

The Beacon

MAY 2018



GOOD NEWS from

United Congregational Church of Westerly

United Church of Christ, Pawcatuck, CT

Sunday Worship ~ 9:30 am

FROM THE PASTOR ...

“Come to me all you that are weary and carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest.”

Matthew 11:28

As our long delayed spring finally starts to take hold, I'm betting you are feeling like me – too much to do and not enough time to do it in. In fact, the most common thread in conversations I have with people usually comes down to this most precious commodity of time. Some of us just don't have enough of it. Our list of things needing done is always longer than the time we have available. Whether those to do lists are at work or at church or at home, for some of us, busyness can dominate our lives more than we want or desire. But, let's not forget that for others – especially those recovering from illnesses or just dealing with the realities of advancing age – it is the inability to be as busy as we once were that becomes painful. For these folks, time weighs heavy on their hands and hearts. Memories of days gone by when time was short and life was pleasantly filled with so much to do become just that – memories. And this reality holds its own challenges just as being too busy does for others.

This is why I love this text from Matthew quoted above. It speaks, I think, to both of these realities – the weariness of too much to do as well as the heaviness of time when each day seems longer than the next. Jesus promises all of us – the too busy and the not busy enough – rest from all that challenges us, all that makes us weary, all the burdens life forces us to carry whether we want to or not. Jesus walks with us, even carries us at times, through every challenge that comes our way. But, we all know, sometimes Jesus' presence itself is obscured by those very same burdens and worries he seeks to help us bear. Enter the church – that incredible community of the faithful in which we learn and experience what it means to be fully known and fully loved by God. Even when we are overwhelmed by momentary challenges, our faith community closes ranks and lifts us up. They remind us of God's abiding presence through their abiding presence in our lives. They become, quite literally, the hands and feet of God helping us make a way forward where we can find none on our own. This is the gift and blessing of the church. It is the living laboratory where we learn together what it means to love and serve God by loving and supporting one another. It is also where we learn how important it is to carry God's love out into the world to those who need it most.

We will be confirming five Confirmands in our church later this month which is why I wanted us to take a moment to reflect on just what it means to accept the gift of Jesus' presence in our lives, helping us to carry heavy burdens, giving us rest when we are more weary than we can fathom. Confirmation is the time when these young people make the baptismal vows made for them in infancy or childhood for themselves. It is the time when the joy of following Jesus takes on a whole new meaning and significance. You have a job in this process too! You are the living examples of faith lived in the aftermath of Confirmation. That's why I hope you will come and meet these amazing youth at our FAITH STORIES POTLUCK on May 5 and share with them why church, why God and Jesus, matter to you. Candidly, I don't think there's any more important event happening in our church this month. But it won't work without you. Hope to see you then.

Your friend in Christ,
Rev. Ruth



May Birthdays

- 1 – Kenton Michael
- 3 – Brian Johnson
- 4 – Charlotte Korean
- 5 – Gregory Sugar
- 7 – Gene LeRoy
- 9 – Nicholas Schilke
- 20 – Daniel Stratton
- 27 – Susan Moynihan

Happy Anniversary to:

Mark & Elizabeth Dessauls – May 6, 1989

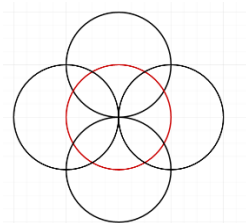
*Please add in your special days by
calling the church office!*



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

Do stop by any time. We can talk about whatever is on your mind and heart – maybe a question on a sermon or about the church; maybe a personal situation that is confusing or hurtful; or maybe life in general or maybe even none of the above! The conversation topic is up to you and the listening is up to me. Come check it out...

Your friend and chatting partner, Rev. Ruth



SABBATH CIRCLES NEWS

May Study Materials will be available in hard copy at church on May 6th—our last unit of study before the summer break. As always, the Sabbath Circles materials will have the same focus as worship this month which continues to be “living sacramentally.”

Our plans for this month:

Sat, May 5 Confirmation Overnight Retreat
At church, noon Saturday to
noon Sunday.
FAITH STORIES POTLUCK
@ 6 pm.

