

A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

December 13, 2015 at 4:00 p.m.



Rocky Hill Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

Established 1727

An Open and Affirming Community of Faith

Welcome to our annual Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols.



Everyone is invited to join heartily in the singing of the carols.

Let silence be kept.

Please silence your cell phones, pagers, watch alarms, and all other electronic devices prior to the start of the service. Thank you!

The Lessons...

are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible and are read by representatives of the ministries and programs of Rocky Hill Congregational Church, United Church of Christ.

Latecomers...

will be seated at the instruction of the ushers, at the time of welcome and during the singing of the congregational carols.

Donations...

received at the time of the offering will be given to Rocky Hill Human Services to help our neighbors in need.

Following the Festival...

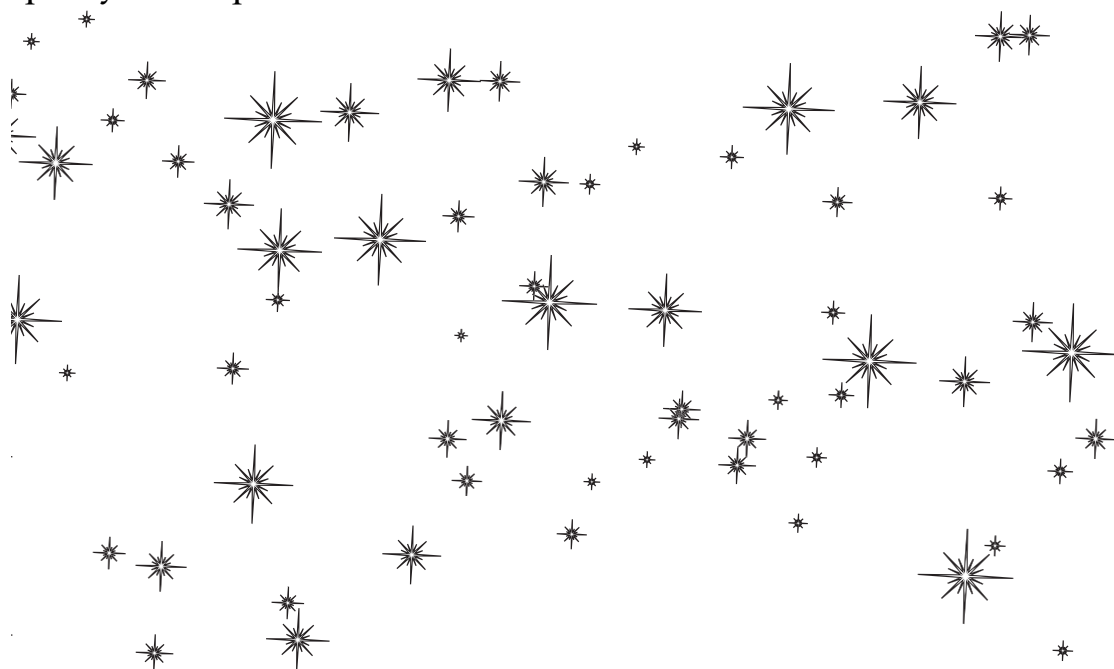
everyone is invited to Chapin Hall for refreshments.

About the Service.

This special Christmas service is held by Christians around the world, in many and varied settings. In small churches and in great cathedrals, people gather to celebrate the story of Christ's coming, in word and music.

The original service was held in 1880, in a small wooden church in Truro, England. Bishop E. W. Benson, who later became Archbishop of Canterbury, wanted a small service for Christmas Eve. His son reported, "My father arranged from ancient sources a little service for Christmas Eve – nine lessons and nine tiny carols, which were read by the various officers of the church, beginning with a chorister and ending with the Bishop." In the early 20th century, the Dean of King's College in England adapted the service to an order close to what we use today, while keeping traditional elements, such as the customary singing of "Once in Royal David's City" as the opening carol. Through the years, and in various settings, the music and the prayers may change, but the spirit remains the same.

The service that we share with you this afternoon reflects our desire to include the entire congregation in the telling of this beautiful story...our readers and musicians are young and old, new members and long-time members, clergy and representatives of the various ministry areas of our church. We hope that the words and music you hear will touch you, remind you of what we celebrate in this season, and deepen your experience of Christmas.



A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols



All congregational carols may be found at the back of the program.

Prelude

Carol Settings

“Fum, Fum, Fum and Riu, Riu, Chiu”

arr. Percy Hall

“It Came Upon a Midnight Clear”

arr. Dave Hall

Woodwind Ensemble

Welcome

Rev. Craig L. Cowing

***Opening Carol for Congregation and Choir**

“Once in Royal David’s City”

Victoria Bower, soloist

The congregation joins in singing stanzas three, four, and five

****Prayer of Invocation and The Lord’s Prayer***

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.

