

Greetings & Happy New Year from First UCC!
We pray that God's blessings continue to fill your home and touch your life!

**We are now gathering together, in person, for worship at the Church
Every Sunday at our usual 10:00 a.m. time!**

**Naturally, we will be following proper distancing & safety protocols
but it is a beautiful blessing to gather as a Church Family again!**



**While we are open, we do plan to CONTINUE to offer a video Worship services for those
who are unable or uncomfortable attending 'in person' worship, or for anyone who would
like to join us via the internet!**

Rev. Mike would like to share this Sunday's Gospel message of hope with you. Even in
the midst of this world-wide health emergency, Jesus love is still with us.

**You may view the video of Rev. Mike sharing this Sunday's message
by clicking this link...**

[JANUARY 10th, 2021 "Fireside" Worship Video](#)

Please use this 'mini-bulletin' to follow along with the service, reading responses along with
Kathleen in the video. Our 'mini-bulletin' also includes other information & announcements to
keep you informed. Please feel free to share the bulletin & the video with others.



*Thanks to Kathleen Dowd for serving as the Sound Engineer &
as the "People" for our Responsive Readings.*

*Thanks, as always, to our Music Director, Sheila Cooke for recording our worship music each week.
Thanks to Paul Ricciardi at Golden Pepper Productions, Inc .for setting our video up for us each week.
Thanks to Gabby & Cliff at Cliff Ross Advertising & Design for assisting us with our Facebook postings.*



~ First United Church of Christ ~

229 Church St. • Easton • Pennsylvania 18042

Rev. J. Michael Dowd, Pastor ~ Sheila Cooke, Music Director

Telephone: 610-258-3361 ~ Email: firstucc2@verizon.net

website: www.firstucceaston.org ~ Facebook (First UCC Easton)

~ Sunday, January 10th, 2021 ~

~ The First Sunday After Epiphany ~



OPENING HYMN: ~ "Jesus Calls Us, o'er the Tumult"

CALL TO WORSHIP: (please read responsively: L= Leader, All: Everyone)

L: The people who sit in darkness

P: Have seen a great light.

L: Arise, let us leave the gloomy night;

P: Let us behold the glorious sight;

("Call To Worship" continues...)

L: Make straight, then, the crooked highways;
P: Exalt the valleys and make low the mountains
L: To prepare the way of the Lord!
P: To make ready our hearts for his appearance,
L: Let us celebrate the Light of the World,
All: For upon us has the Light shined!

CALL TO CONFESSION:

L: The psalmist reminds us, “The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always accuse, nor will he keep his anger forever.” With this knowledge, we may confess our sins before God and one another with confidence.

CONFESSION OF SIN: (Spoken together, in Unison)

All: Merciful God, we go about our days failing to proclaim your saving power with our voices or with our actions. We do not live as ones saved, but rather as people filled with fear and doubt. We often choose what is expedient, not what is right. We close our eyes and ears to those who are in need and close our hearts to those we claim to love. We are quick to hurt others, and slow to right our wrongs. Forgive us, O God, for all the ways we have not lived into our relationship with you. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON:

L: Friends, “God does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us.” In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

GLORIA PATRI: (Spoken together, in Unison)

**Glory be to the Father, and
To the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now,
And ever shall be;
World with out end. Amen**

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION: (Spoken together, in Unison)

All: O God, as we turn to your written word, we pray as Moses did: “Show your glory.” Yet, unlike Moses, we see only partially. We know that you are always just beyond us. Yet, we trust in the Holy Spirit, who awakens our eyes and enlivens our ears to experience your Word in this place. Through your grace, let us see your glory and know your ways.

HOLY SCRIPTURES

Our Old Testament Lesson for Sunday, Jan. 10th is: Genesis 1:1-5 (NIV)

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ² Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

³ And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴ God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

Our New Testament Lesson for Sunday, Jan. 10th is: Acts 19:1-7 (NIV)

While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples ² and asked them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when^[a] you believed?”

They answered, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.”

³ So Paul asked, “Then what baptism did you receive?”

“John’s baptism,” they replied.

⁴ Paul said, “John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.” ⁵ On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues^[b] and prophesied. ⁷ There were about twelve men in all.

