

The Beacon

June and July 2021



“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.” John 13:34

So, you might be wondering, what does a photo of frozen treats have to do with Jesus’ new commandment. Excellent question! Let’s think about it together.

First, Jesus’ “new commandment” John is talking about is really just the Cliff Notes version of the original Ten Commandments from the Pentateuch in the Old Testament. Jesus himself explains this in another of the Gospels, Matthew 22. In Matthew, Jesus is responding to a question posed to him about which commandment (of the Ten Commandments) is the greatest. He responds: “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. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” And, odd as it seems at first blush, Jesus is absolutely correct because the first half of the Ten Commandments describes HOW it is that we love God fully and the second half describes HOW we love the other as much as we love ourselves. Who knew, right?

But more is going on here than Jesus just giving us a briefer version of the Ten Commandments. What he is actually doing is telling us what we need to focus on to be in

right relationship with God and with each other and the key word is love. We are to love God and we are to love each other. Notice that there are no qualifications on Jesus’ commandments to love God and love each other. We’re not just to love God when things are going well and all is right in our world, when we feel like God is smiling on us every moment. No, we are to love God ALL the time, even when life is painful and confusing and we can’t even sense God is near us. In other words, there are no circumstances when we are not to love God. And that, dear ones, can be incredibly difficult.

Similarly, Jesus puts no qualifiers on who we are to love. He uses the term “neighbor” which some like to interpret as people like ourselves but that was never Jesus’ intent. Jesus meant that word to be used in its broadest possible meaning – the people you are surrounded by in any given moment. We all know that can be people we truly know and love – family and friends. But, it can also be people we don’t know and aren’t sure about. It can also be people we dislike, maybe even hate. This is where it gets tough because Jesus really meant it. We are to love everyone. The people who are easy to love and the people who are not. It’s sort of confusing because Jesus knows it’s only human to dislike someone for all the right reasons, but he still says we have to love them. How is that even possible? Well, it’s tough. It comes down to one key reality that is foundational to our relationship with God and that is our sure and certain knowledge that God created everyone. Every. Single. Person. The good people, the bad people, the annoying people, the sick people, the health nut people, the beautiful people, the ugly people, the whack-a-doodle people, the mean people, the kind people, the ... well, you get the picture. God made everyone and each person is equally important to God. Truthfully I am not convinced even God *likes* all these people, but there is no doubt that God loves each and every one. Therefore, we show we love God by loving the other no matter who they are or what they have done.

But what does this kind of loving look like? Being mindlessly nice to everyone, even people

who are rude and nasty? No, not to me anyway. What it does mean is I need to take a breath and a step back before responding in kind. It means I need to let God deal with nasty, mean and sinful people. It is literally not my job. It's God's. And, honestly, what a relief that is.

So, back to the summertime photo of frozen fruit pops melting in the sunshine? Well, summertime is here and as you go through your days whatever they will hold for you, I invite you to remember Jesus' commandment to love God and each other. Let your love melt into the people around you bringing them joy. And let your anger and frustration with the difficult ones just melt away. It's what Jesus would do.

Happy summer!

Your friend and sister in Christ,
Rev. Ruth



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|-------------------------|---|
| <i>Sunday, June 20</i> | <i>Father's Day Worship</i> |
| <i>Sunday, June 27</i> | <i>Open aNd Affirming Sunday</i> |
| <i>Sunday, July 4</i> | <i>Communion & Independence Day Celebration</i> |
| <i>Sunday, July 11</i> | <i>"Dear Jesus" Sunday</i>
<i>Deacons leading worship while Rev. Ruth on vacation</i> |
| <i>Sunday, July 18</i> | <i>A Celebration of Music</i>
<i>Deacons leading worship while Rev. Ruth on vacation</i> |
| <i>Sunday, July 25</i> | <i>"I Love to Tell the Story"</i>
<i>Deacons leading worship while Rev. Ruth on vacation</i> |
| <i>Sunday, August 1</i> | <i>Communion & Rev. Ruth returns</i> |

Kindly Note: Copies of sermons will be provided by request only. Speak with Rev. Ruth or Carol to receive one!



