

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 Sunday's message
by clicking this link...**

[June 14th 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 ~

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, June 14th, 2020 ~ The Second Sunday After Pentecost ~



Invocation:

We praise you, extraordinary God, for the holiness of ordinary things — a gathering of fellow believers, a song of praise, a prayer of thanksgiving, a word, a loaf of bread, a cup, a fountain of water. Send your spirit to rush, cool and clear, through our dry and brittle places. May the spirit seep into the cracks and crevices of our hearts, that we might know you more fully and worship you more deeply. Amen.

Call to Confession:

We know that we have not lived according to God's desires for us. The brokenness in the world, and the sin and despair in our hearts, threaten to consume us as a mighty flood. Yet God is our hope and our firm foundation. Let us confess our sin before our gracious God.

Confession of Sin:

Creating God, in love you moved over the waters of chaos and separated sea from dry land. And yet, we cling tightly to rigid boundaries of our own making. You claim us in the waters of baptism and declare us dead to sin and alive in Christ. But too often we deny that call, conforming ourselves to the whims of culture. At Pentecost, you released your wild and transforming spirit to flow through church and world. But we want to tame that wildness, channeling your spirit through banks of ordered safety. Transform us, we pray. Soften the unyielding edges of our hearts. Loosen our grip on “the way it’s always been” and prepare us for the joy of “the way it still can be,” through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon:

Friends, hear this good news. Jesus Christ is our ark! His power is unequalled, his grace is unrestrained, his strength is steadfast, and his embrace is sufficient to carry all that we are and hope to be. Friends, believe the good news! In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

Prayer for Illumination: (Please read together in unison)

Come and see! We have found the Messiah! He is present to us in the word read and the word proclaimed. Come and see! The living God awaits us here in these pages. Let the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts bear witness to you, O God, and to the Anointed One, Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

HOLY SCRIPTURES

Our Old Testament Lesson for Sunday, June 14th is: Genesis 18:1-15 (NIV)

The Lord appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance to his tent in the heat of the day. ² Abraham looked up and saw three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he hurried from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed low to the ground.

³ He said, “If I have found favor in your eyes, my lord,^[a] do not pass your servant by. ⁴ Let a little water be brought, and then you may all wash your feet and rest under this tree. ⁵ Let me get you something to eat, so you can be refreshed and then go on your way—now that you have come to your servant.”

“Very well,” they answered, “do as you say.”

⁶ So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah. “Quick,” he said, “get three seahs^[b] of the finest flour and knead it and bake some bread.”

⁷ Then he ran to the herd and selected a choice, tender calf and gave it to a servant, who hurried to prepare it. ⁸ He then brought some curds and milk and the calf that had been prepared, and set these before them. While they ate, he stood near them under a tree.

⁹ “Where is your wife Sarah?” they asked him.

“There, in the tent,” he said.

¹⁰ Then one of them said, “I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife will have a son.”

Now Sarah was listening at the entrance to the tent, which was behind him.¹¹ Abraham and Sarah were already very old, and Sarah was past the age of childbearing.¹² So Sarah laughed to herself as she thought, “After I am worn out and my lord is old, will I now have this pleasure?”

¹³ Then the Lord said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Will I really have a child, now that I am old?’ ¹⁴ Is anything too hard for the Lord? I will return to you at the appointed time next year, and Sarah will have a son.”

¹⁵ Sarah was afraid, so she lied and said, “I did not laugh.”

But he said, “Yes, you did laugh.”

Our Epistle Lesson for Sunday, June 14th is: Romans 5:1-8 (NIV)

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we^[a] have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,² through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we^[b] boast in the hope of the glory of God.³ Not only so, but we^[c] also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance;⁴ perseverance, character; and character, hope.⁵ And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

⁶ You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.⁷ Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die.⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Our Gospel Lesson for Sunday, June 14th is: Matthew 9:35-10:8 (NIV)

The Workers Are Few

³⁵ Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness.³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few.³⁸ Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve

10 Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.

² These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John;³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus;⁴ Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

⁵ These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. ⁶ Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. ⁷ As you go, proclaim this message: ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’ ⁸ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, ^[a] drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give.

Meditation ~ “It’s Hard to be an Atheist with Neighbors Like That”

Patrick Greene was known by his neighbors in Henderson County, Texas as a professed atheist. He was notorious for threatening to sue Henderson County each year over the courthouse manger scene.

