



**\*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

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Introit** "There's a Spirit of Love in This Place" Chancel Choir  
By Mark Miller

**\*Call to Worship** Jerry Jones

Come! Now is the time to worship!

**We come to worship God who provides!**

Jesus tells a story of vineyard workers, some who work all day and some who work mere hours, yet the generous landowner paid all of them equally.

**God provides in unexpected ways.**

God does provide in unexpected ways, yet manna, quail, and grapes need gathering and harvesting.

**We respond to God's provision by gathering and harvesting all that God provides.**

Come! Now is the time to worship!

**We come to worship and partner with God who provides for the long haul!**

**Opening Prayer**

Almighty God, we thank you for your kindness that you give equally to everyone.

I pray that you continue to give us mercy and grace even as we welcome the mercy and grace that you extend to others.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit forever more. Amen

**\*Hymn of Praise** "Grace Alone" TFWS# 2162

**\*Passing of the Peace Of Christ** Renee Huckaby

**Children's Message** "Broken Crayons" Terri Hudak

WE HEAR THE WORD

**Prayer of Confession (responsively)** Jerry Jones

Loving and righteous God how generous you are to us even when we don't deserve it.

Forgive us for the times we have failed to appreciate the capacity for greatness of the people you have placed among us. Open our hearts to receive new members as full members of the faith community and to make room for the gifts they bring. Free us, O God, from the jealous thoughts that sometimes come from old guard/new guard thinking. Help us to resist attitudes toward

ministry that are competitive or comparative. Let it sink in that you are the Owner of the Vineyard and we all look forward to the same reward -- life everlasting in your presence forever. Give us the ability to see willing souls among us who continue to stand in the hot sun waiting to work for God and open our eyes to ways to share leadership as we serve you through the ministries of this church. Amen.

**Hymn of Response** "There's a Wideness in God's Mercy" UMH #121

**Scripture Reading** Jonah 3:10-4:11 Jerry Jones

3:10 When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it. 4:1 But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. 4:2 He prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. 4:3 And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." 4:4 And the LORD said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" 4:5 Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city. 4:6 The LORD God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. 4:7 But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. 4:8 When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live." 4:9 But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." 4:10 Then the LORD said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. 4:11 And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?"

*(Musical Interlude)*

**Reflecting on God's Message** "Unexpected Grace" Renee Huckaby

Matthew 20:1-16

20:1 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. 20:2 After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. 20:3 When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; 20:4 and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. 20:5 When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. 20:6 And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' 20:7 They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' 20:8 When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' 20:9 When those hired about five o'clock came,

each of them received the usual daily wage. 20:10 Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. 20:11 And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, 20:12 saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' 20:13 But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? 20:14 Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. 20:15 Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' 20:16 So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

**Prayers of the People**

Renee Huckaby

**Invitation of the Offering**

Renee Huckaby

**Offertory anthem**

"Covenant Prayer"

Chancel Choir

By Jay D. Locklear

**\*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**

Redeeming God, the gifts we bring to you this day, we dedicate to the work of kingdom building. Even more, we offer ourselves as material for this work. Imperfect as we are, we know with Christ as the cornerstone, you can build your vision of mercy, justice, peace, and compassion here in our midst. In Christ, our rock and redeemer. Amen.

**WE RESPOND TO THE WORD**

**\*Sending Hymn**

"Amazing Grace" (verses 1-4,6)

UMH #378

**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.  
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

**Benediction**

Renee Huckaby

**Postlude**

Harlan Otter

68 Danbury Road, New Milford, CT 06776 | [www.newmilfordumc.org](http://www.newmilfordumc.org) | 860.354.4596  
Renee Huckaby | Music Director, Harlan Otter | Liturgical Arts, Barbara Williams | Liturgist – Jerry Jones  
Ministers: *All members of the New Milford UMC*



# Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

**9.24.2023 | 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.*