



# THE BEACON

## SEPTEMBER 2025



*The Lord went in front of them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them along the way, and in a pillar of fire by night, to give them light. Exodus 13:21*

September is here at last and these kinds of tree shadowed roadways are part of who we are in New England. The autumn golds, reds, and rusts beckon us forward down these roads inviting us to imagine where they might lead. For some of us, these roads lead children and grandchildren back to school, young people on to first jobs, working folks back into long stretches of busy days, and retired folks on to whatever catches their fancy. This promise of autumn days shifts our perspectives as our thoughts turn from gardening and recreational moments outdoors to the cozy comfort of homes filled with memories of fall days long past even as we anticipate new possibilities for ourselves and our loved ones.

I chose this text for this month's brief little reflection here because it captures a very basic and yet often overlooked tenet of our faith. Simply put, God is always with us. This particular text comes from the story of the exodus as the Israelites fled Egypt and Pharaoh's army. Once they escaped across the Red Sea, they had no idea where to go. Only God's vague promises of a "promised land" somewhere out ahead of them. But these folks knew all too well that they faced in a brutal desert landscape and a long walk ahead. Searching for water and food would become a full time reality, even as they made pitifully slow progress in their walk into the unknown. Soon they would be complaining to Moses about everything – the lack of food, of water, or real shelter. Even the hope of some promised land somewhere held little appeal after a while. Always remarkable to me is that these

people doubted the validity of God, the love of God for them, even their own need for God in their lives as they traveled forward – led by God's own presence in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

God was right there and yet still remained invisible to them somehow. No wonder we get overwhelmed in our own lives as we consider where God is, how God is speaking to us or even IF God is speaking to us. This, dear ones, is why the church matters. The church is where we come to know God better, to practice what it means to love one another, even the people we find challenging. Church is where we come to learn about our faith and experience what it is to live it in a community of people trying to figure out the same things we are. Don't think I'm saying we all agree on everything in this church. We most definitely do not. But we do share a commitment to love and serve God, to deepen our understanding of Jesus as the guide and guardian of our faith, to experience first hand the surprising movement of the Holy Spirit in our lives and the life of our church.

If you haven't been to worship in a while, whatever the reason, we are praying you will return to us on one special Sunday coming up this month:

### WELCOME SUNDAY

**September 21 @ 9:45am**

*Whether you are coming back after an absence or bringing a friend to join us for the first time, you will be greeted with love, warmth and acceptance in every sense.*  
**SPECIAL FELLOWSHIP TIME TO FOLLOW.**

So, if it's been a minute since you've been here or if you're taking me up on my encouragement to bring a friend with you to worship on the 21<sup>st</sup>, take the time to read through this issue of *THE BEACON*. I think you'll be amazed at just how much one little church can do. I'll be looking for you!

Your sister in Christ,  
Rev. Ruth



**Rev. Ruth's**  
**Community Office Hours**



Come visit me at Martin House Books (in the old Savoy Bookstore space!) on Thursdays, September 4th & 18th, from 1:00 PM -3:00 PM.



### **SEPTEMBER WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

**Sept. 7** - Worship at 9:45AM with Communion  
Rev. Ruth preaching on Esther

**Sept. 14** - Worship at 9:45AM with Rev. Ruth  
preaching on Rahab

**Sept. 21** - Worship at 9:45AM with Rev. Ruth  
preaching on Hannah

**Sept. 28** - Worship at 9:45AM with Rev. Ruth  
preaching on Bathsheba

*Sermon topics and scripture texts for each week  
appear in the weekly email. Also, please speak with  
Rev. Ruth if you would like a hard copy of any sermon.*



### **SEPTEMBER DIACONATE SCHEDULE**

**Sept 7** – Lynn Murray

**Sept 14** – Allana Allik

**Sept 21** – Christina Brummund

**Sept 28** – Joann Spurley

### **NEWS FROM THE DEACONS**

The Deacons had our annual pot luck dinner meeting in August at Lynn's house, and it was productive, even though two Deacons were unable to attend. We are pleased to share that we have ordered and received a memorial gift for Linda Evans. It is a framed display of sea glass birds on a leafy branch, with a beautiful statement about friendship. We know how much Linda loved sea glass. It will be displayed in the parlor, in which Linda was one of the folks who did renovations a while back.

