

The Seneca Valley Voice

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

Here we are, in the final days of Lent, completing the spiritual journey we began with Ash Wednesday as we recalled the exhortations of Joel:

¹ Blow the ram's horn trumpet in Zion!
Trumpet the alarm on my holy mountain!
Shake the country up!
GOD's Judgment's on its way—the Day's
almost here!

² A black day! A Doomsday!
Clouds with no silver lining!
Like dawn light moving over the mountains,
a huge army is coming.

Joel was referring to a plague of locusts, but the prophet used that disaster as the lens through which he focused the presence of God in human life.

Eugene Robinson writes that “there is a sense in which catastrophe doesn't introduce anything new into our lives. It simply exposes the moral or spiritual reality that already exists, but was hidden beneath an overlay of routine, self-preoccupation, and business as usual. Then suddenly, there it is before us: a moral universe in which our accumulated decisions are set in the stark light of God's judgment,” and we have a new opportunity to orient our lives in faith. [Introduction: Joel, *The Message*]



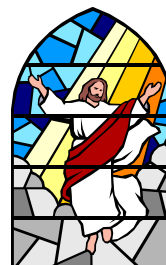
Through most of Lent we have used the psalms as the lens through which we focused on God's presence in our lives. We now move to Palm/Passion Sunday and re-tell the story of Jesus' last week, beginning with his theatrical entry into Jerusalem. With their stark mixture of life and death, these stories are some of the most powerful stories of Christian scripture. These stories strip away the comfort of convenient faith and our easy acceptance of compromises.

The services of worship for which these scriptures are central are among the most powerful and meaningful services of the Christian year. Taken together, they become more than inherited memory: they become our pathway to renewal, calling us to walk as disciples who expose broken places to new realities.

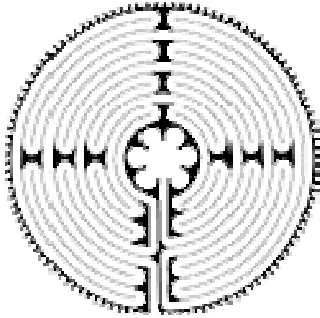
Wherever Holy Week finds you this year, may you experience its sacred mystery, its living memory, its transformational power. If Holy Week finds you close to home, I invite you to join us and share in the journey of this sacred week, that together we may experience new life.

Blessings,

Carolyn



Labyrinthian Experience



Join Bethesda United Church of Christ and Westmoreland Congregational UCC, as we co-host:

**Walking the Labyrinth:
Embodied Spirituality & Movement
Prayer Workshop
Saturday, May 2, 2009
9:30 – 3:00 at Bethesda UCC**

Prayer with movement opens us to a unique opportunity to have a conversation with God. In our busy, noisy, and demanding world, how do we pray and nurture our spiritual lives? How can we use movement to enhance and deepen our faith journey and to become more open to the presence of God? There will be an opportunity to walk a labyrinth set up on the floor of the sanctuary.

Facilitators: **Barrie Gibby** promotes movement prayer as a connection to spiritual growth. She integrates her vast background in theater, sacred dance, education and design to “Build Community” through embodied meditation.

Rev. Dr. Duncan D. Newcomer works with that creative edge between body and spirit. He is a preacher and poet, teacher and therapist, and presently a minister at Rockville United Church in Rockville, MD.

Physically challenged participants are encouraged to attend. Bethesda UCC is handicap accessible. Suggested donation including lunch: \$15. Space is limited to 25. Please call or email the church office by April 24 to register or for more information 301-365-3387 or admin@bethesdaucc.org. Bethesda UCC, 10010 Fernwood Road, Bethesda (on the corner of Fernwood Road and Democracy Boulevard). www.BethesdaUCC.org

Notes from the Deacons

The Deacons are getting ready for Easter. Our celebrations begin on **Palm/Passion Sunday**, April 5, with the distribution of palms and the dramatic reading of the Holy Week story from the gospel according to Mark.

We look forward to **Maundy Thursday**, April 9, and the Simple Supper provided by Deacons and Fellowship. Dinner begins at 6:30pm followed by a short service with optional foot-washing and communion.

The **Good Friday Tenebrae** Service, April 10, is at 7:30pm. This service features the extinguishing of the candles and draping of the cross.

Easter celebrations on April 12 begin with a sunrise service at 6:15am, and a traditional service at 10:00. An Easter egg hunt for the children will follow the second service.

Resignation

It is with regret that we accepted the resignation of Director of Music Ministry, Judith Berg, effective March 24. We wish her the very best as she pursues her music studies.

Potomac Association Ministry Institute

The Potomac Association's Church and Ministry Committee sponsors a sequence of four institutes a year in the History, Polity, Theology and Ministry of the United Church of Christ. It is a series open to all who are interested in learning more about our denomination. The History Institute will be held on April 4, 2009. The Polity Institute will be held on June 12, 2009, in connection with the Central Atlantic Conference annual meeting. The Theology Institute will be held on October 20, 2009, location to be announced. The Ministry Institute will be held on January 30, 2010 at the Offices of the Central Atlantic Conference of the UCC. Each session will meet for six hours. The Institutes are free to all members of the UCC and you do not need to pre-register to come. To learn more, speak to Christie Holland or go to <http://www.potomacuss.org/uccinstitutes.html>.

EASTER EXTRAVAGANZA (1):



Old Rag Hike

On Easter Saturday, a bunch of UCCSVers are planning a hike up Old Rag on the eastern flank, central section, of Shenendoah National Park. The hike is vigorous and in a few places requires the use of both arms and legs and maybe even your back. It is a loop trip with about 2000 feet elevation gain and 7 miles of walking. For those who are in good shape and who desire to be lifted up as is promised by the Easter proclamation, this event is for you. The hike will leave the Old Rag Parking Lot at 7:30am on Saturday, April 11, and return to the same by 2:00pm.

