



GAUDETE SUNDAY
THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 15, 2024

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

Thank you for joining us for worship today. We welcome you into our fellowship as together we gather in the presence of God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

If you are a visitor, please take a moment to scan the QR code below and fill out the form. We want to acknowledge your presence today with a note of thanks. Please let us know if there is a way we may be of help or encouragement to you today.

If you have any prayer requests or concerns, questions about your faith or the Christian life, if you have updates to your contact information, or if there is anything you need to communicate, please note those remarks on the form.



On the front: Hannah by Ruby Mae LeCroy, 2024

WORSHIP MEDITATIONS

Gaudete is Latin for "rejoice" the first word of the call to worship today.

If your only goal is to love, there is no such thing as failure.

-Richard Rohr

My candle burns at both ends; It will not last the night; But ah, my foes, and oh, my friends – it gives a lovely light!

-Edna St. Vincent Millay, 20th c.

We live always during Advent. We are always waiting for the messiah to come. The messiah has come, but is not yet fully manifest. The messiah is not fully manifest in each of our souls, not fully manifest in humankind as a whole: that is to say, that just as Christ was born according to the flesh in Bethlehem of Judah, so must be born according to the Spirit in each of our souls.

-Jean Danielou, 20th c.

Advent is an invitation to plunge into the deep, dark waters of our worst world, knowing that when we re-surface for air we will encounter the hopeful, hovering Spirit of God. For when we dive into the depths of our worst world, we reach a critical point at which our chocolate and pageants no longer satiate our longing for hope – and we are liberated by this realization. Indeed, the light of true hope is found in the midst of darkness.

-Christena Cleveland

Joachim then took to wife that revered and praiseworthy woman, Anna. But just as the earlier Anna (Hannah), who was barren, bore Samuel by prayer and by promise, so also this Anna by supplication and promise from God bare the Mother of God in order that she might not even in this be behind the matrons of fame. Accordingly, it was grace (for this is the interpretation of Anna/Hannah) that bore the lady.

-John of Damascus, 8th c.

ADVENT + CHRISTMAS + EPIPHANY + LENT + EASTER + PENTECOST

Advent is a time to cry out to God to come and visit us, to come and fix our broken world. It is a preparatory period, similar to Lent, where we connect our souls to the broken and the hurting, crying out for God's deliverance. Because of this, most of our Advent hymns are prayers asking God to come to us, and so this word, "come" is present in many of them. Advent themes include the final judgment, the second coming of Christ, John the Baptist preparing the way, and the Messianic hope of Israel.

THE WORSHIP OF ALMIGHTY GOD

GREETING

Blessed be God: the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

And blessed be his kingdom now and forever. Amen.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness!

For he comes, for he comes to judge the earth!

Let us pray.

COLLECT

Attune the ears of your mercy to our voices, we beseech you O Lord; and enlighten the darkness of our hearts with the light of your visitation. O Lord, we beseech you to hasten and not to be slow, and to pour out the protection of your mercy upon us; that those who trust in your mercy may be lifted up by suitable consolations. Through Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

CALL TO CONGREGATIONAL WORSHIP

Rejoice in the Lord always;

again I will say, Rejoice.

Let your reasonableness be known to everyone.

The Lord is at hand.

LORD, you were favorable to your land;

you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

You forgave the iniquity of your people;

you covered all their sin.

Will you not revive us again,

that your people may rejoice in you?

Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,

for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints; but let them not turn back to folly.

Rejoice in the Lord always;

again I will say, Rejoice.

- Philippians 4:4-5, Psalm 85:1-2, 6, 8

O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL







- 2. O come, Thou Wisdom from on high, Who ord'rest all things mightily; To us the path of knowledge show, And teach us in her ways to go. [Refrain]
- 3. O come, O come, Thou Lord of might, Who to Thy tribes on Sinai's height In ancient times didst give the Law In cloud and majesty and awe. [Refrain]
- 4. O come, thou Rod of Jesse, free thine own from Satan's tyranny; from depths of hell thy people save, and give them vict'ry o'er the grave. [Refrain]
- 1. O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel, That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear. /Refrain/

Words: Latin hymn, 18th c. Music: Plainsong, 13th c. Arranged: Thomas Helmore, 19th c.

