

**ROCKY HILL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

Established 1727 ~ An Open and Affirming Community



March 1, 2020 ~ 10:00 a.m.

First Sunday of Lent - Communion Sunday



WELCOME! We extend a special greeting to our guests; our service is enriched by your presence! Nursery care is offered during worship downstairs in Room 4. Hearing devices are available for worship; an usher will be glad to assist you when you ask.

Please join us for fellowship time after worship in Chapin Hall, which is located downstairs. The Welcome Table in Chapin Hall offers information about the church; someone will be glad to answer your questions!

~ORDER OF WORSHIP~

Quote for Reflection:

From the moment you realize that there is more to life than meets the eye, and that you are as much a mystery to yourself as to anyone else, and that the mystery that is you longs more than anything else to connect with the mystery of God, you have entered the Dark Wood.

- Eric Elnes in *Gifts of the Dark Wood*

PRELUDE

Pater Noster

Arthur Foote

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Barry Wilcock

One God of the seen and unseen, in all season of our lives,

People we seek to follow your lead.

When we are called to inhabit our place in the world,

we trust in your providential care, aware that you possess far more insight about the path ahead.

Guide us as we step forward into worship during Lent.

Life is messy and we need your grace.

Be present in our worship as we explore the gift of uncertainty.

The call of the Holy Spirit is upon us...

Let us worship together!

*OPENING HYMN

I Need Thee Every Hour

PH #342

**please rise in body or in spirit, Bold denotes unison response*

Prayer of Confession *(as written, congregation in bold)*

Creative, passionate God,
you delight to shape the world in beauty and harmony.
You invite us to participate in the balance of creation.
We grow in wisdom as our experience unfolds;
we take good learning out of difficult situations yet also
find our well-meant endeavors leading to unintended consequences.
Too often we give in to temptation
that disrupts the joyous, chaotic order of the universe.
We cannot undo all our mistakes,
but we can turn once more to the living presence of Jesus
and find new ways to live and love each other and the earth.
**Do not let our hearts be fearful,
but let us in silence acknowledge our sin
and seek the forgiveness that restores your peace.**

Silent Prayers of confession...

Words of Assurance

Leader: God has prepared a way for us to stay connected to the earth
and to God's living presence, regardless of our waywardness in faith:
In Christ's life, ministry, death and resurrection,
we are made able to persist, upright and strong,
for our sins are forgiven.

People: Thanks be to God!

*Sung Response

Come, O Lord, and Set Us Free

John Bell

Come, O Lord, and set us free; give your peo - ple peace. _____

9
Come, O Lord, and set us free; Come, Lord Je - sus, come. _____

Sharing the Peace of Christ

You are invited to share a sign of the reconciling peace of Christ with those around you with a handshake, an embrace, or a greeting comfortable to you.

(Children are invited to depart for Church School)

We Will Keep a Place For You by John Corrado

We will keep a place for you where - ev - er you may go.
 We'll sus-tain this home of faith and love you've come to know. Go in peace, bring
 hope to hearts that yearn. We will keep a place for you 'till you re-turn.

SCRIPTURE READINGS Psalm 32:1-7
John 5:1-9

SERMON "The Gift of Uncertainty" Rev. Nada Sellers

***HYMN** We Yearn, O Christ, for Wholeness **NCH #179**

OFFERING OF GIFTS

*After the ushers receive the offering, they will collect blue prayer request cards.
 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.*

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory Anthem Bread of the World John Abenour
The Choir

***The Doxology**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below;
 Praise God for all that love has done; Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

This church practices open Communion; all are welcome to share in this holy meal, regardless of church membership or denominational affiliation. All whom Jesus would welcome are welcome here!

Invitation



Recalling the Story & Pastoral Prayer including the Lord's Prayer

Pastor to offer Communion Prayer and together...

...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

Sharing the Bread and the Cup

This morning, the congregation will be seated for Communion; the elements (bread and non-alcoholic grape juice) will be brought to each pew. Please wait until all have been served so that we may take the elements together. As you pass the trays to your neighbor, you may use the words "The bread of life" and "The cup of blessing." If you would like to receive gluten-free bread, please raise your hand so that a Deacon may serve you.

Prayer of Thanksgiving *(together)*

God of mercy, we give thanks for the bounty of this table and its blessings so freely given. May this nourishment strengthen us for the gifts of uncertainty in our lives. Amen.