Homecoming Sunday will be September 21st, where we welcome folks back who couldn't be with us in person, and invite them to bring a friend. We will also have a Card Sunday shortly after that, where we write notes to folks who can't be with us in person.

These are always much appreciated. If you have generic cards, please bring them.

The broadcasting of services has been challenging lately, and discussions have begun as to whether to continue with this process. We also discussed having an "all boards night" meeting, so all boards and committees can coordinate future plans. Any thoughts on these topics would be appreciated.

Lynn Murray,  
Chairperson



### **TRUSTEES NOTES**



Pledges for July were \$5,121, \$861 less than the anticipated pledge amount of \$5,982. Total income for July was \$8,896. Total

expenses for July were \$10,172.

The brush and tree limbs in the lower parking lot have been cleared, thank you Gary Davis! Thanks also to everyone who was able to keep up with their pledges over the summer! If you are interested in the financial aspects of the church, please consider becoming a trustee! Speak to Pastor Ruth or any trustee. Should you notice something in the building that needs attention, please speak to any trustee.

### **FROM THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY**



Hello!

Here is a quick reminder that there are many ways to fulfill your financial pledge to our church. Select from

one or more of the following methods:

- Place your pledge in the collection plate any Sunday.



- Mail it into UCC Westerly, 9 Castle Hill Rd. Pawcatuck, CT 06379
- Use the electronic Donation platform found on our website: [www.uccwesterly.org](http://www.uccwesterly.org)  
(You may choose to have your donation come from a credit, debit, checking, or savings account)
- Set up your own automatic donation system through your financial planner/institution.

Timing? Folks donate in any way that works for them: weekly, monthly, quarterly, twice a year, annually, whenever you can swing it! The wonderful thing is that we support our church financially, which "pays the bills and the salaries". You can review our financial statement in January's Annual Report.

Many of us have special collections that are dear to our hearts, such as Missions, UCC-specific themed Donations, which pop up several times a year, holidays, the Deacons' Fund to support those near and dear to us in need, Music and Organ Funds, Bazaar Baking donations, The Pollinator Garden, Endowment Fund, Memorial Donations, etc. We have diverse interests and we support them how and when we are able.

Thank you, faithful UCC Members and Friends!  
Jenny Brummund,  
Financial Secretary



## **UPDATE FROM OUR MUSIC MINISTRIES**

**AA Battery Donations** are always appreciated! Duracell, Energizer, and other major brands are preferred.

### **Voice Choir and Tone Chimes News**

September means music practice resumes! First, we want to invite anyone and everyone to join us! To twist a familiar phrase, "No matter what your ability or experience, you are welcome in our Music Program!" Consider joining the Voice Choir on Wednesday, September 10th from 7-8 PM, here in the Sanctuary! We will work on some simpler "unison" hymns for this month. Note: Dave Cranmer, the Music Director, will be away the following Wednesday, the 17th, so there is no practice. Choir practice resumes on

Wednesday the 24th and every week thereafter. The Voice Choir will sing the Offertory on the weeks of Sept. 14, 21, and 28. When the Voice Choir performs on a Sunday, we usually arrive at church a half hour to forty-five minutes early to warm up and practice.

If you want to give the Tone Chimes a try, come to our practice after the worship service on October 5th! The Tone Chimes will be playing the Offertory music on October 5th and 12th. We usually practice after worship on the Sundays prior to our "performance," as well as before church on the Sundays of the performance.

2025-26 will follow roughly the same practice/performance schedule as last year, with the Voice Choir featured in two consecutive Sunday services, alternating with the Tone Chimes for two weeks. It's easy to be in both choirs!

We are small but dedicated groups, and we have some laughs while we learn. Music is a way to express faith, praise, and biblical verse. We hope you will join us this year!

