



God is Still Speaking

The Seneca Valley Voice

Carolyn's Column

Changes in Christian Education

If there is such a thing as summer doldrums, I wouldn't know it from the activity around the church! Even with members away on well-deserved breaks, *lots* has been happening, and one of the most significant 'happenings' is in the area of Christian Education.

During an excellent day-long planning retreat at Moderator Christie Holland's home in July, Council decided on two primary areas of emphasis during this program year: Christian Education and worship.

There is strong support among parents to have children present throughout Sunday worship, and a desire on the part of parents and other adults to provide quality Christian Education programs, but not at the expense of missing worship to do so. We are hoping that this schedule will also make it easier for teachers to commit to a block of time such as 4-6 weeks.

At the August meeting of Council, the Christian Education Board requested support for a proposal that has been 'in the air' for several years now—to move the Church School time to 9:00am. Council agreed to give the 9:00am Church School a year's trial, beginning on 19 September.

Recognizing that it is difficult for both children and teachers to have all ages in one class, there will also be three age levels offered this coming year:

- Pre-K through Grade 2
- Grades 3 through 6
- Grades 7 through 12

Church School will begin with all grades gathering for Children's Church in the Gathering Room, then breaking into the respective classes.

In addition to Choir which rehearses at 9:00am, there will also be a weekly adult option of *Havruta*, or scripture study focusing on the text to be used in that Sunday's worship.

I first experienced *Havruta* when I joined John (Deckenback) at the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem two summers ago.

Although *Havruta* technically means a pair of people who are similarly matched who engage in scriptural study, Shalom Hartman applied it to the whole group of us for those sessions. It was a wonderful and simple model, much like that used at *One Anothering*, or when we had open discussion following the reading of scripture during our second service.

Havruta begins with prayer, then the group reads the scripture out loud. Parallel passages, varying interpretations, questions, reflections, comments are aired. Possible interpretations or life/faith connections are offered.

Wednesday evening classes will begin on 22 September, with a five-week study of The First Paul.

In addition, plans are underway to begin a class at Asbury for UCCSV's residents.

Regardless of your particular interest, I hope you will take advantage of the options that are open, and take seriously the need each of us has to grow in our faith.

Blessings,

Carolyn

Help! Scribe Needed

Special thanks to Jeanne, who continued as the Council's scribe through the summer after the new Council began its work in June. Her last Council meeting was in August, and she is stepping down from her scribal responsibilities.

We need a volunteer to serve as Scribe at the Council meetings, held at 7:00pm on the fourth Monday of the month.

These responsibilities include attending Council and congregational meetings, taking and sending out the minutes of their proceedings.

Jeanne will continue with the duties of record keeping, maintaining a current register of marriages, baptisms, deaths, and the like. She also compiles the annual statistical report which is sent in to our national offices.

Thank you, Jeanne, for going the extra mile-or in this case, the extra three months.

Notes from Christian Education

The Christian Education Committee is excited to bring a fabulous opportunity to our entire congregation. We are planning to hold Sunday School at 9:00am until 9:45am each morning starting on 19 September. This will give our children the opportunity to participate in Sunday School and have a snack prior to church starting. This will also open up the possibility for more of our congregation to get involved in teaching our youth, and give their parents the opportunity to be involved in additional possibilities at church. We are thrilled to provide more information and gear up for a great year on 12 September at Rally Sunday. We hope to see you then!

Chair of Board of Christian Education



Deacons

The Board of Deacons is pleased to announce the addition of Maridell to its group. Maridell has a long association with UCCSV and was actually a deacon more than twenty years ago. We are very excited to have her with us again.

The board holds its next meeting on 13 September, at which time fall plans will be outlined and discussed.

Chair of Board of Deacons



Director of Music Ministry

Chancel Choir

Adults and teens are invited to sing with the **Chancel Choir**. There are no auditions, and singers do not need to be able to read music. Rehearsals begin Thursday, 2 September at 7:30pm.

A Few Words from Fellowship

It has been said time and again that UCCSV is so very warm and welcoming. Smiles are generously shared routinely. Now the Fellowship Committee cannot take credit for this, but we can certainly help facilitate the spread of congeniality among our members, friends and visitors.

The Coffee Hour is hosted generously by so many people. However, there is more to fellowship than Coffee Hour. The Committee would like to offer some opportunities to expand and enrich our time together. At Rally Sunday, please look for sign-up sheets to explore the possibility of more shared community activities. If there is a particular interest, we can pursue the development of it.