The reason? Greene says his experience with Christians through the years was of narrow-minded individuals who treated him unkindly. “My wife and I had never had a Christian do anything nice for us,” Greene said. “Just the opposite.”

That changed when the 63-year-old Greene learned he had a detached retina. He was forced to give up driving his Yellow Cab, and resigned himself to his impending blindness. Eye surgery would cost \$20,000 he said, and he didn’t even have the money to pay bills or buy groceries.

Jessica Crye, a member of the Sand Springs Baptist Church in Henderson County learned of Greene’s troubles on the Internet, and felt compelled to help. Crye’s pastor, the Rev. Eric Graham, contacted Greene to find out more about his needs.

Greene responded that he didn’t want the money. There was a chance the surgery would fail, he said. On top of that, there was a chance the retina could become detached again. Greene is not what you would call a positive thinker.

Greene told Graham he had a more immediate need. He said they needed groceries. Pastor Graham said he would see what he could do. Greene said he was “flabbergasted” when the Christian folks made good on their promise, and sent a check for \$400. The money went to help pay the rent, and provide necessities from the grocery store. The contributions didn’t stop at \$400 either, Crye said. More money was on its way.

Greene says he is so amazed by the generosity of those church folks in Henderson County, he’s thinking about writing a book. “I’m going to call it the real ‘Christians of Henderson County, Texas,’” Greene said. “These people are acting like what the Bible says a Christian does.”

Jessica Crye says a couple of folks have expressed resentment about helping someone who has been such a vocal atheist. That’s not surprising. There are always a few spoilsports in every congregation. Jessica has a different viewpoint, though. She thinks “it’s wonderful what God has done.”

As for Greene he says he’s going to show his appreciation by buying a star for the top of next year’s Nativity scene.

In our lesson for today, Jesus is making his way through all the towns and villages of that region, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. Can’t you imagine how thrilled the people were to see him? Then Matthew says something quite significant about Jesus’ attitude toward people. He says, “When [Jesus] saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.”

Can you think of a better description of the mass of people both then and today—“harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd?”

What a parable of contemporary life! “Harassed and helpless—like sheep without a shepherd.”

It is a marvelous metaphor—or more properly, a striking simile. Can you not see a flock of sheep milling around in a pen? Frightened and confused, they stumble blindly, bumping helplessly into one another, because they don’t know which way to turn. Don’t we all know some folks like that. Don’t we all feel like that at times ourselves.

You do realize, don’t you, that many “religious” people, including too many judgemental religious leaders, look on those folks with scorn, not compassion. It is so easy to look down on people according to the way they look or what they wear or the way they talk.

Nancy Ortberg, wife of Pastor and best-selling author John Ortberg tells a wonderful story about an experience her family had one day at an IHOP restaurant. They had about an hour in an otherwise hectic day to spend together as a family and Nancy was hoping for a quiet, calm meal. About halfway through their dinner, though, the hostess seated at a table next to theirs a single mom with three young children. Nancy didn’t notice at first, but soon it became very clear that at least two of the three children had some kind of slight developmental issue. Their mother had very little control over them. They were loud and they were very distracting.

When the meal was over, John took two of their children on to the church for an evening program. The middle daughter, Mallory, and Nancy stayed behind to pay the bill. Nancy was still frustrated that they had not been able to have the kind of peaceful family meal she had hoped for . . . thanks to the family at the next table. But, of course, she didn’t say anything.

Fortunately Mallory did. She leaned over to her Mom and said, “Mom, I have an idea.” Then she looked toward the frazzled and embarrassed woman with the three unruly children and said, “Let’s pay for their dinner.” Out of the mouth of babes. “Let’s pay for their dinner.” And that’s exactly what they did. It made for an exciting experience for Mallory . . . And Nancy learned a lesson in compassion from her very sensitive and thoughtful daughter.

Friends, that’s what compassion looks like. Jesus had compassion on the crowds because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd—sort of like that mother with the three unruly children.

John in his Gospel, after giving us that wonderful verse that says God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that everyone who believes in Him shall be saved, writes, “For the Son came into the world not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.” What a startling piece of Good News that is. “The Son came into the world not to condemn the world . . .” That means there is hope for everyone in the world . . . even us.

It would have been easy for Christ to condemn the crowds. That’s what many preachers and other folks have done through the years—condemn the crowd for their sins. Let them feel the fires of hell lapping at their feet. Many people, including Patrick Greene, the professed atheist in Henderson County, Texas associate Christians with condemnation. But Jesus took a different approach. He had compassion for the crowd. That was what Jesus was about. And that’s what you and I are to be about too.

Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

Who’s he talking about? Who are the workers sent out into the harvest field? At the time, it was his disciples. Today it’s us. But please notice, the motivation is the same in both cases. **We are**

to go out into the harvest fields because of our compassion for people. That's who we are and what we're about.

We're not a business enterprise. Our goal is not to enhance our institutional pride or enhance our brand. We have a calling, we are called to go out into the world because there are people outside the walls of this church and every church who are confused, angry, hurting, dying. There are families that are disintegrating, young minds being destroyed by drugs, old folks feeling forgotten, people who are homeless, single mothers next door to us who need hope. There are people outside of this building who need our help. Yes, we're to bring them to Jesus, but, first of all, we are to make Jesus real to them by showing them his love, his compassion.

Our Church has accepted the mission of showing the love of Christ to our community for 275 years. We have tended to the wounded Revolutionary War soldiers, rushed to feed the soldiers returning from the battle of Trenton, we educated the children in the community, were among the founders of Phoebe Home for the elderly population and Bethany Home to shelter children, we led the community effort of Safe Harbor. We established Community Connection to connect the most vulnerable citizens to public services, supported the Soup Kitchen, provided sneakers for hundreds of kids to help them get ready for school, purchased presents for families at Third Street Alliance and ProJeCt. We sponsor two rummage sales each year, in part, to provide a low cost shopping opportunity for people in our community. Our members regularly step forward and out to share Christ's love.

Some in our society have a difficult time seeing the need. Perhaps it is because, despite the recent challenges to the economy and Covid 19, many still live in an affluent society, they have worked hard and have done pretty well, some others, and I often put myself in this category, have lived somewhat charmed lives. We may not consider ourselves wealthy, but in contrast to more than 75% of the world's people we really are. Sometimes it is hard to put ourselves in the shoes of folks who need help.

It's like the story of a vicar in England who went to visit one of the well-off members of his congregation. It was winter and bitterly cold outside. The vicar was well wrapped up in a heavy overcoat.

As the visit drew to a close, the vicar told the man that he wished to ask him something confidential. This caused the man to accompany the vicar outside. The man didn't bother to put on his jacket. He thought it wouldn't be necessary. After all, what could the vicar want from him that would take that long? But the vicar, cozy in his heavy overcoat, began talking about one thing and another until his host was literally shivering with cold.

The man repeatedly tried to find out what the vicar wanted to ask him so he could go inside, but the vicar just kept making small talk. "Wouldn't you like to go inside again, Vicar?" asked the shivering man. But the vicar serenely continued chatting.

At last, the wealthy man said with chattering teeth, "Vicar, if you don't ask me what you want to right now, I am going to die of cold."

"Sir," the vicar said, "There is a family where the father has been laid off. I need enough money from you to supply fuel to get them through this cold winter."

Immediately the rich man peeled a roll of notes from his wallet and handed it to the vicar. The man explained his generosity like this: "Vicar, now I know why you left me standing so long out here in the cold. You knew that never in my comfortable life had I been really cold. Now that I have experienced this misery for myself, my heart has opened up to a need of which I was before unaware . . ."

Sometimes, in our busy society, it is easy for us to be unaware of how some of our friends and neighbors live, of what pain they may feel.

Rebecca Manley Pippert, in her book *Stories from the Heart* tells about an article that appeared in *Campus Life* magazine sometime back written by a young nurse about a patient of hers. The patient's name was Eileen. Eileen was one of this young nurse's first patients. Eileen was totally helpless. "A stroke had left her with no conscious control over her body," the nurse writes. "As near as the doctors could tell Eileen was totally unconscious, unable to feel pain and unaware of anything going on around her."

All the nurses could do for this poor woman was to turn her every hour to prevent bedsores and to feed her twice a day through a stomach tube. "When it's this bad," an older student nurse told her, "you have to detach yourself emotionally from the whole situation . . ."

But the young student nurse found she couldn't treat this woman with detachment. She decided to talk to Eileen, sing to her, she even brought her little gifts.

On difficult days she was particularly kind to Eileen. Thanksgiving Day was one of those difficult days. The young nurse said to Eileen, "I was in a cruddy mood this morning, Eileen, because it was supposed to be my day off. But now that I'm here, I'm glad. I wouldn't have wanted to miss seeing you on Thanksgiving. Do you know this is Thanksgiving?"

