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860 529-4167 Church

The Church Mouse

December 2014 Newsletter

Website: www.rhccucc.org

Office Hours – 8:30 a.m.–2:00 p.m. Monday-Thursday

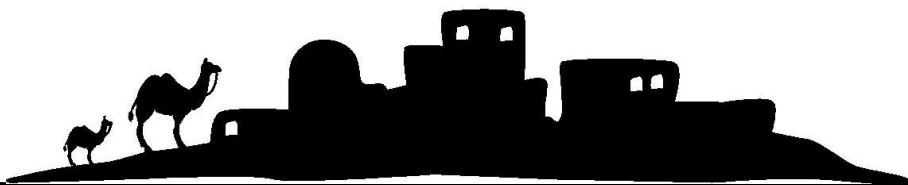
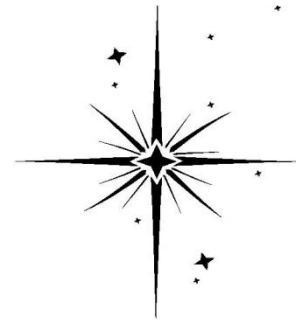
8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Friday

Sunday Worship Services – 10:00 a.m.

Childcare Available/Handicap Accessible

ADVENT CHRISTMAS EPIPHANY SEASON WORSHIP & EVENTS

Sun. Nov. 30	10:00am	1 st Sunday of Advent – worship and communion
	5:00pm	Advent Family Night
Sun. Dec. 7	10:00am	2 nd Sunday of Advent - worship
Tues. Dec. 9	6:00pm	Church Visioning Dinner
Thurs. Dec. 11	1:00pm	Versions of Christmas
Sat. Dec. 13	9:00am	Jingle Bell Rock
Sun. Dec. 14	10:00am	3 rd Sunday of Advent - Worship
	4:00pm	Lessons and Carols
Tues. Dec. 16	7:00pm	Versions of Christmas
Sat. Dec. 20	10:30am	Cookie Walk
Sun. Dec.21	10:00am	4 th Sunday of Advent – worship
	11:00am	Snow date for Cookie Walk
	2:00pm	Christmas Caroling
Wed. Dec. 24	5:00pm	Christmas Eve Intergenerational Service
	11:00pm	Candlelight and Communion Service
Sun. Jan 4	10:00am	Epiphany Pageant



From the Interim Senior Pastor



On Paying Attention at Christmas

*All communal worship may be thought of as ritual.
It is said that ritual is 'a way of paying attention.'*

Donald Heinz, *Christmas: Festival of Incarnation*

Years ago, Congregationalists liked to distinguish themselves from “high-church” types by saying proudly that their worship was not ritualistic – as opposed to, say, that of Catholics or Episcopalians, which was. Because it was simpler in form than the worship styles of other traditions, they thought it was without ritual. But worship is never without ritual. As Donald Heinz puts it, communal worship *is* ritual. It might be simpler or more complex, highly ceremonial or less so, but a gathered community that moves through shared and ordered speech, gestures and acts together is participating in ritual, even when it would swear it isn't.

And if ritual is “a way of paying attention,” then the exquisite rituals of the church's Advent-to-Christmas-to-Epiphany season are a way of paying exquisite attention... to the profound and luminous meeting of heaven and earth that, for Christians, lies at the heart of Christmas. *Word becomes flesh, the holy is right here, the ordinary bears the divine, the human is the vessel for God, the Christ is born...* there are many ways we say it, sing it, internalize it, are moved by it. It is the rituals that get us there. The carols we sing together, the anthems we hear together, the sacred stories we understand together, the bread and wine we take together, the prayers that gather us in, the benedictions that send us out, the offerings we make for the sake of our common life, the candlelight we hold and pass to each other on Christmas Eve... it is the rituals that get us there. Through them, we are invited to pay attention to what matters most and deeply, beneath the surface of things, beneath the sometimes distracted surface of this season.

It has been said that the modern West is a ritually-starved culture; on the whole, there is far less religious observance than there used to be, and so many individuals and families now have little if any experience of sacred ritual as a way of paying attention to life's deepest, most mysterious and holy realities. Without that, we can attempt to live at the surface and pretend it's enough. It's not. And the more spiritually conscious we become, the less adequate it feels to remain on the surface of life, at the level of superficial things. I would like to think that when people who rarely or never enter a church find their way into one at Christmastime, it might be because something in them is still trying to pay attention to something deep, holy, mysterious, beautiful, bright and true. I would like to think that holds, too, for those of us who are in churches all the time.

Let us make our church, our place of worship and community, a place of exquisite ritual in this most beautiful of seasons – not because we will do everything flawlessly all season long, but because through what we do, however humanly it comes off, we will be yearning to pay exquisite attention to what *Word-made-flesh* could possibly really mean, down deep where we still believe in the holy, the mysterious, the beautiful, the bright, the true... down deep where we still believe in God-with-us.

