



CHRIST  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH  
MILFORD

March 1, 2020  
First Sunday in Lent

# WELCOME TO CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

## A NEW CHURCH IN MILFORD

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I get asked “why a new church?” a lot. I think what drives the question is a sense that a new church means more fragmentation; a sign of division rather than coming together. It’s a fair question. What I’d point out though, is that only 14% of New Englanders attend religious services with any regularity. We aren’t looking to steal from that small fraction of people who are already involved in a church, but to learn how to serve the 86% of the people who aren’t being served.

Another way to think of it is by comparison to the restaurant industry. We wouldn’t really want a town where all the restaurants have gotten together and only serve one menu; when a new restaurant opens it adds to the diversity on the restaurant scene and improves the picture for everyone: other restaurants become better and more creative for having more restauranteurs in the area, eaters get more options and variety and a better experience.

We want every human being to belong to a community that is shaped by the Gospel and that exists for the glory of God and the good of our neighbor. We believe that starting a new church is the best way to bring the Gospel to a community. We believe the world is broken: nature, social systems, government, Wall Street, our local communities, you and me. All around us and inside us we see that things are “not the way it’s supposed to be.” The Gospel is the good news that God has entered into his creation in Christ to restore what is broken. The local church is the tool God uses to bring about this restoration because, God who is perfectly Other, became local and present in Christ. The local church brings this infinite Gospel into our particular realities. As we start to believe the Gospel it changes everything from the way we live as neighbors and friends, to the way we parent our children, to how we interact with the world at large.

## FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

Advent + Christmas + Epiphany + Lent + Easter + Pentecost

### DESCENT TO THE CROSS: I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

God the Son came into the world,  
The Light who alone can enlighten us.  
So cries the psalmist,  
“In your Light, we see light!”  
But we prefer darkness to the light that heals,  
Lest the light of God expose  
The wound of our selfishness.

As he descends to the Cross,  
Christ moves closer to the heart of darkness,  
Closer and closer to the supreme degradation,  
Closer and closer to the chilling abyss of evil.

But in all his humiliation, his pain,  
In all his loneliness and rejection,  
He remained the Light of the world,  
And our darkness could not extinguish it.

Praise be to our Lord Jesus,  
Who has turned the gruesome cross into a symbol of hope;  
Worship him, our high God  
And the Light of our shadowed world!

.....

### **Gathering Hymn** Endless Light

From the highest throne to the earth below  
You laid down Your life for the likes of us  
Great is the love of the Savior  
From a wounded heart to a life made whole  
Every human heart will declare as one  
Great is the love of the Savior

### **Chorus:**

Lord of endless light;  
Let Your glory shine forever  
All the earth;  
All the earth sing Your praise  
Hope of every heart;  
Let Your Name be lifted higher  
All our hearts;  
All our hearts sing Your praise

From the mountain heights to the valleys low  
All created things given life to show  
Jesus we live for Your glory  
From the rising sun to the still of night  
Every waking moment for Your delight  
Jesus we live for Your glory

### **Chorus**

God be exalted;  
God be exalted in everything  
We live for Your glory;  
Live for Your glory (REPEAT)

— God + calls + cleanses + speaks + strengthens + sends —

### **Call to Worship** John 1:1-5

Leader In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God

**People and the Word was God.**

Leader He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him,  
and without him was not any thing made that was made.

In him was life,

**People and the life was the light of men.**

Leader The light shines in the darkness,

**People and the darkness has not overcome it.**

Invocation

## **Praise Hymn** Here I am to Worship

Light of the world;  
You stepped down into darkness  
Opened my eyes let me see  
Beauty that made;  
This heart adore You  
Hope of a life spent with You

### **Chorus:**

So here I am to worship;  
Here I am to bow down  
Here I am to say that You're my God  
And You're altogether lovely;  
Altogether worthy  
Altogether wonderful to me

King of all days;  
Oh so highly exalted  
Glorious in heaven above  
Humbly You came;  
To the earth You created  
All for love's sake became poor

### **Chorus**

#### **Bridge:**

And I'll never know how much it cost;  
To see my sin upon that cross  
And I'll never know how much it cost;  
To see my sin upon that cross

### **Chorus**

## Confession of Sin

Leader Father we confess that the light of your love has been obscured by the darkness of our sin.

**People Thoughts, words, and deeds of our own devising hang over us as dark and foreboding clouds.**

Leader Give us eyes to see, O Lord, the grievous and heinous nature of our sin; Set us free from a past that we cannot change; open to us a future in which we can be changed.

**People And give us grace to grow more and more in your likeness and image; through Jesus Christ, the light of the world. Amen.**

## Absolution John 3:16–21

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.

## Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow! Praise Him, all creatures here below!  
Praise Him above, you heavenly host! Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! Amen!

