

# First UCC Happenings



## AUGUST 2020



As we usher in the month of August, it seems as if March, and all of the changes that came with it, was only yesterday. As we easily enter into the sixth month of our response to COVID-19 we remain

vigilant in our hope for a flattening of the curve and ultimately a vaccine and/or a cure to not only rid ourselves of this virus, but to return to some idea of “normal” again.

While we place our hope in scientists, researchers, government leaders, and others to guide us through this time in our lives and in our history, we must not forget to also place our hope in the One that is the author and fulfillment of all hope...Almighty God.

Did you know, that as much as the Bible references the word “hope,” it isn’t mentioned once in the book of Revelation...? Perhaps because the revelation is the fulfillment of what we have been longing and hoping for. Let’s go back into Romans 5:3-4, where it says, “Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.”

You see, hope is the byproduct of perseverance. If we never experienced trial or trouble, then we would have no reason for hope and nothing to hope for. Instead, due to our sufferings and experiences, we have a reason to desire more...to hope.

Moving forward into the month of August, may we continue to press forward, ever adjusting to our present situation, being careful to not be so critical of others, except as is useful for building up the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:29). Our hope for COVID-19 is the health of ourselves, our families, our congregation, our community, our nation and the world. Shouldn’t our hope in Christ look the same? God, through His Son Jesus, holds the vaccine to sin and death for ourselves, our families, our church, our community, our nation, and the world.

Ultimately, when we put our hope in God, the revelation will be our hopes’ fulfillment. I pray our Lord’s continued presence and protection for each of you and for your hope to be found and fulfilled in a loving relationship with Him!

~Rev. Ed Lilley



**From the Director of Music**

**Diane Drury**

### Zoom Musical Events

- ✚ Thurs., July 30 at 7 pm – **Zoom Hymn Sing** – please send hymn requests by email to [toccatagirl@aol.com](mailto:toccatagirl@aol.com)
- ✚ Thurs., Aug, 6 at 7 pm – **Zoom Evensong** – anyone interested in doing a reading, please contact me at (757) 206-5602
- ✚ Thurs., Aug. 20 at 7 pm – **Zoom Hymn Sing** – again, send me any requests

### Virtual Choir

Many thanks to everyone who has been taking part in the various Virtual Choir recordings! I know it is not the same as singing together, but what a beautiful experience it is to hear our combined voices in song! I really appreciate your efforts, and it has been delightful figuring out the best ways to create these individual recordings.

So far, we have folks recording themselves on their cellphones, on computers, on iPads, and even over landline telephones (as I record them on my end). I have started including private recording sessions in the chapel with doors open, or in the sanctuary. When we do this, we are standing at least 10 feet apart, and the singer is masked, while I have on both face shield and mask. These sessions last less than 10 minutes in the chapel and less than 30 minutes in the sanctuary.

### Virtual Choir Recording Due Dates for July and August:

- “Bread of the World” and Hymn #311 – due 7/30
- Hymn #427 – due 8/6
- Hymn #250 – due 8/13
- Hymns #240 and #368 - due 8/20
- Hymn #226 – due 8/27



## THE WIDOW'S PLEDGE

By Hope Harle-Mould

*A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny.*

Mark 12:42

When I was growing up, my Presbyterian minister father never revealed to us how much money anyone in the congregation gave to the church. Except once.

Ruth Spencer was an active member of our church. I could tell from visiting their home that Ruth's husband didn't make a lot of money at his job. But he and Ruth were active in the life of our church.

One day out of the blue, Mr. Spencer died and Ruth was left with two young sons to raise. In the fall of that year, the church began its annual stewardship drive. My father assured Ruth that she needn't feel any pressure to keep her pledge at the same level. When the pledges came in, Ruth Spencer had *increased* her pledge, despite – or because of – all she had been through.

Of all the people in that church who could have easily afforded to give more, it was this woman who lifted her devotion to Christ to a new level.

She has lifted my devotion to Christ ever since.

*From These Days, November 23, 2018*





## First UCC Weekly Offering

June 28	\$ 1,322.00	July 5	\$ 4,370.00
July 12	\$ 2,545.00	July 19	\$ 2,235.00

Thank you to all who have practiced stewardship through your gifts during this challenging time. Prayerfully consider your tithing to support the ministries and staff of First UCC. Thank you!

# Building & Grounds

Thank you for acknowledging my 60th year tenure here at First Church with an Anderson's Gift Card. Our East Wing entrance thanks you too with new flowers on display. Love to all of you. ~Judith

Finally, we have gotten the wrong kind of mulch removed from our playground!





