



## *The Beacon* February 2023

*"The Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights..." Matthew 4:1-2*

Lent begins this month. This ancient Christian tradition dates back millennia and began as a time of study and preparation for persons interested in becoming Christian and joining a faith community. The idea of Lent comes from the story of Jesus going out into the wilderness immediately following his baptism, for a period of solitude, prayer and reflection before he began his active years of ministry. He fasted for these 40 days which is where the idea of observing some kind of ritual abstinence – giving up a favorite food, meatless Fridays, etc. – originated.

Our 40 days of Lent, which excludes Sundays by the way, begins with Ash Wednesday on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. On that day, I will be offering for the first time "Drive-Through" ashes in the upper parking lot from approximately 5-5:30pm in the hopes of catching some folks on their way home from work. Our usual Ash Wednesday service will take place at 6pm in the sanctuary.

I will also be offering a special Lenten Book Study this year for four Sundays after church in person and online. Check the article for more details. Additionally, I will be providing a personal Lenten Guide with suggestions on how you might want to consider using this Lenten season as a special time to reconnect with Jesus, with your faith and the deeper meaning of being Christian. May your Lenten journey this year be a rich one!

Your sister in faith,  
Rev. Ru



### WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Our Sunday morning worship services  
In person & on Facebook Live  
every Sunday at 9:45am.

Please mask if you are feeling unwell or are unvaccinated.

### Back to Basics

February 5 – Communion – "What About Hunger?"

February 12 – "What About God's Expectations?"

February 19 – "What About Homelessness?"

### Resurrection Promise

February 22 – Ash Wednesday

February 26 – "Reaching for the Promise: Study"

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



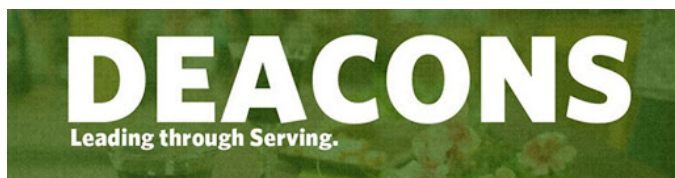
### Diaconate Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Telephone #</u>
2/5	Lynn Murray	401-539-7578
2/12	Ed Stratton	401-596-4740
2/19	Christina Brummund	860-599-1719
2/26	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!***



The next trustee meeting is February 21, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.



The Deacons continue to plan for upcoming service seasons, and to discuss other activities on the church calendar. We also look forward to the possibility of new members in the new church year. Please ask any of the current deacons if you have any questions.

Lynn Murray,  
Deacon chairperson



### Trustee Notes

Pledges through December were \$69,447, \$1031 less than the anticipated amount of \$70,478. Total income for December was \$128,388. Expenses for December were \$137,352 \$19,733 more than the anticipated expenses of \$117,619. We ended the year with a deficit of \$8963.

Thanks again to everyone who has pledged for the upcoming year!

If you are interested in the church property and its financial affairs then the Board of Trustees is the place for you! Please speak to Pastor Ruth or any member of the board.

## MISSION MOMENTS

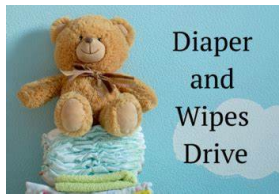
### February

The Missions Board met in January and did some planning for the months ahead. Our weekly support of the food pantry at the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center (PNC) will continue each Sunday throughout the year allowing everyone to support it as makes sense for them. Our other specific focus for February is on homelessness and our support of the WARM Center. Please check out the other article on the Homeless Awareness Prayer Vigil planned for Saturday, Feb. 18. We are also collecting donations to offset part of the cost of our annual pledge of \$1200 to WARM for its soup kitchen operations. During Lent we will once again be inviting folks to support the Church World Service organization as we hold a Blanket Drive in March and April. Following that will be the return of the "Babies and Ladies" donation drive in May & June followed by our now familiar "In the Middle" School Supplies drive in July & August.

Please know your Missions Board is keenly aware of the danger of "over-asking" for donations and other support for our many initiatives. Implicit in every request is always the realization that we know everyone has limits and that each of us does what we can, as we can, to support worthy causes here in the church and elsewhere. Put another way, we are keenly aware that "no one can do everything" but we hope "everyone can do something" even if it's only one thing. Thank you for all YOU do!



