

# BREAK OPEN THE HEAVENS!

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 16, 2012



ROCKY HILL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Established 1727

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Friendly Church at the Center  
An Open and Affirming Community

# ROCKY HILL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

## UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Sunday, December 16, 2012

10:00 a.m.

### ORDER OF WORSHIP

*We welcome all and extend a special greeting to our guests; our service is enriched by your presence! 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.*

**Gathering Our Advent Prayers.** *As the heavens break open this advent season, you are invited to offer a prayer of hope, peace, joy, or love in this sacred place. As we gather for worship, please come forward and place the ribbon that corresponds to your prayer either in the large glass container or directly on the tree. Ribbons are available in the narthex and in the front of the sanctuary.*

### GOD GATHERS US FOR WORSHIP

#### PREPARING THE WAY

Liz Reed-Swale and Meghan D. Young

Isaiah 40:26

Sung Congregational Response: **Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord.**

#### PRELUDE

*Please use the prelude as a time for personal prayer and preparation of your heart for worship.*

“Prepare the Way, O Zion”

setting by David Paxton

#### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Rev. Donna K. Manocchio

*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.*

#### \* CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Someone is coming:

**People: Come, Lord Jesus.**

Leader: Someone is coming who inspires us to be a blessing to others:

**People: Come, Lord Jesus.**

Leader: Someone is coming who will dare us to sing our song:

**People: Come, Lord Jesus.**

\* HYMN

“Watcher, Tell Us of the Night”

New Century Hymnal 103

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH *(see insert)*

MESSAGE FOR CHILDREN OF ALL AGES

CHILDREN’S RECESSIONAL

*(Children are invited to depart for S.P.I.R.I.T. 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.

\* UNISON PRAYER

Barry Wilcock, Liturgist

*Advent God:*

*like a mother lullabying a baby, you sing over us;*

*like a father picking up his kids after school, you bring us home.*

*Jesus Christ, Wellspring of salvation:*

*may we draw near and drink deeply of your living waters,*

*so we might be renewed to life and restored to wholeness.*

*Holy Spirit, Peace surrounding our hearts and minds:*

*help us to set aside our fears and worries,*

*so we may rejoice in what God has done and is doing in our midst.*

*Loving God, in the midst of us, in this holy time and sacred space,*

*in every moment and place we live,*

*surround us with your grace. Amen.*

\* GLORIA ACCLAMATION

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of three systems of two staves each. The first system shows the vocal line starting with 'Glo' and the piano accompaniment. The second system continues with 'in ex - cel - sis De - o, Glo' and the piano accompaniment. The third system concludes with 'ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.' and the piano accompaniment. The music is in a major key with a common time signature. The vocal line features a melodic line with some grace notes and a steady accompaniment line. The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines.

GOD SHARES WORDS OF LOVE AND LIFE

BREAKING OPENING THE WORD

A READING FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT

Luke 1:39-45

# WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

## ANTHEM

“Advent Kyrie”

by David Lantz, III

The Choir

David Lewis, Soloist

Ceilings of cedar, lampstands of gold,  
Bronze covered pillars, beauty untold;  
Yet in the splendor of all we behold,  
Our hearts lie barren and cold.

Kyrie, we pray for mercy. Kyrie, show us the way.  
Kyrie, send us a Savior. Kyrie, Kyrie, Kyrie.

Sign of deliv'rance, glimmer of peace,  
Dreams of Messiah, visions increase;  
Father in heaven, give us a sign.  
Send Your Redeemer divine.

Kyrie, we pray for mercy. Kyrie, show us the way.  
Kyrie, send us a Savior. Kyrie, Kyrie, Kyrie.  
Kyrie, Kyrie, Kyrie. Kyrie, eleison. Amen.

