



Spirit News

February 15, 2018

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

- Prayer of Thanksgiving for the many ways I felt loved and cared for by this congregation during heart attack experience (Lois Sumser).
- Pray for the loss of my bunny, Lexi. I hoped she passed knowing how deeply loved and special she was (Claudine).
- Prayers of Thanksgiving for the life of Flora, who died this past week at age 98. God blessed us with her long life (anonymous).
- Ongoing Prayer for Wayne Miller (Heidi's boss). Pray for health and healing for Wayne as he faces health challenges (Heidi Harmon).
- Ongoing Prayer for Women's Retreat and its participants (Shelly Moore).
- Ongoing Prayer for the political situation in Kenya as they are going through ethnic violence since post election (Maggie Nyamweya).
- Ongoing Prayer for the pain and suffering of so many in our congregation, DC metro area, and those impacted around the world by disaster, catastrophe and hunger (Shelly Moore).
- Ongoing Prayer for Stephen to find a job closer to home to shorten his long daily commute (John Bartkowiak).
- Ongoing prayer for Laurene Karimi who is battling stage 3 breast cancer with so much courage (Terri 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 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.

Havruta

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.

For this Sunday our focus will be on Psalm 25:1-10 and 1 Kings 19:11-12

Canceled Community Office Hours Tomorrow

Pastor Holly will NOT be at Panera Bread tomorrow, Friday, at 12pm for Community Office Hours due to a conflicting school schedule for her children. She will return to Panera next Friday for lunch and you are invited to join her!

Church Office

The church office will be closed tomorrow, Friday, February 16th

This Sunday at UCCSV

It's the First Sunday in Lent and our job this season is to learn to listen. Sometimes we just need to get away in order to hear from that "still small voice" within. This quiet voice is an attribute of the Holy Living God, as Elijah found out in a cave where he expected to experience God in big wind and earthquake and fire. What is your "cave" equivalent? What place (a park, a path, a rocking chair, a shoreline) and practice (walking, journaling, reading, making art) helps you get quiet enough for long enough so you can hear past the chaos and into the depths of your life? Join us this Sunday in worship at 10am as we wrestle with what it means to listen and how to begin to hear. Holly will preach. The choir will sing "In the Quietness." One thing that will be a little different is that our worship will be ordered in such a way that we will begin worship quietly and more contemplatively and move towards an upbeat mood as the service ends. In order to accommodate this shift in mood some pieces of worship may be in a different place than you are used to. Sometimes we need to shake things up in order to listen to things we have not heard before. You are invited to worship with us and see. Come and rest in God this Sunday.

Lenten Soupers Sign up

Here's a sign up for the food for the Lenten Soupers, beginning 2/21. Traditionally, the Deacons have taken care of the first meal out of five and then we invite the other participants to sign up for the rest.
<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090849A4A722A02-lenten2>

Let me know if you'd like me to sign up for you. I know not everyone loves signup genius!

Peace, Jen Fuss

Lenten Soup-ers

Are you seeking wisdom? Interested in listening for life truths and discussing their impacts on your life? Join us for Lenten Soup-ers throughout Lent on Wednesday evenings. At 6:30pm we begin with a simple soup supper and then we will watch a short video by a contemporary speaker and discuss what wisdom we can glean. This week we begin with a short talk by Brene Brown, author and researcher, about the power of vulnerability. If you would like to access her TED talk before we meet or if you can't get to church on Wednesday, you will find her talk here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCvmsMzIF7o&list=PL7ZqPBEw7I-3CLYEc8m_DZBut08zYK6R7&index=1

How to Listen

Like many of you I try to do something special during Lent in order to faithfully observe the season. It is a time of special emphasis on spiritual disciplines. Many people associate Lent with fasting. As in "I am giving up chocolate for Lent." I will confess that I am not always the best faster. And I struggle with whether fasting should only include food. I worry that not eating chocolate for Lent is actually a way of dieting and blaming it on God. And I worry that only fasting from things like chocolate means we spend more time focusing on our body size, than on the fact that we are beautifully and wonderfully made no matter what our bodies look like. But finding some way to intentionally observe Lent is important so whatever you choose to do should be grounded in connecting you with God.

