

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

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

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



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

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

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

### [August 30<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:firstucc2@verizon.net)

website: [www.firstucceaston.org](http://www.firstucceaston.org) ~ Facebook (First UCC Easton)

~ Sunday, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 ~

~ The Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost ~



**Opening Hymn:** #400 ~ "Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation"

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

L: God gives us one day at a time:

All: **Long enough for laughter to follow any tears;**

L: Deep enough for prayer and silence to dance together;

**All: Time enough to help someone in need;**

L: Plenty of time to notice beauty and praise the Maker;

**All: Sufficient time to build a bridge for forgiveness or tear down a wall of resentment;**

L: The right time to embrace friends, smile at strangers, play with children, sing praise to God.

**All: Praise God for this day we are given.**

**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)

**Lord God of Creation, you have promised that you will never leave us; but how quickly we turn from you and from each other! We are content to let our goodness and our worship remain theoretical.**

**Lord God, let the sickness be healed, the death wish go from us, and the people come alive again.**

**Let your word of hope sound in the cities and the voice of your mercy comfort the towns. Make us all teachable, that we may learn again and again what things come first, what truths endure, what actions are worthy of your grace.**

**Give us this day your daily bread, joy and vision; and so we pray for all; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**Assurance of Pardon:**

God is with us.

God brings us peace and forgiveness.

God brings us opportunities

New and fresh every day!

**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:**

L: God, source of all light, by your Word you give light to the soul. Pour out on us the spirit of wisdom and understanding that our hearts and minds may be opened. Amen.

**HOLY SCRIPTURES**

**Our Old Testament Lesson for Sunday, Aug. 30<sup>th</sup> is: Exodus 3:1-15 (NIV)**

Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. <sup>2</sup>There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. <sup>3</sup>So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up."

<sup>4</sup>When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, “Moses! Moses!”

And Moses said, “Here I am.”

<sup>5</sup>“Do not come any closer,” God said. “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.” <sup>6</sup>Then he said, “I am the God of your father, <sup>[a]</sup>the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

<sup>7</sup>The Lord said, “I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. <sup>8</sup>So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. <sup>9</sup>And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. <sup>10</sup>So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.”

<sup>11</sup>But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

<sup>12</sup>And God said, “I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you <sup>[b]</sup>will worship God on this mountain.”

<sup>13</sup>Moses said to God, “Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what shall I tell them?”

<sup>14</sup>God said to Moses, “I am who I am. <sup>[c]</sup>This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I am has sent me to you.’”

<sup>15</sup>God also said to Moses, “Say to the Israelites, ‘The Lord, <sup>[d]</sup>the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.’”

“This is my name forever,  
the name you shall call me  
from generation to generation.

## **Our Epistle Lesson for Sunday, Aug. 30<sup>th</sup> is: Romans 12:0-21 (NIV)**

<sup>9</sup>Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. <sup>10</sup>Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. <sup>11</sup>Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. <sup>12</sup>Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. <sup>13</sup>Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

<sup>14</sup>Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. <sup>15</sup>Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. <sup>16</sup>Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. <sup>[a]</sup>Do not be conceited.

<sup>17</sup>Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. <sup>18</sup>If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. <sup>19</sup>Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” <sup>[b]</sup>says the Lord. <sup>20</sup>On the contrary:

"If your enemy is hungry, feed him;  
if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.  
In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."<sup>[c]</sup>  
<sup>21</sup> Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good.

## **Our Gospel Lesson for Sunday, Aug. 30<sup>th</sup> is: Matthew 16:21-28 (NIV)**

<sup>1</sup> From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

<sup>22</sup> Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!"

<sup>23</sup> Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns."

<sup>24</sup> Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. <sup>25</sup> For whoever wants to save their life<sup>[a]</sup> will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. <sup>26</sup> What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? <sup>27</sup> For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done.

<sup>28</sup> "Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

## **Meditation ~ "The Lure of the Easy Way" ~**

I like the story of the young man, eager to make it to the top, who went to a well-known millionaire businessman and asked him the first reason for his success. The businessman answered without hesitation, "Hard work." After a lengthy pause the young man asked, "What is the SECOND reason?"

