



*“... and the Tempter said to Jesus, ‘All these I will give to you, if you will fall down and worship me.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Away with you Satan! For it is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.’” -Matthew 4:9-10*

These words we know so well sound very different as we read them this year on Ash Wednesday. Lent is the season of the church year set aside for us to focus on our own individual relationships with God. According to tradition, the story of Jesus’ 40 days of fasting in the wilderness prior to beginning his ministry are the reason we observe Lent for 40 days (exclusive of Sundays that is). This year these same words sound and feel so very different as we witness so much of what we have cherished and taken for granted in our country being systematically destroyed by a small group of people who are convinced they know what is best for everyone. As we are learning oh so painfully, that is simply not true.

Our government and our economy are inextricably linked so that destroying one part of that system will inevitably bring the rest of it into chaos – economically, physically and personally – for each of us.

Simply put, we have much to fear these days. It’s almost as though the Tempter has reappeared and made his same offer only this time someone has taken him up on it, at the expense of the rest of us. But, dear ones, we cannot afford to give in to our fear and hide our heads, tempting as cocooning ourselves might feel in this moment. Instead, now is the time we need to come together as a community of the followers of Jesus committed to his teachings that we are to love God with all that we are AND we are to love the other as much as we love ourselves. What does that mean exactly and how are we supposed to do anything like that when we are already so fearful and worried about ourselves?

This is our task this Lenten season, dear ones. We will be sharing our strength and wisdom with each other during these trying days and we will be investing our time in reconnecting with God and Jesus so that we may be guided as to how best we are to respond to this mess we find ourselves in at this moment. This is why our focus this Lenten season is on “resilience.” Resilience is, according to the Oxford Dictionary, “the ability to withstand or to recover quickly from difficulties.” For the six weeks of Lent this year, therefore, we will be learning together during our Sunday morning worship how it is that our Christian roots and faith can empower us to be resilient in these moments when we feel like our lives are being upended. *I do want to offer my gratitude to all of you who have contacted me to express your appreciation for recent sermons. I also want to invite you to talk with me at any time if you find what I say in my sermons to be confusing or upsetting. I need to hear what you all have to say, not just the people who like what I’m saying.*

You will also have other opportunities to engage with this Lenten practice of resilience. I have prepared a Lenten Devotional Guide which offers practical suggestions for developing resiliency each day in a variety of ways. I will also be leading a Lenten Bible Study every Wednesday morning @ 10 am (details later). As always, you can also support our monthly Mission projects (details also provided later). Plus, on Sunday, April 6, immediately following worship, we will be having a “church work day” to try and get a lot of those smaller items on the church structural engineering report taken care of during our “Don’t Sweat the Small Stuff” Work Day. This event will be followed by a pizza party offering GF and regular pizza options.

So, dear ones, I hope you will join us in our quest for resiliency this Lenten season. Our journey will be a positive and hopeful one, no matter what else is going on. Why? Because with God nothing is impossible. 😊

Your sister in Christ,

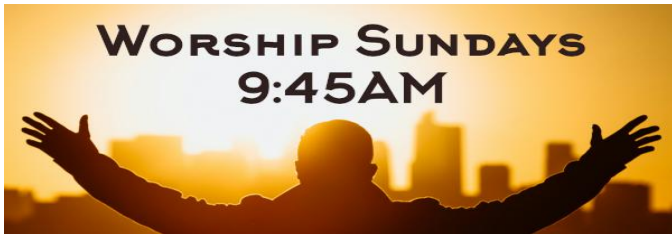
Rev. Ruth



## Rev. Ruth's Community Office Hours



Come visit me at Martin House Books (in the old Savoy Bookstore space!) from 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM on Thursdays, March 13th & 27th.



### Worship Schedule

*Our Sunday morning worship service begins at 9:45am in-person and live on Facebook.*

**Sunday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>** – Worship w/ Communion, Rev. Ruth preaching *Lifting the Veil*, based on Exodus 34:29-35

**Wednesday, March 5<sup>th</sup>** – Ash Wednesday 5:00 PM Service

**Sunday, March 9<sup>th</sup>** – Rev. Ruth preaching *Just Say No*, based on Luke 4:1-13

**Sunday, March 16<sup>th</sup>** – Rev. Ruth preaching *The Four Friends*, based on Mark 2:1-12

**Sunday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>** – Rev. Ruth preaching *Family Picnic*, based on John 6:1-14

**Sunday, March 30<sup>th</sup>** – Rev. Ruth preaching *Party Time*, based on John 2:1-10

*Please speak with Rev. Ruth if you would like a hard copy of the weekly sermon.*



### Diaconate Schedule for March

**March 2<sup>nd</sup>** – Joann (401) 714-8948

**March 9<sup>th</sup>** – Christina (860) 599-1719

**March 16<sup>th</sup>** – Lynn (401) 539-7578

**March 23<sup>rd</sup>** – Allana (860) 599-5212

**March 30<sup>th</sup>** – Bethany (401) 539-4003

*Please know you can call any Deacon at any time with your joys, concerns, and prayer requests.*

### News From the Deacons

The Deacons are looking into purchasing something related to sea glass in Linda Evans' memory, using the generous funds that were donated in her name. We appreciate Rev. Ede Steele filling in while Pastor Ruth was away. Once again, we appreciate the generous donations to the Deacon Fund that will be sent to California fire relief through Church World Service. Talk is underway regarding this year's Barbara Murano Scholarship Fund. The children's space behind the choir loft has had some renovations, thanks to Pastor Ruth.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lynn Murray

### Trustees Notes

The January and February figures on pledging are still in draft form and will be reported in the next newsletter.

