

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

Established 1727 ~ An Open and Affirming Community



**Christmas Evening Worship Service
December 24, 2016
5:00 p.m.**

~ORDER OF WORSHIP~

Welcome to Rocky Hill Congregational Church, UCC, this evening. We're glad you have joined us for Christmas Eve worship, and we wish everyone a blessed and joyous Christmas. Hearing-assist devices are available for this service. Please ask an usher. Nursery care is available downstairs in Room 4.

PRELUDES

“Carol of the Bells”	Ukrainian Carol
“Sleep O Lovely Child”	Italian Carol
Three Settings of “Away in The Manger”	Susan C. Carson

WELCOME AND GREETING

INTROIT

“Once in Royal David's City”, vs 1 and 2
The Choir with Victoria Bower, soprano

OPENING PRAYER

*HYMN

“O Come, All Ye Faithful” Pilgrim Hymnal (red) 132

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Through the season of Advent, we have been watching, waiting, praying, for the coming of light into the world.

**We have lit the candles of hope, peace, joy and love,
longing for the day when the things of darkness –
selfishness and greed, suffering and oppression –
shall be no more.**

Tonight we light the Christ candle
as we celebrate the birth of the one in whom God's light has come.
We pray that as we follow him in the ways of love,
God's light will be born anew in us and in our world.

The Christ candle is lit.

**Please rise in body or in spirit.*

**Bold type denotes collective response.*

May the light of Christ illumine the past,
that we might learn from it with thankfulness,
illumine the present, that we might live in it with love,
illumine the future, that we might prepare for it in hope.

**Thanks be to God for light and the promise of light,
now and always.**

SCRIPTURE READING Proverbs 8:1, 22-31 OT p.553 Pew Bible
Wisdom Plays and the World is Made

PRAYER

O God, our Creator
In your Wisdom we see the reflection
of your only begotten Son,
Jesus, the Christ.
As Wisdom played at your side to make the world,
teach us joyfully to engage the world
with your beloved Son,
together to make all things new.

***HYMN** “Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming” New Century (black) 127

SCRIPTURE READING Isaiah 9: 2; 6-7 OT p.598 Pew Bible
God’s Faithfulness Redeems Us

PRAYER

O God our Redeemer,
when we have strayed from your paths
You light our way home,
and send us your Holy One to guide the way.
Let us follow in the way of your Light,
walking faithfully with You
in the paths of justice and peace
which lead to abundant life.

MESSAGE FOR ALL AGES

***HYMN**

“In the Bleak Midwinter”

New Century (black) 128

SCRIPTURE READING:

Matthew 1: 18-23

NT p.1 Pew Bible

Joseph Dreams of God-With-Us

PRAYER

O God of depth and mystery,
You call us beyond convention
to a way of risky faithfulness.
Fill our dreams with your truth
and our minds with your discernment
so that we, like Joseph,
may awaken with confidence and joy
to expand our lives and make room for You.

DUET

“O Holy Night”

Adolphe Adam

Victoria Bower, soprano; Bob Inderbitzen, tenor

SCRIPTURE READING:

Luke 2: 1-7

NT p.50 Pew Bible

Jesus is Born

PRAYER

O fragile Savior
You come, unprotected, into our dangerous world
and offer yourself as our peace.
Let our joy be to seek your peace
let our hope be to foster your peace
let our purpose be to announce your Peace
with all the fervor of the angels and all the courage of the poor:
Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, God’s peace!

***HYMN**

“Joy to the World”

Pilgrim Hymnal (red) 130

(in verse 2, please substitute “all” for “men” if you wish)

OFFERTORY

Offertory Anthem

“Love Came Down”
The Choir

Daniel E. Gawthrop

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

CHRISTMAS PRAYER

*CAROL AND THE LIGHTING OF CANDLES

“Silent Night”

Pilgrim Hymnal (red) 138

*As the candlelight is passed from person to person around the circle, please tip unlit candles only.
Extinguished candles may be placed in the baskets as you leave the sanctuary.*

*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.*

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

“Pat-a-Pan”

USHERS

Lynn McKenna and her grandchildren, Emily and William



*SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24
CHRISTMAS EVE*

All are welcome here



Looking Ahead

Sunday, December 25
Christmas Day Worship in the Chapel

Sunday, January 1
New Year's Day Worship With Communion

Sunday, January 8
Worship and Epiphany Pageant



Rocky Hill Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

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Rocky Hill, CT 06067

"The Friendly Church at the Center"

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

Church Website: rhccucc.org

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

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: The Rev. Craig L. Cowing ccowing@rhccucc.org

Minister for Children and Youth: Georgette L. Huie ghuie@rhccucc.org

Minister of Music: Mary DeLibero mary@rhccucc.org

Office Manager: Theresa Cleary office@rhccucc.org

Webmaster: Dave Hall webmaster@rhccucc.org

God is still speaking,
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**

