



Spirit News

March 24, 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
Website: UCCSenecaValley.org

Prayer Requests

- Adam DeBaugh (he, him, his): Prayers for David and Sandy whose daughter died this week whilst on holiday.
- Asher: please pray for my friend going through chemo, my mom who is healing from a fall, and my friends dad recovering from leg surgery
- Joyce Miller she/her: Prayers for Mandy and healing and for the Asian community to receive peace
- Lissa Bales (she/her): Prayers for my neighbors who suffered the loss of a loved one yesterday
- John B (he/him/his): Happy 24th Birthday to my daughter Bethany. Pray that she is blessed... especially with a needed full time job!
- Fuss/Estrada Family: Prayers for my friend John, dealing with the difficult situation caring for his mother at home 24/7
- Laura and Beth: Prayer for Matt. May he find out what is happening to cause neurological issues.
- Suzanne and Dan: Prayers for our friend, Evan who is awaiting approval for his entrance in a clinical trial.

This Sunday at UCCSV

It's Palm Sunday and the beginning of Holy Week! Over the last several weeks during the season of Lent have seen that the stories of Jesus' healing ministry are filled with words *and* deeds. Our ability to forgive ourselves and others is the foundation that can transform infirmities and allow us to move on. We integrate our beliefs and actions for the health of the whole. The parade of compassionate power we celebrate today is underscored by a story of transformation, symbolizing our ability to fuel our

movement of recovery. We glorify God for beautiful words and works of wholeness and share that treasured beauty with others. We know there will still be pain, but we also know love will win.

As you come to worship bring your Lent to Go Bag and also your version of a palm leaf. This can either be the palm coloring page in your Lent to Go Bag or an actual leaf or branch from your yard. Be prepared to wave your palms high as we worship together!

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 (Washington DC)

Meeting ID: 844 7075 7726

Passcode: 20874

Find your local number:

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

Final Lenten Souper Tonight

Tonight is our final Lenten Souper. You are invited to join us at 6:30pm to eat together (or you can just join us without food) and enjoy each other's company. Then at 7pm we will watch this week's TED talk "What Almost Dying Taught Me About Living" by Suleika Jaouad.

https://www.ted.com/talks/suleika_jaouad_what_almost_dying_taught_me_about_living?referrer=playlist-wisdom_for_living_with_death_and_loss

We'll discuss the talk and consider how we are healing from the past year and what it means to go on living after the pandemic. Join us!

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84186675185?pwd=QnRqdGNEVjRsaUNsditWcEVObkNGQT09>

Return to Physical Building Plans

The UCCSV Council is working on plans for return to the physical church. A Task Force is being formed to look at all of the necessary details and send recommendations to the council and congregation. Things are starting to look up for many people as we are in hopefully, the last stage on the pandemic. We learned this week that we will have a mass vaccination site right here in Germantown! The Council feels it is important to carefully and prayerfully make decisions about our return to the building. While the CDC gives extensive guidance for faith communities returning to their physical spaces, the top banner on their website still cautions against any large gathering.

The Task Force and Council will be considering a variety of factors:

- Survey of the congregation (coming soon)
- Phases of returning to the building
- Metrics used to determine when to move to each phase
- Guidance from the CDC and other government/professional organization
- Capacity mandates from the state and county
- Guidance from the wider church (UCC and Central Atlantic Conference)
- Sharing ideas with other local churches

- Plans to make the building a safe space (capacity of each room, cleaning protocols, ventilation, water etc.)
- Vaccination status of the country, state, county and our congregation
 - Knowing the vaccination status of members is helpful, but not required
- Outdoor events/worship
 - Gatherings like we had last year are likely
 - Outdoor worship may be a possibility but the logistics of streaming an outdoor service are challenging
- Hybrid worship
 - This will probably be the “new normal” for many churches for a long time to come
- Resources needed (technology, expertise, finances)

Please complete the survey when it is available. If you would like to be part of the Task Force for returning to the building, or have thoughts/comments to share please contact Tim Fuss at TFussRN@gmail.com.

Stay safe!

Tim Fuss
UCCSV Moderator

Don't Throw Away Your Shot! - Need Help Getting Vaccinated?

If you are currently eligible for the Covid vaccine (if you are age 60 and over or fall into other eligible groups - check here for more information as to whether you are currently eligible: <https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/pages/vaccine>) and you cannot find an appointment or you need a ride to get your vaccine please let us know.

