

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

Big Hallelujah News!

We are planning to gather together, in person, for
worship at the Church
Beginning NEXT SUN., JULY 19th
at our usual 10:00 a.m. time!



Naturally, we will be following proper distancing & safety protocols
but it will be a beautiful blessing to gather as a Church Family again!
You should have received a letter via e-mail or regular mail
outlining the details & procedures.



If you did not, please use this link to a copy of our ["Re-Opening Letter"](#).

We will continue to offer video worship services for those who are not able to join us.

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...

[July 12th Worship 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

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~ Sunday, July 12th, 2020 ~

~ The Sixth Sunday After Pentecost ~



Opening Hymn: “For the Beauty of the Earth”

Call to Worship:

Come awake! The light of God is breaking through the darkness.
We bless the light, an unyielding sign of hope in times of trouble.
Do not fear! The love of Christ opens up a space of respite and peace for us.
We bless this place, a sanctuary of rest.
Delight in the gifts of the Spirit, who sets a table of welcome for all.
Surely goodness and mercy have found us here,
in the house of our Lord, the God of abounding love.

Call to Confession:

It is in our confession where we realize our desire for God and our hope for God’s mercy. It is in admitting the truth of our lives that we take the first step toward wholeness and healing. So let us make our confession, first in silent prayer.

Confession of Sin:

God of all the saints, God of all the sinners, hear our prayer.
We would be saint-like — holy, good, patient, loving.
But we end up feeling more like sinners — full of failures of morality, selfish, mean.
Perhaps you see us simply as human — as beloved, and flawed, and trying, and failing and succeeding.
In all of this, forgive the wrong that we have done, and bless the good we have accomplished.
Keep on loving us, and helping us, and molding us more and more into the image of Christ,
in whose name we pray. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon:

Friends, hear this Good News: the love of God is beyond measure, and you are included in that love. Know that you are forgiven and thus freed to love and serve.
Alleluia! Amen.

Prayer for Illumination:

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, July 12th is: **Genesis 25:19-34** (NIV)

¹⁹ This is the account of the family line of Abraham’s son Isaac.

Abraham became the father of Isaac, ²⁰ and Isaac was forty years old^m when he married Rebekah daughter of Bethuel the Aramean from Paddan Aram and sister of Laban the Aramean.

²¹ Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was childless. The Lord answered his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant. ²² The babies jostled each other within her, and she said, "Why is this happening to me?" So she went to inquire of the Lord.

²³ The Lord said to her,

"Two nations^v are in your womb,
and two peoples from within you will be separated;
one people will be stronger than the other,
and the older will serve the younger."

²⁴ When the time came for her to give birth, there were twin boys in her womb. ²⁵ The first to come out was red, and his whole body was like a hairy garment; so they named him Esau. ²⁶ After this, his brother came out, with his hand grasping Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when Rebekah gave birth to them.

²⁷ The boys grew up, and Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the open country, while Jacob was content to stay at home among the tents. ²⁸ Isaac, who had a taste for wild game, loved Esau, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

²⁹ Once when Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau came in from the open country, famished. ³⁰ He said to Jacob, "Quick, let me have some of that red stew! I'm famished!" (That is why he was also called Edom.)

³¹ Jacob replied, "First sell me your birthright."

³² "Look, I am about to die," Esau said. "What good is the birthright to me?"

³³ But Jacob said, "Swear to me first." So he swore an oath to him, selling his birthright to Jacob.

³⁴ Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and some lentil stew. He ate and drank, and then got up and left.

So Esau despised his birthright.

Our Epistle Lesson for Sunday, July 12th is: Romans 8:1-11 (NIV)

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,² because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you^[a] free from the law of sin and death. ³ For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh,^[b] God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering.^[c] And so he condemned sin in the flesh,⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

⁵ Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. ⁶ The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. ⁸ Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.

⁹ You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life^[d] because of

righteousness. ¹¹ And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of ^{f[e]} his Spirit who lives in you.

Our Gospel Lesson for Sunday, July 12th is: Matthew 13:1-9 & 18-23 (NIV)

Verses 1-9

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. ² Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. ³ Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. ⁴ As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. ⁵ Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. ⁶ But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. ⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. ⁸ Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. ⁹ Whoever has ears, let them hear."

Verses 18-23

Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: ¹⁹ When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. ²⁰ The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. ²¹ But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. ²² The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. ²³ But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

Meditation ~ "Birdbaths and Flagpoles" ~ *Matthew 13:1-23*

"I want to start a garden, but my yard's a little problematic," a customer told the fellow at the yard and garden center. "I get blazing afternoon sunshine for about two hours, but otherwise it's all shade."

