



\*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**

Patty Jacobson

**Words to Ponder:**

Answer your greatest call: To love God with all that you are; and to love your neighbor as you love yourself.

Do this and God will prosper the work of your hands.

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Introit**

Chancel Choir

Chris Prause

**\*Call to Worship**

God has been our dwelling place in all generations.

**Before the mountains were brought forth,**

before the earth and sky were formed,

**God was from everlasting to everlasting.**

We come to worship this day,

**that God may gather us in.**

We will be close to God's heart,

**and we will dwell in God's grace.**

We will love God fully,

**and we will love one another well.**

**\*Opening Prayer**

God of Life, your memory is longer than time;

your love longer still.

Your giving nature amazes us.

You have given us yourself.

You have given us your work.

You only ask for love in return, for you and for the world.

You put your ministry into our hands, trusting us to be your hands.

Bless the work of our hands and the ministries of our hearts, O God,

as we seek to do your will. Amen.

**\*Hymn of Praise**

"Have Thine Own Way Lord"

UMH#382

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

Pastor Ed

**Children's Message**

Pastor Ed

WE HEAR THE WORD

**Prayer of Confession (in unison)**

Chris Prause

God of Mercy, we hear your command to love one another.

These words are easy to say, yet so difficult to do.

If only loving could be as natural as breathing, but it takes work and dedication.

Even when we think we are following you, God, it is easy to get distracted, overwhelmed, turned around, even lost.

We turn to the loud praise of the world, rather than the quiet whisper of your blessing.

We do the simple, the least-resistant, and leave the difficult behind.

Turn us around, God.

Turn us back to you when we have wandered, when we have suffered,

or when we bring suffering on others.

Show us once more what love looks like and send us into the world to try again. Amen.

**Words of Assurance**

Pastor Ed

**Hymn of Response**

"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" (v1,2&4)

UMH#384

**Prayer of illumination**

Chris Prause

Almighty God, in you are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Open our eyes that we may see the wonders of your Word; and give us grace that we may clearly understand and freely choose the way of your wisdom; through Christ our Lord. Amen

**\*1st Reading**

1 Thessalonians 2:1-8

Chris Prause

**Paul's Ministry in Thessalonica**

**2** You yourselves know, brothers and sisters, that our coming to you was not in vain, **2** but though we had already suffered and been shamefully mistreated at Philippi, as you know, we had courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in spite of great opposition. **3** For our appeal does not spring from deceit or impure motives or trickery, **4** but, just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel, even so we speak, not to please mortals but to please God, who tests our hearts. **5** As you know and as God is our witness, we never came with words of flattery or with a pretext for greed, **6** nor did we seek praise from mortals, whether from you or from others, **7** though we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle<sup>[2]</sup> among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. **8** So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us.

*(Musical Interlude)*

**\*Gospel Reading**

Matthew 22:34-46

Chris Prause

**The Greatest Commandment**

**34** When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, **35** and one of them, an expert in the law, asked him a question to test him. **36** "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" **37** He said to him, " 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' **38** This is the greatest and first commandment. **39** And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' **40** On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

**The Question about David's Son**

41 Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question: 42 “What do you think of the Messiah?<sup>[a]</sup> Whose son is he?” They said to him, “The son of David.” 43 He said to them, “How is it then that David by the Spirit<sup>[b]</sup> calls him Lord, saying,

44 ‘The Lord said to my Lord,  
“Sit at my right hand,  
until I put your enemies under your feet” ’?

45 “If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?” 46 No one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

Reflecting on God’s Message

“Agape.”

Pastor Ed

Prayers of the People

Invitation of the Offering

Pastor Ed

Offertory Anthem

Chancel Choir

\*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

Gracious God, you have given us mercy.

You have given us love.

You have been our calling, and you have been our home.

Take now our hands and feet, O God, and use them for your purposes.

Take now the offering of our hearts, minds, and souls.

Transform them into your love, your mercy, and your everlasting grace for all the world. Amen.

WE RESPOND TO THE WORD

\*Sending Hymn

“Freely, Freely”

UMH#389

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

Postlude

Patty Jacobson

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Pastor Ed Dayton | Music Director, Harlan Otter | Liturgical Arts, Barbara Williams  
Liturgist – Chris Prause | Acolyte – Garbriel Lora  
Ministers: All members of the New Milford UMC



\*Piece of the Berlin Wall, from Art in the Christian Tradition

# Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost

## 10.29.2023 | 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.**