

ROCKY HILL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Established 1727 ~ An Open and Affirming Community



Christmas Evening Worship Service
December 24, 2017
5:00 p.m.

Reader Three: We are a people who seek to be brought together by the love of Christ. Our faith teaches us that God gives us unconditional love and forgiveness. Acknowledging God's free gift of grace, we light the Candle of Love.

The third candle is lit.

Reader Four: Joy to the world! Our God is now coming to bring us "good news." May we sing songs of praise and gladness. We know that our Savior reigns. Let us light the Candle of Joy.

The fourth candle is lit.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

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

All: We have lit the candles of peace, hope, 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.

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.

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

***HYMN**

"Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"

NC (black) 127

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 9: 2-7
God's Faithfulness Redeems Us

OT p.598 Pew Bible

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

Georgette Huie

***HYMN**

“In the Bleak Midwinter”

NC 128

SCRIPTURE READING:

Matthew 1: 18-23
Joseph Dreams of God-With-Us

NT p.1 Pew Bible

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.

SCRIPTURE READING:

Luke 2: 1-7

NT p.50 Pew Bible

Jesus is Born

DUET

“The Virgin’s Slumber Song”
Victoria Bower and Melody Hall

Max Reger

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!

OFFERTORY

Offertory Anthem “A La Nanita Nana” (Spanish Carol)
The Choir

arr. Norman Luboff

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

CHRISTMAS PRAYER

SOLO

“O Holy Night”
Melody Hall, Soprano

Adolphe Adam



***CAROL AND THE LIGHTING OF CANDLES**

“Silent Night”

PH (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

“I Saw Three Ships” (English Carol)

arr. D.D. McKeever

LITURGIST

Bob Carberry

GREETER

Victoria Bower

USHERS

Christopher, Joseph, and Mark Sheehan

HOSPITALITY

InReach

*All are invited to join us
downstairs in Chapin Hall for refreshments after the service.*

24. Isaiah 9: 6

6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

MERRY CHRISTMAS



Looking Ahead

*Sunday, January 7th, 10:00 a.m.
Worship and Epiphany Pageant*



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. May you know the joy of this Christmas season. – The Flower Committee and the Diaconate

GOVERNANCE UPDATE

Copies of the final version of the proposed Constitution are now available for pickup in the narthex, in the hallway across from the office, and in Chapin Hall. A related "Frequently Asked Questions" (FAQ) document is also available. Look for additional info, displays, and perhaps a second-hour session during the next several months, in preparation for voting on this new Constitution at the Budget and Elections Meeting on March 18. If you would prefer to receive digital versions of the two documents (in pdf format), please send an email request to treasurer@rhccucc.org.



Diaper Drive

The Diaper Bank distributes free diapers to poor families, food pantries, soup kitchens, day care centers and shelters throughout Connecticut. We'll collect diapers during the Epiphany Pageant on Sunday, January 7.

The Office will be closed Monday and Friday Dec 25 & 29, and Monday, January 1.

Rev. Craig will hold office hours 9am-Noon Tues-Thur, Dec 26-28.

Join us on Tuesday, January 2 at 9:30am for the Church Mouse mailing.

Have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



WEATHER CANCELLATION POLICY

If worship is canceled, a notice will be posted either Saturday evening or early Sunday morning on the following media outlets:

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

Christmas Poinsettias



IN LOVING MEMORY OF:	GIVEN BY:
<i>Ed and Charlotte Bacon In honor of Beverly and Henry Hudson</i>	Ed and Holli Bacon III
<i>In honor of family and friends</i>	Louise Butts
<i>Our parents, Armand and Bette Benoit and Ed and Gladys Carberry</i>	Bob and Denise Carberry
<i>My Mother, Jennifer O'Connor</i>	Julia O'Connor
<i>Our Grandparents Our Grandparents</i>	Bower and Inderbitzen Family
<i>Warren Carpenter</i>	Gladys Carpenter
<i>Chester J. Cole Gene Little</i>	Grace Cole and Jackie Little
<i>Domenic and Mildred Yacobucci and Irene Conte Angie Toce Pat Howland</i>	Deb Copes
<i>Clarence and Hazel Vaux Barbara Vaux and Hugh Curtin Peter Curtin</i>	Gail and Gregson Curtin
<i>Our parents and in-laws Our sister in law Judy Wieleba McKinney</i>	Art Franscarelli and Judith McKinney Franscarelli
<i>Norman and Adna Haluday and Norman, Helen and Bill Sageman</i>	Ruth Fitzgerald and Dave Sageman
<i>Nellie and Loydon Clark</i>	Lois Griswold
<i>Philip and Lydia Waugh Emil and Ida Hanson</i>	Robert and Janet Hansen
<i>Gail's father, Richard Boberg</i>	Dave and Gail Hall
<i>Our Parents Susan</i>	David and Bobbie Hawkins
<i>Mike Heneghan</i>	Steph Heneghan
<i>Donald Thompson, Jr, Dad and Grandpa Remembering with love our fun Uncle Bill Maley</i>	Cindy, Maley and Thompson Hunt
<i>Long term church members Dorothy and Robert Hunter My loving parents</i>	Glenn Hunter
<i>My parents, Ronald and Dorothy Young Louis LaCava</i>	Jan LaCava and Family

Christmas Poinsettias



IN LOVING MEMORY OF:	GIVEN BY:
<p><i>Jim McNally</i> <i>Doris McNally</i> <i>Margaret Libera</i> <i>Mary Damiata</i></p>	<p>Lisa Libera</p>
<p><i>Michele Van Epps</i></p>	<p>Carol and Christopher Marshall</p>
<p><i>William and Adrienne Cain</i></p>	<p>Candy and Louis Smith</p>
<p><i>Hazel and Lester Updyke</i> <i>Janet and William Ware</i></p>	<p>Wendy and Steve Ware</p>
<p><i>Jack Mahon, Nancy's father</i> <i>In honor of our parents; Dan & Judy Wilcock</i> <i>and Pat Mahon</i></p>	<p>Barry and Nancy Wilcock</p>
<p><i>Rita Walworth</i> <i>Rita Walworth</i> <i>Rita Walworth</i> <i>Rita Walworth</i></p>	<p>Mark and Pat Hughes Walworth John and Elena Walworth-Faits Grandsons Nicholas and Jacob Faits Our family and friends in heaven</p>
<p><i>To honor the birth of Claire Christina Ann Gwilliam</i> <i>In honor of the birth of Claire Christina Ann Gwilliam</i></p>	<p>Parents: Kevin and Kayla Gwilliam Aunt and Uncle Jasen, Brenda Hughes and Sons</p>
<p><i>Sue Starr</i> <i>Sue Starr</i></p>	<p>Mark and Pat Hughes Walworth Dick Starr and daughters; Becky and Merri and Families</p>
<p><i>In memory of Sue Starr and her many years of loyal</i> <i>participation in the music of our church.</i></p>	<p>The Choir</p>
<p><i>Barbara and Paul Nelson</i> <i>Claire Roches and David Walshe</i></p>	<p>The Hoffman, Fulda, Maynard Families</p>
<p><i>Gil VanNess</i> <i>Our parents, Sue VanNess and John Hummel</i></p>	<p>Sue VanNess and Jennifer Martin</p>

Rocky Hill Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

805 Old Main Street

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

Child Care Provider: Liz Pulling lrpulling@icloud.com

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






Peace
on
Earth