We want to deal this morning with the lure of the easy way. Jesus and His disciples were at Caesarea Philippi. Their ministry to this point had been a stunning success. Crowds pressed in on them everywhere they went. People eagerly reached out to touch this attractive young teacher from Nazareth. The disciples themselves were caught up in the excitement of it all. Jesus asked them, "Who do you say I am?" and Simon Peter answered enthusiastically, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God!" It was one of the most dramatic moments in the disciples' pilgrimage with Jesus.

Then Jesus changed the subject. He began to tell them that the crowds would soon turn against Him; He would be crucified, on the third day he would be raised. The disciples didn't know what to make of all this. Simon Peter took Jesus aside: "Forbid it Lord that these things should happen to you." Jesus' response to Simon Peter is as harsh as any words in the New Testament: "Get behind me Satan! You are not on the side of God but of man."

Perhaps Jesus called Simon Peter Satan' because of Jesus' experience in the wilderness immediately after His baptism by John. In today's lingo, it was there that Satan revealed to Jesus the way to make a million dollars in three easy steps turn stones to bread, leap off the pinnacle of the temple, "Bow down and worship me!" I see Satan not as a red caped figure with a pitchfork but dressed in a \$400 suit and offering in a glib and polished tongue instant

success, instant glamour, instant gratification. We can see Satan almost anywhere today. Jesus encountered him this time in Simon Peter: "Forbid it Lord that you should have to suffer and die."

If there is any doubt that Jesus is resisting the lure of the easy way, listen to the words that follow: "If any man would be my disciple, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

Many of us today are making the mistake of following the easy way. We see it in our family life. Homes are disintegrating because a father or a mother decides one day that enough is enough and simply walks out. To be sure, being a parent is hard work. A comedian says that some people have children as a means of a kind of immortality. He says he just hopes that all five of his are out of the house before he dies.

We see it in our work. True, it is nice to see that the work ethic has regained respectability. Some of us can remember when young people dreaded taking their place in the business world. That attitude was reflected in a Doonesbury cartoon a quite a few years back that had Zonker Harris noticing a despondent student coming out of the library. Zonker asked, "What's the problem?" The student replied, "It's nothing anybody can do anything about. It's just that tomorrow I'm graduating and on Monday I'm assuming a position as a junior vice president of the Chase Manhattan Bank of New York." Zonker is immediately shocked and saddened and says, "Hey, man, I'm sorry. I didn't know." Those were the seventies. But all that has changed. The students that Kathleen and I meet at Moravian College are excited about the prospect of working in their chosen careers. MANY OF THEM HAVE, at least before March 2020.

Now, a national business magazine asks on its cover, "Whatever happened to ethics?" We may be working harder but we are still seeking the easy way. Too often we see businesses taking the easy way; think about Boeing and the 737 Max, or Volkswagen and their emissions falsifying scandal; they really are the tip of an enormous iceberg that threatens the future of many large and small businesses.

We can also see the desire to follow the easy way in the church. One fellow said to another, "Say, I heard that you bought a new car. How did you ever afford it?" The other fellow replied, "I just cancelled my church pledge." The first one said, "Gee, I wish that I could buy a new car for that little."

We are the devotees of the easy way even though everyone in this hearing this knows TWO IMPORTANT TRUTHS.

**The first is that the path to personal success is that of self denial.** Zig Ziglar tells of visiting the Washington Monument. As he and his party approached the monument, he heard a guide announcing loudly that there would be a two hour wait to ride the elevator to the top of the monument. However, with a smile on his face the guide then said, "There is no waiting to go to the top if you are willing to take the stairs." Successful people know that there is no limit to what a healthy, reasonably intelligent person in this society can accomplish if he or she is willing to "climb the stairs." The opportunity is there for anyone willing to pay the price.

Many years ago during a Los Angeles Open Golf Tournament, Arnold Palmer, the legendary golfer, was interviewed while practicing on the putting green. "Arnie," he was asked, "What do you feel was wrong to make you play so poorly this past year?"

