



The Church Mouse

The Reverend Craig L. Cowing, Pastor
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Georgette L. Huie, Minister for Children and Youth
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Mary DeLibero, Minister of Music
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860-529-4167 Church

March 2017 Newsletter

RHCC e-mail address – office@rhccucc.org

Website: www.rhccucc.org

Office Hours – 9:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. Monday-Thursday

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Friday

Sunday Worship Services – 10:00 a.m.

Childcare Available/Handicap Accessible

Hofstra Chamber Choir Concert Saturday, March 25 at 4 p.m.

You won't want to miss this memorable concert! The Hofstra University Chamber a cappella Choir visited several times when our own Melody Hall was at Hofstra. They will be back with us again for a late afternoon concert on March 25. We hope to see you there. We will also be looking for host families for their one night stay. Many of you have hosted students in the past and found it a delightful experience. Please contact Lynne Lataille at Lynnelataille@sbcglobal.com if you can host.





PASTOR'S LETTER - MARCH

Just as Anita and I moved from New Hampshire to Rocky Hill I bought myself a housewarming present—or rather, perhaps, a study-warming present. It is a full-size facsimile of Codex Sinaiticus, the oldest complete Bible in the world (ca. 350 AD). The history of this Bible is long and complicated, but briefly, it was discovered in the 1800's by a German scholar at the Monastery of St. Catherine at Mount Sinai in Egypt. He borrowed it to make a facsimile and never returned it. Parts of it are now in England, Russia, Germany, and at the monastery. This manuscript is written in Greek. Since I learned to read Greek in college, I can open this Bible and read the text, often with difficulty since my Greek is not nearly as good as it once was. I marvel at how a text from nearly two thousand years ago is still accessible. In fact, it is not only accessible, it is the foundation of the text of the New Testament as we have it today.

My ability to read such a text is not a marvel, and it isn't a statement about my own erudition. It is a testament to the continual relevance of a text written so many years ago, a text that continues to shape us as disciples as we hear again and again the teachings of the prophets and Jesus about what it is to be the people of God.

In the Christian faith we constantly move from the past to the present. The past, of course, is the time of Jesus and the history of the church between him and us. Then, there is our own past, a tiny part of the whole of the past. We find inspiration in this text from the past, and hope that it will guide us into the future.

It is easy to get stuck in the past in a way that isn't helpful. As we find inspiration in the Scriptures we also live in our own time, with all its problems and its wonders. It's important to remember that people in the past of the church were doing the same thing we're doing now—trying to figure out how to live their lives in light of their calling to be disciples of Christ, and in light of the Scriptures that give substance to that calling. I doubt very much that people in any given time in the church's past thought that the way they lived out their lives of discipleship should be a rule for people in the future.



We have the opportunity this year to start something new, in response to the changing world. Our proposed governance plan is a chance to reinvent the church for a new age. The Christian church is in the middle of a sea change. It isn't over yet. Churches that once thrived now struggle to maintain large buildings that they inherited from the past. Churches that were once influential institutions in their communities now find themselves becoming increasingly irrelevant.

This fate is not inevitable, but it is more likely if a congregation does not engage with the community and world around it and meet people where they are. We're on our way to doing that. Let's see what the future has to hold as we live out our lives in discipleship!

In Christ,

Pastor Craig

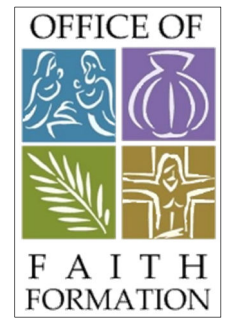


THE WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2017



The service for 2017 will be held at our church on
FRIDAY MARCH 3RD AT 7:00 P.M.

The service, entitled "*Am I Being Unfair to You?*" is written by the Christian Women of the Philippines. These women share their stories of intergenerational wisdom, traditions and experiences of God's profound love and acceptance. WPD's motto is: "*Informed prayer leads to prayerful action.*" For more information about this inspirational service please contact Marge Murk or the church office.



On January 29, the topic for the Middle School Youth Group meeting was “Racial Justice.” This topic was requested by two moms, for as they put it, they had done a good job raising their children not to be biased, but as a result, their children didn’t quite understand that other people could be racist. Other parents must have felt the same about their children, for a total of eleven youth came that night.

