

Cancellations and changes to church services and events will be posted on WFSB (CBS Channel 3), WTNH (ABC Channel 8), as well as on our website www.newmilfordumc.org, and on the church phone message.

December 28 Joint Worship Service at 10 a.m.—Our founder John Wesley established Covenant Services as an important part of early Methodist life. The first Methodist Covenant Service was held August 11, 1755. Wesley found the service rich and meaningful. Eventually these services came to be held on New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, or a Sunday early in the year. The heart of the service, focused on the Covenant Prayer, requires persons to commit themselves to God and asks congregants to participate sincerely. Please join us for this important and meaningful service.

Meetings & Opportunities this week:

TODAY at 2:30 pm Youth Group in Fellowship Hall
Mon., Dec 15 at 10:30 am Tai Chi in Fellowship Hall
 at 6:00 pm Open Door Band in Sanctuary
 at 7:00 pm Wesley Group in Classroom
Tues., Dec. 16 at 7:00 pm SPR in Conference Room
Wed., Dec. 17 at 2:00 pm Worship Committee in Narthex
 at 7:00 pm BSA Troop 31 Meeting in FH
 at 7:00 pm Missions in Conference Room
Thurs., Dec. 18 at 1:30 pm Book Club in Fellowship Hall
 at 3:30 pm Bridgeport Rescue Mission (off-site)
 at 3:00 pm "Our Daily Bread" in Food Barn
 at 3:30 pm Confirmation in Library
 at 5:45 pm Bells Practice in Sanctuary
 at 6:30 pm Pack 467 in Fellowship Hall
 at 7:00 pm Choir Practice in Sanctuary
Fri., Dec. 19 at 3:30 pm Loaves and Fishes (off-site)
 at 6:00 pm Girl Scout Troop 40236 in Fellowship Hall
Sat., Dec. 20 at 7:15 pm Bowling Family Night at Lore's Lanes
Sun., Dec. 21 at 9:30 am Traditional Service in Sanctuary
 at 10:00 am Children's Sunday School
 at 10:30 am Adult Sunday School
 at 11:30 am Open Door Worship in Sanctuary
 at 2:00 pm Nominations and Lay Leaders in CR
 at 2:30 pm Youth Group Fellowship Hall
 at 7:00 pm Blue Christmas Service in Sanctuary

Monday - Friday at noon AA meeting in Fellowship Hall

To view the most recent calendar, visit our website—
www.newmilfordumc.org/calendar.html



**The Open Door
 Contemporary Worship
 11:30 am**

...in a religion born in a barn,
 an open door goes without saying

song 58 "come into this house"
 song 43 "without you"

welcome & announcements

passing the peace

song 72 emmanuel

lighting of the advent candle the nixon family

song 72 emmanuel

song 8 "he knows my name"

contemplative moment

song 21 "wash over me"

old testament lesson isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
page 691 in the new testament in your pew Bible.

gospel lesson john 1:6-8, 19-28
page 91 in the new testament in your pew Bible.
 the word of God for the people of God.
thanks be to God.

presentation of the offerings

children's message

message "waiting for deep faith" rev. paul a. fleck

anthem "voice of truth"

joys & concerns

song "angels we have heard on high"
 song 62 "he's calling out your name"

sending forth

9:30 a.m. Ushers — Sue Sterling and Lu Vivona
9:30 a.m. Liturgist—Heather Morin
11:30 a.m. Ushers —The Walsh Family
11:30 a.m. Liturgist— Pat Tripp



Third Sunday of Advent

Third Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 14th, 2014 at 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, age, race, religious background, economic status, sexual orientation or condition of ableness, we greet you as a beloved child of God.

ENTRANCE AND PRAISE

Prelude

Announcements

Processional "Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty" NICAIA
Hymn #64

Call to Worship

Leader: Welcome to worship on this Third Sunday in Advent. Our focus today is the Light of joy which beckons us onward.

People: As these days are growing darker, we need to focus on the light.

Leader: Jesus is the light which God has given especially to the world.
People: Help us make our hearts ready to receive Jesus, our joy and our light. Amen.

Prayer for Illumination

We gather in preparation
for good news is about to be proclaimed.

We gather in expectation
for joy is about to break forth in our midst.

We gather in celebration
for we are those people who have said yes to the manger, yes to the one incarnate for others, yes to the wholeness of God. In preparation and expectation, let us celebrate your word.

Old Testament Lesson Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Page 691 in the Old Testament in your pew Bible.

Please stand as you are able for the Gospel readings.

Gospel Lesson John 1:6-8, 19-28
Page 91 in the New Testament in your pew Bible.

The Word of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

All Sit.

The Service of Worship
 New Milford United Methodist Church
 68 Danbury Road
 New Milford, CT 06776
www.newmilfordumc.org
 860-354-4596

Rev. Paul A. Fleck, Pastor
 Sandy Lybe, Music Minister
 Brinna Kolitz, Youth Leader
 Emily Nixon, Open Door Band Leader

CHILDREN’S CHURCH

The children are invited to come forward and sit at the chancel with the pastor as the congregation sings the first verse of Hymn 191, “Jesus Loves Me.”

Children’s Sermon

The Lord’s Prayer

OFFERING

Invitation to Offering

Offertory

Please stand for the Doxology

Presentation

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

Offering Prayer

All Sit.

Anthem “Emmanuel” POTE
The children are invited to go out to Sunday School after the Anthem.