## SERMON

“Break Open to Blessing”

The Rev. Donna K. Manocchio

## \* HYMN

“O God, Whose Steadfast Love”

New Century Hymnal 426

## LIFTING UP OUR PRAYERS

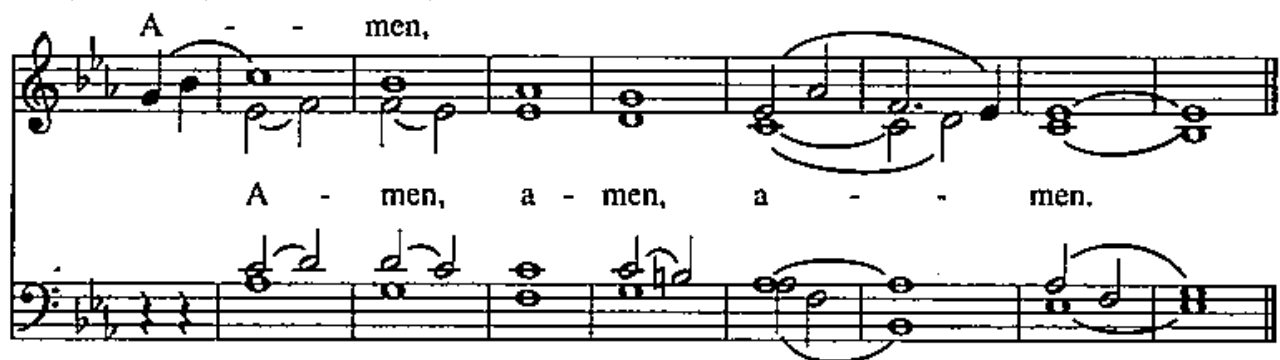
*(We invite your oral prayer requests – keeping the request brief and identifying the first name for the pastors. Trust that God knows the details of the need.)*

## PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE

AND THE LORD'S PRAYER *(debts/debtors)*

*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.*

## PRAYER RESPONSE



A - - men,  
A - men, a - men, a - - men.

## OFFERING INVITATION

*For those who have already given their offering, Giving Cards are available in your pew so that all may participate in giving back to God with joy and gratitude.*

## OFFERTORY ANTHEM

“Advent Peace Canon”

by Pachelbel/Schram

The Choir

Katie Hoffman-Fulda, Flute

Dona nobis pacem, pacem

Dona nobis pacem, pacem

Come, thou long expected Jesus,  
Born to set thy people free;  
From our fears and sins release us  
Let us find our rest in thee.

Israel’s strength and consolation  
Hope of all the earth thou art.  
Dear desire of ev’ry nation,  
Joy of ev’ry longing heart.

Dona nobis pacem, pacem

Dona nobis pacem, pacem

Come thou long expected Jesus;  
Come to us and bring us peace.  
Come, thou long expected Jesus;  
Come to us and bring us peace, peace, peace,  
Bring us peace.  
Come and bring us peace

## \* DOXOLOGY

As we sing the Doxology, praising God for all our blessings, some in our congregation sing this inclusive language version: "Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God all creatures here below; Praise God above, Ye Heavenly host; Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen." You are welcome to sing whatever words are in your heart.

Praise God from whom all bless-ings flow; Praise him, all crea-tures here be-low;  
Praise him a-bove, ye heaven-ly host; Praise Fa-ther, Son, and Ho-ly Ghost. A - men. -

## \* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

### WE GO FORTH TO LOVE AND SERVE

#### BREAKING OPEN

*Adapted from "Go In Pieces" by Pádraig Ó Tuama*

Leader: The gathering has ended. Go in pieces.

**People: Our faith has been rear-ended, certainty amended,  
and something might be mended that we didn't know was torn.**

Leader: And we are fire, bright, burning fire,  
alive in the broken wonder in which we'll find,

**People: our loving and beloved brother, mother, sister, father, friend.**

Leader: And so friends, our gathering has ended.  
Go in pieces to see and feel your world.

