

Greetings from First UCC!

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

Big Hallelujah News!

We are now gathering together, in person, for
worship at the Church

Every Sunday at our usual 10:00 a.m. time!

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



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

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

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

[August 16th 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

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

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

~ Sunday, August 16th, 2020 ~

~ The Eleventh Sunday After Pentecost ~



Opening Hymn: #216 ~ "All Glory, Laud and Honor"

Call to Worship: (Please read responsively – L = Leader, P = People)

L: Holy, Holy God,

P: Giver of Life, Source of Hope,

L: Present in all our questions,

P: Hidden in every "Why?"

L: Holy, Holy God,

P: Walking through every valley,

L: Wiping away every tear,

P: Blessing each precious memory,

L: Letting pass each cry of anger,

P: Working for a new day and a renewed song;

L: Holy, Holy God,

P: Giver of Life, our Source of Hope and Peace.

Call to Confession:

Let us in humility and contrition acknowledge and confess our sins toward God and one another.

Confession of Sin: (Spoken together, in Unison)

Righteous God, we confess with sorrow that we often forget who has given us light, who has made our garden grow with waters of love. We forget your living word and move off your paths to serve our own worldly desires. We leave your cultivated field to venture out into the wilderness on our own. We quarrel with one another trying to decide "who is the greatest." We make our own faces the benchmark for all faces. Help us to remember Jesus, reconciling the whole variegated world in himself.

Assurance of Pardon:

Thank you for calling us back, for never giving up on us when we turn aside, for always loving us, even when we forget who we are and who you are. We know you, as the greatest Gardener of all, who has promised always to replant us in flourishing fields.

Gloria Patri: (Spoken together, in Unison)

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

Prayer for Illumination: (Spoken together, in Unison)

~ Inspired by Amos 5

O God, you alone are our Judge. Send your Spirit of truth to expose our self-deception and challenge our complacency so that we may surrender to your mercy and follow your will through Jesus Christ our Liberator. Amen.

HOLY SCRIPTURES

Our Old Testament Lesson for Sunday, Aug. 16th is: Genesis 45:1-15 (NIV)

45 Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all his attendants, and he cried out, "Have everyone leave my presence!" So there was no one with Joseph

when he made himself known to his brothers. ² And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and Pharaoh's household heard about it.

³ Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still living?" But his brothers were not able to answer him, because they were terrified at his presence.

⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come close to me. "When they had done so, he said, "I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! ⁵ And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. ⁶ For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will be no plowing and reaping. ⁷ But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance.^[a]

⁸ "So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God. He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt. ⁹ Now hurry back to my father and say to him, 'This is what your son Joseph says: God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; don't delay.¹⁰ You shall live in the region of Goshen and be near me—you, your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all you have. ¹¹ I will provide for you there, because five years of famine are still to come. Otherwise you and your household and all who belong to you will become destitute.'

¹² "You can see for yourselves, and so can my brother Benjamin, that it is really I who am speaking to you. ¹³ Tell my father about all the honor accorded me in Egypt and about everything you have seen. And bring my father down here quickly."

¹⁴ Then he threw his arms around his brother Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin embraced him, weeping. ¹⁵ And he kissed all his brothers and wept over them. Afterward his brothers talked with him.

Our Epistle Lesson for Sunday, Aug. 16th is: Romans 11:1-2a & 29-32 (NIV)

11 - I ask then: Did God reject his people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin.

² God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. Don't you know what Scripture says in the passage about Elijah—how he appealed to God against Israel.

²⁹ for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable. ³⁰ Just as you who were at one time disobedient to God have now received mercy as a result of their disobedience, ³¹ so they too have now become disobedient in order that they too may now^[a] receive mercy as a result of God's mercy to you. ³² For God has bound everyone over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all.

Our Gospel Lesson for Sunday, Aug. 16th is: Matthew 15:21-28 (NIV)

²¹ Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. ²² A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly."

²³ Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, “Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us.”

²⁴ He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.”

²⁵ The woman came and knelt before him. “Lord, help me!” she said.

²⁶ He replied, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.”

²⁷ “Yes it is, Lord,” she said. “Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table.”

²⁸ Then Jesus said to her, “Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted.” And her daughter was healed at that moment.

Meditation ~ “Known by Our Scars” ~ Genesis 45:1-15

If you are a person of a certain age, there’s a pretty good chance that you have a series of scars on your body that reflect a childhood lived without bicycle helmets, elbow and knee pads, and a host of other safety devices designed to bubble wrap kids in safety these days. That banana-seated Schwinn bike with the sissy bar on the back and chopper wheel on the front no doubt led to a couple trips to the emergency room, a few stitches, and a good story.