Our Gospel Lesson for Sunday, Jan. 10th is: Mark 1:4-11 (NIV)

⁴ And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. ⁶ John wore clothing made of camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ And this was his message: “After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸ I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with^[b] the Holy Spirit.”

The Baptism and Testing of Jesus

⁹ At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹ And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”

MEDITATION ~ “A Memory of Baptism” ~ Mark 1:1-8

What do Fridays, wedding days, birthdays and baptismal days have in common? Our memory of them is shaped more by meaning than by emotion.

T.G.I.F. Thank God It’s Friday.

People have been offering this secular prayer of thanksgiving for years, and the phrase has become so popular that it’s attached to a restaurant chain, T.G.I. Friday’s.

“Give Me More Friday’s” is their trademark.

This phrase is based on the belief that people are happier on Friday, the end of the work week. Would you respond enthusiastically to a restaurant that tried to lure you with the words “Give Me More *Mondays*”?

Probably not. People talk about their “Monday morning blues,” and they hum the tune “Rainy Days and Mondays.” Mondays are supposed to bring you down.

But what if they don’t?

Recent research has uncovered that people are not much happier on Fridays than they are on Mondays. *They really aren't*. Fact is, our moods do not change very dramatically over the course of the week. But we remember Fridays as happy days because of the meaning and emotions we attach to Fridays.

Friday is when we're liberated from the chores of the work week. It's when we turn from business to pleasure. It's when the door to the weekend is thrown wide open.

These are the meanings and emotions we attach to Friday. Friday has *connotative* and *emotive* significance and it affects and shapes our memory of how we actually felt on a particular Friday. Because we *believe* that Fridays are happy days, we remember them as happy days. Even amid the Pandemic people see Fridays as important.

Take a moment to think about this. It's a powerful point — *meaning shapes memory*. A couple says that their wedding day was the happiest day of their lives. In fact, it was incredibly stressful, but the meaning of marriage turns it into a happy memory.

A man says that the birth of his first child was a joy. Truth is, it was absolute misery to watch his wife suffer through labor, but the meaning of childbirth makes the memory a positive one.

A teenager says that her rejection by a boyfriend was the most crushing blow of her life. In fact, she felt a bit relieved and bounced back quickly. But the meaning of romance makes the breakup a very painful memory.

An adult convert to Christianity might say that his immersion baptism was wonderful. The reality is that the water was, cold and uncomfortable, but the meaning of the sacrament makes it deeply moving.

Meaning shapes memory. "In short, Mondays are not actually blue," says Professor Charles Areni in *The Washington Post*, "but people persist in the belief that they are."

This insight can help us to better understand the significance of what happened to Jesus in the Jordan River. The Sunday after Epiphany is the day in the church year called "Baptism of the Lord," and it gives us an opportunity to remember this event and reflect on its impact. It's a perfect example of how meaning shapes memory.

So what do you remember about the day? John the baptizer appears in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. People from the city of Jerusalem and all Judea flock to him, and are baptized in the river Jordan, confessing their sins (Mark 1:4-5). After years of living with a filthy buildup of sin and unrighteousness, the people of the region are relieved to be washed clean and made right with God.

This feels very good to them. John's providing a much-needed spiritual service, and you wouldn't be surprised to hear the people saying, T.G.F.J. — Thank God For John. But then John switches gears and reveals that he's not simply in the purification business. He proclaims, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me ... I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit" (vv. 7-8).

Perla Martinez-Goody remarks on this text: "At this point, looking at it from a cultural point of view, here's John the Baptist, not so neat, not so clean, with a wild appearance, demonstrating the spirit of inclusiveness to all the sinners coming to him. It's a twist on today's world. When I was in college John would have been called a "hippie," but today, maybe a "grunge band." As such John might find himself today as one who's standing on the outside looking on, or in, at the great event available to everyone but him. But in this story, here is this wild-looking guy that God *chooses* to baptize his Son, Jesus Christ. John is

included and doing something wonderful. What a gift to the sinners looking on! I can imagine them saying, “Hey, he’s one of us ... look at what he’s doing ... maybe there is hope for us.”

