



The Seneca Valley Voice

The United Church of Christ of Seneca Valley
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Carolyn's Column

The story is told of a certain Rosemary who spotted her neighbor's grade-school son Jeremy playing softball. The players clearly were not all his peers. Rosemary stopped to watch and, at the end of the inning, greeted Jeremy. He volunteered that he was playing with his church's softball team. "Where is your church?" asked Rosemary. After a moment's thought, Jeremy responded, "Out there."

That story prompts several thoughts:

- We give witness to our faith outside the walls of the sanctuary, often at times when we are not aware we are doing so.
- Our youth share profound insights—as we experienced again in worship on the 19th. THANKS to Laurel Czajkowski, Caitlin Malone and Jenna Yeany for writing the first service liturgy *and* for sharing their reflections on the healing of Naaman and the ways in which we set up roadblocks between ourselves and God.
- The church *is* the body of Christ—it lives and moves and laughs and plays.
- Faith needs practice.

It is that last thought that I have been considering recently.

Just as we know we need to take time every day to exercise in order to be healthy, we need to take time every day to *practice* our faith. With the Olympics still on full display—at least at the time of this writing—the reminder that faith needs practice is hardly a new insight. No matter how 'natural' our talent, none of us is an instant success at a new skill the first time we give it a try. And even with consistent practice, few of us ever become Olympians. But whether the skill is softball or

skiing, no one becomes proficient in a sport without understanding its principles and dedicating time and effort to its practice.

To continue the sports analogy, not only do we find communion with others in the same field, we also look for guidance to others whose skills are more developed than our own. Especially in the arena of faith, these mentors come to us in personal relationships. They also come to us in books. I commend to your reading the book our Souper group is studying, *The Heart of Christianity*, as well as the book *If God Is Love*.

With Ash Wednesday on March 1, we again come to that point in the church year in which our own spiritual practices prepare us to receive the gift of new life that we celebrate in Easter.

As we enter into this season of Lenten practice and preparation, I encourage you to consider your own faith practices as they find expression in prayer and meditation, physical activity, worship, hospitality, serving others, doing justice, stewardship, and testimony.

These practices are the ways in which our faith takes form, the ways in which we live out the covenant we entered at the time of our baptism, the ways in which the body of Christ takes form in our hearts as well as on the ball field.

Blessings,

Carolyn

From the Moderator

I thought I would take a few minutes to update all of you on council and church activities over the last few weeks. As you heard at the January congregational meeting, our mortgage is paid off and we are awaiting final paperwork from the conference. What an exciting opportunity this provides us as a congregation. How blessed we have been.

We have begun to act on that opportunity by sharing our fortune with others. At the above meeting, a motion was made to empower council to determine how best to spend the loan overpayment check we received from the conference. At the February council meeting it was decided to contribute an additional \$560 to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) and the remaining \$3300 would be used by social concerns on various mission projects, with a particular emphasis on helping Hurricane Katrina victims.

Thanks are in order to Pat Armstrong and Deb Myers for taking on the task of sorting through and organizing an enormous amount of past church records. Thanks also to Charles and Anne for agreeing to serve on the Human Resources Committee.

In the next few months we will begin recruiting members for the various church boards and committees to be presented to the congregation at our annual meeting in early May. Please think about how you would like to be involved in UCCSV and what gifts you have to contribute. Feel free to contact me, Carolyn, or any of the board chairs if you have a question or interest in a particular board or committee.

Sandra



Christian Education



Regional Youth Event

Yes, it's coming: the Regional Youth Event!

July 13-16, 2006

At the University of Delaware

In summer 2006, United Church of Christ youth have an opportunity to participate in a Regional Youth Event (RYE)! At RYE, participants will:

- meet other awesome people of various backgrounds, racial/ethnic groups, and interests;
- enjoy fun activities and learn new skills;
- grow spiritually - getting "amped" up about that faith journey thing!

Nationally, each region will have a youth event, and Central Atlantic Conference is the host for the Mid-Atlantic region. As a member of Central Atlantic Conference of the United Church of Christ, UCCSV youth are a part of the Mid-Atlantic region.

Creation

Join the Youth Group at Creation in Mount Union, PA from June 27 to July 1. Come for all or part of this great Christian Rock and Roll Festival! See Heather or Patrick for details.

Mark your calendars now for upcoming events!

- June 2-3 -- Sunday School Teacher Camp
- August 27 -- Rally Sunday
- September 24 -- The Youth Group will prepare and serve dinner at the Community Based Shelter.
- November 29 -- Hanging of the Greens

Social Concerns

Equal Exchange Coffee Sales

Thanks to all who have supported the sales of Equal Exchange coffee, cocoa, and chocolate bars during Fellowship Hour between services. The Board for Social Concerns plans to have coffee, chocolate, and perhaps tea available every second Sunday of the month. This is a win/win/win situation: third world farmers get a higher, guaranteed price for their products; we get good, organic products at a reasonable cost; the Emergency Assistance program of UCCSV will get the profits.

Emergency Assistance

During the month of March we will accept canned vegetables for our food pantry and Germantown Help. As always, we thank you for your support.

From the Treasurer

Stock Donations

We have received questions regarding stock donations to UCCSV. Procedures for doing so are as follows:

If the stock is with a broker, give the broker the following information:

- Account Name: United Church of Christ of Seneca Valley , 13421 Clopper Road, Germantown, MD 20874
- Account Number: 86Q-04091
- DTC Number: 5198

If you have the stock and would like to transfer it to the church, do the following:

- Call Merrill Lynch at 703-464-8803 and ask for Mehrak and give him the name of the account and the account number, 86Q-04091.
- He will give you instructions and send you paperwork to transfer the stock to the church's account.

