

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

During this time, while worship services are suspended at First Church, Rev. Mike would like to share a Sunday 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 Pentecost message
by clicking this link...**

[Pentecost Sunday, May 31st Video Service](#)

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 ~

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Sunday, May 31st, 2020 ~ Pentecost Sunday ~



Call to Worship:

Lord of all creation, all we have to do is to lift our eyes so we can see the beauty of all that you have created. All we have to do is to visualize the top of the Himalayas or the middle of the Pacific Ocean to understand your power and the vastness of your reach. So, it's with a sense of awe and wonder that we gather together, seeking to praise you and give you thanks for all you have done. We seek your spirit to sweep across our lives and to renew our souls. Breathe life into us during this time that we dedicate to you. Amen.

Call to Confession:

We do not stop enough to listen to the still-speaking God. And like the people of Jerusalem long ago, we often misunderstand the Spirit's movement among us. In the silence and stillness of this moment, let us draw near to God and listen. [*silence*] Let us confess together:

Confession of Sin:

Spirit of God, you come to us as a powerful wind — but we have shut the door and bolted it, to try to keep you out. You descend on us as tongues of fire — but we run away, afraid of being consumed. You give us gifts beyond our ability — but we squander them, we hide them, we say, “Not today,” or “How can one person make a difference?” or “No, Lord, not me.”

On this day of Pentecost, forgive our feebleness. Break open the doors of resistance. Let the fire of your Spirit dance within each of us. And give us courage and faith to claim your call for our lives.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon:

Hear the good news! God's Spirit has been poured out upon all flesh, and we have been made one. We are no longer scattered or divided but gathered together to build up the kingdom on this earth. Thanks be to God!

Prayer for Illumination: (Please read together in unison)

Holy God, whose Word is a light to our paths, illumine our hearts and minds by the power of your Holy Spirit. In the reading and proclamation of your Scripture, confront us in our sin, comfort us in our sorrow, heal our wounds and inspire us to follow you. For the sake of Christ, we pray. Amen.

HOLY SCRIPTURES

Our New Testament Lesson for Pentecost Sunday, May 31st is: Acts 2:1-21 (NIV)

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues^[a] as the Spirit enabled them.

⁵ Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven.⁶ When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken.⁷ Utterly amazed, they asked: “Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans?”⁸ Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language?⁹ Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,^[b]¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome¹¹ (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!”¹² Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?”

¹³ Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”

Peter Addresses the Crowd

¹⁴ Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. ¹⁵ These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! ¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ “In the last days, God says,

I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your young men will see visions,
your old men will dream dreams.

¹⁸ Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
and they will prophesy.

¹⁹ I will show wonders in the heavens above
and signs on the earth below,
blood and fire and billows of smoke.

²⁰ The sun will be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood
before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

²¹ And everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord will be saved.^[c]

Our Epistle Lesson for Pentecost Sunday, May 31st is: 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13 (NIV)

³ Therefore I want you to know that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus be cursed,” and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.

⁴ There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. ⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶ There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. ⁸ To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues,^[a] and to still another the interpretation of tongues.^[b] ¹¹ All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

Unity and Diversity in the Body

¹² Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For we were all baptized by^[c] one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

Our Gospel Lesson for Pentecost Sunday, May 31st is: John 20:19-23 (NIV)

¹⁹ On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

²¹ Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Meditation ~ "From Fear to Overflowing Joy" (John 20:19-31)

Psychologist Wayne Dyer, author of many self-help books, tells of attending his 20th high school reunion. There he met a classmate on whom he'd had a secret crush. She was beautiful and confident even in high school, and Dyer could never muster up the courage to ask her out. To his surprise, at the reunion this woman confessed she had a secret crush on him all through high school, and would have been thrilled to go out with him. His adolescent fear of rejection had robbed him of an incredible opportunity to date the girl of his dreams.

It is a silly example, but that's what fear does to us sometimes, doesn't it? It shuts the door on great opportunities. Fear is the very opposite of the faith to which Christ has called us. Today's lesson from John's Gospel, one of the two principle lessons for Pentecost, tells us that "on the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you!' After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord."

We can identify with these anxious fellows, can't we? After all, it was the Sunday evening following Jesus' crucifixion. This had been a traumatic weekend for these disciples. Can we blame them for huddling in the Upper Room? The doors were shut, says John, "for fear of the Jewish leaders."

It is tragic anytime the doors are shut because of fear. There are churches that have been and are shut because of fear. There was a time when many church doors didn't have to be locked because of crime, but many were locked to certain people because of fear. I remember my home church in Flushing, NY wasn't open and welcoming to a growing Asian population. Eventually the doors were opened and the church was deeply blessed.

How tragic it is when fear . . . which is at the heart of any prejudice . . . shuts the doors of a church. I'm proud that visitors to our congregation universally say how opening, welcoming and friendly we are. It is one of our identities.

