

# The Beacon

## MARCH 2019



**GOOD NEWS from**

**United Congregational Church of Westerly**

**United Church of Christ, Pawcatuck, CT**

**Sunday Worship ~ 9:30 am**

**FROM THE PASTOR ...**

*“Strength and dignity are her clothing and she laughs at the time to come. She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.”*  
Proverbs 31:25-26

As we prepare to say “Happy Retirement” to our dear Susan, faithful secretary for UCC Westerly for the past 24 years, the above scripture from Proverbs is indeed fitting. It seems only appropriate that Susan say her own farewell in the newsletter that has been such a big part of her work here for us...

***A note from Susan***

I want to thank EVERYONE for the opportunity of being your Church Secretary for the last 24 years! My first day of work was March 13, 1995!! I have really enjoyed my work and most of all the people here. I remember reading somewhere that “kindness is the golden chain by which society is bound together.” I have been a recipient of this kindness for many years and I have seen your kindness in action! You folks have such dedication and love for your church and each other. By following your example you have taught me to be a better Christian and a better person. In fact Darla Rines helped me say “yes” to volunteer to do the church bulletin at the Baptist church that

I’m a member of. I’ve watched June and Nancy create beautiful baskets for the Christmas bazaar and then pass it on to Debbie & Lynn. I’ve seen Carolyn & Linda revitalize the Parlor and Music/Library rooms and head up many dinners through the years. What has really impressed me though is the kindness expressed to families at the loss of their loved ones. I can see Becky and other deacons bringing a tray into the Parlor with fresh water for folks to drink and tissues to dry their tears. And then the wonderful receptions you have all pitched in to make so special – even outdoors to make sure the shrubs and lawn looked great as well!

I do have a few funny stories to share. I’ll never forget the time we had an Attic Treasures Sale. It was a warm sunny day and people had been working in Fellowship Hall. Claire came up to the office to tell me she was the only person left in the building, but was keeping the outside doors open because it was so hot. A little while later she came back and asked me to help her get a squirrel out of the building. I finally found an umbrella and we scooped him out the door! Another day, years ago Ann Brown picked a boiling hot summer day to come over and sweep the sand away from the door at the entrance to the sanctuary of the upper parking lot! I had heard that she had been fainting lately in church, so I checked on her several times, but she wouldn’t stop. Charlotte happened by and saved the day for me and somehow coaxed her into heading home!!

Please find below a definition of “Peace” that I remember appeared in our bulletin here many years ago. It touched my heart along with a poem that another kind person at St. Elizabeth’s Church (I worked part-time there too!) shared with me. I would like to share them with you.

PEACE – It does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble, or hard work. It means to be in the midst of those things and still be CALM IN YOUR HEART.

– *Unknown (I have this taped to my refrigerator!)*

I cannot see beyond today.  
Tomorrow’s hills I cannot climb.  
The task at hand is mine to do;  
I’ll know the next in God’s own time.  
Lord, let me walk along with Thee,  
Each TRUSTING step enough for me. – *Unknown*

Now I am looking forward to being retired. In one of the sermons one of the minister's here wrote I remember reading what the word change means.

CHANGE = Danger, Opportunity Ahead! That is what I'm hoping to experience during my retirement and I wish you all good health, peace and love.

- Susan

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## Diaconate Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Telephone #</u>
Mar 3	Joann Spurley	401-714-8948
<i>Ash Wednesday – Mar 6</i>	<i>Bethany Foster</i>	
Mar 10	Dwayne Spurley	860-705-6152
Mar 17	Lynn Murray	401-539-7578
Mar 24	Claire Calabretta	860-536-3625
Mar 31	Ed Stratton	401-596-4740

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## It's Scholarship Time



**Applications** for the **Barbara Murano Scholarship** will be available on Ash Wednesday. They are available to current college students as well as graduating students. They should be *returned to the Deacons by Easter*. Scholarship Sunday will be in June. Plans are under way for a Dine to Donate at Stonington Pizza Palace to support the scholarship fund.



## **ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE**

**Wednesday, March 6 @ 6 pm**

Join us for a brief service of prayer and reflection with the imposition of ashes for those who desire to receive them.

## **LENT AT UCC WESTERLY 2019**

Lent is the time in the church year where we pause to reflect more deeply on our relationship with Jesus and God and the Holy Spirit. There are many ways to do this and a flyer with detailed suggestions for your Lenten observance this year will be available at church this Sunday, and posted on the church website as well.

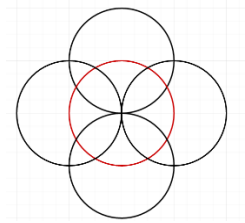
Our focus during worship this year will be on forgiveness. Central to the practice of Christianity, it is often misunderstood. It's one of those things which seems simple on the surface but is really much more nuanced when we pause to consider it more intentionally. In both Sunday morning worship and the midweek Sanctuary services for the first five weeks of Lent, we will be considering what it means to say "*Forgiveness Is ... Necessary ... Personal ... Complicated ... On-going ... Humbling.*"

Our Holy Week services will kick off once again with the Palm Sunday Symbols Service on April 14, and continue with the Maundy Thursday Service of Tenebrae on Thursday, April 18. We will offer two different Easter Sunday worship opportunities once again this year: Easter Sunrise at Misquamicut Beach @ 6am and our own festive Easter Celebration at our usual 9:30am worship time.