Sun, May 6 Understanding the Sacrament of
Communion

Sun, May 13 Mother's Day Celebrations

Wed, May 16 HARVEST TABLE @ 5:30 pm

Sun, May 20 CONFIRMATION!

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Diaconate Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Telephone #</u>
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May 6	<i>To be determined at the</i>	
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May 13	<i>Deacons' meeting</i>	
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May 20	<i>on May 1st!!</i>	
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May 27		
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MISSION MOMENT

A huge thank-you for all of your donations to our Lenten drives for the PNC and the Homelessness/Affordable Housing Awareness effort. Countless bags of non-perishable canned goods were gratefully received by the staff of the PNC and too-many-to-count packages of much-needed paper supplies were delivered to senior affordable living centers on both sides of the river. Our church makes a difference in the lives of so many.

APRIL AND MAY = BABIES AND LADIES MONTH



The months of April and May are dedicated to our second annual Babies and Ladies Collection. These collections were so appreciated last year by the clients of the PNC that we were requested to do it again! Needed baby items include: *all toiletries, larger sized diapers (sizes 3 and up), baby wipes, and sunblock*. They do **not** need the smaller sized diapers, baby food or formula. Lady needs include all feminine hygiene products. Also requested were the larger sized adult wipes.

WARM

Thanks to the Deacons for providing the WARM meal for May 13.

COMING UP!

During the months of June, July, and August, we will be sponsoring our annual "In the Middle" school supply collection. In the next *Beacon* you will find a list of needed school supply items requested by the teachers and staff of Pawcatuck and Westerly Middle Schools. In the past we have dropped these

donations off at the schools where the guidance counselors have quietly distributed the items to needy students in September and through-out the school year.

It's Scholarship Time



Applications for the **Barbara Murano Scholarship** are available on the narthex counter. Please note that completed applications are due in to the church office Sunday, **May 13**. Electronic submissions can be emailed to uccwesterly@sbcglobal.net.



FAITH STORIES POTLUCK

**to share our faith journey stories
and honor our Confirmands**

**Saturday, May 5 @ 6:00 pm
in Fellowship Hall**

Please bring your favorite potluck supper dish and a willingness to talk with our Confirmands. We're counting on you!

Family Housing Support



THANK YOU to all who so generously donated funds to aid in providing **temporary housing** to families with children who are in a crisis situation. Our Lenten boxes along with a donation from the Annie Broadfoot Fund raised \$1,128.50. *"In as much as you have done it unto the least of these, you have done it unto me."*

- Carolyn LeRoy



ATTENTION CONFIRMANDS!

***Important dates
coming up for you!***

Sat, May 5 to Sun, May 6, Noon to Noon –
**CONFIRMATION OVERNIGHT RETREAT
AT CHURH!**

Sat, May 5 @ 6 pm –
FAITH STORIES POTLUCK

Week of May 7 - 13 – **HOME VISITS**

Sun, May 20 – **CONFIRMATION SUNDAY!**



“BOOKS” IS ON THE ROAD AGAIN!

*Our next gathering is on Thursday, May 3 @ 6 pm at Liz Walker's home. **Speak with Rev. Ruth or Liz for directions!** Lasagna Supper with us providing the extras!*

Our book for this gathering is:
My Beloved World by Sonia Sotomayor
*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!*

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE

The Trustees have approved the following purchases from the Capital Campaign Funds:

1. A diaper changing table – installed in the handicap bathroom outside Fellowship Hall.
2. An Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) – installed on the wall to the left of the door as you enter Fellowship Hall. There is no

required training for its use. Hopefully we will never need it but if it is needed, once the unit is opened it will talk you through how to use it. There are both adult and pediatric electrodes in the cabinet.

3. A new wireless sound system for the sanctuary. This includes wireless microphones for both the pastor and the choir, a sixteen channel mixer, and two new wall mounted speakers. We are awaiting delivery of the wireless microphones to begin installation.

