

The Beacon

APRIL 2014



GOOD NEWS from

United Congregational Church of Westerly

United Church of Christ, Pawcatuck, CT

Sunday Worship ~ 9:30 am

FROM THE PASTOR ...

"...on earth as it is in heaven." Matthew 6:10c

I learned a new word today! I know, I know – you'd think these things wouldn't be all that exciting to me by now, but they are. Especially when the new word is a theological concept I had never heard before!

The term I learned is *anthropopathic*. It refers to a specific type of theology -- *anthropopathic* theology. As is often the case with complex – dare I say obtuse – theological terms, this one is based in a fairly simple idea. It refers to the notion of God's personhood. Anthropopathic theology describes the personhood of God through its typically human expression of face, presence and personality. This means considering God as a *person*, not just some divine being operating in a completely different reality from our own. This concept appears in an article by Daniel Ross Goodman in the Harvard Divinity Bulletin (Winter/Spring 2014). It is grounded in the idea that, if we are created in God's image as persons, then God must have a "personhood" too.

What's striking about this concept is that we who claim the title theologian are trained to see all those passages in the Bible, especially the Old Testament, where God is presented in more human-like, personal terms as examples of humans making God over in the image of humans instead of the other way around. Referred to as *anthropomorphizing* God, this notion of making God more human is thus not usually viewed in a positive light. In contrast, this article describes anthropopathic theology as arguing for a God with a real sense of God's own personhood. This makes all those passages where God is longing for a deeper, more committed and loving relationship with the people easier to understand. All those passages where God laments over the faithlessness of the people sound so profoundly personal because they are. God's heart literally is breaking as God's people turn away.

So what does all this have to do with us in our church, in our little corner of the world? And how does it connect with Lent and our focus on the Lord's Prayer as we make our way to Easter? To me, it all comes down to that one little phrase from the Prayer which I quoted above – "on earth as it is in heaven." In these few words, Jesus has us ask God to make our lives more like they would be if we lived face to face with God each day. When we pray Jesus' Prayer we are really asking God to transform us so that our lives can be more like God's dream for us. We can pray in this very personal way because we are created in God's image and likeness. When we pray "on earth as it is in heaven" we are claiming our birthright to live now in hope that God's ways are ours more fully than we ever dreamed. This is the promise of Easter – that new life is more than possible. New life is already among us, and always has been. We have only to see it, claim it and live it. That's the message that sent Jesus to the cross. It's the why of the empty tomb on Easter. On earth as it is in heaven. Imagine that . . .

Blessings,

Pastor Ruth



Birthdays

- 6 Pam Del Pozo-Waldron
- 16 Barbara Johnson
- 25 Dan McCrary
- 25 Travis McCrary
- 28 Emily Dessaulles

Happy Anniversary to:

Douglas & Jenny Brummund – April 25

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

An Invitation to the Women of the Church!



Women's Fellowship Potluck Supper

Women's Fellowship meets next on Tuesday, **April 1 @ 6:00 pm** for a Potluck Supper and Banner-Making Worship. We hope you'll join us and bring a friend!

Mission Memos

THANK YOU to the *Christian Ed Middle School Youth* for providing the **WARM Center meal** in March. For **April 13** Jay & Martha & JJ Macko will be providing the meal.



The Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center (PNC) has requested our assistance in **April** with **peanut butter and jelly, and soap for doing the dishes!** Please bring your items to worship on or before Sunday, **April 13** and we'll get it to the PNC!

Thanks for all your help! Please speak to any member of the Missions Committee with your ideas and questions. – *Dixie Lufbery, Jenny Brummund, Christina Brummund, Peter Hainsworth, Audrey Steinetz, Sandi Davis, and Melissa Stratton.*

Operation Christmas Child



The April donation to Operation Christmas Child will be **combs** and **small hairbrushes**. Many thanks for the March donations of *Band-Aids* and *nail clippers*. In the fall we will be filling shoeboxes with a collection of items for children in underserved areas. Thank you in advance for your help.

– *Lynn Murray*

It's Barbara Murano Scholarship Time
Once Again!

Applications for the Barbara Murano Scholarship are available in the Narthex. Please contact Pastor Ruth if you would like to receive one electronically. Applicants are encouraged to review the application for specifics on the process to be sure they understand what is expected of them in order to receive a scholarship. Applications will be due in to the Church Office no later than Easter Sunday, April 20. Any questions on the Scholarships should be directed to the Deacons through the Church Office.

***Make Your Own
Tacos & Sundaes Supper***

Saturday, May 10th, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

- *Sponsored by the Deacons to raise money to grant yearly scholarships to our church members of any age who are pursuing higher education!*
- *Those interested in applying for the Barbara Murano scholarship are encouraged to help out before, during, or after the dinner if possible.*



Barbara Murano was a member and Deacon of our church. After her death on September 9, 1990, the Diaconate Board established a scholarship in her memory. Scholarships are awarded to members of the church who are continuing their formal education in some manner. To help support this fund and keep it growing, the Diaconate Board has a fundraiser event each year.

Please support this worthy cause and enjoy the food and fellowship.

