

faith matters

The Roxbury Congregational Church
A Congregation of the United Church of Christ



Vol. 278, Issue 11, December 2020

Church Office, 24 Church Street
Roxbury, Connecticut 06783-1703
Church Office: 860-355-1978
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December at Roxbury Church



- A Country Church Christmas Fair – With A Twist!
 - Online Store - Nov 20 - Dec 1st
 - Online Auction - Nov 27 - Dec 4th
 - In-Person (Outdoor) Fair - Saturday, December 5th
10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.

The Fair will have 3 Parts to it:

1. An Online Store (<https://roxburychurch.square.site>)

where folks can purchase at a set price - home-style soup and chili with corn bread, Peanut Brittle, Pecan and Chocolate Pecan pies (whole pies only), Framed Original Artwork.
PICK UP will be at the Parking Lot Building Entrance at the Tent on Dec 5th 11-1.

2. An Online Auction (<https://www.32auctions.com/RoxburyChurch>)

with Gift Cards, Certificates for Donated Goods, and Services, Themed Gift baskets, High-Quality Artwork. There will be a limited number of Silent Auction items as well.
PICK UP will be at the Parking Lot Building Entrance at the Tent – Dec 5, 11-1

3. An in-Person, Socially-distanced Outdoor Fair Saturday, December 5, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
under the tents on the Church front lawn.

Here you can purchase hand-decorated wreaths, baked goods, SERRV Shop, Goat-Boy Soap, Mike's Bees Honey, Olive Oil Factory items, and well as some gift baskets and prepared and wrapped food items. Face Mask required and foot traffic will be one way thru the tent with 6' social distancing..



December 24th

7 p.m.

Outside on the Church Lawn

Brief, socially-distanced

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Beginning Sunday, November 22, 2020 Roxbury Church has suspended in-person worship as COVID-19 numbers have risen. Please worship with us online on Zoom or Facebook Live at our regular 10:30 a.m. worship time.

Pastoral Reflections

The Reverend David F. Peters, Minister



Go back with me...way back... to 4 B.C.E. (Before the Common Era or B.C.) The world was in turmoil area was governed by King Herod the Great, whom Rome had appointed as the ruler of all Jewish people. He ruled by terror and widespread surveillance of the populace. One could easily imagine that the people that lived in that time probably had a high mistrust of everyone and their lives were less than tranquil. They desired a better path forward, a leader that they could believe in to bring them hope, bring them peace, bring them love, bring them joy.

It is in this scene that the prophets of the Hebrew scriptures (Old Testament) said that a new kind of leader would emerge and lead those who believed into that hope, peace, love and joy. It would be indeed Good News!

But the people had to wait, wait patiently with nothing more than the hope of the prophet's prediction of a new day, that would someday, dawn. The people had to be watchful for this new leader. To be sure, there were others who would claim to be that leader. But they would be just another of the same kind of leader with the same heavy-handed tactics.

But God had different plans. Jesus was predictably born in such a way to be the obvious Messiah to those who had be looking for him. It was the others that had not had that mindset of watching and waiting that had a slower time of coming to see Jesus as the one sent from God to be the incarnate presence here on earth among humanity. Emmanuel – God with us.

We are given this opportunity anew this year, this crazy year 2020. With so many conflicting issues coming at us as well as the physical distance that is in place, we too are looking for the Hope, Peace, Love and Joy. We need a Messiah for our current situation.

We have to have that mindset of patient waiting. And then as we come to Christmas, to rejoice in the reality that God is indeed with us.

Then comes the hardest part. With that knowledge, to bring it into our hearts and to let that shine outwards to those who feel they have no hope, no love, no peace, no joy.

I invite you to join me as we journey into this season of Advent and bask in the joy of Christmas!

Susan joins me in wishing you the Christmas Spirit. And may there be in your life: Hope, Peace, Love and Joy!
Merry Christmas! *David*



thank you

To everyone for pulling together since March during this time of challenge to keep our church vital and safe. For your patience and perseverance and willingness to try new things. We go into the New Year even stronger and more connected.

We heard at the Semi-Annual Meeting on October 11 that

-Our finances are in good order. No money has been taken from the Investment Fund. We received a Payroll Protection Endowment (PPE) of \$25,700 for which forgiveness was approved.

