

The Beacon

JUNE 2016



GOOD NEWS from

United Congregational Church of Westerly

United Church of Christ, Pawcatuck, CT

Sunday Worship ~ 9:30 am

FROM THE PASTOR ...

“On that day the Lord will whistle for the fly that is at the sources of the streams of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. And they will all come and settle in the steep ravines, and in the clefts of the rocks, and on the thornbushes, and on all the pastures.” Isaiah 7:18-19

This rather obscure biblical text took some digging to find. I was looking for a scriptural text which could serve as the guiding, foundational text of our Pollinator Garden and Labyrinth project and there aren't too many scripture texts that reference bees. There are a couple of others, but they're pretty gross – Samson eating honey out of a beehive in the rotted carcass of a lion he killed with his bare hands was the worst. But then I came across this one, and I liked it. I like the image of God whistling in the first place but then to realize God is whistling to call up even the insects to return to the land from which the people had been forsaken is incredible.

So, I took my suggestion to the first meeting of the working group which has formed to tackle this exciting project of putting our beautiful church property to use as a location for a Pollinator Garden and Labyrinth for the community and ourselves.

Nine people gathered around a table upstairs at the Malted Barley to talk about how to take this project from “nice thoughts” to something tangible and real, moving us from dreaming to doing. The group loved this verse too, noting that the second part of it sort of describes our property. We don't have “steep ravines” but we do have a significant slope to the property and we do have all sorts of rock formations to contend with as we work to design the garden. And, we do have a few thornbushes and the garden may even have a few more when we move from the design to the cultivation phase. In the meantime, our grounds – especially close to the road, the likely location of the garden, do sort of look like a pasture, which is what a pollinator garden ultimately is intended to be – a pasture, a feeding and resting place for birds and insects of all sorts.

This project is an extraordinary one for so many reasons. Most significant to me is that this is an idea which originated from within the congregation in a committee meeting this past year. It was part of a brainstorming session in Missions where we were trying to figure out what we could do that would be meaningful, significant to the community and *different!* Conversations continued, drawing in more and more people and generating more and more enthusiasm. The idea of incorporating a labyrinth into the pollinator garden surfaced at the Real Good Church Potluck in March and we were off to the races as leaders for each part of the project – pollinator garden and labyrinth – surfaced and began researching and working. Proposals were made to the Trustees at their April meeting and they gave the okay for the project to proceed, with the understanding that the Trustees would remain in the loop and have oversight of the work done on the property. Concurrent with this, an opportunity surfaced for us to participate in a national UCC Ministry Event called *Common Ground*. This is a program in which gardening and the worship and outreach of the local church are integrated dynamically into the life of the church. That event happens the first week in June in Northampton, MA and I am excited to say there are five of us going.

Meanwhile, the working group is, in fact, working! It was agreed that we will begin to look for bids from landscape architects since we know we need expert assistance to site the garden and the labyrinth on the property to maximum advantage. As that work continues, we also decided to work on

creating educational opportunities for all ages both in the church and the community on the whole idea of pollinator gardens and why they are so critical to the future health of our planet. We will also be offering resources and experiences for those interested in understanding the role of labyrinths in prayer and personal spiritual renewal. The labyrinth pilgrimage noted in this summer's Mission Day Trips schedule is an example of this.

As I sat down to write this in my office, I looked out the window to see a tiny hummingbird – an important pollinator – flitting from flower to flower on the azalea bush at the corner of the building. Its tiny wings were beating so fast they were a blur! I wanted to tell it to hang on – the pollinator garden is coming! But then I realized that when it's ready, I'm sure God will let out a whistle that will include hummingbirds too. Hope to see you soon...

Your friend in Christ,
Rev. Ruth



Rev. Ruth's Community Office Hours!
Thursdays from 2 – 4 pm
The Savoy Bookstore & Café
in downtown Westerly

I have received a warm welcome from the Savoy management so I will be continuing to meet and greet folks there each week (except for June 2nd when I will be out of town at the Common Ground event). These afternoons have no agenda except for me to be out in the community, visible and available to chat with you or anyone about anything that is on your mind and heart. It could be church business. It could be a biblical or theological question you've always wanted to talk about. It could be you have someone you'd like me to meet. Whomever, whatever happens is wonderful. And the cold drinks at the Savoy are awesome! So are the hot ones and don't get me started on the cookies...

