

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

Established 1727 ~ An Open and Affirming Community



December 24, 2017 ~ 10:00 a.m.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Christmas Eve

~ORDER OF WORSHIP~

*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** are available for worship—ask an usher. **Nursery care** is available down the hall in Room 4.*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*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 pastor 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.***

SOLO

“Come unto Him” from the Messiah
Melody Hall, soprano

G.F. Handel

CALL TO WORSHIP

Bob Inderbitzen

Leader: We come to witness a miracle.

All: **We sing the miracle of God's steadfast love.**

Leader: New life bursts forth in unexpected ways.

All: **We shout the good news: God's covenant endures forever!**

Leader: The desert blooms; what was barren is fertile!

With our mouths we proclaim God's faithfulness to all generations: God is the Rock of our Salvation! Amen.

***HYMN**

“Joy to the World”

NC (black)132

**please rise in body or in spirit*

Bold denotes unison response

*INVOCATION AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Holy God, Loving Christ, Living Spirit;

You are present in the everyday occurrences;

you are revealed in startling and wondrous encounters.

Let the revelation of your mystery unfold again this day –
that we may see it together.

Let the secret of the ages shed new light on our relationship to you,
and each other,

as we praise the name of Jesus Christ,

who taught us to pray, saying,

We pray this in Jesus' name, who taught us to pray, 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.

*SUNG RESPONSE

NC 743

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It consists of three staves of music. The first staff begins with a whole note G4 and is followed by a half rest. The second staff continues with a half note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, a quarter note C5, a quarter note B4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note G4. The third staff continues with a half note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, a quarter note C5, a quarter note B4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note G4. The lyrics are: "And God will raise you up on ea - gle's wings, bear you on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of God's hand." The guitar chords are: D, Asus4, A, D, Em, A7, D, D7, G, A, Bm, F#m, Em, A7, D.

D Asus4 A D
And God will raise you up on ea - gle's wings,
Em A7 D D7
bear you on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the
G A Bm F#m Em A7 D
sun, and hold you in the palm of God's hand.

LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE: LOVE

The Advent candles will be lit this morning by the Wolfe-Taylor family.



Advent

One: As we gather around the Advent wreath today,
We rejoice that Christmas is a time of prayer and
of open hearts when we sing songs of joy.
Christmas is a time of worship – the moment when the busiest of us pause in wonder.
Christmas happens when God comes to us in love
through Jesus Christ and fills us with love for all humankind.

Two: We light this candle to proclaim the coming of the light of God into the world.
With the coming of this light there is love.
Such great love helps us to love God and one another.
(The fourth candle in the wreath is lit.)

Three: O God, we thank you that Jesus showed your love for every person –
Babies and children, old people and young, sick people and those who were strong,
rich people and those who were poor.
Come to us in this Advent season, and give us love in our hearts for all people.

All: **Amen.**

MESSAGE FOR ALL AGES

BAPTISM *Today we welcome Claire Christina Anne Gwilliam*

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

“Salvator Mundi Natus Est”
Choir, Melody Hall, soprano; Dave Hall, Baritone

Gustav Holst

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 1:26-38

Pew Bible NT p56

SERMON

“It’s a Surprise!”

Rev. Craig L. Cowing

***HYMN**

“It Came upon the Midnight Clear”

NC (black)131

OFFERING OF GIFTS

Following the receiving of offerings by the ushers, they will collect the 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

“Westminster Carillon”
Handbell Choir

Michael Bedford

***Doxology**

I Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done; Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen -

***Prayer of Dedication**

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Joys & Concerns

Sung Call to Prayer

Shep - herd, lead, lead me in your righ-teous-ness,

The first system of musical notation is in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The vocal line begins with a half note chord (F2, B-flat1) followed by a quarter note G2, a quarter note F2, a quarter note E2, and a quarter note D2. The piano accompaniment consists of a steady bass line of quarter notes (F2, B-flat1, F2, B-flat1) and a treble line of quarter notes (F3, B-flat3, F3, B-flat3).

make your way plain be - fore my face. For it is you, God,

The second system continues the melody. The vocal line has a half note chord (F2, B-flat1), a quarter note G2, a quarter note F2, a quarter note E2, a quarter note D2, a quarter rest, a quarter note G2, a quarter note F2, a quarter note E2, and a quarter note D2. The piano accompaniment continues with the same bass line and treble line.

you, God on - ly, who makes me to lie down in safe - ty.

The third system concludes the phrase. The vocal line has a half note chord (F2, B-flat1), a quarter note G2, a quarter note F2, a quarter note E2, a quarter note D2, a quarter note C2, a quarter note B1, a quarter note A1, and a quarter note G1. The piano accompaniment continues with the same bass line and treble line.

Pastoral Prayer

*HYMN

“Angels We Have heard on High”

NC (black) 125

BENEDICTION

***POSTLUDE**

“Carillon Toccata”

Douglas Wagner

LITURGIST

Bob Inderbitzen

USHERS

Deb Copes and Steve Smith, Nancy Parsons

HOSPITALITY

InReach

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

5:00pm Prayer and Music Service with candlelight

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.

The Office will be closed

Monday, December 25 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,</i> <i>Dan & Judy Wilcock 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 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 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>

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

We have most of the usual cards in inventory for immediate purchase this morning. Here is a partial list of cards typically available:

- 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, Olive Garden, On the Border, Outback Steakhouse, Red Lobster
- Shopping: Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Bed Bath & Beyond, Home Depot, Kohl's, iTunes, L.L. Bean, Lowes, Michaels, Payless Shoes, Target, Toys R Us, Walmart

The next ordering deadline for cards that are not kept in inventory will be
On Sunday, January 7.

Did you know that you can donate to the Rocky Hill Food Pantry and "Covenant-to-Care for Children" through our scrip program? Your cash/check donations are used to buy gift cards to local groceries (food pantry) or other retail stores (CC). For these donations, we do not retain any profit, so a \$1.00 donation effectively buys about \$1.07 in groceries or clothing. You may donate at the scrip table in Chapin Hall.

Stop by the scrip table in Chapin Hall this morning for a complete listing of available cards, or to have all of your questions answered. Think SCRIP!

THIS WEEK AT RHCC

December 24

10:00am **Worship**
9:30am **Childcare**
10:00am **Church School**
11:00am **Coffee Hour**
5:00pm **Christmas Eve Worship**

Sunday

Sanctuary
Room 4
Rms 24,25,26
Chapin Hall
Sanctuary



December 25

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Little Scholars Preschool Closed until January 2

7:00pm Women's AA

Monday

Chapin Hall

December 26

9a-Noon OFFICE OPEN
7:00pm Hearing Voices

Tuesday

Room 22

December 27

9a-Noon OFFICE OPEN

Wednesday

December 28

9a-Noon OFFICE OPEN
7:30pm Men's AA

Thursday

Chapin Hall

December 29

OFFICE CLOSED
No Tamil School

Friday



24	Nancy Edwards
25	Jonathan Rutigliano
26	Janet Kunzelman
28	Nathan Vann
30	Krista Pender

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

5:00pm Prayer and Music Service with candlelight



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 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Friday – 9:00 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

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 E. Cleary office@rhccucc.org

Webmaster: Dave Hall webmaster@rhccucc.org

Child Care Provider: Liz Pulling