Jenny Brummund, reporting for David Cranmer 😊

*"My heart is steadfast, O God; I will sing and make music with all my soul. Awake, harp and lyre! I will awaken the dawn." —Psalm 108:1*





## **MISSIONS NEWS FOR SEPTEMBER**

Ours is a very Missions oriented church, but what does that mean exactly? *Webster's Dictionary* offers us some clarity but with a very long definition. The key point of all these various definitions comes down to one idea – the sending out of ... something ... as a result of our faith in God's expectations of us. Some churches – we ourselves in years past – have sent out people on Missions projects like our Providence Experience Mission Week back in 2014 (?) or when we would go to the WARM Shelter to prepare and serve meals. Important to realize here is that times change, people change and how we offer our support of various mission initiatives changes as well. Pulling together a team of folks to go on a Mission trip is beyond daunting since those experiences require a firm commitment, including a nonrefundable cash deposit, from a minimum number of people well in advance. Even local Mission initiatives like WARM Center meals aren't easy to do because it requires a lot of work from a big team of folks to make it happen.

Given the size of our congregation at this moment, it just is not the best use of our resources to attempt to pull off these “one and done” kinds of Missions initiatives. Instead, our Missions Board has focused on a different approach in recent years. One is to bring in guest speakers for worship on timely issues – like this past Sunday's guest speaker Lucienne Andrew from the Westerly Housing Authority. Though this invitation originated from the Deacons, it is totally in keeping with the educational goal which is central to our Missions Board's planning.

Our primary focus is the coordinating of various donation drives to benefit local groups with specific needs. For example, we just completed our annual summer school supplies drive in support of kids at local middle schools. Last year, we completed a number of different donation drives for a variety of items including diapers, ladies feminine products, men's toiletries, toilet tissue, not to mention our on-going food donations drive for the local food pantry at the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center. We also

support the various donation drives and projects of Operation Fresh Start whose presence in our building rent free is yet another very important Missions project coordinated with the Trustees. Operation Fresh Start is a key player now in meeting the needs of some of the most vulnerable in our local communities. We are so honored to support them in that work.



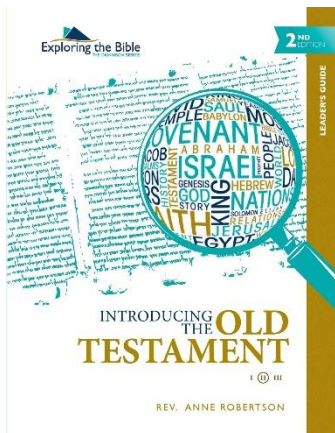
So, all that being said, what are we doing this Fall? *Well, for the month of September at least we are collecting socks* because they are the most requested item at shelters and support human service services centers for the working poor. Any size socks, any style, any color. Adult socks, children's socks, baby socks, even adult support socks. We need them all and we need your help to make it happen. Please bring them in and place them in the baskets under the altar anytime but especially on Sunday morning when you are here for worship. Also, do know that you can order socks for the donation drive from Walmart or Amazon and just have them delivered here. That way you can participate even if you are not able to join us at worship. Truly, everyone can make a difference in the lives of other people if we only take the time to do so. This is where we are so blessed by a Missions Board who is willing to do the work of directing this whole donation process for us so we can do our part to bring the witness of our faith to so many in need outside our doors. Remember, *no one can do everything but everyone can do something*. This is how the world changes – one person, one situation, one moment at a time.

Please know our Missions Board would love your suggestions for future projects and donation drives and ask that you contact any member of the Missions Board with your ideas. Or, simply call or email Jerin in the office with your thoughts and she will send them on to our Missions folks.

*What you do does make a difference...*

Rev. Ruth on behalf of our hard working Missions Board – *Sandi Davis, Peter Hainsworth, Eileen Rawnsley, Melissa Stratton, Kathy Sugar ... and you?*





## Announcing the return of **Wednesday Morning Bible Study!**

**1st Gathering  
Wednesday,  
September 24  
10am  
The Parlor at  
church**

Last spring's very successful Wednesday Morning Bible study resumes as promised on Wednesday, September 24 at 10am in the Church Parlor. We will be continuing our study with the next book in the Dickinson Bible Study Series which is *Introducing the Old Testament*. Books can be ordered online and this time Rev. Ruth is recommending you purchase the student's book. A New Revised Standard Bible is also recommended and can be borrowed from the church for the duration of the course.

