



10.12.2017

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UCC/VF's Weekly Newsletter

# The FORGE

## PURPOSE STATEMENT

The United Church of Christ at Valley Forge, following in the Way of Jesus, is called by God to deepen our relationships with the Spirit and our faith community so that we will be empowered to reach out widely to our neighbors in love, justice, hospitality, healing, and hope.

Scripture for  
This Sunday  
Philippians 4:5-9  
Matthew 22:1-14

### ***The Need for Deep Roots***

*My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he expected it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes. What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it? When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes? And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge; I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. - Isaiah 5:1-7*

I remember hearing this line (attributed to various sources), "Christianity has not so much been tried and found wanting as it has been left untried." It rings true on some levels. Many over the centuries and in the modern era have identified as Christian, given lip-service to Jesus and his teachings, but then have not offered much in the world that looks much like Jesus, and therefore not really living out the call to BE the continuing "Body of Christ" in the world.

The reasons behind this are legion, but one that rises up for me in relationship to our Sunday scripture passages is the culture that has been prevalent in many church traditions of low expectations. People join churches, maybe come to a Sunday service here or there, drop a check in an offering plate (or give online), bring canned goods at Thanksgiving, shoot off a prayer sporadically in the midst of trouble, and mostly just go about life just like everyone else who does not identify as spiritual or Christian. And this is seen as the norm, frankly. Yet Jesus called people to radical transformation. He taught people not a surface-level religious affiliation, but how to be deeply daily rooted in the Spirit of God that is just, compassionate, gracious, and prophetic.

We are called out of the shallow soil and limited plot of a like-minded club or a homogenous family, and into the ever-widening circle of a radically inclusive and richly diverse and gifted community in the Spirit. We are called out of the thin layer of "we've never done it that way before," and into the risky and rewarding prayer of Jesus, "not my will, but yours be done."

*(next page)*

## SUNDAY - OCT. 15

9:00 a.m. Book Study - see pg. 5  
10:30 a.m. Worship Celebration  
Sunday School/Sunday Morning  
Breakfast Club  
12:00 p.m. Inquirer class following  
worship

## THIS WEEK

Mon. - 7:00 p.m. Church Council  
Wed. - 7:00 p.m. Caring Crafters  
7:30 p.m. Spiritual Life Group -  
Exodus  
Thur. - 10:30 a.m. Spiritual Life  
Group - Matthew  
7:30 p.m. Senior Choir  
rehearsal

## NEXT SUNDAY - OCT. 22

9:00 a.m. Book Study - see pg. 5  
10:30 a.m. Worship Celebration  
Sunday School/Sunday Morning  
Breakfast Club  
New Member Welcome during  
worship

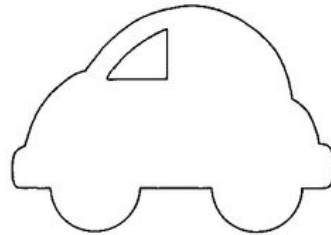
We are called out of the limited place of not having time or intention to awaken to God and the needs of others, and into the expansive consciousness and empowering Spirit of God's reign being lived out in justice, hospitality, healing, and hope. As we live into this call, that is good news for us and for the world.

Love,

*Pastor Michael Bush*

**Listen to & download Sunday's message**

<http://www.uccvf.org/sermonmp3.html>



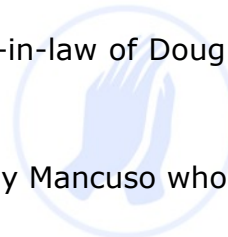
**Drivers Needed**  
Janet Jepsen is in need of drivers to bring her to church on a Sunday morning at 10:00 a.m. There is a rotating list already in place but it would be great to have a few more people. If you would be willing to be added to the list to pick her up and bring her to church, please let the [church office](#) know. Thanks so much!

## **ASSISTANT TREASURER POSITION AVAILABLE**

Randy Hove, UCCVF Treasurer, is looking for an Assistant Treasurer who would like to learn more about the church finances with an aim to eventually becoming treasurer. Initial duties would include helping Randy to prepare financial statements, paying bills, and preparing payroll. Hours are very flexible. The accounting system is completely computerized and very easy to manage. If you are interested in finding out more about this position, please contact [Randy](#) or email the [church office](#).

## **In Our Prayers**

- Comfort and peace for Juliana Flora's aunt, Nancy, who recently found out her cancer has spread and is terminal.
- Comfort and peace for Martha Parrish Bush's sister, Maggie, who has stage 4 bone cancer.
- Healing for Walt Glazier, son-in-law of Doug and Joan Johnson who is struggling in his surgical recovery.
- Support for Reese Bogle.
- Healing and strength for Emily Mancuso who is at the Mayo Clinic.



