



Spirit News

October 17, 2019

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

Prayer Requests

- 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 Dan Davis. Prayers that Dan's IV antibiotic treatment for a borne infection is successful (Suzanne Schmidt).
- 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 Molly's Cousins, April and Chris Winslow who are adopting a baby boy, Baby Byron, who was born 10 weeks early and is doing well in the NICU in Tampa, FL. Prayers for health and growth for baby and strength for the new parents (Molly Thomason).
- 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 Greg Hyer and Cherie Giambalvo, both battling cancer. May they be surrounded with love and comfort throughout their journeys (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.

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.

This Sunday at UCCSV

Money is often a dirty word in church, even as we are very familiar with it in our more secular circles. But our relationship with money - how we understand it, how we use it, and how we feel about it - is central to our lives and therefore an important part of our spiritual lives as well. How can we use money in a way that aligns with our faith? Are there spiritual practices that can help us with this? Using the lens of the classic movie, "It's a Wonderful Life" we will consider the ways in which money can help or hinder us in having a "wonder-full" life. While this is the start of our yearly church Stewardship campaign, we are asked to consider not just what we plan to give to the church to support its ministries, but our very relationship with money and how we can navigate that relationship in ways that become life giving and align with our beliefs and hopes for a better world modeled on God's Realm.

Join us at 10am for worship and together let's wrestle with this important topic.

It's a Wonder-Full Life Worship and Stewardship Series

Our yearly stewardship campaign begins on Sunday, October 20th and runs through Consecration Sunday, November 10th. You should be getting a letter and pledge card in the mail this week that explains more about our campaign (if you do not get something in the mail please let us know so we can send you a copy). This year we are focusing not just on what we can or should give to UCCSV in terms of time, talent, and money, but we are also looking at our overall relationship with money and how that effects our spiritual life. Part of our reflection on this will be focusing on the classic movie, "It's a Wonderful Life." We really do have a wonder-filled life here at UCCSV. We change lives. We support one another in times of joy and sorrow. We work to make a difference in the community around us. We care for God's amazing creation. Over the next month we'll celebrate our church and consider how we can support and live out our faith using the abundance God has blessed us with. Let's celebrate a wonderful life of ministry together!



Friday Fall Fun Fest

Please join UCCSV Council Members as they host a "Friday Fall Fun Fest" at UCCSV from 6pm - 9:00pm on October 18th. We're having grilled burgers and hotdogs with s'mores for dessert. Please join us around the fire pits for an evening of family fun! What to bring? A chair to sit in, a side dish to share and any adult beverage you prefer. Apple cider will be provided.



October is Diaper Month

Please support the Germantown Help by donating diapers. Sizes 4, 5, 6 are especially needed.

Fall Fun Weekend at UCCSV, October 18-20

It's finally October and the weather is cooling off so it's time to celebrate fall! We'll start on **Friday the 18th at 6:00pm with a Fall Friday Fire Pit Fun Night** including a

cookout, games, a firepit, and s'mores. Come hang out around the fire with us! Hot dogs, hamburgers, and



s'mores will be provided. Bring a side dish or salad or fruit and a drink to share. Then on **Sunday, October 20th** after worship, join us for a **Community Pumpkin Carving/Painting session**. Bring a pumpkin from home and any carving tools you might have to share. Together we'll carve out funny and scary designs on big pumpkins and/or paint small pumpkins for those who would rather stay away from the knives. Prizes will be awarded for the best designs! Celebrate God's amazing fall season with your UCCSV community!

Documentary & Discussion

Wednesday, Oct 23rd, 7 PM

"Love your enemy," but would you befriend Klan members?

"Accidental Courtesy" is a documentary about Daryl Davis, an African-American Silver Spring resident who has established friendships with a

number of KKK members – even loaning them his band's tour bus so they could attend a Klan rally! Davis seeks answers to the question, "How can you hate me, when you don't even know me?" with some surprising results.

We will view this 90 minute video and then discuss some of the issues that it raises about how best to understand those who would be your enemy.

Crossing the River: Finding Resiliency in Times of Change. When Doug offered to lead a mini retreat at UCCSV, I jumped at the chance. I encourage you to participate in this event taking place on **Sunday, November 17 from 1-4 pm** in the Gathering Room. Instructions for registering can be found in the Lumunos announcement below. Scholarship funds are available. Feel free to contact me with any questions. Dan Davis-
daniel.davis18920@gmail.com



Holiday Boutique


*Holiday shopping should be easy!!! With beautiful handcrafted art at our Holiday Boutique on **Sunday, November 17, from noon to 5pm** right at the church, you will be contributing to the church and getting your holiday gifts all in one - it's a win/win !!! We have a few spots left for artists who might want to be involved.*

Please call Lois Sumser at 240-780-6279 if you would like to participate.

Mini Retreat Coming to UCCSV

For several years, I have served as a board member of an organization known as Lumunos (formerly Faith at Work). Suzanne also has served on their board and worked as their Deputy Director while she was in seminary. We both have found this organization to be meaningful in our lives and have enjoyed their approach to small groups and interacting in a "sacred space."


