

The Great Thanksgiving [please refer to United Methodist Hymnal pages 13-14]

**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.**

Sharing of the Bread & Cup

musical selection by Mike Gardner

Prayer after Receiving

GOING FORTH

✚ **Closing Hymn #383** "This Is a Day of New Beginnings" [v.v. 1-4] BEGINNINGS

✚ **Commission, Benediction and Passing of the Peace** Pastor Alex
[adapted from prayer shared by Marilyn Fuller]

**"Today may there be peace within.
May you trust that you are exactly where you are meant to be.
May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born in yourself and others.
May you use the gifts that you have received
and pass on the love that has been given to you.
May you be content with yourself just the way you are.
Let this knowledge settle into your bones,
and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love.
it is there for each and every one of us."**

Let us go in peace in the name of our Creating, Sustaining and Redeeming God. **Amen!**

Postlude musical selection by Michael Gardner

cover image: collage by pastor alex

liturgy: adapted from work by Sacredise.com; worshippingwithchildren; laughingbird.net

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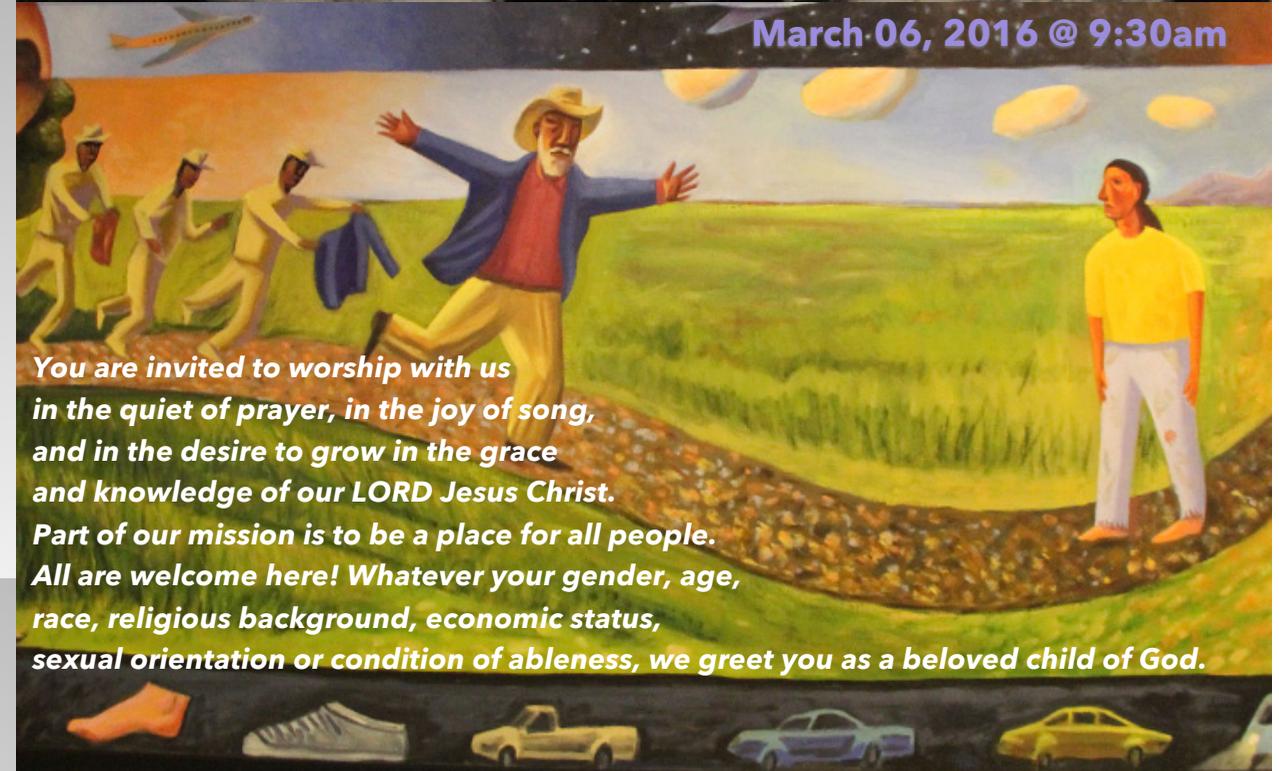
Brinna Koltz, Youth Leader | Lay Leaders: Marylyn Fuller & Pat Tripp

