



# Spirit News

July 14, 2021

United Church of Christ of Seneca Valley  
*An Open and Affirming Congregation*  
13421 Clopper Road, Germantown, MD  
Phone: (301) 540-3449  
Email: [UCCSV@verizon.net](mailto:UCCSV@verizon.net)

## Prayer Requests

- Asher: please pray for my cousin Joan who is in the hospital with sepsis, my uncle Bob battling cancer, Mandy in radiation, and Deb and Steve.
- Heidi Harmon: Please pray for Dan and family as they begin a new life chapter at Fort Leavenworth. Please pray for Heidi and Colby as they cope with the giant hole left when grandkids move away.
- John B (he/him/his): Pray for all those who survived the condo collapse in FL and for those who mourn those who were lost.

## This Sunday at UCCSV

Our "Faces of our Faith" worship series continues this week with the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the book of Daniel. It is a story of courage and strength in the face of fear. A reminder that standing up for what we believe in often comes with a cost. And an awareness that power can demand our loyalty, but it is our choice whether to give it or not. There will be art to consider, testimony to hear, music to enjoy, and prayers that both comfort and challenge us. Come join us! The Zoom room opens at 9:30am and worship begins at 10am. Bring a candle with you as you sit down to worship. You are welcome here!

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88939739878?pwd=L3ZmUW1xRFVHWDdsK1B3TTI2ZUN2UT09>

Meeting ID: 889 3973 9878

Passcode: 20874

Dial by your location

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

Meeting ID: 889 3973 9878

Passcode: 20874

Find your local number:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kyayNlyqh>

## Havruta

Havruta is on a break until August 8<sup>th</sup>

## Outdoor Evening Vespers Cancelled for July

The outdoor Evening Vespers service planned for this coming Sunday, July 18th has been cancelled. For a variety of reasons we were not able to get this extra worship service pulled together this month. Since these additional services require lots of extra work on the part of staff and lay leadership sometimes they are simply unworkable. We hope to have an in person evening vespers service on Sunday, August 15th at 5:30pm. Due to the heat we anticipate holding that service indoors in our Gathering Room. However, because we will be indoors masks will be required.

## Men's Breakfast this Saturday 7/17 at 9 a.m.

Join us again at the picnic shelter area of South Germantown Recreational Park, rain or shine. BYO breakfast and beverage. For directions, contact Noel at [noellin50@gmail.com](mailto:noellin50@gmail.com). He will also offer seat cushions and bug spray at very reasonable prices; all major credit cards accepted.

## **Pantry Project Update**

Hi everyone, we wanted to give you a quick update on the youth service project. First, we are thrilled that we have received the grant of \$750 from the Potomac Association and a generous gift of \$200. This will go towards buying the supplies to start the pantry, such as the storage shed, racks, and an initial stock of various items such as diapers, feminine hygiene products, etc. The youth will meet towards the end of July to discuss next steps, which include buying the supplies, setting up the pantry, and publicizing it in the community. We hope to get the pantry set up by late August. If you are interested in helping us with setting up/supervising the project, we would welcome your participation and feedback. We're so grateful for your support so far and please stay tuned!

Thank you so much! Have a wonderful rest of your week!

Sincerely,  
Clarisse

## **United Church of Christ of Seneca Valley Lives Generously**

You may have seen the t-shirt bearing the words "Live Generously." This slogan is related to the Lutheran's Thrivent Financial Company and it signifies the concept of giving back.

Given the generosity of UCCSV this past year, we "earned" the right to wear one of those t-shirts. Since May alone, we have lived generously by donating in the following ways:

Strengthen the Church Offering-\$485  
Black Lives Matter-\$175  
Little Free Pantry-\$200

Plus, earlier in the year our congregation's donations underwrote a Cooking Healthy Program for mothers of students in the Linkages for Learning Program at Fox Chapel Elementary School. We gave so enthusiastically that there was \$500 left over! The Social Action Board approved that \$500 be used to support students in the Linkages for Learning program attending a special Outdoor Adventure program this summer. Although we do not have those t-shirts, UCCSV has demonstrated in mighty ways the Live Generously approach to giving. Thank you for your commitment to generosity.

## **Medical Debt Relief Celebrated!**

In the Spring of 2020 our church took up a collection for a medical debt relief effort. Combining with seven other DC area UCC churches we donated money to buy area medical debt through a company called RIP Debt Relief. This company buys medical debt for pennies on the dollar and then with donations like ours they are able to forgive the debt of those in need. Our group church effort ended up raising over \$65,000 for debt relief. The purchase wiped out \$9,031,581 in medical debt for 7,817 households. The average amount forgiven per household was \$1,155.38. Recently, we held an area news conference to celebrate this accomplishment. More information and pictures of the event can be found here: <https://www.ucc.org/ucc-d-c-area-churches-wipe-out-9-million-in-medical-debt-in-four-states/>  
Great work, church!!

