

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...

[OCTOBER 11th Worship Video](#)

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, October 11th, 2020 ~

~ The Nineteenth Sunday After Pentecost ~

~ Access Sunday ~ Disability Awareness Sunday ~



Opening Hymn: ~ "Holy, Holy, Holy"

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

—Based on Psalm 85

L: People of God, the Lord is merciful!

P: **God forgives our sin and pardons all our debts.**

("Call To Worship" continues...)

L: People of God, the Lord is good!

P: God restores us to the way of salvation.

L: People of God, the Lord is love!

P: God revives our spirit so that we may rejoice.

L: People of God, the Lord is faithful!

P: God speaks so that we may follow.

L: People of God, the Lord is righteous!

P: God's glory fills this place. Let us worship the Lord our God!

Call to Confession:

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

Confession of Sin: (Spoken together, in Unison)

All: O God, you are the Holy One, and your faithfulness is constant. Forgive us when we spurn your love, turning from your open embrace to run to the things we think will bring us happiness and security. In your mercy, bring us back to your side, to the arms that ache to hold us and the love that longs to heal us. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon:

~ Exodus 34:6; Psalm 86:15

L: God is merciful and gracious, full of forgiveness, abounding in love and over-flowing with blessing. Receive the gift of forgiveness; live this day with new hope and strength to love.

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)

All: 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, Oct. 11th is: Exodus 32:1-14 (NIV)

The Golden Calf

¹ When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, "Come, make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him."

² Aaron answered them, "Take off the gold earrings that your wives, your sons and your daughters are wearing, and bring them to me."

³ So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron.

⁴ He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf, fashioning it with a tool. Then they said, “These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.”

⁵ When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf and announced, “Tomorrow there will be a festival to the LORD.”

⁶ So the next day the people rose early and sacrificed burnt offerings and presented fellowship offerings. Afterward they sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry.

⁷ Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go down, because your people, whom you brought up out of Egypt, have become corrupt.

⁸ They have been quick to turn away from what I commanded them and have made themselves an idol cast in the shape of a calf. They have bowed down to it and sacrificed to it and have said, ‘These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.’

⁹ “I have seen these people,” the LORD said to Moses, “and they are a stiff-necked people.

¹⁰ Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation.”

¹¹ But Moses sought the favor of the LORD his God. “LORD,” he said, “why should your anger burn against your people, whom you brought out of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand?

¹² Why should the Egyptians say, ‘It was with evil intent that he brought them out, to kill them in the mountains and to wipe them off the face of the earth’? Turn from your fierce anger; relent and do not bring disaster on your people.

¹³ Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel, to whom you swore by your own self: ‘I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and I will give your descendants all this land I promised them, and it will be their inheritance forever.’ ”

¹⁴ Then the LORD relented and did not bring on his people the disaster he had threatened.

Our Epistle Lesson for Sunday, Oct. 11th is: Philippians 4:1-9 (NIV)

The Final Appeal for Steadfastness and Unity

⁴ Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends!

² I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. ³ Yes, and I ask you, my true companion, help these women since they have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

Final Exhortations

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. ⁹ Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

Our Gospel Lesson for Sunday, Oct. 11th is: Matthew 22:1-14 (NIV)

The Parable of the Wedding Banquet

22 Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying:² “The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. ³ He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come.

⁴ “Then he sent some more servants and said, ‘Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.’

⁵ “But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. ⁶ The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. ⁷ The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.

⁸ “Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. ⁹ So go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.’ ¹⁰ So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, the bad as well as the good, and the wedding hall was filled with guests.

¹¹ “But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. ¹² He asked, ‘How did you get in here without wedding clothes, friend?’ The man was speechless.

¹³ “Then the king told the attendants, ‘Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

¹⁴ “For many are invited, but few are chosen.”

Meditation ~ “Invited to the Feast”

A first grade teacher gave her 6-year-olds an assignment. The next day they were to bring in a symbol of their religion.

The next morning, she called on Isaac, who stood up and said, "I am Jewish and this Star of David is the symbol of my religion."

The teacher then called upon Mary, who stood up saying, "I am Catholic and this Rosary is a symbol of my religion."

Next came Bobby. "I am United Church of Christ," he said, and held up a casserole dish. We sure have a lot of meals, coffee hours, and picnics here at First UCC.

Have you ever noticed how often food and drink are mentioned in the New Testament? How about banquets and weddings?

Jesus even called the church, his bride!

