

The Beacon

SEPTEMBER 2017



GOOD NEWS from

United Congregational Church of Westerly

United Church of Christ, Pawcatuck, CT

Sunday Worship ~ 9:30 am

FROM THE PASTOR ...

"Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?" Psalm 139:7

"If you become a bird and fly away from me," said his mother, "I will be the tree that you come home to." The Runaway Bunny by Margaret Wise Brown

These two quotes are a clue to some of our exciting plans at UCC Westerly for this fall. The first quote is from Psalm 139. This beautiful psalm is intended as a reminder to all that there is no place we can run to where God is not. If we try to run from God intentionally because of our anger and fear or because we're just too busy to pay attention, still God is with us no matter why or when or where we stop running. If our loneliness and frustrations make us feel like God has run away from us, we are assured that this is never the case. Wherever we find ourselves, God is already there. This is exactly the same sentiment we see in the second quote from the beloved children's book, *The Runaway Bunny* by Margaret Wise Brown. In this classic children's book, memorialized in a statue in Westerly's Wilcox Park, a restless little bunny anxious to be anything but a bunny tells his mother of his plans for a new life. No matter what he proposes, she promises she will already be there to

greet him no matter where he runs or what he becomes. Sound familiar?

Children's books have an amazing capacity to bring the most important of life's lessons down to earth in words and pictures easily understood. That's why this fall in our Sunday morning worship we will be exploring the life wisdom found in children's books. Many of you responded to my request earlier in the summer to share with me your favorite children's books and for that I am very grateful. Our own "Books" group met with me at Misquamicut earlier in August and we spent a lovely evening reading children's books to each other! I am excited about the possibilities this unique foundation offers for our spiritual, missional and fellowship opportunities being planned for this fall. Here's a sampling!

SABBATH CIRCLES is the name given to our new Family Ministries program geared for all ages but with a special emphasis on families with children and youth in their midst. Recognizing that regular Sunday attendance is challenging for young families today, the SABBATH CIRCLES program includes a "home-school" version of Sunday School for older children with a class for little ones offered on Sunday mornings as attendance encourages. The "At Home" curriculum will have a featured theme for the month which will include several Bible stories to be discovered, read and explored by parents and children at home. Accompanying this will be study skill exercises designed to increase familiarity with the Bible itself as well as a variety of other activities to think about the stories through art, crafts and service projects. There will also be monthly conversations with me during Fellowship time one Sunday a month where folks can come and talk about what they are learning in their Bible study at home. Questions encouraged!! Occasional Pot-lucks are part of the plan too!

Another piece of SABBATH CIRCLES will be an intentional pairing up of our families of all sizes and types within the church so that new folks have more seasoned members to connect with and, vice versa. These relationships will be self-chosen, self-directed and rotating throughout the year with the hope that everyone will enjoy this intentional practice of having a "church buddy." Also integral to the program will be missional service projects like WARM CENTER SUNDAY on September 17 and the return of the POLAR FLEECE EXPRESS to Harvest Table on October 18, not to mention on-

going projects connected to the Pollinator Gardens. Lots of exciting stuff for sure!

So, whether or not you are a “runaway bunny”, we hope you will find a new point of connection at our church within SABBATH CIRCLES. And, if you like it, we hope you will invite your friends and family to come be part of a circle at UCC Westerly. SABBATH CIRCLES Sunday will be celebrated on September 10 when materials for September and October will be dedicated and you can pick up your copy then. We also hope to have a variety of Bibles available to purchase or borrow for your studies at home. Learning for all ages is encouraged too!

Sound like fun? We hope so! In the words of the runaway bunny as the book ends: “Shucks,” said the bunny. “I might just as well stay where I am and be your little bunny.” And so he did. “Have a carrot,” said the mother bunny. I’ll make sure we have plenty of carrots for you AND everyone else too. Hope to see you soon.

Your friend in Christ,
Rev. Ruth



Do you have a **Confirmand** (grades 8 – 10) at home? Watch for details on Confirmation in a letter coming soon!



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

Come and chat about whatever. Or come for a nice cold drink and sit with me. The iced chai lattes are my favorite but I understand the iced coffee is pretty good too. Join me some Thursday and find out!
Your friend and chatting partner, Rev. Ruth



September Birthdays

6 – Brian Edmond

16 – Aidan Stratton

26 – Jan McCrary

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

The Disaster Ministries of the United Church of Christ

are already on the ground in Texas, working alongside other faith partners. For the most current information on what support is needed and to make direct cash donations, please check out this link:

http://www.ucc.org/disaster_hurricane_harvey

Also, please note that the **September Deacons Fund offering** received on Sunday, **September 3rd** will go to support the Disaster Relief efforts for Texas.

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Diaconate Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Telephone #</u>
Sep 3	Ed Stratton	401-596-4740
Sep 10	Lynn Murray	401-539-7578
Sep 17	Bethany Foster	401-539-4003
Sep 24	Jenny Brummund	860-599-1719

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MISSION MOMENT

Wow! Wow! Wow! What successful summer collections we had because of YOU, each and every one of you in the congregation!! We collected so many school supplies that we were able to divide the goods between Westerly and Pawcatuck Middle Schools. There will be plenty of school supplies to help our local middle school students who will continue to need pencils, paper, binders, glue sticks, etc. during the entire school year. Thank you so much!

In addition, our collection of juice boxes and boxes of mac and cheese at the request of the PNC was also greatly successful. Great job!!

Now, on to the Fall!