Pre-registration is requested but not required. You may register by emailing Rev. Ruth directly at [revruth1121@aol.com](mailto:revruth1121@aol.com) or the church office at [uccwesterly@gmail.com](mailto:uccwesterly@gmail.com). A sign-up sheet will also be available at church.

If you have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to speak with Rev. Ruth at any time.

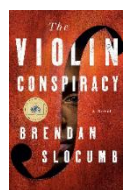


**UCCW BOOKS** is an on-going discussion group ministry of UCC Westerly. We are a group of folks who love to read, talk about what we read, or just talk. Everyone is welcome!

### **OUR NEXT GATHERING...**

Wednesday, September 17th at 12PM Noon In the church parlor.

### **WHAT WE'RE READING...**



**'The Violin Conspiracy'**  
by Brendan Slocumb

*Books are available to borrow through your local library or for purchase through your favorite local bookstore.*

I wonder  
what life  
would be  
like...



If we weren't so  
**fabulous!**

### **LADIES WHO LUNCH**

This is a fellowship group for the ladies of our church with no agenda other than fun! We meet approximately once a month for lunch, conversation, and general frivolity.

### **OUR NEXT GATHERING...**



**When:** Wednesday,  
September 24<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 PM  
Noon

**Where:** Guytanno's Westerly

A sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board outside Fellowship Hall. Hope to see you there!

**Advanced Registration is a MUST!** We will be making reservations a week prior so please sign-up by Wednesday, September 17<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to be added to the list please call or email Jerin in the office at (860) 599-1226 or [uccwesterly@gmail.com](mailto:uccwesterly@gmail.com) Thank you!



### **THE BAZAARS ARE COMING!!!**

You may not be ready to think about our two bazaars coming on November 15 and December 6, but odds are that you may be cleaning out your closets, cabinets, attic, or basement, and wondering what you could do with all of your valuable treasures that you no longer need or use. No, we aren't referring to the odds and ends you've collected through the years; they would go to a yard or attic sale. We are searching for nice items that others would like to bid on for our Annual Bazaar Silent Auction.

Or maybe you have some cute items that you could put together to create a themed basket? Over the years, our themed baskets have received great bids. Some of the most popular baskets were based on All Things Rhode Island, Books Galore, Pollinators, Birding, Crafts, French Inspiration, Red Sox, Patriots, and Baby Sweetness. These are the baskets that quickly come to mind. There have

been other great ones that we have been able to add to our treasure trove. What themes can you



think of? In fact, some of those themes could even be repeated, as there were many bidders who were quite disappointed that their bids were not high enough.

We also have a gift card or two to add to our list, but we need more! Maybe you could ask some local merchants to donate gift cards and/or products? Need some ideas of stores to approach? We have some thoughts in that area, as well.

It's never too early to start prepping for the bazaar! We will have tables ready in Fellowship Hall to receive your lovely donations by mid-September.

Thanks for all of your past, present, and future help!

Shirin, Cathy, Deb, and Sandi

### **BAZAAR PANTRY!**

UCC bakers and canners are already at it, making or prepping to make jams, jellies, pickles, relishes, butters, etc.! It is already a busy summer preparing for our two bazaars this fall. We are filling dozens and dozens of canning jars, using more pounds of sugar and bottles of vinegar than we can count, and cutting up pounds and pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables, some even grown in our own gardens. We are also filling our freezers with fruits and vegetables to be used in baking and soup making later. The same members who will give so much of their time and energy this summer need to purchase or grow much of our own ingredients. And, that is even before the baking begins! Boggles the mind, doesn't it?

In years past some of you lamented that you are no longer able or do not have the time to bake or can for the bazaars, and we all know that our customers expect homemade goods, not store bought. How can you still help? Well, contributing to our bazaar pantry would be ever so helpful. A list of our baking needs is included at the end of this article. Don't stress if we receive more of an item that we may use this year, as we can store it for next year (if it has an extended expiration date) or donate it to the PNC in January. When you are shopping, just grab anything on the list that may be on sale and put it in the designated basket in Fellowship Hall or in the kitchen and label it for the bazaar pantry; then, we will store it in the plastic tubs in the kitchen closet for our

bakers, soup makers, and canners to access when they fire up their canners, soup pots, or ovens. Have extra frozen fruits or vegetables to share? No problem! Just place them in the freezer in the kitchen and label them for the bazaar. Easy peasy! No sign-ups or stress involved. Thanks so much for whatever help you can give us. You have no idea how much we will appreciate your donation. Here is a shopping list to help!