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Diaconate Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name & Telephone</u>
June 5	Lynn Murray 401-539-7578
June 12	Bethany Foster 401-539-4003
June 19	Ane Torres 860-599-5572
June 26	Lynn Murray 401-539-7578

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The Deacons have agreed to issue an **open invitation** to folks who would like to preach over the next few months to cover Rev. Ruth's vacation and possibly other Sundays as well. Please speak with Lynn Murray if interested -- #401-539-7578.

CONGRATULATIONS to the following
2016Confirmands who are now our
newest members of the church!

- **Erin Blake** is a 9th grader at Grasso Tech in Groton, CT. Erin has sung in the UCC Westerly church choir since the age of 7 and also sings in the chamber choir at school. She is also active in sports playing volleyball, basketball and softball.
- **Joe Lanphere** is a 9th grader at Grasso Tech in Groton, CT where he is studying carpentry. Joe enjoys sports and plays flag football.
- **Cody Lanphere** is an 8th grader at Mystic Middle School in Mystic, CT. He enjoys sports and is active in flag football and cross country bicycling.
- **Anna Tarasuk** is a 9th grader at Chariho High School in Richmond, RI. Anna enjoys spending time in the gym and is active in scouting and the Science Olympiad at school.
- **Sydney Walker** is in the 8th grade at Westerly Middle School in Westerly, RI. Sydney loves sports and participates enthusiastically in cross country, basketball and lacrosse.



June Birthdays

5 – Eric Sadowski

7 – Tyler McCrary

20 – Victoria Tosti

23 – June Sicilian

28 – Emma Sugar

Happy Anniversary to:

Bobbie & Pam DelPozo-Waldron –
June 6, 1992

Ed & Judy Stratton – June 6, 1970

*Please add in your special days by
calling the church office!*

BIBLE STUDY STARTING THIS MONTH!



**2nd & 4th Thursdays @
6 pm in the Parlor**

**This month: June 9 & 23
See you then!**

Mission Notes

Upcoming events:

- Mission Sunday on May 29 will be a festive Memorial Day celebration with flags decorating our property and a special donation drive in support of Operation Stand Down Rhode Island
- School supplies will once again be collected over the summer to support our second annual “*In the Middle*” donation drive. Here is a list of needed supplies:
 - Pencils of good quality (like Ticonderoga) that sharpen well, red and other colored pens and pencils for students to correct their work, thin markers, highlighters
 - Zippered “folio” type binders, 3-ring binders (1 ½ inch)
 - 3-ring binder paper
 - Pencil cases that go in the 3-ring binders and small change purses
 - One-subject notebooks
 - Cap erasers for pencils and regular erasers
 - Glue sticks
 - Backpacks
 - And to help the teachers, boxes of tissues for the classroom!
- The June, July and August **meals for WARM** will be provided by the Choir, the Trustees and Missions respectively.



The **Pollinator Garden and Labyrinth Working Group** is hard at work and will be over the summer. Check out Rev. Ruth’s article for specifics and speak with either Claire Calabretta or Kathy Tarasuk to see how you can get involved.

MISSION DAY TRIPS
are being planned as follows:



- **Tuesday, July 26 – 9 am to 12 noon – Franklin Farms, Cumberland, RI**
 - Picking produce in support of the food banks of Rhode Island
- **Friday, July 29 – 2 to 7 pm – Mathewson Street Church, Providence, RI**
 - Working in support of their ministries to the homeless and near homeless, including serving at the PICA (Providence In-town Churches Association) Dinner
- **Saturday, August 20 – 9 am to 5 pm? – Labyrinth Pilgrimage in Rhode Island**
 - Making a road trip to visit several labyrinths at various churches throughout Rhode Island. Lunch out at a restaurant is part of the plan!
- **Sunday, September 11 – after worship – WARM Center, Westerly, RI**
 - We will be planning, preparing and serving the meal at the WARM Center this day.
- **To be finalized – Trip to the Abbey of Regina Laudis in Bethlehem, CT**
 - Seeing the Abbey's spectacular gardens, as well as a pollinator garden nearby; participating in one of the Abbey's prayer services
- **To be finalized – Date to volunteer at the Jonnycake Center Community Garden in Charlestown, RI**