"What kind of soil," asked the proprietor.

"Hard clay, lot of rocks," said the customer, "What do you recommend I plant."

"Hmmm," mused the store owner. "Why don't you look down Aisle B. We've got a big new supply of birdbaths and flagpoles . . ."

I've known some people with a lawn like that--good for growing only birdbaths and flagpoles.

Jesus told a parable about a farmer who went out to sow seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, said Jesus, where it produced a crop--a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.

Jesus' disciples asked him to explain this parable. Jesus replied, "When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path. The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away. The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

Now there are some things that are evident in this parable. The farmer is God. And the seed is the message of the Kingdom. There are a number of things we could think about, but today I want to focus on the good soil that yields a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.

Because, my friends, that good soil is you and me. We are those who have received the message of the kingdom and have said yes to it. Now, the big question, what kind of crop are we producing? Because we are co-laborers with God, it is now our turn to sow seed. What seed are we sowing?

Here are some things we need to know about sowing seed. Let's begin with one of the most important. **You don't have to be someone special to sow seeds of the kingdom.** You don't have to be a superstar. You don't have to be a celebrity. One of the surest teachings of scripture is that anybody can be used by God to do the work of the kingdom.

Let me tell you a story told by James Billington, was Librarian of Congress and a student of Russian history. Billington happened to be in Moscow in August of 1991. It was a tense and dangerous time, with the old Soviet regime giving way to a new social order. Boris Yeltzin and a small group of defenders occupied the Russian White House and successfully managed to face off an enormous number of tanks and troops poised to attack, and to restore the old guard in the Soviet Union.

Surprisingly, a key role in this successful resistance was played, said Billington, by the babushkas, the "old women in the church." These bandana-wearing old grandmothers, who had kept the orthodox church alive for years during the Soviet period, had been the butt of jokes by both Russians and Westerners alike. Nothing could have seemed more pathetic and irrelevant than they, hunched over and wrapped in woolen shawls. They were widely regarded as evidence of the eventual death of religion in the Soviet Union.

Yet on that critical night of August 20, 1991, when martial law was proclaimed and people were commanded to go to their homes, many of these women disobeyed and went instead to the place of confrontation. Some of them fed the resisters in a public display of support. Others staffed medical stations, others prayed for a miracle, while still others, astoundingly, climbed up onto the tanks, peered through the slits at the crew-cut men inside, and told them there were new orders, these from God: Thou shall not kill. The young men stopped the tanks. "The attack," said Billington, "never came."

You don't have to be extraordinarily gifted to help determine the history of a nation or even the world. There's no better evidence of that than found in scripture. Few of the heroes of the Bible, particularly the Old Testament, are heroic at all. They did some really stupid things. But God still used them, just as God can use us. You don't have to be someone special to sow seeds of the kingdom.

However, you do need to be committed. This is the most important secret in life: You and I can accomplish extraordinary things if we are willing to pay the price.

I recently read of the family of a Palestinian terrorist bomber. They celebrate the sacrifice of their young. One young man's father said he hopes his other sons will make the same sacrifice. He said, "There is no better way to show God that you love him."

That's scary. It's misguided of course, crazy, even demonic, but it's also a level of commitment that most of us don't know anything about. There IS a better way to show God you love Him. Rather than dying for Him, how about living for Him? How about becoming a sower of seed? You don't have to be someone special to sow seeds of the kingdom, but you do need to be committed. You do have to know what you believe and you have to give yourself completely to that belief.

Pastor John Beukema shares an experience he had a few years ago that really opened his eyes to the parable of the seeds that failed to take root on different types of soil. He had just led a wildly successful evangelistic crusade. Many people signed commitment cards indicating that they wanted to commit their lives to Jesus. But only a week after the crusade, when Pastor Beukema visited some of these people, he discovered that many of them had already lost their enthusiasm.

A single mother, overwhelmed by her family's needs, had quickly lost the joy she'd found during the evangelistic services. A teenager decided against becoming a Christian because he feared his friends' ridicule. A businessman decided that he wasn't ready to let his faith change his life. He retreated to his old comfort zone.

That happens. We live in a world of people with good intentions. But good intentions won't get it done. To make a difference in the world requires a high level of commitment.

In 1998, sixteen-year-old Alden Tucker read a news story about Michael Peñon, a fifteen-year-old boy of multiracial heritage who had contracted leukemia. Michael's only hope for recovery was a bone-marrow transplant; unfortunately, his exotic ethnic heritage--African-American, Hispanic, and Korean--drastically reduced his chances of finding a matching donor. Alden Tucker, who is also of the same ethnic mix as Michael, immediately volunteered to serve as a donor. Because bone marrow donation is an invasive and painful procedure, federal law prohibits bone marrow testing for people under eighteen years of age.

