

The Beacon

FEBRUARY 2019



GOOD NEWS from

United Congregational Church of Westerly

United Church of Christ, Pawcatuck, CT

Sunday Worship ~ 9:30 am

FROM THE PASTOR ...

“Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up the other...” Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

I am still smiling in the aftermath of our most excellent Annual Meeting held this past Sunday. The Annual Report was chock-a-block full of all the many and varied ministries we have worked to make happen in the year just ended. The financial reports reflected the outstanding commitments of our financial officers for 2018 – Bob MacVicar and George Gray, Treasurers and Janet Allen and Jenny Brummund, Financial Secretaries. We are truly blessed by wonderful people willing to step up and pitch in to make our work on behalf of this community of Christ's faithful possible each day. Very special thanks to Bob MacVicar and Janet Allen retiring this year from their long held posts. Well done, good and faithful servants!

I think this is why as I pondered what Scripture verse to use here this month, I quickly settled on this one, a favorite of mine from Ecclesiastes. It is a powerful reminder of the importance of partnership and community efforts in the life of the church. The entire text actually includes verses 9-12 and emphasizes that working together with others is always the best way to move

forward because of the strength that comes from the entire community of God's faithful. One picks up where another runs out of steam. One steps in when another needs to step away. That is church, and, praise God, that is this church in spades. This blessing is why we accomplish more as a small church than many churches twice our size are able to do. This is our greatest strength and why I am confident God has great plans in store for us moving forward.

I was especially pleased on Sunday at the conversation which followed our People Plan presentation. Dear friends, it was spectacular how folks stepped up to fill in the blanks and I am so excited as this blending of old and new leadership created in the process will be guiding our church and ministries forward. Thanks so much to each and every one of you for answering God's call to do a new thing here in our midst. Thanks as well to those who have answered God's call to stay in place for the promise and challenge of the year ahead.

Lots of exciting stuff in the immediate months ahead: the Valentine Tea in February, the 50th Anniversary celebration in March, Holy Week and Easter coming up in April. Our Transitional Conference Minister for the RI Conference United Church of Christ, Rev. Marilyn Kendrix, will be preaching here February 10 and answering your questions on the merger of the Southern New England Conference currently in process. An interior church work day is coming up in February along with other opportunities to be involved in the life and ministries of this church are described in this newsletter.

So, dear friends, life in our church is good. It's true that finances are a little tight due to a combination of a downward turn in our investment portfolio along with decreased pledging as members move away, pass away or just find life circumstances so changed that their giving to the church needs to decrease. The good news here is that we took in 12 new members last year and most of those folks have already pledged for 2019. Thank you!!! We also learned at the Annual Meeting that our small deficit could be wiped out if everyone gives just an extra \$1.60 per week! Amazing! Not everyone will be able to, certainly, but if those who can increase their giving do so, we'll be in even better shape than we are now. Thank you Jesus for another powerful reminder that

when it comes to our life together as church, it is the community response that makes all the difference. Hope to see you soon!

Your friend in Christ,
Rev. Ruth



ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE
Wednesday, March 6 @ 6:30 pm



February Birthdays

- 7 – Dorothy Oehrle
- 9 – Jimmy Cornell
- 12 – Alice Dessaules
- 17 – Katharine Tarasuk
- 20 – Nick Comito

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



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

Lots happening in the world today! If you'd like a chatting partner to reflect on it all, come by the Savoy any Thursday between 2 – 4 pm. I'd love the company and let's not forget that the Savoy Café has great hot beverages and amazing cookies!

Your friend and chatting partner, Rev. Ruth



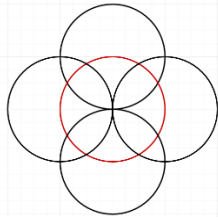
Diaconate Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Telephone #</u>
Feb 3	Bethany Foster	401-539-4003
Feb 10	Lynn Murray	401-539-7578
Feb 17	Ed Stratton	401-596-4740
Feb 24	Claire Calabretta	860-536-3625



CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

The next **Church Council meeting** will be held on Sunday, **March 10th** at **11:00 am** in the Parlor. All Council Members please submit your reports for the meeting to Cathy Gray by **March 4th**. **Electronic submissions are preferred.** (Cathy's email address is graygc@mindspring.com) Susan will send you a form via email on February 25th to help you make out your report.



SABBATH CIRCLES® NEWS

Weekly *Sabbath Circles*® lessons are back with our focus in the season of Epiphany on the life and work of Jesus. If you'd like to have the weekly *Sabbath Circles*® session emailed to you directly, simply email Rev. Ruth at revruth1121@aol.com to request to be put on the *Sabbath Circles*® subscription list.



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

The Pollinator Garden Committee recently met to do some preliminary planning for what we hope to accomplish this year. Those plans include the addition of several new elements to the upper gardens by the labyrinth as well as the creation of a peace pole meditation garden in the "glen" to the right of the driveway leading into the lower parking lot. We also hope to offer educational programs throughout the spring and summer. We have also been invited as a key community stakeholder to participate in the Anguilla Brook Watershed project currently being spearheaded by the Eastern CT Conservation District, an exciting opportunity for sure!