Also, by the way, please return your empty jars from last year!

Not up for shopping, either? Monetary donations are also gratefully accepted!

### **BAZAAR PANTRY SHOPPING LIST**

(\*\*\* = Needed now)

#### **Dry Goods**

\*\*\*Granulated sugar  
Light Brown sugar  
Dark Brown sugar  
Confectioners' sugar  
Molasses  
Vegetable oil  
Solid Crisco  
Peanut butter  
Chocolate chips (also white, butterscotch, peanut butter, and cinnamon chips)  
Cocoa—regular and dark  
\*\*\*Cider vinegar  
Flour (King Arthur preferred)  
GF Flour - (Bob's Red Mill 1 to 1 Baking Flour or King Arthur Measure for Measure GF Flour)  
Pecans and Walnuts

#### **Refrigerated Items**

Butter (unsalted and salted)—please wrap lightly and place in the freezer  
Plant butter (Earth Balance sticks)—same as above  
Eggs—closer to the bazaar

#### **Packaging**

Plastic clamshells  
Cardboard pie boxes  
Plastic quart and pint-sized soup containers  
\*\*\*Glass Mason jars—quart, pint, half pint, and jelly jars\*\*\* (with lids if possible)

Sincerely and gratefully,  
Your Bazaar Bakers, Soup Makers, and Canners

## CALLING ALL CANNING JARS



Have you purchased canned jams, jellies, relishes, pickles, etc. at the bazaars in the past? Or, do you have empty canning jars from your mom, grandmother, neighbor, or friend just sitting around your kitchen or basement, taking up space? Well, this is the time to make some space in your house and help out the canners in the church. Please return or recycle those jars to the basket in Fellowship Hall to help us out. We will be eternally grateful! Thank you so much!

## PRAYER TREE



Our church has a very active and vital prayer ministry which includes, among other things, our Prayer Tree. If you would like to be a member of our prayer team or if you would like the team to pray for you, please speak with any Deacon.

## BRIGHTEN SOMEONE'S DAY



Here are some folks we haven't seen in worship for a time. Please reach out and say hello with a card or note!

**John & Laura Blake**

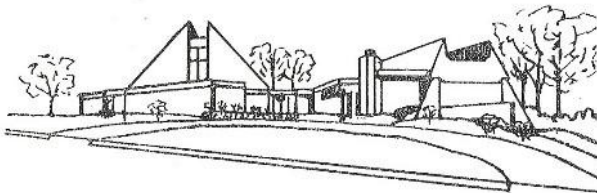
9 Pine Street, Pawcatuck, CT 06379

**Paul & Heidi Grillo**

14 Stuart Street, Westerly, RI 02891

**Elvis & Ane Torres**

63 Nantucket Drive, Mystic, CT 06355



# CELEBRATE!

## SEPTEMBER SPECIAL DAYS

### **Birthdays**

No birthdays this month!

### **Anniversaries**

Fred & Claire Calabretta

Amanda Hainsworth & Jennifer O'Donnell

Mark & Kathy Sugar

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

*We are no longer providing specific birthday dates as an added measure of confidentiality for our folks.*



## OUR STAFF

Pastor: The Rev. Ruth Shilling Hainsworth  
Organist & Choirs Director: David Cranmer  
Church Operations Coord.: Jerin Peloquin

## CONTACT US

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Telephone: (860) 599-1226  
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Website: [www.uccwesterly.org](http://www.uccwesterly.org)

## OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday 9 AM - 1 PM  
Wednesday 9 AM - 12 PM  
Thursday 9 AM - 1 PM

*Please be aware that the format and spacing for the Beacon may appear differently on your computer or device. Thank you for your understanding!*