Many of the Trustees participated in the Threshold Gathering on February 15 and excellent conversations there have reinforced the Trustees' goals for urgent maintenance projects moving forward. This include repairing the roof damage over the organ, checking on issues with the catwalk in the sanctuary and researching what to do with the needed window repairs in the rotting framing around the building.

### From the Financial Secretary



Thank you for your generous pledges to our church!

Respectfully submitted,  
Jenny Brummund

### Update from our Music Ministries

#### Choir Rehearsal



- Wednesdays 7:00 – 8:00 PM
- Join us in the Sanctuary, all are welcome!

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



## Missions for March

### **FURRY FRIENDS SUPPLY DRIVE**



Our March Mission Drive is dedicated to our Furry Friends and all of their needs:

- Pet Foods
- Treats
- Toys
- Kitty Litter
- Puppy Pads
- Etc..

Anything that your special friend needs or enjoys at your home will be greatly appreciated by those who provide love and support to their needy families in our area.

Thank you in advance for your kindness!

## Operation Fresh Start

### **Career & Confidence Building Workshop March 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>**

Operation Fresh Start is delighted to announce our second annual Confidence and Career Building Workshop that will be held at the Haley Mansion in Mystic on Monday, March 17 and Tuesday, March 18.

Eight to ten young ladies in need will be guided through goal-setting exercises, job search strategies, resume writing techniques, and interviewing skills. They will each be paired with a mentor in their chosen field to guide them through the process and will also receive hair and make-up makeovers and outfits suitable for interviews.

If you would like to help with this endeavor, we could use gift cards to Ulta or Sephora or monetary donations to offset the cost of beauty products, breakfasts, lunches, and snacks. Please see Sandi Davis if you have any questions or donations.

Thanks so very much for your continuing support of Operation Fresh Start.



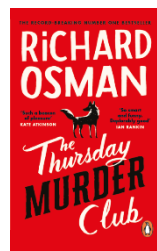
UCCW Books is an on-going discussion group ministry of UCC Westerly. We are a group of folks who love to read, talk about what we read, or just talk. Everyone is welcome!

### Our next gathering...

#### **Wednesday, March 19th @ 12:00PM**

This gathering will take place in the parlor at church. Please bring a bag lunch and a beverage for yourself. Dessert will be provided!

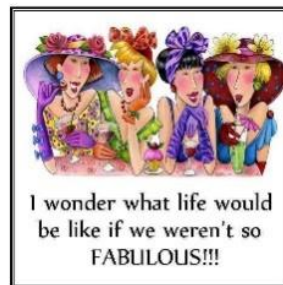
### What we're reading...



#### **“The Thursday Murder Club”** *by Richard Osman*

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

## UCCW 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, March 12 at 12PM

**Where:** J&G Rail Side, 15 Palmer St., Pawcatuck

A Sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board outside Fellowship Hall. Hope to see you there!  
Advance registration is a must.

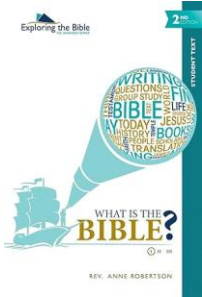
## Prayer Tree

Our church has a very active and vital prayer ministry which involves 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.





## Wednesday Moring Bible Study



Our Bible Study will take place on Wednesday mornings at 10AM beginning on March 12<sup>th</sup>. We will meet in the church parlor and will be using the “Dickinson Bible Study” produced by the Massachusetts Bible Society. It is a six week course in basic biblical literacy that assumes no prior knowledge of the Bible and is not based in any particular Christian tradition. A sign-up sheet will be posted on the bulletin board at church. Text books can be ordered online through Amazon and cost \$11 for a new book or as low as \$6 used. They are also available as audiobooks. Hope you can join us! This is gonna be fun!

## Mark Your Calenders - Don't Sweat the Small Stuff Workday

### **Sunday, April 6 - Immediately Following Worship**

Join us for a church workday where we focus on the little things that make a big difference!

We warmly invite all our members to join us in working on some light, manageable projects highlighted in the structural engineer's report and last year's Threshold Retreat. These are fixes that anyone can help with, and your participation will make a big difference in our church!

## Brighten Someone's Day...



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

### **Dan Stratton**

c/o West View Rehab  
239 Legris Avenue, West Warwick, RI 02893

### **Bob MacVicar**

4 Holmes Street, Westerly, RI 02891

### **Bev Barone**

44 Governor Avenue, Westerly, RI 02891



## March Birthdays

Cathy Gray	Dwayne Spurley-Dows
Joseph Lanphere	Edward Stratton
Shirin Platt	Nathan Sylvestre
Emma Stratton	Claire Calabretta

## March Anniversaries

None

*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 folks.*



### Our Staff

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

### Contact Us

**Address:** 9 Castle Hill Road, Pawcatuck, CT 06379

**Telephone:** (860) 599-1226

**E-mail:** [uccwesterly@gmail.com](mailto:uccwesterly@gmail.com)

**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!*