



*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 NMUMC on Facebook & share our livestream.

WE GATHER TOGETHER

Prelude

Harlan Otter

Words to Ponder:

Walk no longer in darkness, for the light of the world has come.

Welcome and Announcements

Introit

Advent Reading

The Otter Family at 7pm
The Kolitz Family at 10pm

***Call to Worship**

Sing, choirs of angels.

Sing in exaltation.

Let the shepherds in the fields rejoice.

Let the stars in the sky worship the newborn king.

For heaven has come down to earth.

Salvation has come to our homes this day.

Sing, choirs of angels.

Sing in exaltation.

***Opening Prayer**

God of love, choirs of angels sang to your glory on the night of Jesus's birth. Open our mouths to sing your praise, that we might join the heavenly chorus. As the shepherds left their sheep in the fields may we leave our cares behind, that we too may find the hope of our salvation in the Christ child. On this most holy of nights, may our worship befit the Prince of Peace, who came to show us the depths of your love. Amen.

***Hymn of Praise**

"It Came Upon a Midnight Clear" (1,2&4)

UMH#218

***Passing of the Peace Of Christ**

Pastor Ed

Children's Message

*7pm only

Pastor Ed

WE HEAR THE WORD

***Affirmation of Faith**

Pastor Ed

I BELIEVE that Christmas is more than a time for parties and ornaments; it is a time for remembering Christ and the incarnation of God's love in human flesh.

I BELIEVE there are gifts more important than the ones under the Christmas tree, the things we teach our children, the way we share ourselves with friends, and the industry with which we set about reshaping the world in our time.

I BELIEVE that the finest carols are often sung by the poorest voices; from hearts made warm by the wonder of the season.

I BELIEVE in the angel's message that we should not be afraid—that the Child of Bethlehem is able to overcome all anxieties and insecurities.

I BELIEVE in prayer and quietness as a way of appropriating Christmas—that if I wait in silence I will experience the presence of the one born in the manger, for he lives today as surely as he lived then.

I BELIEVE in going away from Christmas as the wise men went: "another way." I want to be different when these days are past—more centered, more thoughtful, more caring.

AND I BELIEVE God will help me. Amen

Hymn of Response

"Hark the Herald Angels Sing"

UMH#240

(Interlude)

***Gospel Reading**

Luke 2:1-14

The Birth of Jesus

2 In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. **2** This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. **3** All went to their own towns to be registered. **4** Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. **5** He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. **6** While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. **7** And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room.^[a]

The Shepherds and the Angels

8 Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. **9** Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. **10** But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: **11** to you is

born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah,^[b] the Lord. **12** This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” **13** And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host,^[c] praising God and saying,

14 “Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”^[d]

Reflecting on God’s Message “You See, We Are the Words of God.” Pastor Ed

Prayers of the People

Invitation of the Offering Pastor Ed

Offertory Anthem

***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 surprise and wonder, you came in a way no one expected. When we looked for you in power and might, you came in weakness and vulnerability. As we worship you anew this night/day, open our hearts to those you came to save— especially the least and the lost. May the gifts we offer into your service continue the work you began in a manger so many years ago. Amen.

COMMUNION

WE RESPOND TO THE WORD

***Sending Hymn** “Silent Night” UMH#239

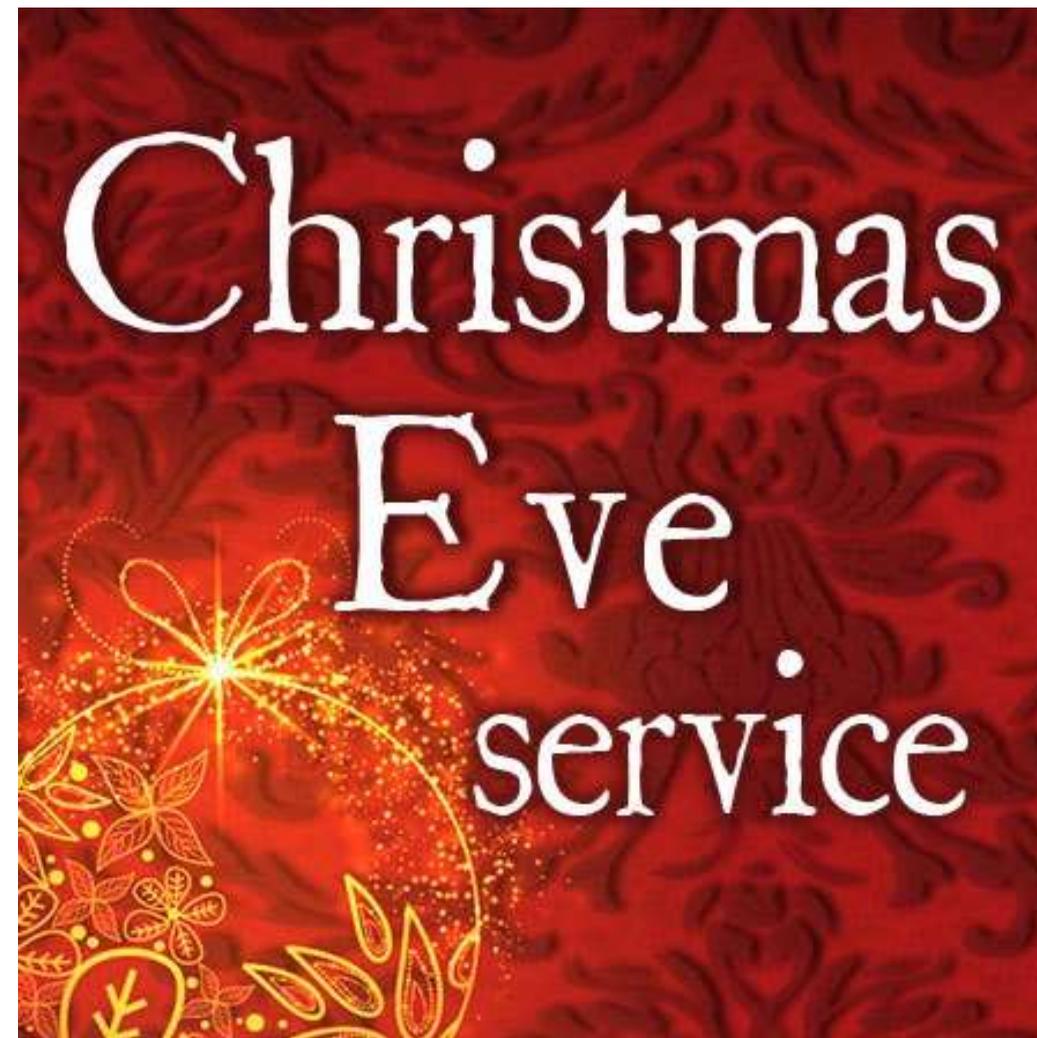
Benediction

Postlude Harlan Otter

***Candlelight Processional**

*10pm only

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Pastor Ed Dayton - 860.354.4596 | Music Director, Harlan Otter | Liturgical Arts, Barbara Williams
Ministers: *All members of the New Milford UMC*



CHRISTMAS EVE

12.24.2022 | 7:00 PM & 10:00 PM

*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.**