Faithfully, Rev. Brenda

"VERSIONS OF CHRISTMAS"

*A one-session Scripture study on the nativity texts in the gospels
with Rev. Brenda*



Thurs., Dec. 11, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

OR

Tues., Dec. 16, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

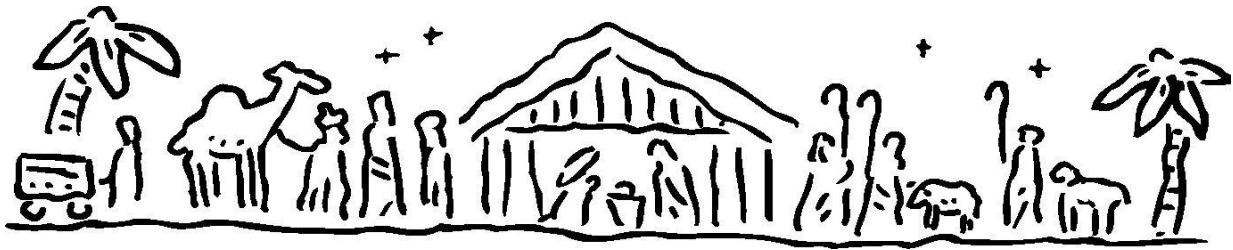
We are often not aware that the stories of the birth of Jesus come in two almost entirely different versions in the New Testament. The two versions have been combined by Christians to make the one traditional, familiar Christmas story that we tell every year. But that composite story itself does not exist in Scripture. What can we learn for our own spiritual journeys through Advent and Christmas by paying close attention to what is and isn't there in the texts? And to the questions raised by the fact that we have differing versions to begin with? Come and enjoy some enlightening exploration and conversation... and some holiday goodies.

**The Council invites EVERYONE— adults, children & youth –
to a special Visioning Dinner
Tuesday, December 9 -- 5:30 PM to 8 PM**

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend dinner and this special event in the life of our church. It is always healthy for an individual, family, or church to stop, evaluate, and understand where they are and where they are going. During this fun and fast paced evening, we'll revisit and update our vision: "Who are we, and who do we want to be?"

- 1) Come to dinner anytime between 5:30 and 6:15 PM.
- 2) At 6:30 PM sharp (!!) we will break into smaller groups for visioning fun!
- 3) We'll be done by 8 PM. We promise!!

RSVP using the sign-up sheets in Chapin Hall, or contact the church office: email office@rhccucc.org or phone 860-529-4167. Please share any dietary needs. Childcare will be provided.



WORSHIP FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

10:00 a.m., sanctuary. Child care provided.

- Dec. 7** **SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT**
Communion; Intergenerational Worship
Second Advent candle: Peace
- Dec. 14** **THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**
Third Advent candle: Joy
Guest preacher: The Rev. Tamara Moreland,
Regional Minister, Connecticut Conference, UCC
- 4 p.m.** **FESTIVAL OF LESSONS AND CAROLS**
See information on Page 11
- Dec. 21** **FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**
Fourth Advent candle: Love
- Dec. 24** **CHRISTMAS EVE**
- 5 p.m.** **Family Service with candlelight**
11 p.m. **Communion Service with candlelight**
- Dec. 28** **FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS**



MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Several church members are interested in restarting a men's Bible study group. You may recall, about six men would meet once a month on Saturday morning in the church parlor room. If you would like to join a men's group to learn more about the Bible, faith building and the power of prayer with men of our church,

PLEASE CONTACT JIM STEVENS AT 860-633-5810
OR SEE HIM AT CHURCH.



S.P.I.R.I.T. Corner Check-in

Church School

We are enjoying our increased time together, worshipping, singing, and sharing together in our new style of Church School. We received bibles on Bible Sunday, explored what the Bible is, and even acted out the Last Supper (with some creative liberties!). We have begun our next church school unit and for Advent we are following the stars to the manger with a “Los Pasodos” themed Advent unit as we prepare our hearts for the birth of Christ.

Youth Group

Youth group had a great time this month exploring God’s creation with a wonderful hike, sharing what we’re thankful for, and joining together for communion on a peak. We also had some great discussions connecting faith, music, and scripture.

All Youth Group events for the year will be open to 6th-12th graders, and when appropriate 6th-8th graders and 9th-12th graders will break off for separate discussion groups. We will meet several times throughout the year for Youth Group Night Out events and service projects. Noah’s Table now meets twice a month on Sunday evenings from 5 PM – 6:30 PM for dinner, fellowship, and faith formation. Schedule is subject to change based on activities determined by the Youth Group.

Children & Youth Leadership Programs at RHCC

The children and youth leadership programs at RHCC have launched. This program is for those between the ages of 2nd-12th grade. Get involved, be a leader, and be part of your church. For information and to sign-up, contact Meghan Young at Meghan@rhccucc.org.

Here’s What’s Happening This Month...

SPECIAL EVENTS: *You do not want to miss these!*

Date	Scripture/Lesson
Sunday, November 30	Advent Gathering: 5 PM – 7 PM Join us for a pot-luck dinner, crafts, and worship as we wait in anticipation during the season of advent. An ALL ages event.
Sunday, December 7	Pageant Kick-Off: Immediately Following Worship Interested in being part of the pageant? Join us in the chapel, for a brief 30 minute meeting, as we introduce the 2015 Epiphany Pageant and assign parts. ALL ages welcome. <i>Mark your calendars, the Pageant is Sunday, January 4.</i>
Saturday, December 13	Jingle Bell Rock: 9 AM – 12 PM A Children’s Christmas Carol Workshop. <i>See flier for more information. RSVP requested.</i>
Saturday, December 13	Epiphany Pageant Rehearsal: 2 PM – 4 PM Come meet in the Sanctuary for the 1 st rehearsal.

