

From the Pastor...

*“Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old.
I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.”
Isaiah 43:18-19*

This has always been one of my favorite passages from the book of Isaiah. It comes from what is called Second Isaiah written to address the experiences of the Hebrew people languishing in Babylon after Israel's defeat by the Babylonians. The writer of these incredible words wanted the people to know that God had not forgotten about them or all they had been through. God knew their heartaches and God had heard their cries. More than that, God was going to respond to those cries and lead these people forward into amazing new possibilities they could scarcely imagine. All they needed was to believe in God and trust that God was present in their midst.

I've been thinking a lot about this text from Isaiah as the halfway point of my first year as your pastor stands on the horizon. (*I know, hard to believe, isn't it?*). I see Isaiah's words coming to life in our midst more and more each day which is why I find myself even more excited about our future together than I was when you first welcomed me into your midst. United Congregational is a wonderful church filled with wonderful people. You have faced challenges and joys together and, most importantly, have learned to celebrate both as just part of being together in this community of faith. You have laid a very firm foundation on which we can now build together for the future of this incredible church.

This future we are beginning to build together is what has me so excited. God is indeed doing a new thing here, just like Isaiah described in those beautiful words above. Worship attendance is strong and getting stronger. Folks stay for social time after worship, even when no one has signed up to provide coffee and goodies. Why? Because they *like being here and spending time with each other!* Each of the boards and committees I have met with are responding enthusiastically to the new possibilities we have generated in our times of conversation and pondering. A few examples are worthy of mentioning here as God's new thing begins to take shape in our midst. The Deacons are supporting a once a month midweek service for healing and peace here in June, July and August as part of the “Summer of Peace-Westerly 2012.” The

Christian Ed Board and Sunday School leadership are planning a “new fashioned” Church Picnic on Sunday, August 26 and are working with me to begin a new family ministries program which will take place one Friday evening each month beginning in September. A special July outing is also in the works to support and celebrate our families with young children. Trustees are hard at work on sprucing up the building and providing the solid financial base we need to move forward into our future with confidence. A technology committee is being formed so that we can work together to maximize our presence on the “web” even as we make more effective use of new technology in the daily operations of the church office. The Stewardship Committee is hard at work creating a series of small group gatherings this fall so we can talk with and get to know each other better. And a new church pictorial directory is in process.

So, when we read those long ago words of Isaiah, we *know* they still apply to us – right here and right now! God *IS* doing a new thing right here at United Congregational Church of Westerly in Pawcatuck! And we get to be a part of it! As I said as I began this article, I'm excited. I hope you are too! I wonder what's going to happen next? I'm so glad we'll be finding out together....

Blessings,

Pastor Ruth

UCC WESTERLY LEADERSHIP RETREAT
Saturday, June 30 from 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Central Congregational Church, UCC in Providence

If you are a member of any board or committee of the church, your presence at this retreat is needed. We will be meeting with Pastor Ruth to ponder together the future of our wonderful church. What do we want to do and to be in our community and the world and how do we get there? Important questions and you are needed as we ponder the answers together. Watch for the event flyer to come out soon and be sure to register!

A NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY IS IN THE WORKS!

Watch for more details throughout the summer as photography dates are set for late September. You will be receiving an "automated" phone call from Pastor Ruth sometime this summer inviting you to participate in the directory so please don't be surprised when you hear her recorded voice coming over your phone. This may seem a little odd, but this automated calling procedure saves church members the work of calling everyone! However, we still need an *on-site coordinator* and *help with publicity, sign-ups* and *hosting on photography days*. If you have a few hours to volunteer on this very important project, please speak with Pastor Ruth or Susan in the office anytime.

IS A WORLD WITHOUT COMPUTERS IMPOSSIBLE FOR YOU TO IMAGINE?

IS TEXTING YOUR PREFERRED MEANS OF COMMUNICATION?

DO YOU "GET" FACEBOOK?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, then please take 10 seconds to finish reading this notice. If you didn't answer yes but know someone who would if only they read the Beacon, then please show them this notice! UCC Westerly needs a little bit of your time as a participant in a technology committee. We will be getting together to discuss everything from what kind of computer we need in the office to upgrading the website to establishing a UCCW Facebook page. Youth and college age kids home for the summer are especially needed! If you are interested, please email Pastor Ruth at mrsh1121@verizon.net right away!!

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

Elizabeth Ball	Pat Donovan	Jimmy
Ann Brown	Barbara	Barbara Simmons
Charlie Wright	Madelyn Stratton	Sandi Davis
Doris Gouvin	Fred	Jeff
Catherine	Debbie	Jim
Millie Silver	Carole Lennon	Jonathan Salovitz
Vince Amkhamavong, U.S. Marines		Shirley Harrington
Alice	John Dillon	Sheryl
David Jones	Ron Madill	Lisa
The Pendleton Family	Beverly and Family	Peter Knox

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

THANK YOU ...

*Our THANKS to everyone who participated in and purchased tickets for the **Barbara Murano Scholarship Ham & Bean Dinner**.*

*Thank you to the congregation for your *Strengthen the Church* offerings.*

American Cancer Society's Relay for Life

The "*UCC Beacons of Hope*" will once again have a team at the American Cancer Society's **Westerly Relay for Life**. This is a team relay at the Westerly High School track on **Friday, June 22nd – Saturday, June 23rd** to benefit cancer research. To support our team, you can find the Westerly Relay for Life on line (www.westerlyrelay.org.) and either join the team or donate to the team, or see Lynn Murray. Everyone should experience the Relay at least once.