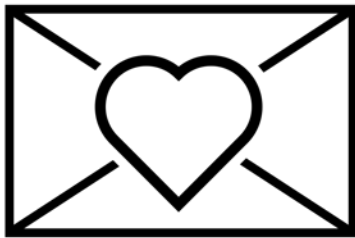
## Opportunities to Serve the Church

The UCCVF Nominating Committee is actively working on a few volunteer positions to start serving the church at the beginning of next year. One is for Elder to replace a position currently held by Beth Eustis. Beth needs to step down from her position because of commitments related to her divinity school studies. The Elders are the spiritual friends of the church.



Each Elder is assigned a group of congregants, known as a 'flock,' that they are to get to know and to help in times of need. The Elders are also charged with finding delegates for UCC Association and Pennsylvania Southeast Conference of UCC meetings. They can also serve as delegates themselves. The Elders elect their own officers in February and that the replacement Elder may or may not serve as Moderator.

We also have two open positions on the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee works to identify candidates for church leadership positions like committee chairs and Elders. Please let me or other members of the Nominating Committee know if you have any interest in these positions or if you have any questions. Also, if you have suggestions for anyone who you think would be a good candidate for the open positions please let us know. Members of the Nominating Committee include [Jim Keller](#), [Chris Maurizio](#), [Barbara Guido](#), and [Juliana Flora](#).



Dear Pastor Bush and UCC Valley Forge,

Jim's (Crane) will designates "...my church, Valley Forge Church of Christ located on Walker Road, Wayne, Pennsylvania..." as one of the beneficiaries of his estate. As the Executor of his Will, I enclose a check for that portion designated for "his" church.

Jim always had good feelings and Thoughts about the church and its members. Despite his multiple handicaps, Jim was accepted without reservation, and he was thankful for being included in the church's many activities. Jim's life was enriched and made more meaningful by the relationships he had with members, and he very much appreciated their caring during his illness, transportation provided to and from church and their visits to the Wayne Center.

His cousin, John Hubbard, and his wife, Ellen, often expressed their gratitude for the caring, helpful nature of the members and the church as a whole. I, too, express my gratitude to you and the membership, for as I was able to interact with the members while supporting Jim, my life, too, has been enriched.

Sincerely,

*Kenneth Tenley*

## SERVING THIS SUNDAY

### Greeter

- Mary Urso and Diane Ludovic

### Ushers

- The McAleer family

### Lighting the Worship Candle

-The Flora family

### Soundboard

- Jeff Durst

### Lean on Me Prayer Partners

- Gwynne Hagee and Shannon Mudd

### Infants/Toddlers

-Tori Hall and Tim Dougherty

## Hurricane Disaster Relief

A number of congregation members have asked the Stewardship Committee about how they might support Hurricane disaster relief through the United Church of Christ. The UCC Disaster Ministries are providing a range of support to victims of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria and details can be found [here](#).

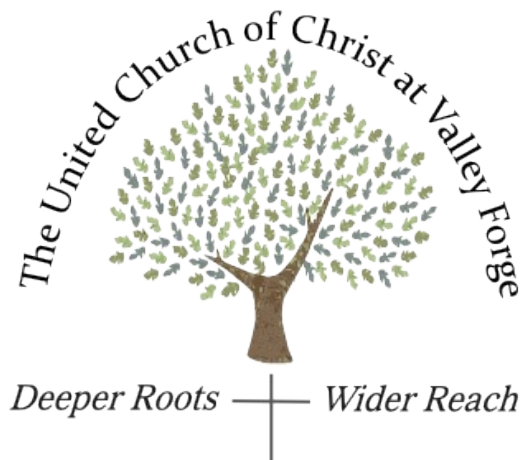
If you would like to make a donation checks can be made payable to the United Church of Christ with **"Hurricane Relief"** in the memo or you may designate by specific name (e.g. Harvey, Irma, Maria). We can then send checks to the National office.

In addition, we are coordinating the collection of flood relief buckets and we will have a sign up sheet at church for the following items. Once we have collected all the items the Stewardship committee will coordinate the drop off of the buckets to local collection points.