HARVEST TABLE

A unique experience
of community, God and Creation



Wednesday, May 16 at 5:30 pm – 7 pm

Theme: Celebrating the Courage to be Different

Join us for a simple meal of soup and salad followed by prayerful reflection and conversation.

All welcome!



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

Thanks to everyone who was able to stay and work on the church grounds spring clean-up on Earth Day Sunday! We're off to an excellent start! Work on the pollinator garden beds adjacent to the church building will be continuing throughout the spring. Please

Speak with any Pollinator Garden Committee member to volunteer!

Some important dates coming up!

Sat, May 19 – *Tarps pulled from Meadow Site!
Regular hoeing begins!*

Sat, Jun 9 – *Meadow planting! Dedication of
meadow followed by planting
followed by Community Picnic!*



BIBLE 101!
Not your usual Bible Study!!

This unique, wide-ranging and unconventional Bible study continues and new folks are always welcome. We're meeting this month on a weeknight, Thursday, **May 10 @ 6:30 pm** in the Parlor. We will be continuing our discussion of Bible stories chosen by class participants from a list of "60 Essential Bible Stories" in the book, *The Unofficial Handbook of the United Church of Christ*, Caldwell & Preston, editors. Truthfully, we're never quite sure where the conversation will take us and that's what is so amazing! Come join us and see why. As a result, the same assignment stands for our next gathering on May 10!

If you'd like to join us and would like a copy of the *Handbook* or just the list of Bible stories, please let Rev. Ruth know. Or, just pick any two stories you particularly like – one from the Old Testament and one from the New – and come prepared to talk about them. If you need a Bible to use or would like to order your own copy of the *Handbook*, please speak with Rev. Ruth any time.

OUR BRAINSTORMING WORK CONTINUES!



Our conversation on March 4 was again very well attended and the notes from that meeting are available at the church. It was decided to continue the brainstorming conversations through the boards and committees of the church as well as during Fellowship time on Sunday mornings and basically any time folks of the church get together.

Other ideas which are percolating as a result of the ongoing conversations:

- Work on ways of being visibly "family friendly" for families with little ones.
- Consider hosting quarterly all church community events – a potluck with some sort of program like a storyteller or a musical group, etc.
- Welcoming packet and/or gifts for visitors
- Improved community outreach, especially around ONA
- Continued work on improved organizational logistics for the work of the church
- Our folks encouraged to talk to folks from the wider community to get their ideas of what the church might consider doing/offering
- Provide "conference call" opportunities for ongoing conversation.

Our next open brainstorming session will be on **Sunday, May 6**. Please join us and share your thoughts! We need everyone! If a schedule conflict will keep you away, please email me or any of our moderators with your ideas!! We'll be looking for you!



HE'S HERE!

Reese O'Donnell Hainsworth

Born April 23, 2018

7 pounds 8 ounces, 21.5 inches long

Proud Parents: Jenny O'Donnell &

Amanda Hainsworth

Proud Grandparents: Jim & Mariette
O'Donnell and Ruth & Peter Hainsworth

*Rev. Ruth & Peter want to thank
everyone again for the lovely
grandparents shower on April 8! So
very kind & generous!*

**ATTIC TREASURES
COMMUNITY SALE!**



**Saturday, May 26, 9 am – 12 noon
FELLOWSHIP HALL* of UCC Westerly**

**Tables for rent! \$10 per card table;
\$15 for long table**

***The Church will also have its own tables
with items for sale with all proceeds of
those sales staying within the church.
So, donate items to be sold or come and
sell your own stuff!***

***Anyone is welcome to rent a table to sell
items!***

Call or email the church office for details!

#860-599-1226

uccwesterly@sbcglobal.net

**This is a change to what was originally
publicized!*

*An invitation is extended to anyone
who would like to participate
in the message on Mother's Day
Sunday by sharing a story about
a strong woman important in your life.
Please speak with Rev Ruth by May 6.*

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
Laura	Ruth King Roes
Devyn Moynihan	Susan Moynihan-Freeman
Mauri Hainsworth	Bill Hoffman

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