The telephone rang. The young nurse turned to answer it. She looked back at Eileen. "Suddenly," she writes, "Eileen was looking at me . . . crying. Big damp circles stained her pillow, and she was shaking all over.

"That was the only human emotion that Eileen ever showed any of the [hospital staff], but it was enough to change the whole attitude of the . . . staff toward her."

"Not long afterward, Eileen died. The young nurse closes her story, saying, 'I keep thinking about her . . . It occurred to me that I owe her an awful lot. Except for Eileen, I might never have known what it's like to give my-self to someone who can't give back.'"

Jesus knew what it was to give to people who couldn't give back. That's what he did for us. "When [Jesus] saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd." And there were so many of them. Just like today. And like then, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few." What then is to be our prayer? Jesus tells us quite concisely, "Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

I want you to join me in praying daily that we continue to be compassionate church. Deep in our hearts we know that is what Christ wants out of us. He wants us to care enough about people to become involved in their lives. He wants us to be willing to take time to show love to young people and old folks, to the substance abuser and the victims of broken families, to the down-and-out as well as the up-and-in. "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few . . . Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." Amen.



Affirmation of Faith:

~ Presbyterian Church, USA

We believe in God — the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who gathers, protects and cares for the church.

We believe the church is one worldwide communion of saints, called from the entire human family.

We believe the church is the single community of believers, reconciled with God and with one another.

We believe that through the working of God's Spirit, unity is a binding force and also that we must seek this unity, which must become visible to the world.

We believe that the sin of division, separation and hatred between people and groups has been conquered by Christ.

We commit ourselves to protecting the unity of the church universal. We pledge to make this unity active in all of our words, thoughts and deeds.

Pastoral Prayer:

Lord God, we give you thanks for all your gifts to us — for daily food, for health, for each breath we take, for freedom to choose, and for the gifts of your word, your power and your love. Our hearts are truly overwhelmed, O God, when we consider how you have entrusted so much to us. May we be worthy of that trust. May we be a people who are unafraid to live as fully and as richly as you want us to live.

Help us, O God, as followers of Jesus, to multiply all that you have given us, to risk spreading your word and perhaps see it misunderstood, to gamble by loving those whom others think worthy only of hate, to take chances by doing good to those who have not done good to us. Help us be faith-filled and desire to increase your glory and your goodness in this world. Make us people who share in both word and deed that which you have given to us.

We pray for the church gathered today, both here and around the world, that it may encourage all of its members to discover, develop and use all their gifts, those of nature and those of grace.

We pray for those who are poor in body or in spirit, for those oppressed and heavy laden, for those sick or in despair, especially for Janet Kobler's cousin Karen B, Gregg D, Marjorie Harron, Helena Rapp, Evelyn Ritter, Phyllis Rush, Helen Litzenberger, Beverly Flad's Family, 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. Care for all those for whom we have prayed, and help us walk faithfully in the path of our Lord Jesus Christ, who taught us to say as we 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:

Let us go from this place committed to live by faith:
Faith in the Creator who is righteous and just;
Faith in the Savior who is gracious and giving;
Faith in the Spirit who is powerful beyond measure.
Go, and may the triune God go with us. 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 Sunday, June 14th, 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.**





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”.]



PRAYER UPDATES...

Mae called to say that Helena is finally back at the Easton Home, hallelujah! She is however, going to be in quarantine there – not allowed out of her room – for the next 14 days. So, if you have a chance, please give her a call, she would just love to chat with her friends!



DUE TO PRIVACY CONCERNS WE WILL NOT POST PERSONAL INFORMATION

(addresses, phone numbers, birthdays, anniversaries, etc.) **ON OUR Website or Facebook page. But we do wish God’s blessings on all those who are celebrating!**



Our own Linda Wright has had her second book published **“55 (More) Journal Pages ~ Grace Upon Grace”**. It is also available as a paperback & e-book on Amazon, as well as her first book **“333 Journal Pages”**. AND... You can e-mail Linda at **lwindalouw@gmail.com** to enter a contest to WIN A FREE COPY!!!!



TODAY, JUNE 14th is “FLAG DAY”! Flag Day commemorates the adoption of the flag of the United States on June 14, 1777 by resolution of the Second Continental Congress.



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 envelope 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.



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), **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 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.

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 Keltly, 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.

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.

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!***