We started by introducing ourselves and our ethnic heritages. Turns out I was the only one who could claim to be 100% of something – in my case, Chinese (but I’ll let you know for sure when my “23 and Me” results come in!). Most of the kids weren’t real sure of their backgrounds, and as they expressed, it just doesn’t matter to their generation if someone has Italian, or Polish, or German roots. We then watched a video of a project Diane Sawyer did in 1991, when she followed two men, one black and one white, as they separately visited the same stores, talked to the same people, and tried to rent an apartment from the same manager. The different ways they were treated were undeniably evident. For the first time, our youth were seeing the subtle but strong ways racial injustice is played out in our society. Even though the video was made 25 years ago, the same differing treatments still exist today. Our very intelligent youth could see that even though civil rights laws are in effect, racial injustice can and does happen when no one is looking.

The adults then shared from their own experiences. Steph Heneghan talked about being in Kentucky for school and seeing first-hand the enforced segregation of races. I talked about the time my father applied to be a mechanic for the city busses, and was given a test asking American history questions (like, who was the second President of the United States?), for which of course, he was not prepared. I’ll never forget how sad he was that day.

We can be proud of our middle schoolers, who didn’t once pull out their phones during our hour-long discussion, and who responded with indignation and caring, and who now want to see the movie *Hidden Figures*. We can be proud of their parents, who recognized a need and cleared the family calendars so their children could attend this important discussion, and who continue to teach their children. We can be proud of RHCC, for committing to be open and affirming to all.

If you are interested in seeing the video, go to YouTube and search “Diane Sawyer” and “True Colors.”

S.P.I.R.I.T. Church School News

Here is our upcoming schedule:

March 5-12:

Pre-K to 5th graders will continue studying “Bible Teachings,” and on March 19 to April 2:

they will study “Mary of Bethany Anoints Jesus.” They will have an opportunity to

- hear the story of Mary of Bethany anointing Jesus to show her love for him;
- identify Mary as the sister of Martha and Lazarus;
- compare the different anointing stories
- learn about the practices of foot washing, anointing, and burial preparation among the Jewish people in Jesus’ day;
- explore ways of offering worship to God;
- consider ways we can care for others.

Grades 6-8 will study the following:

- March 5 – “Praising Jesus”
- March 12 – “The Power of Faith and Prayer”
- March 19 – “Sharing Communion”
- March 26 – “Prayer”

If you are able and willing to teach Grades 6-8, let Georgette or Kathy Morgan know.

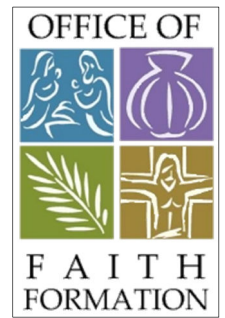
High School Youth Group

On January 29, we attended the Interfaith Youth Hangout at First Church, Middletown. On February 5, we made sub sandwiches to raise money for our upcoming Mission Trip to Louisiana. Thanks to all who supported us: we made around \$400 from the subs, and \$365 from the Super Bowl Party Basket raffle!

In March, we will do activities that were originally scheduled in February: the Key Quest challenge (March 5), and the Gobi Mongolian Grill restaurant (March 19).

Middle School Youth Group

We were snowed out on February 12, so we will try to see *Hidden Figures* on February 26. On March 12, we will have an arts & crafts night.





LENTEN PROGRAMS AT RHCC UCC
SECOND HOUR PROGRAMS
SPECIAL WORSHIP SERVICES

For Lent we will have several opportunities to learn about our faith. 2017 is the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Protestant Reformation. Pastor Craig will do a series of second hour presentations on different aspects of the Reformation. These programs will be held after worship, beginning at 11:15 a.m, and will take place in Chapin Hall or the Parlor.

On Sunday, March 19 we will look at the Medieval background to the Reformation and what led up to it, and on Sunday, April 2 we will look at the Lutheran and Anabaptist Reformations. Later programs in the Fall will be on the Anglican Reformation and the Roman Catholic Church's response, and the Reformed movement and Puritanism.

On Wednesday March 15 and 29 at 7 PM we will have a communion worship service based upon the second century (100's AD) as reconstructed from surviving writings. Both services will be held in the Weil Chapel.