Every scar is a memory, revealing an unfortunate accident, a random act of stupidity, or some kind of injustice. Maybe you were trying to imitate Evel Knievel on that rickety plywood ramp, or maybe the neighborhood bully hit you with a rock thrown in contempt. Or maybe the scars are less visible and yet run much deeper, the result of a deep woundedness of the soul. However we got them, scars remind us that life isn’t fair and can be painful. Every time we look at a scar, we remember the story.

The Joseph story is a scar story about a young man’s woundedness and recovery. His scars are numerous, and yet Joseph is able to interpret them in light of the larger story that God has in mind for him and his people. They are scars that are less badges of honor and more signposts pointing to the kind of suffering love that God has for us and for the world.

To recap the story in Genesis up to chapter 45, Joseph has been in Egypt for quite a while. As a boy, Joseph was a dreamer and the favorite of his father, Jacob, which led to no small amount of jealousy among his older brothers. His father made him “a long robe with sleeves,” which implies that his dad thought him to be a little more special than the others and expected him to do less work. Joseph’s dreams had his brothers bowing down to him, and Joseph was young enough to tell them about it, and thus the sibling rivalry boiled over. When Joseph goes out one day to check on his brothers at his father’s request, they finally decide to get rid of him by tossing him into a well, stripping off his fancy coat, and then selling him into slavery. The brothers told their father he was eaten by a wild animal and presented their dad with the coat smeared in goat’s blood as fake proof — easy to do in the days before DNA testing!

Joseph is brought as a slave to Egypt and sold to an official named Potiphar, who saw Joseph’s potential and put him in charge of the household. Potiphar’s wife saw Joseph’s potential, too, but as a lover, not a worker. When Joseph refused to have an affair with her on moral grounds, she falsely accuses him of rape and has him thrown into prison.

If you're keeping score, that's at least two major scars: being sold unjustly as a slave and being unjustly accused of a crime. But Joseph doesn't pick at those wounds. Instead, he makes a favorable impression on the prison warden, who puts him in charge of the other prisoners. He becomes the interpreter of their dreams as well, and eventually rises again from the dungeon to interpret the dreams of the Egyptian Pharaoh himself. When Joseph predicts a great famine to come, Pharaoh appoints him as the equivalent of the prime minister in charge of the social and economic affairs of the empire. Once again, he is wearing a coat with long sleeves!

The famine strikes hard in Joseph's homeland of Canaan, where his still-in-the-dark father and scheming brothers still reside. They hear that there is grain stored up in Egypt, so they decide to take a shopping trip there, not knowing from whom they would be buying!

That's the recap of the story between Genesis 37 and 45. Joseph's life has been a bit of a rollercoaster to this point, with very high highs and low lows. There was plenty to celebrate but also plenty about which he could be bitter, especially toward the ones who put him in this situation. Joseph no doubt had scars from being tossed in the well, scars from being tossed in the dungeon, scars of rejection, scars of false accusation, and scars from longing to be in his father's presence once again.

And now, here in Genesis 45, Joseph stands over his begging brothers who don't yet recognize him, scarred for life by what they had done to him. He has every right to see himself as a victim, and we wouldn't blame him if he wanted some payback.

But Joseph refuses to give in to victimhood. He does not view his physical and emotional scars as reasons for despair or revenge. Incredibly, Joseph instead sees his scars as signs of God's providential grace.

Joseph "could no longer control himself" in that moment (45:1). He sent everyone out of the room except his brothers and, through his loud, wailing tears, he reveals the truth to them: "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" (v. 3). His brothers couldn't answer him. They were terrified, speechless, almost not believing what they were hearing and seeing. They had to believe that payback was coming swiftly.

But Joseph isn't there to inflict more scars on them. "I am your brother, Joseph," he said to them, "whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life" (vv. 4-5). Indeed, Joseph says, it was not you, my brothers, who sent me here, but it was God (v. 8). And because of God's provision, Joseph's family now had a place to go to survive the famine and, in effect, preserve the covenant God had made with Abraham earlier in Genesis.

Joseph looks back at the events of his life with a new vision where the scars of pain, injustice, rejection, and separation were only part of the story. Fast forward to Genesis 50:20, where he sums up all that he has learned from his scars. "Even though you intended to do harm to me," Joseph says to his brothers, "God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today." This is what we might call 50:20 vision — Genesis 50:20 vision. What the world, the human plan, the human scheme planned as an evil, self-serving act, God took and used for good, preserving life!

One of the persistent puzzles of the human experience is how we deal with evil in the world. As humans in a fallen world, we seem to live lives of constant jeopardy. We are vulnerable to a wide range of evil, from sickness, to crime, to family dysfunction, to oppression, to all sorts of uncontrollable, wound-inflicting mayhem. In the midst of all of that, it's a legitimate question to ask or even cry out, "Where is God in all of this?"

