

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

*Established 1727 ~ An Open and Affirming Community*

**Fourth  
Sunday  
of  
Advent**



December 21, 2014 ~ 10:00 a.m.

# ~ORDER OF WORSHIP~

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*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 down the hall in Room 4.*

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## 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 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.*

## PRELUDE

“Ava Maria”

Bach/Gounod

Dave Hall, cellist

## CALL TO WORSHIP

The Rev. Dr. Brenda Pelc-Faszczka

And the Angel said: “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, the power of the most high will overshadow you, the child to be born will be called holy.”

**Out of the shadows, out of the darkening experience  
of the overshadowing of God, will emerge what is holy.**

Now is the moment for you to wake from sleep. Set aside your fears.

**We awaken. We journey to Bethlehem to God's gracious heart.**

O Come, God of the dance, and gather us up in your arms,  
and twirl us around and around, in your joy!

**O Come to us and live with us**

**this day and forever, Emmanuel. O come!**

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

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

**\*GATHERING PRAYER AND THE LORD’S PRAYER**

**Holy God, Loving Christ, Living Spirit;  
Wherever we have been, you were with us;  
Wherever we are, you are constantly at our side;  
Wherever we are going, you are there waiting for us.  
When we are afraid of tomorrow, push us into God's Advent:  
Spirit-with-us;**

**when we believe no one loves us,  
sing Bethlehem's lullaby to our souls;  
when we doubt our ability to be the children of God,  
infuse us with your gifts.**

**Remind us that there is nothing you cannot do,  
even as we pray as Jesus has taught us, saying,**

**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.**

**LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE: LOVE**

In this season of Advent, we are here to watch and wait and pray for the coming of light into the world. We long for the day when the things of darkness – selfishness and greed, suffering and oppression – shall be no more. Today we light the fourth candle of Advent—the sign of God’s love. Loving God, come to us again this Advent. May the light of your love be born anew within us once more.

**A candle burns, the final marker of our Advent journey. As we approach our journey’s end, may we travel with hope, peace, joy and love, as we recognize our God who travels with us every step of the way.**

*The fourth candle is lit.*

Lord, by your presence, light up the past, that we might learn from it with thankfulness. Light up the present, that we might live in it with love. Light up the future, that we might prepare for it in hope.

As we watch and wait and pray this Advent season, may we be always ready to encounter the Lord who is already and always with us. Amen.

## SUNG RESPONSE

*Sung once in unison. Second time in a round*

Dm Gm C F Dm Gm C F  
Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, in ex - cel - sis De - o!

<sup>3</sup>Dm Gm C F <sup>4</sup>Dm Gm C F  
Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

## MESSAGE FOR ALL AGES

## BLESSING OF THE TOYS

## 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.

## ANTHEM

“Just a Girl”

By Liz Reed-Swale

*The angel came last night, said I'm going to be the bearer of the greatest gift on earth.  
I can hear them now, "She must be out of her mind."  
Well, I'm feeling kind of crazy now, for what's it's worth...  
Don't you want someone better? I'm always wrong;  
According to my mother, I'm not obedient or strong.  
And I don't know if I can be all that you now ask of me; I've let you down before.  
How could you have chosen me; I'm just a common nobody;  
How could you see more; I'm just a girl.*

*My husband, he's a darling, but I don't think he understands the weight that I now carry  
into this new world, into the wilderness, to Bethlehem, into this new era for humankind...  
And Joseph, do you believe me? I know it's hard.  
And I don't know if I can be all that God now asks of me; I've let him down before.  
And I don't know how courage comes and goes, oh, maybe no one knows,  
But I do know I need you with me; I'm just a girl.*

*God with us, he'll be God with us.  
God with us, oh, please, God be with us;  
I don't know if I can be all that you now ask of me, I've let you down before.  
How am I supposed to know all the ways to help him grow?  
Doesn't he need more; I'm just a girl.*

*The angel came, last night, and said, "Mary, you're not just a girl."*

## READING FROM THE SCRIPTURES

Luke 1:26-38

## SERMON

“Letting it Be”

The Rev. Meghan D. Young

## \*HYMN

“Mary, Woman of the Promise”

New Century (black) 123

## 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

“The Bells of Christmas”

from the Sacred Harp

Children and Adult Choirs, Jubilate Handbell Choir

setting by Alfred Fedak

*The Bells of Christmas ring once more;  
The heav'nly guest is at the door.  
He comes to earthly dwellings still  
With new year gifts of peace, good will.  
The world, though wide and far outspread,  
Could scarcely find for him a bed.  
His cradle was a manger stall,  
No pearl nor silk nor kingly hall.*

*Now let us go with quiet mind,  
The swaddled babe with shepherds find,  
To gaze on Him who gladdens them,  
The loveliest flow'r of Jesse's stem.  
Come, Jesus, glorious heav'nly guest,  
And keep your Christmas in our midst;  
Then David's harp strings, hushed so long,  
Shall swell our jubilee of song.*

*Oh, join with me, in gladness sing,  
To keep our Christmas with our King;  
The David's harp strings, hushed so long,  
Shall swell our jubilee of song!*

## \*Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here

Praise God for all that love has done; Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen

## \*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.

The musical score is written for two staves, treble and bass clef, in a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics printed below the notes.