## \* THE PRACTICE OF PEACE

*We practice sharing Christ's peace with one another as a sign of reconciliation and love. It is not simply our peace, but the peace of Christ that we offer. The peace may be shared with a handshake, embrace, or a non-contact gesture. Please respect the wishes of those with whom you exchange the peace. You are invited to extend peace to your neighbor with the words, "The peace of Christ be with you."*

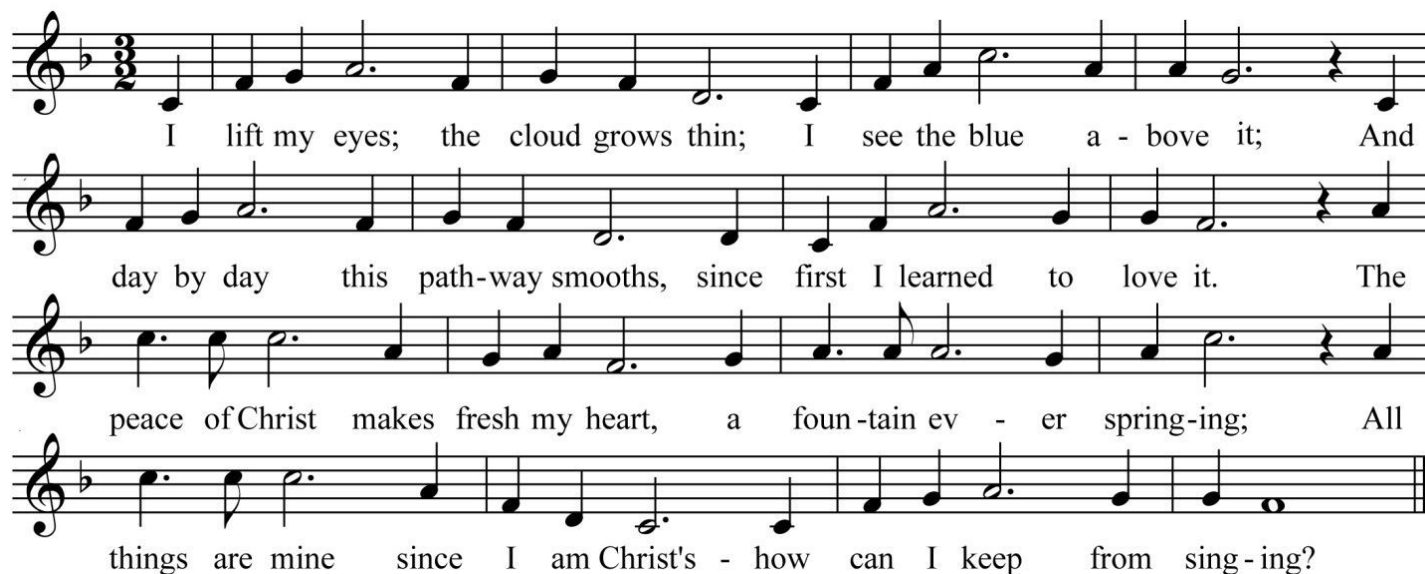
## \* HYMN

*During the Advent season, our third hymn will be a Christmas carol acknowledging the reality that we celebrated Christ's birth in the world 2000 years ago even as we await His birth again in our hearts.*

"Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"  
New Century Hymnal 129

## \* BENEDICTION

## \* BENEDECTION RESPONSE



I lift my eyes; the cloud grows thin; I see the blue a - bove it; And  
day by day this path-way smooths, since first I learned to love it. The  
peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a foun-tain ev - er spring-ing; All  
things are mine since I am Christ's - how can I keep from sing-ing?

## POSTLUDE

“Polish Carol”

setting by Don McKeever

*(\*Please rise in body or in spirit.)*

GREETERS

Diana Hellyar, Emily and William McKenna

HOSPITALITY

Michael and Eileen McKenna

ACOLYTES

Tate Veley, Danielle Berry

USHERS

Joan Diaz, Linda Grillo, Nancy Harlow, Cheryl Hummel, Jan LaCava

# BREAK OPEN THE HEAVENS!

*O God, that you would break open the heavens and come down,  
that the mountains might quake at your presence. . .  
that the nations may tremble at your presence!*

