

You Are Welcome Here!



**An "Open and Affirming" Congregation
of the United Church of Christ
in Germantown, MD**

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST OF SENECA VALLEY

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September 13, 2020

God on the Move - Faith and Technology: Reimagining Church

10:00am Zoom

Our Mission

UCC Seneca Valley is an open and affirming, progressive and inclusive spiritual community that is centered in the belief that we are all beloved children of God. We seek to joyfully share Christ's message of hope through creative expression, deepening connections between people, advocating for justice, and serving our community.

Worship Participants

Greeter: Sabine Cox

Liturgist: Terri Molaski

Pastor: Rev. Holly R. Jackson

Deacon: John Bartkowiak

Director of Music Ministry: Stefan Petrov

Zoom Technical Support: Patrick Jackson

Instructions for Zoom Worship:

As we welcome each other to a new church program year let's reach out to one another, especially those who are new among us or do not live nearby. During today's worship say a special hello in the chat to someone you haven't talked to in a while and someone who lives far away or that you maybe have never met in person. If you're not able to use the chat function feel free to reach out in some other way to someone you'd like to "welcome back" to church today. As you sit down to worship bring a candle with you (flame or electric) and also have bread or a cracker or juice or wine with you for communion.

Keep your microphone on mute during worship unless told otherwise. Words in bold are meant to be said aloud at home with the Pastor or Liturgist who will say them on the Zoom call. Sing along at home to the sung responses and hymns. Close all non-essential programs on your computer and silence all notifications so you don't become distracted. Use the chat box for the passing of the peace and prayer requests or other worship responses. Chat directly to individuals as appropriate. If you are having technical issues please chat message Patrick Jackson for help. The Zoom room opens at 9:30am and worship begins at 10.

Welcome & Announcements

Welcoming the Light into Worship – Light your candle at home

Prelude

Call to Worship

Liturgist: We are all in different spaces, using varied devices, maybe even watching at different times.

People: And yet we are all one in community.

Liturgist: Technology keeps us connected to each other and to God.

People: Yet we acknowledge that technology has its limitations as well.

Liturgist: In this hour let us explore how God is using new ways to share the good news of love, justice, and hope.

People: In this hour let us listen for how God is calling us as the church to reimagine our future.

Liturgist: God is on the move!

People: Let us rejoice and follow!

Opening Prayer

Liturgist: O Living God of the past and of the future, we praise you for this present moment, even as it challenges us to imagine new possibilities. Fill us with your joy and empower us with your Holy Spirit, that our strength and our resilience may be renewed. Create in us the curiosity and drive to learn to sing new songs of your glory in a world which longs for your justice and peace. All this we ask in the name of Jesus, in whom we become your new creation.

Opening Hymn “Called as Partners in Christ’s Service” #495 v. 1, 3, 4

*Called as partners in Christ’s service, called to ministries of grace.
We respond with deep commitment fresh new lines of faith to trace.
May we learn the art of sharing, side by side and friend with friend.
Equal partners in our caring, to fulfill God’s chosen end.*

*Thus new patterns for Christ’s mission, in a small or global sense,
Help us bear each other’s burdens, breaking down each wall or fence.
Words of comfort, words of vision, words of challenge said with care.
Bring new power and strength for action, make us colleagues free and fair.*

***So God grant us for tomorrow ways to order human life
That surround each person's sorrow with a calm that conquers strife.
Make us partners in our living, our compassion to increase,
Messengers of faith, thus giving hope and confidence and peace.***

Invitation to Confession

Liturgist: The ways in which we gather as the church may be changing, but the ways in which we seek and find forgiveness and grace are still the same. We quiet our hearts. We admit to God the shame and guilt we carry, both for the things we have done that we regret and the things we failed to do that haunt us, as individuals and as a society. We do this not because God likes to see us in pain, but because God knows that we are only truly free when we can put these burdens down and receive the gifts of mercy and abundant love.

(A chime calls us to a moment of silence.)

Prayer of Confession

People: God of New Creation, we know you are on the move and calling us in new ways in the midst of this season and yet, we keep losing the connection. We want to go back to the ways things were. Forgive us for not seeing the possibilities you want to show us. Ancient One, we know your ways of love, healing, and justice are true. Forgive us when we forget technology is only a tool and cannot solve all our problems for us. Help us to remember the people behind our screens and remind us to act in virtual spaces with compassion and in the service of truth. Living One, trying to live our lives both online and in person can be complicated. Forgive us when we forget who we are or get disillusioned by comparing ourselves to others. Strengthen us, renew us, and restore us to wholeness so that we can use technology in healthy ways to do your work and live out your purpose for our lives. Amen.

