

# The Beacon

## February 2022



*“... Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” Matthew 25:40*

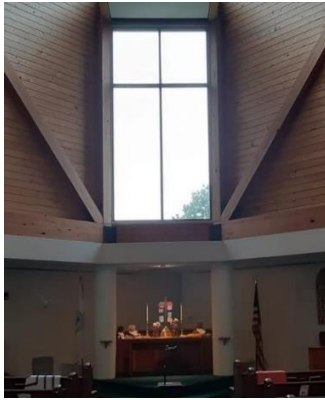
My article this month is short, sweet, and to the point. That's because I have only one point to make, one question to ask, one offer to make. Please consider joining us in person this coming Saturday for our Homeless Awareness Candlelight Vigil. The details and reasons why appear here in the excerpt from the publicity flyer I created for this event over a month ago. Admittedly this event is my baby, my brainchild, grounded in the Homeless Awareness Vigils of youth groups of the 1990's, a staple of youth ministry and Confirmation classes at that time. Over the years, and especially in this time of Covid, these Vigils have gone the way of so many other church programs and been relegated to memory or “remember when” nostalgia moments in churches throughout the country. Understandable except for one thing. The Homelessness Crisis is rapidly moving beyond a Crisis to a full blown Catastrophe and yet no viable solutions are on the horizon. Dear ones, our communities **MUST** do something to address this need and the first step in doing that is to bring attention to the crisis and that is what this year's candlelight prayer vigil in our own upper parking lot this Saturday hopes to do. My colleagues from local churches are coming as are human service agency staff and hopefully even more folks from our church and the neighborhood. So, here is my ask: Please come and bring your kids and your neighbors, anyone you can think of.

Help us to light a candle in the darkness as we invite God into problem-solving mode with us. An hour of your time. Dear ones, that is literally the least we can do. Hope to see you there.  
*Your friend in Christ, Rev. Ruth*



**HOMELESS AWARENESS  
CANDLELIGHT VIGIL  
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 5TH @  
6:00PM  
In the Upper Parking Lot  
Of UCC Westerly  
LIGHT A CANDLE  
In the darkness  
that is homelessness  
In our communities**

We are facing a crisis of homelessness unlike anything else we have seen before in our communities. There is simply not enough affordable or low-income housing available to meet demand in South County, RI and New London County, CT. Wait times for emergency shelter are as long as 4 months! Wait times for affordable or low-income housing are 12-24 months at a minimum. This is simply not sustainable for those in dire need. There are no easy answers, but we do know it will take the community coming together to make a lasting difference. Please join us in a simple first step: this candlelight Prayer Vigil being held outside in solidarity with those who have no warm homes. There will be prayers, songs, and stories. All are welcome! Please give up an hour of time to show you care for the least of these!



## CALL FOR THE 58<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEETING UNITED CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WESTERLY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Annual Meeting shall be held on March 6, 2022 at 10:45 in person in the sanctuary and also virtually via Zoom conference call. This meeting was rescheduled from January 23, 2022 due to a pause to in-person gatherings at the church due to Covid 19. Reservations are required for those attending via Zoom and requested for those attending in person. All are welcome to attend; only members of the church are able to vote.

The purpose of the meeting shall be to receive the yearly reports of Officers, Boards, Committees, Organizations and Departments; to elect officers; adopt the annual budget; set up plans for the new year; and vote on any other business that may come before the congregation. The Treasurer's Report, duly audited, shall be presented.

Respectfully submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_ Cathy Gray, Clerk

### **WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

***Our Sunday morning worship services  
are on pause for in-person through Feb. 13.  
In-Person\* resumes Feb. 20  
Broadcast on Facebook Live  
every Sunday at 9:45am.***

*\*Masks & Social Distancing required for everyone.  
Full vaccinations strongly recommended!*

Our current sermon series is celebrating some of the  
Star Words of Epiphany Sunday!