## FEBRUARY DONATION DRIVE

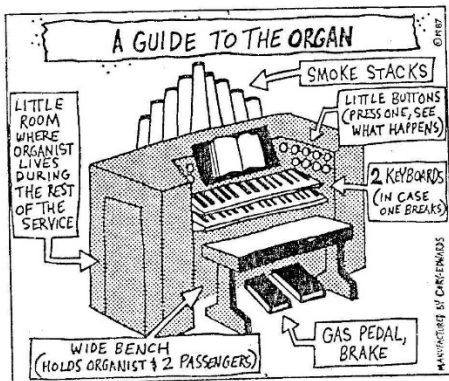


Diaper  
and  
Wipes  
Drive

**A cause you can  
really get behind.**



In February we will be sharing Valentine love with babies by collecting diapers and **unscented** baby wipes. Please, though, **only diapers size three or larger** because OFSNB already has an abundance of those smaller diapers. Just remember that little ones grow into bigger ones rather quickly, so the smaller sizes are not needed for very long! Thanks so very much for all of your donations!



## Organ Fund

On behalf of the Organ Committee, and as Financial Secretary, I'd like to provide an update on "where we are" with funds needed to complete the repairs and refurbishment of our Wicks Pipe Organ. We have signed a contract with the well-respected Foley-Baker Company to complete this work, which will begin this spring and should be completed by the end of December, roughly. There will be a period of time when the organ will not be playable, and David Cranmer will use the Arlene Ainsworth piano to accompany worship services. At last year's Annual Meeting, the congregation voted to make the needed repairs and to honor the \$92,046 total bill.

There has been a modest Organ Account in existence for many years, funded by former (deceased) member Lois Ledbetter for organ

maintenance. The congregation also decided that this account could be used to fund the current repairs. From this account, a \$4800 deposit was paid to Foley-Baker.

Since the need for repairs became known, several very thoughtful members have made substantial donations to the Organ Fund. The family of Judy Bartlett also decided that funds given to the church in her memory be allocated to the Organ Fund. Our industrious members have already completed fundraisers to benefit the Fund: The Congregational Life Committee organized the Bob and June Sicilian Art Show and Sale, which raised over \$3,000. The Barrie Estate Sale (Linda Evans' friend) raised close to \$4,000. Janet Allen sold ceramic ornaments at the Christmas Bazaar to add to the Organ Fund. Thank you to everyone for your generous donations and hard work! In addition, The Washington Trust Bank recently awarded the church a \$1,000 Charitable Trust Grant for the repair of the organ! The total of all the above income is \$31,019.11, approximately one-third of the total cost!

The Organ Committee has discussed several fundraising ideas for the year ahead. The first one will likely be an easy one: a Potluck Soup Supper at the church, with donations to benefit the Organ Fund. We hope to get that on the calendar very soon. Other ideas are; Coffee House afternoons featuring our own musicians (Allana Allik has kindly offered to organize this venue!), a Poetry Reading, a Bridge Party, and a Comedy Evening.

The congregation can be assured that even if we do not cover the entire amount owed in 2023, we will be able to meet the obligation using other funds, perhaps some of the Bob and June Sicilian Bequest, and then continue to fundraise in 2024 to replace as much as possible. Therefore, 2023 is "The Year of the Organ!"

The Organ Committee would also like to invite UCC members who have not already done so to consider making a donation to the Organ Fund in any amount. A larger donation could be made as a pledge and paid over time. Using an honor system, a member could mentally "pledge" to give a certain amount by year's end and divide up the payments as personal budgets dictate. Be sure to note "Organ Fund" on every donation made so that your financial team is able to deposit every donation and allocate it properly.

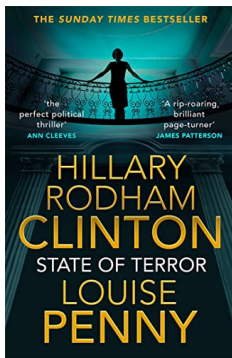
To keep track of our progress, I will place poster in Fellowship Hall, showing our current total and future growth toward the goal amount. Since we as a church elected to make the organ repairs, we can support his work in whatever way we are able.



Thank you in  
contemplating  
to help support  
music ministry  
church!  
to speak to  
your own

We are: Jenny  
Janet Allen,  
Caroline

Melissa Stratton...and Anyone is always welcome  
to join the group!