When we look at the actual events that occurred at the Jordan, we see a variety of emotions. There’s gratitude for the gift of forgiveness. Surprise and shock at the sight of the baptizer’s camel’s hair clothing and diet of locusts and wild honey. Certainly, there is some confusion about the identity of the powerful one who’s coming after John. So the actual experience of John’s ministry is a jumble of emotions, not a carefully crafted stained-glass picture of pure joy and happiness.

All of this changes when Jesus comes on the scene, because meaning has a powerful effect on memory. Mark tells us that Jesus comes from Nazareth of Galilee and is baptized by John in the Jordan, and just as he is coming up out of the water, he sees the heavens torn apart and the Holy Spirit descends on him like a dove. And a voice from heaven says, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased”.

This is the meaning of baptism: Jesus is God’s Son, the Beloved. The mix of feelings up to this point — gratitude for cleansing, surprise at the baptizer’s clothing, confusion about the identity of the powerful one — are suddenly pushed aside. In their place, a new emotion emerges: joy. When Jesus is baptized, we are filled to overflowing with a feeling of joy that God has revealed his Son, announced his love and proclaimed just how pleased he is with Jesus.

The meaning of baptism is that God accepts Jesus as his Son, and the happiness we feel over this acceptance shapes our entire memory of baptism. Gone is the mix of emotions that were felt by the people at the Jordan River, replaced by deep joy that Jesus is God’s Son, the Beloved. Jesus is now, for us, the Word of God in human form ... the Way, the Truth and the Life ... God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God. After witnessing his baptism, we don’t have to wonder any longer about who Jesus is. We know his true identity.

The very same is true for us, as we contemplate our own baptism. In this sacrament, we are connected to the body of Christ — the universal community of Christians that’s nothing less than the flesh-and-blood physical presence of Jesus in the world today. “Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?” asks the apostle Paul. “If we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his” (Romans 6:3, 5). In this sacrament, we become children of God, no less loved and accepted than Jesus Christ himself.

This is the meaning of baptism: Baptism connects us to the body of Christ. It enables us to die and rise with Jesus. It makes us dead to sin and alive to God (Romans 6:11). It gives us new and everlasting life, and a freshly minted identity as children of a loving Lord. It’s an experience that shapes our memory forever.

We make a mistake, however, if we believe that baptism is always the beginning or the guarantee of a lifetime of perfect bliss. Think about what happens immediately after the baptism of Jesus — Mark tells us that the Spirit immediately drives Jesus “out into the wilderness,” where he is tempted by Satan for 40 days (1:12-13). Then his Galilean ministry begins, and Jesus comes face to face with a man with an unclean spirit, a woman with a fever and a steady stream of people who are sick or possessed by demons (vv. 21-34). So, there’s no rest for the freshly baptized.

Pastor Joy McDonald Coltvet discovered this for herself when she led a group of youths on an immersion trip to Mexico. A number of times through the first days there, different young people came to her and confessed how overwhelmed they felt. Said one student, “I feel like I’m drowning.”

This student was experiencing the flood of the world's pain — and that's not a bad thing. That's why it's called an "immersion" trip. Coltvet says that it's when we feel like we're drowning — overwhelmed by the flood of the world's anguish, pain and loss — that "we are reminded that Jesus is the resurrection and the life." Then we realize that "baptism is daily dying and being raised to new life." Then we discover that we are "raised up, gasping for air, and the breath of God fills us."

When we feel like we're drowning in the world's pain, we are raised up — and the breath of God fills us. That's not just a memory of baptism, it is a memory shaped by meaning.

In our religious tradition we observe infant baptism. In such a case, we as members of this church, have an opportunity to help shape both the meaning and the memory of that event. Thomas H. Schattauer explains in an observation passed on to us by Lisa R. Beavers: "In my home, my preschool-age children cheer for Sundays because it's the day they get to see all their friends. My 3-year-old daughter was one of those kids who stood on stage and cried during her first dance recital. After it was over, she told us that she was sad and that she didn't like crying on stage. A few days later, however, she was thinking back fondly to her big night. Several months later, she plays 'dance recital' with her little sister as if it were the best thing that ever happened to her. Like birth, baptism means life. It's done once, yet it is for all of our life. ...We need to discover ways to communicate baptismal living.