The Executive Director of Lumunos, Doug Wysocky-Johnson, has been leading mini retreats around the country on the topic of



**Crossing the River:
Finding Resiliency in Times of Change**

A Half-Day Retreat for People in the Washington, D.C. Area

Sunday, November 17, 2019
1:00-4:00 pm
UCC Seneca Valley
13421 Chopper Rd. | Germantown, MD 20874



Life is filled with transition and change. They might be positive or expected – like retirement, moving, a new job, relationship, or kids entering your life or leaving the nest. Or, the change might be forced upon us through no choice of our own – think health crisis, or a change of leadership at your place of work. We are always leading up to a change, in the middle of one, or on the tail end of some change. Change changes us, but we aren't always aware of how, or what to do with it.

While challenging, change also brings opportunity. In this 3-hour mini retreat, led by Doug Wysocky-Johnson of Lumunos, you will have an opportunity to step back from some change in your life and view it through a spiritual lens. Using sacred story, research from the world of business and social science, conversation and time for reflection, you will leave with a different way to view the changes in your life. Light refreshments provided.

Cost: \$40 (Scholarship help available. Contact doug@lumunos.org)

Register Online: www.lumunos.org/dctransitions

Central Atlantic Conference

Annual Meeting

From October 4-5th the delegates, pastors, and leaders of the Central Atlantic Conference met for our annual denominational gathering in Bethesda. (UCCSV is a part of the regional United Church of Christ body called the Potomac Association which includes churches from the metro DC area down to Richmond, VA and then our association is one of five associations that make up the Central Atlantic Conference (CAC) which stretches from New Jersey down to Virginia.) At the annual meeting we spent time together in worship, did the business of the wider church, and reconnected with people from around our area who work together for the good of the church.

We were privileged to have Rev. Traci Blackmon, the UCC's National Associate General Minister for Justice and Local Church Ministries, preaching for us during our Friday evening worship. Rev. Blackmon, who is a powerful preacher and fierce social justice advocate, reminded us to stay in the race together and not give up, even when the journey gets difficult. She also spoke to those gathered for breakfast on Saturday morning about social justice initiatives including churches working together to purchase and forgive medical debt for those struggling to pay their bills, the reemergence of the Pilgrim Press, the UCC publishing house, and environmental justice work the wider UCC is involved in. Rev. Blackmon shared that she is concerned about the closing of UCC churches and the dwindling of theologically progressive voices as a result of those closings.

On Saturday we heard a State of the Conference address from our new Conference Minister, Rev. Freeman Palmer, who shared with us that the Conference is still here and continuing to rebuild and refocus itself in the wake of the sudden death of our last

Conference Minister and much change in our Conference. Staff positions are being restructured and our budget is being trimmed and reworked. Our theme for the year is moving forward together. As UCC churches we are in covenant, not just with our church members, but with other churches in our associations and with our wider regional bodies. We are all the church together, and together as one we will move forward into the future.

In our business meetings we elected a new Board of Directors for the Conference (a mix of clergy and lay leaders from around the Conference) and passed this year's Conference Budget. It's important to note that our Conference relies on our contributions to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM, which is a portion of UCCSV's annual budget) in order to do its work. The Conference uses those funds to pay staff (Administrative staff, one Conference Minister and three Associate Conference Ministers), pay for initiatives to support clergy, do justice work on behalf of the Conference, fund initiatives that support local churches, and more. 15% of CAC's budget also gets passed on as OCWM to the UCC's National Setting in Cleveland. So when you give to UCCSV, a portion of your giving goes on to support our Association, our Conference, and the National Setting of the UCC, all of whom do important work on our behalf.

Finally, there were also several workshops that were part of our meeting on everything from youth mission trips, to Shaw community ministries, to updates on racial justice work, and workshops on how to do better local church ministry. One workshop of particular interest was focused on getting to know your local community better. It turns out there are resources the CAC can connect us to that will help us to better understand not only the demographics of the communities around us, but also to better understand their needs and how best to reach out to them. In the coming

months and into the new year we will be looking to utilize those resources as we work to connect more with the Germantown/Gaithersburg/Boyd's/Clarksburg area.

The CAC will gather again next fall, this time in the Shenandoah Association in Harrisonburg, VA. In the meantime the Potomac Association will gather for our bi-annual fall meeting on November 2nd at First Congregational Church in Washington DC. Sometimes, it's easy to think we are alone in doing God's work, but in reality we are connected to thousands of people and hundreds of churches in our region through our denomination and when we all work together we can accomplish amazing things. We are moving forward together!

Calendar

UCCSV Fall Funfest (6:00pm) – Oct. 18
Men's Breakfast (9am) – Oct. 19
Bring Your Pumpkin (After Worship) - Oct. 20
Social Action Committee Meeting (11:15am) – Oct. 20
Council Meeting (7:00 pm) – Oct. 21
Social Action Video Discussion (7pm) – Oct. 23
One Anothering Group (10am) – Oct. 26
Teachers Training (11:30am) – Oct. 27
PFLAG (2:30pm) – Oct. 27

