



The Beacon June & July 2024

"As Samuel grew up, the Lord was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground."

1 Samuel 3:19

"Summertime and the livin' is easy" or so say the lyrics from that famous song from the 1959 film *Porgy & Bess*. At least this is the version I am most familiar with. However, *Porgy & Bess* began its first stage run as an opera written by composer George Gershwin. It was first performed in Boston on September 30, 1935, before opening on Broadway in New York, performed by a classically trained all black cast. This was one thing Gershwin insisted on as he licensed the rights for the opera to be performed by various theatrical companies. He thus launched the careers of several black performers who got their big breaks in these performances. Gershwin's caveat soon brought racial controversy from both whites and blacks. White composers like Virgil Thomson thought that "the American Negro" was not capable of speaking for him/herself and therefore did not deserve to have these prime roles in a hit production limited to them. On the other hand, it was rumored that some blacks thought the depictions of "Negroes" were caricatures of what white composers thought they would sound like. Yikes! Negativity is endemic to the human condition, or so it seems!

This seeming inability for people just to be kind to each other is why I've created a plan for exploring some of the arts during our summer worship experiences. I'll be guiding us through reflections on various books, one television series and one movie so that we can explore more deeply the intersection between culture and our Christian faith as a progressive congregation. The various cultural reference points I'll be using appear in the Sunday morning worship schedule descriptions of the plans

for each Sunday so that if you want to read the book or view the television series in advance, you'll be able to do so. Note: I won't be speaking on the movie until August 11 but if you're curious enough to watch it now, it's *Bridge of Spies* starring Tom Hanks. More on that in the *August/September Beacon*!

I confess I have always loved the arts and I know how much depth and meaning they can and do add to our experiences of faith on Sunday mornings and, truthfully, throughout every aspect of our lives. God is always speaking, as we in the UCC embrace so well. But sometimes we miss God's voice because we're looking for something neatly packaged and labeled as "church" or "faithfulness" rather than God's subtle whispers all around us, taking so many different forms.

So, I hope you will enjoy this summertime excursion with me into the arts. As we make our way forward, my prayer is that God blesses us with the great gift he gave to the young Samuel – that none of his words fell to the ground where they would be forgotten, ignored, trampled into dust. May we experience together that truly, God is always with us, always guiding us, always revealing new possibilities, new dreams and new ways of moving forward together. May our words, especially the kind ones, never fall to the ground, unheard and unheeded.

Your sister in faith always,
Rev. Ruth



Check out this artist's secret rendering of Pastor Ruth, Peter, Jack and Leila heading out on Summer vacation....

Just a reminder that Pastor Ruth will be on vacation from July 3-15. Please be in touch with the Diaconate Person of the Week for any Pastoral Care requests or emergencies while she is away.



**JOIN THE POLLINATOR TEAM
& WEAR YOUR GARDENING CLOTHES TO
CHURCH THIS SUNDAY, JUNE 9!!**

BECAUSE ...

**We're having a pollinators garden
MULCH PARTY!!!!**

Time to be busy bees and get that gigantic
mulch pile down to size!!!! WE NEED YOU!



SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

*Our Sunday morning worship service is
at 9:45am. In person & on Facebook Live*

Sunday, June 2 – Scholarship Sunday!

- Worship with Communion and scholarship recipients speaking

Sunday, June 9 – Worship w/ Rev. Ruth preaching

- Considering prayer as presented in Anne LaMott's book *Help! Thanks! Wow!*
- > "Prayer Basics"

Sunday, June 16 – Worship with a guest speaker

- "A Son Remembers"

Sunday, June 23 – Worship w/ Rev. Ruth preaching

- Looking at how worship informs our ability to make meaning of life ; based on the book *Between Heaven & Earth* by Robert Orsi

Sunday, June 30 – ONA SUNDAY!

