



**December 31, 2023, 10:30 a.m.
First Sunday After Christmas
New Year's Eve**

**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 Kathleen Meredith

*CALL TO WORSHIP (responsive) Evelyn Cornwell

A new day dawns.

How majestic is God's name throughout the earth.

A new season of life begins.

God's glory shines in the heavens and shimmers on the waters.

A new year calls us into Christ's glorious future.

We will feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick and imprisoned, and see Christ in every face we meet.

*HYMN "The First Noel" UMH 245

*OPENING PRAYER (unison) Evelyn Cornwell

Source of love and mercy, as we enter a new year in the life of this church may our love for you be made known in our love for one another. Help us leave old grievances in the past and former arguments behind, as we open our hearts to the possibilities that lie before us. Guide our footsteps into the glory of your ways, that we may live as beloved children crowned with glory and honor. May our worship this day reflect the hope and faith we have in you. Amen.

ANTHEM "In the Bleak Midwinter" Chancel Choir
Melinda McCoy-Miller, flute

COMMUNITY PRAYER Kathleen Meredith

CHORAL RESPONSE TO PRAYER Chancel Choir

SCRIPTURE READING Evelyn Cornwell

Ecclesiastes 3:1-13 (NLT)

3 For everything there is a season,
a time for every activity under heaven.

² A time to be born and a time to die.

A time to plant and a time to harvest.

³ A time to kill and a time to heal.

A time to tear down and a time to build up.

⁴ A time to cry and a time to laugh.

A time to grieve and a time to dance.

⁵ A time to scatter stones and a time to gather stones.

A time to embrace and a time to turn away.

⁶ A time to search and a time to quit searching.

A time to keep and a time to throw away.

⁷ A time to tear and a time to mend.

A time to be quiet and a time to speak.

⁸ A time to love and a time to hate.

A time for war and a time for peace.

⁹ What do people really get for all their hard work? ¹⁰ I have seen the burden God has placed on us all. ¹¹ Yet God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end. ¹² So I concluded there is nothing better than to be happy and enjoy ourselves as long as we can. ¹³ And people should eat and drink and enjoy the fruits of their labor, for these are gifts from God.

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

Thanks be to God for this Word.

SERMON "A Fresh Start With Hope" Kathleen Meredith

OFFERTORY "He Shall Reign Forevermore" Praise Band

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) Evelyn Cornwell

Mighty God, as we bring you our offerings, heal the brokenness we feel inside. Turn our upturned gazes back to the earth. Turn our inward focus onto those in need. Only then may we truly see the face of Jesus. Only then may we help heal our broken world. Amen.

*HYMN "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" UMH 240

*BENEDICTION Kathleen Meredith

POSTLUDE Christie Spriggs

This Week's Schedule

Monday, Jan 1

**New Year's Day
Church office closed**

Tuesday, Jan 2

**10-1 Life With Joy (HH)
6 Cub Scouts (HH)
6 Hypnosis for Health (Media)**

Wednesday, Jan 3

10-3 Life With Joy (HH)

Thursday, Jan 4

10-1 Life With Joy (HH)

Saturday, Jan 6

9-2 Treasures of Hope

Sunday, Jan 7

**9 Joy Fellowship Service (HH)
Sunday School (1B)
10:30 Sanctuary Service
EPIPHANY SUNDAY**

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Today's Worship Leaders

**Worship Leader/Certified Lay Servant
Music Coordinator/Joy Fellowship
Joy Fellowship Praise Band**

**Kathleen Meredith
Christie Spriggs
Jay Morrison, Debbie Seebeck,
Christie Spriggs
Evelyn Cornwell
Debbie Seebeck
Jen Phlegar
Jay Morrison**

**Liturgist
Greeter
Camera Operator
Soundboard Operator**