

The Beacon

FEBRUARY 2018



GOOD NEWS from

United Congregational Church of Westerly

United Church of Christ, Pawcatuck, CT

Sunday Worship ~ 9:30 am

FROM THE PASTOR ...

"...and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" Micah 6:8

Even though it seems like we have just put away the Christmas decorations, Lent will be upon us in a few short weeks. Wednesday, February 14 – Valentine's Day – is also Ash Wednesday this year and that, I think, is divine intervention! The linking of this lacy, red rose-filled holiday about love and romance with the date we begin the work of calling ourselves to account before our God is just awesome! What better way to ponder our own shortcomings in doing justice, loving kindness and remembering our humility before God than to put it side by side with a holiday that's supposed to be about love, but too often isn't.

Oh, don't get me wrong. I love Valentine's Day! I love sappy cards and candy hearts and I adore red roses (the real ones).

But, I also recognize that greeting card descriptions of love pale in comparison to the real thing experienced through our relationships with significant others, family members and close friends. We all know that love cannot be contained in a heart-shaped candy box no matter how big it is. Nor can it exist independently in a bouquet of a hundred red roses. Love is an attitude, a way of life, a way of being in relationship with another that transcends stuff and momentary infatuation or irritation. Love, simply put, is the glue of life that holds things together when everything else around is breaking apart.

So, how wonderful is it that Ash Wednesday falls on Valentine's Day? How wonderful to begin Lent with a celebration of love taken to its deepest level, the love of God for each of us. In Lent, we are given the opportunity to take some time and make the effort to consider carefully how it is that God loves us and why it matters. We are asked to be intentional in weighing out how we show our love for this amazing God so that we can see for ourselves the ways we fall short of who it is God created us to be. As always, God's timing is amazing. Lent begins on Valentine's Day. I can't think of any better way to begin our Lenten observances this year.

Might I suggest you celebrate Valentine's Day, and the beginning of Lent, this year by spending some time thinking about the above words from Micah. Do note they are in the form of a question: what does the Lord require of *you* ...? Lent's a great time to figure this out in the midst of this amazing community of the faithful we call UCC Westerly. Doing justice? Loving kindness? Walking humbly with God? Surely there is something in that mix to pique your interest. Come join us as we ponder life together. I'm sure you'll be glad you did.

Your friend in Christ,
Rev. Ruth



February Birthdays

- 1 – Andy Schilke
- 6 – Heidi Schilke
- 7 – Dorothy Oehrle
- 9 – Jimmy Cornell
- 12 – Alice Dessaulles
- 17 – Katharine Tarasuk
- 20 – Nick Comito

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



Rev. Ruth's Community Office Hours
Thursdays from 2 – 4 pm in February on the
1st, 15th, and 22nd at
The Savoy Bookstore & Café
in downtown Westerly

Rev. Ruth will not be at the Savoy on Feb 8 because she will be attending the farewell party for George Weavill, longtime business manager of the Rhode Island Conference.

Do remember these are all subject to change without notice if the weather gets bad!
 Your friend and chatting partner, Rev. Ruth

~ ~ ~

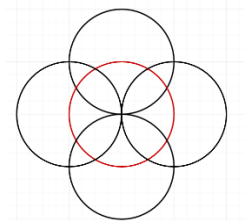
Make a note: Rev. Ruth is taking a little time off and will be away Friday, February 9 through Saturday, February 10. Please contact the Diaconate Person of the week for any pastoral concerns on these two days. Thanks!

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Diaconate Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Telephone #</u>
Feb 4	Bethany Foster	401-539-4003
Feb 11	Ed Stratton	401-596-4740
Feb 18	Jenny Brummund	860-599-1719
Feb 25	Elvis Torres	860-245-4759

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SABBATH CIRCLES NEWS

February Study Materials will be available in hard copy at church on February 4th. Please note that during Lent, the Sabbath Circles will be using the same scriptural focus as worship – exploring the issues of homelessness and affordable housing through the lens of the parables of Jesus.

Our plans for this month:

- Sun, Feb 4 Worship with Communion
- Sun, Feb 11 Worship
 Confirmation @ 11 am
 Valentine Tea from 2-4 pm!
 Volunteers needed!
- Sun, Feb 18 Worship – The Parable of the Lost Sheep
 First Gathering of Lenten Bible Study @ 11 am
- Sun, Feb 25 Worship – The Parable of the Prodigal Son

The 21ST ANNUAL VALENTINE TEA

Annual



Ladies' Night Dinner

sponsored by the Men's Club

Wednesday, February 21st

5:30 p.m. at StoneRidge –

Jerry Brown Rd in Mystic, CT

Tickets: \$35.00 each
Maximum # of people: 25

Menu choices: *Beef Tenderloin, Salmon,
or Chicken Parmesan.*

Please **sign up on the sign-up sheet**
located on the bulletin board near Fellowship
Hall to let us know you are coming and what
your choice of meal is. Please make your
check out to UCC Men's Club and give to Ed
Stratton.

"BOOKS" IS (back) IN THE BUILDING!

**Note: This is the rescheduled date because
of the Jan 30 snow storm!**



Next gathering on Tues, **February 6th @ 6 pm**
Potluck Supper at the church!
Bring your favorite winter comfort food!

Our book for this gathering is:
The Storyteller by Jodi Picoult

Copies available to borrow through the Wilcox
Library in Westerly on the second floor!
Just tell them you're part of
the UCC Westerly book group!