How tragic it is when fear shuts the door of a person's heart. They draw into their own private worlds because something "out there" is just too threatening. How about you, how about us? Are we living behind closed doors because of fear? It is easy to be fearful in today's world isn't it?

One reason the disciples were hiding behind closed doors may have been the proliferation of rumors in Jerusalem at the time of Jesus' crucifixion. John says that the disciples were behind closed doors because of "fear of the Jewish leaders." There is no

indication in the Scriptures that such fears were justified. There is no evidence that the violence of that terrible weekend went beyond the torture and death of Jesus. But surely there were rumors. It's always that way. Whenever there is conflict between rival groups, rumors fly. Fear escalates. Reason is suspended.

Has anybody had some difficulty finding toilet paper? Just the rumor that there will be a toilet paper shortage and not even Costco, Walmart or Amazon have toilet paper.

Sometimes the power of idle rumors can have much more tragic consequences.

The late columnist and author Nell Mohney was for many years a popular religion writer for the Chattanooga, (TN) *Times-Free Press*. In her columns Ms. Mohney related many moving stories from her personal experience.

One of her stories goes back to her college days at a small liberal arts school in Greensboro, North Carolina. There was a girl in that college named Amy Pruett. Amy was a junior transfer from a prestigious school in the East. Mohney said that she and her friends immediately assumed that Amy had failed to make it in her fancy Eastern school. They concluded that Amy probably felt that a small Southern school would be a "push-over" for her and that is why she transferred to their school.

Amy's participation in class, however, proved that their assumptions were wrong. She was extremely bright and very capable, but that didn't change her classmates' behavior toward her. Amy was a very talented person but she was not well-liked, and Mohney and her friends did nothing to help the situation. They consciously did not open up their tightly held friendship and social groups to Amy at all.

Mohney wrote that, in retrospect, she realized that it was a mixture of prejudice and envy on their part. In actuality they envied her dark, sultry good looks. Making them even more envious were the expensive clothes that she seemed to have in abundance. Disdainfully, they called her "over-dressed." Amy's Northern accent and her no-nonsense, straightforward manner were certainly not appreciated in that small Southern college. These girls had not been trained to be direct and assertive.

As time went on Amy's life did not get better. Rumors flew because she left school every Friday immediately after classes and did not return until late Sunday night. After Thanksgiving another ugly rumor began that Amy was having an affair with an older man who picked her up each Friday afternoon and returned her to campus late Sunday evening. It was thought that he was married and that "for services rendered" Amy was given the beautiful clothes and spending money. The invisible wall dividing Amy from her classmates was growing even taller.

And then, immediately after Christmas, news spread rapidly through the girls' dorm and across the campus. Amy Pruett lay in a Greensboro hospital near death from an overdose of sleeping pills. The school psychologist called the students together and told them the real story. Amy's mother was dying of cancer; Amy was lonely and friendless on campus. She was the only person assigned to a single room that year of college life.

Nell Mohney's words tell it best. "The shy but brilliant only child of wealthy parents, Amy had returned home from Vassar to be near her mother during her terminal illness. [That is why she had transferred to their school.] It was . . . traumatic to leave her friends . . . as well as to face her mother's impending death.

“It became an almost impossible situation when she met our walls of prejudice and hostility,” Mohney continued. “But it was the ugly rumor that pushed her over the edge. After all, the older man who transported her to and from the campus each week was her father.”

As you can imagine there was an outpouring of anguish and repentance across the campus following that revelation. Fortunately Amy recovered and her new classmates, now her friends, had a second chance to take her into their social groups and their hearts. But Nell Mohney never forgot the devastating power of rumor.

Idle rumors can ruin a life. They can start a rebellion. They can trap good people behind closed doors because of fear. There was no evidence that the Jewish leaders intended any harm to Jesus’ followers, but there were rumors and that was enough to destroy the sense of well-being for those first followers of our Lord.

We should be able to identify with those early disciples. There is much fear in our society. The media, whether one loves or hates it, sure keeps bad news and controversy in front of us. Remarkable some people say they get the majority of their news from Facebook, talk about a tragedy. We have perfected the rumor mill in our society.

Fear can be so irrational. Did you know, for example, that you are 11 times more likely to die from a stroke than to be murdered? If we were as careful to watch our diet as we are to lock our doors at night, we would all be in much better shape. The disciples were hovering behind locked doors, first of all, because of the proliferation of rumors.

In the second place, they were hovering behind closed doors because they had temporarily misplaced their faith. These were not atheists or agnostics that Jesus had recruited. They were not religious scholars by any means, but they surely had some familiarity with the Psalms. They probably grew up reciting, “The Lord is my shepherd . . .” in their synagogues. They were familiar with Joshua and Moses and the other heroes of the Old Testament. They knew that the Lord was the Rock of their Salvation who would never forsake them. Where was their faith now--the faith that had sustained them from the time they were infants?

