



# Spirit News

April 2, 2020

United Church of Christ of Seneca Valley  
An Open and Affirming Congregation  
13421 Clopper Road, Germantown, MD  
Phone: (301) 540-3449  
Email: [UCCSV@verizon.net](mailto:UCCSV@verizon.net)  
Website: [UCCSenecaValley.org](http://UCCSenecaValley.org)

## Prayer Requests

- Ongoing Prayer to grant our leaders wisdom and compassion to address the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Ongoing Prayer for inspiration and motivation in Dave's job search; healing for Shelly's knee (recent fall) and family health concerns (Shelly Moore).
- Ongoing Prayer for Alexis Symanski. Recovering from a chemo during January and a radical mastectomy on 2.17.20. Alexis is a member of the Schmidt family (Suzanne Schmidt).
- Ongoing Prayer for Maggie's Dad. Continue to pray for my Dad who is recuperating well after his fall (Maggie).
- Ongoing Prayer for Dawn Oler, our dear friend, who is having surgery to remove a tumor. We pray it is benign and her recovery is easy (Terri & Dee Dee).
- Ongoing Prayer for Cheryl's grandmother who is in a coma; pray for Ben who is battling stomach cancer (Maggie).

*Ongoing Prayer Requests: Please notify Nita at [uccsv@verizon.net](mailto:uccsv@verizon.net) should you wish to change your ongoing requests. Please note that ongoing prayer requests will be removed after one month. Feel free to resubmit your ongoing prayer requests.*

## Holy Week begins at UCCSV Palm Sunday, April 5th at 10am

Holy Week begins with a joyous Palm Sunday worship at 10 am on Zoom on Sunday morning (zoom room opens at 9:30am). But how shall we celebrate without the palm fronds we usually get at church? It's time to get creative! You can:

1. Cut a branch from your yard and bring it inside.
2. Make paper palms like this one in these videos  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z7gvxliZucl>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4EjNYmk6V8>
3. Color a Palm (Attached).
4. As Palm Sunday was a protest march you can make your own protest sign.
5. Or simply use the palms on your hands as stand ins.

As part of our mission statement we encourage people to express themselves so this is a great opportunity to express your creativity in very different ways. We will wave our version of palms during worship together so please have your chosen palm by your side for worship. We will also celebrate Communion this Sunday so please bring bread or a cracker and a cup of juice or wine with you as well.

### To bring for worship this week:

**1. Candle 2. Choice of Palms 3. Bread and Juice or Wine**

Topic: Worship Palm Sunday 4/5/20

Time: Apr 5, 2020 09:30 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/443986894>

Meeting ID: 443 986 894

Dial by your location

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 443 986 894

## **Maundy Thursday, April 9th, 7pm**

Our Maundy Thursday worship is usually a very hands on time of rituals and holy experiences. In moving that online we will have scripture and contemporary readings along with prayer and rituals for you to do at home even while we are all together in a virtual space. **Please have**

**ready and nearby before starting worship:**

- 1. Oil for anointing (Only a small amount is needed. This could be a fragrant oil or simply cooking or olive oil.)**
- 2. Supplies for handwashing or foot washing. Have a small bin with water and a washcloth.**
- 3. Bread or a cracker and juice or wine for communion.**

Our zoom room will open at 6:30pm with early arrivals asked to discuss questions to help us set the mood for service.

Topic: Maundy Thursday Service

Time: Apr 9, 2020 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/666299920>

Meeting ID: 666 299 920

Dial by your location

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 666 299 920

## **Good Friday, April 10th, 7pm**

Our Good Friday Zoom service will tell the story of Jesus' arrest, trial, and death. Though the way we structure the service will be different than our traditional Good Friday worship, we will slowly move from light into darkness. **We ask each household participating in worship to have a candle or two with them as worship begins.** One by one we will all put our candles out as we go through the service. This service more than any other this week will echo where

our world is right now. It is important to sit in that grief and understand how our current situation connects us to Jesus' final days.

