



Spirit News

January 17, 2019

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

- Ongoing prayer request for Shane Earl, a childhood friend of Amie Barker. Shane is fighting a recurrence of lymphoma and has lost his health insurance. He has a 13 year old son. Pray for healing and the resources to make it through this challenging time (anonymous).
- Continued prayers for my Aunt following surgery – she is improving (Renee Morales).
- Continued prayer for Wayne Tipping as he deals with heart issues (Paula-Marie Read).
- Ongoing Prayer for Stephen to find a job closer to home to shorten his long daily commute (John Bartkowiak).

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:
Book of Job

This Sunday at UCCSV

It's the weekend we celebrate the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as one of the heroes of our faith. We will also lift up other African American faith heroes and assess where we are as a nation in combatting the evils of racism and finding freedom for all people. If the government shutdown mess has you feeling discouraged, please join us for worship at 10am

as we look for hope and inspiration and imagine not only a better country, but a better world. God's love and justice never shuts down. God has lifted up prophets and leaders to show us the way. Let us celebrate this journey together.

New Worship/Church Series - Do Thoughts and Prayers Matter? The How and Why of Prayer

It's so commonplace now to say you are sending people thoughts and prayers. But what does that even mean? Do prayers actually make any difference? And if they do, then what's the best way to pray? Starting on Sunday, January 27th we'll spend 5 weeks exploring the ins and outs of prayer. Primarily this will happen in worship on Sundays where we will examine the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples and find its radical roots and justice oriented core. We'll also learn about and practice different ways to pray together as a community and as individuals. In addition there will be outside opportunities to explore prayer with a Wednesday Evening session on prayer on February 13th at 7pm at the church, and a Sunday evening open ended discussion on prayer I'm calling "Prayer at the Pub" that we can enjoy over dinner at 6:30pm Sunday, February 24th at the Dogfish Head Ale House. Even the children and youth will be getting in on the fun. On February 3rd the Lower Class will be learning all about The Lord's Prayer while the Upper Class starts a new series on if and why prayer matters this coming Sunday. If you have ever wondered how to pray and if your

prayers matter at all, you won't want to miss church these next several weeks!

Have You Been Furloughed or Know Someone Affected by the Government Shutdown?

If you are a member or friend of UCCSV and you are in need because of the government shutdown, we want to help! We have a Community Assistance Program that can assist you with groceries or bills. There are also multiple resources available through the county that can assist you or others you know struggling because they have been furloughed or are working for the government without pay. For more information on additional resources in Montgomery County and beyond, please visit: https://montgomerycountymd.gov/mcg/fed_emp_loyee-furlough.html

If you would like to discuss a matter related to the shutdown, either financial help or for assistance finding resources or a safe place to talk, please contact Pastor Holly at HollyRJackson@gmail.com.

You Can Help Victims of Human Trafficking - News from The UCC Justice and Peace Action Network

January is recognized in the US as Human Trafficking Awareness Month and the 2009 UCC Synod Resolution against human trafficking urges congregations to recognize January 11 as Human Trafficking Awareness Day. Human trafficking, also known as modern slavery, affected some 24.9 million people in 2016 and is one of the most profitable forms of transnational crime. Traffickers prey on those who are in vulnerable communities and force them into labor, exploit them in commercial

sexual enterprises, and move them across national or state borders against their will.

On January 8, 2019 President Trump signed the Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act of 2018. We applaud Congress and the President for signing this into law and showing our commitment to ending human trafficking. The laws enacted since the TVPRA was first passed in 2000 have served as vital tools to combat modern slavery and human trafficking globally and domestically. This recent bill will establish and reauthorize critical programs to prevent human trafficking, promote justice for survivors, provide services to victims, and increase federal coordination in response to the crisis.

While the reauthorization of the TVPRA is critical, we have also seen in recent months how changes to immigration policy are impacting victims of trafficking in the US. In June 2018, US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) issued a new rule regarding "T" visas, a category of visas given to victims of human trafficking that allows them to remain in the US, receive some government benefits, and gives them a path to citizenship. This new rule states that if an application for a T visa is denied, the applicant will be automatically referred to an immigration judge to begin the deportation process. Previously, those referrals were not automatic and immigration authorities usually refrained from taking action to deport them. Victims were already facing stiff requirements to prove they are a victim of trafficking in order to qualify for a T visa. This new rule change means that victims are now less likely to come forward and report their situation.

As people of faith, we must tell Congress and President Trump to keep human trafficking as a policy priority and call for a revamp of our immigration policies that allow for victims to

escape exploitation and maintain their dignity. To send a letter to your local officials about this issue and for more information please go to: <https://p2a.co/gKwZAMO>.

January Worship Station - Take a Look In the Mirror

Come visit our worship station in the back of the sanctuary this month and take a look in the mirror. There are 5 mirrors at this station, each one asking you to look at yourself in a different way. As we begin this new year, how do you see yourself? How does God see you? Take a look in the mirror and find out.

January is Tuna Month

Your donations of tuna can help feed a family in need. Please help support the Germantown Help food bank by donating cans or non-perishable packages of tuna, other fish, or meats during January.

Getting to Know You - Congregational "Speed Dating" January 18, 7pm

How well do you really know the people next to you in the pews on Sunday? Want to find out more while laughing and having a great time? Join us for Congregational "Speed Dating" on Friday, January 18th at 7pm. This is an easy way to connect more with our community. We will have snacks and you are invited to bring your own drinks. Participants will be paired up and then use a short list of fun questions to get the conversation started. Then after a few minutes you will be paired with a new person to learn all about them. We keep rotating until we've gotten a chance to talk to everyone. As several past participants can attest this is a fun activity that will help to connect you with new

people and even learn some interesting things about yourself. Come join us!

Pulp Pilgrims Book Group

We are to read *Origins* by Dan Brown. Jan 20th at 11:30 in Narthex by the fireplace.

Congregational Meeting, Sunday, January 27th

Please join us after worship for an important Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 27th. This is our yearly budget discussion. The Church Council will present its proposed budget and the congregation, members and non-members alike, will get a chance to ask questions and better understand how we spend your donations. Remember, a church budget isn't just a financial document, it's also a moral and missional document. As the Bible says, when your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Our budget should tell us what our priorities are and how we seek to serve God. After the budget presentation and questions members of the congregation will be asked to vote to approve the budget. As a church member this is one of your rights and responsibilities. Please make the time to be a part of our decision making process and help us be the church together.

Save the Date!

Women's Retreat
May 17, 18, 19
Hollywood Retreat Center



Calendar

Chancel Choir Practice (7:30pm) – Jan. 17, 24, 31

Congregational Speed Dating “Get to Know Me”
(7:00pm) – Jan. 18

Men’s Breakfast (9:00am) – Jan. 19

Tea Party Hosted by Deborah Tomblyn (3:00pm) –
Jan. 19

Pulp Pilgrims Book Group (11:30am) – Jan. 20

Bowling Children & Youth – Jan. 26

Congregational Meeting – Jan. 27

Social Action Committee Meeting (11:15am) – Jan.
27

PFLAG (2:30pm) – Jan. 27

Ladies Night Out (6:00pm) – Jan. 28