Besides, they had been with Jesus. Some of them for three years. How many times had Jesus told them not to be afraid? Someone has noted that there are 366 “Fear not!” verses in the Bible--one for each day of the year and an extra one for Leap Year! Had not any of it rubbed off on them? A time of crisis came and they had gone back to acting as they did before Jesus ever called them to follow him. Where was their faith?

It’s like that small boy who was riding a bus home from Sunday school. He was very proud of the card he had received that day in class which had a picture and a caption that read: “Have Faith in God.” Then to his dismay the card slipped from his hand and fluttered out the window. “Stop the bus!” he cried. “I’ve lost my ‘faith in God!’”

The driver pulled the bus to a stop, and as the boy climbed out and went to retrieve his card, one of the adult riders smiled and made a comment about the innocence of youth. A more perceptive adult observed, “All of us would be better off if we were that concerned about our faith.”

Under stress, something like that often happens to us. We temporarily misplace our faith and go back to acting as if we never heard the Gospel. We do this even though we know that faith is our greatest ally. Those who trust in a good and just God never lose hope. They are perennial optimists. Such faith not only makes us easier to live with but is also of great benefit in dealing with some of our greatest fears.

Henry Ward Beecher once said, "Every day has two handles; we can take hold of it with the handle of anxiety or the handle of faith." The disciples had hold of the handle of anxiety. They were hiding behind closed doors because of the proliferation of unfounded rumors. They were hiding because they had temporarily misplaced their faith. **Principally, however, they were hiding behind closed doors because they felt abandoned.**

There was something about the presence of the Master that gave them a sense of calm even in the presence of imminent danger. There was that time that he calmed the storm and walked out to the boat where they were huddled. The first words he spoke were these: "Fear not. It is I."

Where was he now? Crucified. Body stolen from the tomb. Absent from them in flesh and in spirit. There they were--sheep without a shepherd--children whose parents had abandoned them and left them to face the cold cruel world on their own.

Psychologists tell us that this is one of the greatest fears of childhood. Parents leaving children in the church nursery for the first time have to give the children a lot of reassurance. Deep in the hearts of many children is the fear that their parents are never coming back. That fear continues with us over a lifetime. It rises in kids during a divorce, it arises again with the death of a loved one or spouse. That emotion stays with us through our entire lives. Such is also the experience of life without God. But God has not abandoned His people.

There is a story told about a small village in Poland the day the Nazis came to town. It was on a Sunday and the people were in church worshipping when troops of the Third Reich swarmed into the village. The soldiers entered the church and ordered everyone outside. Then the troops set fire to the structure. Then the soldiers pointed their weapons at the congregation.

But instead of shrinking in fear, these people began to sing "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God." Remember, it was a German, Dr. Martin Luther, who wrote this hymn. The people in the congregation as well as the German soldiers grew up singing this hymn. The people sang a verse, and then went on to the next verse, waiting for the bullets. They truly expected that rifle fire would stop their singing. But the bullets didn't come.

Finally, looking around at the German soldiers surrounding them, they were astonished to see guns lowered and every hardened Nazi face, streaming with tears. The soldiers, one by one, two by two, slowly turned and climbed back into their trucks and jeeps. They pulled away from the little town. The soldiers left behind a congregation of the faithful, standing outside their burning church, singing.

The disciples huddled behind closed doors because they felt abandoned. But they were not abandoned. Listen, here's the Good News. **Christ can penetrate the closed doors of our lives.** Listen to the reading from John's Gospel once again, "On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord." (RSV)

There is the best antidote I know to the fear that so easily besets us. It is to experience the presence of the Risen Christ--to see the marks of his love for us in his hands and side--to hear him say, as he said to those early disciples, "Peace be with you."



Affirmation of Faith:

We believe in God the Creator, the risen Christ and ever-present Spirit.

We believe God whirled fire and wind into a closed room to stir up the hesitant and cautious disciples.

We believe God still stirs things up, turns things upside down, sets people on fire with inspiration and zeal.

We believe the Holy Spirit moves unexpectedly, creating opportunity, guiding reconciliation, fostering community.

The Holy Spirit will not be housebroken or bound by narrow rules or closed minds or doors. The Holy Spirit is like wind and fire, and we believe the church is most alive when we dare to cooperate with the surprising, creating, loving Spirit of God.

Pastoral Prayer:

Holy Breath, Holy Spirit, you who move so lightly on wave and wind, you who can be as mighty as a hurricane, as strong as a tornado, as quiet as breath, draw near. Give us light. Give us hope. Give us spirit. Let us be strong and tender, simultaneously, even as you are. Let us be fierce in defending the gospel and humble in our understanding of its completeness. Let us join your disciples in awe and wonder, and let us become the kind of people they were - real, awed, full and capable, despite weakness, of great witness.

