

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 18th 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

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

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



~ Sunday, October 18th, 2020 ~

~ The Twentieth Sunday After Pentecost ~



OPENING HYMN: ~ "Glorious Things of You Are Spoken"

CALL TO WORSHIP: (Please read responsively – L = Leader, P = People)

L: O give thanks to the Lord, call on his name, make known his deeds among the peoples.

P: **Sing praises to God; tell of all God's wonderful works.**

("Call To Worship" continues...)

L: Seek the Lord and his strength; seek God's presence continually. Remember the wonderful works he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he uttered, O offspring of his servant Abraham, children of Jacob, his chosen ones.

P: You asked, and God brought quails, and gave you food from heaven in abundance.

All: For God remembered his holy promise. Praise the Lord! Amen.

—Adapted from Psalm 105:1-6, 40, 42

CALL TO CONFESSION:

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

(Silent Confession)

CONFESSION OF SIN: (Spoken together, in Unison)

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

ASSURANCE OF PARDON:

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

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 heavenly God, your word is our source of light, enlightening our paths, erasing our blindness. In our reading, shine your truth. Speak to us boldly once again, that we may proclaim your truth with courage.

HOLY SCRIPTURES

Our Old Testament Lesson for Sunday, Oct. 18th is: Exodus 33:12-23 (NIV)

¹² Moses said to the Lord, "You have been telling me, 'Lead these people,' but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. You have said, 'I know you by name and you have found favor with me.' ¹³ If you are pleased with me, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you. Remember that this nation is your people."

¹⁴ The Lord replied, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."

¹⁵ Then Moses said to him, “If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. ¹⁶ How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?”

¹⁷ And the Lord said to Moses, “I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name.”

¹⁸ Then Moses said, “Now show me your glory.”

¹⁹ And the Lord said, “I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the Lord, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. ²⁰ But,” he said, “you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live.”

²¹ Then the Lord said, “There is a place near me where you may stand on a rock. ²² When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. ²³ Then I will remove my hand and you will see my back; but my face must not be seen.”

Our Epistle Lesson for Sunday, Oct. 18th is: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 (NIV)

1 Paul, Silas^[a] and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

Grace and peace to you.

Thanksgiving for the Thessalonians' Faith

² We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. ³ We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ For we know, brothers and sisters^[b] loved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵ because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. ⁶ You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. ⁷ And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. ⁸ The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it, ⁹ for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

Our Gospel Lesson for Sunday, Oct. 18th is: Matthew 22:15-22 (NIV)

¹⁵ Then the Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap him in his words. ¹⁶ They sent their disciples to him along with the Herodians. “Teacher,” they said, “we know that you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You aren't swayed by others, because you pay no attention to who they are. ¹⁷ Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay the imperial tax^[a] to Caesar or not?”

¹⁸ But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, “You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me? ¹⁹ Show me the coin used for paying the tax.” They brought him a denarius, ²⁰ and he asked them, “Whose image is this? And whose inscription?”

²¹ “Caesar’s,” they replied.

Then he said to them, “So give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.”

²² When they heard this, they were amazed. So they left him and went away.”

MEDITATION ~ “Caesar’s or God’s”

Let’s talk about leadership for a few moments. It is an important subject in today’s world. There is a professor from University College London who has written many books on personality and leadership. And he has some strong views concerning incompetent leaders. He says incompetent leaders create a toxic corporate culture that drags everybody in their sphere of influence down. And he claims that the number one trait that incompetent leaders possess is arrogance. According to this professor’s studies and experience, an arrogant leader is a toxic leader.

This professor put together a simple, but amusing, 10-question quiz to measure a leader’s level of arrogance. Here are some of the questions he asks: “Do you have a special gift for playing office politics?” “Are you blessed with a natural charisma?” and my favorite, “Are you just too talented to fake humility?”

I thought of this professor and his quiz when I read our Bible passage for today. The Pharisees wanted to make Jesus look like an incompetent leader. They wanted to trip him up, make him less popular in the eyes of the Jewish people. So, they asked him a loaded question: “Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?”

The Pharisees thought this was a no-win situation for Jesus. Whichever way he answered, he was going to make somebody angry. The Romans demanded heavy taxes from the Jewish people while at the same time oppressing them. We understand taxation without representation. That’s the reason we rebelled against the British.

Zealous Jews believed that paying taxes to Rome was not only a burden to them, it was dishonoring to God because it was to God they owed their ultimate allegiance. If Jesus wanted to make himself popular with the Jewish people, he had only to say it was against God’s law to pay taxes to Caesar. However, if he advocated publicly against paying taxes to Caesar, he would certainly get in hot water with the Roman authorities.

I understand that lots of people despise paying taxes—even today in this country. Here in the U.S., plenty of people have tried to escape paying taxes. Every year, creative people go to court to make the claim that paying taxes is unconstitutional and even illegal.

One of the most creative arguments I’ve heard of against paying taxes is that taxation is a form of slavery, so it violates the 13th Amendment to the Constitution. Yes, the IRS has been taken to court several times over this argument and, of course, each time, the IRS has won.