If you do fast from a food I hope you pray every time you crave that food and fill that hole in your soul with God instead. But you can also fast from things like social media, or fast from saying negative things about yourself or others. You could fast from watching the news. You can also take things on instead of fasting. You

can take on daily acts of kindness. You can choose to contact someone new each day and tell them they are loved. You can read more or hug your child more. You can resolve to go out on a daily walk in God's creation. There are so many ways we can more deeply connect with God and with each other.

My Lent practices will include reading a devotional daily and coloring on a prayer sheet one word that resonates with me from that devotional. I will also be wearing a clerical collar on all my days in the office and in the community as a reminder that I must act as God's ambassador at all times, not just the times I choose to. However you choose to observe Lent, I want to suggest that in the spirit of our Lenten theme of listening you find some way to more deeply listen this season. Listen to God. Listen to your body. Listen to others. Listen and hear. To that end I will be sending out a daily email to suggest to you a way for you to listen. Take my suggestions as works best for you. But however you choose to observe Lent this year I pray that you find meaning in it and it helps you to connect with God spiritually.

-Pastor Holly

Preacher Needed for March 4th

We are in need of a preacher for Sunday, March 4th. Holly will be on the Women's Retreat and so will not be able to be in worship that day. If you are interested in bringing the message that day please contact Holly.

Helping Care for Our Fellow Members and Friends

When someone has been ill, undergone surgery or suffered a particularly difficult circumstance and is in need of a little help (particularly with a meal or two)... how can their fellow members and friends find out about this

need and/or how can we offer our help? Here's how:

1. If you or someone you know from our community is in need of a meal or two, we ask that you let Pastor Holly or one of the Deacons know about it so that the help that is needed can be arranged and coordinated.
2. If you would like to be on a resource list of people who are willing to be contacted regarding providing a meal or two to someone in need, we ask that you let Pastor Holly or one of the Deacons know.

The more we know, the better we can help. Let us love one another.

Pulp Pilgrims Book Group

Pulp Pilgrims Book Group is currently reading *Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood* written by Trevor Noah and published in 2016. Save the date: This Sunday, February 18 at 11:30am in the Narthex.



It's a Souper Time to Help

Can you help us stock the shelves with some warm comfort food during this cold month of February?

Seneca Valley has supported the Germantown Help food bank for years. If you haven't made a donation before, it's easy. Just bring healthy, non-perishable food items to church and drop them off in the basket in the narthex next to the coat closet.

This month we hope to gather as many cans or boxes of instant soup as possible. Thanks for your support!

Women's Retreat

Am Kolel Retreat Center, Bealsville, MD
March 2nd through 4th

Ladies mark your calendars! The Committee for the Women's Retreat has been working hard planning a weekend of renewal and fellowship. This year's theme will be, "OWNING OUR GIFTS."

The cost of the retreat is \$100.00 which will include lodging, all food and materials for the weekend.

Registration forms are available and accepted with payment. Because there is a limited amount of space we encourage sign-up as soon as possible. Scholarship funds are available if needed; please see Pastor Holly. We are working on "Annex" plans if we find that there is a resounding interest; we don't want anyone left out.

Please see Pam Van Prooyen regarding registration.

Calendar of Events

Men's Breakfast (9am) – February 17
Pulp Pilgrims Book Group (11:30am) – February 18
Church Council Meeting (6pm) – February 19
Lenten Soup-ers (6:30pm) – February 21
Social Action Committee Meeting (11:30am)
- February 25
Confirmation Class (11:30am) – February 25
PFLAG (2:30pm) – February 25
Lenten Soup-ers (6:30pm) – February 28