Prayer

Lord of Love and Light, shine through our darkness, bringing us hope. Open our hearts for the journey, our eyes for the light, our spirits for the peace which you bring. Fill our mouths with laughter and speech with shouts of joy that we shall reveal the love with which you surround us. We offer this prayer in the name of the One who is coming into the world bringing your hope, love, peace, and joy, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

RESPONSES

Hymn 211 “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” VENIE EMMANUEL
Stanzas 1, 2 & 3

Lighting of the Advent Candle The Prause Family

Joy to the world! The Lord is coming!

But we’re ready now. How long must we wait?

Are you sure? Are your hearts truly filled with the joy that Christ is about to bring?

Maybe not. The joy of Christmas seems so close but yet so far.

Let us light the candles of Peace, Hope and Joy, as a sign that we are preparing for the joy of Christ in our midst.

Joy to the world! The Lord is coming!

Hymn 211 “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” VENIE EMMANUEL
Stanza 4

[The First, Second, and Third Advent Candle are lighted - the Candles of Peace, Hope, and Joy]

Please stand as you are able for the hymn.

Hymn #2236 (TFWS) “Gather Us In” GATHER US IN

Morning Prayer

Joys and concerns are lifted before God and the congregation.

Pastoral Prayer

Prayer of Confession

God of mercy, light and love, we confess that we have not been people who are quick to pray. When an emergency befalls us, we turn to pleas and prayers which usually begin with the heart-wrenching cry, "Why?". Help us to remember that you are always ready to hear and respond to all our prayers. Remind us that even though we have often failed to witness to your love and live as people of compassion and faith, you love us unconditionally. Forgive our stubbornness and willfulness. Cleanse our souls and spirits and make us truly ready to receive your light. In Jesus’ Name, we pray. Amen.

Words of Assurance

Passing the Peace

The congregation joins in repeating Psalm 19:14

Let the words of my mouth,
**and the meditation of my heart,
be acceptable in your sight, Lord,
my strength and my redeemer.**

Sermon “Waiting for Deep Faith” Rev. Paul A. Fleck

Litany

Liturgist: Come, continue on the journey. It is not far now.

People: But where are we going?

Liturgist: God is welcoming us to God’s kingdom.

People: Can we see it from here?

Liturgist: We see it in the faces of those who know of God’s joy.

People: Will that same joy be given to us?

Liturgist: It already has been given, and his name is Jesus! He is God’s beloved Son, our Light and Joy.

People: Quickly, let us journey toward his light. Amen.

Please stand, if you are able, to sing the hymn.

Hymn #240 “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” MENDELSSOHN

SENDING FORTH

JOYS AND CONCERNS

our prayers are with:

- Steve Bowers who is now on dialysis and has been added to the transplant list.
- Bill Phillips’ great-granddaughter, Holly Nichole’s, birth.
- Anne Meehan’s nephew, Scott, whose brain tumor was found to be malignant, but treatable.
- Kimber’s friend, Linda, who has health issues which postponed her surgery.
- Roberta Buddle’s niece, Cindy, who is undergoing chemotherapy.
- Roberta Buddle’s niece, Wendy (Cindy’s sister), who had a double mastectomy.
- Dorothy O’Rourke whose cancer has returned.
- Glenn Knapp, who fell and broke his hip, and is recovering in Village Crest.
- Laurel Partrick’s cousin, Cynthia, is facing her third recurrence of cancer.
- Emily Nixon’s cousin, who has been diagnosed with cancer.
- Steve and Adrienne Kern’s friend, Steve, who has prostate cancer.

- Marlene Davis’ son, who is undergoing chemotherapy.
- Kay Jones’ niece, Sherri, whose cancer has returned.
- Jan and Gene Parsons’ friend, Brad, whose cancer has returned.
- Sue Sterling’s cousin, Mary, who has lung cancer.

Our Life in Community

For more information about any item listed below, please contact the Church Office at 860-354-4596 or office@newmilfordumc.org

OFF THE TRACK (the adult church school class) is going to "switch tracks" today and have a discussion on the current controversies -- grand juries, demonstrations, issl, etc. Bring you coffee and join us in the conference room around 10:30. All are welcome.

Christmas Tree Sales are underway! A sign up form is available in the Narthex, or contact Dave Kullgren at 860-354-1102 or dkullgren1102@charter.net.

Blue Christmas Service—Next Sunday evening at 7:00 p.m. Christmas can be a painful time for some. It may be the first Christmas without a loved family member who has recently died; it may be a time that has always been difficult. Our spirits sink, as the days grow shorter. We feel the darkness growing deeper around us. We need encouragement to live the days ahead of us. For these reasons, we offer a special longest night “Blue Christmas” service and invite you to attend. A light supper will begin at 6:00 p.m., prior to the service.

The Giving Tree—Gift cards from the Giving Tree are being collected to give to Peg Molina, Director of Social Services for the Town of New Milford, for distribution to members of our community at her discretion. The gift cards can be purchased through the Scholarship Committee which will benefit from this as well. Heather Morin will purchase the cards and deliver them to the church office; please stop at her table in the back of the church to purchase the cards. All gift cards should be in the church office by December 14th.

Advent Giving Program—The Missions Committee will be offering cards that you can give to your friends and family stating that you have given a monetary gift in their honor to a mission organization. The cards will not have a monetary amount attached to them; you may give any amount of money to one or more charities and receive as many cards as you like. Catalogs and order forms are also available on the church website—www.newmilfordumc.org. You may mail your order form to the church with payment and pick your cards up on Sundays between services. For more information, please contact Tracie Nixon at tracienix@gmail.com or 860-355-8628.

Scholarship Committee – The Scholarship Committee wants to remind everyone to get your holiday “Gift Card” order in early so you have them in time for the holidays. See or contact Heather Morin with any questions – 860-354-8406 or email at hmorin218@yahoo.com.