MISSION IN MOTION



Sunday, September 17, 2017

Our September Mission Sunday will be celebrated a week early this month on Sunday, September 17 as we prepare our Second Annual All-church Meal for WARM during the morning service. Please join us as we put Mission in Motion to prepare the following for our friends at WARM:

Sloppy Joes
Pasta Salad
Vegetables and dips
Watermelon
Heavenly Ambrosia

As with last year's event, there will be food stations set up in Fellowship Hall and the kitchen with all of the food and utensils you

need to help create your dish. Mission Committee members will be manning each station to help and Rev. Ruth will provide activities for the children and those who would prefer not to cook, stir, or chop.

We will deliver and serve the meal to WARM after church as their noon meal. No more than 6 people are needed to serve.

Looking forward to this great time together!

Our PNC collection for September and October will be tuna and canned meats.

The **POLAR FLEECE EXPRESS** event will return this year as part of Harvest Table on **October 18**. More details next month. In the meantime, *we could use more fleece!* We are looking for **1.5 yards of material**, prints with coordinating neutral colors. Fleece donations can be dropped off in Fellowship Hall any Sunday. Thanks!

HARVEST TABLE

will be meeting on

**Wednesday, September 20
at 5:30 pm
in Fellowship Hall.**



A simple supper will be created using the bounty everyone brings that evening. **Items to bring include:** lettuce of any type, tomatoes, garden veges, cheeses, fruits, breads – regular & GF, butter.

We will share in the meal, and a brief time of prayer and reflection based on Scripture. Afterward, those who wish are invited to work in the gardens.



*Here's the latest buzz
on the
Pollinator Garden
Project!*

- ✚ **Smothering Party scheduled!** The next Pollinator Garden Event will be the first step in the creation of the main Pollinator Garden on the upper lawns of the church. We will be having a "smothering party" (you read that right) on **Saturday, Sep.23 beginning at 10 am.** We will be preparing 1/10th of an acre of that property for its rebirth next spring as a meadow by smothering it with ground cloth. LOTS of help needed! Pizza party to follow! This is a fantastic way to learn about how to clear ground for new plantings without the use of toxic pesticides. Come join us!
- ✚ **Next Pollinator Garden Committee meeting** will be over lunch after the Smothering Party.
- ✚ **Our UCC Renewing Church Grant for this project** has been submitted. Fingers crossed that the committee reacts favorably to our plans! We could receive up to \$20,000!!!!

Be sure to check out the Pollinator Garden bulletin board in Fellowship Hall for the latest info and for gardening tips and suggestions of all types!

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

The next **Church Council meeting** will be held on Sunday, **September 10th at 11:00 am** in the Parlor. All Council Members please submit your reports for the meeting to Cathy Gray by **September 1st.** **Electronic submissions are preferred.** (Cathy's email address is graygc@mindspring.com) Susan will send you a form via email on August 28th to help you make out your report.

Note from the TRUSTEES

We would like to thank the congregation for their continued support of the Capital Campaign Fund. The Trustees have approved the next project of *repaving the circular drive.* Quotes have been received and we will be contracting with L. J. Beausoleil Paving for \$9,900 to repave the circular driveway. The project should be completed this fall. More details to follow once we sign a contract.



***"BOOKS" IS (back)
IN THE BUILDING!***

Next gathering is Tue, **October 10 @ 6 pm**
Potluck Supper at the church!
Our book for this gathering is:
Sally Hemings: A Novel
by Barbara Chase-Riboud

Join us for a fascinating glimpse into the life of Sally Hemings, the slave who was, for all intents and purposes, the wife of Thomas Jefferson. The book offers rare insights about the truth of what it was like to be a slave in the US. Should be a wonderful conversation, and a timely one!

MUSIC NEWS



**TIME
TO
SING!**

Just a reminder that Choir Rehearsals for the UCC Westerly Choir resume on Wednesday, **September 6.** Come join the fun! All ages and abilities will receive a warm welcome. For more information, please speak with our organist and choir director, Dav Cranmer any Sunday morning!

**YOU ARE INVITED
to the
SECOND ANNUAL FIRST RESPONDERS
SERVICE OF HONOR AND RECOGNITION**

Sunday, **September 24 @ 5 pm**
4:30 pm – Blessing of the Emergency Vehicles
at Central Baptist Church
4:50 pm – Processional
5:00 pm – Service at Christ Episcopal Church

*Note: Our church has been asked along with others in the community to **provide some baked goods for the reception** to follow. Sign-up sheet outside Fellowship Hall!*

A NOTE from the OFFICE:



Our new **Church Directory** of members & friends of the church is available for you to pick up in the office. Please stop by on Sunday mornings or on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays between 8:30 am – 1:30 pm to pick up your copy.

PRAYER LIST



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

Madelyn Stratton	Shirley Harrington
Beverly & Family	Brian Madill
Shirley M.	Gerry
Scott & his parents	The Underhill Family
Connie	Nicci & Jeff
Allie	David Hall
Josh	Ben
Rev. Elizabeth King	Jesse B.
Bill Colprit	Bill & Phyllis Horne
Devyn Moynihan	Susan Moynihan-Freeman
Ruth King Roes	Laura
Bill Hoffman	Mauri Hainsworth

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
Sexton: JoAnn Spurley
Web Master: Heather Stratton
Lighthouse Editor: Elaine deCiutiis

CHURCH OFFICE SPECIFICS

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8:30 am – 1:30 pm