

The Beacon

NOVEMBER 2015



GOOD NEWS from

United Congregational Church of Westerly

United Church of Christ, Pawcatuck, CT

Sunday Worship ~ 9:30 am

FROM THE PASTOR ...

“...in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” Genesis 12:3b

This phrase is part of the very beginning of the story of two of the most important personages of the Old Testament we know as Abraham and Sarah. As the story of their relationship with God begins, they are known by other names, Abram and Sarai. I chose their story as one of the foundational stories for the YES program this year because it is one in which the response to God's call to new life and new beginnings is most readily visible. At the time God tells them they are going to start over and begin a new life, Abram and Sarai are in their 70's! And yet, they respond as God asks them to, leaving everything and everyone they know in order to undertake the journey to the new land God has promised them. God also makes them another promise, stated in the text above – “... in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” Now that's a promise! And, an incredible legacy to all of us still today who seek to discern and follow God's plan for our lives.

Being a blessing to all families is, I think, the essential purpose of the church – any church, but especially our church at this moment in its life. We have already been a blessing in so many lives in so many ways. That is evident everywhere you look in

the church almost any time you visit. You will hear new life in the conversations bouncing around Fellowship Hall every Sunday. You will see new life in the children, youth and adults participating so enthusiastically in the YES program each week. You will hear new life in our music program as music minister, Dav Cranmer, guides our choir in the celebration of their own unique gifts and talents. You will experience new life in all the many activities visible on our church calendar at any time. Truly, ours is a church which “gets” what it is to be “church” – a gathered community of God's Beloved people seeking to support one another for life and ministry in our own lives each day. Worship on Sunday in our extraordinary building is where we come each week to be renewed and re-energized for this work God has laid on our hearts. Whether it's donating socks and underwear for the homeless, or cash for the Deacons Fund or baking bread for Communion or cookies for fellowship time or a collation or one of our Teas, this is a church which understands what it means to give generously from our hearts of our time, talent and treasure.

Your loving and generous hearts are what visitors sense when they come into the building! The warmth and kindness in our church are so real you can feel them when you walk in the door and that is simply extraordinary. That's what gives me such hope for our future. Pledges and gifts to the Capital Campaign continue to come in with some projects finally underway while others are moving forward through the costing/funding process. As we're making our way through the annual Stewardship campaign, we're hearing wonderful stories of the difference this church makes in the lives of real people you know and see here regularly. Even when we encounter challenging situations that momentarily rattle our sense of security in this beloved place, we still rally and find a way to turn it into a positive as recent events have proven. Being a blessing? On it! But there is still so much more we can do, so much more God is calling us to do and to be.

So, I hope you'll take some time to consider for yourself all the ways this church has been a blessing in your life and all the ways you want to see it be a blessing for others moving forward. I hope you'll pledge generously to the Stewardship Campaign on Stewardship Sunday, November 15 and join us for the annual festive Brunch afterward.

If you haven't yet made a pledge or gift to the Capital Campaign, I hope you'll recognize it's not too late! The simple truth is that it takes all of us doing what we can when we can for this church to continue to be the blessing God has called it to be, called us to be, in our little corner of the world. So, how blessed are you feeling?

Your friend and companion in Christ,

Rev. Ruth



November Birthdays

5 – Megan Gray

6 – Kali Bogue

8 – Amanda Hainsworth

21 – John Walker

21 – Rev Ruth

23 – Vera M. Leming

25 – Christina Brummund

26 – Alison Schilke

26 – Sara Schilke

29 – Caleb Stratton

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

Confirmation Meeting

on November 15!!

Grab some breakfast at the Stewardship Brunch and then join us in the Parlor by 11:15 am!



Open Music Committee Meeting – Sunday, November 1st, @ 11 am in the parlor

Our next Open Music Committee meeting will take place on Sunday, November 1st at 11 am in the Parlor. Join us as we talk about what music we'd like to see as a part of Sunday worship and also what musical opportunities might exist for the special holiday worship services in December. Dav and Rev. Ruth are also really interested to hear your ideas about how we might be able to bring local musicians into the church for worship and other special events, as we were able to do last year. Everyone is welcome to these gatherings – no musical expertise or experience required!!!

Mission Memos

For November & December



The Polar Fleece Express!!

Please join the fun on **Thursday, November 5th, from 6:30 – 8:30 pm** as we kick off our Polar Fleece Express with an evening of cutting and sewing fleece mittens of all sizes for the needy in our own community and in Providence. Although materials will be provided, please feel free to bring your own if you'd prefer, and your portable sewing machines! Old sweaters that could be cut up for extra warmth would also be appreciated.

Collection boxes will be at both entrances of the sanctuary during November and December for your donations of gloves, mittens, scarves and hats. Our traditional Giving Tree will be in the sanctuary in December.

The **Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center** helps to feed Westerly residents too. *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!

Thanks for all your help! Please speak to any member of the Missions Committee with your ideas and questions –*Melissa Stratton, Dixie Lufbery, Sandi Davis, Peter Hainsworth, Claire Calabretta, Darla Rines or Kathy Sugar.*

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE!

Be sure to check out the new Capital Campaign bulletin board in Fellowship Hall to see the action plan for moving forward developed at the Leadership Retreat with Peter Saros on October 17. Things are happening!



