

SECOND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

Epiphany Pageant
January 4, 2015 - 10:00 AM



ROCKY HILL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Established 1727

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Friendly Church at the Center
An Open and Affirming Community

~ ORDER OF WORSHIP ~

We welcome all and extend a special greeting to our guests; our service is enriched by your presence! Please join us in Chapin Hall for fellowship time after worship.

*The Welcome Table in Chapin Hall offers information about the church and members who can answer your questions. **Hearing devices and large-print bulletins** are available for worship—ask an usher. **Nursery care** is always available downstairs in Room 4.*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Rev. Meghan D. Young

Please include your full address and phone number as you sign our friendship registration pads, and please wear your nametags. All announcements should be written down and given to the ushers or pastors prior to worship.

If you have a prayer request you would like read aloud for today's prayers, please fill out one of the prayer cards found in the pew racks (your name is optional) and be prepared to pass it to the center aisle at the time of the offering, when the cards will be collected.

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather wondering,

‘Where will we find the Babe born in Bethlehem?’

**We will find the Babe in the laughter of children,
in the wisdom of grandparents.**

We gather asking,

‘Where will we find the Child of Christmas?’

**We will find the Child where the needy are gifted with hope,
where the oppressed are set free.**

We gather wanting to know,

‘Where will we find the Christ who has come for us?’

**We will find our Hope where fear is overwhelmed by grace,
where hatred is overwhelmed by love,
where all people are overwhelmed by joy.**

**Please rise in body or in spirit.*

****Bold type denotes collective response.***

*GATHERING PRAYER

We have heard of your grace, Shaper of stars;
 from those set free from injustice;
 from our children who whisper of your joy;
 from greeters of dawn's fresh start;
 from late risers who listen to the stories of the needy.

We have heard of your Light, Bright Star of the morning:
 which can illumine the shadows of our lives;
 which can show the path to God's heart;
 which can point the way to where we become servants of the
 gospel.

We have heard of your promised peace, Wisdom's Radiance:
 that peace which can end war, as well as heal our hearts;
 that peace which can conquer our fears, and flood us with faith;
 that peace which can enter our lives and overwhelm us with hope.

We have heard of you, God in Community, Holy in One,
 and will proclaim your glory to all. Amen.

Sung Response: Gloria

Music: Jacques Berthier, 1982

1 Dm Gm C F 2 Dm Gm C F

Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, in ex - cel - sis De - o!

3 Dm Gm C F 4 Dm Gm C F

Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

OFFERING OF GIFTS

Following the receiving of offerings by the ushers, the pastor(s) will come to the center aisle to receive prayer request cards.

Invitation to the Offering

For those who have already given their offering, Giving Cards are available in your pew so that all may participate in the act of the offering.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM “Mary Had A Baby” St. Helena Island Spiritual
S.P.I.R.I.T. Church School Choir, led by Liz Reed-Swale

<i>Mary had a baby, oh, my Lord;</i>	<i>The angels were a-singing, oh, my Lord (3X)</i>
<i>Oh, Mary had a baby, oh, my Lord;</i>	<i>Way down in Bethlehem;</i>
<i>Mary had a baby, oh my Lord;</i>	<i>Way down in Bethlehem.</i>
<i>Way down in Bethlehem;</i>	<i>The stars kept a-shining, oh, my Lord (3X)</i>
<i>Way down in Bethlehem.</i>	<i>Way down in Bethlehem;</i>
<i>She named the baby Jesus, oh, my Lord (3X)</i>	<i>Way down in Bethlehem.</i>
<i>Way down in Bethlehem;</i>	<i>Mary had a baby, oh, my Lord (3X)</i>
<i>Way down in Bethlehem.</i>	<i>Way down in Bethlehem;</i>
<i>The shepherds came to visit, oh, my Lord (3X)</i>	<i>Way down in Bethlehem.</i>
<i>Way down in Bethlehem;</i>	
<i>Way down in Bethlehem.</i>	

***Doxology**

*What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb.
If I were a wise man, I would do my part.
But what I can, I give him... give my heart.*

***Prayer of Dedication**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Joys & Concerns

Sung Call to Prayer

Hear our prayer, O God, hear our prayer, O God; in -

cline your ear to us, and grant us your peace.

