



# Spirit News

August 12, 2020

United Church of Christ of Seneca Valley  
*An Open and Affirming Congregation*  
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## This Sunday at UCCSV

We're back and going on another "Virtual Vacation with God" this week. This Sunday we will travel to the forest. What can the trees teach us about life? Why is "forest bathing" a good thing? What kinds of things have trees seen over the years and how can that help us learn how to bear witness to injustice and to hope in the world? Join us this Sunday at 10am on Zoom and find out! Please send in any pictures you have of trees or forests to [HollyRJackson@gmail.com](mailto:HollyRJackson@gmail.com) and they will be included as part of our Prelude and Meditative Music.

The zoom room opens at 9:30am. Sometime this weekend before church you are invited to find a tree near you and spend a few minutes studying it, touching its bark or leaves, and appreciating its presence in preparation for worship. Bring a candle with you to worship.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84470757726?pwd=VUhkWDZacGZBUFBwYWISU3QxN3dlUT09>

Meeting ID: 844 7075 7726

Passcode: 20874

Dial by your location

+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

Meeting ID: 844 7075 7726

Passcode: 20874

Find your local number:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84470757726?pwd=VUhkWDZacGZBUFBwYWISU3QxN3dlUT09>

## Front Porch Hours

Starting this Thursday, August 13th, Pastor Holly will be having "Front Porch Hours" on Thursdays from 4-6pm every week. During that time she will be sitting out on the church's front porch (by the office doors). You can join her on the porch during that time for conversation, pastoral concerns, suggestions, or whatever else you might want to share with her. It's time she wants to offer to you. No appointment needed. Masks will be required and safe physical distance will be maintained. Bored or lonely? Anxious or frustrated? Wanting to chat about the news and the state of the world? Full of ideas or feeling empty? Meet her on the "Front Porch" and have a chat! (If those hours don't work and you need to talk to her you can always make an appointment by emailing her.)

## School Supplies Drive

Usually around this time of the year we are collecting school supplies for children in need in our area. This year, just like everything else, things are different due to Covid. Montgomery County schools will begin their school year online and continue that way through at least January. However, this does not mean children in need no longer require our support. In fact, they may need it more than ever. But instead of gathering supplies and dropping them off somewhere, we are suggesting that you take the money you might normally spend on supplies and give a direct donation. The Montgomery County Public Schools Educational Foundation has a campaign especially for this fall of 2020 called "GIVE BACKPACKS." For just \$10 you can provide a student in need with supplies for

virtual learning, which could include, paper, crayons, pencils/pens, white boards, dry erase markers, and more. You can find more information at <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/community-engagement/backpacks.aspx>. There you can give your donation online, through text, or get an address to mail a check. You can even specify which schools you want your donations to go to. In case you want to support the schools directly around our church feel free to specify: Clopper Mill Elementary School, Germantown Elementary School, Ronald McNair Elementary School, Great Seneca Creek Elementary School, Northwest High School, or Seneca Valley High School. Let's help children in our area get off to a good start in this unprecedented school year!

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

## Equal Exchange

I will be selling coffee and chocolate at the church on September 6 from 1-3.

Thanks, Bethany Fuss

## Message from Susan Percy

I have a neighbor who is involved as a volunteer with this ongoing program to help those trying to learn the English language. Perhaps you know someone who might be interested in helping with the program or wants help with the language. It's all on zoom at this time so anyone can join whether living near or far and its free.

### Library Conversation Group

The English Conversation Clubs are available on line via libraries in the Montgomery County public library system.

Here's the deal. As of now, there are actually five different groups that meet weekly, provided by different library locations and at different times of day. But since all sessions are virtual, any interested English learner can pick the meeting time and day that best fits his or her schedule.

Step 1 - go to the library system website:

[montgomerycountymd.gov/library](http://montgomerycountymd.gov/library)

Step 2 - click "my account login" (If you don't have an account, follow links to create one)

Step 3 - click on "events"

Step 4 -click on "virtual events" - which gives you a list of all upcoming virtual events sponsored by any of the libraries in the system, beginning with the day of the week and time of day on which you are looking at the list.

My neighbor Marsha facilitates the group that meets on Tuesdays from 2pm to 3:30 pm. Its heading on the list is "Germantown English Conversation Club." Put your cursor on the heading, click, and you get a Zoom link that admits you to the group. The link is only activated between 1:50 and 2:05 on Tuesdays.

Other conversation groups can be found the same way - by day of the week and time of day.

There are two groups on Mondays (2pm and 7 PM), one each on Tuesday (2pm), Wednesday (11:30 am), and Thursday (10:30 am). A really motivated learner could be participating every day of the week!

It sounds like a very worthwhile program.

## Important Message from Treasurer

Dear Church Family,

As some of you already know, we have had more than several checks go missing in the last three months. At first, I thought that they had just been lost in the mail. It wasn't until June that several members began reporting that not only had the checks not shown up on their statement from church, but the checks had been cashed. Going through our records and deposits it was apparent that some of the missing checks had been fraudulently cashed. When we discovered this Nita sent out a new giving statement for everyone to check their records. At this point, close to \$3000 worth of checks have been stolen and cashed.

If you have had a check or checks cashed there are several things you can do.

1. I have made a complaint to the Post Office Inspector. However, the representative I talked to asked that each member that has had checks stolen and cashed to call and make a complaint as well. Please be sure to tell them that your check was written to United Church of Christ of Seneca Valley at 13421 Clopper Rd, Germantown, MD 20874. The number is 877.876.2455
2. It would probably be good to call the police as well. I tried to make a police report, but they were not very helpful.

The person I spoke to said that each person who had a stolen and cashed check needed to make the report not the church. The number is 301.279.8000.

3. You need to file a claim with your bank in order to receive a refund. I know this is time consuming and I apologize for this. The banks do have a legal obligation to refund fraudulently cashed checks, but you do have to file a claim. Please note when we deposit checks they are indorsed on the back with a stamp. Also our checks are deposited to a processed by Mid-Atlantic Federal Credit Union.
4. Mail all offerings and contributions to United Church of Christ of Seneca Valley PO Box 803, Germantown, MD **20875**

Please email me at [russellshelley92@gmail.com](mailto:russellshelley92@gmail.com) if you have other questions.

Russell Shelley, Treasurer

## New P.O. Box

We now have a PO box for mailing all your pledges and contributions. As soon as possible, please start mailing your checks to this new address.

The address is  
United Church of Christ of Seneca Valley  
PO Box 803  
Germantown, MD **20875**

**Note that the zip is now different even though it is the 20874 Post Office.** It would be helpful if everyone would spell out the complete church name and not use UCCSV. Maybe this would help the Post Office in directing the mail to the correct address. Any questions, please contact Russell Shelley, Treasurer ([russellshelley92@gmail.com](mailto:russellshelley92@gmail.com)).