



"The vision of Isaiah, son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. Isaiah 1:1

So begins the Book of Isaiah, and most of the other books of the prophets, major and minor, that we encounter in the Old Testament. The prophet identifies himself (the ones we know about are all men) and often the time period during which he is writing, identified by the reigns of the kings. Sometimes the introductions of the prophetic books speak of visions. Sometimes they don't. Each of the books are as different in tone and style as the prophets to which they are attributed.

Prophets played a vital role in the kingdom period, and the post-kingdom period, first as intermediaries between God and the king and at other times, directly between God and the people. Prophets held kings accountable for their misdeeds and offered guidance and at times direct instruction at how a particular situation should be approached. In short, they are a fascinating bunch that we mainline Christians do not spend near enough time studying and reflecting on. I hope to remedy that during these weeks of Epiphanytide leading up to Lent (beginning on February 18) and I invite you to join me in what I think will be a fascinating glimpse into a key part of the Scriptures that most of all know very little about. The sermon schedule appears elsewhere in this edition of The Beacon and I hope you'll take a closer look at it and maybe even consider a little advanced reading! You might also consider joining the Wednesday Morning Bible Study group during Epiphanytide as we will be diving even deeper into this fascinating group of biblical characters!

Your sister in faith,

Rev. Ruth

A THANK YOU FROM ME TO YOU!

Dear Members and Friends of UCC Westerly,

I want to express my deepest appreciation to those of you who were able to contribute to my Christmas gift and bonus this year. The gift card and cash I will save to use on our vacation this summer. The outdoor lighting set sounds spectacular as Lynn explained it to me so I probably will use it at home so I can fully enjoy all its "tricks!" The unique seed card calendar is very exciting and an activity I am excited to share with my grandson, an avid gardener at 7 years of age! I also love the "Fruits of the Spirit" booklets which will be a wonderful addition to my collection of things to take on pastoral visits, especially in nursing homes.

As I have said many times before, I am truly blessed to be your pastor and I give thanks for each of you every day. May God continue to guide us forward together on the path laid out before us as a church, and a community of Jesus' followers. Thank you again for your generosity and may God bless you and all those you love, always.

Fondly, R



CALL FOR THE 62nd ANNUAL MEETING UNITED CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WESTERLY, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Annual Meeting shall be held on January 25, 2026 immediately following worship in the sanctuary. 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

**PLAN TO JOIN US FOR
THE ANNUAL MEETING BRUNCH!**

**Sunday, January 25
Immediately following the
Annual Meeting**

**Look for the sign-up sheets outside
Fellowship Hall!!!!**



JANUARY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Jan. 4 - A Star Words Celebration with Communion

Jan. 11 - Meet Isaiah - Rev. Ruth preaching on Isaiah 6:1-8, "A Prophet's Vision of God"

Jan. 18 - Meet Jeremiah - Rev. Ruth preaching on Jeremiah 29:10-14, "Plans for the Future"

Jan. 25 - Meet Ezekiel - Rev. Ruth preaching on Ezekiel 37:1-14, "Trusting in Possibilities"

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.



JANUARY DIACONATE SCHEDULE

Jan. 4 - Bethany Foster

Jan. 11 - Lynn Murray

Jan. 18 - TBD

Jan. 25 - TBD

NEWS FROM THE DEACONS

The Deacons opted to not meet in December due to busy schedules, so we did a bit of extra planning in November. Special services recently included Poetry Sunday, the Hanging of the Greens, and welcoming the Associate Conference Minister, Rev. Leslie Jackson, who spoke on December 7th. The Blue Christmas service, Christmas Eve service, and STAR Sunday filled out our worship schedule as they have in recent years. At our November meeting, we agreed that it would be nice if

any former Deacons would like to serve as a weekly Deacon. Please speak to Pastor Ruth or any Deacon if interested. We continue to encourage anyone to consider joining the Board of Deacons, as we only have 5 members, all of which have served for quite a while.

Lynn Murray,
Deacon Chairperson

TRUSTEES NOTES



Pledges for November were \$4,697, \$1,285 less than the anticipated pledge amount of \$5,982. Total income for November was \$16,822. Total expenses for November were \$13,263.