- Worship with Communion & Rev. Ruth preaching
- Looking at the story of the rainbow flag through the children's book *Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag*

Sunday, July 7 – Rev. Ruth on vacation

- Deacons will lead a simple prayer service

Sunday, July 14 – Rev. Ruth on vacation

- Worship with Guest Preacher

Sunday, July 21 – Worship w/ Rev. Ruth preaching

- Looking at how much we don't know about the Latinx culture through the novel

I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter
by Erika Sanchez

Sunday, July 28 – Worship w/ Rev. Ruth preaching

- Looking at the importance of knowing where we come from and who formed us by reflecting on the HGTV series *Hometown Takeover: Wetumpka, MS*

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>
June 2	Bethany Foster	401-539-4003
June 9	Christina Brummund	860-599-1719
June 16	Lynn Murray	401-539-7578
June 23	Joann Spurley	401-714-8948
June 30	Allana Allik	860-599-5212
July 7	Lynn Murray	401 539-7579
July 14	TBD	
July 21	Joann Spurley	401-714-8948
July 28	TBD	

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 are very excited about our Scholarship Sunday on June 2nd. This event has taken place for many years, and is in remembrance of Barbara Murano, a former member & Westerly teacher, as well as a friend of Becky Morrone, who passed away many years ago. The scholarships were presented on the 2nd, and the recipients all offered inspiring messages of their plans for the future. This was followed by a delightful celebration in Fellowship Hall. Thank you so much to all who joined us to celebrate these young people.

A variety of plans are underway to accommodate Pastor Ruth's vacation time this summer. Please join us this summer to hear different speakers. The Deacons will meet in June, but not again until August. Feel free to contact any of the Deacons at any time for any joys or concerns.

Lynn Murray
Deacon Chair



Trustees Notes

Pledges for April were \$5,564, \$54 more than the anticipated pledge amount of \$5510. Thanks to all those who are able to keep up with their pledges! Total income for April was \$10,153. Total expenses for April were \$9225.

Should you notice something in the building that needs attention, please speak to any trustee.



MISSIONS NEWS UPDATES!!

June



Equal Time for Gents!

In April we had a donation for Babies and Ladies, so June will be our Donation Drive for Hygiene Items for Gents! All items should be placed in the basket on the altar and will be donated to the PNC once they are blessed at the end of the month.

Some suggestions:

- Soap and/or body wash
- Shampoo
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrushes
- Mouthwash
- Disposable razors
- Shaving cream
- Aftershave
- Dental floss
- Deodorant
- Foot powder
- Skin cream



**July and the first half of August
IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL SUPPLIES DRIVE**

Our annual "In the Middle" School Supplies Drive will again take place during July and the first half of August.

As always, the drive benefits students in the middle schools on both sides of the Pawcatuck River. These items may be on sale in the coming weeks. We have consulted with local middle school guidance counselors to update this list. They, in fact, will be the ones to distribute items to those students in need, so that the upmost discretion will be taken.

- pencils of good quality (like Ticonderoga) that sharpen well or that are already sharpened!
- handheld pencil sharpeners
- thin markers
- highlighters
- 3-ring binders (**1 ½ inch**)
- 3-ring binder paper
- binder dividers with tabs
- pencil cases that go in the 3-ring binders and small change purses
- one-subject notebooks
- cap erasers for pencils and regular erasers
- glue sticks
- sticky notes
- double pocket folders
- index cards
- mini hand sanitizers
- rulers
- clipboards
- basic calculators
- plastic sheet protectors
- **and, especially needed, boxes of tissues**

NB Backpacks are no longer a priority.

The school supplies drive will run officially from the beginning of July until **August 25**, when we will bless them in church.



Despite the dreary weather on the day of the fundraiser, the Annual Plant Sale was quite successful. Thanks go out to all of those who donated plants and raffle prizes, bought the plants, set up for the event, and volunteered their time to work. A big thanks also to Jersey Mike's Subs in Westerly for donating two trays of their yummy subs to feed the hungry workers.

JUNE AND JULY



SCHOOL SUPPLIES!!

Operation Fresh Start will be collecting school supplies during the first part of the summer to give us plenty of time to organize all of the backpacks, pencil boxes, etc. that go out to mostly elementary school children in the early part of August.

A reminder that this list is DIFFERENT than the list of the supplies that our Mission Board will be collecting in July and August, as the items are focused on the needs of a different age group.