In our text for the day, Jesus compares the kingdom of heaven to a king whose son was getting married. The king sent forth his servants to invite people to the wedding feast. In Jesus' time, weddings were huge events that could often last a week or longer. Many parents saved up for years in order to throw a lavish celebration. For this reason, wedding invitations were serious matters. They represented an enormous investment. But many who were invited to this wedding ignored the invitation. This displeased the king, as you might expect,

and he told his servants to forget about those who had been invited and to gather up anyone they could find off the streets to bring them to the wedding feast instead. And the image we have is a wedding feast attended by the homeless, the rejected, winos and prostitutes, people off the streets. And there was a great party--thrown not for society's elite, but for all who would accept the invitation.

Pastor Todd Outcalt tells of attending a family reunion many years ago at a neighborhood park. Everyone was excited about re-connecting with distant relatives. But as the family settled in for the picnic, they noticed one young man who seemed out of place. He was painfully thin and dressed in threadbare clothes. No one recognized him. Slowly, it dawned on the family that this young man was probably homeless and definitely hungry, and that he had wandered into the family reunion in the hopes of getting a good meal. They decided to make him a member of their family that day. They fed the young stranger platefuls of food and included him in all their games and activities. And everyone, says Todd, had a great time.

The kingdom of heaven is like that, says Jesus. All who will come are invited. No one is left out. The kingdom is like a family reunion--like a fun party--like a wedding feast.

An informal survey was made at a missions conference thirty years back. Forty pastors and cross-cultural missionaries were together. And one speaker posed the question: What image do you have in mind when you present the gospel of Jesus Christ to someone? Do you see it as snatching branding irons from the burning fire, or as inviting people to a feast?

You know what they said? The pastors said they saw it as snatching people from a burning fire. And the missionaries said they saw it as inviting people to a feast.

Interesting. The pastors had an image of plucking branding irons from the fire.

Perhaps that should not be surprising. Clergy are often visited by people in distress--people in trouble--people at their wit's end--people who have nowhere else to turn. It is not rare for people to turn to the church when their worlds have fallen apart. It is easy for pastors to see ourselves as physicians of the soul, bringing healing to broken hearts--rescuers pulling people from the flames of lives gone awry.

But the cross-cultural missionaries saw their task as that of inviting persons to a feast. This is an entirely different approach to the life of faith. The missionaries see themselves not as healers of broken lives but as emissaries of the King inviting people to experience a reality more desirable than anything they have known before. They see themselves as guides--pointing the way to peace that transcends all human heartache--joy that surpasses all human pain--love that conquers all human loneliness. Come, all who will, to a feast prepared by God.

And why shouldn't we picture the kingdom life as a feast? Just think what happens when you accept Christ's invitation to the wedding feast.

FOR ONE THING, YOU HAVE A NEW REASON TO LIVE. The sad thing about many people today is not that they have problems. The sad thing is that they have no purpose.

In a cartoon Lucy tells Charlie Brown that she's decided to begin a new hobby. Charlie commends her decision, saying how important it is to accomplish something meaningful with your life. In response Lucy says something like this, "Accomplish something? I thought all we were supposed to do was keep busy!"

There are a lot of folks who are keeping very busy, but not accomplishing very much. We can be like the proverbial octopus on roller skates. We can be here, then there, ultimately all over the place, but getting anywhere specific. Pursuing many pleasures but finding little that brings lasting happiness.

In 1984, Greg Anderson's doctor informed him that he had metastatic lung cancer. At most, they believed he would live another month or two. Anderson refused to accept his doctors' diagnosis. He began searching out and interviewing people who had outlived their doctors' predictions. Eventually, Anderson compiled what he'd learned into the book, 50 ESSENTIAL THINGS TO DO WHEN THE DOCTOR SAYS IT'S CANCER. His most compelling finding was that the people who had lived the longest had decided they had a purpose for their life, a reason that they had to go on living. One woman had decided that she must help raise her grandchildren. A man had committed himself to starting a local chapter of Habitat for Humanity. Most of the people who had beaten the cancer odds had done so because they had a purpose to which they devoted their lives.

That is a finding that is confirmed time and time again. If you feel a sense of purpose for your life, you will be far healthier and happier than you would be without that sense of purpose.

