

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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May 17, 2020

Unraveled: When Our Plans for Our Children Unravel

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: Laura Lineberger

Liturgist: John Bartkowiak

Pastor: Rev. Holly R. Jackson

Deacon: Deb Anderson

Director of Music Ministry: Stefan Petrov

Zoom Technical Support: Patrick Jackson

Instructions for Zoom Worship:

To have during worship today: 1. Candle to light. This can be a real flame or an electric candle as works for you. 2. A picture of you as a child.

Keep your microphone on mute during worship. 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 “The Poet Speaks from Scenes from Childhood” R. Schumann

Call to Worship

Leader: When you dream, what do you dream of?

People: We dream of children who know love and churches with open doors. We dream of rest and sunny days.

Leader: When you dream, what do you dream of?

People: We dream of peace without walls, and equality for all people.

Leader: When you dream, what do you dream of?

People: We dream of milk and honey, food on tables, and an end to suffering. We dream of a church serving all God’s people.

Leader: This morning, we dream together.

People: This morning, we worship together. For there is nothing on heaven or on earth strong enough to unravel God’s dreams for us. Let us worship Holy God.

Opening Prayer

Leader: Holy God, we know you have plans for us. But we also know how often we ignore those plans and go down a different path. Divine Parent, we know the plans you have for us to prosper and find peace. But we also know how the circumstances of the world sometimes get in the way of those plans and we suffer as a result. Gracious God, we know the hope you have that even if all your plans for us unravel we will still return to you. Help us to do that now in this hour of worship. Weave us together, take our plans and make them into yours. Amen.

Opening Hymn

“God of Grace and God of Glory”

#436

*God of grace and God of glory,
on your people pour your power;
crown your ancient church's story,
bring its bud to glorious flower.*

***Grant us wisdom, grant us courage
for the facing of this hour,
for the facing of this hour.***

***Save us from weak resignation
to the evils we deplore;
let the search for your salvation
be our glory ever more.***

***Grant us wisdom, grant us courage
serving you whom we adore,
serving you whom we adore.***

Confession

Liturgist: Though God hopes that we can be light to a world often lost in the shadows, we know that in the course of daily living our light can grow dim and our hope can feel lost. Let us take a moment now to admit to God and to ourselves the mistakes we have made so that we can receive God's outpouring of grace and our light might be rekindled.

(A chime calls us to a time of silence)

People: Gracious God, we do not know the plans you have for us.

We do not know, so we place our children into "good schools."

We set aside money for days to come.

We keep our fingers crossed and try to control the world around us.

Having faith in the midst of uncertainty has never been easy for us.

Forgive us for the moments when we refuse to trust you.

Strengthen us so that when life unravels, we are strong enough to turn to you. This is our prayer of faith. Amen.

Words of Assurance

Liturgist: When everything around us feels uncertain, when it feels like all around us has unraveled, there is one thing we know for certain. When we call on God to show us grace and mercy, it is always granted to us. When we need to be forgiven, redemption is always offered to us. When we feel as though we are about to give up, God always offers us a chance to start over. May peace be yours both when life unravels and when God weaves us back together.

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 –

*Be Now My Vision, O God of my heart;
nothing surpasses the love you impart-
You my best thought by day or by night,
waking or sleeping, your presence my light.*

Children's Message

Scripture

Exodus 1:22, 2:1-10

Six Women Strong, Some Without Names Told by the Rev. Lucy Brady

Reflection

Rev. Holly Jackson

Musical Response

Prelude

by F. Chopin

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 -

*I need you every hour, O God of grace;
the peace your voice affords, I now embrace
I need you, how I need you! Every hour I need you;
O bless me now, my Savior; I come to you.*

Church Moment

Fellowship Committee

Offertory Invitation

Liturgist: In faithfulness to the divine bonds between us, we bring what we have to one another, as we also remember our neighbors near and far. Though God has created us equally, the world does not treat us so. Until wrongs are made right, let us be generous in sharing our goods and furthering the spirit of justice.

Offertory Prayer

People Creator of all, since our beginning you have woven our lives together at the most intimate levels. Though evil encourages us to sever our ties to one another, you reveal our shared humanity and call us to defense of our neighbors. As we bring our offerings, give us wisdom for these days that we might live what we believe by seeking an end to all forces of inequity and injustice. Amen.

Closing Music

“God Will See Us Through”
by Bryan Sirchio and Emma Ceurvels

Benediction

Extinguish The Light

There will be a **Congregational Meeting today** directly after worship. All are welcome.