OPERATION FRESH START SCHOOL SUMMER SCHOOL SUPPLIES DRIVE

Clear water bottles <> Lunch boxes <> Crayons
 Pencil bags or boxes <> sharpened pencils <>
 handheld pencil sharpeners <> eraser caps <>
 pens <> highlighters <> sticky notes <> index cards
 <> folders with pockets <> backpacks
 <> Kleenex/tissues <> hand sanitizer <> 3 ring
 binders <> dividers with tabs (for
 binders) <> clipboards <> basic calculators

Donations for Operation Fresh Start should be placed **ONLY** in the red bins in the bell courtyard narthex. Thanks so much for all of your help!!



From the Financial Secretary

No special offerings this month but we hope you always remember that by your generosity, 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!



Rev. Ruth's

Community Office Hours

Shifting locations this month!

Come visit me at Martin House Books

(in the old Savoy Bookstore space!)

Wednesday, June 12 & Tuesday, June 25

1-3pm

UPDATES FROM CONGREGATIONAL LIFE!!



SUMMER 2024 UCC NIGHT OUT



Stonington Vineyards Friday Night Concert

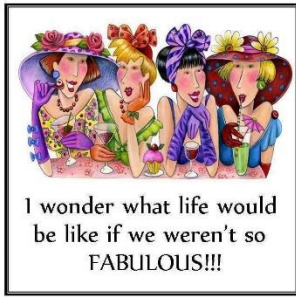
Friday, August 2, 2024 6:00—9:00pm

**523 Taugwonk Rd. Stonington, Connecticut
06378**

We are going to try to do this again. Last time we were rained out, so we are hoping for better weather this year. Let's meet at Stonington Vineyards for one of their enjoyable **Friday** Music Nights. There will be food trucks on site (Brick and Basil Pizza, Six Penny Oyster, and at least one other), but it is always a ton of fun to picnic with one's own food. Bring food for yourself or bring enough to share—totally up to you! The only thing that isn't allowed is outside alcohol—they are a vineyard after all. There will be a sign-up sheet posted for this closer to the event. Don't forget to bring your own chairs and maybe a portable table, picnic blanket, or even an easy-up, if you don't like being in the sun for the first part of the evening. We can set-up early, so come early and stay late. The earlier you arrive, the better parking space you will snag! Can't wait to see you there! **Please note some important details:**

- \$10 per person online
- **Pre-sale online tickets stop at 5pm the Thursday before the concert**
- Day-of tickets are \$15 cash at the door
- Children are free if under 21, with parent or guardian
- 20% of the net ticket profits go will go to relative charity
- No Wine Tastings are offered during music, but wine is available by the glass or bottle only.
- Last call is 8:30 PM
- Tickets are non-refundable.

The music for August 2 will be provided by 2 Cat Zoo.

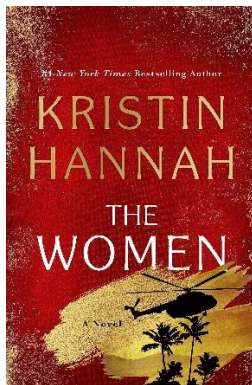


UCCW LADIES WHO LUNCH

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, June 26 @ 12pm
DOGWATCH on Route 1 in Mystic

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, June 19, 2024 @ 12:30pm
Join us for a BYO Lunch & Beverage
DESSERT PROVIDED!!

WHAT WE'RE READING:

THE WOMEN
By Kristin Hannah

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.

Joy Liborio
c/o Mystic Healthcare
475 High Street, Room C-135
Mystic, CT 06355

Charlotte Korean
11 North Drive, Ashaway, RI 02804

Elvis & Ane Torres
63 Nantucket Dr., Mystic, CT 06355



June Birthdays:
Emma Sugar

June Anniversaries:
Douglas D. & Yanna Brummund
Edward & Judy Stratton

July Birthdays:

*Kevin Dows
Michelle MacDonald
Joann Spurley
Ane Torres
Elvis Torres*

July Anniversaries:

*Gary & Sandi Davis
Elvis & Ane Torres*

*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

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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!