

**Invitation to Offering** [adapted liturgy by Nancy C. Townley]

*Tonight we come with our hopes and our dreams. We come as little children. We come because for some of us it is tradition for the whole family to go to church on Christmas Eve. Some have come out of curiosity. Some come because of loneliness. We are here in this place, waiting on tiptoes for something to happen. We come offering our lives and bringing our gifts. In the spirit of this night, let us receive our Christmas offering.*

**Offering of Tithes and Gifts**      “Carol of the Bells”      Handbell Choir

**Offering Prayer**

**THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

*[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]*

**The Great Thanksgiving**      *[please refer to pages 13, 14 in the United Methodist Hymnal]*

**The 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.*

**Sharing of the Bread & Cup**      “In Dulci Jubilo” arr. D. Buxtehude      Zoe Vandermeer

**Prayer after Receiving**

**GOING FORTH**

✠ **Carol**      “Go, Tell It on the Mountain” *[please refer to insert]*

**Sharing of the Light of Christ**

✠ **Carol**      “Silent Night” *[please refer to insert]*

**Commission, Benediction and Passing of the Peace**

**Postlude**      “Trumpet Tune in G” by J.S. Bach      Zoe Vandermeer

**New Milford United Methodist Church**

**Christmas Eve Candlelighting Service**

**December 24, 2015 at 7:30pm**

**EXPECTING ME?**

**Make room, beloved  
there is more than enough.**

*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.*

68 Danbury Road, New Milford, CT 06776 | [www.newmilfordumc.org](http://www.newmilfordumc.org) | 860-354-4596  
Rev. Alex da Silva Souto, Pastor | Zoe Vandermeer, Music Director  
Brinna Kolitz, Youth Leader | **Ministers:** All members of the New Milford UMC

\* **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** “Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring” by J.S. Bach, arr. D. Wells Zoe Vandermeer

**Welcome** [adapted from Worship Connection: Christmas Eve 2015 (Option 2) by Nancy C. Townley

*Come, people. Come with us this night. Come not only to the stable but also to the world.  
Come to the world of both long ago and now. Come bringing your hopes and your fears,  
your joys and sorrows. Come, for God is ready; the stage of our lives is set.*

**An Advent Invitation** “Make Room”

[video: TWOTP; music: Alana Levandoski; poem: Kelly Ann Hall; many images: Steve Pavey]

**Call to Worship** “O Come All Ye faithful” duet Kelly O’Rourke & Madelyn Malinowski

Through time and space, in the blink of the eye,  
the love of God stretched forth in the life of a young girl,  
asking that she be part of God’s great plan of Salvation.

*Her name was Mary.*

*She was not of wealth or power.*

*She was a person, just like you and me.*

The Good News came first to the lowly.

*Even today, we believe that good news often comes only to the mighty.*

*How wrong we are!*

In a world where hatred and fear was commonplace, the Christ Child would be born.

*Fear and Hatred are far too commonplace in our world.*

*May the Christ Child come anew into our hearts today.*

**Opening Hymn #230** “O Little Town of Bethlehem” [v.v. 1, 4] ST. LOUIS

**Prayer of Invocation** Pastor Alex

**Anthem** “In Bethlehem's Lowly Manger” by Frances Williams Chancel Choir

## PROCLAMATION & RESPONSE

† **Candlelighting & Gospel Reading** Luke 2:1-7 [MSG] Priscilla, Ralph III, Emma, Rebecca

<sup>2 1-5</sup> *About that time Caesar Augustus ordered a census to be taken throughout the Empire.  
This was the first census when Quirinius was governor of Syria. Everyone had to travel to  
his own ancestral hometown to be accounted for. So Joseph went from the Galilean town*

*of Nazareth up to Bethlehem in Judah, David’s town, for the census. As a descendant of  
David, he had to go there. He went with Mary, his fiancée, who was pregnant.*

*[the 4 Advent candles are lit]*

As we light these candles of hope, peace, joy and love, may God’s grace:

***be born in us tonight.***

***O Come, O Come Emmanuel!***

<sup>6-7</sup> *While they were there, the time came for her to give birth.*

*She gave birth to a son, her firstborn.*

*She wrapped him in a blanket and laid him in a manger,*

*because there was no room in the hostel.*

*[the Christ Candle is lit]*

**Sung Response #219** “What Child Is This” [v.v. 1] GREENSLEEVES

† **Gospel Reading** Luke 2:8-14 [MSG]

<sup>8-12</sup> There were shepherders camping in the neighborhood. They had set night watches over their sheep. Suddenly, God’s angel stood among them and God’s glory blazed around them. They were terrified. The angel said, “Don’t be afraid.

I’m here to announce a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody, worldwide:

A Savior has just been born in David’s town, a Savior who is Messiah and Master.

This is what you’re to look for: a baby wrapped in a blanket and lying in a manger.”

<sup>13-14</sup> At once the angel was joined by a huge angelic choir singing God’s praises: Glory to God in the heavenly heights, Peace to all men and women on earth who please him.

**Sung Response #219** “What Child Is This” [v.v. 2-3] GREENSLEEVES

† **Gospel Reading** Luke 2:15-18 [MSG]

<sup>15-18</sup> As the angel choir withdrew into heaven, the shepherders talked it over.

“Let’s get over to Bethlehem as fast as we can and see for ourselves what God has revealed to us.” They left, running, and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger.

Seeing was believing. They told everyone they met what the angels had said about this child.

All who heard the shepherders were impressed.

<sup>19-20</sup> Mary kept all these things to herself, holding them dear, deep within herself.

The shepherders returned and let loose, glorifying and praising God

for everything they had heard and seen. It turned out exactly the way they’d been told!

**Children’s Message** “Holy Days To-Do’s” Pastor Alex

**Reflecting on God’s Message** “Fiat Lux” Pastor Alex