**Sunday, Feb. 6 – Humor & Playfulness**  
Sermon: "A Tax Paying Fish???"

**Sunday, Feb. 13 – Motivation & Balance**  
Sermon: "Why Did I Do That?"

**Sunday, Feb. 20 – Endurance & Commitment**  
Sermon: "Take Nothing on Your Journey"

**Sunday, Feb. 27 – Focus & Grounded-ness**  
Sermon: "Worried & Distracted"

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

### **Diaconate Schedule**

| <b><u>Date</u></b> | <b><u>Name</u></b> | <b><u>Telephone #</u></b> |
|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 2/5                | Claire Calabretta  | 860-574-5962              |
| 2/6                | Ed Stratton        | 401-218-8548              |
| 2/13               | Joann Spurley      | 401-714-8948              |
| 2/20               | TBD                |                           |
| 2/27               | TBD                |                           |

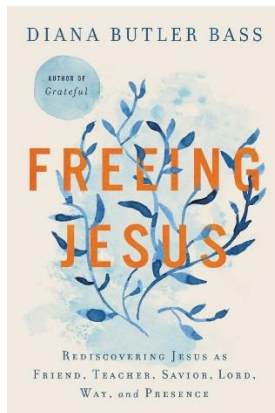
***Please feel free to call the Diaconate Person of  
the Week at any time with your joys, concerns  
and prayer requests. Your church family cares  
about you all the time, not just when you're in  
the building!***



The Deacons continue to reflect on previous services, as well as working with the PRT concerning services and gatherings going forward. There will be Deacon participants in the Homeless Awareness Vigil on February 5th. We continue to monitor Deacon, Stratton, & WARM funds, which supported this year's Missons Committee annual commitment to WARM. We appreciate the Deacon funds that continue to come in. We would love to hear from anyone considering joining the board, as the current members have served for quite some time. Donations of quality silk flowers would be appreciated, as we are revising our

weekly flower donations. We are hoping to create reusable arrangements for weeks when no one has offered to supply fresh arrangements.

Lynn Murray



### A HEADS UP FOR LENT!

*Freeing Jesus* will be the basis for a sermon series and study group during Lent! So, you might want to start reading now. Not sure if it is available through the libraries yet, but you can buy it online and even at your local Target!!

## MISSION MOMENTS - February



Our food donation drive collecting non-perishable food and living closet supplies for the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center will continue through the end of March as the need is strong. Help us “bury the altar” in food donations! Most needed items:

- Canned fish and meats
- Meat-based canned soups/stews
- Nut butters
- Bags or cans of dried beans and peas
- Whole-grain cereals

- Bags of plain rice and pasta
- Barley and quinoa
- Canned fruits in fruit juice or light syrup
- Canned vegetables
- Dish detergent
- Larger sized diapers
- Hygiene supplies
- Paper products, such as toilet tissue

Donations should be brought to church and left in the red buckets at the Bell Courtyard door. Donations brought with you to worship should be placed directly on the altar before worship or during the first hymn. If you can't make it to church, you can easily order food and hygiene items on Amazon and have them delivered directly to the PNC.

In future months we are looking for opportunities to support new projects and programs in our area as well as those with a global reach. Our next project will be raising funds along with our ecumenical partners in the United Methodist Church who are collaborating with UNICEF to finance the distribution of Covid vaccines to poor countries around the world. We will gratefully accept donations in any amount. Check out the display in the Bell Courtyard Narthex on April 1! Note: Every \$37 raised provides 2 vaccine shots to 10 people!



### Trustee Notes

End Of the year pledges came in at a higher rate than expected. For 2021 we received \$67,181 in pledges. This is \$6,044 (10%) more than the \$61,137 that was budgeted. We wish to thank everyone for keeping up with their pledges during the year. Our total income for 2021 was \$143,079. Total expenses for the year were \$152,790. This left us with a deficit of



\$9,711 which is significantly less than the approved deficit of \$17,626.

The Trustees have prepared a 2022 budget.

Estimated income for 2022 is \$112,968.

Estimated expenses are \$116,854. This is a deficit of \$3,886 for 2022. The proposed 2022 budget will be presented to the congregation for approval at the next Annual Meeting. If you have not submitted your 2022 pledge, please do so as soon as possible.

Coast and Country Landscaping was selected as the contractor for snow plowing. This is the same contractor as last year and they will keep the same pricing as last year. The Trustees are also looking into a plaque commemorating the dedication of the new cross window and for a safe for the office.