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

All Sunday morning worship services are now in-person AND broadcast on Facebook Live at 9:45am. Masks optional for people who are fully vaccinated.

Social Distancing recommended at all in-person services!

Sunday, June 6 Communion & Scholarship Sunday

Sunday, June 13 "Take a Breath" Sunday featuring an introduction to "mindfulness"

PLEASE NOTE!

Rev. Ruth will be on vacation from July 5 through July 31. Please be in touch with the Deacons for any Prayer Tree requests or pastoral care issues during this time frame. If you are not sure which Deacon to call, check with Carol in the office at 860-599-1226.



CROSS WINDOW HELP!

Our beautiful cross window needs your financial help. Three of the four panes were found to be cracked and replacement panes were purchased from Clinton

Glass. Unfortunately, when they removed the old glass, it was found that the exterior wood framing of the windows was so rotted that it was structurally unsound to install the new panes. This means that the framing needs to not only be replaced but needs to be beefed up in order to meet a 25-pound wind load. Clinton Glass has proposed an anodized brass aluminum framing that will meet the specification but it will cost an additional \$9000, give or take. Alan Hill will work with Clinton Glass on the final installation.

Your response to our request for donations has been wonderful and is deeply appreciated. We have made real progress toward our financial goals but we're not there yet. Any donations should be marked for the Cross Window.

Thanks, Board of Trustees



Deacon Ministry Diaconate Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Telephone #</u>
6/6	Lynn Murray	401-539-7578
6/13	Joann Spurley	401-714-8948
6/20	Dwayne Spurley	860-705-6152
6/27	Bethany Foster	401-539-4003
7/4	Ed Stratton	401-596-4740
7/17	TBA	
7/18	TBA	
7/25	TBA	
8/1	TBA	

Please feel free to call the Diaconate Person of the Week at any time with your joys, concerns and prayer requests. Your church family cares about you all the time, not just when you're in the building!



An Update from the Deacons:

The Deacons would like to thank everyone who participated in the Dine to Donate at Stonington Pizza Palace on May 20th. Our final total was a record-breaking \$1,147.00!! Thank you for your generous support!! As you know, our proceeds will go to the Barbara Murano Scholarship for our four recipients: Hartmut Doerwaldt, Erin Blake, Adam Tarasuk, and Anna Tarasuk. Their application letters were amazing, and we are hoping to have them share their stories on Scholarship Sunday, June 6th. The service will be followed by an outdoor celebration.

Many thanks also for your continued support of the Deacon Fund. We continue to respond as needs arise. As always, any of the deacons are available to receive your joys and concerns at any time.



MISSION MOMENT

JUNE--BABIES AND LADIES MONTH



Our traditional Babies and Ladies Collection for the PNC will continue during the month of June. Needed baby items include: *all toiletries, larger sized diapers (sizes 3*

and up), baby wipes and sunblock. They do **not** need the smaller sized diapers or formula. Lady needs include **all feminine hygiene products**. Also requested were the **larger sized adult wipes and diapers**. These items are greatly needed and are appreciated beyond words by the people receiving them. It is so encouraging to see that so many people are overcoming their shyness about supplying products needed by the ladies in our communities. Kudos and thanks go out to everyone who has donated to date. There is a growing supply of all items in the back pews of the balcony.

COMING ATTRACTIONS!

Our annual “**In the Middle**” School Supplies Drive will again take place during July and the first half of August. The drive benefits students in both the Stonington and Westerly Middle Schools.

As promised in the last *Beacon* we are including a list of needed supplies in this issue. Even though we are still collecting for Babies and Ladies, these items may be on sale in the coming weeks. We have consulted with local middle school guidance counselors to update this list.

- pencils of good quality (like Ticonderoga) that sharpen well
- thin markers
- highlighters
- 3-ring binders (**1 ½ inch**)
- 3-ring binder paper
- pencil cases that go in the 3-ring binders and small change purses
- one-subject notebooks
- cap erasers for pencils and regular erasers
- glue sticks
- sticky notes
- double pocket folders
- mini hand sanitizers
- rulers
- ear buds
- **and, especially needed, boxes of tissues**

NB Backpacks are no longer a priority.