We hope that you will find these activities interesting and enlightening!

Walking the Labyrinth - On Ash Wednesday March 1st, the Chapel will be open from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 a.m for walking the labyrinth. There will be a basket of stones at the entry. You'll be invited to take a stone, carry it with you through the labyrinth, and leave it at the center. Labyrinths have been used for centuries, in many cultures, to facilitate prayer, meditation, and spiritual transformation. When we walk the labyrinth, we begin a pilgrimage. Where will yours take you?



The Icon of the Month for March will be on display in the Weil Chapel.
Visit anytime for prayer and contemplation in the Weil Chapel.



Christian Activities Council –Report

March 2017



Faith Based Organizing:

This is very exciting, to have a large number of clergy meeting within a group and individually. Eventually, a faith-based power organization will be formed. A very important function of this organization, will be, to form teams in each church, to empower the people in the region to justice related issues. I'm glad to report that Pastor Craig is part of this group.

Adventures in the City:

Fundraising efforts and the hiring of personnel for City Freedom School, has begun. Approximately, 80 students will be attending this fabulous educational program. I would like to thank the Board of Missions, and our congregation, for the funding of this important program, to ensure every child has an opportunity, to receive a great education.

Strategic Planning:

In January, the Board of Directors adopted our three-year strategic plan. It is a very detailed plan. I was a member of this committee, along with Cory Mackey, Mark Deters, Ann Colloton, Tyron Walker, AJ Johnson, and consultant Diane Gordon. While it was intensive work, it will help us tremendously to move forward in our mission to help the poor and needy.

Communication Position:

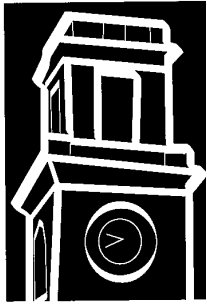
After a thorough search, in partnership with Immanuel Congregational Church in Hartford, we have hired Isaac Lawson, to fill that position. I met Isaac at a meet and greet event at Immanuel Church. He is very warm and compassionate. He also is well educated and has an excellent background. He will be part-time at the Christian Activities Council. Some of our Board members were part of the search committee.

Peace,

Rich Pawlich-Pagliccio

CAC Strategic Planning & Program Committee





SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
		<i>Shrove Tuesday</i> <i>Pancake Supper and</i> <i>Worship</i> <i>Feb 28</i> <i>5pm</i>	1 ASH WEDNESDAY Labyrinth meditation 7:00am LSP Registration 6:00pm Pilates 7:30pm Choir
5 Communion Sunday 10:00am Worship Childcare and Church School High School Youth Group 4pm Tamil school	6 7:00pm Women's AA 7:30pm Bell Choir	7 7:00pm Boards and Committees 7:00pm Hearing Voices	8 9:00am Breakfast Club at Bob's Coffee Shop 6:00pm Pilates 7:30pm Choir
12 Daylight Savings Time begins 10:00am Worship Childcare and Church School Middle School Youth Group Confirmation Mtg 4pm Tamil school	13 7:00pm Women's AA 7:30pm Bell Choir	14 7:00pm Council 7:00pm Hearing Voices	15 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE <i>Lenten Communion Worship</i> <i>7pm Chapel</i> 6:00pm Pilates 7:30pm Choir
19 10:00am Worship Childcare and Church School 2nd Hour: Medieval Reformation 4pm Tamil school	20 7:00pm Bonsai Group 7:00pm Women's AA 7:30pm Bell Choir	21 7:00pm LSP Board 7:00pm Hearing Voices	22 6:00pm Pilates 7:30pm Choir
26 ONE GREAT HOUR OFFERING 10:00am Worship Childcare and Church School Budget & Elections Meeting Confirmation Mtg 4:00pm Tamil school	27 Newsletter Mailing 7:00pm Women's AA 7:30pm Bell Choir	28 6:00pm Cedar Hollow 7:00pm Hearing Voices	29 <i>Lenten Communion Worship</i> <i>7pm Chapel</i> 6:00pm Pilates 7:30pm Choir



Lenten Programs at Rocky Hill Congregational Church

March 19th 11am: Second Hour program by Rev. Craig Cowing on the Medieval Reformation.

