



Westminster Chimes

Volume 2009 #15

August 19, 2009

Editor: Renée Bucklin

**SUMMER SERVICES
MEET IN FELLOWSHIP HALL
9:30AM**

AUGUST 23

**Mindfulness Meditation – Practice
meditation throughout the day**
Kristen Morelli

AUGUST 30

Jazz Sunday
Tom Stites, Howard and Bill Stone

SEPTEMBER 6.

NO SERVICE

SEPTEMBER 13

**10AM
HOMECOMING SUNDAY**
Reverend Barbara Fast & Renee Pierre

We all will gather on our great lawn, welcome one another back to this spiritual home, mingle the waters from our summer times apart, and enter the sanctuary with joyful singing as we rededicate ourselves to this time of new beginnings. Bring a small bit of water from your summer.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

As the summer days drift by, it is possible – just possible – that your thoughts are starting to turn toward the start of the church year and the fellowship of Westminster. This next Tuesday, Reverend Barbara will be back in the office, your DRE Renee will be finalizing the church school plans and your Board will meet to set our goals for the next year. We will review the past year's successes, acknowledge those areas where we fell short, look for ways to improve our effectiveness and confirm the 2 or 3 top priorities for the coming church year. It is abundantly clear that our primary focus this fall will be to support the Capital Campaign efforts and work to ensure its success.



In addition to the important ongoing work of each committee, the Capital Campaign must be an underlying force and significant focus of your efforts. It is the single, most important, one-time project ever undertaken by this congregation since its move to East Greenwich. It honors its history while ensuring its place in the future.

Over the next few weeks, co-chairs of the various Capital Campaign committees will be calling to invite you into participation in the work of this campaign which will succeed with financial contributions from every church member and friend. We all have talents, we all have expertise, we all have energy – collectively we can accomplish the task. Please take a few minutes to review CC Co-Chairs Abby and Bev's list of committees and assorted duties and decide where to place your efforts. When the call comes, say yes. This is your church. This is your future. The time is now!

Faithfully,
Jan Searles,
President Board of Trustees

Dear Friends,

August 18, 2009

The summer has grown hot and filled with sunshine. Local corn and tomatoes are for sale at roadside stands. I watered some recently transplanted forsythia yesterday. I placed a slow drip from the hose on the ground near the root ball and let it stay there to moisten the dry soil, nurture the plant.

I returned every hour to move it to another plant all the while wishing them health and hoping that their roots take hold in the new soil so they grow strong and beautiful together. With a bit of luck, they will be able to take up enough of what they need to weather the dry spells as well as the cold weather of winter and bloom this coming spring. I guess I was acting on knowledge and faith.

I drove to Westminster the other day to visit someone, prepare for this year and to meet with the Board of Trustees. On the way I read this on a banner of a small church that I passed. "*A Place of New Beginnings.*"

Our high school graduates are preparing to begin college, school children are savoring their last weeks of summer before moving into a new grade, or perhaps starting school for the first time! We are preparing for a new congregational year.

I know this "new year" is based upon the agricultural models of inherited culture, but it always reminds me of new clean notebooks that I carried close to my chest and hopeful new beginnings I carried close in my heart. So I guess I have a hope and prayer for the upcoming year here at Westminster.

May our children put their roots into good soil, find nurture and learning for their minds and their spirits. May those graduates moving into the new, find good friends and challenging learning and continue to grow in health and strength and beauty, body and mind. May we who stay, who have put our roots into the spiritual soil that is Westminster, come ready to grow our spiritual strengths, to nurture each other as we nurture ourselves and live our faith with love and justice, so that we grow strong and beautiful spirits.

That banner, *A Place of New Beginnings*, was up and visible to passersby because, just as a school year begins, newcomers seek out faith communities. We are here to offer a home to those seeking a larger faith, one of a spiritual freedom bound to social responsibility and a community of people with whom to share their journey. May we welcome those newcomers and help them see who we are and how we help, work and celebrate together.

A place of new beginnings. I think that is what a congregation can be. Not just in September but every holiday and holy day, Sunday morning and Saturday sampling, and Friday night movie, and Chimes folding and classroom gathering, and Board meeting, choir practice, knitting, or meditation.
Every breath is a new beginning.

In good faith and with love,

Rev. Barbara



Religious Education News & Calendar

Greetings One and All!

It is with a grateful and open heart that I write to you at the beginning of another church school year. I am so excited about the classes to prepare, curricula to review, worship services to create, games to gather, volunteers to reach out to, coordinators to coordinate with, and supplies to secure. Whew! But it is all worth it! This year we will have some changes to our program that are very new to us, but have served other congregations and RE programs very well.