Get Connected

The Stewardship Committee would like to thank the following hosts for this fall's **Getting Connected social gatherings** with Pastor Hainsworth:

Carolyn LeRoy – Westerly
Lynn Murray – Richmond
Linda Evans – Pawcatuck
Elvis Torres – Stonington
Kay Walker Drake – Mystic.

Look for sign-ups and dates in the summer Beacon and at church. Let's get connected!

- The Stewardship Committee

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Happy Birthday to:

Eric Sadowski - 5
Tyler McCrary – 7
Fay Brown – 8
Victoria Tosti - 20
June Sicilian – 23
Emma Sugar – 28

Happy Anniversary to:

Bobbie & Pam DelPozo-Waldron – June 6, 1992
Ed & Judy Stratton – 6-6-70

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

New Member Sunday

A New Member Sunday has been scheduled here at UCC Westerly for Sunday, **June 24th**. New members are received into the church through transfer of membership or affirmation of faith. If you have been a part of the UCC Westerly church family but have not yet formally joined, here's your chance! For more information, please speak with Pastor Ruth.

IS THERE A POTENTIAL CONFIRMAND IN YOUR FAMILY?

If yes, please be sure his or her name is noted in the office because letters explaining our **Confirmation program** and offering an opportunity to sign up will be going out this summer! Call or email Susan in the office as soon as possible!

MAKE A NOTE!

Services for Healing and Peace on June 20th, July 25th, and August 22nd at 7:00 p.m. will be offered in our sanctuary, our contribution to the *Summer of Peace-Westerly 2012*. Plan now to join us for these brief meditative services offering prayers and anointing for healing along with our ponderings of *shalom*, God's vision of peace for the world which fills the pages of our Bible.

COMMUNITY BIBLE STUDY

We have received an invitation for our members who may be interested to participate in a community Bible study being sponsored by Central Baptist Church in Westerly next month. "A Walk Through the New Testament" will be offered as an all day seminar on Saturday, June 9 from 9 am – 4 pm at the church. The cost is \$20 per person and includes lunch, two snacks and a workbook. For more information, call Central Baptist Church at 401-596-4929.

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Diaconate Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
Jun 3	Ed Stratton	(401) 596-4740
Jun 10	Gary Davis	(860) 599-4279
Jun 17	Brenda Cornell	(860) 599-3580
Jun 24	Melissa Stratton	(401) 596-4740

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Mission News

The **UCC Coffee Project** is another name for one of our ongoing missions. You may also know it as **Equal Exchange, Fairly Traded**. This is the little table where you can purchase coffee, tea, chocolate and other items in Fellowship Hall. Just to let you know, our church and the UCC do not make any profit from these sales; the money from our sales is sent directly to the growers and owners of small farms in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and the U.S. to help them build a better future for themselves and their families. The farmers earn a fair price for their products, have access to affordable credit, and gain a long-term trading partner they can trust.

We have some new products to offer: Organic Camomile Tea, Organic Peppermint Tea, Organic Darjeeling Tea, Organic Espresso Bean Chocolate, and Organic "Mind, Body, and Soul" coffee (medium/Vienna roast). There is a **price-list** at the table. We sell "at cost" with no mark-up.

Every second Sunday is "**Mission Sunday**." This is always the Sunday that our church sponsors the Westerly WARM Center meal. The boards and committees are assigned a month in the year for this local mission. The WARM Center meal for Sunday, **June 10th**, is going to be the responsibility of the *Women's Fellowship*. Watch for more information about what the WARM Center does and specific details on how we help. The Mission Committee has decided to add a food/living supplies offering on each Mission Sunday to better benefit the **Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center (PNC)**, our other local mission. Please bring a few items to place in the wicker basket on the floor near the altar. It is our hope that with this monthly ritual, we will remember to generously feed our neighbors. Please note expiration dates on food. Items of particular need are *tea, coffee, fruit juice, jams, and jellies*. Glass jars are acceptable. The Red Buckets are located in Fellowship Hall by the Mission bulletin board.

Check out the new poster on the Mission bulletin board entitled "**Our Mission Work Month-By-Month**." We are trying to

get a good view of what we already do, as we think about and evolve our mission work in the future. Please take one of the pens and write down any donations, service work, and support that you/we contribute in the name of God, through our church. You don't need to include your name, but please add the board/committee you represent, if applicable. Thank you for your help!

-Jenny Brummund for Missions

Quahog & Corn CHOWDER Dinner with a Strawberry Shortcake Dessert!

Sunday, June 10th

5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Open to the public.

Save the date for another great meal! Enjoy a bowl of homemade quahog chowder made with fresh local clams, or a bowl of corn chowder. For dessert: a dish of strawberry shortcake made with fresh locally grown strawberries.

Cost: Adults: \$10.00

Children under 10: \$5.00

When the sign-up sheet is available, please sign up to help out in the kitchen or to set up or clean up.

Thank you from the Trustees.

