



SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP
with UCC Westerly

October 5, 2025 @ 9:45am
In-person & Broadcast live from our sanctuary
CCLI Streaming License #21022154

RAINBOW BRIDGE SUNDAY!

Photo Credit: Microsoft Office Stock Image

NOTE: *If you have brought a photo or remembrance of a beloved pet who has crossed the “rainbow bridge,” please place on the altar as you arrive.*

GATHERING MUSIC — [WORDS & MUSIC: Doug Brummund, ©2022 B.R. Music. All rights reserved. Used with permission.]

PASTOR’S WELCOME

PRELUDE — *With this Bread and Wine*

[MUSIC: Paul Taylor. ©2005 Lorenz Publishing Company. CCLI#4757313]

DEACON’S WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP — from Psalm 121

One: The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade at your right hand.

All: **The sun shall not strike you by day nor the moon by night.**

One: The Lord will keep you from all evil; the Lord will keep your life.

All: **The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.**

***OPENING HYMN**

God, You Spin the Whirling Planets

W&R#24

[©Public Domain]

UNISON PRAYER OF REFLECTION — *Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi*

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,

Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon;

where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy;

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;

to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive;

it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;

and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

The Blessing of our Beloved Animals Who Wait for Us Across the Rainbow Bridge:

[adapted from <https://prayerforanyoccasion.com/rainbow-bridge-prayer-for-cats-a-heartfelt-tribute/>]

Dear Lord, we gather here today to remember and honor our beloved animals who have crossed the Rainbow Bridge. We are grateful for the love and joy they brought into our lives, and we cherish the memories we shared together. We pray that our animals are at peace, free from pain and suffering.

May they find comfort and happiness in the meadow beyond the Rainbow Bridge, surrounded by love and beauty. We trust that they are watching over us, guiding and protecting us from above. Lord, please help us find strength and comfort during our times of grief over our loss of these beloved pets. We ask for your healing touch, to soothe our hearts and bring us peace. Help us to remember the joy and love our animals brought into our lives, and to hold onto those precious memories forever. We are grateful for the gift of companionship our pets provided, and we thank you, Lord, for bringing them into our lives. May their spirits continue to shine brightly in our hearts, as we carry their memory with us always. We come together in this memorial, united in our love for our beloved animal friends. And as we say goodbye for now, we trust that one day we will be reunited with them at the Rainbow Bridge, where there will be no more tears, only joy and eternal love. In your name we pray, Amen.

A CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Note: Ours is an Open Table meaning that anyone who finds meaning in the sacrament is welcome to partake. Do note that our elements are gluten and alcohol free.

An Affirmation of Faith – [from *The New Century Hymnal* #887]

We believe in God: who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others by the Spirit. We trust in God. We are called to be the Church: to celebrate God's presence, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope. In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

Song of Preparation – *Let Us Break Bread Together* W&R#699, v. 1

[© Public Domain]

Words of Invitation, Explanation and Consecration

Partaking in the bread and cup together

Prayer of Thanksgiving: **Bountiful God, we give you thanks that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

THE MORNING MESSAGE

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:1-7

Message – What's Missing?

Rev. Ruth

Meditation Music – Grace Greater than Our Sin

[Public Domain]

#A MOMENT TO BREATHE

A TIME OF PRAYER

Pastoral Prayer & Silent Prayers

The Lord's Prayer in whatever words are most comfortable for you.

Musical response

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF GIFTS AND OFFERINGS*

Special Music *All Things Bright and Beautiful* performed by the Tone Chimes Choir

[©Public Domain]

Doxology *"Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Christ all creatures here below; Praise Holy Spirit, Comforter; One God, Triune, whom we adore. Amen."* [©Public Domain]

***CLOSING HYMN –** *He's Got the Whole World in His Hands*

W&R#80, v. 1-2

v. 3 – *"He's got 'all the many creatures' in his hands*

[WORDS ©Public Domain. MUSIC: ©1986 Curb Word Music. (admin. W.C. Music Corp.) CCLI Song #4666473]

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A PRAYER OF BENEDICTION Numbers 6:24-26

May God bless you and keep you. May God's face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May God's countenance enfold you and give you peace, this day and forever more. Amen.

Sung Response – Let There Be Peace on Earth

W& R#614

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PASSING OF THE PEACE

POSTLUDE *Christ, the Cornerstone*

[MUSIC: Roger C. Wilson. ©1973, 1991 Lorenz Publishing Company. CCLI#3974922]

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TO ANY VISITORS WITH US THIS MORNING, WELCOME! We are so glad you decided to join us! We would love to be able to connect with you after your visit today. Please take one of our Welcome brochures in the pew and leave us your contact information, if you would like. 😊

#A MOMENT TO BREATHE is an experience of Thich Nhat Hahn's breath of 10 exercise. It is very simple, inviting you to breathe as you normally would but counting each breath in and each breath out until you reach 10. This is a remarkably simple but highly effective breathing exercise that calms your mind and heart.

Our Diaconate Person of the Week for this week is Bethany Foster. Please feel free to be in touch with her with your joys and concerns knowing that we care about you all the time, not just when you are here.

***ABOUT THE OFFERING.** We offer our deepest gratitude to our members and friends who are so generous with their pledges and financial gifts to the church, both those here in person and on line. Gifts can be made on line via the "Donate" button @ www.uccwesterly.org or mail your checks, made payable to UCC Westerly, 9 Castle Hill Road, Pawcatuck, CT 06379. **A REMINDER that offering plates** are located at each entrance to the sanctuary. Thank you!

THE PRAYER MINISTRIES of this church are many and varied and you are welcome to participate in any or all of them. These include prayer notebooks within which to write specific prayer requests for Sunday worship, prayer candle tables at which you may light a candle for your own prayer concerns. Prayer shawls and prayer bears are also available to take with you for support in your prayers at home. For more information please speak with any Deacon or Rev. Ruth at any time.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE A PART OF WORSHIP??? *There are several ways. Check out these sign-up sheets on the bulletin board outside Fellowship Hall for details:*

- Flowers in memory or celebration of a person or special occasion! Fresh flowers or dried or silk arrangements are welcome! Check with Jerin in the office for details.
- Volunteers to light the candles as worship begins and then extinguish them as worship ends. Training provided! 😊
- Ushers and Greeters to make sure folks have a Worship Resource and that visitors have someone to answer their questions!

You are welcome to donate flowers for the chancel any week. Our sign-up sheet is located on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall or speak with Rev. Ruth for more information.

Luke 2:1-7

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the inn.

To request a copy of today's message be sent to you, kindly contact the office @ 860-599-1226 or uccwesterly@gmail.com.

THE UNITED CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WESTERLY, UCC

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OUR STAFF:

The Rev. Ruth Shilling Hainsworth, Pastor

David Cranmer, Organist & Choirs Director