So, lots going on and lots in the planning stages for what has become a hallmark ministry of our church. Please remember, anyone is welcome to join the Pollinator Garden Committee at any time and you don't have to be a gardener. You just need to be someone who cares about this eco-system called earth that God entrusted to our care. Speak with Claire Calabretta, Sandi Davis or Rev. Ruth to add your name to our email list for meeting and project announcements.

TIME TO CELEBRATE UCC WESTERLY!



Everyone welcome to our first official committee planning meeting after worship on **Sunday, February 3rd** as we work out the details of the

50th anniversary celebration of our church's consecration on **Saturday, March 16, 2019**. We will be planning a commemorative service using the original order of worship for that day in 1969 followed by a special luncheon at which our long time members will be honored! Help Rev. Ruth, the Trustees and the Deacons plan this long overdue party for our wonderful church!

Take a moment to breathe and rest in our uniquely beautiful sanctuary for 30 minutes of quiet reflection and prayer each week.



Every Wednesday evening from 6-6:30 pm in our sanctuary
[Note: Services may be cancelled at the last minute if the weather seems iffy!]

A guided experience of quiet reflection, chant and prayer. Everyone welcome! Come and bring a friend!

MISSION MOMENTS



The 22nd ANNUAL VALENTINE TEA



**Sunday, February 10th
2:00 p.m.**

Wow! Thanks to all of you for your very generous holiday donations. On January 6 we blessed over 150 socks, assorted packs of children's undies, and two car loads of toiletries and non-perishable food items that were given to the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center and the Westerly Johnnycake Center for distribution!!

In addition, we earned a bit over \$900 from our Dine-to-donate event for WARM that was held at the Stonington Pizza Palace. Thanks go out to Angelo and Agathi for sharing 15% of their day's take with us. Their generosity and your willingness to support this event are just two examples of how special and caring this community is.

COLLECTIONS FOR JANUARY AND FEBRUARY

In addition to our previously scheduled paper products drive, we are also collecting healthy non-perishable food items and toiletries to help the local food pantries whose supplies have been challenged by the recent government shutdown.

FAIR TRADE

A reminder that we have a self-serve cabinet in Fellowship Hall of assorted Fair Trade items for sale. Delicious chocolate bars, baking chocolate, coffees, teas, and more are all available for purchase. Just put your money in the can!

Featuring Fancy Finger Sandwiches, Pastries, Fresh Scones, plus cookies galore and our famous spiced tea. Black tea, coffee and punch also available. NEW THIS YEAR! A Gluten Free Option and a BASKET AND GOODIE RAFFLE! (Please see Sandi Davis if you have anything you would like to donate.)

**Price: \$12.00 for adults
\$6 for children age 8 & younger**

Advance Reservations strongly recommended and can be made by calling Lynn Murray (401-450-9249), Linda Evans (860-599-5066) and Susan in the church office at 860-599-1226.

Then please mail in your check payable to the United Congregational Church. This will guarantee that you won't be waiting in line for a seat! Thank you.

Annual Ladies' Night



hosted by the Men's Club
Tuesday, February 12th
5:00 p.m. at Haversham –
in Westerly, RI

This year folks attending are free to order off the menu (instead of buying tickets for a banquet style meal as in previous years).

*Please **sign up on the sign-up sheet** located on the bulletin board at the entrance to Fellowship Hall. This way they will know how many tables to reserve!*

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. You can also call the church office (860-599-1226) to hear a special recorded message announcing any cancellation plans.



RISE AND SHINE CHURCH WORK DAY!



Saturday, February 16
9am–12pm

Come for all or part of the morning to help lemon oil the pews in the Sanctuary and the woodwork in the bell courtyard narthex.

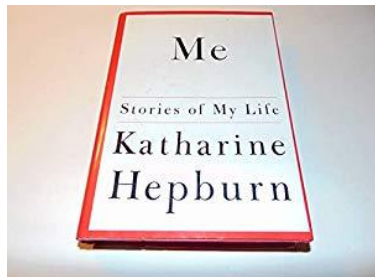
If you can, please bring plenty of rags and lemon oil to add to your elbow grease.

Good natured fellowship, drinks, and snacks will be provided!

Help make our church the shiniest one around!!

BOOKS” has another great book in the works! Join us for a potluck supper and great conversation!

Thursday, February 28, 2019 @ 6 pm
in the church parlor.



Our book:
ME: Stories of My Life
by Katharine Hepburn

Bring a favorite dish to share and get ready for a delightful gathering where we enjoy delicious food and great conversation about a good book, and anything else that comes up in the moment. Everyone welcome!

2019 SUNDAY **WORSHIP BULLETINS**

This special ministry of the church includes the regular Sunday bulletins and also bulletins that are purchased for special times during the church year (Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, etc.) as well as funeral bulletins. Of course we also have the cost of paper for the regular bulletins and the ink and “wear & tear” on the copier machine to consider. For \$30.00 you can provide bulletins for an **entire month** for your church family. *Please sign up* on the **sign-up sheet** that has been posted near the Flower Chart in Fellowship Hall. Make a check out to the church for the bulletins please. Thank you.

PRAYER LIST



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.	Laura
Ruth King Roes	Mauri Hainsworth
Bill Hoffman	Emma
Crystal	Levi Ferrance

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