



**December 17, 2023, 10:30 a.m.
Third Sunday of Advent**

**First United Methodist Church of Newton
111 Ryerson Avenue, Newton NJ**

Order of Worship

(*Please rise in body or in spirit.)

PRELUDE Christie Spriggs

GREETING Rev. Todd Lattig

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE (Joy) Allison and Mario Stapel

*CALL TO WORSHIP (responsive) Kathleen Meredith

Full of questions and full of answers, we come to this place.

Searching for purpose, searching for community, searching for more.

In this time, in this space, God urges us to tell our stories —

The good, the bad, the in-between.

May God soften our hearts this day.

So we can truly hear the stories shared in word and song and silence.

*HYMN “Emmanuel, Emmanuel” UMH 204

*OPENING PRAYER (unison) Kathleen Meredith

Truth be told, Lord, every day we tell a story in our words and actions. May the story we tell be one of hope and promise. God of possibility, may the story we tell be yours.

Amen.

ANTHEM “Come, Thous Long-Expected Jesus” Chancel Choir
Melinda McCoy-Miller, flute

MISSION MOMENT Rev. Lattig

COMMUNITY PRAYER Rev. Lattig

CHORAL RESPONSE TO PRAYER Chancel Choir

KIDS ROCK CHILDREN’S SERMON Rev. Lattig

SCRIPTURE READING Kathleen Meredith

John 1:6-8, 19-28

⁶ God sent a man, John the Baptist, ⁷ to tell about the light so that everyone might believe because of his testimony. ⁸ John himself was not the light; he was simply a witness to tell about the light.

¹⁹ This was John’s testimony when the Jewish leaders sent priests and Temple assistants from Jerusalem to ask John, “Who are you?” ²⁰ He came right out and said, “I am not the Messiah.”

²¹ “Well then, who are you?” they asked. “Are you Elijah?”

“No,” he replied.

“Are you the Prophet we are expecting?”

“No.”

²² “Then who are you? We need an answer for those who sent us.

What do you have to say about yourself?”

²³ John replied in the words of the prophet Isaiah:

“I am a voice shouting in the wilderness,

‘Clear the way for the LORD’s coming!’”

²⁴ Then the Pharisees who had been sent ²⁵ asked him, “If you aren’t the Messiah or Elijah or the Prophet, what right do you have to baptize?”

²⁶ John told them, “I baptize with water, but right here in the crowd is someone you do not recognize. ²⁷ Though his ministry follows mine, I’m not even worthy to be his slave and untie the straps of his sandal.”

²⁸ This encounter took place in Bethany, an area east of the Jordan River, where John was baptizing.

This is the Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God for this Word.

SERMON

PREPARE: “Testify”

Rev. Lattig

OFFERTORY

Christie Spriggs

Please proceed up the center aisle to place your offering in the plate or scan one of the QR codes on the back of this bulletin to make your offering electronically using PayPal or Tithe.ly.

*DOXOLOGY

UMH 95

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

Kathleen Meredith

Lord, we thank you for First United Methodist Church of Newton and the faithful people who have been part of this church over the years. Today, may our witness for Christ be clear, bold, and full of grace. Bless these offerings and the faithfulness of the givers, in Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

*HYMN

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

UMH 230

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Lattig

POSTLUDE

Christie Spriggs

This Week's Schedule

Monday, Dec 18	10-11 Chair Yoga (HH) 11:30-12:30 Yoga for LWJ (HH)
Tuesday, Dec 19	10-1 Life With Joy (HH) 6 Cub Scouts (HH)
Wednesday, Dec 20	10-3 Life With Joy (HH) 7 Blue Christmas Service
Thursday, Dec 21	10-1 Life With Joy (HH) 2 ABC Book Club
Saturday, Dec 23	9-2 Treasures of Hope
Sunday, Dec. 24	10:30 Combined Service No Sunday School 7 Candlelight Christmas Eve Service

Tithe.ly



PayPal



Today's Worship Leaders

Pastor
Music Coordinator/Joy Fellowship
Advent Candle Lighters
Liturgist
Greeter
Camera Operator
Soundboard Operator

Rev. Todd Lattig
Christie Spriggs
Allison and Mario Stapel
Kathleen Meredith
Fred Fox
Jen Phlegar
Jay Morrison