

The Beacon

SEPTEMBER 2014



GOOD NEWS from

United Congregational Church of Westerly

United Church of Christ, Pawcatuck, CT

Sunday Worship ~ 9:30 am

FROM THE PASTOR ...

"I can do all things through God who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13

As I think about it, this is probably the first Bible verse I ever memorized. It's an odd choice in some ways as a verse to be memorized by a young child – I was probably 7 or 8 at the time. More common verses would be something like the 10 Commandments or the 23rd Psalm or the Great Commandment from the Gospels. But I didn't learn this verse because a pastor or Sunday School teacher told me to. I learned this verse because it was my mother's favorite, one she repeated daily and one she made sure I learned "by heart" as soon as I was old enough to do so.

This verse was my mother's lifeline, quite literally. She struggled with anxiety and depression all of her adult life and yet was determined not to let this interfere with how she wanted to live her life. This verse was how she did it. I have very vivid memories of being driven to school as a child with my mother calmly and slowly repeating these words as we

puttered along because my mother hated to drive, at least at that point in her life. She didn't get her driver's license until almost the age of 40 and then she only did because she had to. My dad had just gotten a huge promotion out of the steel mill and into management, great news for our family but it was a position that required a lot of travel. So, my mother had to learn how to drive because she had three kids and an aging mother to care for. And she did, Paul's words to the Philippians carrying her through every moment behind the wheel for more than a few years.

As I think about what lies ahead for our wonderful church now in its 50th year as a "united" congregation, I am thinking this verse speaks to us just as powerfully as it did to my mother. This church has had its share of challenges in the past and there is no question that this church needs to grow in order to survive and thrive in the years ahead, as our founding members had envisioned. What it will take for us to grow remains unclear, but a wonderful spirit and energy is firmly rooted here pulling us forward into a future bright with promise. My hope is that as we do move forward, we will hold on tight to this lifeline verse – "I can do all things through God who strengthens me." Imagine that! God is with us every moment of every day, emboldening us to dream new dreams and hope new hopes. God is with us always, as individuals and as a church, enabling us to handle anything and everything that comes our way.

So, as the program year at the church begins anew this month, with some changes and new possibilities in the works, I hope we embrace these words of Paul's as the lifeline they are. "I can do all things through God who strengthens me." I can face this loss of a loved one. I can deal with this illness. I can handle this tough situation at work. I can open my mind and heart to doing things in new ways, trusting that God is guiding me and our church forward into the future. I can hold on to the simple truth that there is nothing God and I can't handle together. Sounds like a plan to me ...

Rev. Ruth



**“Sing to the Lord a
New Song!”**

***Join us at a special open
meeting of the
Music Committee on
Sunday, September 7
@ 11 am in the parlor!***

We have some exciting ideas about new things we can do in our music program in the year ahead and we want to hear yours! Join us at this special meeting and let’s see what happens when we consider all the ways we might be able to “sing to the Lord a new song!” Please speak with Doug Brummund or Brenda Cornell with any questions.



***WE HOPE YOU WILL JOIN US
for worship at 9:30 am on
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14
for
RALLY DAY &
The MISSION TRIP Service***

CHRISTIAN ED NEWS:

- Join us for **Rally Day** on Sunday, September 14 as we commission our leaders and learners for a new Sunday School year!
- Make a note! Middle School and High School age youth are invited to attend the RI Conference Youth Event on Sunday, September 21 in the afternoon. Details to follow soon.

Come and hear first-hand from our Mission Trip participants about how they spent those four days in mid-summer. Why did we go and do what we did? What did we learn about hunger and homelessness? How did we encounter God in the midst of all we experienced? Life changing moments happened and continue to happen as we process what we experienced and what God might be asking us to do as individuals and as a church as a result. This service is our sharing with you what we experienced. You won’t want to miss it...