Topic: Good Friday Worship

Time: Apr 10, 2020 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/948243705>

Meeting ID: 948 243 705

Dial by your location

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 948 243 705

## **Easter Sunday, April 12th, 10am**

If there was ever a time to be reminded that even darkness, isolation, and death could not stop God and that there is hope even when all seems lost, this is the Easter Sunday we will never forget. Yes, we will have to do it over Zoom and our sanctuary will be as empty as a tomb, but as we worship from home we are reminded how the disciples spent that first Easter, locked in their homes, scared, and grief stricken. We will journey with them even as we shout our Alleluias.

**For Easter Sunday Worship we invite you to:**

- 1. Wear a fabulous Easter hat or outfit.**
- 2. Have a flower or plant nearby to remind you of new life.**
- 3. Have a candle ready to light.**
- 4. Have a ribbon wand from Easter's past to wave or make your own Alleluia sign to wave to the camera. (Alleluia coloring page attached.)**
- 5. Children to have a bag of jelly beans nearby (more info coming to parents).**
- 6. Bread or a cracker and juice or wine for communion.**

Topic: Worship Easter Sunday

Time: Apr 12, 2020 09:30 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://zoom.us/j/870551007>

Meeting ID: 870 551 007

Dial by your location

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 870 551 007

## Contact 5 People Challenge

In these times it is important that we pull together and reach out to one another. It would be a true act of community if everyone reached out to at least 5 other people or families from church this week. You can call, text, email, or just send a card. Anything would be a welcome contact. Make at least 1-2 of the people you are contacting people you don't know well. Let's not just strengthen the connections we already have but create new ones along the way.

## Zoom Worship from Last Week

Here is the link for the recording of this past Sunday's worship. [https://zoom.us/rec/share/-9AqAprPtUpIQI3t7X\\_NcLIfr5zEX6a80yIP-vMEyxw4eiJu8IAWfiVrj3qc3WDJ?startTime=1585491022000](https://zoom.us/rec/share/-9AqAprPtUpIQI3t7X_NcLIfr5zEX6a80yIP-vMEyxw4eiJu8IAWfiVrj3qc3WDJ?startTime=1585491022000)

## Send Us Photos of Your ZoomSpace

We're all in different places but we'd love to see how you're worshipping even while we're apart. Take pictures of the place you Zoom in with us. Take pictures of yourself while on Zoom. Take pictures of the candle you're lighting on Sunday or anything else that's helping you find a sacred moment. We want to see you and your worship spaces! We'll take the pictures and put them as part of our Zoom worship so we'll feel more connected. Post pictures to facebook or send them to [colby.a.harmon@gmail.com](mailto:colby.a.harmon@gmail.com).

## If You're Struggling with Zoom Technically

Please note that you can always just call in to a zoom meeting using your phone if you prefer to do it that way. Some people on Sunday also found they could see video but not hear. In that case you may want to set up the video and then also use your phone to connect with the audio. If you need technical help please contact Holly at [HollyRJackson@gmail.com](mailto:HollyRJackson@gmail.com) or call me on my cel phone at 202-247-8592 and I will try to help. Also there are many resources for how to use Zoom on their website, including video tutorials. We're all on a learning curve together!

Check out: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206618765-Zoom-Video-Tutorials>

In particular watch videos on How to Connect to a meeting:

[https://www.youtube.com/embed/vFhAEoCF7jg?rel=0&autoplay=1&cc\\_load\\_policy=1](https://www.youtube.com/embed/vFhAEoCF7jg?rel=0&autoplay=1&cc_load_policy=1)

How to configure your audio and video:

[https://www.youtube.com/embed/HqncX7RE0wM?rel=0&autoplay=1&cc\\_load\\_policy=1](https://www.youtube.com/embed/HqncX7RE0wM?rel=0&autoplay=1&cc_load_policy=1)