S.P.I.R.I.T Church School Calendar: *What we're learning this month.*

Date	Lesson
Sunday, December 7	Communion Sunday. Family worship. <i>2nd Sunday of Advent</i>
Sunday, December 14	S.P.I.R.I.T. Church School: "Los Posados" <i>3rd Sunday of Advent</i>
Sunday, December 21	S.P.I.R.I.T. Church School: "Los Posados" <i>4th Sunday of Advent</i>
Wednesday, December 24	Christmas Eve <i>5 PM Intergenerational Worship, with Candlelight</i> <i>11 PM Traditional Service with Communion and Candlelight</i>
Sunday, December 28	Family Worship.

Youth Group Calendar: *December*

Date	Fellowship Gatherings
Sunday, December 21	Noah's Table (6 th -12 ^h Grade) → 5 PM – 7 PM. <i>Join us for the youth group Annual Holiday Party!</i>

***Please RSVP with Meghan Young for all youth group events, and to volunteer as a chaperone or driver for any youth group event.*

Jingle Bell Rock!

A Children's Christmas Workshop & Celebration



Come join us for a fun-filled morning of singing everyone's favorite Christmas carols, playing games, making crafts, and decorating tasty treats. *Adult supervision provided.*

Saturday, December 13th
9 AM – 12 PM

Open to ALL children in PreK - 5th Grade

Bring a non-perishable food item or new toy for those in need in our community.

Freewill donations accepted to cover the cost of this event.

RSVP: Please Call 860-529-4167, ext 204 or email meghan@rhccucc.org to let us know you're coming!

S.P.I.R.I.T. CHURCH SCHOOL – What We’re Learning Now!

Los Posadas, a Mexican Journey

Mexico has a celebration called *Los Posadas*. This is a reenactment of the journey of Mary and Joseph to find a safe place to stay in Jerusalem and have their baby. *Los Posadas* happens during the last 12 days of Advent. Each night Mary and Joseph go from house to house asking if there is room for them to stay. Some places say there is “no room,” just like the inn keeper. But finally, on Christmas Eve, there is one place that welcomes Mary and Joseph to stay.

Turn your home into a reenactment of the *Los Posadas* journey. Begin by preparing a small picnic, including snacks and a blanket to sit on. Put the name of every room in the house on small pieces of paper and place them in a basket. Draw one room name from a basket. Place the picnic inside the room listed on the piece of paper you chose. Shut the doors of all the rooms.

Pretend that you are travelers looking for a place to stay. You are tired and you are anxious about finding a place that will welcome you. Go from room to room carrying flashlights. At each door knock and together ask, “Is there room for us to stay here?” Open the door and look inside. If the picnic is inside the room, you will know that you are welcome to come in and enjoy hospitality. While you eat the picnic, talk about the importance of always letting Jesus into our lives. Our hearts and our homes must be open to all who need help and hospitality, just like Mary and Joseph did.

A Prayer For The Unit. God, help us to explore the journey to Bethlehem, the journey of the magi, the journey to Egypt, and the journey to Nazareth. Open our eyes and our hearts to the journeys you made, and help us to know you are always with us. *Amen.*

*Don’t forget to learn along with us in our weekly bulletins.
Check them out for faith nurture ideas you can use at home to learn with us!*



CONFIRMATION

Confirmation class is now well underway. We’ve made a covenant with one another, started this journey of getting to know the church and each other, connected scripture, music, and faith, and jumped into learning about the bible and worship. With the season of Advent starting the new Church year, we’re looking forward to meeting our confirmation mentors who will be joining us throughout the year.

If you would like more information about being part of the Confirmation class (9TH & 10TH graders), or if you are interested in being a mentor for the confirmation class please contact Meghan Young at Meghan@rhccucc.org.

December Schedule:

Here’s what we’re learning and doing this month...

Date	Class/Event	Times
Sunday, December 7	CLASS: Prayer *Meet your mentors	5 PM – 7 PM

From the MODERATOR...



During this second half of the year, the Council met on September 9 and November 11. Here are some of the notable highlights from these meetings: In September, Moderator Bob Inderbitzen appointed members to three ad hoc committees to explore a variety of topics and planning including: **church staffing, organization & governance, and visioning**. These small groups met throughout the fall, with reports and updates made at November's Council meeting. Their work is ongoing.

A Visioning Dinner will be held on Tuesday, December 9 from 5:30 PM to 8 PM. Come to dinner anytime between 5:30 and 6:15 PM. This is a special church-wide event for adults, children & youth. During this fun and fast paced evening, we'll revisit and update our church vision: "Who are we, and who do we want to be?" Please RSVP using the sign-up sheets in Chapin Hall, or contact the church office: 860-529-4167 phone or email office@rhccucc.org.

A new upright piano was donated for the chapel from a gift in memory of Myrtle Furman. This generous gift has allowed us to relocate the older, baby grand piano from the chapel into the sanctuary on a new moveable stand.

Over the summer, the Diaconate and Pastors **completed a review of the church membership list**, reaching out to many inactive member and friends—some of who we have lost touch with, or have moved or joined other churches. This effort has reduced the number of active members to around 300 (from nearly 600). The more accurate membership total will reduce mailing and postage costs, and reduces the dues our church contributes to our covenantal, denominational partners: the Hartford Association, the Connecticut Conference, and the national setting of our United Church of Christ (paid through the Conference).

