

# The Beacon

## JANUARY 2018



**GOOD NEWS from**

**United Congregational Church of Westerly**

**United Church of Christ, Pawcatuck, CT**

**Sunday Worship ~ 9:30 am**

**FROM THE PASTOR ...**

*“Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock and the door will be opened for you.”*  
Matthew 7:7

I can think of no better Scripture than this from the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew for our focus this month and for the year ahead in our wonderful church. We have accomplished so much on so many different fronts in the year just ended. I won't take the time or space to recount everything here but I do encourage you to read the Annual Report which should be out by mid-month in anticipation of our Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 28<sup>th</sup>. Suffice to say that the building and grounds are looking better than they have in years, attendance at our Christmas services was excellent and response to our mission initiatives has been phenomenal. Energy is high in our congregation and that is indeed a wonderful thing.

That's not to say we are without our problems. We're not. Some building issues remain and the budget is tight. Very tight since we lost several givers who passed into God's nearer presence last year. With this year off to a cold and snowy start, heating and plowing costs will be a

concern until warmer weather arrives in spring. Needing our special attention this year too are our human resources, the people power which makes our church function from day to day and keeps us moving forward. This is, in my opinion, our biggest challenge for the year ahead. How do we organize ourselves to do God's work most efficiently, using the people and financial resources we have? How do we find new ways of doing traditional tasks? What might it look like to restructure ourselves for the work needing to be done? How can we find ways for folks to “plug in” to the life of the church in ways which make sense in their lives and make a difference in the church? Discovering these are our challenge for the year ahead.

This is why our Church Council, with the full support of the Deacons and the Trustees, has decided to expand the Annual Meeting of the congregation called for by our by-laws. Traditionally taking place on the last Sunday of January each year, this year's meeting will follow an abbreviated worship service to allow for an expanded meeting format. The first part of the meeting will follow a traditional agenda in terms of receiving the Annual Reports and approving the proposed budget for 2018. Then we will do something different, but no less important! We will be moving into a brainstorming session as we wrestle with our organizational structure and “people needs” for the coming year. A small group of our leaders will be working to plan this meeting and you are welcome to be a part of this process. And, of course, we hope you will take the time and make the effort to be with us for the Annual Meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Details will be forthcoming in the Weekly Email soon.

Matthew reminds us so beautifully that Jesus expects us to ask, search and knock as we confront the needs of our lives, as individuals and as a church. This we will do at the Annual Meeting and throughout the coming year. Please know it will take all of us as we dare to dream new ways of being church together even as we honor our traditions. Every voice, ever person matters in this process. Especially you! I'll be looking for you...

Your friend in Christ,  
*Rev. Ruth*



# January Birthdays

- 3 – Judy Bartlett
- 5 – Peter Hainsworth
- 9 – Douglas Brummund
- 11 – Carolyn LeRoy
- 15 – Liz Walker
- 18 – Lindsay Walker
- 26 – Sonya Johnson
- 28 – Jamie Foster
- 31 – Ben Macko
- 31 – Anna Tarasuk

Happy Anniversary to:

Dan & Jan McCrary – 1-7

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



Our decorated Christmas trees were quite popular this year at the Bazaar, and our supplies are getting low. If you are taking advantage of after Christmas sales, it would be greatly appreciated if you could pick up a small tree or two – 12” to 24” are perfect. We have plenty of lights and plain round ornaments, but other small ornaments would be useful as well.

– Lynn Murray



Rev. Ruth’s Community Office Hours  
Thursdays from 2 – 4 pm in January on the 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 25<sup>th</sup> at The Savoy Bookstore & Café in downtown Westerly

Do remember these are all subject to change without notice if the weather gets bad!

Come and chat about whatever is on your mind and heart.

Your friend and chatting partner, Rev. Ruth



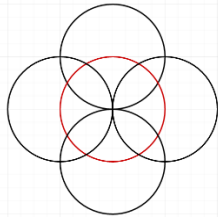
## Diaconate Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Telephone #</u>
Jan 7	Bethany Foster	401-539-4003
Jan 14	Ed Stratton	401-596-4740
Jan 21	to be decided	
Jan 28	to be decided	



## CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

The next Church Council meeting will be held on Sunday, January 21<sup>st</sup> at 11:00 am in the Parlor. All Council Members please submit your reports for the meeting to Cathy Gray by January 5<sup>th</sup>. **Electronic submissions are preferred.** (Cathy’s email address is graygc@mindspring.com) Susan will send you a form via email on December 28<sup>th</sup> to help you make out your report.



## SABBATH CIRCLES NEWS

January Study Materials will be available for Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup>.

Our plans for the Season of Epiphany:

- Sun, Jan 7 Preparing the Sanctuary for the Season
- Sat, Jan 13 HOMELESS AWARENESS VIGIL, Noon to Midnight
- Sun, Jan 14 Homeless Awareness Worship with Guest Speaker, Russ Partridge from WARM
- Sun, Jan 21 Worship – Flashlight Sunday
- Sun, Jan 28 Worship followed by the Annual Meeting & Congregational Brainstorming Session

## News from your Deacons



- The Deacons are looking for feedback concerning *the possibility of changing the time of Sunday worship from 9:30 am to 10:00 am.* Please email the church office or speak to any of the Deacons to voice your opinion, or even to let us know that either time is okay with you!

