



*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 recorded service.

WE GATHER TOGETHER

Prelude

Harlan Otter

Words to Ponder:

God's faithful live as oaks of righteousness. Let us grow strong and true this Advent season.

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

The Weed Family

Introit

"The Little Drummer Boy"

Bell Choir

arr. Tammy Waldrop

***Call to Worship**

When the Lord restores our fortunes,

we are like those who dream.

Our mouths are filled with laughter;

our hearts sing with shouts of joy.

Worship the Lord of our salvation.

Chuck Samson

***Opening Prayer**

God of Dreams, you have done great things for your people.

From times of old, you awaken the faithful to the dawn of your glory.

Fill our mouths with laughter.

Loose our tongues with shouts of joy.

Anoint us with the oil of gladness and make it known among all people

that we will live as oaks of righteousness, the plantings of the Lord. Amen.

***Hymn of Praise**

"O Come O Come Emmanuel" (v1,2&4)

UMH#211

***Passing of the Peace Of Christ**

Pastor Ed

Children's Message

Pastor Ed

WE HEAR THE WORD

Prayer of Confession (in unison)

Chuck Samson

Merciful God, we hear John's fervent cry:

"Make straight the way of the Lord,"

but we don't know what we should do.

Our lives carry on as they have before.

Nothing seems to change.

Yet we long to be caught up in the ecstatic visions of prophets and mystics.

We yearn to tune our ears to the heralds who testify to your light.

Help us walk in the ways that lead to life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Words of Assurance

Pastor Ed

Hymn of Response

"It Came Upon a Midnight Clear"

UMH#218

Prayer of illumination

Chuck Samson

God, source of all light, by your Word you give light to the soul. Pour out on us the spirit of wisdom and understanding that our hearts and minds may be opened. Amen.

***1st Reading**

Isaiah 61:1-4

Chuck Samson

The Good News of Deliverance

61 The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me

because the LORD has anointed me;

he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,

to bind up the brokenhearted,

to proclaim liberty to the captives

and release to the prisoners,

2 to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor

and the day of vengeance of our God,

to comfort all who mourn,

3 to provide for those who mourn in Zion—

to give them a garland instead of ashes,

the oil of gladness instead of mourning,

the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.

They will be called oaks of righteousness,

the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.

4 They shall build up the ancient ruins;

they shall raise up the former devastations;

they shall repair the ruined cities,

the devastations of many generations.

(Musical Interlude)

***Gospel Reading**

Luke 1:26-38

Chuck Samson

The Birth of Jesus Foretold

26 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, **27** to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was

Mary. **28** And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you."^[a] **29** But

she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. **30** The

angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. **31** And now, you

will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. **32** He will be great and

will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his

ancestor David. **33** He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be

no end." **34** Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"^[a] **35** The angel said to

her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born^[9] will be holy; he will be called Son of God. **36** And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. **37** For nothing will be impossible with God." **38** Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Reflecting on God's Message "Even a Nobody is a Somebody at Christmas." Pastor Ed

Prayers of the People

Invitation of the Offering

Offertory Anthem

"Mary, Did You Know?"
by Buddy Greene

Pastor Ed
Chancel Choir

***Doxology**

"Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow"
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

UMH #95

Offering Prayer

God of peace, you have restored our hope and sanctified our dreams.
May this offering express the joy we feel for the gift of your salvation.
May our gifts reflect our wonder and gratitude for being clothed in the garments of salvation and the robes of righteousness.
May our tithes and our very lives help restore the dreams of the downhearted, and fill the hungry with good things. Amen.

Pastor Ed

WE RESPOND TO THE WORD

***Sending Hymn**

"Hark the Herald Angels Sing"

UMH#240

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

Harlan Otter

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Pastor Ed Dayton | Music Director, Harlan Otter | Liturgical Arts, Barbara Williams
Liturgist – Chuck Samson | Acolyte – Gabriel Lora
Ministers: *All members of the New Milford UMC*



Third Sunday of Advent

12.17.2023 | 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.