There has been much enthusiasm in reports from the Board for Faith Formation and Pastor Meghan for the **new "group worship" model being used for this year's church school program**. The children enjoy being together for creative worship experiences and programs to help deepen their faith formation and learning. The Council is grateful to all of the volunteer teachers and additional 'helpers' who lead the church school.

A new audio system has been installed in the sanctuary. The system includes eight new speakers, four new wireless microphones, a new pulpit microphone, and independent 'volume' controls for each microphone. There are also playback and recording features. Already, audio recordings of Sunday Worship services are regularly posted to the church website, rhccucc.org. The equipment supports our existing Assisted Listening Devices, used to aid individual hearing during worship services. The new audio system and related equipment was made possible by generous contributions from members.

Treasurer Dave Hall has reported an **ongoing shortfall in church income vs. expenses**. While expenses have been largely on-track with budgeted amounts, income from pledges has been running behind. Income from other, smaller sources is also running behind. While the trend is concerning, some of the shortfall may be attributed to the lengthy lapse since the

church's last stewardship program—an intentional decision to shift the annual stewardship program to the fall. Current income deficits are being covered by the Memorial Fund. The Treasurer, Board of Trustees, and Council will continue to follow these trends closely.

Over the summer, the Board of Trustees coordinated **renovations to the room occupied by the "Little Scholars Preschool at the Rocky Hill Congregational Church"** (formerly the RHCC Cooperative Nursery School). This included painting, flooring, new counters, and concealing much of the exposed pipes. Check-out the room! **Electrical upgrades were made in the choir loft**, replacing outdated and unsafe wiring, and adding many new outlets.

In November, **the Search Committee reported that they've started interviewing candidates**. The committee has shared regular updates of their progress with the Council and church. Please continue to hold them in your prayers as they seek to prepare us to call a new pastor to our church.

The Council made two **new appointments to the Personnel Committee** to fill open positions: Dave Sageman, chair of the Board of Trustees; and Candy Smith for the Diaconate.

The next Council meeting is Tuesday, January 13 at 7 PM.

The holy season of Advent is here! Please take advantage of the many opportunities organized by our boards, committees, pastors and many individuals throughout the congregation to worship, share, give, learn and love as we prepare for Christmas.

Please contact me, or any of the members of the Church Council, if you have any questions or comments.

Peace,
Bob Inderbitzen, Moderator
rinderbitzen@cox.net
tel 860-418-9171



2014/2015 Church Council

Diaconate, Don Pagnucco
Board of Trustees, Lynne Lataille
Board for Missions, Meghan Montana
Board for Faith Formation (Christian Education), Caryn Doten
At Large Member, Bob Carberry
At Large Member, Ed Bacon
At Large Member, Rich Pawlich-Pagliccio
Acting Associate Pastor for Faith Formation, Rev. Meghan Young
Interim Senior Pastor, Rev. Dr. Brenda Pelc-Faszczka
Clerk, Marsha Hoffman
Treasurer, Dave Hall
Moderator, Bob Inderbitzen

Music, Music, Everywhere



LESSONS
& CAROLS

December is a big month for music. We hope you will attend our **Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols** on **Sunday, December 14 at 4:00 p.m.** It will be a beautiful service of short scripture readings and music celebrating the birth of Jesus by adult and junior choirs, bell choir, and many instrumentalists. There is no admission charge, though a free-will offering will be taken to support the work of our church and local community. As always at our church, a lovely reception will follow coordinated and served by our Inreach Committee. Please come. You are welcome here!!!

COOKIE WALK

Yes, it's that time of year again!

Time to pull out your rolling pins and sifters and feed your sweet tooth!

This year we will be doing things slightly different. Based on the feedback we received last year, we have changed the format slightly. It will be held on **SATURDAY December 20 from 10:30 AM until 2 PM.** The snow date will be Sunday December 21 after church. We hope this will allow people to shop without crowds and enjoy picking up their favorite treats.

Pre-packaged tins, pre-orders will be available. As always we will have gluten free cookies, nuts and no nuts and candies. Sign up sheets will be in Chapin Hall beginning the Sunday after Thanksgiving.

Please help us make this the biggest and best Cookie Walk ever!

Linda Tokarski (860-633-8414, Itokarski 64@gmail.com)

Marsha Hoffman (860-563-1367)



Sunday, December 21 at 2:00pm

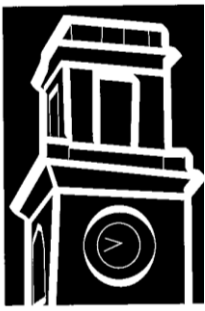
Join the Music Committee for an afternoon of singing your favorite Christmas carols. We will be visiting several nursing houses and our church family shut-ins and sharing our gifts. **All ages welcome.** We will meet at the church and car pool and come back to the church afterward for light refreshments.



Sunday, December 14, 2014 at 4:00 p.m.