"If I say, 'I was married,' you will likely assume that my wife has died or I am divorced. But if I say, 'I am married,' you will assume I have a wife and that on a certain date I was married and still am. Although it's true and essential to say 'I was baptized,' it is also necessary to assert, 'I am baptized'"

More than anything else, baptism marks our birth as Christians. Through baptism, we are identified as children of God who are both loved and lovable, chosen by the Lord to be his people in the world. "The truth, even though I cannot feel it right now," wrote the Dutch priest Henri Nouwen, "is that I am the chosen child of God, precious in God's eyes, called the Beloved from all eternity and held safe in an everlasting embrace."

The chosen child of God. This is not just Jesus ... it is each one of us. Precious. Beloved. Safe in an everlasting embrace. Our true identity. Make this your memory of baptism.



AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: (please read together in unison)

All: We belong to God, eternal and infinite, Creator of all things and all that is to come.

We follow Christ, who comes to us from God and reveals God to us. He heals people and transforms lives and calls us to join in his ministry. He was crucified, died, and was raised again by God, and reigns over all creation, and he bids us to die and rise with him in the service of the healing of the world.

We are moved by the Holy Spirit, together with the communion of saints, as members of the body of Christ, God's holy universal church.

We are confident in the forgiveness of sin, the power of the resurrection and the reality of eternal life. In all things, it is our desire to follow Christ, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, for God's glory. Amen.

PASTORAL PRAYER:

L: It is a time to pray for our Nation; we pray for a peace to settle throughout our land. Before the unrest of Wednesday afternoon escalates further, may we all be vigilant in our prayerful support for a quick and peaceful end to this.

Let us pray for the elected representatives and their staff who spent a number of harrowing hours waiting and watching. We are thankful that they were courageous in carrying out their duty. We pray for them as they continue to us pray for them and all of our leaders as we deal with a difficult time for our country.

Let us pray for the officers of the law who will risk and did risk their lives in an effort to defend our democracy.

Let us pray for America – a land of democratic ideals, while not always perfect, but which has long been a beacon of light and hope for many who live with the hope of being free citizens in a free state. It is a shining city on a hill.

As we gather in our historic sanctuary we remember the role that our ancestors played in the history of our nation. Here, where General Lafayette, John Adams, Patrick Henry, among others worshipped we pray for our nation and our national leaders.

God help us all.

Let there be peace on Earth, and let it begin with us.

In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

LORD'S PRAYER: (Please read together in Unison)

**All: Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth,
As it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom,
The power, and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.**

PRAYER OF DEDICATION: (Please read together in Unison)

All: We bring our gifts and our lives to be blest by the spirit of God. May all that we bring be a sign and witness of our love and devotion to this church. As we offer these gifts, may our lives be renewed and may our church become even more a witness of the Good News of Jesus Christ. Amen.

* **DOXOLOGY** (SPOKEN in Unison)

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

BENEDICTION:

L: May the light always shine in our darkness. May our ears always hear the Word. May grace upon grace be ours and may the glory of the Father's only Son be known to you now and forever. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: "Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart"



As we navigate our way through this difficult and unpredictable time please share your personal, family and neighbor prayer requests. You can send them by email for our church office: firstucc2@verizon.net or you may call the office & leave a message. Also please share our First UCC Worship program & video with your friends and family.



Announcements for Sunday, Jan. 10th, 2021 ~

No matter who you are, or where you are on your life's journey, you're welcome here. Join us in celebrating First UCC's respect for the past and faith in the future.



PLEASE NOTE: Hospitals no longer notify the church or the pastor unless you SPECIFICALLY REQUEST IT. So please, if you or a family member is hospitalized, let us know by calling the office at 610-258-3361! Please see our prayer list below.



OR by calling or texting Rev. Mike directly on his cell phone at 610-216-5471.



IMPORTANT FIRST CHURCH NOTES...

Rev. Dowd & our First Church leadership will continue to monitor the ongoing Corona virus situation. We will be especially mindful of the most vulnerable members of our First Church Family & make decisions accordingly.

Please keep watching your **e-mail**, our **website** at www.firstucceaston.org, or our **Facebook** page at <https://www.facebook.com/FirstUCCEaston> or call our **Church Office at 610-258-3361** for updates & information.



