

“No matter who you are, or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here”



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF NEW MILFORD

December 7, 2025

WELCOME & CALL TO MINISTRY

LIGHTING THE CANDLES

PRELUDE

Coventry Carol/Trad. English, arr. Joel Raney

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: People of God, Christ has invited us here.

People: We gather to praise God, who brings justice and righteousness to all.

Leader: We gather to give thanks to God for hope and peace.

People: Blessed be the Lord, who has done marvelous things.

All: Let us praise God together.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

GLORIA PATRI*

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be world without end. Amen, Amen.

HYMN*

Hail to the Lord's Anointed #140

LIGHTING OF THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE

The Behrens Family

Last Sunday we lit the first candle on our Advent Wreath, the candle of hope. Let us light it again to show that our hope continues.

(Light one purple candle.)

John the Baptist called on the people of his day to prepare the path for the coming of the Messiah. He called them to repent, turn around, change their ways. To live in peace with others, we need to repent and change directions.

(Light the second purple candle.)

We light this second candle to remind us that Jesus is the Prince of Peace. He shows us how to share God's peace with others.

Response

O Come, O Come Emmanuel, v. 2

*O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by thine advent here.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION & LORD'S PRAYER

God of hope and peace, as we worship you this day, may we catch a glimpse of your peace; may we open ourselves to receive your grace; and may we welcome one another, as you have welcomed us. Help us to prepare our hearts and our lives, for Christ to be born in us once again. Forgive us, when we lose our way. May we be renewed in body and spirit, prepared to bring your righteousness and justice to the world. In the name of Christ, we pray, saying...

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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Choral Response

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Choral Response

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 11:1-10

OFFERING OUR GIFTS

Call to Offering

Offertory

Advent Prayer/arr. Patrick Liebergen

Song of Presentation*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God all creatures here below; praise God above ye heavenly hosts: Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Offering Prayer*

We thank you, Holy One, for all your good gifts, especially the gifts of prophecy, promise, and calls for preparation. As a thankful response to these gifts, we offer our belief, our commitments, and our money, that we may hasten the time when no one will hurt or destroy on all God's holy mountain. Amen.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

#361 in Hymnal

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Invitation

Leader: Know that the God of comfort is with you.

People: We know that the God of hope is with us.

Leader: Open wide our hearts.

People: We open them to God's peace.

Leader: Let us give thanks and share our joy.

People: In this space and time, we offer God our love and praise.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Consecration

Words of institution

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

*The Deacons will serve communion. Gluten free crackers are in the center cup.
Please hold the bread and juice until we partake as a group.*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

For the nourishment of spirit, mind, and body, for hope that we begin to see, and for comfort from the Prince of Peace, we share our gratitude, Gracious God. Encourage us in these shortened days. Through the long nights of this season, may your hope carry us until dawn arrives again. Amen.

HYMN*

O Word of God Incarnate #322

Church School children will process to the Parish House during the last verse.

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 3:1-12

Choral Response

SERMON

Prepare the Way

Choral Response

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

HYMN*

Blessed Be the God of Israel #135

BENEDICTION* - spoken and sung

POSTLUDE

In dulci jubilo/Johann Michael Bach

**All are invited to stand in body or spirit*

THANK YOU

The flowers at today's service were given by Barbara McGiver in loving memory of her father, John Strain.

Thank you to the Behrens Family for reading the lighting of the first advent candle.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

All Are Welcome Here: For your comfort, listening devices are available by the front doors of the church. Large print bulletins are available at both entrances. Additionally, services are live streamed in the chapel, should you need to step out of the service for any reason. Simply turn on the TV. Please see a Deacon if you need assistance.

Chili Lunch and Christmas Tree decorating will be held after today's service in Fellowship Hall.

Women of the Bible Study Group meet in the Chapel on Monday at 1:00 PM.

Christmas Concert will be held on Sunday, December 14 at 4:00 PM with the Christmas Choir, village Handbell Ringers and Cherub Choir.

Chapel Stitches next meeting will be on Sunday January 11, 2026.

The First Congregational Church United Church of Christ

Office Hours: Monday to Friday 9:00 am - 2:00 PM

(860) 354-8232 Voicemail Available 24/7

www.nmchurch.org | church@nmchurch.org

Rev. Marie's day off is Friday.