Rocky Hill Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

*A Festival of Nine
Lessons and Carols*



WORSHIP SCHEDULE
Sunday Morning Worship
Communion 1st Sunday
10:00 a.m. with childcare



CHILD
care
 Provided



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
30 1st Sunday of Advent 11:20am Children's Choir 11:40am Adult Choir 4:00pm Tamil Sangam 5:00pm Advent Gathering	1 10:30am Apple Rehab Svc 7:00pm Women's AA 7:00pm RHCC Bowling 7:30pm Bell Choir	2 11:00pm Lodge Svc 7:00pm Board and Committee Mtgs	3 9:30am Quilters 7:00pm Adult Choir
7 2nd Sunday of Advent 11:15am Pageant Kickoff 11:20am Children's Choir 11:40am Adult Choir 4:00pm Tamil Sangam 5:00pm Confirmation	8 7:00pm Women's AA 7:00pm RHCC Bowling 7:30pm Bell Choir	9 8:30am Breakfast Club 6:00pm All Church Visioning Dinner	10 9:30am Quilters 7:30pm Adult Choir
14 3rd Sunday of Advent 11:20am Children's Choir 11:40am Adult Choir 3:00pm Lessons & Carols Warm-up 4:00pm Lessons & Carols Concert	15 Poinsettia's Due 7:00pm Women's AA 7:00pm RHCC Bowling 7:30pm Bell Choir	16 11:00am Retired Clergy 7:00pm Versions of Christmas	17 Newsletter Mailing 9:30am Quilters 7:30pm Adult Choir
21 4th Sunday of Advent 11:00am Cookie Walk Snow Date 2:00pm Christmas Caroling 4:00pm Tamil Sangam 5:00pm Noah's Table	22 7:00pm Women's AA 7:00pm RHCC Bowling 7:30pm Bell Choir	23 6:00pm Community Meeting	24 5:00pm & 11:00pm Christmas Eve Services
28 4:00pm Tamil Sangam	29 7:00pm Women's AA 7:00pm RHCC Bowling 7:30pm Bell Choir	30	31 New Year's Eve

VOICE MAIL INSTRUCTIONS – If you call the church and the Voice Mail answers, you do not have to listen to the entire message. Anytime during the message you can have the call transferred directly to the person you are trying to reach by simply keying in the following numbers:

- | | | | |
|---|-----|----------------------------------|-----|
| Brenda Pelc-Faszczka, Interim Senior Pastor | 202 | Mary DeLibero, Minister of Music | 207 |
| Meghan Young, Acting Associate Pastor | 203 | Myke Halpin, Custodian | 205 |
| Mitsey Baker, Office Manager | 201 | RHCCNS (Nursery School) | 208 |

December 2014



THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
4 7:00pm Search Committee 7:30pm Men's AA	5	6
11 1:00pm Versions of Christmas 7:00pm Search Committee 7:30pm Men's AA	12 Newsletter Deadline	13 9:00am Jingle Bell Rock 2:00pm Epiphany Pageant Rehearsal TBD Lessons & Carols Rehearsal
18 8:00pm Men's AA	19	20 10:00am Cookie Walk
25 Office Closed Merry ★ Christmas	26	27

WEATHER CANCELLATION POLICY

In the event of winter weather on a Sunday morning, our first priority is to ensure the safety of church members. Some winters the snow and ice are a real danger, and so worship is cancelled for the day. If such a storm happens, please know that a system is in place to make as many of our members and friends aware as possible. If and when worship is canceled, notice will be posted on **Channel 3 WFSB-TV**, and the voice mail greeting on the church phone will be updated with the cancellation if you choose to phone the main number. Additionally, an email and phone tree will alert church leaders to the same information. It takes a real storm to disrupt our worship, but if that happens, we want to be ready. Cancellations will also be posted on the church website: www.rhccucc.org.

On weekdays, if schools are closed in Rocky Hill, the church office will also be closed.

WAYS TO GIVE

GIFT TREE FOR COVENANT TO CARE



This year, we will again be having a giving tree to benefit the children in the Covenant to Care programs. We will be setting up the tree with ornaments that have children and their needs listed on them in early December. This is a wonderful way to give the struggling children in our communities the gift of Christmas love. The dates for collection will be posted in the weekly bulletins in December. See Kari McCaw-Blaise for questions.



Christmas is a special time to remember our members who are no longer able to join us at worship in our sanctuary. The Diaconate provides small poinsettias to be personally delivered. It is a rewarding experience and we are extending the opportunity to everyone. Please, speak with a deacon, call Steph at 860-529-4672 or sign up in Chapin Hall if you would to participate in bringing the joy of Christ's birth to someone.

Deacons' Christmas Offering For Children's Nutrition Needs

The special offering received at both Christmas Eve services and on the Sunday following Christmas will be for the **Nutrition Backpack Program** of the **Hands On Hartford** organization. This program, for elementary school children, provides nutritious meals that children can have at home over the weekend, in cases where those children depend on school lunches during the week for their only nutritious meals. Food insecurity is ever-present for so many of our neighbors, especially young children. **Envelopes for this offering will be received with a mailing to the congregation and will also be available in the pews.**



DEACONS

While, the extent of my musical ability is lip-syncing, I find Christmas Carols and other tunes of the season a joy that can make me stop what I am doing to listen. "The Little Drummer Boy" (originally known as 'Carol of the Drum') is one of my favorites. Written in 1941 by Katherine Davis, it has been recorded by everyone from the Trapp Family singers to Justin Bieber. And, I think I have heard most of them. Why do I love the song – maybe because I can actually sing pa rum pum pum pum without embarrassment? Actually, the song reminds me that if I do my best, offer him my best, Jesus will smile at me.