THANK YOU FOR JOINING US TODAY! We will continue to meet on an ongoing basis to discuss how things are working. We will share information on these decisions as they are made. **HOWEVER, we do plan to CONTINUE to offer a video Worship service for those who are unable or uncomfortable attending 'in person' worship or for anyone who would like to join us via the internet!**



Today's **Bulletins** are sponsored by **Helen Litzenberger**, in loving memory of her husband Lester.



HAPPY NEW YEAR! Since last Sunday's service was 'snowed out', we will observe Epiphany & safely share the Sacrament of Holy Communion together **TODAY** at our in-person **Worship service. We will also collect FUNDS for the Food Pantry.** Please join us if you are able. All are welcome at the Lord's Table!



We will still be collecting warm hats, scarves, glove, mittens & socks to be distributed to those who need them so, bring some in & hang them on our "Angel Tree"!





OUR “SUNSHINE FUND” IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT RIGHT NOW, with many people being out of work. Our “Sunshine Fund” helps members of our church who may need some assistance due to this health emergency.

A REMINDER – If you are experiencing an emergency need, please contact the Church Office or Rev. Mike directly. All requests will be kept confidential.



OUR ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN has begun! If you are able to pledge your giving, **please complete & return your pledge card as soon as possible.** Thank you in advance for supporting the financial needs of ***your*** church.

Your Stewardship Committee



2021 OFFERING ENVELOPES are now available. Please pick yours up from the table in Memorial Hall. If you do not have envelopes but would like a set, please see Bob Arnold or Rich Phifer.



Rev. Mike is hosting a Virtual WED. EVENING BIBLE STUDY via Zoom, live at 7:00 p.m.! (NOT 7:30) can join in on the computer or on the PHONE!!! This virtual, live, group Bible Study runs from 30 to 60 minutes, depending on what topics come into the conversation. You can join in on line or, you can CALL IN & be a part of the group on the phone! Please e-mail Rev. Mike or the Church Office (firstucc2@verizon.net) if you are interested, he will send you the link/info to join.



RUMMAGE UPDATE!!! PLEASE NOTE... We are **NOT** able to accept any more Rummage at this time!



FIRST CHURCH FAMILY NEWS! ...



As we continue in this “state of limbo”, we would like to make note of some of the events in the lives of our First Church Family. IF YOU have family news to share, especially if we missed it, please e-mail or call the office to let us know & we will post it in our next “Mini-Bulletin”. *[Please note: Apologies for missing events that would normally have been shared in our monthly “Steeple News”.]*



KEEP IN PRAYER... Please keep Bob H., Kelly C & Family, Tim & Gregg, Doris S., Jamie H., Bob & Barbara V., Rosalie, Sue Carpenter, David Freytag, Don Mills, Jr., Collette Andreadis, Wendy Wandersee, Jeanette Orso, Sal Giamoni, Danny K, Bonnie David, Janet Kobler’s cousin Karen B, Moe & Keith Berger. We keep Marjorie Harron, Helena Rapp, Phyllis Rush, Evelyn Ritter, Nomie P. & Helen Litzenberger, in our prayers as well as the family of Joe K., the family of Tim O’Neill, the Dzikowski children & family members, & all those who grieve.



Lord, we pray for our Nation, for peace, unity & healing of the fractures in our country.

As we celebrate the hope of this new year, Lord, please bless us all in the coming year!



A Reminder... While we have reopened, many are not able to join us yet. Even through this, our church expenses (gas bill, electric bill, etc.) must still be paid each month. With this in mind, we ask that you continue to contribute during this crisis. You can...



- **MAIL your contributions** to the church at 229 Church Street, Easton, PA 18042.
- **DROP your envelope through the MAIL SLOT in the Church St. door of the SCHOOLHOUSE** (formerly the Office). Please make sure your name or envelop number is on it.
- **Online Giving**, which allows you to make your contributions online from either your bank checking or bank savings account. If you are interested in this online option, please contact Rich Phifer at 610-217-9244 or email Rich at raphifer@rcn.com to get further information about this payment option.