***September
Birthdays***

***SWEET HOUR OF PRAYER
RESUMES THIS MONTH
With a slight new twist!!***

- 6** Brian Edmond
- 16** Aidan Stratton
- 26** Jan McCrary

The Sweet Hour of Prayer group will resume meeting once again on Thursdays this Fall with a slight change. The prayer fellowship will continue to gather at **6 pm** for 30-40 minutes of shared reflections and prayer. New this year will be a brief **Bible study** which will take place from **5:30 – 6:00 pm**. Folks are invited to come to either or both. Hope to see you then!
P.S. Requests for the Prayer Group are welcome and should be given to Rev. Ruth.

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

Mission Memos

THANK YOU to *the Trustees* for providing the **WARM Center meal** in **July** and for **August** our thanks to *everyone* for providing donations to the Deacons Emergency Fund. For **September 14** we will be relying on your donations to the Emergency Fund to provide the meal. We appreciate your generosity.



The Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center (PNC) has requested our assistance in **September** with **cans of pineapple and mandarin oranges**. Please bring your items to worship on or before Sunday, **September 14** and we'll get them to the PNC!

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

Neighbors In Need

"Imagining another world where literacy is no longer a concern!"

The UCC "Neighbors in Need" offering will be collected on **October 5**. This special mission offering of the UCC supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One third of the offering supports the Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM). Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM), to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects. Envelopes are available in the newsletter. Please give generously.



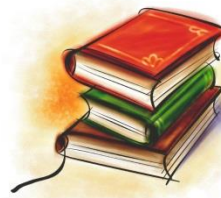
Diaconate Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name & Telephone</u>
Sep 7	Bethany Foster (401) 539-4003
Sep 14	Becky Morrone (401) 596-1070
Sep 21	Jay Macko (860) 705-3512
Sep 28	Elvis Torres (860) 599-5572



LOOKING FOR COLLEGE CREW VOLUNTEERS ONCE AGAIN!

We are once again looking for folks willing to serve on our "college crew" to keep in touch with our college kids via letters and care packages. This program was very successful last year so we want to keep it going. If you're interested, kindly add your name to the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board outside Fellowship Hall!



***What are you doing on
OCTOBER 25?
Consider representing our
church at
SUPER SATURDAY!***

Consider investing some of your time in attending an incredible learning opportunity being sponsored jointly by the RI and MA Conferences of the UCC. Flyers with details are available in the narthex. Worship, workshops, a guest speaker from the National UCC and resources galore on issues critical to the local church will make up the day. Speak with Rev. Ruth with any questions.

SAVE THE DATE:

Saturday, **OCTOBER 11** – **A MEAT LOAF DINNER** will be served in Fellowship Hall. This is sponsored by **Women's Fellowship & the Kitchen Committee**. Please watch the bulletin and the next newsletter for more details!



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

REMINDER!

PLEASE sign up to host Fellowship Time after worship every Sunday. The sign-up sheet is next to the Flower Chart. Thank you.

Irons Homestead

We received the following email from Rich MacKay, Vice-President of Outdoor Ministries:

The Outdoor Ministries Committee is hosting a retreat at Irons on **Saturday, September 13**, from 9:00 am to noon. We are sure many Conference members have a vision for Iron's future, and we want to hear from you. Everyone interested in outdoor ministry, camping, or Irons is invited to attend and discuss exactly what Iron's missions should be for the future.

Iron's camping program has improved greatly over the past 2 years. Now such questions have arisen as: *How do we afford paid staff or recruit enough volunteers to avoid cancellations? How do we fundraise? What sort of camps do we offer? Do we offer just camping or other sorts of retreats, meditations, meetings, religious programs?*

Please contact myself or Rev. Geary, Irons Director with any questions. Thank you very much for your time and attention.

Emails for:

Rich MacKay ourmac55k@yahoo.com
Rev. Geary jgeary@ricucc.org

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	Doris Whitehead
Scott & his parents	Vivian Roode

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

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Website: www.uccwesterly.org

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