

The Beacon

SEPTEMBER 2018



GOOD NEWS from

United Congregational Church of Westerly

United Church of Christ, Pawcatuck, CT

Sunday Worship ~ 9:30 am

FROM THE PASTOR ...

“Hear O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise.” Deuteronomy 6:4-7

These words, known as the Shema in Judaism, are the cornerstone of faith for Jews and Christians the world over. Jesus’ version of the Great Commandment appears in both Matthew and Mark: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. The second is like it. You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:37-39) These texts – one from the Old Testament and the other from the New – form the foundation on which all of the stories, all of the teachings, all of the wisdom of our faith tradition are built. If we don’t know these two texts, if we don’t understand them and do our best to incorporate them into life as we live it each day, then our faith will forever be incomplete.

I wanted us to begin our new program year this fall by pausing to consider and reflect on the Shema and the Great Commandment precisely because they embody the goals of how God expects us, needs us, to live our lives as people of faith each day. In order to understand these powerful words, and what they truly mean, we need to go back to the beginning, back to the basics of our faith and how it is the Bible informs that faith, our worship and our mission as God’s people. This is why the Deacons and I have decided to spend this fall focusing on some key stories of the Old Testament in worship and beyond. As Christians, we know many of the stories of Jesus and even a few about Paul and the other apostles but how many of the Old Testament stories do we know? Sure, we may know the names of Adam and Eve, Noah and Abraham but why should we? Or Jacob, or Joseph or Moses or Samuel or David? We know the names but do we know their stories? Do we have any clue why they are integral pieces to faith we profess each day as followers of Jesus? We’re proposing to re-discover this together this fall as a congregation and family of faith in this place.

Lots of other exciting stuff going on here at the church this fall as usual! We’re revamping worship just a tad to make room for more voices and more stories so please check that out here in the *Beacon* and decide how you might like to participate. A new weekly Wednesday evening service called “Sanctuary” begins on September 5 at 6 pm offering a much requested midweek worship option. Sabbath Circles, our at home version of Sunday School, returns this year in a slightly new format as a weekly insert to the order of worship.

Fall comes round once more and exciting things are happening here at UCC Westerly. We hope you’ll be a part of them as you are interested and able. Do know we miss you when you aren’t here and we hold you in prayer always. We’ll be looking for you!

Your friend in Christ,

Rev. Ruth



September Birthdays

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

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

CONGREGATIONAL PLANNING MEETING & LUNCH!



Sunday, September 2 @ 11 am in Fellowship Hall
Lunch provided with free will offering gratefully received.

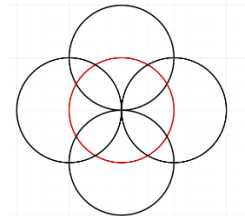
Join us to review a specific plan as a starting point for concrete planning so we are ready to act and move forward at our January Annual Meeting!
All voices and opinions matter!!



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

Come by any Thursday and chat. I'd love to hear your questions about the Old Testament Stories sermon series. I'm also really interested in learning any and all trivia you may have to share on our church or either of our parent churches – Broad Street Christian or Pawcatuck Congregational!

Your friend and chatting partner, Rev. Ruth



SABBATH CIRCLES® NEWS

We are excited to announce that **Sabbath Circles®**, our at home Sunday School curriculum, is returning this Fall but with a new twist!

A simple Sabbath Circle lesson, based on the Old Testament story for the week, will appear as an insert in the order of worship each Sunday as well as in a weekly post on the website and the church's Facebook page.

Make a note!! You really need a Bible of your own to get the most out of Sabbath Circles and Sunday worship!

Speak with Rev. Ruth for help in ordering one!!!



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

- Appearances are deceiving as our Meadow in the making proves!! The Meadow did not grow in as we hoped nor did it fail completely. The weather was so hot and dry and the church's water access for the meadow was not as anticipated due to technical difficulties with the plumbing which we are in the process of correcting with the assistance of the Trustees. But, in the meantime, the Meadow grew in robustly with more weeds than anticipated but still some good pollinator plants. After much discussion and conversation with our experts, we decided to mow it and keep it mowed, letting it winter over to see what comes up next spring. Then, we'll "edit" and move forward!!
- Our Rain Garden and Rain Barrel continue doing what they are supposed to do. In the garden, extreme heat killed off some of the tinier seedlings which will be replaced but the garden is working well as we learned during the heavy storms in August. Exciting to see!
- We are in the final planning phases on the installation of the Labyrinth which we hope to break ground for some time in September. Many hands will be needed for the day we lay the paths or "circuits" of the labyrinth. Watch for details!
- In conjunction with the Pollinator Gardens Project, the Trustees have put together a plan for care of the other parts of the property which are not part of the Project. *Check out the sign-up sheet outside Fellowship Hall to "adopt" a part of the property for a little "TLC" when you have time.*

***Announcing a new midweek worship,
reflection & study opportunity...***



***Beginning on Wednesday, September 5
6-6:30 pm
in our sanctuary***

***A weekly guided experience of quiet
reflection and prayer for those seeking
comfort, hope, healing and sanctuary from
all that weighs heavy on the heart.
Everyone welcome!***



Diaconate Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Telephone #</u>
Sep 2	Lynn Murray	401-539-7578
Sep 9	Jenny Brummund	860-599-1719
Sep 16	<i>Remaining dates to be determined at meeting on September 5th!</i>	
Sep 23		
Sep 30		



MISSION MOMENT

What successful summer collections we had because of YOU, each and every one of you in the congregation!! We collected so many school supplies that we were able to divide the goods between Westerly and Pawcatuck Middle Schools. There will be plenty of school supplies to help our local middle school students who will continue to need pencils, paper, binders, glue sticks, etc. during the entire school year. Thank you so much!