Sunday, February 11th

(Snow date is Sunday, February 18)

2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

*Come and enjoy
Delicate Tea Sandwiches,
Cookies, Fancy Pastries, Fresh Scones,
and a variety of Beverages.*

**Price: \$12.00 for adults
\$6 for children age 8 & younger**

Reservations required
and can be made by **calling the church
office at 860-599-1226 or
emailing us at uccwesterly@sbcglobal.net.**

Then please mail in your check payable
to the United Congregational Church. This will
guarantee that you won't be waiting in line for a
seat! Thank you.



Please **sign up on the
sign-up sheets** on the table in Fellowship Hall.
Volunteers will be needed for bakers, sandwich
makers, sandwich filling makers, and
ingredients donators. We are also looking for
kitchen workers and *wait staff* the day of the
event, as well as *folks who can cook filling
ingredients and prepare fillings* on Saturday.
Please note: All servers and kitchen workers
please bring an **apron** to wear while working
the Tea. Folks who will be in the kitchen also
need **hats**—no exceptions! Gloves will be
provided. Thanks!

MISSION MOMENT



HOMELESS AWARENESS AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

are the focal points of our Lenten Mission projects. Stay tuned for announcements in Rev. Ruth's weekly emails and the Sunday bulletins and on posters around the church for information on the ways in which we can make a difference in our community.



CANNED SOUPS AND FRUITS

are our collection items for the PNC for the months of February and March.



A huge thank-you going out to Susan Ryan-Champouillon, the owner of the now-closed Maize-N-Manna, for her very kind and generous donation of lasagna noodles and dried lima and pinto beans, which have already

been and will continue to be used for our WARM and Harvest Table ministries.

WARM

Thanks for the Men's Club for providing the February 11th meal for WARM.



CONGRATULATIONS to our **ALMOST IRON CHEF WINNERS** for 2018!

- Appetizer – **Erin Blake**
- Salad – **Becky Morrone**
- Main Course – **Katharine Tarasuk**
- Dessert – **Dwayne Spurley**

ALMOST IRON CHEF 2017 – Erin Blake!!

Thanks to everyone who came out and supported this unique and fun event. Deep appreciation to Shirin Platt, Sally Panciera, Becky Morrone, Joann Spurley, Gary Davis, and Bill Morrone for all their efforts to make this event happen.

HARVEST TABLE
*will not meet this month
but we hope you will join us for the*



ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE
Wednesday, February 14 @ 6:30 pm

Lenten Plans in February!

Wed, Feb 14 Ash Wednesday Service @ 6:30 pm
Sun, Feb 18 & 25 *Sunday morning worship* featuring Lenten Sermon Series on the Parables of Jesus (see additional information in the Sabbath Circles article!)

Lenten Bible Study – BIBLE 101; 60 Essential Bible Stories **First gathering will be on Sunday, February 18 @ 11 am; subsequent gatherings to be determined at that time.

Personal Lenten Devotional Guide written by Rev. Ruth will be available on Ash Wednesday. Copies in both narthexes. A .pdf for download will be available on the church website, www.uccwesterly.org.

Mission and Service Opportunities:

- Learn about the issues of homelessness and affordable housing in our area during the “Blessing Moments” of Sunday morning worship.
- Food donations for the food pantry at the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center being received – canned soups and fruits.
- Harvest Home Lenten Collection boxes available in the Bell Courtyard narthex.



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

☺The gardens may be enjoying their winter rest but our Pollinator Garden crew is working on plans for 2018! Watch for the announcement of our first open planning meeting for 2018!

UPDATE ON ANNUAL MEETING and BRAINSTORMING SESSION!



Thanks so much to all who participated in our Annual Meeting Sunday on January 28 including worship, the Annual Meeting and the Brainstorming Lunch which followed. The day was successful beyond anything we had hoped for! There was so much energy and enthusiasm that we decided we need to continue to meet to figure out how we want to organize and structure ourselves to move forward into the future God has in mind for us. Everyone currently serving on Boards and Committees agreed to serve one more year as we continue this brainstorming process and decide how it is we need to redo the by-laws. Our next brainstorming session will be on Sunday, **March 4** immediately after worship. All welcome and urged to attend!!

Our brainstorming work centers on these three questions which everyone is encouraged to consider:

1. What work needs to be done in the church & how do we do it? Said in another way – What boards and committees need to continue and what can we let go of or combine together?
2. How can we make it easier for folks to participate in the work of the church?
3. Who will do the work needed and for how long? (Term limits – yes or no, and if yes, how??)

Join us at our next brainstorming session and share your thoughts! We need everyone!

2018 SUNDAY WORSHIP BULLETINS

This special ministry of the church includes the regular Sunday bulletins and also bulletins that are purchased for special times during the church year (Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, etc.) as well as funeral bulletins. Of course we also have the cost of paper for the regular bulletins and the ink and "wear & tear" on the copier machine to consider. For \$30.00 you can provide bulletins for an **entire month** for your church family. *Please sign up* on the **sign-up sheet** that has been posted near the Flower Chart in Fellowship Hall. Make a check out to the church for the bulletins. Thank you.



New email address for Rev. Ruth –
revruth1121@aol.com.

Please take note of this!

Storm Closing Information



If we have a cancellation at the church due to severe weather, the cancellation will appear on **Channel 8 in Connecticut** and **Channels 6, 10, and 12 in Rhode Island**. You will also receive an emergency email from Pastor Ruth. You can also call the church office (860-599-1226) to hear a special recorded message announcing any cancellation plans.

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	Josh
Ben	Rev. Elizabeth King
Jesse B.	Bill Colprit
Bill & Phyllis Horne	Laura
Devyn Moynihan	Susan Moynihan-Freeman
Ruth King Roes	Mauri Hainsworth
Bill Hoffman	Eli Hammett

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
Secretary: Susan Perreault
Sexton: JoAnn Spurley
Web Master: Heather Stratton

CHURCH OFFICE SPECIFICS

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