One change is that we will be asking all volunteers who work with children to consent to a background check. This has become very routine in our schools and has been on the increase in our church schools across the country. With the initiation of our Safe Congregations Committee last year, this is one of the first recommendations that we will implement this year. This policy will be in effect for anyone working with children in the nursery, RE program, and Youth Group.

The second enhancement to our program this year will be the start of a more comprehensive *Our Whole Lives (OWL)* Program. OWL helps participants make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual health and behavior. It provides age-appropriate information in six subject areas: human development, relationships, personal skills, sexual behavior, sexual health, and society and culture. This fall we will offer OWL to our K&1 students. It will be an 8-week program held on Sunday morning during regular RE Classes. The topics include birth, babies, bodies, and families. There will be a parent orientation and a parent/child orientation held before the start of these classes. Once the classes have begun, the class is closed to new participants. There will be a class offered for students who do not participate or for children new to Westminster who have not attended the orientations. In the spring, we hope to offer OWL for grades 10-12. This is a 12-session program and also requires a parent orientation.

More information about OWL can be found at:
<http://www.uua.org/religiouseducation/curricula/ourwhole/index.shtml>

I am very grateful to Rev. Barbara, Jan Searles, our board president, and the entire board for increasing my hours from 17 to 20 for the fall. This will enable me to coordinate the OWL leaders in addition to all of the other aspects of coordinating our RE Program here at Westminster. For a church school of our size (nearly 90 students nursery-high school), it requires nearly 24 hours per week. This first step truly helps me to put more hours into the program and shows our community how important the Religious Education Program at Westminster is to our leadership.

If you have any questions about our program, please feel free to contact me.

In gratitude,
Renee

WOMEN OF WESTMINSTER ALL WOMEN WELCOME

We meet every Thursday evening.

Setup/Meeting: 7:00 to 7:15 PM
Announcements: 7:15 to 7:30PM
Program: 7:30 to 8:45 PM
Place: Fellowship Hall

Our Mission/Statement of Purpose is to enhance and encourage:

* Spirituality * Support of each other

PLEASE JOIN...

the Women of Westminster for a presentation by Dr. Jody Lisberger on Thursday, Sept. 24, 2009 at 7:30pm.

Dr. Lisberger is the Interim Director of Women's Studies at the University of Rhode Island and will speak to us about the "third-wave of feminism." All WOMEN are invited to join us for this exciting event.

First-wave feminism was concerned primarily with establishing, as a point of policy, that women are human beings and should not be treated like property.

The central focus of the second wave was on total gender equality--women as a group having the same social, political, legal, and economic rights that men have.

Third-wave feminism is a generational term--it refers to how the feminist struggle manifests itself in the world today, with concern for women of color, non-heterosexual women, low-income women and women in the developing world.

JUNIOR CHOIR NEWS!

Junior Choir rehearsals will begin:

Wednesday, September 16th
6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

I look forward to sharing new music with everyone! If you are interested, please call or email: Lauren Kalian.

CHARITY OF THE MONTH – PROVIDENCE BOOKS THROUGH BARS

Westminster shares unrestricted cash placed in our collection basket 50/50 with a different charity each month. With approval from our minister and Board of Trustees, the Share the Plate Committee has selected *Providence Books through Bars* for the months of August and September.

Providence Books through Bars encourages literacy and self-development, through personal contact and encouragement provided by volunteers. The Providence chapter has answered thousands of requests from prisoners around the country. Here is a quote from a prisoner, "...the prisoner book programs are life saving."

All monetary donations are used for postage (approximately \$3 per package, shipping supplies, and photocopies).

PBTB welcomes all interested people to help fill the requests for books. They receive between 50 and 60 letters from inmates every month. They also accept book donations during volunteer hours, every Sunday afternoon, from 4 to 7 PM, at the Bell Street Parish House, 3 Bell St., Providence.

Here is their wish list for book donations (paperbacks are preferable):

Dictionaries and Thesauri
World/US/Black/Latino History
Sci-Fi/Thriller * Westerns * Classics
Religion/Spirituality/Mythology
Health & Wellness * "How-To"

For questions about Sharing the Plate, please contact a member of the Committee: Kristen Morelli, Bill Stone, Celia Humphreys or Nathan DeSisto. To make a charitable organization suggestion, please fill out a Nomination Form located in our mailbox, and available on our website.