March 15th and 29th 7pm: Communion Worship Service held in the Weil Chapel.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday Morning Worship

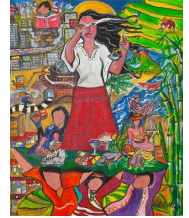
Communion 1st Sunday

10:00 a.m. with childcare



2017

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
2 9:30am Music Together 7:30pm Men's AA	3 World Day of Prayer Worship Service, 7pm	4
9 9:30am Music Together 7:30pm Men's AA	10	11 8:30am Men's Bible Study Holy Land Presentation & Potluck Dinner 5-7pm Chapin Hall
16 7:30pm Men's AA	17 Happy St Patrick's Day  <i>St. Patrick's Day</i> Tibetan bowls 7pm	18 UCC Super Saturday <i>God is still speaking,</i> UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST 
23 7:30pm Men's AA	24	25 8:30am Men's Bible Study Hoffstra Chamber Choir Concert 4pm
30 9:30am Music together 7:30pm Men's AA	31	



World Day of Prayer
Worship Service
Friday, March 3rd at
7pm
Held at RHCC



UCC Super Saturday is a full-day of skill building; offering numerous workshops, worship, a marketplace of vendors, and an opportunity for everyone to network with one another.

Saturday, March 18, 2017 at 8:00 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.

Minnechaug Regional High School

621 Main Street, Wilbraham, MA 01095



One Great Hour of Sharing is a special Missions offering of the United Church of Christ. It will be collected on March 26, 2017. It is involved with disaster relief with response and recovery, refugee/immigration and development ministries throughout the world; including healthcare, agriculture and food sustainability.

FROM THE TRUSTEES - Narthex Bathroom Remodel



We are starting a project to remodel the Narthex bathroom. The project will include new fixtures, a baby changing table, and hot water connected to the sink. Our goal is to complete the project by Easter. Most of the work will be done by volunteers. Once construction starts the bathroom will not be available to use for two to three weeks. If you have any questions, contact Steve Smith, Steve Ware or Dave Sageman.



The RHCC men's Christian fellowship (bible) study group meets the second and fourth Saturdays each month at 8:30-9:30am in the Fiorilli room. Our first meeting will be on February 25th. If you enjoy fellowship and want to learn more about scripture and other faith topics, please join us.

If you would like further information, please see Jim Stevens at church or call 860-632-5810. Thanks be to God.

New Directories available now

New Church Directories will be available in Chapin Hall after worship or in the office during weekday office hours. Contact the office if you would like one mailed to you, and specify whether you want large print or legal size.

SCRIP-SURE

Looking back, Looking ahead



For the first nine months of the current fiscal year (i.e., since last May 1), we've earned about \$13,200 from the scrip program. That's down about 14% from the record-setting pace of the prior year, but up slightly over the corresponding results from two years ago. Scrip-Sure continues to provide a vital source of revenue to "fund our faith."

We started this program in late-2009. As some of you will recall, we celebrated \$1 million in total scrip sales (face amount) in December of 2014. We're now over \$1.5 million cumulatively, and on a pace to reach the second million by the end of 2018. More importantly, we've already earned more than \$105,000 to support the work of RHCC. And through the scrip program, you've also donated thousands to the Rocky Hill Food Pantry and many other mission projects.

While we attempt to keep most of the cards that are actively sold from week-to-week in stock, we do take orders monthly for those gift cards that are not routinely stocked. That order is typically placed immediately after the last Sunday of the month. But there will be some shifts in that schedule this spring, due to vacation schedules and travel plans.

Here are the tentative deadlines and delivery dates for the next several orders:

Order by	For delivery on
Sunday, Feb. 26	Sunday, March 5
Sunday, March 26	Sunday, April 2
Sunday, May 7 (one week later than usual)	Sunday, May 14
Sunday, June 11 (two weeks later than usual)	Sunday, June 18

In the event that any of these dates change, this will be announced in the weekly bulletin.

Thanks to all who continue to actively support this program.

Dave Hall, Treasurer

MISSIONS



Our major spring activity, The Foodshare Walk Against Hunger is fast approaching. Historically, the walk takes place the 1st Sunday in May which is **May 7th** this year. The walk helps to raise awareness and money for the over 137,000 people in Greater Hartford who struggle to get food. The church will once again will be walking under the leadership of our Team Captain, Thomas Kainamura. It is never to early to start soliciting donations from friends and families. Please save the date and plan on walking. Information on t-shirts coming soon.