*Isaiah 64:1-2*

## **NEXT WEEK DECEMBER 23**

Scripture: Matthew 1:18-25 – Joseph  
Sermon: “Break Open to A New Dream”  
The Rev. Donna K. Manocchio



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

### **S.P.I.R.I.T. Faith Nurture Ideas**

*These faith nurture ideas coordinate with the weekly session plans for church school. We hope you will join us in learning, teaching, and growing together!*

**Here's what we're learning about this week...**

**COME JOIN THE CIRCLE: Unit 2 – Mary & Elizabeth's First Christmas**

**YOUR SONG**

**Read the Song:** Luke 1:41-45

**Reflect on the Song:**

When Mary visited Elizabeth she brought unexpected joy. Elizabeth was blessed by Mary's visit and she recognized that Mary was blessed by God. How do you imagine Mary might have felt to hear Elizabeth's words? When have you had the experience of hearing someone call you "blessed"?

Elizabeth's words to Mary remind us that, like John, we too are preparing the way for Jesus and shining light in dark places. Like Mary, we may feel humble and think we go unnoticed, but each of us carries the seeds of God's kingdom. Our words and actions help those seed to take root and blossom into works of justice and restoration in our homes, in the lives of friends and families, and throughout the world.

Never underestimate the gift you are created to be. Especially in this season of anticipation and hope, dare to sing your song, share yourself with others, and be a blessing to others.

**Sing the Song.** *Talk about the Bible story children and youth explored this week and try this:*

- 1) Check your hymnal for settings of Elizabeth's Words (Luke 1:41-45).
- 2) Bake cookies in the shape of Christmas symbols and decorate them. Share them with someone who might enjoy a friendly visit.
- 3) Spend some time thinking about people you know who may be finding Christmas hard this year: someone who has recently lost a loved one, a family that has just separated, someone who has lost their job. Find ways to reach out to them with sensitivity and caring.
- 4) Write or call someone who, like Mary, has inspired you to action.

**A Prayer For The Unit.** God, you bring hope to all people just the way each new day is a new beginning. Help us to bring hope to others just the way you do. Amen.

**NURSERY VOLUNTEERS & DONATIONS REQUESTED:** Donations of storage bins and toy boxes are needed to organize the Nursery. Additionally, Nursery Volunteers are needed for December and January. If you are interested in volunteering in the Nursery during Sunday morning worship, please contact a member of the Childcare Committee ([RHCCchildcare@gmail.com](mailto:RHCCchildcare@gmail.com)) for more information. You can also sign-up outside the Nursery.

**PARENTS:**

**Church school ends at 11:15 AM.**

**Please pick-up your children at the following locations.**

*(So that the children may focus through the end of their class, we ask that you do not look through the classroom windows, and that you wait for the teacher to end class by opening the classroom door.)*

<b>CLASS</b>	<b>PICK-UP LOCATION</b>
<b>Pre-K</b>	<b>FUN &amp; GAMES</b> <b>RM. 24</b> <i>Christian Education Hallway</i>
<b>K - 1<sup>st</sup> Grade</b>	<b>SHOW &amp; TELL</b> <b>RM. 25 &amp; RM. 27</b> <i>Christian Education Hallway</i>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade</b>	<b>COMMUNITY LIFE</b> <b>RM. 22</b> <i>Christian Education Hallway</i>
<b>4<sup>th</sup> &amp; 5<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	<b>FOOD &amp; PEOPLE</b> <b>Youth Room</b> <i>Ground Floor of Church</i>
<b>6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	<b>HANDS ON</b> <b>RM. 23</b> <i>Christian Education Hallway</i>



**“Warm Heart Tree”**

For the 38th year, the Warm Heart Tree has returned to the narthex and will be up through January 6th. We will once again be collecting donations of warm hats, gloves, packages of white athletic socks, and scarves to decorate the tree. Men’s hats should be black, brown, or gray without decoration. Please place your donations directly on the tree. Donations can be

hand-made, bought, or even a new re-gifted item (let someone benefit from 'Mom, what was Grandma thinking, I will NOT wear that!'). The donations will be distributed to some of Connecticut's neediest. Some of the children and teen donations will be removed from the tree and delivered BEFORE Christmas to the The Connecticut Association of Foster and Adoptive Parents located in Rocky Hill.