Myrtle Howells was ninety-one years old, and feeling like her life had no more meaning. At one point, she actually prayed that God would either give her a purpose or take her life. God chose the first option. He gave Myrtle the desire to start a pen-pal relationship with prisoners. She wrote a kind letter to the Atlanta Penitentiary, offering to correspond with any prisoner who needed a friend. And she signed the letter, "Grandmother Howell."

Little did Myrtle Howell know what she was getting herself into. The prison inmates desperately needed the love and attention that she had to give them. Over the years, she ended up corresponding with hundreds of hurting people. One inmate wrote that she had believed herself to be incapable of love, but she knew she loved her Grandmother Howell. And Myrtle found that her last years were her most fulfilling ones, because she had a ministry that gave her such joy.

Deep in our heart I believe we know that, don't we? THE HAPPIEST PEOPLE IN THE WORLD ARE THOSE WHO HAVE SOMETHING TO LIVE FOR. And it has nothing to do with our bank account or our stock folio. Material success can give us a feeling of relief, but it cannot give us joy. It can ease our fears about the future, but it cannot fill that future with love and peace and hope. As an anonymous writer once put it:

Money can buy a house but not a home./Money can buy a bed but not sleep.

Money can buy a clock but not time. /Money can buy a book but not knowledge.

Money can buy food but not an appetite./Money can buy position but not respect.

Money can buy blood but not life./Money can buy medicine but not health.

Money can buy sex but not love./Money can buy insurance but not safety.

Money can buy a church pew but not salvation.

No one can be truly happy who does not have a reason to live.

Denis Waitley tells how in the summer of 1993, the rivers of the Midwest--the Mississippi, Missouri, and others--surged over levees into communities and farmlands. During this worst flooding in regional history, heroic volunteers worked to near exhaustion filling sandbags around the clock. In one instance, they were joined by a group of convicts from a boot-camp

prison program in Greene County, Illinois. The convicts had been sent to help with sandbags for shoring up a levee. If it failed, the little town of Inota on the Iowa-Illinois border faced destruction.

The criminals worked with furious passion and energy. They refused to sleep. They wouldn't leave the sandbag brigades even to eat. Still, the levee gave way and the town, with its two hundred houses, was lost. Now the convicts wept openly in frustration and compassion.

Why had these men from the local prison suddenly become good Samaritans? Because after dealing in drugs, violence, and destruction, they had a positive purpose in life, perhaps for the first time. They had a mission to save a town. They had the opportunity to observe people who cared for each other working as one for the same goal. This caused them to begin to care.

Wouldn't we like to have the kind of passion for life those convicts discovered working to save that town? The way is simple. Find a mighty purpose for your life.

Have you noticed that most successful companies today have mission statements? "This is why we exist as a company," say these statements. Wouldn't it be helpful if everyone on earth had a personal mission statement?

"This is why I am here: a, b, c, d." You and I are invited to experience life as we have never experienced it before--with joy and exhilaration and love. We are invited to a feast.

But there is an addendum to this parable. THERE WAS ONE POOR MAN AT THE WEDDING FEAST WHO WAS NOT PROPERLY DRESSED FOR THE OCCASION. That should not be surprising. Where would homeless people find proper clothing for a wedding feast? Why was the king so upset with this one man?

Scholars tell us that in Jesus' time, kings often gave their guests fine robes to wear during their visit. The king was not rejecting this person because he had worn the wrong clothes. The king would have willingly supplied the right clothes for his guest. Evidently, though, the guest had not felt it necessary to accept the king's offer of fine robes. He had chosen to stay in his own common clothes instead.

So it is with us. We want to enjoy the feast, but we do not want to put on the new garment God has for us--the garment of a new purpose for our lives, the garment of love for all people, the garment of personal responsibility, the garment of a new walk with God. We have on the wrong apparel to enjoy the feast, and we never discover all that God has laid up for us.

There is a famous line from the show Mame: "Life is a banquet, and most poor fools are starving to death." The kingdom of God is a banquet, a feast and a party all rolled into one. But many are starving. Why? Because we will not accept God's invitation to come to the feast.



Affirmation of Faith: (Spoken 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 Redeemer, we give you thanks and praise for the gift of your word and for its power to encourage, comfort, convict and transform. We hear the word and are keenly aware of our inability to follow it in either letter or spirit. We need a merciful high priest who sees us as we are, not as we often portray ourselves to be, and you have given him to us in the person of your Son, Jesus. We thank you that he understands our weakness, sympathizes with the brokenness of our human condition and reaches out to us in love, compassion and grace. It is because of Jesus' life, lived without sin, and his work on the cross that we come to you with confidence, knowing that you welcome us home and hear us with tenderness and concern.