There are 2 options for accessing the trip: 1) Drive down to Old Rag on Friday night and camp out with members on the Ridge Trail; 2) Drive down at 5:00am on Saturday and meet the campers in the parking lot at 7:30am. Each person is responsible for their own hiking gear, day pack and trail snacks.

For further information, to sign-up and to explore car-pooling options, call the church office.

EASTER EXTRAVAGANZA (2):

Easter Picnic

Hiking not your thing? Or, love hiking *and* eating? How about an Easter picnic? Join Carolyn and John at their home in Frederick, 207 Rockwell Terrace. If the weather doesn't cooperate, we'll move indoors, but rain or shine, there will be good food and the opportunity to celebrate our most joyous day in the company of friends.

Hors d'oeuvres begin at 5:00pm. If the weather *does* cooperate, we may even manage a game of Frisbee baseball. Kids welcome.

Can You Help Provide Some Landscape TLC?



Spring has arrived! If you enjoy working with plants and shrubbery, we would love to have your help in maintaining the prayer garden and the landscaping in front of the church. You can spend time whenever it is convenient to you in weeding, trimming, mulching, etc. You can even plant some annuals if you would like. Property Operations will provide any mulch or other supplies you might need. Please see John or Wayne if you can help.

Lost...but Not Found

Some time ago, we offered *Saving Jesus* as an adult education class. It used a DVD on two discs, but I only have disc 2. If you have disc 1, please return it either to Marilyn's desk, or to me directly. Thank you.
~Carolyn



Pulp Pilgrims

UCCSV's Book Club is currently reading *Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace...One School at a Time* by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin. Be sure to get the book that was published in January 2007. Join us for spirited discussion, varying opinions and ideas, and great fun on Sunday, April 19, at 11:30am in the Narthex. Questions? Call or e-mail: UCCSV at 301-540-3449or uccsv@verizon.net



Countryside Artisans' Spring Studio Tour

On April 17, 18 and 19, meet and talk with area artisans as they open their studios to offer an array of handcrafted items for sale. Find hand-blown glass, prints and paintings, yarn, textile fashions, jewelry, woodworking, ironwork, pottery, garden art, plants and local wine.

Come out for a breath of fresh spring air, watch lambs frolic in the fields and see where the artists live and work. Take home a renewed sense of well-being and possibly a wonderful piece of art to add to your home. Keep the tradition of American artists alive!



Mind, Body, Spirit

Mind, Body, Spirit meets on the second Tuesday of each month from 7:30-9:00 pm.

This group offers the opportunity to learn meditation as a means of improving health through relaxation and provides a path for drawing closer to God. For directions and to confirm that you will be attending, please call the church at 301-540-3449. The next meeting will be Tuesday, April 14.

April Birthdays



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| April 3 | Jean Jarrard |
| April 4 | Mike Diskin |
| April 9 | Janet Edson |
| | Karle Mason |
| April 15 | Heidi Harmon |
| April 16 | Christii Watkins |
| April 20 | Daniel Harmon |
| April 21 | Sarah Gove |
| April 25 | Andrew Harmon |
| April 27 | Jim Van Prooyen |



Congratulations !

Congratulations to Dan and Suzanne as they celebrate the birth of their first granddaughter, Frances. She was born on March 23 and weighed in at 8 pounds and 12 ounces..



April Scripture Readings

Sunday, April 5 – Palm/Passion Sunday

Mark 11:1-11 or John 12:12-16

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalm 31:9-16

Philippians 2:5-11

Mark 14:1-15:47 or Mark 15:1-39 (40-47)

Easter Sunday, April 12

Acts 10:34-43 or Isaiah 25:6-9

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

1 Corinthians 15:1-11 or Acts 10:34-43

John 20:1-18 or Mark 16:1-8

Sunday, April 19

Acts 4:32-35

Psalm 133

1 John 1:1-2:2

John 20:19-31

Sunday, April 26

Acts 3:12-19

Psalm 4

1 John 3:1-7

Luke 24:36b-48

THE APRIL CALANDAR IS ON THE NEXT PAGE



APRIL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

1 April – Wednesday

7:00-8:30p – 7th Day Adventists

2 April – Thursday

7:30p – Choir

7:30p – Boy Scouts

3 April – Friday

7:00-8:30p – 7th Day Adventists

4 April – Saturday

9:00a – Restructuring the Church (Starbucks)

5 April – Palm/Passion Sunday

6 April – Monday

7:00p – Deacons

7 April – Tuesday

10:00a – Staff

9 April – Maundy Thursday

6:30p – Maundy Thursday Light Supper, Prayers and Optional Foot washing

10 April – Good Friday

7:30p – Tenebrae Service

12 April – Easter Sunday

6:15a – Sunrise Service

10:00a – Worship

Easter Egg Hunt – following 10:00a Worship

13 April – Easter Monday

Church office closed

7:30p – Social Action (Narthex)

19 April – Sunday

11:30a – UCCSV Book Club – Pulp Pilgrims (Narthex)

21 April – Tuesday

7:30p – Council

22 April – Wednesday

5:30p – Called to Care

23 April - Thursday

Deadline for Voice Articles

26, 27, 28 April – Sunday, Monday, Tuesday

Carolyn in Boston for President (UCC) Advisory Committee

Deadline for Annual Reports

Recurring Meetings at UCCSV

10:00a - Sunday Worship

8:30p – Sunday, AA

10:00a – Tuesday - Staff

7:30p– Second Tuesday of month - Mind, Body and Spirit

7:30p – Wednesday – One Anothering 7:30p–

Thursday – Choir and *Boy Scouts*

9:00a – Saturday - 7th Day Adventists (all day)