May God be with us as always but especially in the weeks ahead as we pause and take time to reawaken and renew our faith and its place in our lives.



## March Birthdays



## SABBATH CIRCLES® NEWS

- 1 – Fred Tarasuk
- 1 – Madelyn Stratton
- 5 – Cathy Gray
- 7 – Shirin Platt
- 10 – Adam Tarasuk
- 12 – Emma Stratton
- 18 – Dwayne Spurley-Dows
- 19 – Edward Stratton
- 30 – Brenda Cornell

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**

Lent is the time of year when we think more deeply about our individual relationships with God and how God is, or is not, present in our lives. 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. The Savoy Café has great hot beverages and amazing cookies!

Your friend and chatting partner, Rev. Ruth

Weekly *Sabbath Circles*® lessons continue with our focus in the season of Lent on forgiveness and what Jesus teaches us about it. If you'd like to have the weekly *Sabbath Circles*® session emailed to you directly, simply email Rev. Ruth at [revruth1121@aol.com](mailto:revruth1121@aol.com) to request to be put on the *Sabbath Circles*® subscription list.

**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!**

**Our focus during Lent will be Forgiveness.**

## **MISSION MOMENTS**

Thanks to everyone who contributed to our winter collection of paper products and healthy foods to help restock local food pantries. A reminder to everyone, though, that food pantries cannot accept items that are expired. Please check the “sell by” dates on the non-perishable food items that you donate. Apparently foods cannot perish but they do expire!!

### **SPRING CLEANING!**



Our Lenten collection theme this year is **Spring Cleaning!** Look for the sales, hit Job Lot's Insider Deals, check out Aldi and the coupons in the paper to find all kinds of household cleaning products to donate to the PNC. Or maybe you even have extras in the cabinets under your sinks! Don't forget that paper towels, sponges, and wipes are also needed to clean up those spills!

### **LOOKING AHEAD TEASER**

Our Mission themes for the remainder of the year include traditional collections and new endeavors. The Babies and Ladies Collection and In the Middle School Supply Donations will be joined by a gently used shoe collection and an endeavor to collect survival items for the homeless. In addition, we are planning two Mission in Motion field trips. More info coming in future Beacons and Sunday bulletins!

We will receive the UCC **One Great HOUR of Sharing offering** here on Sunday, March 31. This fund supports disaster relief, refugee emergencies, and sustainable development ministries around the world.

*Check out the attachment to the Beacon entitled **VISIONS OF PEACE!***

**TIME CHANGE THIS MONTH!**  
**SPRING FORWARD ON SATURDAY,**  
**MARCH 9 or be late to church on**  
**March 10.... ☺**

### **CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING**

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

### **Trustee Notes**

Our Income in January was \$10,539 which is \$1,044 more than our anticipated income. Our expenses for January were \$12,487 which is \$767 more than our anticipated income. Our deficit for January was \$1,948. This was mainly due to quarterly payment for insurance.

Our utility costs are slightly higher than expected. Electricity was \$303 (usage is down but rates have increased) and gas was \$953. The Trustees would appreciate and thank anyone willing to make a special offering to help defray these costs. The donation should be made with a note that it is to be used for utility costs.

A job offer will be made shortly to replace Susan, who is retiring in March.

***“BOOKS” is planning something wonderful once again!***

*We just don't know what it is yet since the Beacon had to go to print before the Books meeting. Watch the Weekly Email, the weekly bulletin and the church's Facebook page for the details once they are confirmed.*



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

*We're excited that our own resident ornithologist Megan Gray will be meeting with the committee on Sunday, March 17 after worship to talk with us about how we can be intentional in adding elements to the gardens and meadow which will enhance local bird life. Sound interesting? Please join us!*

*We will also be meeting with our landscape designer this month to begin planning the addition of a "water element" to the gardens. Watch for more exciting details on this as the hope is for this to be done in memoriam of someone very special in the life of the church.*

*So, as always, lots going on 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. And you don't need to be a committee member to work in the gardens! You just need to be someone who cares about this ecosystem 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.*

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***Yes, we are saying good-bye to our dear Susan at the end of this month BUT we will also be saying hello to our new Secretary/Office Administrator.***

*The Trustees are pleased to announce that Carol Lindsay will be joining the staff as of Monday, March 18. Carol has a strong professional background and the search committee was especially impressed with her easy manner and interest in the church. We hope you'll give her a warm welcome!*

**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 |
| Laura            | Ruth King Roes      |
| Mauri Hainsworth | Bill Hoffman        |
| Emma             | Crystal             |
| Levi Ferrance    | Bea                 |

*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.*

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**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](mailto:uccwesterly@sbcglobal.net)  
*Website:* [www.uccwesterly.org](http://www.uccwesterly.org)  
*Office Hours:* Monday, Thursday & Friday from  
8:30 – 1:30 pm