



Spirit News

August 10, 2017

United Church of Christ of Seneca Valley
An Open and Affirming Congregation
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Prayer Requests

- Prayers for Julia on finding an affordable apartment. Thanks to Pam for providing Ladies Night Out – what a great time (anonymous).
- Ongoing prayer for Leonard Myers, one of our original members, now retired and moved to Delaware, has colon cancer (anonymous).
- Ongoing prayer for my aunt Jean who was recently diagnosed with terminal bladder cancer (Terri Molaski).
- Ongoing prayer for Laurene Karimi who is battling stage 3 breast cancer with so much courage (Terri Molaski).
- Ongoing prayer for Helen who is battling cancer for the third time in her young life (Dee Dee Molaski).
- Ongoing prayer for Phyllis Anderson and family. Phyllis is declining with dementia. Surround her and her daughters who are caregiving. Please grant them patience and peace (Deb Anderson).
- Ongoing Prayer for Patti and Gary Dennison who are suffering through severe illness and very difficult times (Andrea Dennison).
- Ongoing Prayer for Michelle Cohen – Has multiple myeloma (Terri Molaski).
- Ongoing Prayer during my continued treatment and palliative care for cancer (Maridell Mason).

Ongoing Prayer Requests: Please notify Nita at uccsv@verizon.net should you wish to change your ongoing requests. **Please note that ongoing prayer requests sent anonymously will be removed in one month.**

This Sunday at UCCSV

Many of us know the general outline of the story of Joseph and his amazing coat and the brothers whose jealousy ended in Joseph's

being sold into slavery. But the question is did it have to happen that way? Did God orchestrate the situation so Joseph could end up in Egypt? Is this a good story or a disturbing story? Join us in worship this Sunday as we explore this story for the next two weeks. Holly is back from her week long retreat and is excited to get back in the pulpit to preach. Kristin Smith will offer up beautiful music while the choir will join together for an impromptu offertory. We will celebrate communion together so the children will begin in Sunday School with Ms. Helen and then rejoin the community before we gather at God's table. Summer is slipping away, but we still are enjoying being in community together and challenging our minds and hearts. Join us!

My Time on Star Island

"When you take time to replenish your spirit, it allows you to serve others from the overflow. You cannot serve from an empty vessel." - Eleanor Brown

From Saturday, July 29th until Saturday, August 5th I was on retreat on Star Island in New Hampshire. I was part of a conference called Star Gathering 1. Star Island is a retreat destination owned by a joint venture of the UCC and the Unitarian Universalists and is considered to be a part of the UCC's outdoor ministries program. The week I attended was a week specifically for people in the UCC with the theme of "Spiritual Practices for Effective Leadership."

Star Island is very small. You must take an hour ferry ride to get there. There are about 25 buildings total on the island. There are no cars,

only one or two trucks that the staff uses to move things around on the island. It is the perfect place to go to unplug, retreat, and get closer to God. While on the island I attended chapel twice a day (and led one evening service), soaked up the program on leadership, spent time talking to other clergy and lay leaders, went on lots of nature walks, made art, and basically just refreshed my soul. I found the joy of being preached to instead of always being the one preaching. I watched gulls fly overhead and thought of the Holy Spirit. I met with fellow clergy women and was prayed over. I created enough space in my brain and soul to allow for creative ideas to well up. I prepared myself for another year of ministry at UCCSV.

This week on Star was a gift that will stay with me for a very long time. And I know that what I learned there will greatly impact my ministry with you. You will know this when I start saying in the next few weeks, "So I had this idea..." But maybe the most important lesson I learned on Star was simply that taking the time to retreat, reflect, and remember who I am and what God continues to do for me and ask me to do for the world is essential. And while a week away on an inaccessible island certainly makes that more possible, both sabbath rest and reflective retreat are available to us each and every day, week, and month if we are intentional about making space for them.

So thank you from the bottom of my heart for giving me this time away. I will be a much better pastor for this church in the weeks and months to come because of it. And I will seek to bring the lessons I learned from my time on Star to UCCSV so that we can all practice replenishing our spirits and continue to serve others (and God) from the overflow.