**Here's a list of the supplies that will go in the [bucket](#):** 1) One five-gallon bucket with resealable lid (If bucket has been used, clean well but do not use if it has held chemicals of any kind.) 2) Four scouring pads, 3) Seven sponges, including one large 4) One scrub brush 5) Eighteen reusable cleaning towels (e.g. Easy Wipes) 6) One 50 oz. or two 25 oz. bottle(s) of liquid laundry detergent 7) One 16-28 oz. bottle of liquid disinfectant dish soap 8) One 12-16 oz. bottle of household cleaner that can be mixed with water (no spray bottles) 9) One package of 48-50 clothespins 10) Clothesline, two 50 ft. or one 100 ft. 11) Five dust masks 12) Two pairs non surgical latex gloves 13) One pair work gloves, cotton with leather palm or all leather 14) 24-28 heavy duty or contractor type 30-45 gallon trash bags on a roll and removed from carton 15) One 6-9 oz. bottle of non-aerosol insect repellent

Angela Steel, Stewardship Committee Chair





## ***SAVE THE DATE: SUNDAY OCT 29!***

### ***What Matters: Congregational Conversations***

Five years ago, we began a series of Congregational Conversations that led to a UCCVF Purpose Statement and then a set of priorities that have guided our ministry and mission decision-making. Some examples:

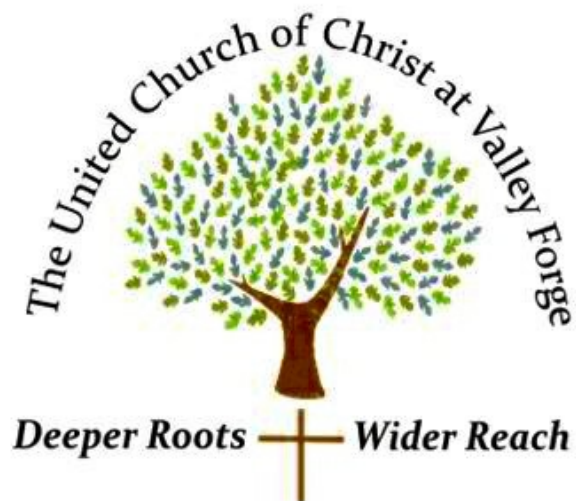
1. One priority was to address the lack of education and experience for our youth and children around being fully included in the worshipping community on Sundays. This has led to the formation of an All-Ages Worship Team, which brought changes to our service every Sunday (such as percussion instruments given to our young people) as well as some All-Ages Worship Sundays in which we have experimented with various ideas to make our worship service more inclusive of the whole generational spectrum.
2. Another priority was to increase opportunities for Adult Spiritual Formation. This led to the formation of an Adult Spiritual Formation Team (representatives from Staff, CE, and Elders). One fruit of this work was the recently released brochure (for the second year) revealing an entire program year of classes, groups, retreats, and opportunities.
3. Another priority was forming relationships that foster hands-on/local mission opportunities. Recent connection with Philadelphia-based ArtWell is one new relationship that has emerged from this focus.

It is time to RENEW these conversations to discern what priorities the Spirit is calling us to in this season of our life together. We will be utilizing our annual October Congregational Meeting to begin this process. Plan to stay after worship for a delicious lunch and conversation on October 29 in Fellowship Hall. Following the dialogue (which will include some small-group brainstorming), we will also have our annual presentation and vote on our Statement of Need for 2018 and the slate of officers/leaders for 2018. We estimate the total meeting time (which includes aforementioned lunch) to be approximately one hour.

Come and see! We need your participation and input!

Peace to you,

*The Church Council*



## UCCVF Adult Spiritual Formation Opportunities

All adult spiritual formation opportunities at UCCVF for the 2017-2018 program year can now be viewed [online](#).

Also, look for our printed brochures. Grab a few on Sunday and share them throughout the week.



Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry(CAIM). Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries(JWM) to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants.

The 2017 theme is "Protect the Sacred: In a Just World, Clean Water is Life." At UCCVF we will receive the NIN offering through the month of October.

We ask you to prayerfully consider your offering for this important mission offering.

Thank you, *Angela Steel and the Stewardship Committee*

*(Holly Branham, Jody Canale, Jeff Durst, Shannon Mudd and Mary Shiffer)*

**The Hillman family** will be walking in the Pennsylvania Walk4Hearing on October 22 to raise money for the Hearing Loss Association of America. If you'd like to sponsor TeamHillman, you can go to this [link](#).

