You Are Welcome Here!

An “Open and Affirming” Congregation of the United Church of Christ in Germantown, MD
December 19, 2021

Travelers on the Journey:
Journey To Love
10:00 a.m.

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
Advent Wreath Lighters: Leo Saligan & Russell Shelley
Ushers: John Bartkowiak
Liturgist: Luz Granada
Pastor: Rev. Holly R. Jackson
Deacon: Tim Fuss
Director of Music Ministry: Stefan Petrov
Audio Visual Technical Support: Patrick Jackson
Zoom Support: Bryan Young & Beth Lauriat
Tellers: Dan Davis & Russell Shelley

*Stand as you are able/Rise in body or spirit*
Welcome & Announcements

Prelude

*Call to Worship
Liturgist: We have lost our way.
People: We feel distant from love.
Liturgist: We worry that we are not enough
People: We join together in community for this journey
Liturgist: Holy God, help us find our way to your love. Amen.

Advent Candle Lighting
Reader 1: Every journey requires us to move towards a destination. Sometimes our destination feels so very close and yet we feel lost. Sometimes even though we travel with others, we feel lonely. We need to be reminded that love is the brightest light of all. As the Body of Christ, we walk this path in community. We are never alone. As we light this candle of love, we pray that we are reminded to hold each other up as we move ever closer to the promised day of new life found in the most unexpected of places.

Reader 2: God of love, light our way, make straight our paths, remind us of your love for us and our love for each other as we approach the manger. Amen.

Advent Sung Response “Won’t You Let Me Be Your Servant” #539 (v. 2 &3)

“We are pilgrims on a journey, we are travelers on the road; We are here to help each other go the mile and bear the load. I will hold the Christ-light for you in the shadow of your fear; I will hold my hand out to you, speak the Love you long to hear.”

Invitation to Confession
Liturgist: The church should be place where we can admit that we have lost our way. Where we can confess that we cannot find the right path. Where we acknowledge that we have not always treated our fellow travelers with love and care. Let us pray with our whole hearts, in silence and words, for we follow a God who longs to wipe away our tears, hold all our doubts, and remind us of how deeply we are loved.

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

Confession
People: God of Love, we are near to the manger, the Source of Love, but you still feel out of reach. We are anxious, overwhelmed and exhausted. The pandemic has caused us to look inward for so long that we cannot find our way. We yearn for connection, and yet we often work hard to sabotage love and community. We are angry with those who don’t think like us. We are ready to shut the door on friends and strangers alike. Help us to listen
again, for the boldness of Mary’s faith. Remind us of your Love that extends from her womb through all generations. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon
Liturgist: Mary’s song says that our God fills the hungry with good things. Be assured today that the Holy One knows your hunger and emptiness and stands ready to fill our lives with love. You are forgiven. Go in peace.

*Passing of the Peace

*Hymn  “O For a World” #575, v. 1, 2, 5

Scripture  Luke 1:39-56

Sermon  Rev. Holly R. Jackson

Hymn  “My Soul Gives Glory to My God” #119 v. 1, 2, 5

Community Life and Concerns
(In-Person participants fill out prayer requests. Zoom participants 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 Come, O Come Emmanuel” #116 v. 1

Mission Moment  “The Christmas Fund”  Suzanne A. Schmidt
Invitation to the Offering
Liturgist: Mary shared of her body, her heart and her love to bless her child and her community. We honor her legacy of love when we share from our blessings. This morning’s offering will now be received.

Prayer of Dedication
People: Creator of all blessings, thank you for live, love, and community. Thank you for the challenge to share our time, our prayers, our resources and our love. Bless them and use them to build up love and tear down injustice. Amen.

*Closing Hymn “Love Came Down at Christmas” 165 v. 1, 3
*Benediction

Postlude

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Fellowship Time - After worship we will ask people to leave the building by the side and back doors and not to congregate inside in small groups. If people want to meet and greet after worship, they can do so outside on the side porch or in the parking lot.

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 UCC of Seneca Valley: UCCSV Worship Support (signupgenius.com)