If you are interested in the financial affairs of the church, please consider joining the Board of Trustees. Speak to Pastor Ruth or any trustee!

As always, if you should see something in the building that needs attention, please speak or get in touch with any trustee.

FROM THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Happy New Year! from Michele M., Bill S., and Jenny B.

Envelopes for "The Christmas Fund" are available on the side table in the sanctuary, next to the Pollinators table. This is one of UCC's "Five" special collections and benefits retired ministers of our denomination who may not have enough to support themselves. Some pastors who served in small, rural churches have small pensions and/or may need extra help with health needs. Please consider contributing to the Christmas Fund, which is near and dear to our hearts, as we remember Reverend Raymond Bradley and his dedication to us and many other churches, despite his advanced age!

Feel free to bring any questions or comments to Jenny.

Thank you for your generosity, compassion, and faith-filled giving, as always!

End of year statements can be picked up on the back pew starting this Sunday!



MISSION MOMENT

Missions has been busy with the Adopt-A-Family project we did in support of Operation Fresh Start. Just under 100 families were helped with many grateful tears shed by our little family from our community as our packages were opened on Christmas morning. How wonderful to know we made such a difference this Christmas for a family who really appreciates the support!

For the month of January, we will once again be resuming our support of the local food pantry at the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center. All kinds of non-perishable food items, pet food and supplies as well as paper products and toiletry items are welcome. Please place in the donation baskets at the front of the sanctuary when you are in church.

Missions will be meeting next week to plan our program for the coming year. Have some ideas? Please let us know!

Sandi Davis, Kathy Sugar, Melissa Stratton, Eileen Rawnsley, Peter Hainsworth



OPERATION FRESH START

Our own Sandi Davis now sits on the board of Operation Fresh Start and will keep us clued and involved on all the projects they have planned for the year ahead. In the meantime, we are so very glad to provide the home base for this vital community resource!!

ATTIC TREASURES 2026

Don't forget our Attic Treasures yard sale as you are cleaning and organizing after the holidays! Toys, clean gently-worn clothes, household goods & tools, gently-used linens & towels.... just about anything would make a good donation to the yard sale. Items can be stored in the middle level Room #3 at church until the sale which will be later in the Spring.

(No furniture, electronics, or broken items, please!)



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, January 14th at 12PM Noon In the church Parlor.

WHAT WE'RE READING...



'The Book Club for Troublesome Women' by Marie Bostwick

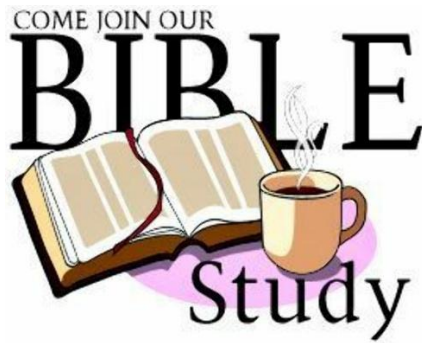
Books are available to borrow through your local library or for purchase through your favorite local bookstore.



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. Given that this winter has started off with frigid temps, snow and ice, *Ladies Who Lunch* are taking a brief hiatus and will be returning with an event March!!!

Any questions on this group should be directed to Rev. Ruth.



WEDNESDAYS

January 14, 21 & 28 @ 10:30am

In the Parlor.

We're back!! Wednesday mornings at 10:30am in the church parlor. This is NOT your typical Bible Study! Led by Rev. Ruth, a Harvard trained biblical scholar, this study is more about learning how to read and understand the Bible for yourself. Our starting point is first and always your questions! We have a curriculum we use as a guideline, but it is not a firm structure.

No need to sign up or register! Just show up and join the fun! Please speak with Rev. Ruth for any questions.

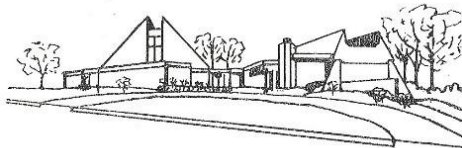
PRAYER TREE



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.

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 Coordinator: Jerin Peloquin

CONTACT US

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Facebook/UCCWesterly



uccwesterly.org



OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday
9:00AM - 12:00PM
Wednesday & Thursday
9:00AM - 1:00PM

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