



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

In this season of giving thanks, I am especially reminded of how grateful I am for this congregation, and for the generosity of spirit you showed—again!—in recognizing my birthday. From the spirited rendition of *Happy Birthday*, to the cards and yummy cake at coffee, to the beautiful vase of fall-colored flowers at my door, your warm wishes have graced these waning days of October. Thank you.

I am also thankful for the efforts of our John-Wayne duo in changing the exit signs as the old red ones age out, by replacing them with the newer green ones. Studies indicate that the color red is so associated with “Stop” that it sends a mixed message over emergency exits. Since the color green is associated with “Go”, it is becoming the color of choice for exit signs. Thanks too for their replacement of the broken door stops.

Susan is responsible for the attractive autumn display in the entry way, and is thinking ahead to Thanksgiving and Advent. Thanks to Susan for sharing her artistic gifts to visually enhance our worship space and our ‘living’ space.

Thanks are also in order for Jean, Ruth, Helen, and Jim for their teamwork in our own Emergency Assistance ministry. They have worked out a shared schedule so that desk is staffed every Tuesday and Thursday morning to respond to appeals for help from area residents.

Others in the office on a very regular basis are Ann, Cathy and Floyd. They answer phones during staff meetings and assemble the bulletin every week. Many thanks to a great crew!!

And then, of course, we have our church school, coordinated by another dynamic duo, Stephanie and Anne. They not only coordinate and teach, but have lined up a terrific group of members to share their faith by teaching our children or by sharing the children’s time during worship. Youth benefit from the leadership of Patrick (church school) and Heather (youth group).

Anne coordinates a gracious ministry of hospitality, and Pat Armstrong comforts and cheers with warm personal letters. Others greet and usher; still others make personal calls to guests, and make sure friendship pads and nametags are in good repair and at their needed locations. Choir and band members share their gifts of music, not just during the holidays, but Sunday after Sunday in their worship leadership.

My point isn’t to name every person who gives so generously of their time and talent to bring into being the various ministries of this church. That would necessarily also include those staffing the Lord’s Table once a month, those teaching adult education classes, those quietly bringing food supplies to stock the shelves of the Germantown food pantry, those picking up litter along Middlebrook Road, filling Thanksgiving baskets or providing a Christmas party for Shaw community children, just for starters.

My point is to say thank you to *all* who share their time and talent within this congregation. It is through your sharing that we become the body of Christ, through your sharing that we serve those within this community and beyond.

As we approach Thanksgiving—that quintessentially UCC-related event that nationally is our favorite holiday, I encourage each person to do two things: give thanks to God for your countless blessings, and give thanks to those within this congregation, within your circle of family and friends whose generous sharing of their time and talent has graced your life.

Blessings,

*Carolyn*

### **Notes from The Deacons**

November seems to be the gateway to memories. It heralds Thanksgiving and the Advent Season, both evoking remembrances and feelings that are deeply ingrained in all of us. We here at UCCSV are fortunate and blessed to have a “church family” with whom to share this special time of the year. We encourage your participation and we offer an extended hand to your friends and family.

This **Thanksgiving Eve service** will be held at UCCSV Wednesday, November 26, at 7:30 pm, in partnership with Trinity United Methodist Church and Open Door Metropolitan Community Church.

The Thanksgiving platter will no sooner be dried and put away, than we'll need to get our church ready for the start of Advent which begins Sunday, November 30. This means, of course, that we need “all hands on deck” for the ***Hanging of the Greens*** on Saturday, November 29, at 7:00 pm. We ask that you give whatever time you can spare that Saturday evening to help transform the church and ready it for the Advent Season. Simply show up Saturday, November 29, at 7:00 pm to share in a joyful job and a holiday cookie reward.

Chair

### **Guest Preacher**

Conference Minister John Deckenback will be our guest preacher Sunday, November 9. His sermon, *Tending God's Light*, will focus on ministry in the Middle East. Following worship he will share slides and observations of his most recent trip to the region where he visited Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, Israel and Jordan. His text will be Matthew 25.1-13.