The Board for Missions has also voted to sponsor an elder at the Tibetan Refugee Self-Help Centre in Dharmasala, India. We are excited to learn more information about the person we are sponsoring and share information with the congregation.

Your Board for Missions is: Kari McCaw, chair; Wendy Ware, secretary, Anita Hawkins, Bob Inderbitzen and Marge Murk

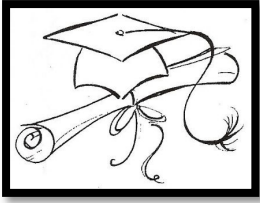


Church Historian:

In 1839, a group of enslaved Africans broke free while being transported around the island of Cuba aboard the coasting schooner Amistad. They attempted to sail the small vessel back to Africa, but were captured by the US Revenue Brig Washington off the coast of Long Island, charged with mutiny, and threatened with return to slavery. Connecticut Congregationalists formed the Amistad Committee, which organized a legal defense, eased the captives confinement during the lengthy court case, and eventually funded their return to Africa after winning a favorable decision from the US Supreme Court. The UCC commemorates the 1839 struggle for freedom, the Amistad Committee, and the American Missionary Association's heritage on Amistad Sunday, typically held the second Sunday in March.

Kari McCaw

Rocky Hill Congregational Church Scholarship Information for the 2017-2018 Academic Year



Each year, our church awards college scholarships which are funded by investment returns from the Scholarship Endowment Funds. Applicants should be members of Rocky Hill Congregational Church, active members of one of its youth organizations, or active participants in the life of the church. Awards are based upon church and community involvement, demonstrated scholastic achievement, financial need, and the completion and submission of a scholarship application form.

Scholarships may be awarded for up to four years of undergraduate studies. Recommendations on scholarship recipients are made by the Scholarship Committee, whose members are appointed by the Board of Trustees. This recommendation is then subject to the final approval of the Trustees.

Graduating high school seniors and returning college undergraduates who are seeking a church scholarship for the 2017-18 academic year are invited to complete and **return an application prior to April 15, 2017**. Scholarship awards will be announced in June. Scholarships to graduating seniors will be presented in the applicant's school awards assembly program. Otherwise, recipients will be notified by letter. Scholarship checks will be paid to the awardee and notification of change of plans or non-attendance should be made to the committee prior to issuance of checks in mid-July and mid-December.

Application forms are available in the office, or send an email to: scholarships@rhccucc.org for the link to the pdf. or refer to members of the Scholarship Committee: Hilaire Leavitt or Randy Pulling.

Applications are DUE prior to April 15th, 2017.

RHCC IS GOING TO SUPER SATURDAY!

Super Saturday is a full-day of skill building; offering numerous workshops, worship, a marketplace of vendors, and an opportunity for everyone to network with one another. This year's Super Saturday is co-hosted by the Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island Conferences of the UCC, and will feature keynote speaker Brian McLaren, author, activist, and public theologian.



Saturday, March 18, 8am-4pm, at Minnechaug Regional High School, 621 Main Street, Wilbraham, MA 01095

If you would like to attend, contact the church office at: office@rhccucc.org or 860-529-4167 and we will be registering for you. RHCC will cover the registration cost, and there is a group discount. (Please do not register yourself.) For more information, see Craig, Georgette or Deb Copes. Brochures are available in Chapin Hall. To view the workshops, pick up a brochure or visit: www.ctucc.org and enter "Super Saturday 2017" in the upper right search box.