Steeple Restoration ~

Check out all of our Steeple Project Videos on our website or our [NEW YouTube Channel!!!](#)

We have set up a YouTube channel for the church to post videos of our Restoration progress. You can find our YouTube channel by searchingFirst United Church of Christ Easton PA, then click on the steeple logo!



First Church Prayer Requests ~

Prayer is a powerful thing! God invites us to pray with words of praise, thanksgiving & petitions for others & for ourselves. We gladly receive & share prayer concerns so that we may 'Bear one another's burdens' (Galatians 6:2) and 'Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.' (Romans 12:15).



IF YOU ARE IN NEED OF EMERGENCY PASTORAL CARE, please call our church office at 610-258-3361 or Rev. Mike at 610-216-5471.

We all ask for Your blessing, Lord, on all of those who are essential employees & remain in high risk positions, unable to isolate, in order to serve & protect us during this national health emergency & their families. Father bless those in Health Care, First Responders, those who care for others, all those who wait on us in stores, restaurants, those who drive us on public transit & take care of us at other places that we frequent, all those who will be cleaning public places & all those around us who must deal with the public in other ways. Including those in our own families & church family who are 'essential' in their work places (**David S., David W., Helen C., Jill W., Keith B., Keith C., Mark C., Ross F.**) We pray for those who reside in group facilities (nursing homes, hospitals, prisons, group homes, etc.) we pray for Your protection over them Father.

We pray for Your healing for all those afflicted with this Corona virus or who may be ~ **Beth** (Linda W. relative, ~ we pray that Your healing love will wash over them, strengthen them & bring them to full & complete recovery.

Lord, we pray for our **hospitalized Veterans and the dedicated staff** that care for them and we **pray for the souls of our Veterans and staff who Shave lost their battle with COVID.**

Father, we lift up those who struggle with mental & emotional health & substance abuse issues, seen & unseen. For many, the amplified uncertainty of what is happening, fear, income/job loss, family

stress, loss of support contacts, etc., is more than they can bear. Lord, speak Your Peace into the spirits of those who are gripped by these struggles that may be spiraling out of control. Help them to see You at the center of their storm & let them know You will be their strength.

Lord, we pray for Your wisdom for those who are making decisions about how to keep us all safer. **Help us all to remain calm but cautious.**

We pray for those whose incomes will be affected due to closures, cancelations & cautions. This is a MAJOR problem for many. Help us to help each other through this time. Bless those who we are in debt to, (utility companies, credit card companies, loan holders, medical facilities, insurance companies, etc.) with understanding & compassion. We pray that we will be kind, compassionate & considerate with each other. Help us to see need in our neighbors & in our own families & help us to reach out, to share & to shine the light of hope on those around us.

Lord, we pray for the people of California & the western United States who are engulfed in wild fires & smoke. Give them peace & strength. We pray for You to watch over all the smoke jumpers, firefighters, rescue workers, shelter workers, volunteers & neighbors as they all try to help each other.

Lord, we pray for the people of Beirut, for the families of those who were lost, for those who are injured, for the thousands of people who are now homeless in that already hurting land. Help the rest of us to see a way to help them.

Please keep these folks in your prayers... We pray for healing for Barbara V., Bob G., Bob H., Bob L., Chris, Colette A., Danny K., David F., Debbie S. & Family, Deacon Anthony Koury, Doris S., Evelyn R., Fawn B., Ferne, George S., Tim & Gregg D., Helena, James R., Jamie H., Jeanette O. & Family, Jill R., Joe R., Kelly C. & Family, Kim Kelty, Lila, Marilyn Crozier Snuggs, Marjorie H., Mark, Marlene M., Michael R., Nancy M., Nancy & Ken A., Naomi, Nicole A., Ray U., Rosalie, Ruth F., "Sal: G., Stewart W., Wendy W. We pray for all those affected by the recent storms, fires & other natural disasters, and now disease & civil unrest, Lord, protect them, keep them strong & help them to recover their lives.

We pray for Ashley, Barbara, Bonnie, Brittany, Claritza, Davonna, Davon, Dawn, Delila, Katie, Kimberly, Skyler, Susan, Charlene, Amy, Jailien, Jessica, Rose, Twanda, Wendy, Nancy, Natasha & all officers & prisoners at NC Prison.