-The back deck has been repaired thanks to ...and the ceiling fans in the sanctuary, thanks to Chris Steers. The rug in the Parish House was deep cleaned by Bruce Rossiter.

-Our Sunday services on Zoom and Facebook Live have reached a larger number of people than in-person services alone. We have missed our choir's participation with their music ministry but have appreciated the continued support of Music Director Sandy Kleisner and those who've offered their voices as "cantors."

-We look forward to ordering new pew cushions for the entire sanctuary thanks to an anonymous (and extremely generous donor).

-We look forward to our first mostly online Christmas Fair thanks to all those who've are stepping up to make it happen!



From the Church Staff
David, Sandy, Nancy, & Bruce

Congratulations

To Des Desmond celebrating the 64th anniversary of his ordination, held at the South Main Street Congregational Church in Manchester, New Hampshire on November 26, 1956. He'd love to have you celebrate with him, preferably by phone. Please keep Des and his wife, Nancy, in your prayers.

Steeple Lighting

The steeple can be lit in loving memory of someone or in celebration for a month. We ask for a \$50 donation to the Memorial Fund. Contact Rev. Peters for arrangements.

Stewardship Campaign Underway

Our Stewardship Campaign for 2021 Financial Pledges is underway. If you have not already submitted your pledge, please do so TODAY! You can mail in the pledge form mailed to you last week, phone any one of the Stewardship Committee members (Colby Kalisher, Mike Wilcox or Steve Ross) with your pledge, or email them at stewardshp@roxburychurch.org/give. A copy of the pledge form can be found on the church's website, roxburychurch.org/give



Santa Fund 2020

For this year's Santa Fund, we are collecting unwrapped new gloves, mittens, hats and socks. There is a basket in the Meetinghouse entry foyer to place them. We are also collecting financial gifts for Christmas meals. Checks can be made out to Roxbury Congregational Church with Santa Fund in the memo. They can be mailed or dropped off at the Church Office. Thanks to Diana de Vries and Heidi Neff for their leadership.

Luminaries for Christmas Eve

We are looking for someone to place the Luminaries in front of the property for Christmas Eve. The candles, bags and sand are provided. If you (and family/friends) can help, please speak to Rev. David Peters, or call the Church Office, 860-354-1978.



Blue Christmas Service. Sunday, December 20, 7 p.m.

You are invited to join us on Zoom as we recognize that for some this is not “the most wonderful time of the year.” Some have had losses and disappointments, and this has not been the normal kind of a year with the pandemic with routines disrupted and traditions stretched; and we will acknowledge those to God and pray for peace in our lives and hearts. This service, as all services, is open to the community.

Help Share Christmas Joy With video

You and your household can send a short video wishing everyone in our church family a “Merry Christmas and Happy, Healthy New Year.” You can record it on your smartphone or tablet and email it to david@roxburychurch.org. David will put the videos together and add in some of our choir members singing carols. Please send them by December 1st. Help share the Christmas joy this year!

Meditation Group

Mindfulness Meditation continues to meet on Saturday mornings at 10:30 a.m. on Zoom. Please contact Charlie Stauffacher at 860-354-1274 for more information. Check out the church's Mindful Meditation page for meeting links and further information.



Ideas for Christmas Giving

As you think about your Christmas gift-giving, we suggest you consider gifts with power! Gifts that not only convey your love but also pass some love on to others:

SERRV Handicraft Items

Many handmade crafts from third world and developing countries are available for sale. We have a SERRV Shop here at the Church, open on Sundays after worship. The price marked includes a higher percentage to the artisan than normally given... and they are lovely and in all price ranges. A great place for children to shop for adults! Questions: **Susan Zappulla-Peters**.



Retail Gift Cards For the Holidays!

Cash cards make great gifts for the holidays! All you have to do is pick out which cards you'd like and **Heidi Neff** will order them for you.

A list is available of local retailers to choose from. Some offer as much as 16 percent back for our church! Talk to Heidi after worship or call her at 860-354-3177 to get your cards.

It is simply easy, and it only costs you the time it takes to see Heidi Neff and purchase a cash card. No EXTRA money!!