## Pastoral and Silent Prayer

\*HYMN “Jesus, Jesus, Oh, What A Wonderful Child” New Century (black) 136

\*BENEDICTION

\*POSTLUDE

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ACOLYTES

Victoria Bower and Tyler Morgan

USHERS

Chris and Kathy Mosure, Bob and Denise Carberry

GREETERS

Dave and Bobbie Hawkins

HOSPITALITY

Lynn McKenna and Ruth Jensen

The tower is lit this week in memory of Marilyn and Ed Matthias  
by Tom, Gary, Dick, Lynn and Diane.



**CHRISTMAS EVE**

**WEDNESDAY, December 24**

**5:00pm Intergenerational Service  
with candlelight**

**11:00pm Candlelight and Communion**



Thank you all for your purchase of poinsettias, both for our shut-ins and for the decoration of our lovely sanctuary. As always, special thanks to those who decorate and who deliver poinsettias. We are also grateful for our church school children and teachers who made cards to bring along with the flowers.

May you know the joy of this Christmas season.

The Flower Committee and the Diaconate

**IN LOVING MEMORY OR \*IN HONOR OF:**

**GIVEN BY:**

Ed Bacon, Jr.

Charlotte Bacon

Frances & Ed Bacon Sr. and Helen & Bill Jensen

Ethel Bacon, Jan Kelly and Hal Kelley

Family and friends

Louise Butts

My parents, Armand & Bette Benoit and my dear friend, Mary

Bob & Denise Carberry and Julia O'Connor

Ed & Gladys Carberry and Jennifer O'Connor

William and Ethel Haywood

Gladys & Warren Carpenter

Philip and Ruth Carpenter

Chester J. Cole

Grace Cole and Jackie Little

Domenic and Mildred Yacobucci

Deb Copes

Irene Conte

Angie Toce

Louise and Harold & Bob and Dan Goetter and

Joan & Al Diaz

Bob and Dan Goetter

Helen and Alfred Diaz

Patricia Donahue, Helene Cronan, Ana Donahue

Brian, Daphne, Grace, Isabel and Maya

Stuart MacDonald

The Donahue, Mackay, Cronan, Cowper, and

MacDonald families

Belinda Fiorilli

Julie Dostie

Claire Roche and David Walshe

Katie, Tom, Jared and Jillian





**IN LOVING MEMORY OR \*IN HONOR OF:**

Kenneth & Myrtle Furman

Louis & Laura Button

Diron & Anahid Mosesian

Jim Griswold

Maude & Hayden Griswold and Nellie & Loydon Clark

Our Parents

Susan Statkiewicz

Marianne Lowry

Roger Hill

Martha Gibson

My parents, in-laws, Audrey Rose, and friends Belinda,  
Dan, Sue, Billy, Cindy, Mary-Grace, Roy and Jerry

Donald Thompson Jr, Dad and Grampa

William Maley, our fun-loving Uncle Bill

Our Grandparents

Margaret Libera

Doris McNally

Gene Little

\*Our parents

Paul Mosure and Howard Hartz

Mary & Charles Woods and Mildred & Poppy Martin

Our parents

Our son Daniel R. Somes

Lester Hazel & Pamela Opdyke and Bill & Janet Ware

Loved ones

\*Our parents, Dana & Judy Wilcock and Pat Mahon

**GIVEN BY:**

Robert & Carol Furman

Doreen & Rob Grandell

Lois Griswold

David and Bobbie Hawkins

Stephanie and Michael Heneghan

Lily G. Hill

Cheryl Hummel

Cindy, Maley and Thompson Hunt

The Inderbitzen and Bower family

Lisa Libera and Jim McNally

Jackie Little and Grace Cole

The Morgan family

Kathy & Chris Mosure

Candy and Louis Smith

Dick and Thelma Somes

Wendy and Steve Ware

Barry and Nancy Wilcock



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

*Serve, Pray, Invite, Receive, Ignite, Tell*

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

*(Parents: Pick-Up your child in Chapin Hall)*

*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...**

#### **LESSON → Los Posadas**

Mexico has a celebration called *Los Posadas*. This is a reenactment of the journey of Mary and Joseph to find a safe place to stay in Jerusalem and have their baby. *Los Posadas* happens during the last 12 days of Advent. Each night Mary and Joseph go from house to house asking if there is room for them to stay. Some places say there is "no room," just like the inn keeper. But finally, on Christmas Eve, there is one place that welcomes Mary and Joseph to stay.