There are people willing to help! Email Pastor Holly at HollyRJackson@gmail.com.

Lenten Worship Series - Holy Vessels: A Lenten Season of Healing and Recovery

Each of us is created a precious and holy vessel of embodied love. We have been through a harrowing time since last Lent that has shattered our sense of wholeness— body, mind, and spirit— like a glass vessel fractured into pieces. In this Lenten “season of recovery” for our physical, communal, mental, intellectual, and environmental health, we will explore the healing narratives of Jesus that tell of divine solidarity with human suffering and remind us that we can begin a journey toward making something beautiful from that which is seemingly broken. Beach glass offers us a multifaceted symbol of this transformative process. In your Lent to Go Bags there will be sea glass for you to use meditatively throughout this series. Each week we will focus on a different kind of health and healing as we work each week to recover and find a way forward.

March 28 (Palm Sunday): Integrated Health

Holy Week Worship

Maundy Thursday Worship, April 1st, 7pm

Join us for an interactive service honoring the journey of Holy Week from the flipping of the tables in the Temple, to Jesus' anointing by Mary, to washing Peter's feet, and then to the Last Supper. Using music, scripture, contemporary readings, and spiritual practices we will walk with Jesus through it all. In order to get the most out of this service we invite you to have the following with you as you sit down to worship: 1. A few coins (doesn't matter which

kinds but you should have 2-4 total). 2. Lotion or oil of some kind, preferably fragrant in some way. 3. A small bowl of water. 4. Bread or a cracker and juice or wine for communion.

Join Zoom Meeting for Maundy Thursday

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86476220871?pwd=MUI2N1gwVmlURXptOGtMUmRrQUI4Zz09>

Meeting ID: 864 7622 0871

Passcode: 20874

One tap mobile

Dial by your location

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

Good Friday Worship, April 2nd, 7pm

We'll sit together by the cross as we consider the final day of Jesus' life from his arrest to his trial to the crucifixion to the tomb through scripture, music, and reflection. This is a tenebrae service and together as a community we will move from the light to the darkness of the tomb little by little. In order to do this we ask that you have a candle with you, either electric or flame, or if you do not have a candle that you have a light source nearby that you can put out when you are told to.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87939789137?pwd=WGRDcUg0S3owMIRCWkozUy9OejY4Zz09>

Meeting ID: 879 3978 9137

Passcode: 20874

Dial by your location

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Easter Sunday Worship, April 4th, 10am

Christ is Risen! We'll celebrate shouting our alleluias in word and song! Resurrection is the ultimate healing and now that healing has been promised for all people. We'll have the traditional Easter music and a spirit of joy and possibility will infuse our worship. Invite your friends and family to join us from wherever they are!

As you sit down to worship, bring with you a ribbon wand or a coloring page or scarf or something else to wave and show your joy. (You can find Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday coloring pages here:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/17Qli1IOiZ4Ouj-Z9ZKvEyaPBw3JmHLyi?usp=sharing>) Also bring bread or a cracker and juice or wine for communion.

Join Zoom Meeting

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

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Gone Fishing!

Give a person a fish and you feed her for a day, teach a person to fish and you feed her and her family for a lifetime.

It started with Pastor Holly Jackson's vision that our congregation, UCC of Seneca Valley (UCCSV) in Germantown, MD would partner with an elementary school which was identified as a Linkages to Learning school. Linkages to Learning assists students and their families by providing or connecting them to services and resources that address the social, economic, health, and emotional issues that may interfere with student success.

The only Linkages to Learning school in Germantown is Fox Chapel Elementary School (FCES) located six miles from our church. The program participants first language is Spanish and only two members of our congregation speak Spanish fluently. And the partnership was to kick off as UCCSV began meeting online! The only time we were at the church this past fall was

for socially distanced, masks required Firepit Fridays held outside in the church parking lot. Despite some possible obstacles, our congregation forged ahead with typical outreach efforts including providing school supplies at the start of the school year, Thanksgiving food baskets, and Christmas gifts for several families. When the Christmas gifts were delivered, Rodolfo Nogales the Community School Coordinator for the Linkages to Learning program informed us that the mothers in the program reported they needed food. Not meeting in person, limited possibilities for our congregation to collect food which meant asking for cash donations to cover the costs of purchasing food. Pastor Holly and the co-chairs of the Social Action Board, Dan Davis and Suzanne Adele Schmidt believed that our congregation would respond generously to the request for monetary contributions. Respond they did! Over \$542 was contributed toward the food.