### **November Birthdays**

- November 8           Damian
- November 20       Jeanne
- November 22       Stephanie
- November 22       John
- November 23       Dan
- November 30       Bill

### **Prayer Requests**

Prayer requests may be submitted to Carolyn via email any time during the week. Please identify the request “Prayer Request” in the subject line. These requests will be incorporated in the following Sunday's worship. If you would like to be on the mailing list to receive a weekly list of those prayed for on Sunday, please let Marilyn know at [marilyn223@verizon.net](mailto:marilyn223@verizon.net).

### **Called to Care**



### **FRIENDS WITH WHEELS** **A Transportation Ministry**

#### ***CAN YOU HELP?***

From time to time everyone needs a “little help from a friend.” The Called to Care Committee is soliciting volunteers to help other members and friends who might “need a lift.” If you can help on Sunday morning and/or other times, please sign up (list on Deacons' Bulletin Board) .

#### ***DO YOU NEED HELP?***

If you need a ride, call the church office (301-540-3449) during the week and Marilyn will give you the name of that month's coordinator. You can then call the coordinator at your leisure. Arrangements will be made for you. As the date nears, your helpful driver will reconfirm with you.

## Christian Education

With the month of November we come to the end of the Pentecost season as well as the end of the Christian year, concluding with the Reign of Christ on Sunday, November 23. As is often the case, this Sunday coincides with the Sunday before Thanksgiving—truly a season for giving thanks!

Even though the weather is turning colder, the liturgical color of the Pentecost season continues to be green, reminding us that this is a time of growing as a community of disciples. The gospel according to Matthew also continues to be used throughout the Pentecost season.

On November 30 we move into a new Christian year as we begin the first of the four Sundays of Advent. The liturgical color changes to royal blue, suggesting our preparation for the coming of the Messiah. This is the Sunday we also begin reading from the second gospel, the gospel according to Mark.

The lectionary, the Bible readings determined by an ecumenical group for each of three liturgical years (cleverly dubbed “A”, “B” and “C”, rotates between the three synoptic gospels. (Synoptic means “same”, and refers to the first three gospels.) In Year A, the readings come primarily from Matthew; in Year B, the readings come primarily from Mark; in Year C, the readings come primarily from Luke. The gospel according to John is interspersed throughout the readings, regardless of the year.

Our children’s church school curriculum is based on the lectionary readings, which we also follow in worship most Sundays.

## Adult Education: Romans

With the exceptions of November 9 and 16, this class on Paul’s Letter to the Romans meets following worship and fellowship. The series is led by Glen and his longtime friend and colleague, Richard, who currently is writing a book on Romans. Participants are asked to read the following portions of Romans in preparation:

- November 2           1.16-4.25
- November 23       Chapters 5-8
- November 30       Chapters 9-11
- December 7         Chapters 11-15
- December 14       Chapter 16
- December 21       Summary Review

## Youth Group



Dear Friends and Family,

Team UCCSV is walking in the Fannie Mae *Help the Homeless Walkathon* and I would like to invite you to join me.

Nearly 12,000 people in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area this year are homeless. That total includes people who are living on the streets, staying in shelters, or living in transitional housing. More than 45 percent are families and about one-quarter are children. While "street homelessness" is the image commonly presented to portray homelessness, less than 13 percent of the homeless people in the region regularly live on the streets. More than one quarter of the region’s homeless single adults are employed.

Fannie Mae’s Help the Homeless Program is a community-wide program to raise funds and awareness in support of beneficiary organizations that work to prevent and end homelessness. This Program spans several months, culminating in the Fannie Mae Help the Homeless 5K Walkathon on the National Mall on Saturday, November 22. The Fannie Mae Help the Homeless Program has grown into the nation’s largest fundraising event benefiting the homeless. Since 1988 the Help the Homeless Program has raised more than \$69.5 million for more than 220 organizations dedicated to serving homeless people in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Each year tens of thousands of people join Fannie Mae’s *Help the Homeless* walks to support organizations dedicated to serving homeless people.

