



*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:

Be bold before God, for Christ, the rejected one, has become the cornerstone of our faith.
Through the Good Shepherd, you are found, comforted, and loved.

Welcome and Announcements

Introit "The Risen Christ"
by Keith Getty and Phil Madeira Harlan Otter

***Call to Worship** Joan Pond

The Lord is my shepherd, I will fear no darkness.
We will love one another, as Christ loves us.
Christ, the Good Shepherd, has compassion for all.
We will love one another, as Christ loves us.
Open your hearts to goodness and mercy today.
We will love one another, as Christ loves us.
Love, not merely in thought and word,
but in truth and action.
We will love one another, as Christ loves us.

***Opening Prayer**

Shepherding God, guardian of our souls, you offer us rest in the safety of green pastures.
Shower us with your love, and offer us fullness of life in your name.
When our spirits are parched, you lead us beside still waters and quench our thirst for righteousness;
you restore our souls and heal our battered spirits.
Touch our hearts and minds, that your goodness and mercy may follow us every day of our lives.
May we abide in your love and grace for all eternity. Amen.

***Hymn of Praise** "O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing" UMH#57

***Passing of the Peace Of Christ** Pastor Ed

Children's Message Pastor Ed

WE HEAR THE WORD

Prayer of Confession (in unison) Joan Pond

Good Shepherd, help us become your bold acolytes, lighting the way of your truth for all to see.
Help us choose honorable paths through green pastures and still waters amid the darkest valleys of our

lives.

For you are greater than our fears and you know how to bring us peace.

As you laid down your life for us, may we strive to live for others.

We choose you this day, for no other name under heaven inspires us to greater joy. Amen.

Words of Assurance Pastor Ed

Hymn of Response "The Gift of Love" UMH#408

Prayer of Illumination Joan Pond

Good Shepherd, show us your path through the peaks and valleys of our lives.
May goodness and mercy flow through us, as your love sparks our actions.
Help us put our whole selves into the world as we seek to walk in your truth and love.
You are our shepherd, today, tomorrow, and always. Amen.

***1st Reading** Psalm 23 Joan Pond

A Psalm of David.

1 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
2 He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;^[a]
3 he restores my soul.^[b]
He leads me in right paths^[c]
for his name's sake.
4 Even though I walk through the darkest valley,^[d]
I fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.
5 You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
6 Surely^[e] goodness and mercy^[f] shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD
my whole life long.^[g]

(Musical Interlude)

***Gospel Reading** John 10:11-18 Joan Pond

¹¹ "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹² The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. ¹³ The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. ¹⁴ I am the good shepherd. I know my own, and my own know me, ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me, and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ I

have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. ¹⁷For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. ¹⁸No one takes^[a] it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”

Reflecting on God’s Message “Modern-Day Shepherds.” Pastor Ed

Prayers of the People

Invitation of the Offering Pastor Ed

Offertory Anthem Harlan Otter

***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

As the Good Shepherd lays down his life for his sheep, may we, too, strive to serve our neighbors. Whether next door, across town, or around the world, may God bless our prayers, our gifts, and our ministries.

In Christ’s name, we present these gifts. Amen.

WE RESPOND TO THE WORD

***Sending Hymn** “They’ll Know We are Christians” TFWS#2223

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 – Joan Pond | Acolyte – Arianna/Bella O’Rourke
Ministers: All members of the New Milford UMC



*Swanson, John August. Psalm 23

Fourth Sunday of Easter

4.21.2024 | 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.