



Spirit News

November 16, 2017

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

- Pray for family and friends (anonymous).
- Pray for Miriam, who this week found out she has stage 4 bone cancer in addition to known medical problems (Helen Hanes).
- Prayers of comfort for a friend going thru separation in marriage; blessings for family coming together on Thanksgiving (Joyce Miller).
- Pray for healing for Thomas, a friend of Rachel's who is in the hospital (Rachel Estrada).
- Prayers for my son as he deals with the anniversary of his best friend's suicide (anonymous).
- Prayers of strength for my dad and cousins on the passing of my Aunt, Jane Elmore, after a painful battle with cancer (Terri Molaski).
- 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 care-giving. 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 during my continued treatment and palliative care for cancer (Maridell Mason).

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
Luke 1: 5-25**

This Sunday at UCCSV

It's the start of Advent and we are celebrating with the angels! In almost every encounter with angels in the bible, the first thing the angel says is "Do not be afraid!" This message is revolutionary in a world where fears are often played upon and amplified or simply are outright justified. How can we learn not to be afraid and what does that have to do with the Christmas story? How can we bring more hope into the world and what might that look like? Join us this Sunday for worship at 10am and find out! There will be communion, Holly will preach, the Confirmation Class will light the first

Advent candle, the choir will sing and much more! The elementary/preschool Sunday School class will meet together at the start of service and focus on an angel coming to talk to Mary about Jesus' birth. There will be a special extra Children's Moment this Sunday after the children rejoin us for worship in the sanctuary. Get ready for Christmas by moving intentionally through the Advent season.

After worship children and adults who want to participate in the Christmas Pageant on December 17th will rehearse in the sanctuary. Also the Confirmation class will meet and the Christian Education Committee will meet as well.

Peace, Holly

World AIDS Day December 1

AIDS burst onto the scene in the early 80s devastating families and confounding medical practitioners. It seemed that the world was dealing with something that could not be tamed nor cured. People who were diagnosed were stigmatized and isolated. When the support of friends and family were needed most, AIDS victims died alone. We have come a long way since the early 80s in both medical treatment and social treatment of this dreaded disease. In 1987 AZT, the first drug specifically to combat HIV was marketed under the name Retrovir. It is still used today, although there are many drugs in the HIV arsenal. We now have fusion inhibitors, protease inhibitors, integrase inhibitors, nonnucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors, and nucleoside and nucleotide reverse transcriptase inhibitors. These drug classes were and are used as "cocktails" to keep the virus in check. The last 10 years have seen the advent of complex drug regimen cocktails combined into one pill – some taken only once a day! And these drugs allow for a non-detectable viral count in blood tests of AIDS patients! Currently the medical community is beginning to embrace "non-

detectable equals non-transmittable" which will, with hope, erase any of the remaining public fears.

So, on Friday, December 1, consider wearing red to show your support for those with AIDS and those who continue to make AIDS research their life work. I will be wearing red in honor of two cousins I lost to AIDS and to honor the progress made in curing this awful disease. There is still a lot to be done, especially for underserved countries and communities.

Pulp Pilgrims Book Group

We are currently reading, *My Beloved World*, a memoir by Sonia Sotomayor.

As the first Hispanic and third woman appointed to the United States Supreme Court, Sonia Sotomayor became an instant American icon. In her memoir, she writes with candor and intimacy as she recounts her life from a Bronx housing project to the federal bench. This journey offers an inspiring testament to her own extraordinary determination and the power of believing in oneself.

There are several copies of the book in print, electronic, and audio formats available within the Montgomery County Library System.

We hope you will join us this Sunday, December 3rd, at 11:30am in the Narthex. Contact is Deborah Tomblyn, deortombl@aol.com.

**Our January book is *Born a Crime* by Trevor Noah. Noah's path from apartheid South Africa to the desk of The Daily Show began with a criminal act: his birth. A hold is necessary as there are 30 copies of the book with 134 current holds and 20 CD copies with 67 current holds (11.6.2017).



Confirmation Class: Make A Difference For UCCSV's Youth

We kicked off this year's confirmation class with 10 youth! We can't wait to see how this class evolves and what they learn and in turn teach us about God and community. Now it's time for you to become part of this amazing process. Sign up using the sign up genius to help provide lunch for our confirmands and teachers. Sign up to help lead a class (lessons and materials provided). Be sure to ask the confirmands what their experience has been so far and be sure to share with them a story of your faith journey. This is a church wide effort as these youth are all our children. Make a difference and get involved today!