#### UPCOMING GREETERS

Oct. 22 - Conrad and Betty  
Follansbee

Oct. 29 - The Harrington family

Nov. 5 - Rob and Marni Schultz

#### UPCOMING USHERS

Oct. 22 - Robert Schultz and Mark  
Fehnel

Oct. 29 - Phil and Sue Clark

Nov. 5 - Gwynne Hagee and Chris  
Maurizio

#### UPCOMING FELLOWSHIP

##### TIME

Oct. - The Schultz Flock

Nov. - The Eustis Flock

Dec. - The McKinley Flock

#### WORSHIP CANDLE LIGHTING

Oct. 22 - Denise Parella

Oct. 29 - Kim Mehle

Nov. 5 - Ellen Matthews and Luca

#### SOUNDBOARD

Oct. 22 - Chris Maurizio

Oct. 29 - Lauren Patrick

Nov. 5 - Jim McKinley

## Opportunities to be deeply planted in the nurturing, expansive good news of God.

Whether you have previously participated or not, you are welcome to try one out.

### Sunday Morning Book Study - Sundays 9 am to 10 am

Through November 12, join Shannon Mudd for a 7-week class based on the book, *Chaos and the Kingdom*.

### Wednesday Night Spiritual Life Group - Exodus

Many have seen the *Ten Commandments* film that tells part of the Exodus story, but we offer an opportunity to look at this story more fully and connect it with the stories of our own spiritual journey. Some questions we will consider include: What are the stories we have not commonly heard in this narrative? Why did Israel tell this story? How and why has this story so often spoken to oppressed and hurting people (like African slaves)? As citizens of a modern empire and also fragile human beings who can experience bondage in different ways, how does this story of Empire and liberation from bondage speak to us individually and as communities of people? Come join us each Wednesday evening 7:30-8:30 at UCCVF. We open with prayer, sometimes share some goodies, read and talk about the text and how it connects with our contemporary situation, and close with a prayer circle.

### Thursday Morning Spiritual Life Group - Gospel of Matthew

This group meets at UCCVF 10:30-11:30 a.m. each week. We begin with prayer, read a portion of the story of Jesus and his ministry, and then we discuss what the story meant in its own time and how it may form and shape us in our time. Matthew's Gospel is often best known for the Beatitudes and Sermon on the Mount. We will look at these teachings, the context, the symbols, and more. Pastor Michael Bush will facilitate the conversation.

**Sunday Morning Prayer Advocacy Ministry:** This group meets monthly for a time of praying for one another and for anyone requesting prayer. They also read and discuss various books on prayer and healing as a way to grow in understanding and practice of prayer. We meet generally the second Sunday of the month 9:00 AM-10 AM For more information contact Gwynne Hagee.

**Grief Support Group:** Pastor Michael continues leading a monthly Grief Recovery group here at UCCVF for those who have suffered the loss of a loved one and are grieving.

**Lean on Me Prayer Ministry:** The Lean On Me prayer ministry is a one-on-one prayer time that is offered *every Sunday after worship*. Two of our Prayer Partners will be seated in the chapel chairs in the Sanctuary. You are welcome to come and sit next to one of them, tell them what you would like to pray about (a joy, concern, or thanksgiving) and then the Prayer Partner will lift you up in prayer.



### HAVE YOU LIKED US ON FACEBOOK?

Our Facebook page offers links to articles connected with faith life, periodic reminders, photos and more!

Click [HERE](#) to visit.

# FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

The **Caring Crafters** meet on Wednesday evenings from 7-9 p.m. to create items for charity. Email the church office if you would like to join the group.

The **Monthly Dinner Out** group meets monthly at local eateries for fun and fellowship. Members are asked to sign up to pick a place to eat and organize the meal. If you would like to join the group, please let Rosemary McKinley know.

**UCCVF Bridge Group** - We meet once a month at various locations. All are welcome - any level of expertise is invited from novice to experienced. It is a social group. Dessert and coffee or tea will be served and then we start playing cards. Contact Phil Clark for more info.



## SAVE THE DATE!

### SPIRITUALS CONCERT AT UCCVF

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12**

Don't miss "That's The Spirit" on Sunday, November 12 at 4:00 PM. UCCVF Choir has created a 50 voice choir between area churches and singers to perform an ALL SPIRITUALS concert here at UCCVF. It's even a "Bye Week" for the Eagles, so you won't miss any football action!!!

There is nothing more exciting than hearing a large group of singers perform "age-old" spirituals, and this time with some new twists. Our own Joan Johnson will be teamed up with Kat Bowman, Music Director at UCC Pikeland in Chester Springs, and several other accompanists to backup the singers with 4-hand accompaniments. The music is exciting and we would like a FULL HOUSE here at UCCVF to support this

community effort.

Refreshments will be served after the concert. There will be a free-will offering to offset the cost of the music and to support the UCCVF Music Ministry. Please come...bring your family and friends for this wonderful event. We hope to see you there.

Pastor  
The Rev. Michael T. Bush  
[michael@uccvf.org](mailto:michael@uccvf.org)

Director of Music  
Joan Johnson  
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