

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 20, 2020

God on the Move – Faith & Democracy Sunday

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: Terri Molaski

Liturgist: Rev. Suzanne Adele Schmidt

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 bring a candle with you (flame or electric). It's Faith and Democracy Sunday and we're celebrating and encouraging voting as an expression of our faith and filling out and sending in the 2020 Census as a way to do God's justice in the world.

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: God is here.

People: God who loves each of us without measure, and welcomes us from every race, color, creed, language, culture, and orientation.

Liturgist: God who sees us and knows us all is here!

People: Halleluiah! Let all the people praise God!

Opening Prayer

Liturgist: Gracious and compassionate Creator, we are gathered here together to worship you. We quiet our hearts and minds so that we may hear and respond to your voice. Be enlivened in and among us. Live through us as doers of justice, lovers of mercy, and as those who walk humbly with you. Let us become the beloved community where all may live with dignity and in peace. You are great and worthy of all praise. Amen.

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, you are so generous, providing abundance, enough for all. Yet, it is so easy for us to decide that we do not have enough. Worse, we can be resentful of your generosity to others. Help us partner with you in the vineyards of our communities to ensure our elected officials are committed to the flourishing of all your people. And God, when our resentment deteriorates into vengeful anger at those whom we believe deserve your punishment, when we “other” those who disagree with us, help us do better. Transform that anger into the energy to share the stories of your love and justice throughout the generations. Help us carry that prophetic voice all the way to the voting booth. Thank you for calling us to share your generous love—may we meet your call, without fear. 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.*

Children's Moment

Scripture Matthew 20:1-16

Contemporary Reading Quote from "The Book of Joy" by Archbishop Desmond Tutu

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.*

Mission Moment – Social Action Committee

Offertory Invitation

Liturgist: Let us hear God's call to justice and hope anew today. As a community we are called in this time to do the harvest work of getting out the vote and to make sure there is a good census count. Sometimes the tithe we need to give is monetary and sometimes we need to use our feet and hands to create the just kin-dom. Now we bless our offerings of money and energy towards the building of God's Realm here on earth.

Offertory Prayer

People: God of Justice, accept these offerings of our time and treasure. Take our hands and feet and use them to create your beloved community of love and compassion. Take our donations and use them to further your care of the most vulnerable. Whatever we give you can take and multiply. We offer our best for the healing of the world. Amen.

Closing Music "Together We're Strong" By Tracy Howe Wispelwey
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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.

This worship was adapted from prayers written by Rev. Andrea Vassell (NJ), Rev. Linda Higgins (VA), and the Rev. Terry Yasuko Ogawa (NC) for Faith and Democracy Sunday. Hymns and lyrics reprinted and streamed under ONE LICENSE # 724117-A. All Rights Reserved.

Call to Action

Please make sure you are registered to vote and that you have a voter plan. If you have already done so, you might offer to help other members of your congregation do the same. Members of the Central Atlantic Conference may check their registration and register to vote at our [Faith & Democracy 2020 Election Center](#) on the homepage of LetJustice.org.

Faith & Democracy 2020 Election Center

As people of faith, our vote can serve as a powerful tool to rid our communities of injustice, hatred and inequality. There is no better time than now to be faithful to God's call. The call to engage in public life. The call to fight for justice and liberation.

Led by our faith, focused on freedom, and energized by love, let's make a seismic shift toward justice and true democracy at this critical time in our nation's history.

As part of our Faith & Democracy 2020 campaign, we are providing our local churches, justice leaders, and pastors with resources to increase voter turnout in this year's election!

☐ Sign me up for email updates from the campaign

Participants outside the Central Atlantic Conference may use the [Our Faith, Our Vote UCC Civic Action Center](#) to do the same.

Our love of neighbor demands that we care about the issues being addressed by the politicians representing us. Join with us in lifting up these issues.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Antiracist Intergenerational Book Club

Suzanne Schmidt and Bethany Fuss are planning on hosting an intergenerational book club to work towards antiracism. All are welcome. We have bought copies of "This Book is Anti-Racist" by Tiffany Jewell using a grant from the Potomac Association Faith Formation Committee. We would meet Sundays from 7-8 pm for 5 weeks, starting September 27 and ending October 25. We would love for you to join us! Please contact Suzanne Schmidt or Bethany Fuss to register, or with any questions.

Take Action NOW

Election Day is 6 weeks away, November 3rd, 2020. The Social Action Committee recognizes the importance of our voice and our vote and has developed a task force to encourage fair and healthy voting practices. Please be on the look out for upcoming ways to support and engage this important process. If you have interest in joining the task force feel free to reach Court Buchanan at courtbuchanan@hotmail.com.

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.