The school supplies drive will run officially from the beginning of July until **August 22**.

In the past we have dropped these donations off at the schools where the guidance counselors have quietly

distributed the items to needy students at the beginning and through-out the school year.

The Mission theme for September and October will be our annual **Mission in Motion**. This year we will combine two efforts to support the UCC eco-justice ministry. We will be “Blanketing the World in Love” by selling blankets to donate to Church World Service and planning a hike through one or some of our beautiful local preserves to learn how we can help our environment. Stay tuned for more complete plans in coming *Beacons*.

Remember: YOU are making a difference in this world!



Trustee Notes

As we solely return to a new normal from the Covid19 pandemic, the church facilities are now open for visitors and group activities. We respectfully request that any person not fully vaccinated to please wear a mask when in the building. Please continue to sign in and out on the forms at each entrance and to use the hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes.

As of this writing, the financial reports for April were incomplete. However, our expenses are starting to be higher than our income. This is primarily due to the major repairs being done to the Cross Window. We hope to have a complete financial report next month.

Clinton Glass started replacement of the Cross Window glass on April 26. Upon removing the old cracked glass and the trim, it was found that the wood framing had rotted so badly that it was structurally unsound. Clinton Glass has provided us with a proposal for installation of a dark brown bronze aluminum framing for the window. Cost estimate is \$8,498. We have received approximately \$2,400 in donations to help pay for the new framing. We are seeking donations to help cover this unexpected expense. Meanwhile, for the next several weeks the Cross window will be covered with a tarp.

The next Trustee meeting will be on June 22.

THOUGHTS ON SUSTAINABLE GARDENING FROM OUR POLLINATORS TEAM!



POLLINATOR GARDEN ADVICE

WEEDS!!!!!!



Yikes! Just when our flowers are starting to bloom and we think our spring planting is done, what happens?? Weeds appear, seemingly out of nowhere. What to do? What to do?

Here are a few tips from your Pollinator Garden Team that may help you deal with your weedy problem without the use of dangerous chemicals.

First, and foremost, be sure that what you are pulling is actually a weed. Maybe it is a wildflower that is essential for the continued existence of our pollinator friends. Yes, most people hate those dandelions, but their flowers provide essential pollen in the early spring when few other options are available to our pollen-seeking friends. And, those beautiful yellow finches use those flowers for nourishment. Download an app, such as PictureThis, that will help you identify the plant before you pull it.

Second, there are ways to eliminate weeds that depend on several factors.

- If the weeds are in cracks in your sidewalk or driveway, you can use:
 - A solution of one gallon of white vinegar, 1 tablespoon of Dawn, and one cup of salt or Epsom salts. Mix in a pump container and spray the culprits in the early morning of a sunny day. This will kill what is above the ground but not always the roots. You can eliminate the salt if you would like to have something other than weeds grow there again.
 - A pot of boiling water might just do the trick, as well.
- If the weeds are in your garden, DON'T use the vinegar solution, as it does not discriminate between what is a desired planting and what isn't. You have several options here:
 - Being proactive is your best bet. When you first establish your bed or right after spring cleaning it, place newspapers or cardboard on all exposed surfaces and then mulch over it. Or, at least, mulch over the exposed areas. These two options can also be done any time during the season. Some gardeners recommend sprinkling corn meal over exposed areas. Another option is to cover as much of the soil as possible with plants or desirable ground cover to limit the space available to the weeds. Ever hear of Square Foot Gardening? It's a very effective way to limit the weeds that grow in your veggie garden during the summer season. Again, this limits the space available to weeds.
 - There is always the option of just yanking those weeds out as they appear. Unfortunately, there are weeds, such as mugwort, that LOVE to be pulled and accept that challenge by growing more!

Lastly, remember that there are no methods to permanently eradicate weeds. Simply put, Weeds Happen, whether we like them or not.