Words of Assurance

Liturgist: God is on the move, but God has promised to never leave us behind. Living into a new creation requires practice, learning, and the knowledge that we will be forgiven again and again as we grow into everything God knows we can be. Take heart. You are God's beloved now and in all the days to come!

Passing of the Peace

(We will drop out of the powerpoint and unmute you. You are encouraged to wave, say Christ's peace aloud, and/or write your offering of peace to all in the chat.)

Sung Response

"Come, Let Us Join with Faithful Souls"

#383 v. 2

***Faithful are all who love the truth
and perfect truth proclaim,
who steadfast stand at God's right hand
and glorify God's name.***

Scripture

Genesis 11:1-9, Jeremiah 29:4-5, 7

Contemporary Reading

Selection from "Five Assumptions Failing Us Now" by Susan Beaumont

Reflection

Rev. Holly R. Jackson

Musical Response

Community Life and Concerns

(We will drop out of the Powerpoint here. Please feel free to write your prayer concerns in the chat box.)

God is good, **all the time.**

All the time, **God is good!**

Moment of Silence

Pastoral Prayer

Lord's Prayer

(You are welcome to pray using the words below, or whatever words or version of this prayer is the most meaningful to you.)

**Our Creator in heaven,
hallowed be Your name.
Your realm come, Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
and forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.**

**For Yours is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

Sung Prayer Response “Not my Brother, Nor my Sister” #519 v. 1 & 4

*Not my brother, not my sister, but it's me O God,
standing in the need of prayer;
Not my brother, not my sister, but it's me O God,
standing in the need of prayer;
It's me, it's me, O God, standing in the need of prayer.
It's me, it's me, O God, standing in the need of prayer.*

*Not the stranger, nor my neighbor, but it's me O God,
standing in the need of prayer;
Not the stranger, nor my neighbor, but it's me O God,
standing in the need of prayer;
It's me, it's me, O God, standing in the need of prayer.
It's me, it's me, O God, standing in the need of prayer.*

Offertory Invitation

Liturgist: What makes a community loving is not a lack of mistakes. It is what we do after we inevitably wrong one another. A loving community is honest. It learns and grows. It seeks to mend through truth and justice and change. With God's help, we practice this in this place. In gratitude for this Sacred investment we make in one another, let us bring what we have together.

Offertory Prayer

People: Just and Compassionate One, we bring you our offerings as we see you on the move and hope these gifts continue to fund and sustain that movement within your church. Guide our practices, individual and collective, in the stewardship of our resources so that we can have an ever larger impact on the world around us. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Leader: God moves us to the table and seeks to feed us. God be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts

People: We lift them up to God.

Pastor: It is a good and joyful thing to praise the living God.

People: Let us come with open hearts to this table of transformation!

Communion Prayer

Leader: We are the people of God, we are the body of Christ. We are scattered, and the body of Christ is broken, but as we gather, the body of Christ is remembered. Each piece of bread that we eat was once scattered across the fields, but God moved to collect them and the grain has now become for us the bread of life. Each sip that we drink was once many vines, but God moved to join them together and so they have become for us the new wine of God's Realm.

The people of Israel were sustained by a God on the move through their years of wilderness wandering: And we too are God's people, sustained by a God moving us through the wilderness of this world.

Jesus was always on the move with his disciples but he gave them food to sustain them on their journeys. He said to his disciples: "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. "

In our communion with one another, we are fed with the bread of heaven that sustains us, and we drink the wine of gladness that brings us joy.

On the night on which Jesus was betrayed, he sat at supper with his disciples.

While they were eating, he took a piece of bread.

I invite you now to raise your bread at home up with both hands.

Jesus said a blessing broke it, and gave it to them with the words,

'This is my body. Given for you. Do this to remember me.'

I invite you to break your bread and return it to your plate.

Later, he took a cup of wine, and gave thanks for it.

Raise your cup up now before you.

Jesus said, 'This cup is God's forgiveness poured out for you and for all people.

Drink from it, all of you, to remember me'.

I invite you to put your cup down as we bless these elements.

