

The Beacon

MARCH 2015



GOOD NEWS from

United Congregational Church of Westerly

United Church of Christ, Pawcatuck, CT

Sunday Worship ~ 9:30 am

FROM THE PASTOR ...

"Your word is a lamp to me feet and a light to my path." Psalm 119:105

Our sanctuary is really dark at night, especially when it's cloudy outside. Since we don't have a light switch by the double doors leading to the upper parking lot, walking out through the sanctuary at night is challenging to say the least. If you're leaving with someone else, it's easier because one of you can walk across to those double doors and flick on the lights in the narthex. This means the second person can see to walk through to the doors without crashing into a pew or the organ bench or anything else that might be in the way. But, this only works if there's someone with you. Otherwise, you have three choices. You can leave the balcony lights on while you walk over to turn the narthex lights on and then walk back to turn the lights off again and then back to the lit narthex. OR, you can convince yourself that you know the sanctuary well enough to walk across in total darkness. I don't recommend this. OR, you can use a flashlight, which is what I have learned to do. It's just a little flashlight so it illuminates just enough for me to see where to put my feet as I walk across to the narthex and out the doors to the parking lot. A lamp to my feet and a light to my path, in a very real sense.

Similarly, I have realized all too well in this long, cold and dreary winter, that as I am driving home from church at night, my headlights only illuminate a very brief distance ahead of me while I make that long drive home. Even when I use the high beams, the light from the headlights shows me just enough of what is ahead that I can continue to make my way forward. This, I think, is also true of our life together in the church. So often, we can only see what's right in front of us – what life makes visible to us in the moment – as we move forward into God's future and our role in it. This means we are always stepping out in faith, trusting that we will have enough light, enough wisdom, enough courage, enough hope to keep moving forward on the path God is revealing before us as individuals and as the church together.

This text from Psalms also has another important qualifier. *God's Word* is to function as a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. God's Word – the Bible – is to help us in our trusting, in our hoping, in our figuring out how it is that God is leading us forward into the future. God's Word in the Bible is indeed foundational to our faith. This is why I urge all of you to participate as you are able in this year's Lenten self-study program which I am calling **Faith Stories**. It is a 40 day schedule of readings which will expose you to *some* of the key stories of the Bible. The Bible is intended to be God's lamp for our feet, God's light for our path and it's important that we take the time to know what's in it and how it is able to speak to us every day. So, I hope you will pick up a copy of **Faith Stories** at the church or contact Susan or myself and we will be happy to send you an electronic version. The Bible readings for the upcoming week are also posted on our Facebook page and you are welcome to post your questions there as well. You can also plan on joining me at one of three **Faith Stories** gatherings in March (see the calendar) where we will talk together about what this experience of reading through the Bible has been like for you. In other words, I am asking you to give up some time this Lenten season and invest it in learning a little more about the book which is foundational to our life and work in the church. I am confident you will find it very illuminating! ☺

Blessings,
Rev. Ruth

BOOKS ON THE ROAD!

**Monday, April 13 @ 6:00 pm
at Carolyn LeRoy's home.**

This time we are reading Our Lady of the Lost and Found by Diane Schoemperlen, a fictional account of the Virgin Mary's decision to spend her vacation in the home of an agnostic writer. Or is it fiction? Come and join us as we discuss this unusual book over dinner at Carolyn LeRoy's home so please call Carolyn (401-333-8812) to RSVP and get directions! Hope to see you then!

Mission Memos



CHOIR NEWS



***Open Meeting of the
Music Committee
Sunday, March 1st
@ 11 am in the parlor***

Join us for this important conversation about hymnals and special music and new possibilities! Dav Cranmer, Our Interim Organist and Choir Director, will be with us as we finalize plans for Holy Week and Easter. Everyone welcome!

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.

Please tune to one of these stations for more information about the cancellation of worship or other church events.

The Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center (PNC) has requested our assistance in **March** with **tissues and hand cream or lotions**. Please bring your items to worship on or before Sunday, **March 8** and we'll get them to the PNC!

The **Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center** helps to feed Westerly residents too! Please know that our monthly dedicated offering is so appreciated. To encourage donations anytime, one Red Bucket will remain in the Bell Courtyard area of the narthex. *Feel free to contribute canned goods any Sunday.* The need is so great!

The **PNC** is also accepting donations of **used children's books**. The books help keep children busy while parents are filling out forms. Children are also able to take the books home with them. Dixie Lufbery faithfully delivers the UCC donations to the PNC every week. Thank you, Dixie!

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

CONGREGATIONAL MISSION TRIP IN THE WORKS!

More details in the April newsletter...



March Birthdays

- 1 – Fred Tarasuk
- 1 – Madelyn Stratton
- 7 – Shirin Platt
- 10 – Adam Tarasuk
- 12 – Emma Stratton
- 19 – Edward Stratton
- 30 – Brenda Cornell

Happy Anniversary to:

Ed and Nancy Schilke – March 16

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

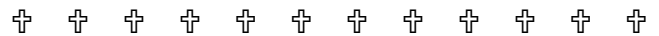
Next Generation BAZAAR BINDER

We are in the process of compiling a “next generation” Bazaar Binder. This will contain information that can be used by someone stepping in to help at Christmas bazaars of the future. Everyone who has ever been an area coordinator or worked in a particular area of the bazaar for a period of time has valuable information about the behind-the-scenes work in that area. Let’s get it all in writing so it can be shared with newcomers, so others won’t feel intimidated volunteering, and so we can document all the little things that make our bazaar so special. **Forms** are on the narthex counter. *Please fill in and return to Lynn Murray.* Please feel free to add any additional details as needed!



Diaconate Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name & Telephone</u>
Mar 1	Carole Kus (860) 822-3787
Mar 8	Jay Macko (860) 705-3512
Mar 15	Becky Morrone (401) 596-1070
Mar 22	Elvis Torres (860) 599-5572
Mar 29	Ane Torres (860) 599-5572



Corned Beef & Cabbage DINNER

Saturday, March 14th at 5:30 p.m.

**Traditional Corned Beef & Cabbage
Homemade Dessert & Beverage**

Admission price: Adults \$10.00;
Children \$5.00

Everyone is welcome to attend. Please wear your green!

Help is needed in the kitchen at 10:00 am on Friday, March 13, to cook the meat and peel the vegetables. A sign-up sheet will be posted for desserts and for helpers!

One Great Hour of Sharing

The core of the United Church of Christ is transforming lives! Why? Because *we are one* in Christ. With our gifts to **One Great Hour of Sharing** the United Church of Christ offers hope and wellbeing to people around the world. Lives are transformed through support that provides shelter, food, water, medical supplies, healthcare, education and disaster relief in the US and internationally.

Offering envelopes are available on the table at the entrance to the sanctuary or in the newsletter for your donations. The collection will be received at our church on **March 15th**.
“Sharing Resources – Changing Lives.”

Our schedule for **HOLY WEEK**



Palm Sunday – March 29th @ 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 “Upper Room” Service – April 2nd @ 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 “Stations of the Cross” Community Service – April 3rd @ 10:00 am in Wilcox Park, Westerly

Easter Sunrise Service – April 5th Misquamicut Beach

6:00 am – Prayers to greet the Easter dawn
6:30 am – Festive Service of Worship

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 5th @ 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.



CONGRATULATIONS to our ALMOST IRON CHEF WINNERS for 2015!

- **Overall Almost Iron Chef – Adam Tarasuk** with assist from Mom, Kathy
- **Best Appetizer – A TIE!! – Reanu Morton & Whitney Stamm**
- **Best Entrée – Pam Del Pozo-Waldron**
- **Best Side Dish – Linda Evans**
- **Best Dessert – Adam Tarasuk** with assist from Mom, Kathy

It's Barbara Murano Scholarship Time
Once Again!