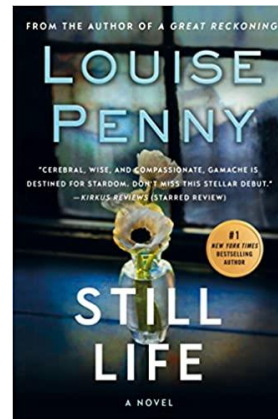
Most of the information for this article was drawn from our own experiences or from the web site:

[How to Make Natural & Safe Homemade Weed Killer • The Garden Glove](#), where there is an abundance of additional information and explanations.

As an aside, the weeds in the gravel in the bell courtyard and in the cracks in the sidewalks and parking lots respond well, if not permanently, to the vinegar, Dawn, and salt solution. As they are not part of our pollinator gardens, we invite anyone to come and have at it with them!!

HAPPY GARDENING!!

The Pollinator Gardens Team is ALWAYS looking for more folks who are interested in sustainable gardening practices. The best way to learn is by working alongside us! For more information on how you can be involved with this vitally important eco-justice ministry, please speak with Claire Calabretta or Sandi Davis anytime.



We'd love to have you join us at
BOOKS

A group of folks who love books and talking about books!

Join us for our next gathering
Thursday, June 10 @ 6:30pm
Please contact Rev. Ruth for the Zoom link.

WHAT WE'RE READING:

Still Life

An Inspector Gamache Novel
By Louise Penny

††††



REV. RUTH'S
"WORDS TO THE WISE"

For Parents and Kids

Sundays @ 11am

Via Facebook Live

Join us as Rev. Ruth talks about typical kid's questions about God, Jesus and faith.



UCCW Pandemic Response Team

The Pandemic Response Team is pleased to report that our return to in-person worship services is going very well. Thanks so

much to everyone who is cooperating fully with masking and social distancing by those not yet vaccinated. Your support on these matters makes everything easier for us all. Please know the Team continues meeting regularly to monitor and revise our worship protocols as changing circumstances warrant. They are meeting via Zoom later this month. Any questions regarding the Pandemic Response Team should be directed to Bethany Foster at 401-539-4003.



Brighten Someone's Day...

We don't see each other as often as we would like to these days. Here are a few suggestions of folks who might like to receive a card or note from you! Check out the newest Church Directory for more!

Judy Bartlett

28 Indian Hill Road, Uncasville, CT 06382

Joan Bauer

186 Jerry Browne Rd., #1314, Mystic, CT 06355

Alice Dessaules

425 Drozdyk Dr. #106, Groton, CT 06340

Kay Drake

186 Jerry Browne Rd., #6412, Mystic, CT 06355

PRAYER LIST



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

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Madelyn Stratton | Beverly & Family |
| Brian Madill | Shirley M |
| Jennifer Woodhall | Paula |
| Allie | Josh |
| Ben | Rev. Elizabeth King |
| Laura | Ruth King Roes |
| Mauri Hainsworth | Bill Hoffman |
| Emma | Crystal |
| Bea | Jake Shultz |

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.



June Birthdays:

- Eric Sadowski – 5
- Victoria Tosti – 20
- Emma Sugar – 28

July Birthdays:

- Kevin Dows – 3
- Jimmy Stott – 4
- Mark Comito – 13
- Joann Spurley – 14
- Bobbie DelPozo-Waldron – 19
- Ane Torres – 21
- Jim Cornell – 27
- Elvis Torres - 30

Anniversaries:

- Bobbie & Pam DelPozo-Waldron – 6-6-92
- Ed & Judy Stratton – 6-6-70

- Elvis & Ane Torres – 7-20-02
- Gary & Sandi Davis – 7-20-74

Please add in your special days by calling the church office at 860-599-1226!!





OUR STAFF

Pastor: The Rev. Ruth Shilling Hainsworth

Organist: David Cranmer

Secretary: Carol Lindsay

Sexton: Joann Spurley

Web Master: Heather Stratton

CHURCH OFFICE SPECIFICS

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Office Hours: Monday 9 am-1 pm and
Thursday 9 am–3 pm

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