**Please rise in body or in spirit.*

Bold type denotes collective response.

Invitatory Carol

Children's Choir

"O Sanctissima"

Sicilian Carol

Will Rolfe, Orchestra Bells

The First Lesson

The Psalmist cries for mercy

Psalm 130

Marge Murk

Carol for Congregation, Choir and Handbell Choir

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel"

arr. Margaret Tucker

Val Triblets, soloist, Katie Hoffman-Fulda, flute

The congregation joins in singing stanza four

The Second Lesson

The Prophet foretells the coming of a Savior

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Georgette Huie

Choir

"Advent Carol"

words Sandra Niles
music Peter Niedmann

*The people of the world confessed;
No Law makes way to happiness.
No strife in ages gone before
Brought lasting peace, and souls restored.
How long before the world can know
The end of Satan's deadly woe?
How long till blindness, deaf'ning fear will cease,
And touch of Love draw near?*

*The leaves of prophecy unfold;
Isaiah's dream of Love is told.
A vision full of power and might,
A Lord of light beyond all light!
How long before we see Love's face,
And hearts are touched by saving grace?
How long till Zion's songs are heard,
And mankind knows God's healing Word?*

*Isaiah saw his glimpse of God
In majesty above, and awed;
While angels soared and sang for Him
The Sanctus of the seraphim.
"How long," he asked, "till all can see
with opened eyes, and hear of Thee?
How long before Thy truth above will touch
All hearts with fire of Love?"*

*The temple, shaken, filled with smoke.
Then touched with fire, the prophet spoke
In open answer to God's call,
To bring this message to us all:
When Jesus comes, we'll see God's face.
His tiny hands will touch our race.
In infant laughter heaven sings
The pow'r of Love above all things!*

Carol for Congregation and Choir

"Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"

The Third Lesson

The Prophet proclaims good news to a people in exile

Isaiah 40:1-8
Kathy Morgan

Solo

“Come Unto Him”
Melody Hall, soprano

G. F. Handel

*Come unto Him, all ye that labour,
Come unto Him, ye that are heavy laden,
And He will give you rest.*

*Take His yoke upon you, and learn of Him,
For He is meek and lowly of heart,
And ye shall find rest unto your souls.*

The Fourth Lesson

A vision of the peaceable kingdom

Isaiah 11:1-6
Maley Hunt

Choir

“Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”
Melody Hall and Dave Hall, cellists

arr. Dave Hall

The Fifth Lesson

The Angel Gabriel appears to Mary

Luke 1:26-35, 38
Marge Murk

Choir

“Breath of Heaven”
Jillian Maynard, mezzo soprano

Amy Grant
arr. Craig Courtney

*I have traveled many moonless nights,
Cold and weary with a babe inside.
And I wonder what I’ve done. Holy Father,
You have come and chosen me now
To carry Your Son.*

*I am waiting in a silent prayer.
I am frightened by the load I bear.
In a world as cold as stone
Must I walk this path alone?
Be with me now, be with me now.*

*Breath of Heaven, hold me together,
Be forever near me, Breath of Heaven.
Breath of Heaven, Lighten my darkness,
pour over me Your holiness for
You are holy, Breath of Heaven.*

*Do You wonder, as You watch my face,
If another should have had my place?
But I offer all I am for the mercy of Your plan.
Help me be strong, help me be, help me*

The Sixth Lesson

The birth of Jesus

Luke 2:1-7

Lisa Eleck

Jubilate Handbell Choir “The Wexford Carol”

arr. H. Dean Wagner

Carol for Congregation and Choir

“Silent Night”

The Seventh Lesson

The shepherds go to the manger

Luke 2:8-20

Maley Hunt

Choir

“Lay Down Your Staffs”

French carol
arr. Parker/Shaw

*Lay down your staffs, O Shepherds leave your sheep!
From hamlets come Your flocks will quiet keep;
Come, weep no more, Your souls with joy renew,
Come, hasten to adore The Christ, the Christ,
The Christ who comes to comfort you.*

*There you will see Him lying in a stable,
An infant poor, And languishing and feeble;
Oh, wondrous love. Of Him, our faithful Shepherd,
Who come to love; He is, Hi is,
He is the faithful Shepherd.*

“Shepherds Come-a-Running”