The next Trustee meeting will be on February 16 at 6:30.



The Pandemic Response Team wishes to thank everyone for their patience and support as we made the decision to implement a temporary pause on in-person worship at the beginning of January. We are very happy to announce that with current infection numbers falling, we are moving forward with our plans to return to in-person worship on Sunday, February 20. For the time being, however, Fellowship time will take place in the sanctuary with masks. We hope to lift this restriction soon. For any comments, questions or concerns with regard to the Pandemic, kindly speak with PRT Chairperson Bethany Foster at any time. You may reach her at 401-539-4003.

## **The Mindfulness Group**

*A small group ministry  
of UCC Westerly*



At our well attended gathering on January 22<sup>nd</sup> we made the decision to meet twice a month, once for teaching and conversation and the second time for an in-person activity. Our schedule for February is as follows:

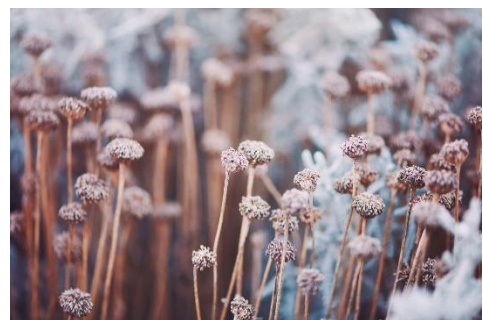
***Saturday, 2/12 @ 10 am on Zoom***

***Saturday, 2/26 @ 10 am at church***

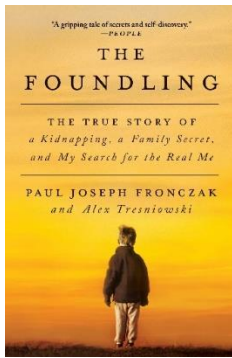
- *Carpooling to Napa Tree Point for a meditative hike!*

*Kindly note this group is also planning an overnight retreat at Wisdom House in Litchfield, CT sometime this spring. Watch for details! Everyone will be welcome to attend the retreat, regardless of whether or not you have been part of the Mindfulness Group!*

Questions? Suggestions? Speak with Rev. Ruth anytime.



A reminder from the Pollinator Team to help your gardens have a good rest and still take care of pollinator insects who may be over-wintering in the stalks of your garden. Let sleeping critters rest!



## An Invitation to join us at BOOKS

### OUR NEXT GATHERING:

Wed., Feb. 16 @ 12:30 pm  
Join us for a pizza lunch!  
Pizza, cold beverages and ???  
IN PERSON AT CHURCH!!!!

### WHAT WE'RE READING:

THE FOUNDLING  
By Paul Joseph Fronczak

### EVERYONE WELCOME!

Available to borrow through your local library or  
for purchase through your favorite book store.  
If you would like to borrow a copy from someone  
who has purchased it,  
kindly be in touch with the church office.



## Announcing UCC 101!

Sunday, February 13 @ 11am

Via Zoom so reservations needed.

Curious about what it might mean to become  
"official" in the church in terms of  
membership, virtual or in-person? Or why it  
matters? This is the gathering for you!  
Long time members also welcome to attend  
and bring your questions too!

We'll discuss all sorts of things including:

- Beliefs of the United Church of Christ, including the sacraments
- What membership entails for in-person and virtual members and why it matters

### • Answers to YOUR questions!

This is an informational session only! No expectations regarding membership decisions whatsoever! Speak with Rev. Ruth or Carol in the office to receive the Zoom link. NOTE: You can't participate without the Zoom link!!!



### A Reminder...

The Grief Group  
usually meets on occasional Thursdays in  
the Parlor at church.

### Our next gathering:

Thursday, Feb. 24 @ 1pm

**NEW MEMBERS ALWAYS WELCOME!**

Please speak with Rev. Ruth for more  
information.



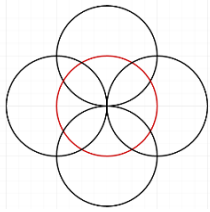
## **Brighten Someone's Day...**

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!