YES! *There's lots going on for Children and youth in November!*

Sunday, Nov 1 – All Saints Day Service; YES session following Communion will be Art Engagement with Jenn

Sunday, Nov 8 – Service Engagement preparing the WARM Center meal with Tanya

Sunday, Nov 15 – Story Engagement

Sunday, Nov 22 – *Thanksgiving Sunday!*
Nature Engagement with Jay

Sunday, Nov 29 – No YES program due to Thanksgiving Holiday Weekend

BOOKS IN THE PARLOR!



**Monday, December 14th
@ 5:30 pm**

Join us for some finger foods (which you will bring) and great conversation about a lovely Christmas story we have chosen as our next book. *Paper Angels* by Jimmy Wayne is available through interlibrary loan. It's also available online as an e-book or you can purchase a copy of the book through Amazon for as little as \$4.

BOOKS is also planning ahead a little so you can too! Our first winter book will be *I Am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai with Christina Lamb. Malala is the girl who stood up for education in Afghanistan only to be shot by the Taliban. She miraculously survived and continued her advocacy for education for which she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014, its youngest recipient ever.

Also on the table for consideration by BOOKS is the classic *To Kill A Mockingbird*. Noteworthy in regard to this book is that it is also one folks across the RI Conference UCC are being urged to read as preparation to attend the play based on the book during its run at Trinity Rep in Providence in March. Recommended by the Racial Justice Facilitators group of the Sacred Conversations on Race initiative in our Conference, this classic is a provocative look at a key moment in the history of race relations in this country. If you are interested in reading this book and attending the play, within the context of our own BOOKS group or on your own, please be in touch with Rev. Ruth so she can have tickets for the play reserved for us with event organizers.

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Diaconate Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name & Telephone</u>
Nov 1	Lynn Murray (401) 539-7578
Nov 8	Elvis Torres (860) 599-5572
Nov 15	Ane Torres (860) 599-5572
Nov 22	Becky Morrone (401) 596-1070
Nov 29	Carole Kus (860) 822-3787

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From Your Friends on the Stewardship Committee

During this time on our church calendar, we are again pondering the question, "Am I doing what I can to be a steward of UCC Westerly?" It is time to make a commitment to present ourselves completely to God as his servants with no strings attached. Be it time, talent or pledge of money, can you give with the spirit of true peace and joy knowing that you are doing God's will? We hope so!

Our Stewardship Campaign for 2016 kicked off on **October 11th** and will continue through **November 8th** culminating with pledges received and dedicated on **November 15**. Our annual **Stewardship Brunch** will take place after worship that Sunday so we hope you'll plan now to attend. A sign-up sheet for that event will be up shortly.

We hope you'll join us in worship during this stewardship season as four of your UCC Westerly friends talk about our church, what it means to them and why they give as they do. What we each do, does make a real difference. We'll be looking for you!

Janet Allen Carolyn LeRoy Sally Panciera



Family Housing Support

THANKS to all of you who donated towards the Family Housing Support walk in the park. Our church raised \$175.00 of the over \$2,000.00 contributed that day. It is a very worthwhile local cause that provides emergency housing for families with children.

-- Carolyn LeRoy, Linda Evans, and Ed Stratton

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BAZAAR & TEA & SILENT AUCTION

Saturday, December 5, 2015

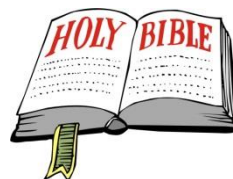
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Please support our annual event!

Bazaar sign-ups are on the far wall in Fellowship Hall. If you have any questions, please ask any church member for details.

Bake Room – We are asking once more for your donations of homemade goodies for our Bake Room. Cookies, cakes, pies, breads, quick breads, candy, fudge, buckeye balls, baked beans, preserves, or any of your family specialties are welcome! Thank you for your continuing generosity.

- Carolyn LeRoy, Shirin Platt



Have you ever wondered if you could read the WHOLE BIBLE?

We're going to attempt to do just that in 2016, guided by the book *The Bible Challenge*, Murek P. Zabriskie, ed. But, you'll also need a good, readable bible to participate as well. If you're interested in ordering a new bible for this ambitious endeavor, please speak with Rev. Ruth as soon as possible.



**3rd Annual ALMOST
IRON CHEF COMPETITION**

***Saturday, January 23rd,
2016***

This event is just around the corner and coming up fast!! Watch for details in the Weekly Email Update, the weekly Sunday morning bulletin and the Facebook page! And be thinking about what you think the secret ingredient for this year should be....



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

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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 |
| Beverly | Karen & Bill |
| Shirley M. | Timothy Nugent |
| Scott & his parents | Gerry |
| William Underhill III | |
| Family of Gary Dobson | Hope |
| Connie | Nicci & Jeff |
| Bob & Ann | Sharon Brooks |
| Family of Doris Whitehead | |

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
Sunday School Contact Persons: Tanya Sylvestre
and Susan Lanphere
Secretary: Susan Perreault
Sexton: Debby Johnson

CHURCH OFFICE SPECIFICS

- Mailing Address:* 9 Castle Hill Road
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Website: **www.uccwesterly.org**
Office Hours: Monday, Thursday, & Friday
from 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.