Barbara Murano Scholarship Applications will be available on March 1st. This year, there is an alternate form for repeat applicants, with a different set of questions. Applications are due back to the Board of Deacons by April 19th. Applications may be reviewed by the board, with an interview to follow. Since the Barbara Murano Scholarship Dinner supports this fund, we request that recipients assist at this dinner on Saturday, May 9th. Scholarship will be presented on Scholarship Sunday in June.

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

All boards and committees of the church must please send a representative to the next **Church Council meeting** scheduled for Sunday, **March 8 at 11:00 am** in the Parlor. All Council Members please submit your reports for the meeting to Cathy Gray by **March 1st**. **Electronic submissions are preferred.** (Cathy's email address is graygc@mindspring.com) Susan will send you a form via email on February 27th to help you make out your report.

ATTIC TREASURES SALE

Saturday, April 25th
8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.



Clean Saleable Items are appreciated and *some treasures would be nice too!* They can be brought *any time!* Please leave them downstairs – 1 flight down, second door on the right! Please no big items, such as couches, and no computers. *Women's Fellowship* will be coordinating this event.



WE NEED YOUR HELP!!

Two important ministries of this church need people power to happen and that means you! Please consider helping out with one or both of these important *monthly commitments* the church has!

#1 – **Coffee hour hosts.** Sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall. You can just do the coffee. You can also provide goodies, or not. You can just clean up. But we need everyone to help in some way! Coffee hour is a critical time when visitors and friends get to know how wonderful our church is and if it doesn't happen it makes us look bad to any visitors we may have that day. It's just not fair that the Deacons have to scramble to do it almost every Sunday. So, won't you please sign up for one Sunday? Talk with Lynn Murray for more details.

#2 – **WARM CENTER Meal** – 2nd Sunday of every month. We have promised WARM we will provide one meal a month on the 2nd Sunday of every month so volunteers are needed to prepare a meal for 60 people and get it over to WARM by early afternoon on that Sunday OR provide a cash donation of any amount to help cover the cost of one or more of the 12 meals we promise to provide each year. We need someone for March so please speak with Rev. Ruth asap!



SWEET HOUR OF PRAYER

will continue in its scattered rather than gathered format for the time being, meaning our prayer ministry will happen through prayer time during worship on Sunday mornings and

through the Prayer Tree as requested. If you would like to become a member of the Prayer Tree as someone to be contacted to pray for members and friends of our church, please speak with Prayer Tree Coordinator, Ane Torres (860-460-7807) at any time.



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

CHRISTIAN ED NEWS:



- ❖ Sunday School all month in March!
- ❖ Our Inaugural **Grandparents Day** will be **Sunday, March 15th**, with Linda Evans presenting our (Great) Grandparent message. All children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren, are welcome to come. Toddler care will be available.
- ❖ A reminder of the books and activity bags located in the pew to the right of the organ for those Sundays when children remain in worship.
- ❖ **REMEMBER!** The best way for children to learn faith is to experience faith first hand through the adults in their lives whom they love and trust. *“Faith is caught, not taught.”* William Willimon

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| Ann Brown | Barbara |
| Madelyn Stratton | Sandi Davis |
| Fred | Catherine |
| Jeff | Jim |
| Millie Silver | Debbie |
| Shirley Harrington | Lisa |
| Beverly & Family | Carole Kus |
| John Dillon | Brian Madill |
| Sheryl | David Jones |
| Doris | Jennifer Clancon |
| Eugene Ravenelle | Kim Brown |
| David Stratton | Beverly |
| Karen & Bill | Shirley M. |
| Scott & his parents | Gerry |
| David Hall | Family of Nina Poeta |
| William Underhill III | Martha |
| David Keith | Linda Dessauls |
| Timothy Nugent | |

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
Interim Organist: David Cranmer
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.