



MILFORD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

December 1, 2024 | 1st Sunday of Advent | 10:00 AM

Hanging of the Greens—Holy Communion

Theme: **Come, Let Us Adore Him**

Jennifer Lovallo, Pastor

Jeffrey Fornoff, Music Director

PRELUDE

Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel

Lynn Arthur Koch

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*CALL TO WORSHIP

How shall we prepare this house for the coming of the King?

With branches of cedar, the tree of royalty.

How shall we prepare this house for the coming of the eternal Christ?

With garlands of pine and fir, whose leaves are ever living, ever green.

How shall we prepare this house for the coming of our Savior?

With wreaths of holly and ivy, telling of his passion, death, and resurrection.

How shall we prepare our hearts for the coming of the Son of God?

By hearing again the words of the prophets, who foretold the saving work of

God.

For God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.

Glory to God in the highest!

* CONGREGATION STANDS AS COMFORTABLE

CONGREGATION RESPONSE IN ***BOLD Italic***

BLESSING OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE

In the darkest days of winter an evergreen tree brings hope of new life, reminding us of the gift of life we have through Jesus Christ.

Holy Lord, we come with joy to celebrate the birth of your Son, who rescued us from the darkness of sin by making the cross a tree of life and light. May this Christmas tree, arrayed in splendor, remind us of the life-giving cross of Christ, that we may always rejoice in the new life that shines in our hearts, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

BLESSING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

The circle of greens which form the Advent Wreath is a sign of life without end.

Christ came to bring us salvation and has promised to come again. Let us pray that we may always be ready to welcome him.

Come, Lord Jesus.

That the keeping of Advent may open our hearts to God's love,

Come, Lord Jesus.

That the light of Christ may penetrate the darkness of sin,

Come, Lord Jesus.

That this wreath may constantly remind us to prepare for the coming of Christ,

Come, Lord Jesus.

That the Christmas season may fill us with peace and joy as we strive to follow the example of Jesus,

Come Lord. Jesus. Loving God, your Church joyfully awaits the coming of its Savior, who enlightens our hearts and dispels the darkness of ignorance and sin. Pour forth your blessings upon us as we light the candles of this wreath. May their light reflect the splendor of Christ, who is Lord, forever and ever. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MOMENT/ LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

*OPENING HYMN

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (verse 1)

UMH 211++

GOD WILL SEND A RIGHTEOUS KING

Jeremiah 23:5-6

Placing the Cedar Branch

In ancient times the cedar was revered as the tree of royalty. It also signified immortality and was used for purification. We place this cedar branch as a sign of Christ, who reigns as King forever, and whose coming, in justice and righteousness, will purify our hearts.

HYMN

"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

UMH 196++

THE PROPHET DECLARES A CHILD WILL BE BORN		Isaiah 9:2, 6-7
Placing the Evergreen Wreath		
	<i>Because the needles of pine and fir trees appear not to die each season, the ancients saw them as signs of things that last forever. Isaiah tells us that there will be no end to the reign of the Messiah. Therefore, we place this wreath of evergreens shaped in a circle, which itself has no end, to signify the eternal reign of Jesus, the Christ.</i>	
HYMN	“People, Look East” (verse 1)	UMH 202
THE FOURTH SERVANT SONG		Isaiah 53:1-6
Placing the Holly and the Ivy		
	<i>For Christians, this passage from Isaiah reflects the sufferings of Jesus, who saved us from our sins by his death on the cross, and by his resurrection from the dead. In ancient times, holly and ivy were considered signs of Christ’s passion. Their prickly leaves suggested the crown of thorns, the red berries the blood of the Savior, and the bitter bark the drink offered to Jesus on the cross. As we place the holly and the ivy, let us rejoice in the coming of Jesus, our Savior.</i>	
HYMN	“Hail to the Lord’s Anointed” (verse 1)	UMH 203
THE MYSTERY OF THE INCARNATION		John 1:1-5, 9-14
	<i>As we prepare for the coming of Jesus, the Light of the World, we light the Christmas tree. During this Advent, wherever you see a lighted Christmas tree, let it call to mind the One who brings light to our darkness, healing to our brokenness, and peace to all who receive him.</i>	
HYMN	“I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light” (verse 1)	UMH 206
SCRIPTURE LESSON	Luke 21:25-36	NT p.85-6
SERMON	“Preparations”	
ANTHEM	“A New King is Comin’”	Walter Rodby
OFFERING		
OFFERTORY	“My Soul Gives Glory to My God”	Morning Song, harm. Charles H. Webb
*DOXOLOGY	“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”	UMH 95

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Gracious God, in this season of anticipation, we offer our gifts with hopeful hearts. As we prepare for the fullness of your kingdom, may these offerings be a sign of our readiness and desire to live attentively. Use them to bring justice, righteousness, and joy to our world. Surprise us with your presence and help us to look up, to pay attention, and to embrace the hope you bring. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

PASTORAL PRAYER

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God, we confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart. We have failed to be an obedient church. We have not done your will, we have broken your law, we have rebelled against your love, we have not loved our neighbors, and we have not heard the cry of the needy. Forgive us, we pray. Free us for joyful obedience, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PARDON

Hear the good news: Christ died for us while we were yet sinners; that proves God’s love toward us. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Glory to God. Amen.

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

UMH 15-16

LORD’S PRAYER

UMH 895

RECEIVING THE BREAD AND CUP

(Everyone is invited to come to the rail to receive the bread and cup)

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves for others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN** “Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates” (verses 1&2) UMH 213

***BENEDICTION**

For all that has been...*Thanks!*

For all that will be...*Yes!*

***SENDING FORTH**

POSTLUDE “Tell Out, My Soul” Walter Greatorex