God of all those who are scattered and broken, you call us to wholeness.

We thank you for the love demonstrated in giving your son, that we might be united with you.

We thank you that in Christ you moved to enter into the pain, uncertainty, and fear of our world; and that your arms are always open to us in loving embrace, gathering us to you as a mother hen gathers her brood under her wing, as a shepherd gathers his flock.

We thank you for bread and wine, symbols and signs for us today,
of your faithfulness to your people through all generations. Amen.

Now you may take your bread or share it with others in your household saying something like “The bread of heaven given for you.” Then take the cup and either dip your bread in the cup and eat it or eat your bread and drink your cup separately saying to yourself or to others in your household, “The cup of blessing shared with you.” Take a few moments now to share this meal together and take in God’s grace.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

People: Holy God, we thank you that in eating and drinking together we receive Jesus’ love, transform our hearts, and imagine changed lives. Send us out from this place restored, renewed, unburdened, and whole. Amen.

Closing Music “God is Still Speaking” By Mark Miller
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congregations to play recording during worship or education programs, and to
stream online.*

Extinguish The Light

Benediction

Fellowship Time - Those who wish to stay and chat with others will be broken into small group breakouts to allow for more sustained conversation.

“Opening Prayer” adapted from *All Things New*, written by Rev. Susan A. Blain and Rev. Scott Ressman, “Offertory Invitation and Prayer” adapted from *enfleshed*, “Communion Liturgy” adapted from work by Simon Woodman.

New to our Congregation or have questions? Please consider leaving us your contact information at <https://forms.gle/Rjicc2jdMmzCgCFh8>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Zoom Worship Volunteer Opportunities

If you would like to help lead our Zoom worship experience there are ways you can help. We still need a "Greeter" and a "Liturgist" every Sunday. Greeters will welcome people as they come into the meeting before worship by voice or by chat and help by supplying important web links in the chat box. Liturgists will lead the service with Holly. We also welcome musical video offerings of instruments or voice that we can use during worship. In addition, we welcome pictures of our congregation during this time apart

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090849a4a722a02-uccsv>

Social Action News

The Social Action team is pleased to announce that all 500 postcards for the Recover Our Vote campaign have been distributed and will be mailed by September 20th. A special thanks to everyone who volunteered to complete and mail the postcards!

Fire Pit Fridays

Fire Pit Fridays will be held on the 1st and 3rd Fridays of each month, starting September 18 - November 20. Enjoy the chance to connect with others with social distant fellowshiping around a fire. BYOB&SS (bring your own beverage and smores stuff). Time to be announced later.

Front Porch Hours

Pastor Holly will be having "Front Porch Hours" on Thursdays from 4-6pm every week. During that time she will be sitting out on the church's front porch (by the office doors). You can join her on the porch during that time for conversation, pastoral concerns, suggestions, or whatever else you might want to share with her. It's time she wants to offer to you. No appointment needed. Masks will be required and safe physical distance will be maintained. Bored or lonely? Anxious or frustrated? Wanting to chat about the news and the state of the world? Full of ideas or feeling empty? Meet her on the "Front Porch" and have a chat! (If those hours don't work and you need to talk to her you can always make an appointment by emailing her.)

Donations Needed for Local Elementary School Students

Our church was recently contacted by case workers with a program called Linkages to Learning at Fox Chapel Elementary School in Germantown. Linkages

to Learning is a community school partnership with an integrated focus on health, social services, community engagement and leadership to support student learning, strong families, and healthy communities. The program is looking for new partners in their work and so they reached out to us. This program is working with 30 students in the school who are in need. We have been given an opportunity to make a difference in their lives!

Linkages to Learning is in need of the following for Fox Chapel students starting online learning:

Earbuds or Headphones - doesn't matter what kind

Computer Mouse- wireless would be best but anything else works too

Digital Timers

Flash Drives - 3-8 GB are fine

Small Desk Lamps

Academic Planners for Elementary School Students

These items (except for the Academic Planners) need not be new. Gently used items in good shape are very welcome. You can drop these items off for collection at the church during Pastor Holly's Front Porch Hours on Thursdays from 4-6pm.

If you would prefer to order something online you can find a wish list at

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3NFWX55YU9EQ9?ref=wl_share.

You can mail it directly to Pastor Holly at 9713 Breckenridge Place, Gaithersburg, MD 20874. Just let her know that it is coming.