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Diaconate Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name & Telephone</u>
Apr 6	Lynn Murray (401) 539-7578
Apr 13	Claire Calabretta (860) 536-3625
Apr 20	Becky Morrone (401) 596-1070
Apr 27	Ane Torres (860) 599-5572

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Our Deep Appreciation...

Peter and I would like to extend our deep appreciation to all of you who have been so thoughtful with your expressions of sympathy and consolation in so many ways following the recent death of our sister-in-law Mary Lou. Your love and concern touched us very much, and touches us still.

It's Time to Register!!

Congregational Mission Trip

Thursday, July 31 – Sunday, August 3

**The Providence Experience based at
Irons Homestead, Glocester, RI focusing on
hunger and food insecurity issues in
Providence, RI**

The flyer and registration form with details will be out by March 31. Cost per person is \$125 which includes room, board and transportation to our work sites. The deadline for registrations will be **May 27** so start checking your calendars now! Space is limited so be sure to sign up as soon as you can.

Our schedule for
HOLY WEEK



Palm Sunday – April 13th @ 9:30 am

This powerful service of readings and music begins our Holy Week observances. This service foreshadows the events of Holy Week and Jesus' Passion. Palms will be distributed and the children will enjoy an Easter Egg Hunt in Sunday School.

**Maundy Thursday Soup Supper and
Communion Service –
April 17th @ 6:00 pm in Fellowship Hall**

This service offers an “upper room” experience as we gather around the tables to share a simple meal and remember Jesus' last evening with his disciples.

**Good Friday “Way of the Cross” –
April 18th @ 10:00 am in Wilcox Park,
Westerly**

**“Vigil at the Tomb” Retreat –
Saturday, April 19th @ 9 am – 12 noon**

During this time of study, reflection and prayer we will imagine the agony of the women waiting for the dawn of Sunday morning to anoint the broken, battered body of Jesus. We know how the story ends with the empty tomb – but they didn't. We have to read between the lines of the biblical text to find their story but it is there.

**Easter Sunrise Service – April 20th
6:00 am – Westerly Town Beach (tentative)**

Be with us as we greet the Easter dawn at the edge of the ocean. This brief service will offer prayers, story and song to begin our Easter celebrations.



Easter Sunday – April 20th @ 9:30 am

A joyous celebration of the empty tomb of Easter morning offering beautiful flowers, special music and life renewed and renewing. This is a family worship service with all ages remaining in worship for the entire hour.

UCCW101

This group will meet next on Monday, **April 7 at 6:30 pm** in the Parlor. Our topic: Jesus – who he was, who he is to us today and why it matters. Come with your questions and your favorite story about Jesus in the Bible.

**Annual Outdoor
Spring Clean-Up**

*at the church on Saturday, **APRIL 12,**
10:00 am*



Please join us at the church to spruce things up for Spring. Bring your rakes and gloves. Hope to see you there!

*Please watch your Sunday bulletins
to see if we will be having a*

ROAST PORK DINNER

Saturday, April 26th

5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

A decision will be forthcoming!

Highlights from Trustees' Meeting on March 25, 2014:

- Welcomed new member John Blake
- Elected *William Hoffman* – Chairman
- Discussed Payroll Service for employees
- Discussed roof repairs
- Set April 12 as Outdoor Clean-up Day

CHECK IT OUT!

The Outdoor Ministries Division of the RI
Conference UCC has announced

Summer Camps at Irons 2014

High School Camp – July 13-18

Elementary Mini-Camp – July 27-30

Middle School Camp – August 3-8

Family Camp – August 8-10

Brochures with details are available at the church. Staff for the summer camps are currently being recruited. These are volunteer positions but with some perks. College students volunteering can get some valuable volunteer work experience helpful in applying for scholarships and jobs after graduation. Parents agreeing to work as staff can get a discounted rate for their children to participate in the programs. Also, camperships are available for camp participants. There is a special need for nurses and certified cooks. Please speak with Rev. Ruth for details.



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

Ann Brown	Barbara Simmons
Charlie Wright	Barbara
Madelyn Stratton	Sandi Davis
Fred	Catherine
Jeff	Jim
Millie Silver	Debbie
Shirley Harrington	Lisa
Beverly & Family	Carole Kus
John Dillon	Brian Madill
Vince Amkhamavong, US Marines	
Susan & Devin	Sheryl
David Jones	Doris
Jennifer Clancon	Eugene Ravenelle
Kim Brown	David Stratton
Beverly	Patricia Whipple
Martha Hale	Karen & Bill
Doris Whitehead	Scott & his parents

*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: Darla Rines

Sunday School Contact Persons: Tanya Sylvestre
and Susan Lanphere

Secretary: Susan Perreault

Sexton: Debby Johnson

CHURCH OFFICE SPECIFICS

Mailing Address: 9 Castle Hill Road
Pawcatuck, CT 06379

Telephone # & FAX: **860-599-1226**

E-mail: **uccwesterly@sbcglobal.net**

Website: **www.uccwesterly.org**

Office Hours: Monday, Thursday, & Friday
from 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.