



milford united methodist church

December 24, 2023 | Christmas Eve | 7:00 PM

Theme: The Gift of the Nutcracker
Jennifer Lovallo, Pastor
Jeffrey Fornoff, Music Director

PRELUDE "God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen" Arr. Christopher Uehlein

MUSICAL SHARING "Christmastime is Here" Marcus Lovallo, *piano*

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*CALL TO WORSHIP

The angels are singing a new song!

Glory to the newborn King!

Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice, for our hopes are fulfilled in the Child of the Manger.

God has given us a new song to sing. Let our voices soar with good tidings.

*CENTERING PRAYER

God of Eternity, whose rule extends to the farthest stars, come to rule within us on this wondrous night, when the Word becomes flesh once more to dwell among us. We open ourselves to the light and long to offer our lives as a dwelling place for your truth. Speak to us again through the Child of Bethlehem. Reach out to the child in all of us, and hold us in the warmth of love's embrace. We gather as your children to say thank you for loving us so much that you gave us the greatest gift of all, the babe in the manger, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN** "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing" UMH 240++

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH The Hancock Family

***CAROL** "Joy to the World" UMH 246++

SCRIPTURE Luke 1:39-45 NT p. 57

BELL CHOIR ANTHEM "Silent Night, Holy Night" arr. by Jeffrey Fornoff

THE CHRISTMAS STORY

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SCRIPTURE Luke 1:26-38 NT p. 56-57

CAROL "Angels from the Realms of Glory" (verse 1) UMH 220
[The Angels are placed in the Creche]

SCRIPTURE Luke 2:1-5 NT p. 58

CAROL "O Little Town of Bethlehem" (verses 1 & 2) UMH 230
[Mary and Joseph are placed in the Creche]

A WORD "On the Animals"

CAROL "The Friendly Beasts" (verses 1 & 2) UMH 227
[The Animals are placed in the Creche]

SCRIPTURE Luke 2:6-7 NT p. 58

CAROL "Away in a Manger" (verse 1) UMH 217
[Baby Jesus is placed in the Creche]

SCRIPTURE Luke 2:8-20 NT p. 58

CAROL "Angels We Have Heard on High" (verses 1 & 2) UMH 238
[The Shepherds are placed in the Creche]

SCRIPTURE Matthew 2:1-11 NT p. 2

CAROL "The First Noel" (verse 3) UMH 245
[The Wise Men are placed in the Creche]

ANTHEM "Ding, Dong! Merrily on High" Arr. by Ken Besig

SERMON "The Greatest Gift"

MUSICAL SHARING "O Holy Night" Steven Bloomer-Teague

CHRISTMAS OFFERING

OFFERTORY "Pastorale in G" Charles Wesley
 Jeffrey Fornoff, *organ* Elijah Keay, *clarinet*

***DOXOLOGY** "O Come, All Ye Faithful" (verses 1-3) UMH 234++

CHRISTMAS PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER UMH 895

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

CHRISTMAS CANDLELIGHT

***CLOSING HYMN** "Silent Night, Holy Night" UMH 239++

***CHRISTMAS BLESSING**

POSTLUDE "Cradle Song" Arr. Lani Smith

++ *Indicates someone's favorite hymn*

Merry Christmas



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