I think we all wish there was some way to skip paying taxes. It was true in Jesus’ day, and it’s just as true today. I like this advice comedian Jay Leno has given: “Worried about an IRS audit?” he asks. “Avoid what’s called a ‘red flag.’ That’s something the IRS always looks for.

For example,” says Leno, “say you have some money left in your bank account after paying taxes, *that’s* a red flag.”

Well, Leno may be right. This conversation between Jesus and the Pharisees was full of red flags. The Pharisees didn’t really care about Jesus’ opinion about taxes though; they only cared about ruining his popularity with the people. Jesus, of course, didn’t care about his popularity or even his own safety. He cared about only one thing: doing the work of his Father. So Jesus didn’t have to struggle with his answer. He said, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”

Now if you want an answer that’s unpopular with everyone, this is it. “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” Just as some people resent paying taxes, some people would rather not give God that which is God’s.

Pastor Brian Kluth tells of a friend’s four-year-old daughter, Amanda, who was determined not to put her quarter in the offering plate one Sunday. Amanda’s parents were trying to teach her to be a faithful and cheerful giver. But Amanda wasn’t having any of it! Her parents were embarrassed that they had to pry the quarter out of her little hand and drop it into the offering plate.

Later that afternoon, Amanda’s mom heard her playing on the backyard swing. Every time Amanda got the swing up to its highest point on the swing set, she would shout at the sky, “God, I want my quarter back! God, I want my quarter back!”

Some people would rather not give God that which is God’s including Amanda.

Jesus wasn’t trying to pile extra stress on us when he pointed out our responsibility to both pay our taxes to the government and give to God’s work. He was trying to teach us an important spiritual principle: **Giving is the ultimate sign that we trust God.**

If we want to know what we really believe about God, we can examine our checkbook. Our level of giving toward God’s work matches our level of trust in God. Do we believe that, if we invest in God’s work, God will always provide for our needs? This is where the rubber meets the road when it comes to faith. Do we trust God enough to give a portion of our resources to do His work?

Let me tell you about a Christian couple named Jerry and Muriel Caven. The Cavens had started numerous successful businesses over the years. As they reached retirement age, however, they realized that accumulating wealth was not what life was all about. They believed God was leading them to participate in a new venture. That venture was overseas Christian missions.

Instead of jealously protecting their retirement savings as most of us do, the Cavens decided to give away larger and larger portions of their income to God’s work. Jerry Caven says that their generosity was stoked by the realization that God was the true owner of all they had anyway. As he says, “Once we understood we were giving away [not our money, but] God’s money to God’s work, we had a peace and joy we never had back when we thought it was our money!”

Isn’t it interesting how trust in God usually leads to greater peace and joy? If we don’t have much joy in our lives, it may be because we do not trust God.

Putting our trust only in money and material things for security or status or identity is a sure path to misery. Trusting in material things leads to anxiety, fear, greed, conflict—all the qualities that are out of alignment with God’s will for our life. The path to joy lies in sharing with God in the work of His Kingdom.

God wants to save us from the empty, frustrating, meaningless insecurity that comes from putting our trust only in material things. That life is a bottomless pit. There is never enough to satisfy. But giving to the work of God gives our lives meaning and purpose.

And that brings us to the second thing Jesus was teaching us in this Bible passage. First of all, giving is the ultimate sign that we trust God. **And secondly, giving is the ultimate opportunity we have to impact our community and the world.**

Sometimes we look at giving money to God's work, and see a loss from our bank account; a minus sign in our balance sheet. And that's where anxiety and greed kick in. When we look at giving to God as an opportunity it is the greatest way to impact the world in a concrete way.

Pastor W.A. Criswell told the story of a man who was asked, "What did you do yesterday?"

The man said that yesterday he taught a class in a church college. On Tuesday, he was down in the Rio Grande Valley working in a Vacation Bible School. On Wednesday, he was operating in a church hospital in Nigeria. On Thursday, he was teaching the Word of God in the Amazon jungle. On Friday, he was building a church house in the Philippines. On Saturday, he was preaching in Tokyo, Japan.

The friend stopped him, "Man, even in the jet age you can't do all that!"

The fellow said, "But I do it every day. I give to my church it goes all over the earth doing good for Jesus."

Think about it. We may never physically go to Haiti to feed a starving child, or dig wells in Honduras, or provide after-school activities for needy kids in Boston or share the good news of Jesus with hurting people in our community. But through our giving, we can do all these things and more. Our money can fuel ministries across our community and state. We support ProJeCt, and Pheobe Home and Bethany Home. Sue Beling will soon be speaking about UCC and Church World Services programs that save lives. Ministries that change lives.

We may be unsure about the ministries God is calling us to. We may be super-busy and not know how we can fit ministry into your schedule. You may wonder how our limited resources can really make a difference, but you would be wrong. Truly every little bit helps.

In 2011, former University of Georgia football coach Mark Richt and his wife Katharyn, both devoted Christians, sold their second home—an eight-bedroom mansion worth almost \$2 million—so they could give more time and money to charities. Mark and Katharyn had been reading the book *The Hole in Our Gospel* by Richard Stearns, the president of World Vision.