## HOMELESS AWARENESS VIGIL



A Homeless Awareness Vigil will happen Saturday, **January 13** from *noon to midnight* in the upper parking lot at the church.

Here's Why:

- Homelessness is everyone's problem.
- Jesus tells us that we are to care always for "the least of these."
- We need to understand the problem from the inside out if we have any hope of fixing it.

Here's How:

- We'll spend Saturday afternoon constructing our "camp."
- We'll receive **donations** of blankets, socks & personal care items.
- We'll hear from folks who work with the homeless.
- We'll experience what it is like to live at the mercy of the elements.
- We'll take turns outside by the fire.
- We'll be *making the noon meal for the next day at WARM.* Please see the Missions article for food donations needed.

Here's What:

- If you want to join us for dinner around the bonfire, please bring \$5 to chip in for pizza.
- If you intend to join us in the Vigil outside, PLEASE DRESS APPROPRIATELY!
- **SPECIAL REMINDER TO CONFIRMANTS!** You are expected to attend the Homeless Awareness Vigil! Confirmation Class will take place that evening at **7 pm.** We will be outside by the bonfire, unless it's too cold!

## HARVEST TABLE

*Pondering Light and Darkness*



**Wednesday, January 17 at 5:30 pm**

Join us for a simple supper of soup, salads and breads.

Gluten Free options provided!

Then we will gather in table fellowship for prayer, biblical reflection and conversation.

We'll reflect together on the light and dark places in our lives, and how to find God in each.

Bring a dish to share or just bring yourself.

We'll be expecting you.



*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! Please join us for our first planning meeting of the year on Sunday, **January 7<sup>th</sup> @ 11 am** in the Parlor.

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



Next gathering on Tues, **January 30 @ 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!*

## **CALL FOR THE 54<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEETING**

### **UNITED CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WESTERLY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**The Annual Meeting shall be held on  
Sunday, January 28, 2018  
at 10:00 am immediately following  
*a shortened worship service***

The purpose of the meeting shall be to receive the yearly reports of Officers, Boards, Committees, Organizations and Departments; to elect officers; adopt the annual budget; set up plans for the new year; and vote on any other business that may come before the congregation.

The Treasurer's Report, duly audited, shall be presented.

Respectfully submitted, *Cathy Gray*, Clerk



## **ANNUAL REPORTS ARE DUE**

**on Monday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

**and can be submitted (to Susan) as early as possible!**

**The reports will be ready for distribution on  
Sunday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018.**

All groups, Boards, and organizations should submit an annual report as well as all Treasurers. Please *email* your report to Susan at [uccwesterly@sbcglobal.net](mailto:uccwesterly@sbcglobal.net). Hard copies can be left on Susan's desk if email is not available to you.

If you need more time to complete your report, please contact the church office and let us know. *Thank you.*



**ALMOST IRON CHEF**  
**returns on**  
**Saturday, January 27<sup>th</sup>,**  
**2018 @ 6:00 pm**

We are excited to announce the return of the popular Almost Iron Chef event again this year! So get ready to enjoy the culinary talents of our members as well as folks from the community as our amateur chefs gear up to compete once again.

**The Key Ingredient is BACON!** The categories for dishes are Appetizer, Main Course, Salad or Dessert.

Registration forms for chef competitors are now available in Fellowship Hall, through the church office or can be downloaded through the church's website. Pre-registration of chefs is helpful but not a must. Remember, chefs, to encourage your friends and family to attend to stuff the ballot boxes for you that evening!!! Tickets for chef competitors and tasters will be \$10 again this year. And once again, one ticket = one official AIC ballot! No charge for children age 6 and under.

Watch for additional AIC details in the Weekly Email Update, the weekly Sunday morning bulletin and the Facebook page!

**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.

**MISSION MOMENT**



Yes, WOW!! That is all we could say when we were sorting and packing all of YOUR donations to the three holiday drives sponsored by our church. Agencies on both sides of the river benefitted from your generosity. WARM received countless socks (countless because we gave up trying to count all of them!) and huge boxes of supplies for their living supplies closet, and the PNC received TWO car loads of non-perishable foods (including enough breakfast items to feed the entire town. Well, maybe that is a *slight* exaggeration...) OUR CONGREGATION IS AMAZING! Together we are making a difference in our community. THANK-YOU!!

We are making lasagna for the January WARM meal using whole wheat lasagna noodles donated to us by Maize & Manna for this purpose. *Donations needed of eggs, mozzarella cheese, ricotta cheese and spaghetti sauce.* Items donated in excess of what we need to prepare the lasagna will be donated to WARM as well.

Stay tuned for information regarding our Mission project for Lent. Details will be in the next Beacon!



## PRAYER LIST



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

*Dearest Members & Friends of UCC Westerly,*

*Once again words fail me as I consider your tremendously generous Christmas gifts to me this Christmas. I love all the gift certificates and you know the Savoy ones will especially come in handy. I also love the "To Do" memo pad with my favorite Bible verse. And the ceramic bowl/planter is truly lovely. Thank you for the honor and privilege of being your pastor every day.*

*Love, Rev. Ruth*

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.*

## 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.

### 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