

Cantata—Sunday, December 7th at 5:00 p.m. (the day after the next Spaghetti Supper), please join us for a Christmas Cantata and potluck supper to follow. Mark your calendar now and invite your friends for a great way to begin your celebration of Christ's birth! For more information on the potluck supper, contact Roxanne Martin at 860-355-4118 or mrm189@att.net.

Cantata Rehearsal Schedule for Children—The choir will be performing the Christmas story told through song. Tableaus will take place as the story unfolds. The children are invited to be a part of these tableaus in a variety of parts. There are no lines to be learned, no songs to be memorized. The children will pose in the "living nativity" as the story is sung. We will need at least 12 children for the various parts and will happily have places for all who want to join us. Anyone interested should contact Carol Muska at 860-355-1485 or by email at auli7@sbglobal.

NM Shelter Opens Soon—The New Milford Homeless Shelter will open for the winter season on Sunday, November 23 at St. Francis church at the top of the Green. Overnight volunteers are still needed for the season. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer or have been a volunteer and want to do so again please contact Gerri Holland, Shelter Schedule Coordinator at 860-354-5917. If you have questions regarding the shelter, being trained as a volunteer or volunteering please contact Rita Iverson at 860-355-1252.

Volunteers (males and females) are needed throughout the season. In addition, NMUMC will be providing volunteer coverage for the week of **January 11**. We currently have 4 people scheduled so would invite others to volunteer for that week. Thanks to those who have served and continue to do so.

Meetings & Opportunities this week:

TODAY at 2:30 pm Youth Group in Fellowship Hall
 at 5:00 pm Sandy Relief Meeting in Fellowship Hall
Mon., Nov. 17 at 10:30 am Tai Chi in Fellowship Hall
 at 5:30 pm Ed Center Harvest Festival in Fellowship Hall
 at 6:00 pm Open Door Band in Sanctuary
 at 7:00 pm Wesley Group in Classroom
Tues., Nov. 18 at 7:00 pm SPR in Conference Room
Wed., Nov. 19 at 7:00 pm BSA Troop 31 Meeting in FH
 at 7:00 pm Missions in Conference Room
Thurs., Nov. 20 at 1:30 pm Book Club in Fellowship Hall
 at 3:00 pm "Our Daily Bread" in Food Barn
 at 3:30 pm Confirmation in Library
 at 3:30 pm Bridgeport Rescue Mission (off-site)
 at 5:45 pm Bells Practice in Sanctuary
 at 6:30 pm Pack 467 in Fellowship Hall
Fri., Nov. 21 at 3:30 pm Loaves and Fishes (off-site)
 at 6:00 pm Girl Scout Troop 40236 in Fellowship Hall
Sat., Nov. 22 at 10:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal in Sanctuary
 at 12:00 noon Youth Group Can/Bottle Drive in FH
 at 7:00 pm Family Game Night in Fellowship Hall
Sun., Nov. 23 at 9:30 am Traditional Worship in Sanctuary
 at 10:00 am Children's Sunday School
 at 10:30 am Adult Sunday School
 at 11:30 am "Open Door" Cont. Worship in Sanctuary
 at 2:30 pm Youth Group Fellowship Hall

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 39 "we seek your face"
 song 59 "arise"

welcome & announcements

moment of silence

passing the peace

song 84 "mighty to save"
 song 61 "breathe"

gospel lesson matthew 25:14-30
page 28 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 "christians got talent" rev. paul a. fleck

anthem

joys & concerns

song 88 "this is amazing grace"
 song 64 "you are good"

sending forth

9:30 a.m. Ushers — Chris Prause and Kyle Doto
9:30 a.m. Liturgist—Ann Tibbatts
11:30 a.m. Ushers —Carol Muska
11:30 a.m. Liturgist— Tony DosSantos



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

23rd Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday, November 16th, 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 "Take My Life, and Let It Be" MESSIAH
Hymn #399

Call to Worship

Leader: The time for harvest is close at hand. What have you done with the gifts God has given you?

People: We have brought our gifts to the house of the Lord.

Leader: Praise God for the gifts and for opportunities for service that they represent.

People: We praise God for all the ways in which our lives have been blessed.

Leader: Generous God, accept our gifts and our lives this day.

People: Loving God, accept our praise and gratitude. Amen.

Prayer for Illumination

Loving God,

Who speaks to use through your Scriptures

And in the collective wisdom

Of your people throughout the ages:

Help us to hear anew

What you would speak to us this day.

For your word is always fresh,

A message of life and hope

In the world that needs to know and heed your will.

Through Christ the living Word

And your Spirit of Illumination

Who with You is the truth that sets us free. Amen.

Epistle

Page 205 in the New Testament in your pew Bible.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Please stand as you are able for the Gospel readings.

Gospel Lesson

Matthew 25:14-30

Page 28 in the New Testament in your pew Bible.

The Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

All Sit.

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

“Come and See”

HAMM

The children are invited to go out to Sunday School after the Anthem.

Prayer

Awesome God, you created the world and all that is in it. You blessed each element of creation with your love. You called us from slavery into witness and service. Be with us this day as we gather to worship. Clear our minds of all the distractions which would draw us away from you. Open our hearts and spirits and let your healing and empowering love flow in. Prepare us to be witnesses to your power and love as we use the gifts with which you have blessed us in your service. For we offer this prayer in the name of your Son our Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

RESPONSES

Please stand as you are able for the hymn.