## THIS WEEK AT RHCC

### DECEMBER 16

- 11:15am **Cookie Walk**  
 11:30am **Noah's Table**  
 2:00pm **Christmas Caroling**  
 5:00pm **Confirmation**

### DECEMBER 17

#### POINSETTIA DEADLINE

- 5:30pm Yoga with Lynn  
 7:00pm Women's AA  
 7:00pm **RHCC Bowling**  
 7:30pm **Bell Choir**

### DECEMBER 19

- 9:00am **Quilters**  
 9:30am Community Meeting  
 12:00pm **Bible Study**  
 7:30pm **Adult Choir**

### DECEMBER 20

- 5:30am TOPS  
 8:00pm Men's AA

### DECEMBER 22

- 8:30am Yoga with Lynn

### SUNDAY

- Chapin Hall  
 Youth Room  
 Meet at Church  
 Fiorilli Room/Parlor

### MONDAY

- Chapin Hall  
 Chapin Hall

### Church Loft

### WEDNESDAY

- Room 6  
 Fiorilli Room  
 Quilters Room 6  
 Choir Room

### THURSDAY

- Chapin Hall  
 Chapin Hall

### SATURDAY

- Chapin Hall



- |    |                                      |
|----|--------------------------------------|
| 16 | Rebecca Alferi<br>Eva Shen           |
| 17 | Alex Siembab<br>Jacob Engel          |
| 19 | Midge Sword<br>Carolyn Scheirey      |
| 20 | Julia Stewart<br>Nicholas Jokl       |
| 21 | Holly Peterson<br>Christina Santiago |



### Today in Chapin Hall

It doesn't seem possible that this year is our 11th Cookie Walk! We would like to thank all of you who have baked for us, bought from us, and supported us through that hectic week for the past 11 years.

Please visit our cookie walk today after worship in Chapin Hall from 11:15 until we are sold out. As in previous years, we are offering gluten free and diabetic treats as well as nuts/no nuts. We will also be able to pre-package treats on request.

Cookie Walk is a major fund raiser for the choir. It has allowed us the opportunity to travel to Sweden and to South Carolina for performances as well as provide additional support for the Music Program at RHCC, UCC.

## **Church World Service Blanket Program**

Christmas cards to benefit the Church World Service Blanket Program will be sold after today. Please support their work around the world as part of our Global Ministry.



### **Christmas Caroling Today, December 16 at 2:00pm**

Please join in sharing a little holiday cheer to some of our church shut ins this afternoon. We will meet at church at 2 pm and deliver plants, cards and our singing greetings around Rocky Hill returning to the church around 4 pm. There will be refreshments waiting upon our return.

**The Rocky Hill Food Bank is at a Critically Low Level  
Please help feed our neighbors and our friends!**

**The items most needed are:**

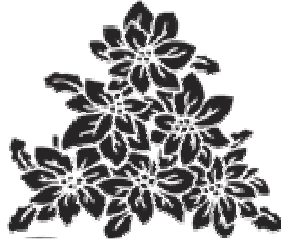
6 oz. tuna, baked beans, canned soups  
spaghetti sauce, rice, juice boxes  
snack bars, toilet paper and paper towels.

**Please bring items to service or drop them off at church during the week.**

### **HOLIDAY FOOD BASKETS FOR TOWN OF ROCKY HILL RESIDENTS**

The Town of Rocky Hill Human Services Department will distribute fresh food baskets and/or gifts to disadvantaged households for the upcoming Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. We are seeking Rocky Hill residents who may benefit from this distribution. Residents must demonstrate a financial or other legitimate need to qualify. All inquiries are confidential. Call 860-258-2799 or 258-2724 to register.