"Call to Worship" and "Confession" adapted from liturgy by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org, "Offertory Invitation and Prayer" by enfleshed. Hymns and lyrics reprinted and streamed under ONE LICENSE # 724117-A. All Rights Reserved. © 2020 Bryan Sirchio, all publishing rights reserved. Permission given congregations to play recording during worship or education programs, and to stream online.

We thank the Rev. Lucy Brady for being our storyteller this morning. Lucy is an ordained UCC minister who has created a unique ministry using the ancient art of biblical storytelling. She is a member of the Network of Biblical storytellers International and has told stories in worship, conference and retreat settings, at the UCC General Synod and once in the Ladies Room at Boston's Logan Airport. She loves visiting her three grown children, playing with grandchildren, and anything chocolate.

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

Parents of Children and Youth

Here are some great coloring and activity pages (including a play-doh mat) for children and youth to complete while listening to worship.

<http://www.getcoloringpages.com/coloring/36428>

<http://flamecreativekids.blogspot.com/2020/03/moses-in-bulrushes-printable-play-dough.html>

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. Perhaps even with Flat Jesus! Or show us your creative side.

Have you made any art or worked on a project? Show us a picture. Help us stay connected during this time of virtual worship by sharing some of yourself with the congregation.

May Worship Series –

Unraveled: Seeking God When Our Plans Fall Apart

Through the 5 Sundays in May we will go on a journey asking ourselves what happens when our plans fall apart and unravel as they have in the past few months in the midst of a pandemic. What happens when our world falls apart? How do we press onward when our tightly-knit plans unravel into loose threads? What do we become when our identity—or the path we're on—comes undone? What if all of this is not the end we fear it will be? In our unraveling, sometimes life surprises us with unexpected joy, love, and hope—with a new beginning we couldn't have imagined.

Sometimes we need God to unravel us, for we long to be changed. This worship series explores 5 different stories of unraveled shame, identity, fear, grief, dreams, and expectations. These are stories where God meets us in the spiraling, unraveling our plans—and us—into something new. We'll have some personal testimonies, beautiful music, storytelling, and more to help the stories come alive and let us live into the lessons God wants us to learn. Join us as God weaves us into a new creation!

May 26 – 2 SAMUEL 3:7; 21:1-14 || Rizpah Mourns Her Sons (Public Grief That Inspires Action)

May 31 – (Pentecost) ACTS 9:1-20 || The Conversion of Saul to Paul (Discovering a New Path)

Wednesday Bible Study and Prayer Group

For those who are interested in having a little more thoughtful discussion about the Unraveled bible stories from our worship series, engaging in prayer time, and spending some time in fellowship we will be holding a one hour Zoom meeting Wednesday evenings from 7:30- 8:30pm through May. We will be exploring stories and art that will be reflective of the scripture for the upcoming Sunday. We will also pray for our concerns and the concerns of our world. On April 29th we will begin with reading a passage from the Book of Job and looking at an art piece called "Step Into the Swell" by Lisle Gwynn Garrity. All are welcome!!

Topic: Wednesday Evening Study and Prayer Time: Apr 29, 2020 07:30 PM
Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88630782324?pwd=NkpLT280NUVENnRXeWl1M3FXTXlHZz09>

Meeting ID: 886 3078 2324

Password: 20874

Dial by your location

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 886 3078 2324 Password: 20874

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/k5i26Z9z>



UPDATE - UCCSV Raises over \$6,000! Matching Funds Can Cancel Over \$1,200,000 in Med. Debt

In March and April, Seneca Valley joined a dozen other United Church of Christ congregations in the area to gather donations to help buy back and forgive the medical debt of individuals and families in DC and the surrounding counties.

Our congregation has given over \$3,000, which the church matched with funds administered by the Social Action Board. An additional match has boosted this to over \$12,000. Since medical debt portfolios may be purchased for a fraction of their original value, these gifts will be able to cancel medical debt of over \$1 million.

We are working with the nonprofit organization, [RIP Medical Debt](#), which locates, buys, and forgives medical debt of individuals in the community who are below twice the federal poverty line, have debts greater than their assets, or have debts greater than 5% of their annual income. Prior to purchase by RIP Medical Debt, these bills have passed through several collection agencies and have been pursued for months or years. RIP offers

to purchase these accounts at their present industry market value of pennies on the dollar.

Then the debt is simply forgiven. Debt relief recipients are sent a letter informing them that their medical debt has been bought by the United Church of Christ and erased with no strings attached. They owe nothing on the debt and face no tax penalty.

Before the coronavirus pandemic, 79,000,000 Americans were choosing between paying their medical bills and basic needs like food and shelter. In the midst of the Covid-19 outbreak, medical bills are surely hitting many more people even harder, especially those who have lost their income. Thank you so much for your gifts. They will make such a difference to those who need it most.