Hymn #206 “I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light”

HOUSTON

Morning Prayer

Joys and concerns are lifted before God and the congregation.

Pastoral Prayer

Prayer of Confession

We are "pack rats", O Lord. You continually pour gifts and blessings into our lives and we hide them away for fear that they might disappear or not be worthy of acclaim. We squander them wastefully on things that are not healthy or helpful to others. We confess that we have not always recognized the talents we have been given. We find it easier to belittle the gifts than to honor the giver. As Jesus reminded his listeners to honor the giver of the gifts by using them to create something better, for healing, for hope in the

world; remind us that the message of Jesus is truly pertinent to us today. Forgive us when we have treated it as a nice story. Help us to take the gifts you have given us, to develop them, and use them in ways which will offer healing and hope. In Jesus’ blessed 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

“Christians Got Talent!”

Rev. Paul A. Fleck

Litany

Liturgist: The voice of God is speaking to you. God is calling you today to come and rejoice. Come to me, dear ones. Open your hands.

People: **We can’t, Lord. Our hands are calloused and dirty, rough.**

Liturgist: Open your hands. My healing and cleansing love will protect and soothe you. Come to me, beloved friends. Open your hands.

People: **We can’t, Lord. Our hands have been wounded and they are bleeding.**

Liturgist: Open your hands and I will touch your wounds and stop the bleeding. Come to me, disciples, witnesses. Open your hands.

People: **We can’t, Lord. We have nothing to offer to you. Our hands are empty.**

Liturgist: Open your hands and I will give you my peace. Now you are healed.

People: **Now we can reach out to help.**

Liturgist: Now you can go into the world to offer blessing and hope.

People: **Praise be to you, O God, who has taken our excuses and turned them into commitment.**

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

Hymn #2172 (TFWS)

“We Are Called”

WE ARE CALLED

SENDING FORTH

JOYS AND CONCERNS

we are thankful:

- For our veterans who have served.
- Ann and Tom Tibbatts grandson, Evan, is engaged.
- Rich Baur received good test results and has a planned course of treatment.

our prayers are with:

- Dorothy O’Rourke whose cancer has returned.
- Sue Sterling’s boss’ son, Scott, who has brain cancer.
- Anne Meehan’s nephew, Scott, who had surgery for a benign brain tumor.
- Glenn Knapp, who fell and broke his hip, and is recovering in Village Crest.
- Marlene Davis’ sister in California who had emergency surgery.
- Sue Perry, who is still recovering from ankle surgery and is receiving excellent card from Dean.

- Terri Brown’s step-daughter and son for the Lord’s leading and wisdom in new decisions that need to be made.
- Roseanne, Sarah Taranto’s Mother-in-law, who is having heart and breathing problems.
- Angie Chastain’s father, Jack, who has been diagnosed with colon cancer.
- Linda, Kimber Malinowski’s friend, who had lung surgery
- Marsha Sacca, who is recovering from bypass surgery and pneumonia.
- Bill Gardei, who is totally blind and suffers from Parkinson’s Disease. Bill is a former pastor of NMUMC.
- Alma Hough, that she will be relieved of her pain.
- Sue Sterling’s colleagues who have been diagnosed with cancer.
- Roberta Buddle’s niece, Cindy, who is undergoing chemotherapy.
- Giovanni Thomas’ as he continues treatment.
- John King, who is battling cancer.
- Two friends of Kimber Malinowski who are facing health issues.
- Charlie Chapin, as he heals.
- Laurel Partrick’s cousin, Cynthia, is facing her third recurrence of cancer.
- Mary Gunther, who had abdominal surgery.
- 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

first Stewardship Report—To date we have received 56 pledges totaling \$142,948! Pledges are still being accepted and may be turned in to the Church Office. Pledge forms are available in the Library.

A Call for Sunday School Teachers! Jesus said, “[l]et the little children come to me.” They’ve come to New Milford United Methodist Church, and our Sunday School is filled to overflowing! We’ve expanded our Sunday School to two classrooms. But this means we need more teachers to help us with the joyful work of teaching our youngsters the love of God. Will you join us? For more information contact the Church Office at 860-354-4596 or Martha McMahan at 860-354-5345.

Special Collection NEXT WEEK to Benefit Children in Liberia-Rev. Toby Gbeh of Liberia will be joining us for a special presentation next Sunday, regarding the Ebola epidemic in that country and the personal impact it has had on him, his friends, and his colleagues still there. Rev. Gbeh received his M.A. in Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations from Hartford Seminary, CT and has extensive pastoral and teaching experience in Liberia, Ghana and the U.S. Toby returned home to Liberia in 2006. He has served as President at the Liberia Baptist Theological Seminary in Paynesville and taught Islam and Church History. Rev. Gbeh organized an elementary school in the Seminary Community for children whose parents are not able to afford their education. "Uncle Toby" as he is called by the children at Quality Foundation is a father and grandfather. In addition to his Seminary responsibilities, Toby has been directly involved with the children and their parents. He returned to the U.S. in April, 2014. The special collection will benefit the elementary school and the children attending there, many of whom have lost parents in this epidemic.

Family Game Night—Join us on Saturday, November 22nd at 6:30 p.m. for a night of fellowship at our family game night! Please bring a finger food to share. The Martins will provide the beverages. Please RSVP to Roxanne Martin at 860-355-4118 by the 2nd of each month.

Future family game nights will be held the fourth Saturday of the month in Fellowship Hall starting at 6:30pm. Hope to see you there!