

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 12, 2021

**Finding Our Way Again
With Curiosity, Courage and Connection:
Where Are You From?**

Back to Church Sunday

10:00 a.m. 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:

Liturgist: Jen Fuss

Pastor: Rev. Holly R. Jackson

Deacon: Deb Anderson

Director of Music Ministry: Stefan Petrov

Zoom Technical Support: Patrick Jackson

Instructions for Zoom Worship:

As you sit down to worship we encourage you to bring a candle (flame or electric). 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. 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 from north and south.

People: We are from tiny apartments and expansive homes.

Liturgist: We are from this city and from others far away.

People: We are from big families and dinners made for one.

Liturgist: We are from stages of grief and stages of love.

People: We are from hot summers and cold winters.

Liturgist: We are from kitchens with passed down recipes,
and front porches with old, familiar swings.

People: We are from the dust of the earth and the stars of the sky.

Liturgist: We are from a lot of places, but today we are here.

People: Today we are together. Holy God, gather us in.

Opening Prayer

Liturgist: Holy God, we don't always know how to pray or what to do in worship, but you are here with us anyway. We don't always know how to listen, but you are in our ears all the same. We don't always know what to believe, but you surround us with beauty and hold us together in love, even when we doubt. There are so many distractions, so much need in the world, so many things calling on our hearts and minds. Find us. Connect with us in this hour of worship. Connect us to you and to each other through prayer, words, songs, and offerings. Be in this place even as you remind us of all the places we come from and are going to. Help us to be fully here and fully alive. Amen.

Opening Hymn

"Renew Your Church"

v. 1 & 4

Invitation to Confession

Liturgist: If we were to call the prayer of confession by another name, we might call it a moment for truth telling—A moment to pause, to reflect, to be honest about the places we want to grow and the way we need God's help. Family of faith, there is power in honesty. So let us pray, first with a moment of silence, because we worship a loving and gracious God. *(A chime calls us to a moment of silence.)*

Prayer of Confession

People: God of All Places and People, when Nathaniel heard that Jesus was from Nazareth, he asked, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" We confess that we have often asked the same question. Can anything good come from that side of town? From a school with poor test scores? From a criminal history? From the opposite political party? From a history of addiction? From a church with faults? Holy God,

forgive us for doubting that you are always present in all things and at all times. Open our eyes to see your goodness, not as something that resides here or there, but as the expansive grace that it is. Remind us that when we ask, “Can anything good come from there?” the answer is always yes. Amen.

Words of Assurance

Liturgist: Beloved of God, if you ever ask yourself, “Can anything good come from this messy and human life of mine?” Remember this: God is always whispering, “Yes.” We were created in the image of God. Our origin story is one of goodness and love from the very beginning. So hear and believe the good news of the gospel: God is here. God is at work among us. We are forgiven. Thanks be to God for a love like that. Amen.

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 to the Peace

“I’ve Got Peace Like a River”

Children’s Message

Scripture

Genesis 2:4b-15

Contemporary Reading

“Where Are You From?”

Dr. Raj Nadella

Sermon

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.

Prayer Response

“O God, Our Help in Ages Past”

Offertory Invitation

Liturgist: Friends, we are being invited to come and see a deeper life of faith. One of the ways we can say yes is by giving what we have—time, money, and/or our talents. So let us say yes to this invitation of faith together. Let us give our tithes and offerings.

Offertory Prayer

People: Generous God, you created us from the earth and in your image. With these offerings we thank you for our lives, for all of the places we come from, and for all the places to where we will go. Use these gifts to bless all people in all places and to spread the love of your Realm to all the corners of creation. Amen.

Closing Music

“Leaning In”

by Christopher Grundy

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Extinguish the Light

Benediction

Liturgy adapted from work by Rev. Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org as part of the “I’ve Been Meaning to Ask” worship series. Hymns and lyrics reprinted and streamed under ONE LICENSE # 724117-A. All Rights Reserved.

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

New to our Congregation? Have questions?

Please consider leaving us your contact information at

<https://forms.gle/Rjicc2jdMmzCgCFh8>

Greeters and Liturgists are needed always!

If you are available on Sundays, please consider signing up at
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090849a4a722a02-uccsv>