Pastoral and Silent Prayer

MESSAGE FOR ALL AGES IN WORD AND SONG

“A Service of Las Posadas”

Words to the songs are printed in your bulletin; all songs will be sung by the congregation.

The Journey Begins

SONG

“Las Posadas”

*In the name of heaven,
we seek shelter.*

*In the name of heaven,
where can we find las Posadas? (2x)*

Las Posada: The First Innkeeper

Worship Leader: People of God, we have been turned away, what shall we do?

Congregation: Let us continue to search for las posadas and God’s promised realm of shalom!

SONG

“Las Posadas”

The Angel Appears To The Shepherds

CAROL

“The First Noel”

Las Posada: The Second Innkeeper

Worship Leader: People of God, there is still no place for the son of God to rest his head. What shall we do?

Congregation: Let us continue to search for las posadas and God’s promised realm of shalom!

SONG

“Las Posadas”

The Arrival of the Magi

CAROL

“We Three Kings”

The Journey Continues

CAROL

“Go Tell It On The Mountain”

Las Posada: The Third Innkeeper

CAROL

“Silent Night”

Mary Gives Birth to Baby Jesus

Worship Leader: People of God, we have found shelter at last. Let us rejoice and be glad! Let us respond together:

Congregation: **May every door be opened wide! Open wide with welcome! Holy Family come in this place – in this place may you find shelter! In this place may you find las posadas!**

An Epiphany Prayer

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation

By the light of the star, God led travelers to the Christ Child.
When they saw the child they were overwhelmed with joy.

**By the light of divine love, God leads us to this Holy meal.
Gathered together, we encounter the living Christ
and taste the deepest joy.**

Here at this table we get a foretaste of God’s banquet. This is God’s table, and so all who seek to follow the ways of love and peace are welcome to eat and drink from it.

**We come to taste the grace eternal.
We come to see that God is good.
Let us celebrate that Christ is alive and in our midst.**

Prayer of Preparation

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 forever.
Amen.**

The Words of Institution: Recalling the Story

Sharing the Bread and the Cup

This church practices open Communion – all who wish to know the presence of Christ and to participate in the community of God's people are welcome to receive Communion, including children, and regardless of church membership or denominational affiliation.

This morning we will receive Communion at the manger by intinction (dipping the bread into the cup, which holds unfermented grape juice). Gluten-free bread and juice are also offered. Please follow the lead of the ushers who will guide the coming forward row by row (beginning with the side sections from the front, continuing with the center sections from the back). Any wishing to receive Communion who are unable to come forward may raise their hands to identify themselves to a deacon and will be served in their seats.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

**We give you thanks, O God,
that you have come to us through Jesus Christ,
both in the midst of time and history in the city of Bethlehem,
and in the timeless presence of Christ's Spirit
as we receive the gifts of bread and cup.
Send us out into the world rejoicing,
ready to share your love with the people we meet;
through the Grace of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

The Practice of Peace

*You are invited to share a sign of the reconciling peace of Christ with those around you
(a handshake, an embrace, or a non-contact gesture).*

*HYMN

“Joy to the World!”

Pilgrim (Red) 130

*BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE

“This Little Light of Mine”

Spiritual

S.P.I.R.I.T. Church School Choir, led by Liz Reed-Swale

This little light of mine; I'm going to let it shine (3x)

Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine

This little love of ours, I'm going to let it shine (3x)

Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine

This big world of ours; I'm going to help it shine (3x)

Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine

ACOLYTES

Louis DiRenzo and Brian Speers

GREETERS

Lois and Jim Stevens

HOSPITALITY

Bob Simmons and Bea Donahue

DEACONS

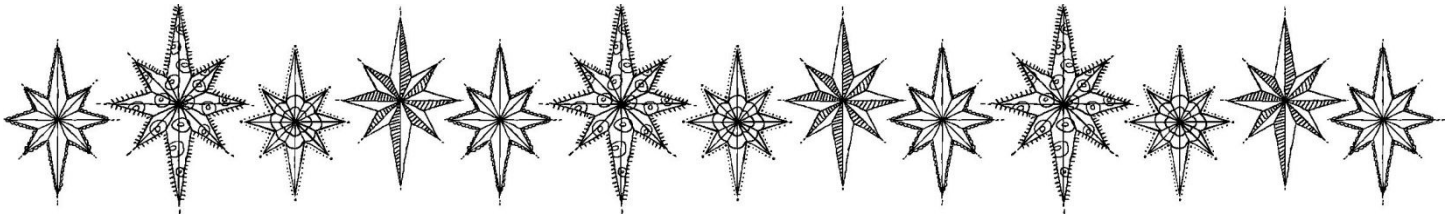
Stephanie Heneghan, Eleanor Mahar, Bob Carberry
and Katie Hoffman-Fulda

We welcome Windsor Johnson as guest pianist this Sunday.

TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERSHIP IS PROVIDED BY:

Nicolis Alessi
Victoria Bower
Isabel Donahue
Maya Donahue
Grace Donahue
Jacob Engle
Molly Engle
Hannah Fuller
Erik Jokl
Nick Jokl
Anthony Marcucci

Emily McKenna
Will McKenna
Mya McNally
Aiden Montana
Molly Morgan
Kaedryn Pulling
Toryn Pulling
Teagan Reed-Swale
Charlotte Reed-Swale
Ben Rolfe
Will Rolfe



S.P.I.R.I.T. Corner

Serve, Pray, Invite, Receive, Ignite, Tell

***Children are invited to remain in worship today,
following along with the children and youth bulletins.***

S.P.I.R.I.T. Church School will resume on January 11 with "Jesus: The Storyteller"

NOAH'S TABLE (6th-8th Grade) – January 11, 5 PM – 7 PM

Join us for a meal and a night of giving to others. Please RSVP by Friday, January 9, with Meghan Young at Meghan@rhccucc.org. 1 Adult volunteer is needed for this gathering.

EXPLANATION OF TODAY'S EPIPHANY PAGEANT

Today is the festival of Epiphany. During the season of Epiphany, we celebrate and remember the manifestation of the Son of God as the Savior and Messiah. The beginning of the Epiphany Season is marked by a celebration of the adoration of the Christ child by Magi from the East, representing the welcoming of the Good News. Today, in pageant form, we celebrate their journey and the Good News they received, while reflecting on our own journeys of faith. We remember the moments in our lives when there has been only a star, a glimmer of light and hope, leading us through what felt like long nights. And, we give thanks for those moments when in our seeking, God has been revealed and made known to us.

Today's Epiphany Pageant, incorporates the tradition of Las Posadas (Spanish for "the inns"), which is an Advent Celebration of hospitality. This tradition dates back more than 4000 years to Spain, when the priests taught many of the biblical stories to illiterate believers through drama. This morning's service is inspired by this Latin American tradition. The Posadas symbolize Mary and Joseph's long journey to Bethlehem and their frustrating search for lodging. At each Posada, or Inn, Mary and Joseph ask for shelter and at each Posada they are refused. The service ends when at the last Posada, the Holy Family is finally recognized and they are welcomed in with celebration. This tradition re-enacts the story told in Luke 2:1-7. We learn from the Posadas that by welcoming the poor and the needy, we are welcoming Jesus in our midst.

The United Church of Christ has a long standing tradition of standing with the poor and offering an extravagant welcome to those who are seeking a home, whether they are faith seekers, strangers, refugees or immigrants. By doing so, we are called to remember that weary family so long ago who simply sought a safe night's lodging and a place of respite. Las Posadas is also a symbolic retelling of our own life journeys and for many, the struggle to overcome the established geographical borders, social boundaries or personal barriers in search of newness of life, justice and safety. Like Mary and Joseph in Las Posadas, pilgrims of all kinds encounter rejection, misunderstanding and prejudice. It is by God's incarnate grace that we are welcomed, and in turn, called upon to welcome others who may knock at our "doors".

“The First Nowell”

The first Nowell, the angel did say,
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter’s night that was so deep.

Refrain:

Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the east, beyond them far,
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night.