*Come they told me, pa rum pum pum pum
A new born King to see, pa rum pum pum pum*

*Our finest gifts we bring, pa rum pum pum pum
To lay before the King, pa rum pum pum pum, rum pum pum pum, rum pum pum pum,*

So to honour Him, pa rum pum pum pum, When we come.

*Little Baby, pa rum pum pum pum I am a poor boy too, pa rum pum pum pum
I have no gift to bring, pa rum pum pum pum
That's fit to give a king, pa rum pum pum rum pum pum pum, rum pum pum pum,*

Shall I play for you, pa rum pum pum pum, On my drum?

*Mary nodded, pa rum pum pum pum
The ox and lamb kept time, pa rum pum pum pum
I played my drum for Him, pa rum pum pum pum I played my best for Him,
pa rum pum pum pum, rum pum pum pum, rum pum pum pum,*

Then He smiled at me, pa rum pum pum pum Me and my drum.

December provides you with so many opportunities to enjoy the season with your church family. Take advantage of the program offerings – take a chance and attend something new. Also, please note the opportunity to give through the Deacons' special Christmas offering, this year designated for a children's Nutrition Backpack program. (see information on the preceding page.)

As the days before Christmas pass quickly, I hope you have that 'something' to bring you back to the real meaning of Christmas. Something that will say, God only wants my best. And please join with your church family in our beautiful church on Christmas Eve.

Gail Tine
For the Deacons



SCRIP-SURE: The Peak Season is Upon Us

The months of November and December are always the biggest months for scrip sales. Last year, we earned over \$4500 during these two

months alone. This is the period when there are three important uses for scrip:

- 1) Scrip (i.e., gift cards) can be given as **Christmas presents**
- 2) Scrip can be used to fund your **own Christmas shopping**
- 3) And, of course, scrip can continue to be used for your **everyday shopping and eating**, including groceries, pharmacies, restaurants, etc.

Do you plan to do any Christmas shopping at the following retailers?

Amazon	Home Depot	Pier One
Banana Republic	J.C. Penney	REI
Barnes & Noble	Jo-Ann Fabrics	Sears
Bath & Body Works	Kohl's	T.J. Maxx
Bed Bath & Beyond	L.L. Bean	Talbots
Cabela's	Land's End	Tanger Outlets
Dick's Sporting Goods	Lowe's	Target
Dressbarn	Macy's	Toys R Us
Eddie Bauer	Marshall's	Walmart
Gap	Old Navy	Williams-Sonoma

Did you know that you can use scrip to shop at every one of these retailers? And the church will earn anywhere from 4% to 20% on the face amount of your purchases if you shop with scrip purchased through our program!

We'll be placing bi-weekly orders to facilitate your shopping needs until Christmas. Cards ordered on any of the following Sundays will be available on the next Sunday, as listed below:

Place your order by...	... and pick up the cards on
Sun., Nov. 30	Sun., Dec. 7
Sun., Dec. 14	Sun., Dec. 21

Some scrip is also available in electronic form. In particular, **Amazon** and **L.L. Bean** are two popular providers of "e-scrip." These can be requested during the week by email (send to treasurer@rhccucc.org) and can usually be sent to you within an hour of your request – assuming that I'm online at the time. E-scrip functions just like regular gift cards, and can be used to pay for online orders or in the associated stores. Some of our

members prefer to pay for online orders using scrip (or e-scrip) because it means you don't have to provide your credit card number online.

A complete list of participating retailers is available in Chapin Hall, or online at rhccucc.org/scriplist. Retailers offering e-scrip (also called "ScripNow eCards") are denoted on the listing with by an "S".

Thanks to all who continue to support what has become our primary year-round fundraiser. Think SCRIP!

Dave Hall, Treasurer

A MESSAGE FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Thank you for your generous and enthusiastic support of New Consecration Sunday. We thank you for prayerfully considering how God is calling you to share your time, talent and treasure. We also wholeheartedly thank the members of Council for their participation in reaching out to the congregation. Most of all we thank Moderator Bob Inderbitzen for all the work he did to support and drive New Consecration Sunday.

If you have any questions regarding pledging or envelopes please contact the members of the Stewardship Committee.

Senior Pastor Search Committee Update



Over the past month the Search Committee has continued to receive, review, and discuss profiles that continue to come in and have also conducted several interviews with candidates that we have had interest. We will continue to meet and interview over the coming weeks, although there may be some brief breaks to allow for holiday schedules for both the committee and the candidates. The Committee is excited to be continuing in this work and moving forward towards the placement of a new Pastor here at RHCC!

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact any of the committee members.

Senior Pastor Search Committee: Liz Reed-Swale - Co-Chair, Gregson Curtin -Co-Chair, Stephanie Heneghan - Chaplain, Hilaire Leavitt - Secretary, Meghan Montana - Communications, Neal Cox, Diana Hellyar, Michele Jokl, Rhody Triblets



Global and Local Mission News

"Christmas, children, is not a date. It is a state of mind. "

– Mary Ellen Chase

Thank You!

Heartfelt thanks to all who donated to our Thanksgiving drive for Peter's Retreat. It was a great success and the residents there are so grateful to everyone in the congregation for keeping them in our hearts and minds this holiday season.

Global Prayer This Month

Prayers for Ecuador

Brought to us by Global Missionaries Marilyn Cooper and Glenn Hebert who serve with Ecumenical Foundation for Integral Development, Training and Education in Ecuador.