*Remember to Honor your Loved Ones  
With Christmas Poinsettias*



The Poinsettias will adorn the sanctuary for worship on

**Sunday, December 23**

**The cost is \$12.00 per plant.**

**Ordering deadline is Monday, December 17<sup>th</sup>**

Please fill out the information below and mail to Joan Diaz (*see address below*)

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Dedication ("in loving memory of...", "in honor of..." etc.):

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Please select:

I will pick-up my plant after worship on Sunday, December 23.

Use my plant to decorate the church through Christmas.

The Deacons may give my plant to a shut-in or homebound member.

**Make your checks payable to:**

**Joan Diaz with "Poinsettia" in memo line and mail to:**

15 Thistle Down, Cromwell CT 06416.

You may call Joan with questions at 860 613-2889.

## **Luke 1:39-45**

<sup>39</sup>In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.'

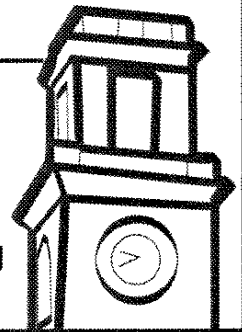
# Break Open the Heavens!

## Advent Season Worship & Events

- Sun, Dec. 2** 10:00 a.m. **1st Sunday of Advent** - Worship and Communion  
5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. **Advent Family Night**, Potluck Dinner,  
Crafts, and Worship (RSVP)
- Mon, Dec. 3** 5:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m. **Ecumenical Women's Advent Retreat** (RSVP)
- Sun, Dec. 9** 10:00 a.m. **2nd Sunday of Advent** - Worship and Toy Drive  
4:00 p.m. **Lessons & Carols** - an evening of music from the choirs
- Sat, Dec. 15** 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. **Jingle Bell Rock**  
Carols, Crafts & Cookies /PreK-5th Grade (RSVP)  
5:00 p.m. **Service of Remembrance and Healing**
- Sun, Dec. 16** 10:00 a.m. **3rd Sunday of Advent** - Worship Service  
11:00 a.m. **Cookie Walk** following worship  
2:00 p.m. **Christmas Caroling** in Rocky Hill
- Sun, Dec. 23** 10:00 a.m. **4th Sunday of Advent** - Worship
- Mon, Dec. 24** 5:00 p.m. **Christmas Eve Intergenerational Service**  
11:00 p.m. **Service of Candlelight and Communion**
- Tues, Dec. 25** 9:00 a.m. **Christmas Day Worship**
- Sun, Jan. 6** 10:00 a.m. **Epiphany Pageant** - bring baby items (diapers, food,  
formula) for families in need  
6:00 p.m. **Epiphany Service and Potluck** (RSVP)

Rocky Hill Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ

For more information: phone 860-529-4167 • email [office@rhccucc.org](mailto:office@rhccucc.org)  
[www.rhccucc.org](http://www.rhccucc.org) • [facebook.com/rhccucc](https://www.facebook.com/rhccucc)



**Rocky Hill Congregational Church United Church of Christ**  
**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

Senior Pastor: The Reverend Donna K. Manocchio [donna@rhccucc.org](mailto:donna@rhccucc.org)

Acting Associate Pastor: Meghan D. Young [meghan@rhccucc.org](mailto:meghan@rhccucc.org)

Minister for Faith Formation: Meghan D. Young [meghan@rhccucc.org](mailto:meghan@rhccucc.org)

Minister of Music: Mary DeLibero [mary@rhccucc.org](mailto:mary@rhccucc.org)

Pastor Emeritus: The Reverend Arthur C. Weil

Church Office: Carol Harvey [office@rhccucc.org](mailto:office@rhccucc.org) / 860 529-4167

Webmaster: Dave Hall [webmaster@rhccucc.org](mailto:webmaster@rhccucc.org)

Church Website: [rhccucc.org](http://rhccucc.org)

Visit us on Facebook at: [www.facebook.com/rhccucc](http://www.facebook.com/rhccucc)



# LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

## The Third Sunday of Advent

### “Break Open to Blessing”

December 16, 2012

*Please use this Advent wreath prayer at home and for your own reflection and meditation.*