Polish Carol

*Shepherds come a running into Bethlehem.
Shepherds come a running into Bethlehem
Merrily they sing and play their pipes in hand.
Sweetly now they bow to Mary,
Wond’ring how to greet the child.
Jesus mild.
Sweetly now they bow to Mary,
Wond’ring how to greet the child,
Jesus mild. Jesus mild.*

Dancers

“Pat-a-Pan”

French Carol

Choreographed and danced by
Hannah Fuller, Molly Morgan, Toryn Pulling and Grace Triblets
With the Woodwind Ensemble

The Eighth Lesson

Matthew 2:1-11

The magi follow the star to Jesus

Lisa Eleck

Duet

“The Virgins Slumber Song”

Max Reger

Melody Hall, soprano; Jillian Maynard, mezzo-soprano

The Offertory

Invitation

Offering of Gifts

Carols for Congregation and Choir

“What Child Is This”

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

Prayer of Dedication

The Ninth Lesson

John 1:1-14

The Word becomes flesh

Rev. Craig Cowing

Choir

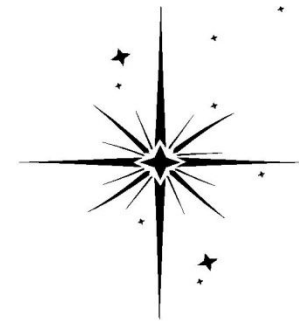
“Love Came Down at Christmas”

words Christina Rossetti
setting Matthew Oltman

*Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, Love divine;
Love was born at Christmas,
Star and angels gave the sign.*

*Love shall be our token,
Love be yours and love be mine,
Love to God and all men,
Love for plea and gift and sign.*

*Worship we the Godhead,
Love incarnate, Love divine;
Worship we our Jesus:
But wherewith for sacred sign?*



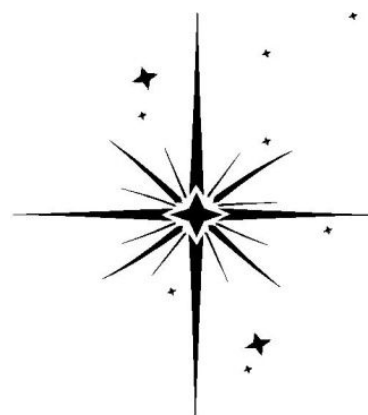
*Passing of the Peace

* Carol for Congregation and Choir
“On This Day Earth Shall Ring”

*Benediction

*Postlude “How Lovely Shines the Morning Star”

J. C. Bach



The Choirs of Rocky Hill Congregational Church, UCC

Mary DeLibero, Minister of Music

Choir

Soprano

Holli Bacon
Victoria Bower
Melody Hall
Cynthia Hunt
Marsha Hoffman
Hilaire Leavitt
Jackie Little
Eleanor Mahar

Alto

Sarah DeGiovanni
Ruth Fitzgerald
Judy Graham
Gail Hall
Anita Hawkins
Katie Hoffman-Fulda
Lynne Lataille
Jillian Maynard
Val Triblets

Tenor

Dave Hall
Bob Inderbitzen
Frank Vann

Bass

Michael Bower
Tom Fulda
Bill Hoffman
Steve Ware

Dancers: Hannah Fuller, Molly Morgan, Toryn Pulling, Grace Triblets

Instrumentalists

Dave Hall, Director

Craig Cowing
Drums
Dave Hall,
Trumpet, Cello
Gail Hall,
Clarinet
Melody Hall,
Cello
Katie Hoffman-Fulda,
Flute
Jillian Maynard
Flute
Christ Mosure,
Alto Saxophone

Jubilate Choir

Michael Bower
Deb Copes
Tom Fulda
Katie Hoffman-Fulda
Lynne Lataille
Hilaire Leavitt
Jackie Little
Kathy Morgan
Debra Peterson
Kristy Solie

Handbell

Children's Choir

Victoria Bower, Assistant
Nicolis Alessi
Grace Donahue
Nicholas Jokl
Ben Rolfe
Will Rolfe, orchestra bells
Cole Triblets

Minister: The Rev. Craig L. Cowing
Scripture Readers: Marge Murk, Georgette Huie, Kathy Morgan,
Maley Hunt, Lisa Eleck, Craig Cowing

Cover Artwork: Michael Bower
Program: Mitsey Baker
Reception Coordinators: The In-Reach and Music Committees
Ushers: Wendy Ware, Kathy Mosure, Steve Smith and Dave Sageman

**Thank you all for coming and
have a Merry Christmas Season!**



**Join us each Sunday in Advent
at 10:00 am
as we prepare for the Birth of Christ!**

Christmas Eve

5:00pm Intergenerational Candlelight Service
11:00pm Service of Candlelight and Communion