



**\*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** Patty Jacobson

**Welcome**

**\*Bidding prayer** Pastor Ed

Beloved in Christ, let us rejoice, in our carols and hymns, that the good purpose of God is being mightily fulfilled. Let us celebrate the promise that our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, will bring all peoples and all things into the glory of God's eternal kingdom. The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. But first, let us pray for the world that God so loves, for those who have not heard the good news of God, or who do not believe it; for those who walk in darkness and the shadow of death; and for the Church in this place and everywhere, that it may be freed from all evil and fear, and may in pure joy lift up the light of the love of God. These prayers and praises let us humbly offer to God, in the words that Christ himself taught us.

**Lords 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.**

**First Lesson** Isaiah 40:1-8 Patty Dayton

To God's people in exile in a faraway land, the prophet Isaiah announces good news: God is coming back, and bringing the exiles home!

*CAROL 211, (v1-3) (UMH) (O Come, O Come, Emmanuel)*

**Second Lesson** Jeremiah 23:5-6 Chris Prause

The prophet Jeremiah offers hope for a righteous branch, a just king who is yet to come.

*CAROL 211, (v4-5) (UMH) (O Come, O Come, Emmanuel)*

**Third Lesson** Zechariah 9:9-10 Mary Prause

To a nation grown weary of war and weapons, God promises a king who will establish a reign of peace.

*CAROL 209, (UMH) (Blessed Be the God of Israel)*

**Fourth Lesson** Haggai 2:6-9 Carolyn Nuzzi

The prophet Haggai promises to God's people a temple even more glorious than the temple of old.

*CAROL 213, (v1,2&4) (UMH) (Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates)*

**Prayers and Concerns**

**Pastoral Prayer** Pastor Ed

**Invitation to Offering**

## Offering Prayer

Pastor Ed

God of the heavens and the earth, we come before you in celebration, bringing gifts for those who cannot celebrate with us. Our songs of praise are for your name and honor. May these gifts give others the opportunity to sing praises to your name as they come to know the endless love you have for each of your children. Amen.

## Fifth Lesson

Isaiah 35:1-6

Terri Hudak

The prophet Isaiah announces the renewal both of the land and of God's people on the coming day of redemption.

*\*CAROL 211, (v6-7) (UMH) (O Come, O Come, Emmanuel)*

## Sixth Lesson

Luke 1:26-35,38

Rosaura Frias

The angel Gabriel announces to the virgin Mary that she will give birth to a ruler whose reign shall never end.

*\*CAROL 196, (UMH) (Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus)*

## \*Seventh Lesson

Mark 1:1-15

Pastor Ed

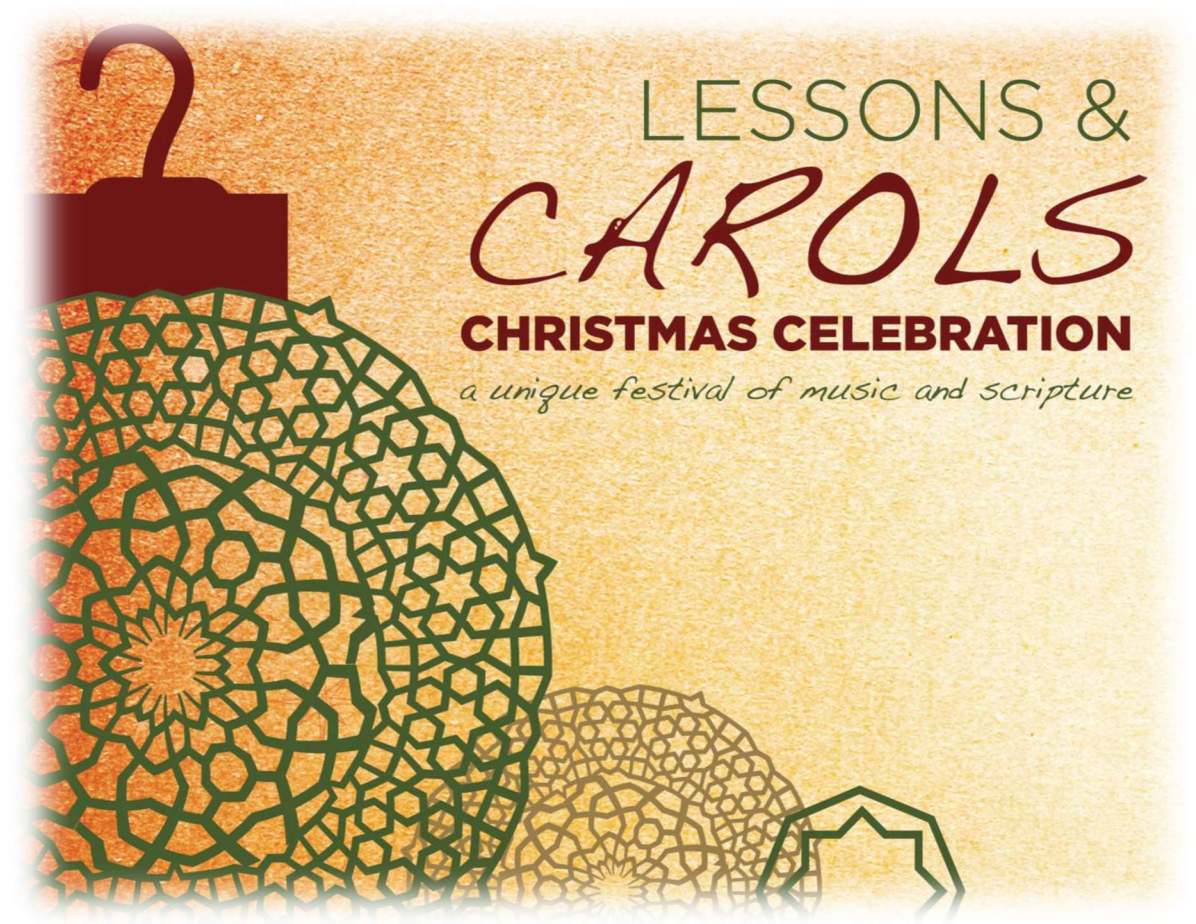
Jesus proclaims the coming of the kingdom of God.

*\*CAROL 715, (v1,2&4) (UMH)*

## \*Dismissal with Blessing

## Postlude

68 Danbury Road, New Milford, CT 06776 | [www.newmilfordumc.org](http://www.newmilfordumc.org) | 860.354.4596  
Pastor Ed Dayton | Music Director - Harlan Otter | Liturgical Arts - Barbara Williams  
Ministers: *All members of the New Milford UMC*



## ***A Festival of Lessons & Carols***

**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday After Christmas Day | 12.31.2023 | 9:30am**

*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.*