This is a wonderful super easy visual guide for Zoom:

[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b4ccb837e3c3aff68a91faa/t/5ba66614e79c705ac397dade/1537631766152/SUPER-EASY-GUIDE.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0AKVEJJVUIY4RsXbXYPfmejKLaO-7lluAyocTsYcq-z0THaP0\\_BW-qGWI](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b4ccb837e3c3aff68a91faa/t/5ba66614e79c705ac397dade/1537631766152/SUPER-EASY-GUIDE.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0AKVEJJVUIY4RsXbXYPfmejKLaO-7lluAyocTsYcq-z0THaP0_BW-qGWI)

## Giving to UCCSV

It is crucial for you to continue giving to the church even as we are not gathering together in person. Your church staff is still working hard and needs to be paid and we still have utility and supplies bills coming in. So if you can continue to give please do so in one of the following ways:

1. Mail your offering check to the church. We have people coming in to the church at least once a week to gather these.

2. Set up online bill pay to the church through your bank. Yes, they will still mail the church a check but at least you didn't have to write the check yourself! This is also usually a free option.

3. Use Paypal through our website. Use the general fund for your regular pledge. You can also give here to special funds we have set up. Please consider covering the processing fees so that more of your donation goes to the church. <http://www.uccsenecavalley.org/donate>

Thank you!

## Sunday Volunteers Still Needed

Even though we are worshiping online Sunday volunteers are still needed. I am looking for greeters whose job will be to come on the Zoom call at 9:30am when the "building opens" and greet everyone as they come in verbally and by chat. I also need liturgists who will help me to lead the worship so I am not the only face and voice people are experiencing on Sunday mornings. You must be comfortable with Zoom in order to do these jobs. Please email me at [HollyRJackson@gmail.com](mailto:HollyRJackson@gmail.com) to volunteer.

## Share Your Gifts and Talents in Worship

We're looking for you to be a part of our Zoom worship experience. If you have art work to share please share pictures with us so we can use it on our powerpoint. If you play music or sing Stefan will be coordinating having people take videos of themselves and then we'll use those for offertory music or preludes or postludes. Share your talent with us and

enhance our worship experience. For information send pictures or videos or questions to [HollyRJackson@gmail.com](mailto:HollyRJackson@gmail.com).



### The Dilemma

In the past forty years, medical costs have doubled, insurance copays and deductibles have spiked, and bankruptcy rates have quadrupled, creating an avalanche of destructive medical debt.

### The Burden

Forty-three million Americans owe about \$75 billion in past-due medical debt. Medical debt contributes to more than 60% of all bankruptcies and three-quarters of all individuals in medical bankruptcy *had health insurance coverage*. Lives, households, and dreams are sinking under loads of medical debt.

### The Impact

Medical debt restricts individual's freedom with garnished wages and poor credit. A low credit score can deny someone a loan, an apartment, or even a job. The financial effects of one trip to the hospital can hold someone back their entire life, keeping them from ever reaching their full potential.

### The Challenge

A dozen United Church of Christ congregations and institutions in Washington, DC and the surrounding counties have banded together in an effort to erase \$2 million or more in medical debt in the area in and around the District.

## The Process

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 RIP's purchase, 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 a third party and erased with no strings attached. They owe nothing on the debt and face no tax penalty.

## How you can help

The United Church of Christ of Seneca Valley is collecting donations during March and April to help reach the combined goal of raising \$25,000 in the local area. Your donations, when combined with others, will enable the purchase of debt in bundled portfolios, millions of dollars at a time at a fraction of the original cost. A donation equal to the cost of a movie ticket can help relieve over a thousand dollars of medical debt for a needy individual or family.

## Matching gifts

Every donation from the congregation will be matched by an equal allocation from the UCCSV Social Action Fund. **This enables every dollar of your gift to buy back over \$200 in medical debt!**