WOMENSPHERE ANNUAL RETREAT

Women of the Ballou Channing District are invited to the Womensphere Annual Retreat. Womensphere organizes sacred circle gatherings for women of the Ballou Channing District of the Unitarian Universalist Association. Renew your mind, body and spirit with Marcianna. She is a teacher of Yoga, Belly, African, Modern and Ballroom Dance, as well as Creative Movement, and Dancersize. She is an Artist who creates Sculpture, Drawings and Poetry and also the founder/operator of Chrysalis Video. Marcianna will gear activities to allow for various physical abilities. All activities are optional. There will be time for craft projects, walks, reading, etc. Join us for a weekend of renewal with UU women.

Topic: The Goddess Within: Discovery of the Spiritual Feminine through Movement and Meditation

When: Saturday, October 3, 2009 thru Sunday, October 4, 2009

Where: Senexet House, Woodstock CT

Cost: \$125, limited number of partial scholarships available

Deadline to register: September 25, 2009

To register or for more information, contact Kate Gillis.

AMONG OURSELVES

Poetry Book

Dick Yeaw sent me his book, entitled "My Life in Poetry," Volume 2, to share with anyone at Westminster who would like to read it. Please call or email me if you're interested.

Nancy Rieser

SHARE THE PLATE LOOKING FOR MONTHLY SPONSORS

Are you on a committee with a month that's especially meaningful to you? Would you want to "adopt" a month to sponsor the Share the Plate charity?

If you are on a committee that's interested in adopting a Share the Plate month, please contact any member of the Share the Plate Committee (Kristen Morelli, Bill Stone, Celia Humphreys or Nathan DeSisto).

As a reminder of how Share the Plate works, Westminster shares unrestricted cash placed in our collection basket 50/50 with a different charity, approved by the Committee and the Board of Trustees, each month.

The Share the Plate Committee is also interested in recommendations for individual charities. To make a charitable organization suggestion, please fill out a Nomination Form located in our mailbox, and available on Westminster's website (www.westminsteruu.org). For questions about Sharing the Plate, please contact any member of the Committee.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

The MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE needs the help and support of the whole congregation in welcoming visitors. In order for our congregation to grow we all need to look for new faces and welcome them to Westminster by speaking with them and introducing them to someone else. We can all do this before the service, after the service and at coffee hour.

Join the MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE and explore with Laurie Tyce and myself what we can do to help grow our congregation. We need YOUR help to explore how we can be more welcoming and attract new families and individuals. How can you help? Call me and volunteer to become an official greeter.

When attending services wear a greeter nametag above your name tag. Do you remember the name of everyone in our congregation? We all like to be called by name. Help visitors learn your name. Look for visitors to welcome and encourage them

to fill out a greeter card found in the hymnal, accompany them to coffee hour and encourage taking a red cup. Introduce them to at least one other person.

Cecile Mark & Laurie Tyce

UPCOMING SATURDAY SAMPLINGS

Saturday, September 26 – Westminster's Green Sanctuary Task Force is sponsoring a potluck featuring locally grown and produced food, followed by a showing of the documentary, "The Future of Food." Dinner will be at 6:00 PM, in Fellowship Hall, so that we'll have time to see this important film, which is approximately 90 minutes long, following dinner. While we adults watch the film in Fellowship Hall, we will have a movie appropriate for children in the Woodbury Room. Childcare will be provided during the film showings. Look for more details in the next Chimes.

Saturday, November 7 – The Artists and Friends group is sponsoring a potluck starting at 6:30 PM in Fellowship Hall. Childcare will be provided. Look for more details in future Chimes issues.

Future Saturday Samplings – We have found that Saturday Samplings are most successful when sponsored by a church group. The sponsoring group sets the theme for the evening and helps with set-up and clean-up. Childcare is provided at Saturday Samplings at no cost to families. If your group is interested in sponsoring a future Saturday Sampling, please contact Celia Humphreys.

THANK YOU

From V-Day: Thank you so much for your contribution to V-Day in the amount of \$562.95...Your involvement and support are vital to our mission and our success. We greatly appreciate your help with V-Day's work to end violence against women and girls.

Eve Ensler – Founder/Artistic Director

“FORGING THE FUTURE” – YOUR WESTMINSTER CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

We are thrilled to be able to report that the foundation has been laid for a successful Capital Campaign this fall season as we work toward our goal of a new church building. The theme of the campaign is “Forging the Future” and was derived from two sources – the stained glass window of the Forger in Fellowship Hall which has been with this church since its earliest days, and a continuation of the theme of our Vision and Mission quest, “Searching for the Future.”

