

~ ORDER OF WORSHIP ~

We welcome you to worship this Christmas Eve, and extend a special greeting to our guests; our service is enriched by your presence!

*Please include your full address, phone number or email, as you sign our friendship registration pads. **The Welcome Table** in Narthex offers information about the church. **Hearing devices and large-print bulletins** are available for worship—ask an usher. **Nursery care** is always available downstairs in Room 4.*

PRELUDE

“Sleep. O Lovely Child”

Italian Carol

WELCOME AND GREETING

The Rev. Meghan D. Young

DUET

"Night of Silence"

Daniel Kantor

Victoria Bower and Bob Inderbitzen

*THE SHARING OF PEACE

The Rev. Dr. Brenda Pelc-Faszczka

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). As you extend peace to your neighbor you are invited to use the words, “The peace of Christ be with you.”

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Joseph Sheehan

Such a large star for such a tiny babe,

Such a fuss over a poor child in a manger.

Such a loud song for such a quiet gift,

Such celebration for a little stranger,

Such a Love to enter our lives so softly,

Such a life to fill our hearts with love.

**Please rise in body or in spirit.*

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

***A CHRISTMAS CAROL**

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

O come all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant, O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem. Come and behold Him, Born the King of Angels;	Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation, Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above! Glory to God, all glory in the highest;
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Refrain

Refrain:
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
Born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh
appearing;

Refrain

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

The Inderbitzen & Bower Family

Through this season of Advent, we have been watching, waiting, and praying for the coming of light into the world. We have longed for the day when the things of darkness – selfishness and greed, suffering and oppression – shall be no more. Our journey has been lit with hope, peace, joy, and love, as we recognized our God who travels with us every step of the way.

A light has dawned, and it fills the earth. We go to Bethlehem to see the embodiment of God’s grace. Today we light the Christ candle, as we celebrate the God coming to us in human form, bringing light to all the world. The light of the world beckons to us.

The Christ candle is lit.

May the light of Christ, 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.

Rejoice and be glad for the possibilities of this good news! Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among all whom God favors! May God's light overwhelm the world and be born anew within us once more. Amen.

Sung Response: Gloria

Music: Jacques Berthier, 1982

The musical notation is written on two staves in 6/8 time. The first staff contains measures 1 through 4, and the second staff contains measures 5 through 8. Chords are indicated above the notes: 1 Dm, Gm, C, F; 2 Dm, Gm, C, F; 3 Dm, Gm, C, F; 4 Dm, Gm, C, F. The lyrics are: Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, in ex - cel - sis De - o! Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS EVE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Emmanuel, God with us, show us where you may be found today:
in each human birth, in family joy, in relentless tragedy,
in each treasured babe, and homeless families.

Emmanuel, we rejoice that you are with us –
in everything, through everything.

Lord Christ, be born in us today.

Word of God, become flesh in us that we might live your gospel.

Light of the world, shine in us and through us for the sake of your world.

Loving God, help us to see your grace,
hear your voice, and follow in your way.

Let the Christ child be born anew in our hearts,
as we join the angel choirs who sang your glory,
and with your people in every time and place,
caroling the good news which is ours:

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.

ANTHEM

“Who’s That Yonder?”

arr. John Wilson

The Choir with Rhody Triblets, guitar

American carol

THE GOOD NEWS OF CHRISTMAS

Luke 2:1-20

SERMON

“Way Down in Bethlehem”

The Rev. Meghan D. Young

*A CHRISTMAS CAROL

“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
now give heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today;
Ox and ass before him bow, asleep within the manger now.
Christ is born today, Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
now you know endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this!
God has opened heaven’s door, and you are blessed for evermore.
Christ was born for this, Christ was born for this!

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
now you need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save, Christ was born to save!

OFFERING OF GIFTS

Invitation to the Offering

The Christmas offering will go to support the children’s Weekend Backpack Nutrition Program of Hands on Hartford, which provides healthy meals to children who would otherwise not have them on weekends when they are not receiving them at school.

Anthem

“Sussex Carol”

British Carol

The Choir

*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**

SHARING THE CHRIST LIGHT

*Please note that the sanctuary will darken at the beginning of the Sharing of the Christ Light.
For your safety, we ask that you remain seated.*

Introduction

Solo

“O Holy Night”

Adolphe Adam

Val Triplets, soloist

Passing of the Light

Candlelight will be shared with those at the end of the pews, who are invited to pass it along. Please light your candle by tipping it over a lit one.

Reflecting on the Light

***A CHRISTMAS CAROL**

“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,
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.

Please extinguish your candle at the end of “Silent Night”

***BENEDICTION**

***BENEDICTION RESPONSE**

“Joy to the World! the Lord Is Come”

Joy to the world! the Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,
And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! the Savior reigns;
Let all their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness,
And wonders of his love, and wonders of his love,
And wonders, wonders of his love.

***POSTLUDE**

“I Saw Three Ships” English Carol

arr Don McKeever

Greet your neighbor with the joy of Christmas!
Please return your candle to the baskets located at the entrances of the church.

USHERS

Lynn, Emily and Will McKenna

READERS

Hannah Fuller, Joseph Sheehan, and Brian Speers

The members, friends and staff of Rocky Hill Congregational Church, UCC
wish you a joyous and blessed Christmas!

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