

The Beacon May 2024

*"Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."
Matthew 5:3*

Dear ones, it is no secret that we are living in difficult and dangerous times. Divisiveness is disrupting far too many corners of our lives, and our hearts. Our anxieties are forefront in our minds and hearts too often. But what can we do about it? That becomes our question. It's more than a question, actually. It's an existential wondering about this ongoing clash between people in every conceivable way. Politically, religiously, philosophically, socially – divisiveness is everywhere. We focus constantly on what's wrong with "those people." Sometimes it seems like we even go so far as to look for divisions when they aren't there. So, as a Christian and as a Pastor, I have to ask why. What exactly are we doing to ourselves by focusing on what's wrong instead of challenging ourselves to search out what's good, what's kind, what is uplifting to our spirits and our hearts.

As we read Jesus' words from the Sermon on the Mount, we are reminded that God already knows about our discomfort and our discontent with the way things are in the moment. And this is not what God wants or intends for us. Instead, God is always inviting us to join with others to create something wonderful and healing and new, right here where we live. This is what Jesus means by the "kingdom of God." As the words of the hymn "Gather Us In" remind us, "Not just in buildings, small and confining, not in some heaven light years away,

here in this place the new light is shining; now is God present and now is the day."

Dear friends, as we approach the season of Pentecost which is considered the birthday of the Christian church universal, our task in our beloved church is clear. God is asking us to work together to build community here in our time and space so that we may continue to share God's light, hope and peace with the world. May we be up to the challenge.

Yours in faith,

Rev. Ruth



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

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

Sunday, May 5 - **Communion Sunday!**
Making Disciples Matthew 28: 6-20

Sunday, May 12 - **MOTHER'S DAY!**
A Capable Woman Proverbs 31:10-31

Sunday, May 19 - **Pentecost Sunday!**
Did You Hear That? Acts 2:1-8

Sunday, May 26 - **MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND**
For Everything There is a Season -
Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

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



Diaconate Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Telephone #</u>
May 5	JoAnn Spurley	401-714-8948
May 12	Christina Brummund	860-599-1719
May 19	Lynn Murray	401-539-7578
May 26	Allana Allik	860-599-5212

Please know you can call any Deacon 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!

Prayer Requests Always Welcome!

As many of you know, we have had an active prayer tree for quite some time. This is a way for prayers to go out quickly when they are requested. We have both phone branches, and an email group. If you would like to be put on the tree, or to withdraw your name, please let any of the Deacons know.



NEWS FROM THE DEACONS

The Deacons have recently made a donation to the Ukrainian Refugee efforts. This is made possible by the generous donations we receive for the Deacons Fund. Our Barbara Murano Scholarships will be presented on Scholarship Sunday, June 2. Scholarship applications are due in to us by May 12. This year we are also offering two scholarships through Operation Fresh Start, with assistance from Shannon DePerry. We thank her for all she does for the community! We are looking forward to supporting the PRIDE in the Park event on Saturday, June 1st at our booth in Wilcox Park!!

Summer worship plans are being formulated. If you'd like to try your hand at offering the morning message one Sunday, please speak with any Deacon. We are especially needing to cover the Sundays Rev. Ruth is off – July 14 and August 18.

Lynn Murray
Deacon chair



Trustee Notes

Pledges for March were \$5,696, \$186 more than the anticipated pledge amount of \$5510. Thanks to all those who are able to keep up with their pledges! Total income for March was \$9,784. Total expenses for March were \$11,862.

The "meadow" has been mowed, thank you Gary Davis! The trustees are in the process of getting quotes for lawn mowing for the growing season. The edges of the stairs in the interior of the building were all painted yellow for safety. Thanks again to Gary! As always, should you notice something in the building that needs attention, please speak to any trustee.



MISSIONS NEWS UPDATE!

Here's what's coming up on the calendar of Missions Projects for the next few months. Remember that donations to the Food Pantry at the PNC are always welcome! What we do does make a difference!

May - STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH *
This offering, one of the UCC Five for Five offerings, enables crucial programs such as faith development, confirmation retreats, regional youth events, camping programs like the award winning programming at Silver Lake as well as church innovation to thrive.

June - GENTS donations of men's grooming products like razors, beard care, etc.

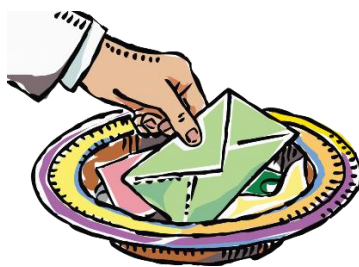
July & August - SCHOOL SUPPLIES drive

OPERATION FRESH START— NEW BEGINNINGS

MAY



Our annual plant sale will take place on **Saturday, May 18** and we need your support! Flowers and veggies, indoor plants and outdoor ones, seedlings and transplant – all will be available for sale. Check the OFS Facebook page for more details!