Alden Tucker wasn't about to take "no" for an answer. He began talking to reporters and legislators about changing the consent laws for bone marrow donation. He also met and befriended Michael Peñon. Just before Michael's death in 1999, Alden promised him that he would never give up the campaign to change bone marrow donation laws. In March 2000, the Michael Peñon Law allowing bone marrow testing and donation by people under the age of eighteen was signed into law in the state of Washington.

He was only a teenager but Alden Tucker made a difference. So can you. So can I, if we're willing to pay the price. **That is why a cross stands at the center of our worship.** Someone was willing to pay the price in our behalf.

People often ask, was it necessary for Christ to die upon the cross? Obviously, it was. We, of course, cannot see into the mind of God, but Christ dying on a cross is a reminder to us that if our lives are to have any impact on our world, we are going to have to give our lives to something bigger than ourselves.

Nothing in life worthwhile is obtained without sacrifice. Someone has to sacrifice to build a successful marriage--actually two someones. Someone has to sacrifice to produce children who are healthy mentally, spiritually and physically. Someone has to sacrifice to build a successful company or a successful community. Humanity never moves forward unless someone is willing to go beyond the efforts of the ordinary or the average.

Gordon Giesbrecht is the director of the Laboratory for Exercise and Environmental Medicine at the University of Manitoba. His nickname is Professor Popsicle. This is not a sign of disrespect. Professor Giesbrecht has spent his career studying the effects of extreme cold on the human body. He quite literally immerses himself in his subject. Throughout the course of his career, Professor Giesbrecht has induced hypothermia--extremely low body temperatures--on himself thirty-seven times. He regularly exposes himself to freezing temperatures and records the effect those temperatures have on his physical and mental health. His research has led to life-saving advances in treating victims of exposure and hypothermia.

We do not know if Dr. Giesbrecht is more brilliant than other scientists. But we do know he has a high degree of commitment.

We know that God was committed to saving humanity from its own foolish ways. How do we know? Because of the cross. You and I want to go through life on the cheap. We want to get by on minimal effort. And it simply will not work.

So, I ask you what kind of seed are you sowing in the lives of those you love? In the community? In the world for which Christ died? Will this be a better world because you've been here? It doesn't take a lot of talent to make a difference in the world. All it takes is someone willing to take up a cross.



Affirmation of Faith: (Please read responsively)

Leader: Let us affirm our faith.

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:

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 Jeannette Orso, Janet Kobler's cousin Karen B, Gregg D, Linda Arnold's Father Harold Mims, Marjorie Harron, Helena Rapp, Evelyn Ritter, Phyllis Rush, Helen Litzenberger, George Beling, Wendy Wandersee and Danny K who is suffering from brain cancer. We pray that the Lowe's will feel the comfort of your hand as they deal with the death of Gordon's mother. 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, and Jill West. Care for all those for whom we have prayed.

Minister by your Spirit and by us, to all those for whom we have prayed, and help us walk faithfully in the path of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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 we leave this place, may the word of God light our path and illumine our way.
And may God's Spirit empower us to be a light for others.
In the name of the triune God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. Amen.

Closing Hymn: "O Jesus, I Have Promised"



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, July 12th, 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.

As we move toward our planned re-opening, NEXT SUN., July 19th, we will be meeting on an ongoing basis to discuss how this will work. 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!**

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.



Rev. Mike is hosting a Virtual WED. EVENING BIBLE STUDY via Zoom, live at 7:30 p.m.! You 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.

“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”.]



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”](#)**.

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.
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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) & 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, Danny K., Debbie S. & Family, Deacon Anthony Koury, Doris S., Evelyn R., Fawn B., Ferne, Gregg 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., Wendy W. & 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 Berger Family, The Lowe Family, the Flad/Orso 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.



**Even though we have moved “Into the Green”, and are planning to reopen our Church for live, in person worship next Sun., we all need to continue to be “Corona Warriors”!
We need to protect our loved ones, ourselves
& those around us!**

- If you are sick **STAY HOME & CONTACT YOUR DOCTOR.**
- One way to do that is to **LIMIT CONTACT IN PUBLIC PLACES** and **WEAR MASKS** and **WASH YOUR HANDS.**
- 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!*



**We hope you will be able to join us
NEXT SUN., JULY 19th
as we RE-OPEN for LIVE, IN-PERSON WORSHIP
at the Church at our normal 10:00 a.m. time!**