Also in the planning for this fall:

- **An overnight Labyrinth Retreat** to experience and learn firsthand why labyrinths are such a powerful resource for prayer and spiritual renewal.
- **A trip to Block Island to visit the labyrinth there!**

Check out the Mission Day Trips bulletin board in Fellowship Hall for details and to sign up for the trip(s) that interest you!

Announcing a Women's Fellowship Summer Gathering!



**Saturday, June 25
from 2 – 6 pm**

A potluck cook-out at Rev. Ruth's home!

Hamburgers, hot dogs and veggie burgers will be provided along with buns and condiments. The rest is up to you!

Our agenda will be to brainstorm ideas for what we'd like to do next year. Car pools will be arranged so you don't need to worry about making the drive.

Sign-up sheet on bulletin board outside Fellowship Hall.

All women of the church are welcome!!!!

"BOOKS" Continues on the road...



Our next gathering will be on **Tuesday, June 28 @ 6 pm** and we will be meeting at **Supreme Pizza**, 157 Granite Street, Westerly. The book we have chosen to read for this gathering is *The Nightingale* by Kristin Hannah. This popular book should be available through the library as well as available for purchase through Amazon in both print and kindle versions. I'm told there was even a copy in the books room at Attic Treasures because one person of our group scarfed it up as soon as she saw it! Hope you'll join us!

**THE CE BOARD and THE FAMILY FUN
FELLOWSHIP are pleased to announce this
year's OUTING to the
CT TIGERS BASEBALL GAME!**



**Sunday, August 14
Game Time 4:05 pm**

Sign-up sheet outside Fellowship Hall.
Group discount ticket price is \$7 each.
You must sign up to attend so we are sure we
have the correct number of tickets reserved!
Deadline to sign up is **August 1**.

**COMING IN SEPTEMBER!
"Dessert and Dabble" Party**

You've heard about this, maybe you
have done it, or maybe you have just wished
you could take part. We will have our own
expert instructing us in creating a beautiful
painting and providing all the materials. The
evening will include cold (soft) drinks, desserts,
and a basket raffle. More information to follow
once the date is set. Start inviting your friends!

A Chance to say "Thank You!"

Debby Johnson is no longer officially our
sexton. However, for the past several months,
she has continued to clean our building on a
volunteer basis! In appreciation of all she has
done, (not to mention the hundreds of dollars
she has saved us), we would like to present
her with local gift cards. If you would like to
make a financial donation to this, it can be sent
to the church office (checks made out to UCC),
or there will be baskets available on Children's
Sunday, June 5th.



*Please pray for the following members and
friends of our church:*

Madelyn Stratton	Sandi Davis
Fred	Jeff
Catherine	Millie Silver
Carole Kus	Shirley Harrington
Lisa	Beverly & Family
Brian Madill	David Jones
Eugene Ravenelle	Jennifer Clancon
Karen & Bill	Kim Brown
Shirley M.	Hope
Gerry	Timothy Nugent
Scott & his parents	William Underhill III
Family of Gary Dobson	
Connie	Nicci & Jeff
Bob & Ann	Sharon Brooks
Allie	Family of Doris Whitehead
Rae Drager	

*If you would like anyone added or
removed from this list for the next newsletter,
please call the office or let one of our deacons
know. Thank you.*

OUR STAFF

Pastor: The Rev. Ruth Shilling Hainsworth
Organist: David Cranmer
YES Program contact: Kathy Tarasuk
Secretary: Susan Perreault
Web Master: Heather Stratton

CHURCH OFFICE SPECIFICS

Mailing Address: 9 Castle Hill Road
Pawcatuck, CT 06379
Telephone # & FAX: 860-599-1226
E-mail: uccwesterly@sbcglobal.net
Website: www.uccwesterly.org
Office Hours: Monday, Thursday, & Friday
from 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.