

**2013 ADVENT SPIRAL
Reversing Falls Sanctuary**

On behalf of Reversing Falls Sanctuary, welcome to our Advent Spiral celebration. Mother Earth invites us during this season to slow down, to travel within, to honor the darkness and to proclaim the triumph of Light and Love. In the words of the Sufi writer, Kabir Helminski, “If the suffering and drama of this world were not real, unconditional Love would have no place. The imperfection of the world is what gives birth to the reality of Love – an unconditional Love that loves even this imperfection.” Similar words were spoken by a very bright light that recently left our planet, the tireless and brilliant worker for peace with truth and reconciliation, Nelson Mandela. Let us take a moment of silence to honor this extraordinary man whose light has illumined our world..... And another moment to honor the lives lost in Newtown one year ago today.....

Reversing Falls Sanctuary is committed to sharing and honoring the stories of all those who walk among us. And this is the Season for many, many stories. This center candle can be a symbol of many realities – the primordial flaring forth of our Universe 13.7 billion years ago; the Winter Solstice when night in this Northern hemisphere has the longest hours of darkness; our Sun radiating light and life; the miraculous lasting of the light in the oil lamps of the Maccabees; Buddha’s enlightenment teachings and practices; the birth of Jesus, the Cosmic Christ, breaking into history as Emmanuel, God-with-us. Whatever story you are walking, let this center candle be the still point within each of us, the deep core of all our stories, the place of divinity that unites us all as one.

Let the symbols present in this place guide you on your journey. The evergreens, the beeswax candles, the music – all invite our senses to awaken, to be mindful of what our souls are yearning for at the deepest level. This ritual invites us to

retreat for a while from the busyness and the noise and the clutter of our thoughts and our everyday lives and move into the quiet and silence and order of these intentional moments. It asks us to stay present to this moment and to one another. It invites us into the deep mystery and wonder of life.

We ask you to come forth, take a candle, and spiral your way through the path of greens. As one pilgrim lights his or her candle, the next one can begin the journey because of a new design to the Spiral created by our musicians, Anne and Lin Parker. After you light your candle, choose a log to place it on, to pierce both the nail and the darkness of one particular moment and place. As the sanctuary grows in light, we will witness how our walking together can sustain us in whatever darkness may hover over us personally or over our sacred Earth. Today is the day we proclaim together the power of Compassion, the power of Love and the power of Light. Please come forward as you feel ready.