CONFESSING OUR SINS

Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD?

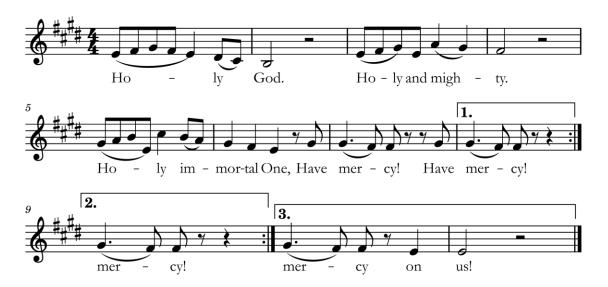
And who shall stand in his holy place?

He who has clean hands and a pure heart,

who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.

- -Psalm 24:3-4

God of grace, you are coming in power to bring all nations under your rule. We confess that we have not expected your kingdom, for we live casual lives, ignoring your promised judgment. We accept lies as truth, exploit neighbors, abuse the earth, and refuse your justice and peace. In your mercy, forgive us. Grant us wisdom to welcome your way, and to seek things that will endure when Christ comes to judge the world. Amen.



Continue your confession of sins in silent prayer

RECEIVING ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Glory to God in the highest!

And peace to His people on earth.

SAVIOR OF THE NATIONS, COME



1. Sav-ior of the na-tions come, Vir-gin's Son, make here Your home!



- 2. Not by human flesh and blood, By the Spirit of our God, Was the Word of God made flesh --Woman's offspring pure and fresh.
- 3. Here a maid was found with child, Yet remained a virgin mild. In her womb this truth was shown: God was there upon His throne.
- 4. Then stepped forth the Lord of all From His pure and kingly hall; God of God, yet fully man, His heroic course began.
- 5. God the Father was his source Back to God He ran His course. Into hell His road went down, Back then to His throne and crown.

- 6. For You are the Father's Son Who in flesh the vict'try won. By Your mighty pow'r make whole All our ills of flesh and soul.
- 7. From the manger newborn light Shines in glory through the night. Darkness there no more resides; In this light faith now abides.
- 8. Glory to the Father sing, Glory to the Son, our King, Glory to the Spirit be Now an through eternity.

Words: Ambrose of Milan, 4th c. Martin Luther, William Reynolds, trans. Music: Martin Luther, 16th c.

PRAYER OF ADORATION

Jesus, you are joy even in the saddest times. Help us to praise you when we are upset or grieving. Shine joy into our hearts we pray. Amen.

THE LITURGY OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Pastor: The Lord be with you,

Congregation: And also with you.

Introduction

Intention

Do you now standing here today affirm your continued willingness to be joined to the membership of New Life Presbyterian Church and to take the membership vows?

The Creed

- 1. Do you believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth?
- 2. Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord?
- 3. Do you believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting?

The Renunciations

- 1. Do you renounce Satan and all the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God?
- 2. Do you renounce the evils of this world that corrupt and destroy the creatures of God?
- 3. Do you renounce your own sinful flesh and all its ways and works that separate humanity from a relationship with God?
- 4. Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept Him as your Savior?
- 5. Do you put your whole trust in His grace and love?
- 6. Do you promise to follow and obey Him as your Lord?

The Vows

- 1. Do you acknowledge yourselves to be sinners in the sight of God, justly deserving His displeasure, and without hope save in His sovereign mercy?
- 2. Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and Savior of sinners, and do you receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation as He is offered in the Gospel?
- 3. Do you now resolve and promise, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you will endeavor to live as becomes the followers of Christ?
- 4. Do you promise to support the Church in its worship and work to the best of your ability?
- 5. Do you submit yourselves to the government and discipline of the Church, and promise to study its purity and peace?

THE DECLARATION

Friends, Ryan Woo has been duly examined and approved by the Elders of the Church. We have received confirmation of his baptism and commendation of his faith and life from his home church in California. Therefore I now proclaim that he is now a member of New Life Presbyterian Church, with full rights and privileges as a member of the body of Christ, our congregation, and the Presbyterian Church in America as detailed in God's Holy Word and in our Confession, Catechisms, and Book of Church Order.