Anna Olszewski  
1176 Bayshore Drive, Unit #104  
Fort Pierce, FL 34949

Barbara Sadowski  
3 Lois Court, Pawcatuck, CT 06379

Heather Stratton  
71 School Street, Westerly, RI 02891



**UCC WESTERLY  
PEOPLE PLAN 2022  
Confirmed Responses  
As of February 3, 2022**

**OFFICERS:**

**Co-Moderators:** Kathy Tarasuk, Gary Davis

**Clerk:** Cathy Gray

**Financial Secretary:** Jenny Brummund

**Asst. Financial Secretaries:** Michele Mitchell, Bill Street, Ed Stratton

**Treasurer:** George Gray

**Asst. Treasurer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Historian:** Peter Hainsworth

**Auditor:** Melissa Stratton

**BOARDS:**

**DEACONS** Need at least 1 more

Joann Spurley, Lynn Murray, Ed Stratton,  
Bethany Foster, Claire Calabretta,

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**TRUSTEES** Need at least 3 more

Kathy Tarasuk, Dwayne Spurley,  
Melissa Stratton \_\_\_\_\_

**MISSIONS** Need at least 2 more

Peter Hainsworth, Melissa Stratton,  
Kathy Sugar, \_\_\_\_\_

**CONGREGATIONAL LIFE** Need at least 3 more

Sandi Davis, Cathy Gray, Julie Grillo

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**AD HOC TEAMS:**

**STEWARDSHIP TEAM** Need at least 3-4 more

Jack Hainsworth

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**POLLINATOR TEAM** No limit on membership

Sandi Davis, Christina Brummund, Shirin Platt, Anna Olszewski

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**ONA TEAM** No limit on membership

Sandi Davis, Ed Stratton, Peter Hainsworth

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**MUSIC TEAM** Need 3

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**ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEER NEEDS:**

**At Large Church Council Members –** Need 3

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**Conference Delegates –** Need 3

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*Please Note: Our By-Laws also call for a By-laws Committee and a Flower Committee. We just revised the By-Laws last year so we are not recruiting for a slate for this. Any By-laws issues which come up will be referred to the Church Council who can act to appoint a By-Laws Committee if they determine it is warranted.*

*Also, the Flower Committee is not included here since our plans for managing fresh flowers for worship have changed. Most of the time, individuals will be purchasing their own flowers and will therefore be taking them home after worship. The Flower Chart is still being used to coordinate who would like to have flowers on a particular Sunday.*

*Vacancies still remaining by the time of the Annual Meeting on March 6 will be filled with nominations from the floor. If you expected to see your name here, perhaps in more than one place, and it's not, PLEASE SPEAK WITH REV. RUTH!!*

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## **BEACON PRAYER LIST**



*Our church has a very active and vital prayer ministry which involves our Prayer Tree, requests for prayers during Sunday morning worship and*

*this invitation in the Beacon each month to pray for specific folks who are requesting prayers here. So, that means we have multiple active prayer lists at any given time! How wonderful is that! Below is this month's list for the Beacon Prayer List.*

|                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Madelyn Stratton | Ruth King Roes    |
| Shirley M        | Jennifer Woodhall |
| Bill Hoffman     | Donald            |
| Emma             | Paula             |
| Scott            | Evan              |
| Anna Michael     |                   |

*If you would like anyone added or removed from this list for the next newsletter, please call the office. Thank you.*



### **OUR STAFF**

*Pastor:* The Rev. Ruth Shilling Hainsworth  
*Organist:* David Cranmer  
*Secretary:* Carol Lindsay  
*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@gmail.com](mailto:uccwesterly@gmail.com)  
*Website:* [www.uccwesterly.org](http://www.uccwesterly.org)  
*Office Hours:* Monday 9 am-1 pm and Thursday 9 am-3 pm

**Please be aware that the Format and spacing for the BEACON may appear differently on your computer or device depending upon which WORD version you have. Thank you for your understanding!**



### ***February Birthdays:***

Dorothy Oehrle – 7  
Alice Dessaulles – 12  
Katharine Tarasuk – 17  
Nick Comito – 20  
Gary Davis - 22

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