Holly

August Worship Station - Remembering Our Baptisms

Baptism is one of the few sacraments we have in the United Church of Christ. It is, we believe, God's grace made real through ordinary means. Simple water blessed and used to represent how God welcomes us into the family and makes us God's own. It is water that washes us clean, not because we are in need of scrubbing up in order to make us acceptable to God, but because God wants to remind us that we are awash in grace and love every day of our lives. So touch the water to remember your baptism, whether you were an infant or child or adult when you received it. If you have not been baptized imagine what this sacrament might say to you and if you would like to participate in it. If you would like to be baptized, please talk to Pastor Holly. Feel free to take a post-it with a name on it to remind you of how you were renamed as part of your baptism. With water and prayer you were recognized as a beloved child, a son, a daughter, a loved one. God is proud of you. Know that by touching the water and/or taking a name and feel it in your bones.

Havruta on August 13 and 20

Our adult bible discussion group on Sunday mornings at 9am is called Havruta, a Jewish term meaning that we seek to wrestle with God's word by studying, analyzing, and debating the text. No one tells us what to think, but we pray that God is present in our discussions and gives us new insights and ideas. For the next two Sundays we will focus our discussion on The Lord's Prayer or The Prayer of Our Savior, the prayer Jesus taught his disciples that we still say at least once a week here at UCCSV. What does this prayer mean? How does it speak to you? What can it tell us about God, Jesus, and ourselves? Join us Sundays at 9am and find out!

Pool Party for Children/Youth/Families this Saturday, August 12th

On Saturday, August 12th join us for a pool party for UCCSV's children, youth, and families and anyone who wants to be an honorary child, youth, or family for the day! Meet us at the Whetstone Pool and Community Center at 19410 Brooke Grove Court, off Centerway Drive in Montgomery Village at 3:30pm for fun at the pool. After we have enjoyed our time in the water we will walk over (less than 5 minute walk) to Pastor Holly's house at 9713 Breckenridge Place for pizza and more fun! Please RSVP to HollyRJackson@gmail.com so we can know how many people to expect.

Pulp Pilgrims Book Group this Sunday

We are currently reading, The Zookeeper's Wife by Diane Ackerman. It was published in 2007 & is the true story of how the keepers of the Warsaw Zoo saved hundreds of people from nazi hands.

We will meet this Sunday, August 13 at 11:30am in the Narthex.

Last Day, this Sunday to Collect School Supplies Drive for Interfaith Works

Want to go shopping for school supplies to help others? Interfaith Works, an interfaith organization in Montgomery County, is holding a school supplies drive to provide over 2,000 new backpacks and new school supplies to Montgomery County students who want to start the school year ready to learn. Let's join with over 150 other faith communities to give to kids in need in our area! We will collect the

following school supplies at UCCSV through August 13th:

- 2 inch 3 ring binders
- Dividers
- Filler paper: wide ruled and college ruled (8 1/2 x 11 in)
- Two pocket folders
- Highlighters: yellow, pink and blue
- Pens: black and blue
- Markers
- Rulers
- Pencil Boxes and Pouches
- Scissors
- Backpacks especially for middle school and high school aged students
- Small day planner/organizer for the parents
- New children's socks and underwear
- Giant gift cards
- SmartTrip cards

Volunteers Needed

Please sign up this Sunday on the bulletin board outside the church office.

We are in need of Liturgists for August 20th and month of September.

We are in need of Ushers for August 27th and month of September.

Many thanks!

Calendar of Events

Pool Party at Holly's (4pm) – August 12
Root Beer Float Sunday - (August 13)
Men's Breakfast (9am) - (August 19)
One Anothering at Joyce's (10am) – August 19
Trustee's Meeting (6pm) – August 21
Council Meeting (7pm) – August 21
CE Committee Retreat (9am) – August 26
Blessings of Backpacks (during Worship) – August 27
Social Action Committee Meeting (11:15am) – August 27
Sunday School Teacher Training (11:30am) – August 27
PFLAG (2:30pm) – August 27