## **Congregational Check In/Happy Hour - Fridays at 7 PM**

Connecting nowadays can be difficult. Do you sometimes just want to see your fellow UCCSV members and friends for a quick chat? Your wish is granted! There will be a Congregational Check In/Happy Hour every Friday at 7 PM. It will only

run for 45 minutes and is a good way to say "hi" and catch up with others. Different Deacons will be hosting each Friday and it is open to all. It will be very casual with no obligations... stop by when you feel the need and stay as long or short as you want. Take care and we will see you when we see you.

-John (Chair of Deacons)

UCC Seneca Valley is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.  
Topic: Congregational Check In/Happy Hour

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89655025431?pwd=V1k0bEQ4VTBGODJ3L2U1WHBFbzBnZz09>

Meeting ID: 896 5502 5431

Passcode: peeps

Dial by your location

+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

Meeting ID: 896 5502 5431

Passcode: 565927

Find your local number:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89655025431?pwd=V1k0bEQ4VTBGODJ3L2U1WHBFbzBnZz09>

## REGISTER FOR OUR CAREGIVING PROGRAMS

*Caring for your loved one is easier with support*

The Village at Rockville—A National Lutheran Community is pleased to partner with Jenerations Health Education to provide complimentary virtual seminars to support you in your caregiving journey. Please click on the link below to register for one or all of these opportunities. Contact Admissions Manager, Rochelle Clarke with questions, [rclarke@thevillageatrockville.org](mailto:rclarke@thevillageatrockville.org).

Learn more about our free online Caregiving programs here:

<https://www.thevillageatrockville.org/caregiving>

Sign up our Caregiving programs for the remainder of 2021 here:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040c44adad28abf85-caregiving>

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## When Will UCCSV Get Back to In-Person Worship?

As vaccination rates in our area soar and the number of COVID cases continues to drop you may be wondering why our church is still worshipping online. Here's a few reasons why we're still only gathering on Zoom right now on Sunday mornings and some information about when we think that may change:

We're still worshipping almost exclusively online because at the moment it's impossible for all the church to worship together in the sanctuary at the same time. We also have no way to livestream the service or create a hybrid worship experience with the technology currently in our sanctuary. Our sanctuary still only holds less than 50 people if we practice social distancing. While many churches have stopped distancing, our church guidelines call for us to follow the 2 out of 3 rule. There are three ways to stop the spread of COVID: 1. Be outside 2. Distance 3. Wear masks. We must practice two out of three of these methods whenever we gather. If we are worshipping inside then we must continue to

distance and stay masked. As long as we cannot all worship together, and we have no way to include others who cannot be there in person with an online option, we will continue to worship online as that is the most accessible worship option we have.

Many of our congregation have told us that they are not yet ready to return to inside worship within a crowded sanctuary. We honor this conservative approach after the trauma of this past year. With limited staff and lay leadership we have to focus on the worship experience that is presently most accessible to the largest numbers of people. Right now that continues to be Zoom.

Some might ask, "Can't you just worship outside?" Yes. We have had two outdoor evening Vespers services for those who would like to worship in person. However, these are subject to issues with the weather and staffing. We are trying to offer an in person worship at least once a month as possible but this is only to supplement online worship, not to replace it. Yes but, "When do you anticipate being back in the sanctuary for Sunday worship?" At this time the church is contracting with a company to significantly upgrade the audio and visual technology in our sanctuary in order to provide us with options for hybrid worship and livestreaming. We do not yet have a date for when this work will be finished. When the work is done we will phase in hybrid worship so that we can have in person distanced worship in the sanctuary AND be able to have people also join us online for Sunday morning worship at the same time. We will continue to record our worship for posting on the church website as well. We hope this will happen by late summer or early fall.

We continue to try to adapt to this situation as things change. We appreciate your grace and

patience. We encourage vaccinated worshipers to get together for Zoom worship watch parties at home or to gather and meet separately in person to experience that crucial sense of community and connection. Some of our ministry groups are also starting to meet in person either at the church or off site. Be assured that we are moving in a positive direction and look forward to the day when those who can join us for in person worship in the sanctuary are back in the pews! Stay tuned for more information!

## Spirit News Summer Schedule

Our newsletter will not be published on July 21, August 4, August 18.

## Upcoming Worship at UCCSV

July 18 – Faces of our Faith: Queen Vashti – Standing Up for Ourselves

July 25 – Faces of our Faith: Deborah – Creating Space for God's Wisdom

## July and August Birthdays

(Is your birthday missing? Send us an email ([uccsv@verizon.net](mailto:uccsv@verizon.net)) with your birth month and date and we will be glad to add you to our list).

Terri Molaski	7/3
Deb Anderson	7/9
Laura Yeany	7/9
Joan Bomar	7/10
Patrick Jackson	7/10
Carol Brandt	7/13
John Bartkowiak	7/14
Dee Dee Molaski	7/14
Tim Fuss	7/17
George Benskin V	7/19
Jim Hall	7/19

Shelly Moore	7/20
Colin Pelkey	7/22
Eli Sotak	7/24
Rod Dunlap	7/28
Deborah Barnes	7/30
Helen Walty	7/30
Maria Daughters	8/1
Leo Saligan	8/5
Diane Teigiser	8/10
Aaron Cox	8/19
Christie Holland	8/25
Carol Lambie	8/28