Oh loving God, for whom all things are possible, we pray that we are moved to use our gifts, talents, abilities in your service. Help us to see those in need, the hurting, those hungry for love or community, the sick, those without sufficient resources. May we be of use to you: Let us be your loving hands, your comforting arms.

Dearest God, move us to do your will, to assist in bringing justice to those who seek it and to bring sufficient resources to those who lack. Open our eyes that we may see the poor in spirit who pass through our lives and open our hearts that we may learn to share. In the name of the most Holy, Amen.

www.globalministries.org

Board For Missions Members: Meghan Montana – Chair, Kari McCaw-Blaise – Secretary, David Bell - Treasurer, Lisa Eleck, Cindy Hunt, Thomas Kainamura, Sarah Mosure, Marge Murk, Wendy Ware.

2014 R.H.C.C COUNTRY FAIR

A HEARTFELT *THANK YOU*

to all who participated in this year's country fair.



With the grace of god, the volunteers of the church and our customers, we are proud to announce, despite the pouring rain,

WE RAISED \$10,700.00.

YOU SHOULD ALL BE PROUD OF YOUR EFFORTS.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elaine Somes

FAIR COMMITTEE

Housing: The Deerfield Avenue house is now fully refurbished and is for sale to a first time low income owner.

Programs:

1. **Coats:** We are once again working in conjunction with Best Cleaners to provide hundreds of coats to children and adults in our neighborhoods. We can't thank Best Cleaners enough for their generosity and hard work to help the poor and needy.
2. **Knox Park** awarded the Christian Activities Council their green hero recognition for our community garden on Cabot Street. This was a joint effort with people in the neighborhood and who tended the gardens and who had access to fresh vegetables.
3. **ICEJ Task Force** which is now part of the Christian Activities Council, provided 100 volunteer tutors for guide and teach math and reading to young people in North Hartford.

Christmas Party: YOU ARE ALL INVITED TO OUR ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY
 47 Vine Street, Hartford on December 15, 2014 from 5-7. A donation of non perishable food items is appreciated. If you have questions, contact me at 860-257-8177.

Peace,
 Rich Pawlich-Pagliccio

Delegate, Member Board of Directors

HISTORIAN NOTES - OCTOBER 2014

Profit from the Scrip-Sure Fundraising Program was \$1,538 in October.

Saturday, October 4: The Country Fair had 11 booths plus the Quilt Raffle, followed by the Roast Beef Dinner that evening. Karen Wells of Wethersfield won the Quilt . A total of \$10,700 was raised.



Sunday, October 5: Special offering - Neighbors in Need

Saturday, October 11: CT UCC Choir Concert in Norwalk, CT

Friday-Saturday, October 17-18: CT UCC Annual Meeting, Cheshire, CT

Sunday, October 19: Blessing of the Animals was held at 2 PM on the Church's side yard. Confirmation Class began that evening.

Thursday, October 23: Missions Board hosted a group for 8 people to the Hands on Hartford dinner and screening of "The Line," a video documentary of four people living at or below the poverty line. The event was held at the Aetna Auditorium in Hartford. Representatives from Hands on Hartford led a Q&A session on hunger insecurity and homelessness and announced the beginning of a new, centralized location for their services.

Small Group Ministries are taking place.

Report of the RHCC Delegates, Lisa Eleck and Jackie Little, to the
Connecticut Conference UCC Annual Meeting 2014

We thank you for allowing us to represent you at the Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ held October 17 and 18, 2014.

Friday evening's agenda began with worship, recognition of and welcoming guests. The worship service acknowledged that we all come together, even as we all have burdens. The litany recalled that Jesus calls us to come to him, all who are weary and heavy laden, and he will give us rest. The prayer was for our baggage to become bread and living water - to make what we carry be in service of the work we are called to do. And not alone.

The business part of the Annual Meeting also took place: election and installation of CT UCC Officers; the 2015 Budget was passed; voting of two Resolutions presented by member churches of the CT UCC. The Resolution of Implementation Regarding the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict was passed. The Resolution of Implementation to End Mass Incarceration for Non-Violent Offenses was also passed. Hearings on the budget and resolutions were held in September in different parts of Connecticut. We (Lisa and Jackie) attended the one in Hartford.

This evening closed with Theological Reflection by guest Rev. Dr. J. Mary Luti. She reminded us to not take these gatherings for granted! She highlighted that interdependence is the theme, and if you think you see clearly and have all the answers, you have probably not gone deep enough. Let's indeed carry each other's bags (burdens).

Saturday's agenda began with worship and communion by intinction. Our Conference Minister Rev. Kent Siladi, presented his vision for our CT Conference: "interdependence." To quote part of his report, "Put simply this vision is for us together to build one another up to discern our common witness and ministry, to work collaboratively to make our communities and our state a more just, loving and compassionate place. We are called to be in relationship with one another." "We can't make it without each other."

After Rev. Siladi's message, Focus Groups were held to discuss what his vision meant to us. We (Lisa and Jackie) each attended a different Focus Group. The questions were related to vision of interdependence in the church.

1. What does the vision of interdependence mean to you? What feelings do you have about it?
2. How have we seen interdependence in our church?
3. How would this vision take shape in our church?
4. If we were to become more interdependent, what would you see happening?
5. What would you add to this vision?