We pray for continued healing for the President and First Lady, for all Covid victims, Collette Andreadis, Jeanette Orso, Sal Giamoni, Danny K, Bonnie David, Karen B, Keith Berger, Shirley Galante David Freytag. We pray for the Ashton Family as they grieve for the family matriarch Arlene. We remember Marjorie Harron, Helena Rapp, Phyllis Rush, Evelyn Ritter, Helen Litzenberger and Naomi Protyniak. 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: Thanks be to thee, O God, for all good gifts, and especially for thy inexpressible gift of the Lord Jesus. Help us, O Lord, to see wherein we have been blessed, and to be a blessing to others. 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.**

Benediction:

Go forth, children of God, as people who are forgiven and who have much love to share with those who have yet to sense their forgiveness, who have yet to experience God's love. And may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you and rest upon you and upon those you love.

Closing Hymn: "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"



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, October 11th, 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.



We will continue to collect our special Neighbors In Need offering through October.



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.



RUMMAGE UPDATE!!! PLEASE NOTE...

We are NOT able to accept any more Rummage at this time!

We have rooms full & the next opportunity for a sale is not until the Spring of 2021 & we are already out of room! So please hold on to any future donations until we have a definite date & can find more room.



MEN'S CLUB FUND RAISER ~ The Men's Club will hold a Shammy Shine Car Wash Gift Card fundraiser once again this year. This fundraiser will start in October and run through the end of November. These gift cards make great Stocking Stuffers! Cards will be available in denominations of \$10, \$20, \$50 and \$100.



OCTOBER SCHOOL SUPPLY PROJECT! We are partnering with some of our 'Sister Churches' to collect funds through the month of Oct., for bulk purchase of school supplies for our EASD. **There is a basket in the Narthex for your monetary donations.**



DON'T FORGET , Tues., Oct. 13th is the last day to register to vote in NJ. Next Mon., Oct. 19th is the last day to register to vote in PA.

Also, IF you received a mail-in ballot, please carefully follow all the directions while filling it out & preparing to return it!



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".]*



KEEP IN PRAYER... Please keep David Freytag, Shirley Galante, Collette Andreadis, Bob Arnold, Wendy Wandersee, Jeanette Orso, Joe K., Sal Giamoni, Danny K., Bonnie David, Janet Kobler's cousin Karen B, Moe & Keith Berger. We remember Marjorie Harron, Helena Rapp, Phyllis Rush, Evelyn Ritter and Helen Litzenberger, in our prayers. We offer prayers of sympathy to the Ashton Family, the family of Naomi Schleicher, the family of Joshua Fulmer and to Megan McGinley's family.



Lord, we pray for the people of California & the western United States who are engulfed in wild fires & smoke. Give them peace & strength. We pray for You to watch over all the smoke jumpers, firefighters, rescue workers, shelter workers, volunteers & neighbors as they all try to help each other.

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.

Lord, we pray for this whole world as we battle to overcome the Covid-19 virus & all who are affected, including our President, Mrs. Trump & their staff & families.



WITH LOVING THANKS...

I would like to thank Pastor Mike for his several phone calls & visits to Meg's mom, Pam, her father, Tim and to me. I would also like to thank so many of my church family for the numerous phone calls, sympathy cards and notes I received during this difficult and sad time in my life. Thank you also for all the prayers said during the illness and death of my dear granddaughter Megan.



~ Naomi Protyniak



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.



'Steeple Restoration ~

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 searchingFirst United Church of Christ Easton PA, then click on the steeple logo!



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, **the President, Mrs. Trump, Hope Hicks & their staff, families & 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 California & the western United States who are engulfed in wild fires & smoke. Give them peace & strength. We pray for You to watch over all the smoke jumpers, firefighters, rescue workers, shelter workers, volunteers & neighbors as they all try to help each other.

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., David F., Debbie S. & Family, Deacon Anthony Koury, Doris S., Evelyn R., Fawn B., Ferne, Gregg D., Helena, James R., Jeanette O. & Family, Jill R., Joe K., Joe R., Kim Kely, 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.,

Shirley 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 Ashton Family, the family of Naomi Schleicher, the family of Joshua Fulmer, and the family of Megan McGinley & 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!***