Example Your \$100 gets you a full-value \$100 card - (church gets a %)

We have cards available most Sundays or in a few days for: Stop and Shop-6%, Big Y-6%, ShopRite-6%

Major Retailers including: LL Bean-16%, TJ Maxx & HomeGoods-7%, Home Depot-4%, Cabellas-11% Gap / Old Navy-14% and Restaurants, grocery stores across the country...and many more.

See the Kiosk in Fellowship Hall for a complete listing and contact Heidi Neff 860-354-3177 to purchase your card. There is also an online way to purchase and make repeated purchases easy.

Also **Stew Leonard's** Cash Cards are available from Ray Fitch only.

AmazonSmile

Do you shop on Amazon.com? If so, eligible purchases can generate 0.5% back to our church. Go to smile.amazon.com to find out more! There is also a link on the eFaith Matters emails and the church's website: roxburychurch.org



Food Pantry Donations Needed

Food Pantry donations continue to be needed as we head into the colder seasons. You are encouraged as you do your shopping to fill an extra bag with nonperishable food items for Daily Bread. This Danbury pantry serves many working-poor and the homeless. Your donations can be placed in the basket in Fellowship Hall under the Opportunity Table and are one way to share God's love with the world. There is a list of needed items on the table.

There is a group who work at the food pantry monthly. When someone cannot make it, there are very few backup folks. Please consider volunteering to be a backup person when needed. It is only about three hours per month on the second Monday. Can you spare that? Thank you. Please call **Sue Stauffacher** at 860-354-1274

Word & Sacrament for December 2020



Deacon of the Month: **Colby Kalisher**

First Sunday: Communion – Food Offering
Second Sunday – Children’s Sermon
Third Sunday – Faith Story
Fourth Sunday – Mission Highlight

Underlined scriptures are for Lay Readers

Sunday, December 6
Second Sunday of Advent

Psalm 85: 1-2, 8-13
Mark 1: 1-8
Reader:
Advent Candle Lighting: (remotely)

Sunday, December 13
Third Sunday of Advent

Psalm 126
John 1: 6-8, 19-28
Reader:
Advent Candle Lighting: (remotely)

Sunday, December 20
Fourth Sunday of Advent

Psalm 89: 1-4, 19-26
Luke 1:26-38
Reader:
Advent Candle Lighting:(remotely)

Sunday, December 27
First Sunday after Christmas
Christmas Fund Offering

Psalm 148
Luke 2: 22-40
Reader:

Thursday, December 24
Christmas Eve, 7 p.m. Front Lawn

Psalm 96
Luke 2: 1-14, (15-20)
Advent Candle Lighting:

So Your Minister Can Help / Support

If you are hospitalized and desire pastoral support, you or your family should notify our minister of the hospitalization as soon as possible, by calling 860-355-1978. With the new federal regulations, he is not able to find this information from the hospital.

stewardship matters

IRA Charitable Rollovers

In December 2015, Congress enacted a permanent extension of the IRA Charitable Rollover. Under the new law, if you are 70 ½ or older and have an IRA, the IRA Charitable Rollover provides you with a unique opportunity to make charitable gifts to the charitable organization of your choice, with the advantage that you do not pay income tax on the gift amounts. If interested, you should speak with your plan administrator.

Contribution Opportunities

There are several ways to contribute financially to our church: the weekly collection plate, by using offering envelopes, by sending checks or by having your pledge automatically deducted from a bank account. If you have questions or would like to more information, please speak with one of the members of our Stewardship Committee: **Colby Kalisher Steve Ross, or Mike Wilcox**. Pledges enable our Trustees to set the budget for our next year. Every pledge is important, no matter the amount.

Pledge Statements

The Church Office recently sent out Pledge Statements for those who either pledged or gave to the church this year. Statements reflect funds received through November 30th. We ask you to please bring your pledge up to date *as we do have some year-end expenses to meet*. Thank you! You will receive a statement after Dec. 31 reflecting your financial gifts to the church for 2019 .
Questions: **Heidi Neff** (860-354-3177)

Parish Register

Weddings

November 2, 2020: Shelby L. Hardgrove and Ian G. Meadows were married by Rev. Peters in Chester, CT.