ALSO, we lift up the family of Joe K., the family of Tim O'Neill, the Dzikowski children & family members, the Flexer/Arnold Family, the Galante/Rapp Families, the Amore/Smith Families, the Ashton Family, the family of Naomi Schleicher, the family of Joshua Fulmer, and the family of Megan McGinley & All whose broken hearts endlessly grieve. LORD, send Your sweet, tender & restorative love to cover them & heal those hearts.

Jesus, we pray for our Nation, that we can come together for each other, for this whole world Lord.

We pray for You to watch over parents & families & all of our young people. Especially now, while schools are closed. Lord keep Your hand on them & guide their choices & decisions. Help families to meet the extra needs they have during this time.

Lord, again we see more cases of severe racial inequality in our nation & the anger of a community that has had enough. We lift up ALL victims of hatred, violence, abuse & their families & all people of faith as we pray for healing for them all, for our nation & an end to hate. We pray for peaceful but meaningful protests that are heard by the heart of this nation. We pray for a leader to step forward from that community, a person of character, peace & strength, to end the violent protests & to channel the anger into meaningful action & change rather than destruction.

Lord, we pray for healing of these communities around our nation that have been ravaged as protests morphed into riots, looting & violence. Lord, speak to the hearts of those perpetrators & show them that, that is not the way. We pray for those were injured or killed, for whose businesses, homes & possessions were destroyed. We pray that those responsible will step forward to bring restitution & restoration.

We thank you & pray for those who protest in peace, who seek justice & peace. We thank you & pray for the police & other law enforcement agents who act with restraint & compassion and we pray for those who don't.

We lift up all of our military and all of our first responders, LORD, we ask for your protection over them all as they serve us all.

We pray that You will give our leaders the courage & compassion to make changes that will begin to heal our nation after this week's shameful & terrible assault on our Capitol & our very democracy.

We pray for our very planet. It seems to be groaning with earthquakes, floods, tornadoes, germs & all sorts of natural responses to our treatment of our host planet, our home here in the Universe. Lord help us to find better ways to live so we do not endanger ALL life that shares this planet with us.

Jesus, thank You for coming to save us! Without You, we would all be lost. AMEN.



Unfortunately, we are seeing covid infections, hospitalizations & deaths rising more & more.

**We all need to continue to be “Corona Warriors”.
WE ALL HAVE A PART TO PLAY!**

**We need to protect our loved ones, ourselves & those around us!
We need to allow our health care workers & systems to conserve supplies & keep hospital beds open.**

We need to do our part to have mercy on those whose job it is to care for the sick.



- **IF YOU ARE SICK, STAY HOME & CONTACT YOUR DOCTOR.**
- **We should still LIMIT CONTACT IN PUBLIC PLACES, WEAR MASKS & WASH OUR HANDS OFTEN or STAY HOME, out of public group settings, altogether.**
- **If you do go out to the store, check with neighbors & friends to see if you can pick up items for them (the fewer folks out there, the better!)**
- **Use grocery/pharmacy pick up services & delivery services.**
- **If you go out, make sure to wash your hands, sanitize your carts, car, bag handles, doors knobs, & all high touch areas.**
- **Katie & Larry Miner have volunteered to run NECESSARY errands for folks who are at high risk or cannot get out. You can contact Katie by calling 610-258-4426.**
- **IF YOU TRAVELED out of the area or into an area where covid cases are rising, please be extra cautious about your contacts when you return. You may need to quarantine for the recommended 10-14 days. Please consult current (& ever changing) PA directives.**

**Please keep watching your e-mail for updates & information!
Say your prayers, wash your hands, wear your mask & stay well!**



**The Church Office will be open on a limited basis during this time.
Please call the office at 610-258-3361 if you need something or before you come,
to make sure someone is there.**

(But we hope you are all practicing “Social Distancing” & only go out if it is absolutely necessary.)

Please call the office at 610-258-3361 or e-mail us at firstucc2@verizon.net if you have prayer requests to share or if you are in need of assistance.

***Say your prayers, wash your hands, wear your mask &
may God’s blessings cover you & those you love!***