As Rodolfo inquired about specific needed foods, he learned that the mothers wanted to learn more about nutrition and healthy eating. About this same time, Ester Gaitan Waldrop, Health Educator for the Montgomery County Extension Office of the University of Maryland contacted Rodolfo about offering a class which addressed the mothers' requests. The zoom class required ingredients for the mothers to cook. Plus, the class mushroomed from one week to five weeks. As more mothers learned about the class, the numbers expanded. Rodolfo knew his limited budget would not cover the cost of ingredients for all five classes. That's when our congregation swung into action by providing ingredients for two classes and we contacted Mother Seton Parish about providing food for one class. Rodolfo was able to provide ingredients from the Linkages to Learning budget for the other two classes. Each class began with a time of learning followed by a time of preparing items

such as banana pancakes, pasta salad, breakfast smoothies, and fruit parfaits. One of our members, Adam DeBaugh, who is the Assistant Director for WUMCO Help, Inc., a service organization in Poolesville, MD indicated that WUMCO had a huge amount of frozen venison. That gift of venison was the centerpiece for the final class project. Each mother prepared enough stuffed peppers to feed her family for dinner later that day.

With some careful shopping, UCCSV was able to spend only \$142 for all the ingredients (with additional help from WUMCO). The remaining \$400 will be for future projects with the Linkages to Learning participants.

On the last day of class, Pastor Holly, Suzanne and Dan got to meet with the mothers via zoom. Rodolfo served as our interpreter. We discovered that day the power of learning to fish. The mothers shared that the classes taught them to read food labels, make grocery lists, shop healthy and smartly, as well as cook nutritious meals low in fat. Plus, they enjoyed themselves and the sense of community which the classes offered. These classes provided “fish and fishing tips for a lifetime”!



Class 4: Fruit Parfaits



Class 5: Stuffed peppers

Dan and Rodolfo with ingredients for Class 5



100 Acts of Service to the Community in 2021

We know UCCSV makes an important contribution to our community as individuals and as a whole group, but we want to go further by documenting our acts of service and celebrating them. Let's see how quickly we can get to 100 acts of service to the community! If you have done an act of service to the community this year we want to know about it. Acts of service include more formal acts of volunteerism like tutoring or delivering food or cleaning up the neighborhood park to helping out a neighbor with technology or other task. An act of service can be running errands for others or paying it forward in some way. How do you serve our community? How are you making a difference? If you have completed an act of service please email Marybeth Thomason who is compiling a list for us. MarybethThomason921@gmail.com. Send along your name and your act of service. We'll celebrate your contribution and have it become part of our effort as a whole church to reach 100 acts of service by this summer!

Lent: 40 Days to Love Mercy

At the beginning of Lent, the Social Action Board announced that there would be three opportunities to demonstrate the Micah 6:8 directive to “love mercy.”

The first opportunity focused on food insufficiency on the local level and the second at the national and international level through UCC’s annual One Great Hour of Sharing offering.

The third opportunity is assisting Germantown Help during their Easter outreach. UCCSV is teaming up with two other faith communities in Montgomery County, Journey's Crossing Church (JCC) and Hindu American Community Services, Inc. Most of those receiving groceries will pick them up at JCC’s parking lot. Of the 300 grocery sets, 50 will be set aside for UCCSV to deliver to folks with limited mobility/transportation who cannot come to JCC themselves.

We need 8-10 UCCSV drivers to show up at JCC (corner of Century Blvd. and Cloverleaf Center Dr.) at 9 a.m. on Saturday April 3rd and deliver the groceries immediately after pickup. Noel Lin will receive a list of the 50 recipients in advance so that we can contact them to let them know to expect delivery. **If you would like to help with the delivery, please email Noel Lin noellin50@gmail.com by March 29.**

If you would like to contribute toward gift cards for Easter food, you may do so through the church website (look for the Germantown Help option) or by sending a check to the church P.O. box.

Holy Week Worship

March 28 - Palm Sunday, Worship at 10am
April 1 - Maundy Thursday, Worship at 7pm
April 2 - Good Friday, Worship at 7pm
April 4 - Easter Sunday, Worship at 10am

Happy Birthday



Quinn Jackson	3/2
Michelle Singletary	3/4
Tom Frazier	3/5
Madelyn Anderson	3/7
Bethany Fuss	3/9
Paula-Marie Read	3/9
Jean Bertelmann	3/10
Tucker Singletary	3/25
Jako Domingo	3/29