You can help! Join me at the Fannie Mae *Help the Homeless Walkathon* and urge others to participate. Working together we can prevent and end homelessness!

Thank you so much for all of your support and I look forward to seeing you at the Fannie Mae 2008 *Help the Homeless Walkathon*.



### Christmas Pageant December 14

Sunday afternoon December 14, at 5:00 pm, UCCSV's children and youth will present *Matt and Lucy's Version Births*, a Christmas pageant telling the stories of Jesus' birth from the gospels of Matthew and Luke, the (only) two gospels that do so. This delightful pageant includes wonderful songs in addition to the traditional story. It will be followed by a potluck supper. Plan on attending!

### Social Concerns



### Holiday Food Baskets

Guess what, folks? The holidays are fast approaching and soon Thanksgiving will be here. Once again UCCSV will be providing the makings of Thanksgiving dinner, plus a few extra food items for each basket, to three local families whose names have been provided by Community Ministries of Montgomery County.

A sign-up list will be posted on the bulletin board outside the office. Please consider helping a family have a nice Thanksgiving meal.

The foods should be at church and in the baskets by Sunday, November 16. Members of our church will deliver the baskets on the Sunday before Thanksgiving.

If you would like us to do the shopping you may make a donation to UCCSV and mark the memo line "Holiday food baskets." As always we thank you for your generous support.

Thank you all for caring. By helping others have a nice Thanksgiving we'll find that we enjoy our own holiday a lot more.

### Emergency Assistance

Thanks to the generosity of members and friends, the Emergency Assistance Ministry of UCCSV has helped 115 families in our community so far this year, giving over \$11,000 to assist with such needs as rent, utilities and food. At this time there is only a little over \$1,000 left in the Emergency Assistance budget for the remainder of the year.

### Adopt-a-Road

The next Adopt-a-Road work day is Saturday, November 8, at 9:00 am. We will meet in the Seneca Valley High School parking Lot. Join fellow UCCSVers as we make our section of Middlebrook Road shine and sparkle. If you have never done it before and think your back is too weak to be of service in this cause, think again. We can use you. Show up at 9:00 am and we will give you the 15 second tutorial plus a Pik-Stick which will allow you to pick up trash without bending over. Simple? You better believe it! Fun?? Just like a heavenly banquet. See you there. We supply gloves, trash bags, and reflective vests



### Fellowship

#### Holiday Cookies

Baking cookies for the holidays? If you have time please make extra and leave them at the church for the festivities we will have here. Just mark for UCCSV use. Many thanks.

### Church Office

Just a reminder that the deadline for announcements in the bulletin is Wednesday by 2:00 pm.

The deadline for the December Voice is Friday, November 21, by noon.

## Completing The Circle



### Give us a Piece of your Mind...And Heart and Soul

As mentioned in the last newsletter, we are going to begin a process to get more feedback about our ministries at UCCSV. Using a format described in the book *Completing the Circle* by David McMahill, we hope to receive feedback about how things are going on a regular basis.

Our first feedback/reflection group will be about our worship service. It will be held after church on Sunday, November 16. Child care will be provided. We would like anyone who attends services to participate. If possible, please sign up on the bulletin board or call the church office so that we have an idea of how many people to plan for.

Members of the human resources committee and the transition team will use a series of questions about how each of us experiences the worship service to guide the group. For example: "What do you experience during the pastoral prayer? Are all of the elements of the service meaningful to you? What do you experience related to the music?" and so on. We anticipate this taking about an hour and one-half to two hours (Feel free to bring a lunch. Cheese, crackers and fruit will be provided). The questions for reflection are based on the questions in the book *Completing the Circle*.