Joseph's 50:20 vision tells us that despite all evidence to the contrary, God is still at work. God is making things *good* despite appearances. We suffer the scars, but the wounds of this life are not ultimately fatal for those who put their trust in him.

Does this mean that every tragedy we experience has a silver lining? That all evil is really good and that all our suffering is somehow being orchestrated by God?

Not at all.

Notice that the end of Genesis has the same message as the beginning. In Genesis 1, God creates the universe, the earth, and us and calls it all "good." By chapter 3, however, humans have rejected God's goodness for self-serving sin and yet, despite all human efforts to the contrary, God's intention for good overcomes. God used the slavery of Joseph to save his chosen family, through whom all the earth would be blessed. The God who does this is also the God who transforms the evil and unjust death of Jesus into the salvation of the world. God's goodness wins in the end, which is why the apostle Paul, even while languishing in prison with many scars of his own, could say, "We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).

Plastic surgeons routinely try to erase the scars people have accumulated over the years. There are cosmetic reasons to do so, but there may be spiritual reasons not to. Joseph didn't ask for his scars to be removed. He showed them to his brothers and saw them as signs of ultimate healing. The risen Jesus did the same. When he came out of the tomb, he still had the scars as identifiable marks of how God can make even the horror of death into a vehicle for good that blesses the whole creation with restoration and renewal.

What scars do you carry? What are the physical, emotional, psychological, or spiritual scars that mark your life? How might they become signs of healing and occasion for a new vision of life for you and others you meet? Joseph looked at the scars of slavery and saw that God had a saving plan for his life and the lives of his people. Perhaps the scars you carry can enable you to speak into the pain of someone else's life. Showing that scar of past abuse may help others have the courage to seek healing. Revealing that pain of loss may put you in a powerful position to help others who are grieving. We didn't ask for these scars, nor did God inflict them upon us; and yet, those scars can make known to the world how God can make good out of the worst situations.

Scars never go away, and yet the scars of Joseph and Jesus remind us that the tears we shed, the emotional pain inflicted on us, and the heartache of loss will all become memories one day, like the scars of Jesus. We still bear the marks, but they need not hurt us any longer. They can be signs of healing for us and for the world.

That's 50:20 vision!.



Affirmation of Faith: (Please read responsively)

L: Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is the one true church, apostolic and universal, whose holy faith lets us now declare:

P: **We believe in God the Father, infinite in wisdom, power and love, whose mercy is over all his works, and whose will is ever directed to his children's good.**

We believe in Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of man, the gift of the Father's unfailing grace, the ground of our hope and the promise of our deliverance from sin and death.

("Affirmation" continues...)

We believe in the Holy Spirit as the divine presence in our lives, whereby we are kept in perpetual remembrance of the truth of Christ, and find strength and help in time of need.

We believe that this faith should manifest itself in the service of love as set forth in the example of our blessed Lord, to the end that the kingdom of God may come upon the earth. Amen.

—United Methodist Hymnal

Pastoral Prayer:

L: Gracious Lord Jesus,

Today we lift up those in need of your presence. And so we pray ...

Prayers of *peace* for those who are passing through waters that would seem to overcome them;

Prayers of *strength* for those who are passing through rivers, beset by the raging currents of life;

Prayers of *protection* for those who are passing through fires of tribulation, that they will not be burned;

Prayers of *faith* for the one who is venturing into uncharted waters;

Prayers of *wisdom* for the one who is making some major decisions;

Prayers of *love* for the one who is feeling rejected and unloved;

Prayers of *comfort* for the one who is grieving; and

Prayers of *contentment* for the one who wants to let go of material things and walk with you.

Today we especially lift up in our prayers: We remember in love the life of Megan McGinley, and we share the grief of Naomi Protyniak, Tim McGinley, and Pam. We pray for continued healing for Bob Arnold Wendy Wandersee, Jeanette Orso, Sal Giamoni, Danny K, Bonnie David, Janet Kobler's cousin Karen B, and Harold Mims. We remember Marjorie Harron, Helena Rapp, Phyllis Rush, Helen Litzenberger, and Evelyn Ritter in our prayers.

Bless these prayers and may we all find all we need as we seek to do your will in every situation. For you are the image of the invisible God, at the head of all creation. In you all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through you and for you. You are before all things, and in you all things hold together. And you are the head of the body, the church. Nothing is impossible with you. And therefore, we come to you, and we pray, and we pray in your name. Amen

Lord's Prayer: (Please read together in Unison)

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

Prayer of Dedication: (Please read together in Unison)

All: Gracious Spirit, you have showered us with your gifts, and we embrace you with thanksgiving. May our embrace be arms wide open, ready to share, to serve and to love. Use our spiritual gifts that we may live the spiritual life, moving according to the Spirit's heated touch and bending in the direction of God's holy will.