Who will you invite into the inn? Practice hospitality this week. Invite someone you haven't before to Christmas Eve service. Bring a plate of warm christmas cookies to a neighbor. Look for God in the world, and pray in places you normally wouldn't

**Prayer For The Week:** God, help us to open our eyes and our hearts to the journeys you made, and help us to know you are always with us. *Amen.*

### **NOAH'S TABLE (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade) – Holiday Party – TONIGHT**

*December 21, 5 PM – 7 PM*

Join us for our annual youth group Holiday Party. Come for a meal, a unique advent game, prayer and reflection, and some cooking baking. Please RSVP by Friday, December 19, with Meghan Young at [Meghan@rhccucc.org](mailto:Meghan@rhccucc.org). 1 Adult volunteer is needed for this gathering.

## 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.*

In the first half of December, 45 members & friends bought or ordered scrip, producing a net profit of almost \$1000. We also achieved a milestone last week, as we reached \$1,000,000 in total scrip sales since our program started five years ago. See the January newsletter for more details on this achievement.

All orders are in and can be picked up at the scrip table this morning. We also have replenished our inventory of the most popular cards, including many low-denomination cards that may be suitable as stocking stuffers or gifts for teachers, postal carriers, babysitters, etc. Here is a partial list of cards available for immediate purchase:

**Coffee:** Dunkin Donuts, Starbucks

**Fast food:** Boston Market, Chipotle, McDonalds, Panera,  
Subway, Wendy's

**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, Staples,  
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!**

**Hello,**

You are invited to the following event:

## 2014 HARTFORD HOMELESS PERSON'S MEMORIAL

Sunday, December 21, 2014 from 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM (EST)

**Center Church Meeting House**  
675 Main Street  
Hartford, CT 06103



### ***Remembering Fallen Friends. Responding Collectively.***

Honor the lives of our friends and neighbors who passed away during the past year while experiencing homelessness.

Speak out against these unjustified deaths so the public better understands the physical burden and emotional trauma that homelessness causes.

Join the national movement to shine a light on the injustice of homelessness.

The annual homeless memorial seeks to honor the lives of members of our community who passed away while experiencing homelessness, due to the experience of homelessness. We will be holding an interfaith service to pay tribute to our friends, raise awareness around the continuing existence and scope of homelessness, and speak out against this injustice faced by many in our community.

Service starts shortly after 4:30pm. Refreshments will be served at the end of the service, around 6pm. Free on-street parking is available on Gold Street. All are welcome.

Visit <http://bit.ly/1yH472f> to Register!

Contact Nate Fox, Center Church ([nate@centerchurchhartford.net](mailto:nate@centerchurchhartford.net)) if you have any questions or would like to be involved.

We hope you can make it!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matthew Morgan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Matthew Morgan  
Journey Home

## **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](http://www.rhccucc.org).

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

## **MEN'S BIBLE STUDY**



Several church members are interested in restarting a men's Bible study group. You may recall, about six men would meet once a month on Saturday morning in the church parlor room. If you would like to join a men's group to learn more about the Bible, faith building and the power of prayer with men of our church. PLEASE CONTACT JIM STEVENS (860-632-5810) OR SEE HIM AT CHURCH.

## **CHRISTMAS CARD DISPLAY**



Please take a moment to view the new exhibit in the cabinet on the wall opposite the office. Joan Tennyson and Nancy Edwards have artfully displayed a collection of Christmas cards created by Nancy through the years. They are truly beautiful to view.

## THIS WEEK AT RHCC

### December 21

### Sunday

10:00am **Worship**  
2:00pm **Christmas Caroling**  
2:00pm **Tamil Sangam** Chapin Hall  
5:00pm **Noah's Table**

### December 22

### Monday

7:00pm **Women's AA** Chapin Hall  
7:00pm **Bowling**  
7:30pm **Bell Choir** Loft

### December 23

### Tuesday

6:00pm **Community Meeting** Room 25

### December 24

### Wednesday

9:30am **Quilters** Room 6  
5:00pm **Intergenerational Service**  
11:00pm **Traditional Communion Service**

### December 25

### Thursday

## MERRY CHRISTMAS

### OFFICE CLOSED

7:30pm **Men's AA** Chapin Hall

### December 26

### Friday

### OFFICE CLOSED



## **BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK**

Dec. 21 Holly Peterson  
24 Nancy Edwards  
26 Janet Kunzelman

### **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.



A warm thank you to **Joan and Al Diaz** for their many years of decorating our Sanctuary entrances. We wish them well as they move to North Carolina.

*Thanks So Much!*

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

**805 Old Main Street**

**Rocky Hill, CT 06067**

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

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

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

**Office Hours**

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

Friday

8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**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](mailto:brenda@rhccucc.org)

Acting Associate Pastor for Faith Formation: The Rev. Meghan D. Young

[meghan@rhccucc.org](mailto:meghan@rhccucc.org)

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

Office Manager: Mitsey Baker [office@rhccucc.org](mailto:office@rhccucc.org)

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