



Spirit News

January 2, 2020

United Church of Christ of Seneca Valley
An Open and Affirming Congregation
13421 Clopper Road, Germantown, MD
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Website: UCCSenecaValley.org

Prayer Requests

- Prayer for Jane who is challenged by the serious illness of her fiancé (Ruthanne).
- Prayer for Charles Dunlay, Colby's Brother-in-law who was just diagnosed with cancer.
- Ongoing Prayer for Mama Carmen Billones. She has liver cancer and it has metastasized into her pancreas. Dr. Ruel and Billy need your prayers for her comfort and wellbeing to heal (Billy Van Orman).
- Ongoing Prayer for Bill Hayes. Prayers for recovery after shoulder surgery (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 for my niece, Lina, who lost her job 3 months ago and now is getting desperate (Luz).
- Ongoing Prayer for Dawn. She is going through a lot of health issues and needs all the prayers she can get (Terri & Dee Dee).
- Ongoing Prayer for Jill and her son, Spencer. Also, Nanny (Chloe Jackson).
- Ongoing Prayer for Alexis Symanski recently diagnosed with breast cancer who is facing a radical mastectomy and hysterectomy (Suzanne Schmidt).
- Ongoing prayer for God to forgive us for destroying your forests. Help us to know and

act how important forests are to our planet and our lives (Deb Anderson).

- Ongoing prayer for Dave's mom who has breast cancer and had a seizure that left her lethargic and more frail. Traveling mercies for travelers (Shelly Moore).
- Ongoing prayer for Linda Snyder, Tim Fuss's Aunt, in treatment for early stage pancreatic cancer. Prayers for her care team and that her positive outlook will be sustained.

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

It's 2020 and we're welcoming in the new year with the intention of going deeper on our spiritual journey with God and in the process transforming ourselves and the world around us. To help us in that task this Sunday we will receive the gift of a Star Word. A Star Word is a gift of the Spirit. A single word that is yours to ponder, pray on, and give you strength for the year to come. Each person will get a different word, this year with an accompanying scripture reference. This is also a communion Sunday so we will share a simple meal at Christ's table and celebrate the Epiphany. Join us for worship at 10am and start the new year off right! After worship we will join together in unhooking the greens and putting our Christmas decorations away.

Staff Love Gifts

All the staff at UCCSV - Pastor Holly Jackson, Music Director Stefan Petrov, Office Manager Nita Stone, Custodian Anna Gavidia, and Nursery Caregiver Uriah Sossou - send our sincerest thanks for our extremely generous Christmas gifts. We deeply appreciate your remembering us and we look forward to continuing to serve the UCCSV community into the coming new year!

A New Mission Statement for UCCSV

On January 12th the Strategic Planning Team will present a new mission statement for UCCSV that is a clearer reflection of who we are right now and what we hope to do in the future. The Team has been working on a mission statement in addition to new core values and analyzing our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats as a community. The Council has seen this new mission statement and would like to present it to the congregation to be voted on at our January 26th Congregational Meeting. In order to get people familiar with this statement we will be presenting it in several different ways over the next several weeks. First, the new mission statement will be printed in next week's Spirit News and Holly will start a three week worship series focusing on the new mission statement and its implications starting on January 12th. Then after worship on the 12th we will hold a listening circle type meeting to answer any questions anyone has about this process and gather your feedback. During the month of January you will also be invited to participate in the ongoing strategic planning process by contributing to a congregation wide visioning board that will be available to add to during fellowship time in the Gathering Room. Finally you will be invited to vote on the new

statement, along with our 2020 budget, at our January 26th meeting immediately after worship. 2020 is a new year of promise for our congregation and we hope to move into the future clear eyed about our identity and our mission and intentions. Be a part of the process!

Vision Board for UCC Seneca Valley

As part of our ongoing strategic planning process starting this Sunday we will be creating a congregation wide Vision Board. Some of you may be familiar with personal vision boards. This is the same concept but we will all add to this board and we will be free to continue to add to it throughout the month of January. We will provide a variety of magazines for people to look through (feel free to bring more if you have them at home) and we will ask you to respond to the following questions:

1. What does a thriving church look like to you?
2. How can our church serve and transform our neighborhood and/or the world?
3. Where do you fit into this vision? What gifts do you bring and what does it look like for you to be a part of this community?

You can add pictures, words, or phrases. Look through the magazines with these questions in mind and see what things call to you or make you think. Cut them out without judgement. You may not even know why an image seems to answer one of these questions, but yet you feel it does. Add whatever you cut out to the board. Look at what others have added and consider it throughout the week, see if new images or ideas come to you. Feel free to add them the next week. Let's see what we come up with together with God's help! The Strategic Planning Team will use this vision board to continue to create a strategic plan for UCCSV and provide recommendations to committees as appropriate.

Going Deeper Spiritually in 2020

Pastor Holly is looking to create a small group of people, no more than 8-10, who are interested in taking a new journey together in the new year. This group would meet monthly and focus on a particular spiritual discipline. It might be a particular way of reading the bible or a way of praying or a way of interacting with people or a social justice task. During the meeting we would explore the discipline and talk about what it might mean to live out this practice in daily life. We would then commit to doing this practice for the next month relying on each other's support throughout the process. At the end of the month we would discuss our experiences and then explore a new discipline for the month to come. As this is trial group members would be asked to commit to meet once a month for 6 months and our meetings would be planned at a time and place best for the participants. The main idea is to create better connections between people and to allow people to explore all kinds of spiritual disciplines in a supportive atmosphere. Are you interested in learning more? Contact Holly at HollyRJackson@gmail.com for more information or to commit to being a part of this new trial group.