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090849a4a722a02-ways>



Starry Night, Noisy Night Rehearsal

On December 17th in worship UCCSV's children, youth and adults will be presenting a very special Christmas Pageant! In order to tell God's story as best we can we will be rehearsing three more times. We will come together after worship on December 3rd and December 10th and we will also have an additional rehearsal on Sunday, December 10th in the evening from 5:30-6:30pm. If you want to participate, please join us for rehearsals!



Hanging of the Greens/Christmas Craft Night: This Friday, December 1st

The Christmas season is almost upon us. Let's get ready for this special season with a wonderful intergenerational evening of fun, decorating, and creativity! We will start with a Hanging of the Greens at 5pm in order to decorate the church for the season, then we will have dinner together and make Christmas crafts. Please come at whatever time you can get here. There will be something for everyone! Please mark your calendars and plan to attend in order to get your heart (and our church) ready for the Christmas season!



Christmas Poinsettias

If you would like to place a poinsettia in the Sanctuary for Christmas, please fill out the form in the back of Sunday's bulletin and place in the offering plate.

Deadline is Sunday, December 10th.

Cost of each plant will be \$10.00.

Blue Christmas Tea

Wednesday, December 6th at 7 PM in the Church Narthex. Light refreshments will be served.

The Blue Christmas Tea is a special tradition of UCCSV. The holidays can be a difficult time for those who may be lonely, in mourning, feeling alienated and cast apart from family celebrations or experiencing depression and sadness. At our past teas, we have welcomed participants to share about a person who has died, a special pet who has been lost, or a significant ending that affects them during the Advent and Christmas season. Some participants simply come and welcome some quiet and time for reflection. We want to set this time aside to be present for those in our community who struggle and seek to provide a safe place of rest, comfort and healing. Together we welcome the presence of Christ as the Comforter.



Brunch and Cookie Exchange

The annual cookie exchange and brunch will be on December 10 after church at Sandy Renner's house. (The address and directions are on the bulletin board near the sign-up sheet.) If you want to participate in the exchange, please bring 5 dozen cookies and a container for taking cookies home. Please sign up so that Sandy knows how many to cook for. And because of space limitations, it's for adults.

Pack and Play Needed

We would like to borrow a pack and play for a few days over Christmas while our two and a half year old grandson visits. If you have one that we can borrow, please let Sandy or Bill Renner know.



Bringing a Little Extra Christmas Joy to our Neighbors

Can you help gather the fixings for Christmas dinner for five families in the upper Montgomery County area? Over the next few Sundays we will be accepting donations of the items listed below to help make a few holiday dinners a bit more festive.

- Boxes of Stuffing Mix
- Jars of Turkey Gravy
- Cans of Green Beans
- Cans of Corn
- Cans of Cranberry Sauce
- Cans of Yams
- Potatoes
- Dinner Rolls
- Pies
- Apple Cider
- Cash donations to pay for five turkeys, which have already been purchased.

We also hope we can add a little something under the tree for the same five families. Please look for sign-up sheets at the church to provide a Christmas gift (of about \$25) that will be delivered with the Christmas Dinner Baskets.



Staff Christmas Love Offering

We appreciate our church staff 365 days a year, but Christmas is a great time to show that appreciation in a tangible way. If you would like to voluntarily contribute toward a gift card for Pastor Holly Jackson, Director of Music Ministry Stefan Petrov, Office Manager Nita Stone and Custodian Anna Gavidia, please do so no later than Sunday, December 17th by one of the following means:

1. Put a check in the offering plate with the memo line marked "Staff Love Offering."
2. Put cash into an envelope marked "Staff Love Offering" and place it in the offering plate.
3. Hand your cash donation to one of the Deacons.

The total amount of donations will be divided among the best staff a church ever had! Let's show our appreciation for the tireless and loving dedication they demonstrate for our congregation all year long!

Calendar of Events

Confirmation Classes (11:30am) –
December 3 & December 17

Pulp Pilgrims Book Group (11:30am) –
December 3

CE Committee Meeting (11:30am) – December 3

Deacon's Meeting (7:00pm) – December 4

Blue Christmas Tea (7:00pm) – December 6

Cookie Exchange & Brunch
at Sandy & Bill's (11:30am) – December 10

Pizza Night at Ledos – December 12

Men's Breakfast (9:00am) – December 16

Christmas Pageant (10:00am) – December 17

Fellowship Committee Meeting (11:30am) –
December 17

Trustee's Meeting (6:00pm) – December 18

Council Meeting (7:00pm) – December 18

Christmas Fund Offering (10:00am) –
December 24

Social Action Committee Meeting (11:30am) –
December 24

PFLAG (2:30pm) – December 24

Christmas Eve Night Service (7:30pm) –
December 24

Lord's Table at St. Martins (1:00pm) –
December 26