From the Financial Secretary

Thank you, as always, for your faithful donations to UCC Westerly!

A REMINDER! Please pay for Christmas and Easter flowers "in-person" or by mail. Our electronic donations option is not set up for flowers (and that money goes to McQuades) so we need to deposit it separately from what comes in electronically.

THIS MONTH'S SPECIAL OFFERING FOR THE UCC is the Strengthen the Church Offering. The funds raised this offering support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations. **By your generosity to this offering, you build up the Body of Christ.**

As always, if you have any questions about your giving to the church, please speak with us at any time.

Thank you.
Jenny Brummund & "crew"



AN UPDATE FROM OUR MUSIC MINISTRIES!

Donations of AA Batteries are appreciated! Please consider donating good quality (Duracell or major brand) batteries to power the individual receiver/microphones used by our choir members, as well as the pulpit microphone. Each battery "change out" requires about ten AA batteries. Change out is done once a month, and more frequently for the pulpit.

We have had a generous Benefactor for several years, but it would be nice to ask the wider congregation to share this expense.

Thank you for your generosity!

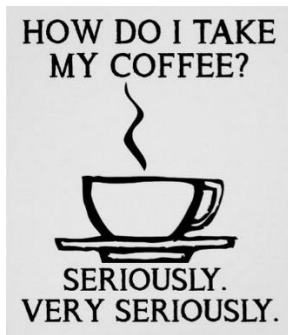
The Music Committee!



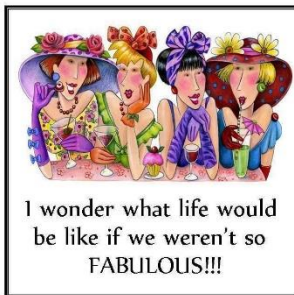
UPDATES FROM CONGREGATIONAL LIFE!!

Many thanks to all who assisted with our recent Attic Treasures Yard Sale. Thank you to Cathy & Deb for doing the majority of hauling upstairs, organizing, and setting up. Thank you to all the workers during the day, the bakers, and the packers. Thank you also to all who donated so many items that folks came for. Many thanks also to Jenny and Michele for doing all the counting and to Joann for taking care of the coffee table/baked goods table. We raised over \$700! Great job everyone! Some guests were already asking when our next one would be!

Please mark your calendars now for the Organ Recital and Dedication Weekend which will take place in late September. Dates and details are being finalized!



Rev. Ruth's Community Office Hours
 returning this month!
Thursdays, May 2, 16th & 30th
1-3pm @ Starbucks on Granite Street
In Westerly, RI

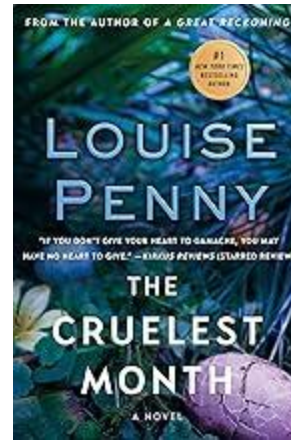


UCCW LADIES WHO LUNCH

This is a fellowship group for the ladies of our church: members and friends, old, young and in-between, single and spoken for. You are invited to meet once a month for lunch, conversation and general frivolity. NO AGENDA FOR THIS GROUP OTHER THAN FUN!

NEXT GATHERING is planned for
Wednesday, May 29 @ 12pm
QUYTANNO'S in Westerly.

Sign-up sheet outside Fellowship Hall or email the office to have your name added to that list.



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, May 8, 2024 @ 12:30pm
 Join us for a BYO Lunch & Beverage
 DESSERT PROVIDED!!

WHAT WE'RE READING:

THE CRUELEST MONTH
 By Louise Penny

EVERYONE WELCOME!

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

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. Below is this month's list for the Beacon Prayer List.

Shirley M
 Donald
 Scott

Jennifer Woodhall
 Emma
 Evan

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



Brighten Someone's Day...

A few suggestions of folks who might enjoy a card or note.

Judy Stratton
71 School Street, Westerly, RI 02891

Barbara Sadowski
3 Lois Court, Pawcatuck, CT 06379

Bob MacVicar
4 Holmes Street, Westerly, RI 02891



May Birthdays:
Charlotte Korean
Susan Moynihan
Daniel Stratton

MAY ANNIVERSARIES:

None that we know about!

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

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



OUR STAFF

Pastor: The Rev. Ruth Shilling Hainsworth
Organist & Choirs Director: David Cranmer
Office Assistant: Jerin Peloquin

CHURCH OFFICE SPECIFICS

Mailing Address: 9 Castle Hill Road
Pawcatuck, CT 06379

Telephone: **860-599-1226**

E-mail: **uccwesterly@gmail.com**

Website: **www.uccwesterly.org**

Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday
9am – 1pm

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!