A few suggestions might be:

Tapas Dinner
Caroling through the neighborhood

Ladies Night Out (already in place)
 Olney Theater
 Christmas Cookie Exchange

What would you like to do? Please share with us.
 We want to hear from you.

***“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for
 brethren to dwell together in unity.”
 Psalm 133:1***



Property Operations

Property Operations is happy to report that "Grubby Sundays" (the cleaning-of-our-church project) was a wildly successful venture in joining our UCCSV congregation with the 7th Day Adventist congregation to thoroughly "scrub" our church. Many new friends were made between the two diverse congregations while hunkering down to clean our facility. The many hands (approximately 40 people!) who participated in the venture really made easy work of a pretty dirty task. Kudos to our cleaners!

Chair, Board of Property Operations

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On Grubby Sunday, at lunch time, one of our members sat down at the small table with two of our young children because all the other tables were filled. Soon our Music Director joined them. Then this conversation:

Child: *This is the Lucky Table*

Music Director: *Oh, good!*

Child: *Do you know why this is the lucky table?*

Music Director: *No, why?*

Child: *Because you are sitting here.*

Awww.

Pulp Pilgrims Book Group

Pulp Pilgrims Book Group is reading *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee in celebration of the book's 50th Anniversary!

Those of us schooled in the United States have probably read this book. Those of us schooled in other parts of the world may have read this book. An even greater number of us have seen the movie version with Gregory Peck as Atticus Finch at least once. This is a great chance to read this beloved book again; to experience life through the eyes of a little girl living in a small town in the Deep South in the 1960s. She learns through experience that the entire locale is poisoned by virulent prejudice, as she witnesses her father, a compassionate and just local lawyer, as he defends a black man unjustly accused of a terrible crime. This is truly a "can't put it down" read!



Do join us for our next gathering on Sunday, 19 September after worship (@11:30am) in the Narthex. Mark your calendars now! Everyone is welcome all the time. Questions: Contact the church office at 301-540-3449.

Social Action

Adopt-a-Road

Join other UCCSV members/friends cleaning our portion of Middlebrook Road. Our next date will be 11 September. We meet in the Seneca Valley High School parking lot at 9:00am. Donuts will be available!

Bake Sale

The next bake sale to benefit Emergency Assistance will be held Sunday, 19 September during coffee/fellowship time.

Just wrap your items and price them for sale. We appreciate all who continue to support this ministry.

Emergency Assistance

Following a summer break to re-fill Emergency Assistance coffers, and to give volunteers time off for vacations, the Emergency Assistance office will fill requests for assistance with utility bills and rent beginning Thursday, 2 September. We hope that by closing for the summer months while our depleted funds are being refilled, we will now be able to provide emergency help for the rest of the calendar year. We do appreciate all you do to make the funds available for emergency help to the Gaithersburg, Germantown and Boyds communities. Thank you for your help with this important ministry of UCCSV. Contributions for the Shalom Church, which help fund Emergency Assistance, are received on communion Sundays. The next communion Sunday is 5 September.

Recycling of Computer Ink Cartridges

If you have any empty computer ink cartridges which you would let us recycle, we can make money for Emergency Assistance. Just put them in a sandwich bag and place them in the box on the shelf in the left corner of the Gathering Room and we will send them in to be recycled. Many thanks.



Contribute Money to UCCSV while you shop

Do you wish there was some way you could give a little extra to the church?

eScrip is a national online program to return a percent of sales to charitable organizations.

Here's how it works. You go to www.eScrip.com and click on "sign-up." Follow the instructions to register your Safeway card and other credit and debit cards. Instruct them that you want the donations to go to UCCSV. Our eScrip ID number is 151607756.

Then every time you use your card at a participating store or local restaurant, the merchant donates a percent to UCCSV. In addition, you can shop on their online mall at numerous national stores such as Barnes and Noble and Lands End. When you access the online site through eScrip UCCSV also receives a percentage.

Or you can choose to install AutoEARN and it will track your purchases automatically from the retail site which is easier than remembering to go to the eScrip site every time you buy online.

While the percent that is donated is generally under 5%, it can add up. Last year we only had four participants and we received over \$150. We have the potential to receive a lot more if members and friends sign up and if we all remember to use the site for online purchases. They will also send you emails about restaurants in the area that are participating in the program. All you have to do is use the credit card that you have registered when you pay your bill.