If you have any questions please let me know.

Treasurer

WELCOME !

Please welcome Carla our new Nursery Caregiver! Please stop by the Nursery and extend a warm welcome to Carla. Carla is a skilled nanny who also has experience working with children with special needs. We are delighted to have her as part of the UCCSV family.



Fellowship

Coming Tuesday, February 28, from 6:00 to 7:30 pm, is the annual all-you-can-eat Shrove Tuesday pancake supper, which will be hosted by the Youth Group and the Fellowship Board. The price is \$5.00 per person and \$3.00 for those ten and under. We look forward to seeing you there.

Remember to save Saturday, March 18, for our Tapas Night. We will gather at 7:00 pm at the Keys' home, This is an evening of adult fellowship, so get a babysitter, leave the jeans at home, and enjoy pleasant socializing. You are asked to bring either an appetizer or a dessert to share. Beverages will be provided. Sign-up sheets will be found on the bulletin board near the church office.

Several members of the congregation have donated coffee for the fellowship hours. The need for coffee is on-going. If you would care to make a donation, consider buying Equal Exchange coffee when the Social Concerns Board has it available the second Sunday of each month. You may simply hand the coffee to any member of the Fellowship Board.

Looking ahead to the Easter season, the Deacons and the Fellowship Board will again host the Maundy Thursday service on Thursday, April 13. A simple supper will be served, Communion will be celebrated, and there will be foot-washing for those who wish.

Property Operations

Space is still available in our newly-rented storage bin for file boxes. If you have any old UCCSV files at home that should be stored, please let Marilyn know and she will get them packed, labeled and ready for storage.

Conference Annual Meeting

Central Atlantic Conference's annual meeting will follow the theme, *Come Listen, Go Serve*, at its annual meeting June 9-11. The meeting will feature guests Cally Rogers-Witte from Wider Church Ministries, Marla Shrader, a UCC missionary in Palestine, and Michael Scheunemeyer, addressing issues of health and wholeness. Youth are encouraged to attend as delegates from their local congregations. The Conference is held at the University of Delaware in Newark.

Baltimore Opera Company: *Dead Man Walking*

On March 11, the Baltimore Opera Company will premier *Dead Man Walking*, the opera.

If you are interested in seeing this musical interpretation of Sister Helen Prejean's best-selling book, please contact Jane Henderson, Citizens Against State Executions (CASE), at 240-338-2579, or contact the Baltimore Opera Company directly.

Sister Helen will be there in person on Saturday night, March 11, and MD CASE is reserving tickets. If you buy your ticket through CASE, they may be purchased at cost for \$35.

**Ash Wednesday Service**

Please join us as we participate in a joint Ash Wednesday Service at Trinity United Methodist in Germantown, MD. Our choir will also be participating in this service.

Wednesday, March 1, at 7:30pm.

Lectionary Readings—March**Sunday, March 5—The first Sunday of Lent**

Genesis 9:8-17

Psalm 25:1-9

1 Peter 3:18-22

Mark 1:9-15

Sunday, March 12

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

Psalm 22:23-31

Romans 4:13-25

Mark 8:31-39 or Mark 9:2-9

Sunday, March 19

Exodus 20:1-17

Psalm 19

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

John 2:13-22

Sunday, March 26

Numbers 21:4-9

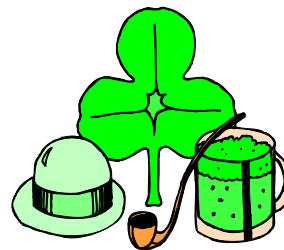
Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22

Ephesians 2:1-10

John 3:14-21

Our Lenten focus this year will explore baptism and our call to live as though the Realm of God is a present reality.

March 2006						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 7:30pm – Joint Ash Wed. Service Trinity Methodist	2 7:30pm - Choir	3	4
5 5:00-7:00pm – Youth Group	6 5:00pm – Called to Care (narthex)	7 10:00am -Staff	8 6:15pm – Souper 7:00pm –Heart of Christianity	9 7:30pm - Choir	10	11
12 4:00-7:00pm - Confirmation	13	14 10:00am -Staff 6:30pm - Fellowship at Bertelmann's	15 6:15pm – Souper 7:00pm –Heart of Christianity	16 7:30pm - Choir	17	18 7:00pm - Tapas (Home of Art/Jasna Keys)
19 5:00-7:00pm – Youth Group	20 7:30pm – Prop Ops	21 10:00am -Staff 7:30p - Council	22 6:15pm – Souper 7:00pm –Heart of Christianity	23 7:30pm - Choir	24	25
26 4:00-7:00pm – Confirmation One Great Hour of Sharing	27	28 10:00am -Staff	29 6:15pm – Souper 7:00pm –Heart of Christianity	30 7:30pm – Choir Confirmation trip to Cleveland	31	



March 2006

Outside groups meeting regularly at UCCSV:**Sunday & Tuesday Nights - 8:30pm – AA****Thursday Nights - 7:30pm - Boy Scouts****Friday Nights - 6:30pm - Salem Church****Saturdays - 8:30am-1:00pm & 4:30pm-8:30pm - 7th Day Adventists**