Ministers: All members of the New Milford UMC

New Milford United Methodist Church



March 06, 2016 @ 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, age,
race, religious background, economic status,
sexual orientation or condition of ableness, we greet you as a beloved child of God.**



* **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.

ENTRANCE & PRAISE

Prelude musical selection by Michael Gardner

Welcome & News

† **Opening Hymn #348** "Softly And Tenderly, Jesus Is Calling" [v.v. 1, 2] THOMPSON

† **Call to Worship** [adapted from Psalm 32] Terri Hudak

Happy are those whose sins are forgiven.

Happy are those in whose heart there is no deceit.

When we ignore our wrongdoings, our lives disintegrate with worry and guilt;

But when we recognize our shortcomings we experience God's forgiveness.

Surrounded by God's grace and filled with forgiveness, we sing Your praise.

Stubbornness ends when we listen for God's word.

When we fail to listen, our hearts are hardened and our lives tormented.

But when we put our trust in God, we are filled with God's steadfast love.

Rejoice and shout for joy, all those who are upright in heart.

Prayer of Invocation Pastor Alex

† **Hymn of Praise #348** "Softly And Tenderly, Jesus Is Calling" [v.v. 3, 4] THOMPSON

Children's Message "To Be Loving or to Be Fair?" Pastor Alex

[adapted from concept by worshipingwithchildren]

[All children are invited to Sunday School for the lesson "Jesus Washes Feet" from John 13:1-17]

Hymn of Praise #140 "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" FAITHFULNESS

PROCLAMATION & RESPONSE

Prayer for Illumination Terri Hudak

† **Gospel Reading** "Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32" [NRSV] Terri Hudak

Listening for God's Message Pastor Alex

Prayer for Reconciliation

On this very day, Waiting God,

we admit all the lengths to which we go so we might avoid You.

**You offer us that kin-dom of joy and wonder,
 yet we would hide in places where temptation waits.**

**You invite us to feast on Your grace and peace,
 but we stubbornly refuse, because You also welcome those we call 'outsiders.'**

**We are quick to see all the mistakes that those around us make,
 but hope You will ignore our foolish choices.**

**Celebrating God, before we come to our senses, we find You running towards us,
 sweeping us up in Your arms, tears of grace mingling with our cries of confession,
 a mighty river washing away our sinful ways to restore us to new life.**

**In Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, we find no limitations on Your grace,
 no reservations about Your love, but a feast that overflows with wonder,
 a place we can finally call home.**

Assurance of Pardon

God rolls away everything that stands in our way - our past, our sin, our pain, our hesitation, and reshapes us into new people living in the new creation.

What wonderful grace. We are forgiven! Broken, we are made whole;

lost, we are brought home; empty, we are filled with songs of gladness.

We rejoice and give thanks to God who has graced us with mercy. Amen.

† **Hymn of Response #378** "Amazing Grace" [v.v. 1, 2, 3] AMAZING GRACE

Invitation to Offering

Offering of Tithes and Gifts musical selection by Michael Gardner

† **Doxology #95** "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.**

Offertory Prayer Pastor Alex

HOLY COMMUNION

[Communion is a time when we celebrate and share in the presence of the risen Christ around His Table. This is an open Table and all are invited. **You need not** be a member of this Church or any Church; **you need not** be baptized. **You need only desire a closer encounter with God.** John Wesley, the founder of the people called Methodists, believed that it is possible to have a conversion experience during Communion, and so all are welcome at the Lord's Table]