Please note: If you and your spouse/partner/child have the same Safeway or credit card with slightly different numbers, you should register all of them.

If you have registered in the past, **please make sure your Safeway card is re-registered each year and your information is up to date.** If you have questions or concerns, please contact me.

I've been signed up for at least 6 years and have had no problems. Sandy



September Birthdays

September 1	Maridell
September 5	Ben
September 19	Ulric Ron
September 24	Suzanne
September 25	Stu

Bible Readings for September

Sunday, September 5 – A New Identity

Jeremiah 18:1-11
 Psalm 139: 1-6, 13-18 or
 Deuteronomy 30:15-20
 Psalm 1

Philem 1-21

Luke 14:25-33

Sunday, September 12 – Growing in God's Love

Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28
 Psalm 14 or
 Exodus 32:7-14
 Psalm 51:1-10

1 Timothy 1:12-17

Sunday, September 19 – Prayerful Living

Jeremiah 8:18-9:1
 Psalm 79:1-9 or
 Amos 8:4-7
 Psalm 113

1 Timothy 2:1-7

Luke 16:1-13

Sunday, September 26 – Surprising Investment

Jeremiah 32:1-3a, 6-15

Psalm 91:1-6, 14-16 or
 Amos 6:1a, 4-7
 Psalm 146
 1 Timothy 6:6-19
 Luke 16:19-31

Verizon Discount to UCC Members

This is to announce that Verizon Wireless is offering a corporate discount to the United Church of Christ. If you have a Verizon phone in your name, you may take advantage of a 12% discount immediately. Please use the link below to register existing accounts, activate new service, or upgrade existing equipment with a 12% discount. To register for the discount, click below, enter your zip code, scroll to the bottom of the page - select enroll, and then register your information.

To register for 12% discount click here: (Just cut and paste the box below.)

[https://www.verizonwireless.com/b2c/store/controller?item=b2eltem&action=domainAuth&token=AWsQK1gV394HYR8XBU54SzvK34043GCP6244bT3L7uk05Ns1jqtqr0OImO4SJ85yfPE7FhnNkfDTw3bTqzzvX3cETG0pW25Vs5fSlbbsbwI9AdY8yu96nG32NKcSh5xY \[cid:934585312@19082010-280C\]](https://www.verizonwireless.com/b2c/store/controller?item=b2eltem&action=domainAuth&token=AWsQK1gV394HYR8XBU54SzvK34043GCP6244bT3L7uk05Ns1jqtqr0OImO4SJ85yfPE7FhnNkfDTw3bTqzzvX3cETG0pW25Vs5fSlbbsbwI9AdY8yu96nG32NKcSh5xY [cid:934585312@19082010-280C])

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Thanks again to Paula-Marie, Cathy, Klein, and Barbara for covering the office while I was on vacation.

I really appreciate your help!
Marilyn

doesn't sound like a lot, the total of those \$100's adds up to an amazing contribution. To a single mom, you have just kept her and her children off the street. For an elderly person, you have provided the energy needed to power lifesaving medical equipment. For somebody who has given up, you have given hope and the feeling that somebody out there cares for them.

I cannot begin to express UMAN's heartfelt appreciation. Please share our gratitude with each and every member of your congregation. They are shining stars in our eyes and the eyes of the community. In addition to your tremendous generosity, UMAN is very thankful for being welcomed into your building to hold our monthly Board meeting last Thursday, July 16th.

Sincerely,
Program Director, UMAN



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July 21, 2010

To our friends at Seneca Valley United Church of Christ:

The staff and volunteers of The Upper Montgomery Assistance Network (UMAN) wish to thank you for your generous support of the many vulnerable families in our community. Without dedicated congregations like you, UMAN could not be a leader in preventing homelessness and utility disconnection in the area.

Recently, the needs of the poor have become overwhelming. We have seen the numbers of requests for help double, or even triple, and I'm sure your Parish has too. So many families come to us needing thousands of dollars to help keep their electricity on, or hand us a court notice requiring 3 or 4 months rent to prevent an eviction. Knowing that these families are looking to you for hope and help is a big burden to carry alone and can leave a helpless feeling in the pit of your stomach, but together we can do it, and we have!

The generosity of your congregation has given hope to the hopeless and changed the lives of countless households. While \$100 towards a utility bill here, and a potential eviction there

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