March Birthdays

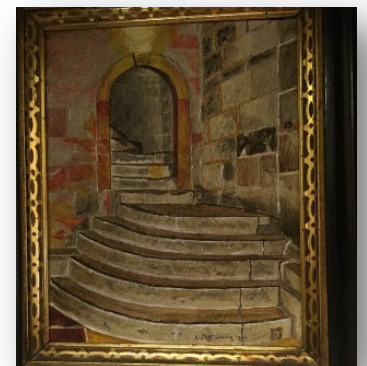
1	Bill Hoffman	14	David Bell
1	Todd McGowan	15	Alexander Ware
2	Rebecca Milles	17	Kathryn Morgan
2	Pat Gordon	18	Gabriella Salazar
2	Grace Donahue	20	Susan VanNess
4	John Van Doran	20	Elaine Somes
6	Joseph Wilson	20	Charlotte Reed-Swale
6	Timothy Bishop	21	Ryan Bengston
6	Bay Tran	22	Gladys Carpenter
8	Kevin Sudell	23	Marilyn Van Doran
9	Colleen Schultz	24	Bea Donahue
11	Jason Hall	24	Sarah Mosure
11	Jennifer Knight	26	Todd Pender
11	Sharon Calvo	27	Richard Sweezy, Jr
11	Cheryl Robbins	28	Gail Fu
11	Ryan Tuohey	28	Nicole Graham
12	Tim Dostie	29	Kim Burghoff
12	Todd Doten	30	Jayson Veley
12	Suzanne Speers	31	Mark Walworth
12	Isabella St. Pierre	31	Pat Hughes-Walworth
13	Dick Somes		
13	Jackie Little		



Holy Land Potluck Dinner and Presentation Saturday, March 11 in Chapin Hall

Potluck ~5:00 p.m., Presentation over dessert ~6:00 p.m.

Bring your favorite dish to share, or try something new from the rich and ancient cuisines of the Holy Land! Cookbooks and recipe links are available from Anita at coffee hours after church. Join us for a fun evening presentation of Craig's trip to the Holy Land. He'll share his collection of photos and artifacts from his trip to the Holy Land in 2011. It includes a few paintings he did of various scenes, an icon and a creche from Bethlehem, plus other items. Come and enjoy!





REMEMBER OR HONOR LOVED ONES WITH EASTER FLOWERS



The flowers will adorn the sanctuary for worship on
Easter Sunday, April 16

The three choices this year will be:

Easter Lily in 6 1/2 inch pots with 6+ buds (\$11.00)

Hyacinth 6 inch with 3 bulbs (\$8.50)

Tulip 6 inch full pots with limited color options (\$8.50)

The Deadline for orders is Palm Sunday, April 9

Please fill out the information below

Given by: _____

Daytime Telephone Number: _____

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

	<u>Number ordered</u>		<u>Dollar Amount</u>
Lily @ \$11.00 each	_____	x\$11.00 =	_____
Hyacinth @ \$8.50 each	_____	x \$8.50 =	_____
Tulip @ \$8.50 each	_____	x \$8.50 =	_____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$_____

Please select:

☐ I will pick up my plant after worship on Easter Sunday, April 16.

☐ The flowers may remain in church to decorate the sanctuary

Make your checks payable to:

Rocky Hill Congregational Church with "Easter flowers" 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

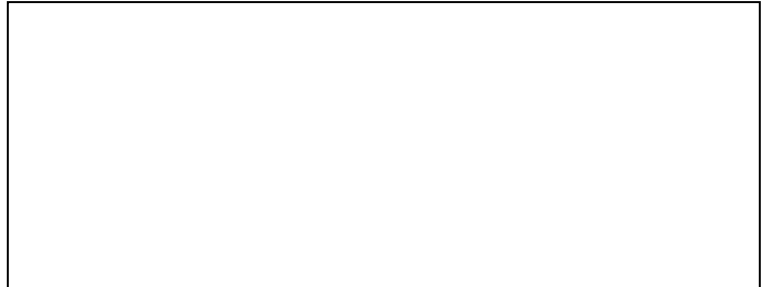
Permit #7

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED
TIME VALUE MAIL

Mailed February 27, 2017



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.



CALL TO THE ANNUAL BUDGET AND ELECTIONS MEETING

Sunday, March 26, 2017

The annual Budget and Elections Meeting of the Rocky Hill Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, is called for Sunday, March 26, 2017 immediately following worship in the sanctuary for the transaction of the following items of business:

1. To vote on the proposed budget for the 2017-2018 fiscal year;
2. To approve the special offerings for Missions and Diaconate.
3. To vote on the distribution of any undesignated bequests for the 2017-2018 fiscal year.
4. To elect church officers and board and committee members for terms beginning May 1, 2017.
5. To hear the report of Governance sub-committee for overview of current status.
6. To approve recommendation of the Special Events Committee for the expenditure from 2016 events.

Linda Tokarski, Church Clerk