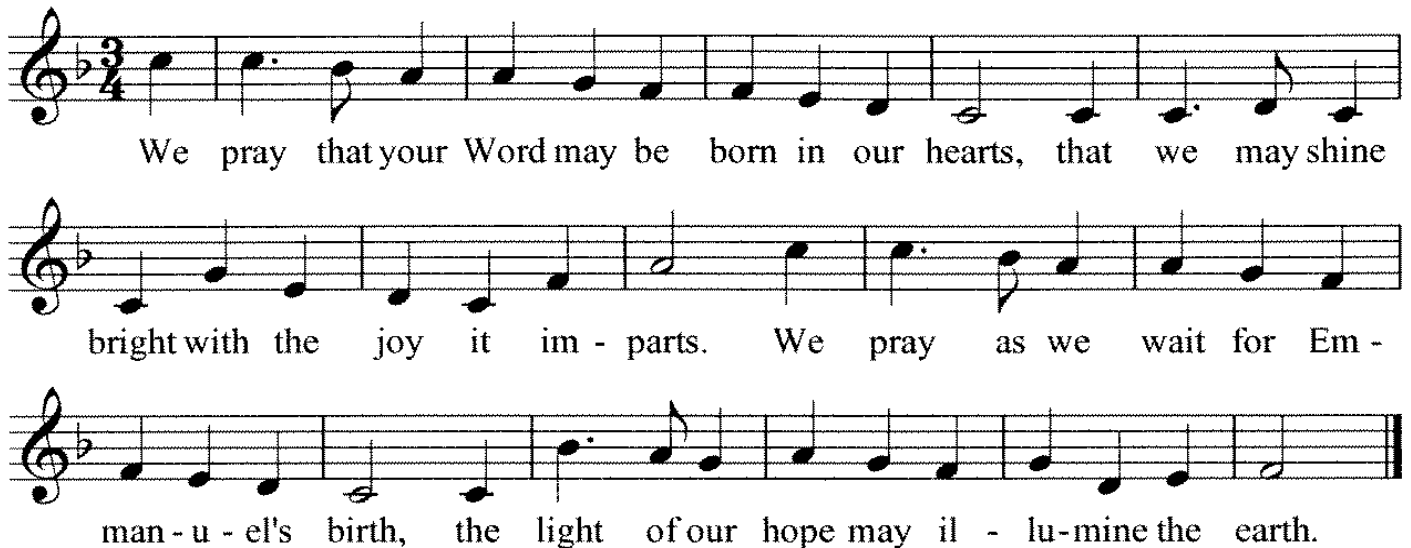
*Reader 1:* O God, we light the third candle of Advent.

*Reader 2:* We seek your comfort. Both mighty and tender, you come. Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you.

**People (sing):**

Steve Garnaas-Holmes

"Away in a Manger"



We pray that your Word may be born in our hearts, that we may shine  
bright with the joy it im - parts. We pray as we wait for Em -  
man - u - el's birth, the light of our hope may il - lu - mine the earth.

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*Reader 1:* Isaiah announced God's coming to a people exiled in a broken and parched wilderness. He declared that God's redemption would make a highway in the desert and change the rough places into plain. God would come as a shepherd—feeding, leading, and cradling the weary flock. This Advent, we seek such a God.

**People:** Saving God, look upon your world and heal your land and your people. Prepare us to be changed. This Advent, teach us to be tender and just, as you are. Amen.

**The Song of Mary**  
**The Magnificat**  
*Luke 1:46-55*

My soul proclaims the greatness of our God,  
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior;  
who has looked with favor on this lowly servant.  
From this day all generations will call me blessed:  
You O God have done great things for me,  
and holy is your Name.

You have mercy on those who fear you in every generation.

You have shown the strength of your arm,  
and have scattered the proud in their conceit.  
You have cast down the mighty from their thrones,  
and have lifted up the lowly.

You have filled the hungry with good things,  
and the rich you have sent away empty.  
You have come to the help of your servant Israel,  
for you have remembered your promise of mercy,  
the promise you made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and Sarah and their children for ever.