## Peace of Christ

Leader The peace of the Lord be with you!

**People And also with you!**

## Thanksgiving Hymn What Wondrous Love is This?

♯ Dm                  Am   C   Em                  Dm   C                  Dm                  Dm<sup>7</sup>   C 7   F

1. What won - drous love is this, O my soul, O my soul, what  
 2. To God and to the Lamb, I will sing, I will sing, to  
 3. And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on, and

C   Bm   Am   G                  Am   G   C                  Dm                  C   F   C   F   C

won - drous love is this, O my soul! What won - drous love is  
 God and to the Lamb, I will sing; to God and to the  
 when from death I'm free, I'll sing on; and when from death I'm

Dm                  C   Am   Bm<sup>7</sup>   C                  Dm                  Am   Em                  Dm   C

this that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dread - ful curse for my  
 Lamb, who is the great I AM, while mil - lions join the theme, I will  
 free, I'll sing and joy - ful be, and through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing

Dm                  Dm<sup>7</sup>   C 7   F   C   Bm   Am   G                  Am   G   C                  Dm 7

soul, for my soul, to bear the dread - ful curse for my soul!  
 sing, I will sing, while mil - lions join the theme, I will sing!  
 on, I'll sing on, and through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing on!

— God + calls + cleanses + speaks + strengthens + sends —

**Old Testament** Isaiah 50:4-9

**New Testament** Luke 9:51-62

Reader The Word of the Lord!

**People Thanks be to God!**

**Sermon** The Cost of Discipleship | Pastor Curran Bishop

**Response Hymn** Whate'er My God Ordains Is Right



C C/B Am F

1. What - e'er my God or - dains is right,  
 2. What - e'er my God or - dains is right,  
 3. What - e'er my God or - dains is right,

5 F G F C /G /A /B

Ho - ly His will a - bid - eth  
 He - nev - er will de - ceive me  
 Though now this cup in drink - ing

9 C C/B F

I will be still what - e'er He does,  
 He leads me mer - to the pro - my per - fant  
 May bit - ter seem to my heart,

13 F G F C C C/B

And fol - low where He guid - eth  
 I know take He will all un - der - me  
 I take it all shrink - ing

17 Am D G

He is my God,  
 I take, con - tent,  
 My God is true,

21 Am F E E /F# /G#

Though dark my road  
 what each He morn hath a - sent,  
 each morn hath a - new

25 C C/B Am F

His holds me that I shall shall not a - fall,  
 Sweet hand com - fort yet shall griefs fill my way,  
 com - fort yet shall griefs fill my heart,

29 F G C 3rd Time To Coda /G /A /B

Where - fore to Him I leave it all  
 And pa - tient - ly sor - row shall His day  
 And pain and sor - row shall de - part

**Bringing Our Life to God**      Profession | Collection | Prayers

**Confession of Faith**      Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth,  
and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father  
before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God;  
begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father,  
by whom all things were made.

Who, for us humans for our salvation, came down from heaven,  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate;  
He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures;  
He ascended into heaven, and is seated on the right hand of the Father;  
and He shall come again, with glory, to judge the living and the dead;  
whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life;  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son;  
who with the Father and the Son together  
is worshipped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.

And I believe one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins;  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**Prayers of the People**

**Doxology**      Jesus Remember Me

Chords: Eb, Fm/Eb, Bb, Eb

Jesus, remember me when you come in to your kingdom.

5 Chords: Cm, Fm/Ab, Bb, Eb

Jesus, remember me when you come in to your kingdom.

### Communion in Christ Jesus

*All Christians are invited to receive Christ's presence of bread and wine. When directed please take your bulletin, stand and form a circle around the sanctuary. Whether you intend to take communion or not, please join us in the circle. If you are not able to stand in the circle, please sit at the end of one of the aisles. We serve wine in the Lord's Supper, believing it to be the Biblical element used. We provide grape juice for those who, out of conscience or reasons of health, do not partake of wine. Wine is in the common cup and inner rings of the tray; juice is in the outer ring. The communion bread is gluten free.*

### Communion Hymn When I Survey the Wondrous Cross [see page 13]

#### Prayer for those searching:

Oh God, I am discovering that the more I have, the more I need to have, the more I am loved, the more I need to be loved, the more I achieve, the more I need to achieve. Nothing seems to satisfy me. Could it be, as someone once said, that "Our hearts are restless until they find their rest in thee." Dear God, if this is true, and if as the Bible teaches there is life and life eternal in Christ alone, please guide me to Him. Open me to the reality of the One who alone can satisfy my restless heart. Give me the courage to believe that which I cannot see but can understand, feel and touch through the Word, sacraments and church family. Lord I want to believe, help my unbelief! Amen.