* **DOXOLOGY** (SPOKEN in Unison)

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

Closing Hymn: #547 - "Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound"

Benediction:

Go forth in the love of God, shed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Spirit. Go forth more for the needs and concerns of others than for your own interests. Go forth to honor the name of Jesus Christ — ushering in his kingdom for all to see. 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, Aug. 16th, 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.

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



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.



FINALLY! We will hold our ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING NEXT SUN. AUGUST 23rd immediately following our worship service. We hope all of our members can attend! If you recall, our meetings was originally scheduled for March 22nd. A LOT has happened since then so we invite everyone to participate in planning our future!



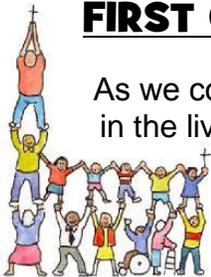
Rev. Mike is hosting a Virtual WED. EVENING BIBLE STUDY via Zoom, live at 7:00 p.m.! **(NOT 7:30) can join in on the computer or on the PHONE!!!** This virtual, live, group Bible Study runs from 30 to 60 minutes, depending on what topics come into the conversation. You can join in on line or, you can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



“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”.]*

“Church Family News” continues...



KEEP IN PRAYER... Please keep Jeannette O. in prayer, for healing & peace after her surgery this past week, Bob A. for a quick recovery from his hip replacement surgery, Wendy for recovery from her back surgery & Moe. Bonnie D. needs prayers for healing of an aneurysm . We offer prayers of sympathy to Megan M.'s family.



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”](#).



DID YOU RETURN YOUR 2020 CENSUS FORM? It's not too late! This is an important count because it affects government representation, funding & other things. So, if you haven't completed yours, please do. If you need assistance, please ask or visit <https://www.census.gov/en.html>



STEWARDSHIP NOTE ~



- While we have reopened, many are not able to join us yet. Even through this, our church expenses (gas bill, electric bill, etc.) must still be paid each month. With this in mind, we ask that you continue to contribute during this crisis. You can...
 - **MAIL your contributions** to the church at 229 Church Street, Easton, PA 18042.
 - **DROP your envelope through the MAIL SLOT in the Church St. door of the SCHOOLHOUSE** (formerly the Office). Please make sure your name or 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.



'SAVE THE FIRST STEEPLE' project update ~ Work is in progress!



It's happening! A high lift is in the courtyard & will reach up to the Weathervane, where Gordon Bennett Painting technicians are working!

We are proud to report that we have just reached our \$90,000 fundraising mark, on our way to the \$125,000 goal! A few Final sponsorships are still available at \$2500 each, as well as, a new lighting sponsorship!

Let me know as soon as possible if you are interested in one of these sponsorships for your beautiful historic church!

~ Doreen Arnold, Steeple Project Chair



ATTENTION PA PROPERTY OWNERS & RENTERS! HELP IS AVAILABLE!

The PA Housing Finance Agency (PAHFA) has **federal CARES ACT dollars available to assist with Mortgage** (for homeowners or landlords) **or Rent** (for tenants) **payments.**

THE APPLICATION DEADLINE IS SEPT. 30th, 2020. Please visit the PAHFA website for application forms, document lists, income guidelines, & all the info you will need to register for the program... <https://www.phfa.org/pacares/rent.aspx>
or call 1-855-827-3466

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.

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

Please keep these folks in your prayers... Baby Jackson Keith Arnold & family, Joseph & Melissa Dennis who were married here recently, Beverly F., Bob A., 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 Keltly, Lila, Marilyn Crozier Snuggs, Marjorie H., Mark, Marlene M., Michael R., Nancy M., Nancy & Ken A., Naomi, Nicole A., Ray U., Ruth F., "Sal: G., 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 family of Megan McGinley, the Galante/Rapp Family, 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”, 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.**
- **We should still LIMIT CONTACT IN PUBLIC PLACES and WEAR MASKS.**
- **If you do go out to the store, check with neighbors & friends to see if you can pick up items for them (the fewer folks out there, the better!)**
- **Use grocery/pharmacy pick up services & delivery services.**
- **If you go out, make sure to wash your hands, sanitize your carts, car, bag handles, doors knobs, & all high touch areas.**
- **Katie & Larry Miner have volunteered to run NECESSARY errands for folks who are at high risk or cannot get out. You can contact Katie by calling 610-258-4426.**
- **IF YOU TRAVELED out of the area or into an area where covid cases are rising, please be extra cautious about your contacts when you return. You may need to quarantine for the recommended 14 days. Please consult current (& ever changing) PA directives.**

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