***HYMN**

If You But Trust In God to Guide You

NCH#410

BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE

POSTLUDE

Today's Altar Flowers and the Tower are dedicated In loving memory of Mary Damiata,
by Lisa, Jackson & Maya McNally

In
Loving
Memory

The Flowers last week were given in Loving Memory of Bill Holmes By Joan Tennyson

THANKS to our worship participants today:

Ministers	You, the people of God
Pastor	Rev. Nada Sellers
Liturgist	Barry Wilcock
Minister of Music	Mary DeLiberio
Minister for Children/Youth	Georgette Huie
Ushers	Sue Chatfield, Steve Ware
Communion Servers	Chris Sheehan, Cheryl Hummel, Laurel Cole Rich Pawlich-Pagliccio, Rob Grandell
Greeter	Joan Tennyson
Hospitality	Lynn McKenna, Ruth Jensen

TODAY

10:00am	Worship
9:30am	Child Care
10:00am	Church School
11:00am	Coffee Fellowship Hour
11:30am	Lenten 2nd Hour!
5:00pm	Confirmation Class

NEXT WEEK SUN. MARCH 8

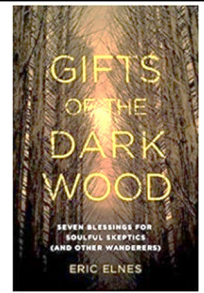
Worship
Child Care
Church School
Coffee Fellowship
Who We Are Information Session
Lenten 2 nd Hour with soup/salad lunch
Confirmation Class



LENTEN SECOND HOUR DISCUSSION SERIES

Sunday March 1 – Sunday March 29 **BEGINS TODAY!**

Held every Sunday after worship at 11:30am in the Chapel



Rev. Nada Sellers will offer a Second Hour discussion series that will relate to the sermon series she will share during Lenten Worship. She will be using the book: Gifts of the Dark Wood; Seven Blessings for Soulful Skeptics (And Other Wanderers), by Rev. Eric Elnes, Ph.D.

Elnes is a UCC pastor, author, speaker and host of Darkwood Brew, an amazing online spiritual gathering place for exploring aspects of Christian faith. We will be reflecting about how times of bewilderment in Christian spirituality can yield insight; how getting lost might even be part of helping us find our way. We'll plan to gather in the Chapel starting at 11:30am each Sunday of Lent – some books will be available for purchase from the office and they are widely available for on-line ordering as well. The gathering will include a light soup lunch in the Chapel for all who participate – crockpots of soup!



BRING IN A CROSS FOR DISPLAY DURING LENT

The display case in the hallway outside of the office will be used to display crosses for the Lenten and Easter season. Please, bring in any you would like to loan for the next couple months. Be sure they are marked so they can be returned to you. Joan Tennyson will be arranging them with her usual artistry. They can be left in the office.



We'd like to stay in touch with you! Here's how...Please include your full address, phone number and email as you sign our friendship registration pads. 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 friendship registration pads (your name is optional) and be prepared to pass it to the aisles at the time of the offering, when the cards will be collected. If you have announcements, please write them down and give them to the ushers or pastor prior to worship.

March 8th Information Session

We will be holding a RHCC information session – *Who We Are and What We Believe* – on Sunday, March 8th at 9 AM in the Fiorelli Room. This session is meant for anyone interested in more information about our church – who we are, our vision/mission, our governance and other interesting facts about us. While we encourage anyone interested in joining our church to attend, we open this up to anyone – guests, recent members or anyone who has been a member of this church for many years. As we say each and every Sunday, all are welcome here.

March 15 New Member Sunday

We will be welcoming new members on Sunday, 3/15, during our service. We are thrilled to hear from folks who are interested in joining on 3/15. If we have not heard from you and if you are considering joining, please let Pastor Nada know. If you cannot attend our information session on 3/8, we will be holding other sessions in the near future. We would also welcome talking to you individually and answering any questions you may have about our community of faith.

About Ash Wednesday and Lent:

Ash Wednesday, the day after Fat Tuesday (Mardi Gras), in the Christian church calendar, marks the beginning of the Lent and Easter cycle. This cycle includes forty days of reflection (not counting Sundays) and culminates in Holy Week: the days of Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday. These last three days are known as the triduum, and Lent ends with the first service of Easter.

In the earliest days, Ash Wednesday began for some, as a season of preparation. Initiates, those preparing to become members of the Christian church, would go through 40 days of preparation for baptism, and baptism often took place in the earliest hours of Easter morning, during the vigil. Another tradition begins the days of Lent with the imposition of ashes as a symbol of humility and penitence along with confession of sin. The phrase "you are dust, and to dust you shall return" reminds us of God's expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:19). For Christians, the penitential season of Lent leads to Easter when we celebrate with joy, the gift of salvation through Jesus' death and resurrection, holding fast to the assurance of our eternal life in God's realm, beyond the death of our physical selves.

-- Pastor Nada and the Worship Ministry team



Worship Ministry

Some of you may be wondering what the “Worship Ministry” does, given that we have a Pastor to lead our church services. Well, as the expression goes, “it takes a village” (or at least a small group) to coordinate some of the details that enable us to attend services that have been well-prepared for.