Refrain

“We Three Kings”

We three kings of Orient are
Bearing gifts we traverse afar
Field and fountain, moor and mountain
Following yonder star

Glorious now behold Him arise
King and God and Sacrifice
Alleluia, Alleluia
Earth to heav'n replies

Refrain:

O Star of wonder, star of night
Star with royal beauty bright
Westward leading, still proceeding
Guide us to thy Perfect Light

Refrain

“Go Tell It On The Mountain”

Refrain:

Go, tell it on the mountain, Over the hills and everywhere,
Go, tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching O'er silent flocks by night,
Behold throughout the heavens There shone a holy light.

Refrain

The shepherds feared and trembled When lo! above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus That hailed our Savior's birth.

Refrain

Down in a lowly manger The humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation That blessed Christmas morn.

Refrain

“Silent Night”

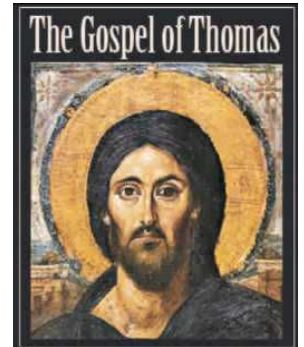
Silent night, holy night, All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child. Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, Shepherds quake at the sight,
Glories stream from heaven afar, Heavenly hosts sing alleluia;
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at thy birth, Jesus, Lord at thy birth.

WEDNESDAY SCRIPTURE STUDY
will resume with the Gospel of Thomas

Weekly Scripture study will resume on **Wednesdays, 12:00 – 1:00**, beginning on **January 14**. The first text we will look at will be **The Gospel of Thomas**. Discovered in 1945, it is one of the several gospels we now know existed in early Christian times but was not included in the canon of the New Testament. Copies of the text will be made available at the first session. No need for any particular background, come and explore what the Gospel of Thomas says that Jesus taught... and see how it compares with what we are familiar with from the gospels we know.



COMFORT FOOD DINNER

sponsored by InReach –

Sat., Jan. 31, 5:30 PM, Chapin Hall,

Featuring Meat Loaf, Mac & Cheese, Ham; entertainment featuring Magician Lon Cerel for a great price:

\$10 for adults; \$5 ages 4-12; free for children under 4 years; family cap \$35.

Please call Joan Tennyson for reservations 860-529-8789;

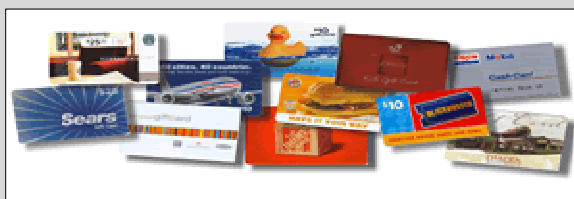
Tickets on sale during Coffee Hours beginning January 4th

Snow date is February 1, 2015.

FLOWERS



The flowers in the sanctuary on December 21 were given by Sue Monaghan in memory of her mother Marion Gray. We apologize for not recognizing them in previous bulletins.



SCRIP-SURE

What is it? Scrip-sure is a **fundraising program** for our church, which allows the regular shopping we do at a variety of retailers to generate income for the church. How? Participating retailers sell gift certificates or gift cards to our church at a discount. Church members buy the certificates for full face value and redeem them for full face value, and our church keeps the difference as revenue. Everybody wins! The retailers get our business, and our church gets a regular source of revenue that involves nothing other than what we would all be doing anyway – shopping/spending at grocery stores, drugstores, restaurants, gas stations, and many other businesses, including online retailers.

Our monthly "end-of-December" order deadline is actually today, January 4. Cards ordered by tonight will be available for pickup on January 11. Order forms may be turned in at the scrip table in Chapin Hall this morning, or emailed to treasurer@rhccucc.org by the end of today.

Meanwhile, we have most of the usual cards in inventory for immediate purchase this morning. Here is a partial list of cards available:

Coffee: Dunkin Donuts, Starbucks

Fast food: Boston Market, Chipotle, McDonalds, Panera, Subway

Gas: Exxon/Mobil, Shell, Sunoco

Grocery: Big Y, Stop & Shop, Trader Joe's, Westside Marketplace,
Whole Foods

Pharmacy: CVS, Walgreens

Restaurants: Bertucci's, Bonefish Grill, Buffalo Wild Wings, Denny's
On the Border, TGI Fridays

Shopping: Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Bed Bath & Beyond,
Home Depot, Kohl's, iTunes, Lowes, Marshall's, Target,
Walmart

See Gail Hall at the scrip table this morning for a complete listing of available cards, or to have all of your questions answered.