All: We welcome you in the name of Jesus Christ!

Peace be with you.

Amen.

THE RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP

Please come forward and give the right hand of fellowship to our new members while we sing the hymn.

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

All children may come forward for a brief lesson and prayer by Pastor Tim.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

While the children are being dismissed, we will have a brief time of welcome and greeting. You are welcome to "pass the peace of Christ" to one another.

GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

If you are visiting, or have a contact update, please scan the QR code below and fill out the form. Please see announcements on page 19.



THE LORD SPEAKS THROUGH HIS WORD

OLD TESTAMENT READING: 1 SAMUEL 1:1-20

There was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim of the hill country of Ephraim whose name was Elkanah the son of Jeroham, son of Elihu, son of Tohu, son of Zuph, an Ephrathite. ²He had two wives. The name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other, Peninnah. And Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.

³ Now this man used to go up year by year from his city to worship and to sacrifice to the Lord of hosts at Shiloh, where the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests of the Lord. 4 On the day when Elkanah sacrificed, he would give portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and daughters. 5 But to Hannah he gave a double portion, because he loved her, though the Lord had closed her womb. 6 And her rival used to provoke her grievously to irritate her, because the Lord had closed her womb. 7 So it went on year by year. As often as she went up to the house of the Lord, she used to provoke her. Therefore Hannah wept and would not eat. 8 And Elkanah, her husband, said to her, "Hannah, why do you weep? And why do you not eat? And why is your heart sad? Am I not more to you than ten sons?"

⁹ After they had eaten and drunk in Shiloh, Hannah rose. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat beside the doorpost of the temple of the Lord. ¹⁰ She was deeply distressed and prayed to the Lord and wept bitterly. ¹¹ And she vowed a vow and said, "O Lord of hosts, if you will indeed look

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord **People: Thanks be to God!**

on the affliction of your servant and remember me and not forget your servant, but will give to your servant a son, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor shall touch his head."

¹² As she continued praying before the Lord, Eli observed her mouth. 13 Hannah was speaking in her heart; only her lips moved, and her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli took her to be a drunken woman. 14 And Eli said to her, "How long will you go on being drunk? Put your wine away from you." 15 But Hannah answered, "No, my lord, I am a woman troubled in spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before the Lord. 16 Do not regard your servant as a worthless woman, for all along I have been speaking out of my great anxiety and vexation." 17 Then Eli answered, "Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition that you have made to him." 18 And she said, "Let your servant find favor in your eyes." Then the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad.

¹⁹ They rose early in the morning and worshiped before the Lord; then they went back to their house at Ramah. And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and the Lord remembered her. ²⁰ And in due time Hannah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Samuel, for she said, "I have asked for him from the Lord."

THE PSALM: PSALM 85, ANTIPHON: V. 9

Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him, that glory may dwell in our land.

¹Lord, you were favorable to your land; you restored the fortunes of Jacob.
²You forgave the iniquity of your people; you covered all their sin.
³You withdrew all your wrath;

you turned from your hot anger.

Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him, that glory may dwell in our land.

⁴Restore us again, O God of our salvation, and put away your indignation toward us!
⁵Will you be angry with us forever? Will you prolong your anger to all generations?
⁶Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you?
⁷Show us your steadfast love, O Lord, and grant us your salvation.

Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him, that glory may dwell in our land.

⁸Let me hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints;

but let them not turn back to folly.

9 Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him, that glory may dwell in our land.

10Steadfast love and faithfulness meet;
 righteousness and peace kiss each other.
 11Faithfulness springs up from the ground,
 and righteousness looks down from the sky.

12Yes, the Lord will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase.
13Righteousness will go before him and make his footsteps a way.

Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him, that glory may dwell in our land.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit!

As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be world without end. Amen.

THE GOSPEL: LUKE 1:5-11; 19-25

In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ⁶ And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. ⁷ But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years.

⁸ Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, ⁹ according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. ¹⁰ And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. ¹¹ And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord

People: Glory to you, O Lord!