Our basic responsibilities are the lining up of weekly Liturgists and Ushers, and monthly Communion Servers. In addition, we also attend to some of the details of the weekly services (ie candles and paraments), and we look ahead with the Pastor at the church calendar to prepare for “special events”, like Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday services, Baptisms, and “New Member Sundays,” to name a few.

We are now also exploring the possibility (and logistics) of recording our services to reach others who may not be able to attend a service in person. If any of you have ideas that you think the Worship Ministry should consider, please share your thoughts with us.

Lastly, know that we would like to welcome one new member to this ministry in May. Please reach out to us if you are interested.

Submitted by Sarah D., representing the Worship Ministry, that also includes Chris S., Bob C., Michael A., Cheryl H. and Nada.

CALL TO THE ANNUAL BUDGET AND ELECTIONS MEETING

Sunday, March 22, 2020

The Budget and Elections Meeting of the Rocky Hill Congregational Church, United Church of Christ is called for Sunday, March 22, 2020 immediately following worship in the sanctuary for the following items of business:

1. Presentation and approval of the proposed budget for the fiscal year beginning May 1, 2020,
2. Ratification of the recommendations of the Nominating Committee for Officers, Core Ministries, and Elected Committees for terms commencing on May 1, 2020, and
3. To conduct any additional business proper to come before the congregation.

Respectfully submitted, Hilaire Leavitt, Clerk

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.

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

- Coffee: Dunkin Donuts, Starbucks
- Gas: Exxon/Mobil
- Pharmacy: CVS, Walgreens
- Fast food: Burger King, Boston Market, Chipotle, McDonalds, Panera, Subway, Wendy's.
- Restaurants: Bonefish Grill, Outback Steakhouse, Red Lobster
- Shopping: Ace Hardware, Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Bed Bath & Beyond, Home Depot, Jo-Ann Fabrics, Kohl's, iTunes, L.L. Bean, Lowes, Michaels, Target, Total Wine, Walmart.
- Grocery: ShopRite, Big Y, Stop & Shop, Trader Joe's, WholeFoods, Westside Market.

The next order for physical cards not stocked in inventory will be placed on **February 23 (with delivery on March 1)**. E-cards may be ordered anytime. A complete listing of all retailers available through our program can be picked up at the scrip table in Chapin Hall.

Did you know that you can donate to the Rocky Hill Food Pantry and "Covenant-to-Care for Children" through our scrip program? Your cash/check donations are used to buy gift cards to local groceries (food pantry) or other retail stores (CC). For these donations, we do not retain any profit, so a \$1.00 donation effectively buys about \$1.07 in groceries or clothing.

Think SCRIP!

THIS WEEK AT RHCC



March 1

10:00am Worship
9:30am Childcare
10:00am Church School
11:00am Coffee Hour
11:30am 2nd Hour Lenten Series
5:00pm Confirmation Class

Sunday

Sanctuary
Room 4
Rms 24,25,26
Chapin Hall
Chapel
Room 2



March 2

7:00pm Women's AA

Monday

Room 6

March 3

7:00pm Ministry Teams

Tuesday

Fiorilli/Parlor

March 4

6:00pm Bell Choir
7:30pm Choir

Wednesday

Choir Room
Choir Room

March 5

7:30pm Men's AA

Thursday

Chapin Hall

March 6

Office closed on Fridays

Friday

1	Bill Hoffman
1	Todd McGowan
2	Rebecca Milles
2	Grace Donahue
3	Pat Gordon
4	John Van Doran
5	Tim Bishop
6	Bay Tran

Pastor Nada's Office Hours:

Monday 9:30am–3:30pm

Tuesday 10:00am – 12:00pm

Wednesday 3:00pm – 5:00pm

The One Great Hour Of Sharing offering is one of the four special missions offerings of the United Church of Christ (UCC). This Lenten offering supports the disaster, refugee and development ministries of the UCC. Their positive message is “Invest in Futures”. One Great Hour of Sharing is but one concrete way we can show that we can reach out beyond what we can see and help brothers and sisters in need worldwide. This offering will be collected on **Sunday March 22, 2020.**



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: www.RockyHillUCC.org

Visit us on Facebook & Instagram at: [RHCCUCC](#)

Office Hours: Open Monday – Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Friday – Closed

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	
Pastor:	Rev. Nada Sellers	nsellers@rhccucc.org
Minister for Children & Youth:	Georgette Huie	ghuie@rhccucc.org
Minister of Music:	Mary DeLibero	mary@rhccucc.org
Office Manager:	Theresa E. Cleary	office@rhccucc.org
Webmaster:	Steve Smith	admin@rhccucc.org

WEATHER CANCELLATION POLICY - In the event of bad winter weather predicted for a Sunday morning, our priority is to ensure the safety of our church members & friends. If worship is canceled, a notice will be posted Saturday evening or early Sunday morning on the following media outlets:

- Channel 3 WFSB-TV
- Our facebook page – facebook.com/rhccucc
- Our website – RockyHillUCC.org