January Food Donations: Comfort Food Macaroni and Cheese

During the month of January we will be collecting donations of Macaroni and Cheese for Germantown Help, a local food pantry that provides meals and other assistance for people in our area. In the dark, cold of winter we all love some comfort food like macaroni and cheese. The pasta dish is a staple of the food

bags Germantown Help gives to all their clients. So this winter let's give a little comfort to our neighbors and provide them with boxes of macaroni and cheese.

Congregational Meeting Sunday, January 26th After Worship

All members of UCCSV are requested to join us after worship on Sunday, January 26th for an important congregational meeting to discuss the budget for 2020 and also the proposed new mission statement for our congregation. All are welcome to attend this meeting, which will start directly after worship in our sanctuary. Members of the congregation will then be invited to vote on these crucial issues. Help shape the future of YOUR church by being a part of this process!

Volunteers Needed ASAP!

We are in need of Liturgists and Ushers for January and February. If you are available, please sign up on the bulletin board outside the church office. Many thanks for all you do!

Adopt-A-Road

Join UCCSV friends and members as we make a part of Middlebrook Road beautiful. Trash grabbers, gloves, reflective vests, and trash/recycling bags provided.

When: Saturday, January 11th

Where: Small fenced in parking lot of Seneca Valley High School off of Middlebrook Road (near the auditorium entrance)

Time: 9:00 am

Questions/RSVP: Jenny at utzjhome@gmail.com

Pulp Pilgrims Book Group

In January we will discuss *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens. We are set for January 12th.

Abstract:

For years, rumors of the "Marsh Girl" have haunted Barkley Cove, a quiet town on the North Carolina coast. She's barefoot and wild; unfit for polite society. So in late 1969, when handsome Chase Andrews is found dead, the locals immediately suspect Kya Clark. But Kya is not what they say. Abandoned at age ten, she has survived on her own in the marsh that she calls home. A born naturalist with just one day of school, she takes life lessons from the land, learning from the false signals of fireflies the real way of this world. But while she could have lived in solitude forever, the time comes when she yearns to be touched and loved. Drawn to two young men from town, who are each intrigued by her wild beauty, Kya opens herself to a new and startling world -- until the unthinkable happens.

When Chase Andrews is found dead, the locals immediately suspect Kya. -- adapted from publisher info.

Ledo Pizza Night January 14th

The second Tuesday of each month will be UCC Seneca Valley night at Ledo Pizza on Wisteria Drive in Germantown. Ledo will give UCCSV a portion of its sales (between 10%-20% depending on the amount spent) from both eat in and carry out all day. You must present a flyer (available at church or at Ledos Tuesday evening starting at 5:30pm) to have your sale counted towards our total. Join us for an inexpensive, kid-friendly, evening out and help us raise some funds for UCCSV!

Accompaniment Training

Sanctuary DMV
Immigrant
Accompaniment
Training
Sunday, Jan 19th, 1:30-
3:30 pm
at
UCC of Seneca Valley
13421 Clopper Rd,
Germantown, MD
20874



Sanctuary DMV is a volunteer group that advocates for immigrants and marginalized communities in DC, Maryland, and Virginia. The group resists policies and policy proposals that target and aim to deport millions of undocumented immigrants and discriminate against Black, Indigenous, Muslim, Latinx, and LGBTQ+ people.

There have been several cases of migrants being detained after going for a routine Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) check-in. They literally disappear without being allowed to inform their friends or relatives, creating panic among their loved ones.

By volunteering to accompany migrants to ICE check-ins, immigration, and other court hearings, you are showing solidarity and helping to ease the anxiety of interacting with the legal system, reducing the likelihood of detention with your presence, and - if the person with you is detained - keeping relatives or lawyers informed and potentially activating deportation defense actions that Sanctuary DMV and their partners can take. All this will be a huge help to efforts to find ways to stop the actual deportation. Language skills other than English (especially Spanish), and access to a car, are highly useful but by no means necessary.

Experienced Sanctuary DMV members will conduct “Accompaniment Training” for new volunteers to explain what to expect, and the roles and responsibilities of those who can accompany people to ICE check-ins or immigration court appearances in Baltimore. * Appointments are during working hours on weekdays. In many cases waiting times are quite long, so you may need to block off several hours or an entire day.

Sanctuary DMV is particularly interested in broadening its team of volunteers in Upper Montgomery County. UCC of Seneca Valley is supporting their efforts by hosting a training session in Germantown, Maryland on Sunday, January 19, 2020 from 1:30 to 3:30 pm.

* Sanctuary DMV Accompaniment Volunteers from other areas also support trips to the ICE field office in Fairfax, VA and immigration court appearances in Arlington, VA.

Calendar

CE Committee Meeting (11:30am) – Jan. 5
Unhanging of the Greens (after worship) – Jan. 5
Deacons Meeting (7pm) – Jan. 6
Adopt-A-Road (9:00am) – Jan. 11
Listening Circle Strategic Planning (11:30am) – Jan. 12
Pizza Night at Ledos – Jan. 14
Mens Breakfast (9am) – Jan. 18
Immigration Appointment Accompaniment Training (1:30pm) – Jan. 19
One Anothering Group (10:00am) – Jan. 25
Congregational Meeting – Jan. 26
PFLAG (2:30pm) – Jan. 26
Trustees Meeting (6pm) – Jan. 26
Council Meeting (7pm) – Jan. 26