The future is upon us and now our journey of hope begins in earnest. We have a mountain to climb but no mountain was ever climbed but a step at a time.

Mr. Fred Rogers said,

“Imagining something may be the first step in making it happen, but it takes the real time and real efforts of everyone here, to learn, to create and turn our thoughts into deeds and our vision into invention.”

Our collective and created Vision and Mission and our UU Faith calls us to do this work. We set these goals together, in the spirit of community and democracy and we chose what our path would be.

Strong, talented and enthusiastic members of the congregation have volunteered to co-chair key subcommittees (see below for committee descriptions and co-chair names). During the rest of August and first week of September these co-chairs will be calling on you to ask for your help with one of their committees. Please take a look at the list below, because if you feel you could better contribute by serving on another committee, by all means tell the requesting chair.

Participation on a committee does not necessarily mean attending meetings. It may mean taking care of one or two specific tasks that the committee needs to have done. It may mean making some phone calls, hosting a party, making deliveries from/to committee members/party hosts, etc. In whatever way you can help this campaign, you will be helping Westminster to reach our vision of a new sacred building space.

Sub-committees/Co-chairs:

Campaign Literature – Sandy Hopkins and Bo Pickard will be leading this group to create a logo, produce two brochures (one which will be perfectly useful even after the campaign), simple invitations to the home parties, and pledge cards.

Inspired Message: Lauren Kalian “and a host of others,” as Bullwinkle would say, will be using the talents of our congregation at the beginning of Sunday services, and during other church activities, to remind us, in an entertaining way, just why we need to reach our goal.

Home Parties: Maureen Souza and Vicki Hawes, and their committee, will be the “party planners” who arrange for each member and friend of the congregation to be invited to a small home party. Each home party will host a presentation of the new Fellowship Hall building project, the goals of the Capital Campaign and what it will take to realize this goal.

Direct Mail: Donna Poland and Doris Duarte and their committee will be the production team making sure that the printed materials are collated, labeled and in the mail at the right time.

Personal Visits: Jan Searles and her co-host will form a committee to personally visit each and every church member for fellowship, shared visioning of the future of Westminster, and providing information about the specifics of what is required to achieve our vision. They will follow up with a short second visit to each member to collect completed commitment cards.

Tracking and Accounting: John Searles will keep track of our progress toward our goal, and provide statements to the congregation on a periodic basis over the 3 year campaign.

Starting September 6, 2009, Abby and Bev will be holding “office hours” every Monday night in the Hedge Room from 6:00 pm-8:30 pm. Chairpersons may drop in with updates, email, call our cells, or congregation members may come in to have questions answered.

Watch your next Chimes for an article explaining how you will see the full “Forging the Future” Capital Campaign roll-out this Fall.

Abby Addington-May

Bev Burgess

WESTMINSTER CALENDAR

8/20 7:00 PM WOW Art Trolley
(carpool at 6:00 PM)
8/23 9:30 AM Summer Worship (FH)
8/26 6:00 PM Buddhist Meditation (FH)
8/27 7:00 PM WOW (FH)
8/30 9:30 AM Worship FH)
9/1 7:00 PM Program Council (W)
9/2 6:00 PM Buddhist Meditation (FH)
9/2 6:00 PM Music Committee (RR)

WESTMINSTER WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS

To volunteer, write your name on the schedule in Fellowship Hall, or contact Judy Brown, the Office Administrator.

The Caring Circle is Here to Help You

If you have experienced a setback that has left you or a family member ill, or in need of meals, visits, rides or other help, please contact Nancy Rieser or Rev. Barbara Fast (phone 401-884-3561).

WESTMINSTER CONTACT INFORMATION

Westminster Unitarian Church welcomes all individuals without regard to race, color, physical challenge, sexual orientation, age, or national origin.

Church Office: 401-884-5933
Fax Number: 401-885-2710
Minister: Barbara Fast
minister's study: 401-884-3561
Religious Ed Coordinator: Renee Pierre
Music Director: Nonetta Shatakhtsian
Office Administrator: Judy Brown
E-mail: westminsteruu@verizon.net
Website: www.westminsteruu.org
Summer Office Hours No regular days-
phone messages and
mail checked twice weekly.

CHIMES DEADLINES



DEADLINE: August 28th
MAILING: September 2nd

If you prefer to have the Chimes e-mailed to you, please contact Judy Brown in the Church office weekdays between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m.