Pastor	Rev. Marie Bacchiocchi	revmarieb@nmchurch.org 475-207-0740
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Treasurer	Jill Coolbeth	tresurer@nmchurch.org
Financial Secretary	*Open	financialsecretary@nmchurch.org

Today's service

Deacon on Duty	Hannah Albright
Trustee on Duty	Bill Jackson
Ushers	Deacons
Scripture Reader	Pam Cafiero
Acolytes	Deacons



Weekly
Sundays - Worship 10:00 AM
Coffee Hour 11:00 AM
Bible Study Group 11:15 AM
Monday - Woman of the Bible Study Group 1:00 PM
December
Dec. 7 - Advent Week 2 Chili Lunch – Following service
Dec. 14 - Advent Week 3 Christmas Concert 4:00 PM
Dec. 20 - Men’s Breakfast
Dec. 21 - Advent Week 4 Christmas Pageant Brunch following Service
Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve Family service 4:00 PM
Dec. 24 - Candlelight service 9:00 PM

Imagine Together

2026 Pledge Plan for time, Talent and Treasure

For our church to thrive, we need your commitment in many different ways. Yes, we need your monetary donation, of any amount, to fund our budget. Yet, we also need the gift of your time and talent. They are equally important to the life and ministry of our church.

Please fill out this pledge form with how you will support our church in the coming year. There will be a second collection after the sermon to receive your pledge from.

Thank you for supporting our church!

First and Last Name(s)

Main Address(#, Street, Town, State, Zip)

Phone # _____ Email _____

In total I plan to donate \$ _____ to the general fund.

I/we prefer to make the donation:

The donation will be made:

_____ All at once in the month of _____

_____ in cash

_____ In equal installments each quarter

_____ by check

_____ In equal installments each month

_____ by bill pay

_____ In equal installments each week

_____ online (credit card, Pay Pal)

_____ electronic transfer

I wish to receive my statements via email

Time and Talent Pledge

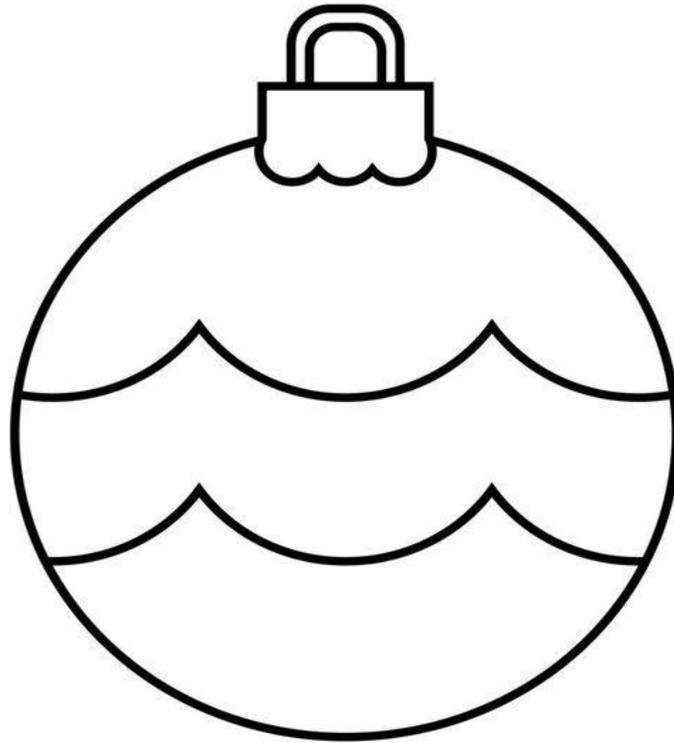
_____ I would like to serve on a committee.

_____ I have an idea for a new ministry/program: _____

_____ I can help with a short term task.

_____ I can pray for our church, it's members and ministry, once a week.

_____ I want to help, but don't know where I can fit in.



Advent Devotion Week 2: Peace

How can you be a peacemaker this Advent? Write it in the center of the ornament. You can color the ornament in Advent colors: purple, pink, and blue or any colors you want. Then cut out the ornament and hang it on your tree to remind to be a channel for peace this Advent.