THINK SCRIP!



LITTLE SCHOLARS PRESCHOOL
at the ROCKY HILL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
Preschool Registration

Church members' priority registration period for Little Scholars Preschool at the Rocky Hill Congregational Church (formerly Rocky Hill Congregational Cooperative Nursery School) is from January 11 until January 24.

Church members receive a 10% tuition discount. Brochures in the church office describe days and times and other information for the **three and four-year-old programs**. If you have questions you may call Julie Dostie at 860-563-5663.

WEATHER CANCELLATION POLICY

In the event of winter weather on a Sunday morning, our first priority is to ensure the safety of church members. Some winters the snow and ice are a real danger, and so worship is cancelled for the day. If such a storm happens, please know that a system is in place to make as many of our members and friends aware as possible. If and when worship is canceled, notice will be posted on **Channel 3 WFSB-TV**, and the voice mail greeting on the church phone will be updated with the cancellation if you choose to phone the main number. Additionally, an email and phone tree will alert church leaders to the same information. It takes a real storm to disrupt our worship, but if that happens, we want to be ready. Cancellations will also be posted on the church website: www.rhccucc.org.

On weekdays, if schools are closed in Rocky Hill, the church office will also be closed.

Please note that if Rocky Hill posts a parking ban, the church will be closed. However, check on Sunday morning to see if a Saturday ban has been lifted.

THIS WEEK AT RHCC

January 4

10:00am **Worship**
Pageant

4:00pm Tamil Sangam
5:00pm **Confirmation**

Sunday

Sanctuary

Rm 22, 23, 24, 25

January 5

10:30am Apple Rehab Service.

7:00pm Women's AA

7:00pm Bowling

7:30pm **Bell Choir**

Monday

Chapel

Loft

January 6

11:00am The Lodge Service

7:00pm **Boards and Committees**

Tuesday

January 7

9:30am **Quilters**

7:30pm **Adult Choir**

Wednesday

Rm. 6.

January 8

8:00pm Men's AA

Thursday

Chapin Hall



Jan 4 Jack Malespini
5 Barbara Wheeler
6 Joan-Marie Schaefer
8 Brian Silkowski
9 Debra Peterson
Melody Hall
10 Natalie Tine
Nicolis Alessi

WORSHIP RECORDINGS AVAILABLE

Audio recordings, written sermons and bulletins for many of our Sunday worship services are available on the church website,

rhccucc.org

(See WORSHIP BULLETINS)

or you may contact the office to request an audio CD or printed sermon.



Mitsey Baker will be out of the office from January 5th through January 9. Voice mail will be checked daily.



Rocky Hill Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

805 Old Main Street

Rocky Hill, CT 06067

Church Office: office@rhccucc.org / 860 529-4167

Church Website: rhccucc.org

Visit us on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/rhccucc

Office Hours

Monday – Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Friday 8:30 to 12:00

Open and Affirming Statement

Because we believe that all people are created in God's image and thus are blessed and loved equally by God, and because love is a unifying and strengthening force within our Christian Faith,

We, the members of the Rocky Hill Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, hereby declare ourselves an Open and Affirming Christian community, actively expressing Jesus' inclusive embrace of all people.

We welcome all who seek to follow Jesus, including persons of every age, gender, race, national origin, faith background, marital status and family structure, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, mental and physical ability, economic and social status, and educational background, to share in the life, leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities, blessings and joys of our church family.

Jesus teaches us to welcome all God's children into God's covenantal community. As we grow together in faith and love, we will strive to celebrate the diversity in which God has created us.

Approved by congregational vote June 2009

Ministry Team

Ministers: All the members of the church

Interim Senior Pastor: The Rev. Dr. Brenda Pelc-Faszczka brenda@rhccucc.org

Acting Associate Pastor for Faith Formation: Meghan D. Young meghan@rhccucc.org

Minister of Music: Mary DeLibero mary@rhccucc.org

Office Manager: Mitsey Baker office@rhccucc.org

Webmaster: Dave Hall webmaster@rhccucc.org