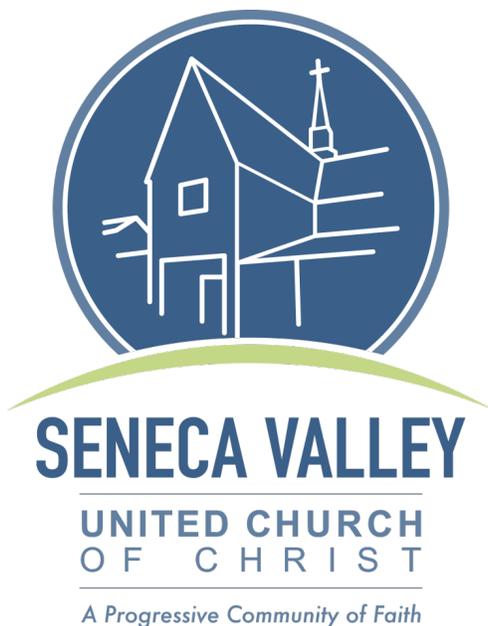


You Are Welcome Here!



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

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST OF SENECA VALLEY

13421 Clopper Road • Germantown MD 20874

301-540-3449 • uccsv@verizon.net

May 24, 2020

Unraveled: Public Grief Inspires Action

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 and Aaron Cox

Liturgist: Russell Shelley

Pastor: Rev. Holly R. Jackson

Deacon: Joyce Miller

Director of Music Ministry: Stefan Petrov

Zoom Technical Support: Patrick Jackson

Instructions for Zoom Worship:

We invite you to have with you during worship today: 1. Candle to light. This can be a real flame or an electric candle. 2. A sign like you would have at a protest for justice. It can be focused on any issue that you care about. It can be a simple piece of paper with words written with a marker or as elaborate as you want to make it.

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

“Moment Musicaoux #6”

F. Schubert

Call to Worship

Leader: When we come to this virtual worship space, we bring all of ourselves.

People: We bring joy and hope, dreams and prayers, grief and doubt, memories and heartache.

Leader: God meets us here. God hears our prayers and sees our scars.

People: With open hearts and authenticity, let us worship the God of love and justice.

Opening Prayer

Leader: Divine Wisdom, be our companion as we endeavor to deepen our commitment to peace and hope. We long to be practitioners of justice, but the way is not always clear. We long to protest and lift our voices against that which steals life and harms others, but we struggle to find the words and determine the actions that will truly make a difference. Give us the courage in this hour to look public grief in the face and allow ourselves to feel and react. Let this time of community remind us of why our witness matters and how we can encourage each other to be your voice in the world. 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: God of creation, humanity is capable of such evil.

Stories in scripture alongside stories on the news remind us of that painful truth. For the moments when we choose violence over peace, exclusion over inclusion, and fear over hope—forgive us.

When we choose pride over what is right, and comfort over justice— Show us mercy. And when we numb our pain instead of leaning into empathy— Unravel us, for we long to be changed. Gratefully we pray in Jesus' name, 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

2 Samuel 3:7; 21:1-14

Contemporary Reading “Remembering Rizpah: The Story of an Obscure, Powerless Woman Reminds Us to Do What We Can”

By Paula Gooder

Reflection

Rev. Holly Jackson

Musical Response

“Bagatelle op.119”

Beethoven

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

Deacons

Offertory Invitation

Liturgist: Sometimes we depend on the strength of our neighbors and sometimes our neighbors depend on ours. We take turns shouldering together the shared burdens of life. Through one another, God upholds us. In gratitude for this and all the gifts of community, let us bring together our resources in spirit and offering.

Offertory Prayer

People: Holy One, bless our offerings and renew our spirits. As you call the faithful to courage in these days, we hope to rise to the occasion. Where you ask us to endure, bring us companionship in the struggle. Where you ask us to share what we have, may our hearts overflow with generosity. Where you ask us to open ourselves to radical change, make us brave and wild with imagination. Where you ask us to speak up and speak out, give us words to spur justice. For the sake of your Realm, enable us to live the love we desire. Amen.

Closing Music

“Give Me Jesus”

Performed by Miranda Lin

Benediction

Extinguish The Light

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

“Call to Worship” and “Confession” adapted from liturgy by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org, “Offertory Invitation and Prayer” by enflashed. Hymns and lyrics reprinted and streamed under ONE LICENSE # 724117-A. All Rights Reserved.

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://flamecreativekids.blogspot.com/2013/10/cross-reflective-colouring-sheet.html>

<http://flamecreativekids.blogspot.com/2020/04/hope-play-dough-mat.html> (works as a coloring sheet as well)

Zoom Pet Parade

Do you have a favorite stuffed animal or pet you’d like to show off to the church? Mark your calendar and get your best beast ready for the 1st ever UCC Seneca Valley Zoom Pet Parade. Coming Saturday, May 30 at 2:00. If they like wearing costumes, feel free. If they can do a trick, plan on sharing it. More information will be coming next week.

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.

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

Regrounding

The Property Operations Team invite you to spend some time “regrounding” yourself with a visit to the church property. Come and walk the labyrinth, sit in the prayer garden, pull weeds, separate bulbs/plants in the front beds or pick up trash along the property’s edge.

While there, please take time to add a “prayer” strand to the loom hanging in the prayer garden. You are welcome to bring your own ribbon, shoelace, string or a piece of that old shirt you turned into a mask. Or use a piece from the bag clipped to the loom. Your prayer can be silent or shouted, sung or written. Laments and joys, fears and thanksgivings are all welcome. Life is woven with all of these; woven together, stronger together.

In Person Pastoral Visits

Now that the weather is improving it is possible to do pastoral visits outside in a safe way. Pastor Holly is available to meet with you in the prayer garden (or in your yard if you can't get to the church). Visits will observe proper social distance and include masks, but are a way to connect in person. You don't even have to have a topic to discuss! This is just a way to feel a little more connected and normal again. Please email HollyRJackson@gmail.com to make an appointment.

Creating Together with Hope!

During this time of uncertainty and “unraveling”, you are invited to share in the creation of a felted collage for our sanctuary that will be a reminder to us of what gave us hope during these “pandemic” times. The more families and friends that participate, the more meaningful it will be.

Let’s “weave” together a symbol of the good things that happened the last few months and create something for the church sanctuary for when we return.

A friend has offered to help us with the actual “felting” of our images into a banner or altar cloth. She referred us to one of her suppliers for the pre felt we need for the first step. It turns out she was willing to DONATE almost all of what we need to do this.

On Sunday, June 7 between 3-5 pm or Sunday, June 14 from 3-5 pm you can drive by to pick up your supplies.

Your job right NOW is to think of what you might want to create to reflect what has held hope for you and what colors you will use. You’ll need one background color and contrasting colors for your design or you can cut out a shape. Decide if you want to do one as a family or individually.

When you come to church, you will be given the colors you want to work with placed in a plastic bag with instructions. Beth & I will have gloves on to handle your fabric. If you can't make these dates/times please call Susan at 301-972-7564 and arrange for another time. Hope you'll join us!

Susan Percy & Beth Lauriat



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.