WORD

***Sending Hymn** “I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light” UMH#206

Lord’s Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.**

**And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.
Do not let us fall into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

Benediction

Postlude Harlan Otter

68 Danbury Road, New Milford, CT 06776 | www.newmilfordumc.org | 860.354.4596
Pastor Ed Dayton - 860.354.4596 | Music Director, Harlan Otter | Liturgical Arts, Barbara Williams
Liturgist – Rosaura Frias

Ministers: All members of the New Milford UMC



* Bosch, Hieronymus, -1516. John the Baptist in the Wilderness

Third Sunday of Advent | 12.11.2022 | 9:30 am

You are invited to worship with us in the quiet of prayer, in the joy of song, and in the desire to grow in the grace and knowledge of our LORD Jesus Christ.

Part of our mission is to be a place for all people. All are welcome here! Whatever your gender identity, age, race, religious background, economic status, sexual orientation or condition of ableness, we greet you as a beloved child of God.