¹⁹ And the angel answered him, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. ²⁰ And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time." ²¹And the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they were wondering at his delay in the temple. ²² And when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he kept making signs to them and remained mute. ²³ And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

²⁴After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she kept herself hidden, saying, ²⁵ "Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among people."

HEARING THE WORD PREACHED

Sermon Title: "Auntie Grace"
Scripture Texts: 1 Samuel 1:1-20
Preacher: Rev. Dr. Tim LeCroy

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of God the Father almighty. From thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

THE OFFERING

New Life is supported by the generous gifts of our church members and friends. If you are visiting, you are not expected to give, but if the Lord has blessed you today and you would like to support our ministry, it would be most appreciated. If you don't have cash or check, you can also give on-line at www.newlifeithaca.org/giving/

Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

-2 Cor. 9:6-7

OFFERTORY

New Life Children Sing "The First Noel"

THE PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS

EUCHARIST

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts!

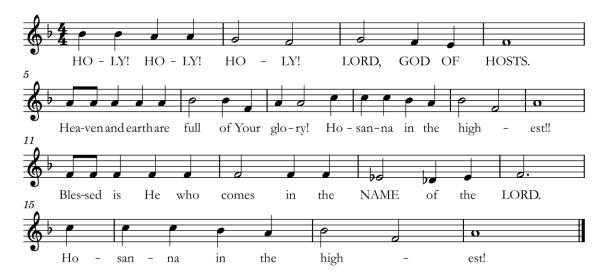
We lift them up to the Lord!

Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

It is proper and right to do so.

Truly it is proper, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the Messiah, the very lamb of God, and calling sinners to repentance that they might escape the wrath to come.

Therefore, with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, and with the Church on earth, we praise and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and singing:



WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND PRAYER

THE ACCLAMATION

For as often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Therefore, we proclaim the mystery of Faith:

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven: Hallowed be Thy Name, Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.

THE INVITATION

New Life Presbyterian Church welcomes all baptized Christians who trust in Jesus Christ to receive Holy Communion with us.

-If this does not describe you, you are invited to come forward, crossing your arms in front of your chest when you reach the front, to receive a blessing from the pastor.

DISTRIBUTION

The congregation will come forward row-by-row, forming two lines in the center aisle. Cup your hands together to receive the bread, then proceed outwardly to the wine tray. There is juice in the very center and wine on the outside. Then use the outside aisle to return to your seat and wait until we eat and drink together.

THE HOLY COMMUNION

We partake together of the most holy body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. After the communion the pastor prays a prayer of blessing.

Prayers for Those Not Communing

New Life Presbyterian Church welcomes all baptized Christians who trust in Jesus to receive Holy Communion with us. If you are not able to receive Communion, please use the time to mediate on one of the following prayers:

Prayer for Those Searching for Truth

Lord Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open me to the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life you promise. Amen.

Prayer of Belief

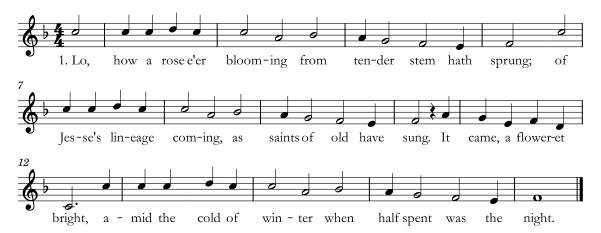
Lord Jesus Christ, I recognize that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever dared admit, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt on the cross, taking what I deserved in order to offer me complete forgiveness. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as my Savior and Lord. Amen.

For Those Struggling with Sin

If you are a baptized believer in Christ who is struggling with sin, you should still come forward for communion. As it says in our Larger Catechism 172:

One who doubteth of his being in Christ, or of his due preparation to the sacrament of the Lord's supper, may have true interest in Christ, though he be not yet assured thereof; and in God's account hath it, if he be duly affected with the apprehension of the want of it, and unfeignedly desires to be found in Christ, and to depart from iniquity: in which case (because promises are made, and this sacrament is appointed, for the relief even of weak and doubting Christians) he is to bewail his unbelief, and labour to have his doubts resolved; and, so doing, he may and ought to come to the Lord's supper, that he may be further strengthened.