This session will be coordinated through Human Resources with a facilitator and note taker. Following the session, the facilitator and note taker will meet with the Deacons and any staff member responsible for the particular areas being reviewed to discuss the feedback obtained at the session to determine appropriate recommendations for action. The results will be reported to council and the congregation. Human Resources will also use the information as part of the staff evaluation process.

We plan on holding similar feedback sessions on other topics in the future: one covering Youth Confirmation on January 4, one for new members in March and one about Christian Education in May.

If you have any questions please contact anyone on the "completing the circle" team.

### Thula Sizwe

It is a special joy to again welcome our guests, **Thula Sizwe**, who return to us from KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. Join us Friday, November 7, at 7:30 pm to hear these spirited, talented men in concert – and bring a friend! A free-will offering will be received.



### Scripture Readings – November

#### Sunday, November 2

Theme – *Celebrate God's Gifts*

**Matthew 23.1-12**

Joshua 3.77-17

Psalm 107.1-7, 33-37

1 Thessalonians 2.9-13

#### Sunday, November 9

Theme – *Tending God's Light*

**Matthew 25.1-13**

Joshua 24.1-31, 14-25

Psalm 78.1-7

1 Thessalonians 5.1-11

#### Sunday, November 16

Theme – *Extravagant Opportunity*

**Matthew 25.14-30**

Judges 4.1-7

Psalm 123

1 Thessalonians 5.1-11

#### Sunday, November 23

Theme – *Reigning Compassion*

**Matthew 25.31-46**

Ezekiel 34.11-16, 20-24

Psalm 100

Ephesians 1.15-23



## November Calendar

### Saturday, November 1

9:00-11:45am – Anti-racism workshop – National City Church

### Sunday, November 2

Stewardship Sunday

Daylight Saving Time ends

8:15am – Pancake Breakfast – organized by Patrick Malone and Sunday school “Dudes”

11:15am – Spreading the Hope meeting

6:00-8:30pm – Inter-generational Dialogue (Schmidt/Davis home)

### Monday, November 3

7:00pm – Deacons

### Friday, November 7

7:30pm – Thula Sizwe

### Sunday, November 9

New Members received

John Deckenback – Guest Preacher and leader of Adult Forum

2:00-4:00pm – Don Hill – Stewardship Forum at UCCSV

### Monday, November 10

7:00pm – Social Concerns

### Tuesday, November 11

7:30pm – Mind, Body, Spirit (Kasemans)

Veterans Day

### Friday, November 14

7:30pm – Presentation of video of *The Long Journey Home* – Opera by Tom Rimes – with reception

### Saturday, November 15

Anti-racism workshop

### Sunday, November 16

11:15am - Human Resources – Completing the Circle – *Worship*

11:15 am – Fellowship Board Meeting

### Monday, November 17

7:30pm – Property Operations

### Tuesday, November 18

7:30pm – Council

### Friday November 21

Voice deadline

### Saturday, November 22

8:30am Team UCCSV – D.C. Walk for the Homeless

### Sunday, November 23

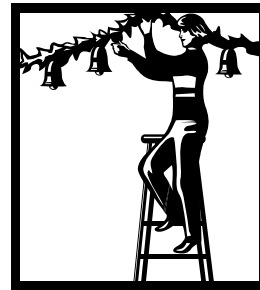
No church meetings/events planned

### Wednesday, November 26

7:30pm – Joint worship with Open Door and Trinity United Methodist at UCCSV

### Saturday, November 29

7:00pm – Hanging of the Greens with dessert



### Recurring Meetings

**Wednesday nights** – 7:30pm – One Anothering

**Thursday nights** – 7:30pm – Choir and Boy Scouts

**Saturday – all day** – 7<sup>th</sup> Day Adventist Church

**Sunday mornings** – 11:15am - Romans

**Sunday nights** – 8:30pm – AA