Funerals

November 9, 2020: Marvin E. Clark, Jr., 79, of Southbury, CT, died November 4, 2020 in Southbury. A funeral was held at Carpino Funeral Home and burial in Mountain Grove Cemetery in Easton with Rev. Peters officiating.

December Birthdays & Anniversaries

| | |
|----|---------------------------|
| 2 | Dick Callahan |
| 14 | Rebecca Racz |
| 16 | Dale Pinchbeck |
| 16 | Sterrett Kelsey |
| 19 | Kevin & Diana Dumas (A) |
| 22 | Bill Fredericks |
| 24 | Bill & Genie Jayne (A) |
| 27 | Phil & Diana de Vries (A) |
| 31 | Steve & Linda Ross (A) |

David's Mystery Church Tours

David's popular mystery church tour series continues! Most weeks, Rev. David record a video from a mystery location on the Church campus. The video appears on our Church's Youtube Channel, [Youtube.com/Roxbury church](https://www.youtube.com/Roxburychurch), usually on Thursday or Friday.



**From Our United
Church of Christ
Camp and Retreat
Center
in nearby Sharon, CT.**
www.silverlakeect.org

Christmas at the Lake

Saturday, December 5 &

Saturday, December 12

Cost: \$40/\$50 per person

Family Day at Silver Lake

Saturday, December 12

10 am - 4 pm

Cider & cocoa by the campfire, Christmas
crafts, Advent reflection, Adventure
Program, Lunch and snacks.

Tiered pricing.

Actual Cost: \$50 per person

Discounted Rate: \$40 per person

Masks and physical distancing required

Twelve Days of Christmas At Home

Did you know that Christmas is not just a
one-day celebration, but a holiday season
that lasts for twelve days?

The traditional Christmas season goes from
Christmas Day on Dec. 25 through
Epiphany on Jan. 6. This year, we are
celebrating the Twelve Days of Christmas
with you and your
family!

Silver Lake's Twelve
Days of Christmas At
Home Box will bring
you twelve days of
activities to enjoy with
your family between
Christmas Day and
Epiphany.

Read more about the boxes here (at our
website).

Purchase your boxes through the online
store today!

Order by December 11 to ensure delivery by
Christmas.



information matters



A few ways to be informed about the life of your church here in Roxbury:

Faith Matters

Our church newsletter is mailed monthly to those who subscribe. Or you can pick it up in the Narthex (entrance) or in Fellowship Hall. It is also available at the Roxbury Market.

eFaith Matters

We send out an email each Monday with the latest announcements, prayer requests and an inspirational piece and a Call to Worship on Fridays. Subscribe by sending an email to david@roxburychurch.org.

Church Website

The Church's website, roxburychurch.org, is chock-full of information and events. There are resources for the journey of life as well as pictures of our common life and links to related sites.

Facebook

Our church's presence in social media is on facebook.com/roxburychurch

Here you will find another source of information and news as well as shared topics of religious and spiritual interest.

Meeting Minutes & Reports Board

This special bulletin board is on the landing just outside the Office Library area. On it are posted the latest minutes and reports for all committees as well as financial reports.

Church Master Calendar

Because the church is busy, and use of the buildings by community groups has also increased dramatically, we have posted a master calendar of activities in the Church Library. Before you schedule a meeting or change a date, please check this calendar to be sure the space will not be occupied at the time.

And please write your meeting on the calendar, or remove it if your plans change.

LaBonne's Receipts

A continuing thank you to everyone who contributes LaBonne's receipts to the church. This has been an on-going source of revenue to add to our mission funds. Please save your receipts and place them in the wooden box on the table in Fellowship Hall. Questions to **Sue Stauffacher** at 860-354-1274.

Roxbury Congregational Church Relational Covenant:

Every one of us is an essential part of our church community.
We will open our hearts and minds to one another.
We will let God's love flow through us.
We will focus on God's word.
We will speak honestly and respectfully.
We will speak to principles rather than personalities.
We will seek to do God's work.