When we lose our way, guide us. When we are winded, invigorate us. When we go too far on too little, befriend us. Never let us be far from our source in you.

In your mercy, journey with all whom we name in word and silence ...

Janet Kobler's cousin Karen B, Gregg D, Marjorie Harron, Helena Rapp, Evelyn Ritter, Phyllis Rush, Helen Litzenberger, Beverly Flad, Doris and Henry Salinas, and George Beling. We share our prayers for the continued health of those who spend their lives in health care and essential jobs, Mark Cooke, Keith Berger, David Wandersee, Ross Forsythe, David Skillinge, Helen Corona, Jill West and Donna who cares for children in NYC. Today and every day we pray for our hospitalized Veterans and the dedicated staff that care for them and pray for the souls of our Veterans and staff who have lost their battle with COVID. By the presence of your Spirit of mystery and grace encourage us in the days ahead so that we can go faithfully as sisters and brothers of the risen One who taught us to pray...

Lord's Prayer

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.

Benediction:

As you enter a new week, may you experience God's presence. May you feel God pouring out the Holy Spirit over your heads and your thoughts and the words of your lips, over your hearts and your feelings and emotions and your compassion for all others, and over your hands and your feet as you put into action all that God commands you. During this week, may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with each of you. Amen.



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 Pentecost Sun., May 31st, 2020 ~

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.

We will be meeting on an ongoing basis to discuss upcoming events, projects & etc. We will share information on these decisions as they are made.

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.



FIRST LADIES & FUNDRAISER NOTES: The **First Ladies Fund Raisers** that were in progress ("Shoo Fly Cake Sale" & Barbeque Sale) **have been CANCELED. Any orders that were already placed will be refunded once we begin gathering for worship again.**

“SUNSHINE FUND” - We are also most grateful for continued donations to our “Sunshine Fund”, which goes to assist any of our First Church Family members who are in need. **THIS FUND IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT RIGHT NOW, with many people being out of work due to this health emergency.** Though we have published our Easter dedications today, we are still accepting donations to our “Sunshine Fund”. **A REMINDER – If you are experiencing an emergency need, please contact the Church Office or Rev. Mike directly. All requests will be kept confidential.**





STEWARDSHIP NOTE ~

- With the outbreak of the Coronavirus, church services and other activities at First UCC have been suspended for the foreseeable future. Even though our church services are suspended, 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 health 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.



ELECTION INFO...

The PA PRIMARY Election IS THIS TUES., JUNE 2nd, 2020. Please make sure you know where your polling place is, if you did not get a mail/absentee ballot.

IF YOU DID get a mail/absentee ballot, please DON'T FORGET TO SEND IT IN OR DROP IT OFF at the Courthouse. Ballots MUST BE RECEIVED by 8 p.m. on Election Day.

You can REGISTER or APPLY for mail/absentee ballots or find other election information at www.votespa.com



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 ~ Bev Lamberts 14 yr. old great-granddaughter, **Alexis**, living in China, **Beth** (Linda W. relative), **Doug D.** & others ~ 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 have 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.

Please keep these folks in your prayers... Beverly F., Bob G., Bob L., Chris, Debbie S. & Family, Deacon Anthony Koury, Doris S., Evelyn R., Fawn B., Ferne, George B., Greg D., Helena, James R., Jeanette O. & Family, Jill R., Joe R., Kim Kelty, Lila, Marilyn Crozier Snuggs, Marjorie H., Mark, Marlene M., Michael R., Nancy M., Nancy & Ken A., Naomi, Nicole A., Ray U., Ruth F., Stewart W., & all those affected by the recent storms, fires & other natural disasters, and now disease, 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 Vu family & All whose broken hearts endlessly grieve. LORD, send Your sweet, tender & restorative love to cover them all.

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.

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 for your mercy, grace for all those killed & healing for those wounded & for the families of the victims of the latest acts of gun violence in Portapique, Nova Scotia.. LORD, HELP US!!! Please take hold of those who are so rage filled or unstable that they unleash horrible evil into this world. Give our leaders the courage & compassion to help prevent any more of these tragedies.

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.



**We all need to be “Corona Warriors”
We need to protect our loved ones, ourselves
& those around us!**

- One way to do that is to **LIMIT CONTACT IN PUBLIC PLACES** to only **NECESSARY** activities. In other words... **STAY HOME!!!**
- If you are sick **STAY HOME & CONTACT YOUR DOCTOR.**
- 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.

**Please keep watching your e-mail for updates & information!
Say your prayers, wash your hands & 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 &
may God’s blessings cover you & those you love!***