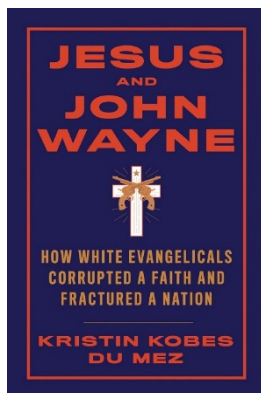


advance for  
this opportunity  
the important  
of our beloved  
Please feel free  
any of us with  
ideas!

Brummund (me),  
David Cranmer,  
Leroy, and

understand terms conservative evangelical theology and history,  
thus making clear why our country is in the intellectual and  
emotional space it is. I can't think of a more important book to  
guide us through this year's Lenten season."

The book should be readily available through the library and your  
favorite book store. For more details, speak with Rev. Ruth any  
time. Cell: 401-663-7934 <> [revruth121@aol.com](mailto:revruth121@aol.com)



## ANNOUNCING

### A Lenten Book Study

SUNDAYS in person @ 11AM in the Parlor  
Feb. 26, March 5, 12, & 19

or

WEDNESDAYS @ 6pm via Zoom  
March 1, 8, 15, 22

(Advance registration required for Zoom)

According to the site "GoodReads.com," Jesus and John Wayne is a sweeping account of the last seventy-five years of white evangelicalism, showing how American evangelicals have worked for decades to replace the Jesus of the Gospels with an idol of rugged masculinity and Christian nationalism. As Du Mez explains, the key to understanding this transformation is to recognize the role of culture in modern American evangelicalism.

Rev. Ruth notes: "I think this is one of the most important and comprehensive books I have read which outlines in easy to

## LIGHT A CANDLE

In the darkness that is homelessness

In our communities

Saturday, February 5<sup>th</sup> @ 6 pm

The Upper Parking Lot  
Of UCC Westerly

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! For more information or to volunteer to assist with this event, kindly speak with Rev. Ruth or any Missions Board member.

Look for the beauty of nature all year long, especially in your own back yard! Also, now is the perfect time to plan for your gardens this year!!!



### **An Invitation to Join us at BOOKS**

A group of folks who love to read, talk about what we read or just talk...

#### **OUR NEXT GATHERING:**

Wednesday, February 15, 2023 @ 12:30pm

Join us for a BYO Lunch & Beverage

DESSERT PROVIDED!!

IN PERSON AT CHURCH!!!!!!

#### **WHAT WE'RE READING:**

##### **STATE OF TERROR**

By Hillary Rodham Clinton  
& Louise Penny

**EVERYONE WELCOME! This book is available to borrow through your local library or for purchase through your favorite bookstore.**

**BOOKS** is an on-going discussion group ministry of UCC Westerly. Please speak with Rev. Ruth for any questions.



#### **A WORD FROM THE POLLINATOR TEAM!**

A reminder that your gardens and yard are "sleeping" right now but they still provide valuable food for the many critters in your area!

### **The Grief Group**

Will be meeting twice in February:

Wednesdays

February 8 @ 2pm in the Parlor.

February 22 @ 1pm in the Parlor

Please note change of time for 22<sup>nd</sup>!

This group is for anyone struggling with life in the midst of loss of a loved one, a job, a change of life status never imagined.

Rev. Ruth for



Please speak with more details.

The Pandemic Response Team wishes to let everyone know they are still monitoring the situation and will continue to advise church leadership as we move forward through this "post pandemic" time. 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.



Our newly redesigned website is live!  
Check it out at [www.uccwesterly.org](http://www.uccwesterly.org)!



### ***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!

Beverly Barone  
44 Governor Avenue, Westerly, RI 02891

William & Christa Colprit  
3 Elizabeth Drive, Pawcatuck, CT 06379

Martha Evans  
7 Scot Circle, Charlestown, RI 02813



The Sunshine Cards Ministry is Updating their Birthday and Anniversary lists. If you are unsure if we have your birthday/anniversary on record please contact Carol in the office.

## **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
Donald	Emma
Scott	Evan

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

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## ***February Birthdays:***

Dorothy Oehrle – 7  
**Jimmy Cornell** – 9  
Alice Dessauls – 12  
Kathrine Tarasuk – 17  
Nick Comito – 20  
Gary Davis - 22

*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:* Ed Curtin

### **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; 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!**