A compilation of the responses from all the focus groups is being prepared, and we'll share it with you when it's available. We, Lisa and Jackie, encourage us, RHCC, to keep Rev. Siladi's vision of interdependence in mind as RHCC revisits its vision in December.

The Meeting continued after lunch with the Celebration of the 20th Anniversary of the Korean Partnership.

Two "Living Waters" Awards were presented, one for the "Field of Flags" to Jo-Ann Hornyak and Anne Kirkpatrick who were the coordinators of the display and members of the Memorial Garden Committee of the Somers Congregational Church. The other "Living Waters" Award was presented to Dr. Gordon and Nancy Crouch, who were instrumental in the building of a medical clinic in Masooli, Uganda. The clinic, Faith Mulira Health Care Center, opened January 10, 2011. They were inspired by bible studies at their home church in Simsbury.

A presentation about the Silver Lake Conference Center was made by Rev. Jocelyn Gardner Spencer and Rev. Jeff Lukens.

Dr. Mary Luti summed up our activities thus far with her thoughts on interdependence. She believes the source and goal of Christian life is the sacrament of baptism, the promises made together. Interdependence means community, the whole church, including the children in worship; including the forebears who have passed before us, honoring their wisdom and achievements.

The Connecticut Conference Choir sang "Siyahamb' ekukhanyen' kwenkhos" as the gathering song for afternoon worship. Scripture was read and sung to music which we learned Friday evening.

Rev. Stephen Camp of Faith Congregational Church in Hartford gave a message of "a better way forward," reminding us that with Jesus, his burden is light and his yoke is easy; come to him and he will give you rest. Rev. Camp reminded us we are each part of the whole. Our service and work of God is easier and amazing when we do it together. He urged us to unpack our bags, open up our hearts, and use our gifts to build up the body of Christ. Love is the fuel to get us there, to a better place. Look out. Look up. Watch what will happen in our conference, our church, and in our lives.

The Connecticut Conference Choir sang "Amazing Grace" under the direction of guest conductor and pastor of St. James Baptist Church in Norwalk, Dr. Kenneth DuBose,.

In closing, while the choir sang "United We Stand, Together We Can," all were invited to come forward and take a small stone from the bowl of water, renewing baptismal vows and covenants with God, going out with renewed energy and vitality in finding ways of doing God's work together.

Video clips of the speakers and a seven-minute highlight video are available at www.ctucc.org, Annual Meeting, Cheshire, Oct. 17-18; scroll down to Annual Meeting News.

Lisa and Jackie

SYNOD DELEGATE

Bob Inderbitzen has been selected to serve as a delegate for our Hartford Association of churches at General Synod, June 26-30, 2015 in Cleveland, Ohio—the birthplace of the United Church of Christ.

Every two years, General Synod brings together thousands of faithful members of the United Church of Christ for formal church witness, inspirational worship, and fellowship with friends (new and old). For more information about Synod, visit www.ucc.org/synod.

Happy
December Birthday



1 John Hoffman
2 Anita Watson
Joe Kunzelman
3 Jennifer Courtemanche
4 John Hummel
6 Marty Rowe
7 Robert Mullins
9 Kendres Lally
13 Thelma Somes

14 Dave Hall
15 Linda Grillo
17 Jacob Engel
19 Midge Sword
20 Nicholas Jokl
21 Holly Peterson
24 Nancy Edwards
26 Janet Kunzelman
30 Krista Pender
Karen Meszaros



Rudy and Barbara Burgess
were married on
December 29, 1956

WORSHIP RECORDINGS AVAILABLE.

Audio recordings, written sermons and bulletins for many of our Sunday worship services are available on the church website, rhccucc.org (see WORSHIP: BULLETINS), or you may contact the office to request an audio CD or printed sermon.

*Remember to Honor your Loved Ones
With Christmas Poinsettias*



They will adorn the sanctuary for worship on
Sunday, December 21st

The cost is \$12.50 per plant.

Ordering deadline is Monday, December 15th

Please fill out the information below and mail to Kim Burghoff (*see address below*)

Given by: _____

Daytime Telephone number: _____

Dedication ("in loving memory of..." or "in honor of..." etc.):

1. _____

2. _____

Please select:

I will pick-up my plant after worship on Sunday, December 21st.

Use my plant to decorate the church through Christmas.

The Deacons may give my plant to a shut-in or homebound member.

Make your checks payable to:

Rocky Hill Congregational Church with "Poinsettia" in memo line and mail to:

Kim Burghoff

204 Gray Fox Lane, Rocky Hill CT 06067.

You may call Kim with questions at 860 563-3287.

ROCKY HILL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
805 Old Main Street, Rocky Hill CT 06067
Telephone # 860 529-4167

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Hartford, CT 06101

Permit #7

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED
TIME VALUE MAIL

Mailed November 18, 2014



Jesus didn't turn people away. Neither do we.
The United Church of Christ:
No matter who you are,
Or where you are on life's journey...
You're welcome here.



ADVENT GATHERING

Sunday, November 30, 5 PM - 7 PM

Join us for a pot-luck dinner, crafts, and worship as we prepare for this season of Advent to wait in anticipation for the birth of Jesus Christ.

*This is an intergenerational event
for the entire church family and friends.*

Please sign-up in Chapin Hall or email Meghan@rhccucc.org
to let us know you are coming.