1. Im - mor - tal, in - vis - i - ble, God on - ly wise,  
 2. Un - rest - ing, un - hast - ing and si - lent as light,  
 3. Great Fa - ther of glo - ry, pure Fa - ther of light,

in light in - ac - ces - si - ble hid from our eyes,  
 nor want - ing, nor wast - ing, thou rul - est in might;  
 thine an - gels a - dore thee, all veil - ing their sight;

most bless - ed, most glo - rious, the An - cient of Days,  
 thy jus - tice like moun - tains high soar - ing a - bove  
 all praise we would ren - der; O help us to see

al - mighty, vic - to - rious, thy great name we praise.  
 thy clouds which are foun - tains of good - ness and love.  
 'tis on - ly the splen - dor of light hid - eth thee!

— God + calls + cleanses + speaks + strengthens + sends —

**Coronation Hymn Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise**

**Benediction** Numbers 6:24-26

The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

**Announcements**

1. When I sur - vey the won - drous cross on which the  
 2. For - bid it, Lord, that I should boast, save in the  
 3. See, from his head, his hands, his feet, sor - row and  
 4. Were the whole realm of na - ture mine, that were a

B $\flat$  F C $^7$  F C $^7$  F C F C F Gm D

Prince of glo - ry died, my rich - est gain I  
 death of Christ my God: all the vain things that  
 love flow min - gled down: did e'er such love and  
 pres - ent far too small; love so a - maz - ing,

Gm F C F F C $^7$  Dm Gm C $^7$  F 7

count but loss, and pour con - tempt on all my pride.  
 charm me most, I sac - ri - fice them to his blood.  
 sor - row meet, or thorns com - pose so rich a crown?  
 so di - vine, de - mands my soul, my life, my all.

# REFLECTION

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## Lent and the Question of Jesus

Lent began this past Wednesday—which brings Good Friday and Easter onto the horizon! Almost certainly, *Time* or *Newsweek* will have a picture of Jesus on the cover of their news magazine sometime over the next six weeks, and some provocative title to an article in which they will quote a “leading NT scholar” who has some new theory about the “real” Jesus. The only redeeming thing about these very predictable articles is that they get before people once more the great question of the ages: *Who is Jesus Christ?* It’s the question Jesus himself puts to his followers after he asks them what the crowds think of him: Jesus said to his disciples, **“But who do you say that I am?” (Luke 9:20)** Jesus answered that question throughout his teaching and healing ministry. And in John’s gospel particularly, Jesus reveals who he is for the world using wonderful pictures and images in the famous “I Am” sayings.

This year during Lent our liturgy each week will lead us into the celebration of Christ by focusing on one of the “I Am” sayings. In these images, Jesus uncovers not only his own identity and power but our human need as well: it would not be such good news that Jesus is **“the light of the world”** if we were not caught up in our own darkness; that Jesus is **“the way, the truth, and the life”** if we were not lost, confused in falsehoods, and captive to death’s mockery of all our dreams and hopes.

**(adapted from Ron Lutjens, Pastor, Webster Groves, Missouri)**



# WE ARE A LOCAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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## **Local**

We are a church in and for our community. We want to celebrate its goodness, serve its specific needs, and work towards the flourishing of all its citizens. We worship in the voice of our community and seek to be a church that grows organically out of our neighborhoods. We are committed to working for the common good. We look to serve, not to be served. We look to give, not to take. We are eager to bless others because we have been blessed by God.

## **Presbyterian**

Being Presbyterian means we are led by elders and connected with other churches. This provides accountability, oversight, and produces real pastoral care. We are part of the Reformed Tradition which teaches that God knows us intimately and enables us to know Him intimately. We believe that life in relationship with God is not only possible but vibrant. That God is the initiator of this relationship and the whole is based on grace and forgiveness offered to us in the being and action of Jesus Christ.

## **Church**

We believe that church is not an event or a program but rather a family. A place where you no longer have to choose between being really known or really loved. Within the family of God we don't need to perform in order to be accepted. We no longer relate to each other based upon our past failures or future potential but rather we relate to each other as brothers and sisters who have been loved by God in Christ!

## COMING UP

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### **Sunday Night Community Group**

We meet on Sunday evenings from 5-7pm in each other's homes for fellowship, to eat and drink together, study Scripture and share a brief prayer service. If you'd like to join in please contact us for more details (see below).

### **Commissioning Service**

On March 22 we will gather with our sister churches at 4pm to be officially commissioned as a worshipping congregation with the purpose of service Milford.

### **Sunday Morning Worship Public Launch**

Bear with us – this is a “soft launch”! On March 29 we plan to “officially” begin Sunday morning worship. Come us celebrate, and contribute your talents and abilities to our community (it takes a congregation to have worship!). <sup>SEP</sup>

### **Contact us**

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