The book created in them a passion to contribute to international missions. As Mark Richt said, "You know what? I don't want to pour money into a home like that when I can use it for better things, for eternal things."

Most of us don't have a \$2 million house to sell to give to missions, but that doesn't mean that we can't have the same joy that the Richts discovered. Every dollar we give to the work of God is an eternal investment in sharing life and hope.

Giving is the ultimate sign that we trust God. Giving is the ultimate opportunity to impact the world. And finally, Jesus is teaching us in this Bible passage: **Giving is the ultimate pathway to joy.** Every hard teaching of God results in a blessing for those who believe and obey. When Jesus taught, "For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it," (Matt. 16: 25), he was teaching a profound and eternal truth. He was teaching us to live in faith rather than in fear.

When Johnny Jennings was eighteen years old, he visited a children's home associated with his church. He tells how moved he was when three little boys at that home ran up to him and begged to be adopted.

Johnny was too young to consider starting a family at that time. But he knew God was calling him to do something to help. So, at 18 years of age he began collecting money to give to that children's home. Since he didn't make much money, he started gathering paper and aluminum scrap on the side and recycling it, then gave the recycling money to support the orphans at the Home. This became a lifetime act of faithfulness.

That is why recently, at the age of 88, Johnny Jennings was honored by the state of Georgia for giving more than \$400,000 to the Georgia Baptist Children's Home through his recycling work. When asked why he dedicated his life to this mission, Jennings says, "The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away."

Could you do that? It all comes down to a matter of trust. Do you want to maximize the positive impact of your life *and* experience more joy in life? Giving to God's work is the surest way to do it. There is nothing else you can possibly spend your money on that can offer you a better return for your investment. But you will never experience the joy that awaits all those who take that step of faith until you give sacrificially to the work of God. So, render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's. You really don't have much choice about that, do you? But much more importantly, render unto God the things that are God's.



AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: (Spoken together, in Unison)

All: We believe that we are the light of the world. We believe we should let our light shine before others, so that they may see our good works and give glory to our Father in heaven.

We believe that our love should be genuine. We believe that we should hate what is evil, and that we should hold fast to what is good.

We believe that if we live by the Spirit, we should also be guided by the Spirit.

We believe in the church, the Body of Christ that is active in the world today to bring reconciliation and justice, and to announce the good news of God's love and forgiveness.

We believe we should not become conceited, compete against one another, or envy one another.

We believe that we should clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience.

We believe that we are called to live lives that are self-controlled, upright and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

PASTORAL PRAYER:

L: O God, whose Son prayed at all times and who taught his disciples to turn to you any time in respectful trust, we pray today for people who do not seem to have the gift of prayer, who do not know how to pray -- perhaps because they do not believe that you are real, perhaps because they cannot believe that you care.

Help them, Father, by the power of your Spirit: Help them take a chance, to pray as if you were indeed real, to pray as if you surely did care. Then respond to their prayers as only you know how -- that their doubts may be banished, their unconscious longing for you stilled.

All-knowing God, we cannot fool you: We are no different! We often fail when trying to

pray -- or fail to pray, period. We know, from aching, humiliating, firsthand experience the doubts of all doubters, the loneliness of all loners. While we pray, sincerely, for others who fumble at prayer, we are praying just as much for ourselves!

We pray for continued healing 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.

Give us your Spirit, O God, to be our teacher. Let us learn from your Spirit the honesty and the terror, the intimacy and the awe, the frustration and the fulfillment of true prayer. And curb our pride, so that we may dare to confide our ups and downs with prayer to loved ones, friends, fellow Christians, for the mutual lightening of burdens. In the name of Jesus. 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 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.**

BENEDICTION: (please read responsively: L= Leader, P=People of the Congregation)

L: Be forever blessed,
P: **Forever loved,**
L: Forever cradled in God's arms,
P: **Forever called by name.**
L: Go, knowing God's grace,
P: **Sharing God's peace,**
L: Living God's justice,
P: **Bearing God's blessing to all.**

Closing Hymn: "Now Thank We All 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 18th, 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 , TOMORROW, Mon., Oct. 19th is the last day to register to vote in PA. THIS FRI. is the last day to submit application for Absentee/Mail In ballots 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, 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.



Stewardship Note ~



Stewardship Campaign....

Our Annual Stewardship campaign has begun. The mailing should arrive over the next week. To help us plan for our 2021 budget, please complete the enclosed pledge card and return it by Sunday, November 8th. Then, join us on Sunday, December 6th, to review and approve the Budget. Thank you in advance for supporting the financial needs of **your** church.
Your Stewardship Committee

A Reminder... 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 to get further information about this payment option.



Steeple Restoration ~

My sincere thanks again to the incredible members of the Steeple Committee for this significant accomplishment .An awesome night and a dream come true after 3 years of planning.

There remain a few outstanding items that are currently being addressed. Also, in addition to the original scope of work, we plan to schedule Bennett Painting to repair and paint the damaged weathervane on top of the spire. This is being scheduled over the next couple of weeks.

Thank you again for your support!

Doreen Arnold - Chair



Check our 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 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 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.,

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!***