Without looking up from his putting, Arnold answered in his own direct way, "I wasn't hard enough on myself, that's all." Two hours after this brief interview, the same reporter came

back to find Palmer still practicing on the putting green. The reporter concluded, "The greatness of Arnold Palmer is his choice of the hard way."

Pete Carrill, basketball coach at Princeton University, was a Bethlehem native and he grew up with a good friend of mine Rocco Calvo. Rocco invited me to go to a Lafayette/Princeton game. Carrill mentioned Bill Bradley, Princeton's All American forward. His nick name as Dollar Bill, why? Because Bill would shoot 100 shots from around the key at the end of every practice and if he missed one, he would start over. The Hard Way.

Success in life requires a willingness to resist the lure of the easy way. A sound body requires that we exercise, eat the right foods, conquer bad habits. A sound mind requires that we read, that we observe, that we continually learn. A sound marriage requires that each partner goes into it with the understanding that marriage is not a 50/50 proposition but a 70/30 one in which both parties give the 70, perhaps 100/100. A sound family means that we will take the time to be sensitive to the needs of our children, that we provide not only for their physical needs but their emotional and spiritual needs as well. Such goals require sacrifice, they require perseverance, they require determination. But everyone of us knows that the path to personal success is the path of self-denial.

**We also know that self denial is essential to the salvation of the world.** Here is the missing summons in our day. Our world faces some tremendous challenges. Is there on one who cares enough to act? Some cynic has said, "When the going gets tough, everyone leaves." That happened to Jesus. As the way got harder, the numbers of those who followed dwindled until finally He died alone on Calvary. Yet, if He had been unwilling to lay down His life, the world would never have known the love of the Father. If those early disciples had not picked up Jesus' cross and followed after Him, we still would not know about that love and if you and I do not pick up the cross in our time make those hard choices and assume those difficult responsibilities our children's children will not know the old, old story of Jesus and His love.

You may know the thrilling story of Glen Cunningham, I remember reading a Landmark Book about him when I was in third grade or so. Became one of my heroes. Cunningham was a young man whose legs were so badly burned as a boy that doctors said he would never walk again. However, this determined champion went on to win an Olympic gold medal as a miler. Even more importantly, Glen Cunningham devoted his life to helping troubled young people. Once, his wife asked, "Glen, why do we have to give so much more than others? No one else is doing what we are." Glen answered, "That's the reason, Ruth. No one else is doing it."

Richard Leaky, the famous archeologist who worked in northern Kenya, discussed in his book People of the Lake what it is that separates man from the great apes. It is not man's intelligence, says Leakey, but his generosity. Humans are unique in the having the ability to share. Humans are capable of genuine compassion. Only human beings are capable of laying down their lives for a friend. When it comes to taking up the cross of self denial, however, many of us have not discovered our humanity. If we don't care what happens to this world, who will? If we don't feed the hungry, who will? If we don't shelter the homeless, who will? If we don't tell the world about Christ, who will?

I recall the words of General William Booth, founder of The Salvation Army and a friend to the down and out. Three months, before his death he wrote: "While women weep as they do now, I'll fight; while little children go hungry as they do now, I'll fight; while men go to prison, in and out, in and out, as they do now, I'll fight; while there is a drunkard left, while there is a poor lost girl upon the streets, while there remains one dark soul without the light of God, I'll fight - fight to the very end."

Can you imagine General Booth writing a book entitled Looking Out For Number One? What has happened to our society? "If any man or woman would be my disciple," Jesus says to us, "Let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." That is the word we desperately need to hear. It is a call, as M. Scott Peck would phrase it to "a road less travelled." In Zig Ziglar's analogy it is the lonely stairs as opposed to the crowded elevator. Or as Jesus himself once said, it is the narrow way that only a committed few will pursue.

How about you? The road to personal success is the road of self denial. Any worthwhile self-help book will tell you that. Self-denial, however, is also essential to the salvation of the world.

The story is told of a worker in an inner-city mission who had given many years to a most discouraging ministry. A friend came to him one day and said, "Why don't you leave this job before you are broken by its inhuman burden? Why don't you run away from it all?" The man replied, "There are times when I would very much like to leave it all. But there is a strange, loving man on a cross who won't let me."