December 2020

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 29 CHRISTMAS FAIR ONLINE AUCTION Thru Dec 4 - 6 PM CHRISTMAS FAIR ONLINE STORE Thru DEC 1 ■ 6:00 AM Shelter Bkst ■ 10:30 AM Worship | 30 ■ 6:30 PM Fair meeting | 1 ■ 6:30 PM Karate David Peters' day off | 2 ■ 7:00 PM Boy Scouts | 3 ■ 6:30 PM Deacons | 4 ■ 9:00 AM Erin B. Kitchen use ■ 10:00 AM Sr Knitting | 5 ■ 9:00 AM Christmas Fair ■ 10:30 AM Mindful Meditation |
| 6 ■ 6:00 AM Shelter Bkst ■ 10:30 AM Worship | 7 | 8 ■ 6:30 PM Karate David Peters' day off | 9 ■ 7:00 PM Boy Scouts | 10 | 11 Hanukkah ■ 9:00 AM Erin B. Kitchen use ■ 10:00 AM Sr Knitting | 12 ■ 10:30 AM Mindful Meditation |
| 13 ■ 6:00 AM Shelter Bkst ■ 10:30 AM Worship | 14 ■ 9:00 AM Daily Bread Food Pantry team | 15 ■ 6:30 PM Karate David Peters' day off Newsletter Deadline | 16 ■ 7:00 PM Boy Scouts | 17 | 18 ■ 9:00 AM Erin B. Kitchen use ■ 10:00 AM Sr Knitting | 19 ■ 10:30 AM Mindful Meditation |
| 20 ■ 6:00 AM Shelter Bkst ■ 10:30 AM Worship ■ 11:45 AM Church Council ■ 7:00 PM Blue Christmas Service | 21 | 22 ■ 6:30 PM Karate David Peters' day off | 23 ■ 3:00 PM Loaves & Fishes Meal ■ 7:00 PM Boy Scouts | 24 Christmas Eve ■ 7:00 PM Christmas Eve Outdoor Service | 25 Christmas Day ■ 9:00 AM Erin B. Kitchen use ■ 10:00 AM Sr Knitting | 26 Kwanzaa ■ 10:30 AM Mindful Meditation |
| 27 ■ 6:00 AM Shelter Bkst ■ 10:30 AM Worship | 28 | 29 ■ 6:30 PM Karate David Peters' day off | 30 ■ 7:00 PM Boy Scouts | 31 New Year's Eve | 1 New Year's Day ■ 9:00 AM Erin B. Kitchen use ■ 10:00 AM Sr Knitting | 2 ■ 10:30 AM Mindful Meditation |

Church Newsletter Deadline for the January 2021 issue: December 15th

Leadership Listing

(All 860- unless noted)

Ministers: The Congregation
 Moderator: Brian Neff, 354-3177
 Clerk: Patricia Fraley, 868-0051
 Treasurer: Cathy Racz, 799-0180
 Collector: Heidi Neff, 354-3177
 Deacons: Mike Wilcox, 354-8821
 Trustees: Charlie Meade, 354-1274
 Stewardship: Colby Kalisher, 355-8012
 Missions: Barbara Biafore, 799-6501
 Fellowship: Jeanne Steers, 354-7484
 Pastoral Relations: Pat Fraley, 868-0051
 Men's Group: Charlie Stauffacher, 354-1274

Youth Group: Barb Cover, (203) 788-5823
 Historian: Dale Pinchbeck, 355-4297
 Librarian: Joan Temple, 350-0529

Secretary/Newsletter: Nancy Glover, 355-1978
 Minister of Music: Sandra Kleisner, 868-9040
 Custodian: Bruce Rossiter
 Pastor: The Rev. David F. Peters,
 office: 355-1978 home: 355-8830
 david@roxburychurch.org

Roxbury Congregational Church, UCC
24 Church Street
Roxbury, CT 06783

Address Service Requested

faith matters

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NEWSLETTER – DECEMBER 2020

Christmas Eve Service 7 p.m. on the lawn

Worship – Sundays 10:30 a.m. online

We Are A Community Seeking To Share God's Love!

Worship In-Person or on Zoom (link on web site) or Facebook Live (fb.com/RoxburyChurch)

No Matter Who You Are, or Where You Are on Life's Journey, You Are Welcome Here!