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming



- 2. Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
 The rose I have in mind;
 With Mary we behold it,
 The virgin mother kind.
 To show God's love aright,
 She bore to us a Savior,
 When half-spent was the night.
- 3. This flow'r, whose fragrance tender With sweetness fills the air, Dispels with glorious splendor The darkness ev'rywhere. True man, yet very God, From sin and death he saves us And lightens ev'ry load.
- 4. O Savior, child of Mary, Who felt our human woe; O Savior, King of glory, Who dost our weakness know: Bring us at length we pray To the bright courts of heaven, And to the endless day.

BENEDICTION

The Pastor pronounces a blessing upon the congregation from Scripture.

DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heav'nly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Words: Thomas Ken, 1674 Music: Thomas Tallis, 16th century

DECLARATION OF PEACE

May the Peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Go in peace.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE CHURCH AROUND THE WORLD

Pray for churches in Vietnam, where the government requirement for faith
communities to be registered has caused deep division. Pray for the Spirit's wisdom as
registered congregations battle government pressure to conform to regulations and
unregistered churches are harassed by police and forbidden to practice their ministry.

PCA CHURCHES AND PASTORS IN THE NEW YORK STATE PRESBYTERY

 Hope Presbyterian Church, Ballston Spa; Nate Thompson, senior pastor, and James Farinacci, pastor of congregational care

SISTER CHURCHES IN ITHACA

o Trinity Lutheran Church; Rob Foote, pastor

NEW LIFE ALUMS IN VOCATIONAL MINISTRY

Matt & Jenn Irvine, Serge (World Harvest) -- London, England

OUTREACH IN LOCAL COMMUNITY

Willow Glen Christian School

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

 President Joe Biden and Vice-President Kamala Harris; the members of Congress and the Judiciary

NEW LIFE CHURCH

- o Ruth Williamson: Pray for healing for her injured knee.
- Ann Williamson: Praise that her friend Gudrun is getting much-improved care at her new facility.
- Ellen Mosher: Pray for her sister Janet and her husband Rick as Janet's health continues to deteriorate. Pray that Janet will not be in pain, and for Rick as he supports her as she prepares for the end of her life. Praise that Art and Ellen were able to visit them this past week.
- Praise that our church's financial footing has improved, and that people would continue to give.
- o Brad Helmetsie: Praise that their friends have finalized the adoption of their son. Pray that the father-in-law of Brad's sister-in-law Richard would recover from his recent stroke that left him paralyzed on his left side.

If you do not wish to have praises and requests shared during the worship service printed in the bulletin for the next three weeks, please inform Angela Brodie in an email (angelabrodie@gmail.com).

life@newlife

Christmas Eve Service and Reception

We will gather here at 5:30PM on Christmas Eve for our first Christmas liturgy and Eucharist. Afterwards we will stay for a short reception, the first Christmas party of the season!

Morning Prayer & Pastor Tim's "Office Hours" - Tuesdays

Join us on Tuesdays at 7:45AM for a short time of prayer. We will be using the traditional form for the Daily Office, which has confession of sin, psalms, scripture readings, and intercessory prayer; and our time together should last about 20 minutes. Immediately following Morning Prayer on Tuesdays, Pastor Tim will be available at the church for consultation or conversation. Please feel free to stop by.

contact us

Senior Pastor: The Reverend Dr. Timothy R. LeCroy tim@newlifeithaca.org

Elder:

David Williamson – david@newlifeithaca.org

Church Contact: 950 Danby Road Suite 195 Ithaca, New York 14850

Other comments: _

607.277.8398 www.newlifeithaca.org

New Life Presbyterian is a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America

Please let us know you worshiped with us today!

We would like to acknowledge your presence with us today. You will not be added to any mailing lists without your permission and we will not share your information with anyone. Please fill this out and place it in the offering when it comes by.

me:Last Name:
::
ddress: Mobile Number:
Requests:
I am an out-of-town visitor.
I reside locally and I am visiting New Life Church today.
I would like more information about New Life. Please have someone contact me.
Please send me more information about:
I would like to meet the pastor for coffee.
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