Jesus said, "If anyone would be my disciple, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." That is His call to your life and mine today. Can He count on you? Will you join the company of the committed? Will you take up your cross today?



**Affirmation of Faith:** (Please read together in UNISON)

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

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

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

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

**Pastoral Prayer:**

L: Gracious and loving Creator, Sometimes the words just are not there. God, you are so amazing that our words and thoughts of how best to praise you pale in comparison to the splendors of your name. You are the Almighty, you are the Redeemer, you are grace never ending and the embodiment of love itself. And when we come to you in prayer, sometimes words fail us in what to say. Yes, we lift up our concerns, and yet sometimes they seem so small in comparison to the tribulations encountered across your creation. How can our problems compare to disasters people face, or the fighting that surrounds people trying to escape, or the horrors that no child should ever experience?

We pray for continued healing for Collette Andreadis, Bob Arnold Wendy Wandersee, Jeanette Orso, Sal Giamoni, Danny K, Bonnie David, Janet Kobler's cousin Karen B, Moe, Keith Berger and Harold Mims. We remember Marjorie Harron, Helena Rapp, Phyllis Rush, Evelyn Ritter and Helen Litzenberger, in our prayers.

Lord God, sometimes when we come to you to pray, we are clueless as to what we should ask for. You know the thoughts in our minds and the desires of our hearts, and there are times when they conflict. Sometimes we want what is not always the best for us, and there are times that we long to hold on to the things we should let go of. There are times when really the best thing we can do is just pray thy will be done. In these moments, dear God, we are so very thankful for the lessons of your Son Jesus Christ for teaching us the words to pray when our own are insufficient, for our tradition teaches that Jesus said to pray to Our Father ...

**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 God, Jesus promised his disciples the gift of the Holy Spirit, a gift that remains as powerful and transformative today as it was on the first Pentecost. With generous and thankful hearts, we offer our gifts to you — our time, treasure and talent, but most of all, our hearts. Use us and these offerings for your purposes and glory. Amen.**

\* **DOXOLOGY** (SPOKEN in Unison)

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

**Closing Hymn:** #198 - "Lift High the Cross"

**Benediction:**

Let your lives witness to Christ's love.  
Let your words bring reconciliation.  
Let your thoughts be of peace.  
Let your touch bring healing.  
Let your actions count for justice.  
Be a sign of hope and a beacon of joy.  
Go and may God's blessing go with you.



**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](mailto: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. 30<sup>th</sup>, 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](http://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.

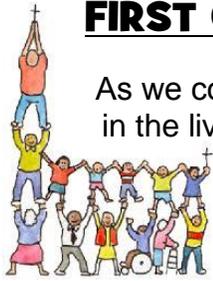


**Rev. Mike is hosting a Virtual WED. EVENING BIBLE STUDY via Zoom, live at 7:00 p.m.!** (NOT 7:30) can join in on the computer or on the PHONE!!! This virtual, live, group Bible Study runs from 30 to 60 minutes, depending on what topics come into the conversation. You can join in on line or, you can 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 Collette Andreadis, Bob Arnold Wendy Wandersee, Jeanette Orso, Sal Giamoni, Danny K, Bonnie David, Janet Kobler’s cousin Karen B, Moe, Keith Berger and Harold Mims. We remember Marjorie Harron, Helena Rapp, Phyllis Rush, Evelyn Ritter and Helen Litzenberger, in our prayers. We offer prayers of sympathy to Megan McGinley’s family.

**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.

Also, please pray for the safety of the painting technicians & other contractors who are working on our Steeple restoration project. At times they are working 130 ft. up!

**THANK YOU** for your prayers, cards & calls as I recovered from my recent hip replacement surgery. ~ Bob Arnold



**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 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](mailto: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!

Please update the announcement in Sunday's Bulletin regarding the Steeple Restoration project. We have hit another fund raising milestone of \$102,000!

A few Finial 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

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

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



## **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, Colette A., 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., "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](mailto: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!***