In addition, our collection of pasta and sauce, at the request of the PNC, was also greatly successful. Great job!!

Now, on to the Fall!

MISSION IN MOTION



Sunday, September 30, 2018

Our September Mission Sunday will be celebrated on Sunday, September 30 as we prepare our **Third Annual All-church Meal for WARM** during the morning service. Please join us as we put Mission in Motion to prepare our following traditional meal (a real favorite, we are told!) for our friends at WARM:

Sloppy Joes

Pasta Salad

Vegetables and dips

Watermelon

Heavenly Ambrosia

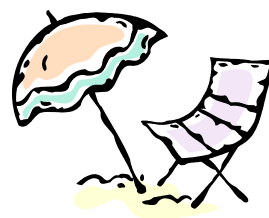
As usual, there will be food stations set up in Fellowship Hall and the kitchen with all of the food and utensils you need to help create your dish. Mission Committee members will be manning each station to help and Rev. Ruth will provide activities for those who would prefer not to cook, stir, or chop.

We will deliver and serve the meal to WARM after church as their noon meal. No more than 4 or 5 people are needed to serve, although we could use some extra help to transport the food over to Westerly.

Looking forward to this great time together!

Our PNC collection for September and October will be **lunch-themed**. The PNC has requested **soups, canned tuna and meats, and jams and jellies for those PBJ's**. They do NOT need *peanut butter*, however, as other community organizations are planning peanut butter drives.

BOOKS AT THE BEACH!



**Thursday, Sep 20th
@ 6:00 pm**

The Pavilion at
Misquamicut State Beach

Our book: *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee

Bring a brown bag supper and a cold drink to this delightful gathering where we enjoy the ocean and talk about a good book, and anything else that comes up in the moment.

Everyone welcome!

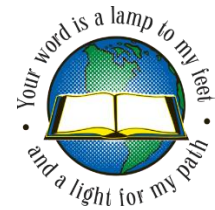
***A new way of celebrating
the wonderful and amazing folks
of UCC Westerly in worship!***



The Deacons and Rev. Ruth would like to encourage as many folks as would like to *participate in worship this year* in a variety of different ways. Check out the possibilities below and see where you might find a spot you like!

- ***Blessing Moment/Life Stories*** The Blessing Moment *on the second Sunday of every month* will be an opportunity for folks to share their personal stories of a time God and/or this church touched their lives in tangible ways. 2-3 minutes is all we're looking for!
- ***Blessing Moment/Trivia Stories*** The Blessing Moment *on the third Sunday of every month* will be an opportunity to play UCC Westerly Trivia! Do you know some obscure fact about our church and her people that you're willing to pose as a trivia question on a Sunday morning?? Here's your chance....
- ***Ushers*** – The ranks of our ushers are getting thin and they can use some help. No big commitment! Just one Sunday every now and then when you can greet people as they arrive, hand out bulletins, take the offering and maybe even manage the candles if you're up for it. *Women and youth especially encouraged to volunteer!*

Sound interesting? *Speak with any Deacon or Rev. Ruth any time.* Sign-up sheets for Life Stories and Trivia Stories are on the sign-up sheet outside Fellowship Hall.



BIBLE 101!
Not your usual Bible Study!!

Will be returning first with a *brief organizational and planning gathering* following the Sanctuary service on **Wednesday, September 12 @ 6:30 pm** in the Parlor. Join us!

AN "ENVELOPE UPDATE"
FROM THE DEACONS

The Deacons realize there has been some confusion about the new "Pew Envelopes For Gifts and Offerings". These envelopes can be found every Sunday in the pew racks and on the pews themselves on Communion Sundays. Please know these can be used for multiple purposes:

- ☺ Instead of a numbered pledge offering envelope for the regular weekly offering if you forget your envelope one Sunday. Do check 'Regular Offering' on the front of the envelope, and include your name if enclosing cash.
- ☺ For the monthly Deacons Fund offering received on every Communion Sunday. For this offering the envelope should NOT be placed in the offering plates passed by the ushers but instead placed in the Deacons Fund Baskets passed during the last hymn.
- ☺ For any guest who wishes to contribute to the regular weekly offering discreetly. Please check 'Regular Offering', especially if it is Communion Sunday. If also making a Communion offering, please use a separate Pew Envelope.
For any questions, please see any Deacon.

PRAYER LIST

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

The next **Church Council meeting** will be held on Sunday, **September 9th** at **11:00 am** in the Parlor. All Council Members please submit your reports for the meeting to Cathy Gray by **September 3rd**. **Electronic submissions are preferred.** (Cathy's email address is graygc@mindspring.com) Susan will send you a form via email on August 31st to help you make out your report.



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

Madelyn Stratton	Beverly & Family
Brian Madill	Scott & his parents
Shirley M.	Gerry
Connie	Nicci & Jeff
Allie	Josh
Ben	Rev. Elizabeth King
Jesse B.	Bill Colprit
Laura	Ruth King Roes
Mauri Hainsworth	Bill Hoffman
Douglas Cain	

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 – 1:30 pm