## Church-Wide Prayer: Pray with us each day at noon

### August 1-15:

*Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Romans 8:1, NIV*

**Lord our God**, grant that we may be your children who receive the Spirit and all they need from you. You strengthen us not only physically but also inwardly, in our hearts, enabling us to face the uncertainties of earthly life and whatever still needs changing in human society. Keep us from giving in to weakness. May your power be always with us. May we have patience and hope, because you are working for the good and we may wait for it in expectation. Amen.

### August 16-31:

*For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them. Matthew 18:20, NIV*

**Lord our God and our Father**, we praise you because we are allowed to have community together in the name of Jesus, who has opened our eyes to see you and who has promised to be among us when we are gathered in his name. May our hearts remain unshadowed, even when our lives seem to grow difficult and the future looks dark. Protect us whenever we are tempted and have battles to fight. Deliver us. Make us free people who know we belong to you and who are allowed while still on earth to have a share in eternal life. Amen.



# Wider Missions & Outreach

The Wider & Outreach Missions are honoring the request of school supplies from Forrest Elementary. There are items highlighted that are needed most:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ 5 Girl bookbags</li><li>▪ 5 Boys book bags</li><li>▪ 25 boxes of tissue</li><li>▪ 20 containers of sanitizer</li><li>▪ 5 pks of dry erase markers</li><li>▪ 10 boxes of Ziploc bags (Gallon or Sandwich)</li><li>▪ 60 composition Notebooks</li><li>▪ 20 Primary journals</li><li>▪ 50 pks of yellow pencils</li><li>▪ 50 pks Crayola crayons</li><li>▪ 15 pks of colored pencils</li><li>▪ 15 pks of markers</li><li>▪ 25 blunt tipped scissors</li><li>▪ 5 large scissors</li><li>▪ 70 plastic prong folders</li><li>▪ 30 pronged folders</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ 30 NO prong folders</li><li>▪ 15 pks of paper</li><li>▪ 100 glue sticks</li><li>▪ 20 Elmer's glue bottles</li><li>▪ 10 pks of index cards</li><li>▪ 10 pks of pink wedge erasers</li><li>▪ 20 pks of tip erasers</li><li>▪ 5 pks highlighters</li><li>▪ 40 pencil boxes</li><li>▪ 20 earbuds</li><li>▪ 10 containers of disinfecting wipes</li><li>▪ 20 travel size deodorant (10 boys/10 girls)</li><li>▪ 20 packs of Incentive Stickers</li><li>▪ 1 box of disposable Face Masks (50 count)</li></ul>
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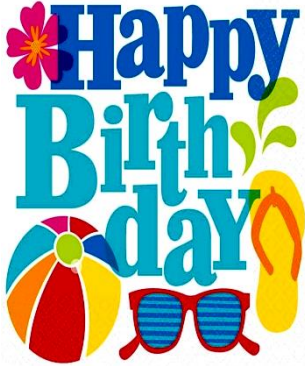
We don't know what the start of school will look like, but Forrest said that items will be needed to send home in packets, if school doesn't open.

Our congregation has always been generous in the past & Forrest is counting on us to help them for this school year.

Stay safe & well.

~Pat & Carol

## AUGUST BIRTHDAYS



5 Alyssa Germanos

8 Carol Diehl

9 Marie Collins

11 Gail Nelson

15 Kevin Yeargin

16 Lee Fischer

19 Kelli Crawford

21 Nicholas Bocklet

25 Sam Phillips

If you have a birthday and it's not on the list, please let us know so we can correct our records.

## *August Anniversaries*

NONE AT THIS TIME

If you have an anniversary in August, September or October, please let us know, so we can correct our records.

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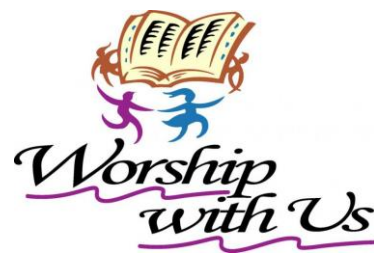
## **An Update on Our Shut-Ins**

Jane Smith is happy to be back at Morningside after six weeks of hospital and rehab visits. She has developed some problems with her eye, but has been under a doctor's care. Helen Speight also fell three weeks ago and broken glass from glasses cut her face so she had a visit to Sentara. The upside of this is that Paige got a 3 hour visit with her mom. Shirley Highsmith got to visit one hour outside with her son and daughter in law last week. Sylvia Travis says whenever they let me thru my door I think I might just skip down the hall. Ernie Hook has a weekly visit from her health nurse and she is still able to answer the questions asked.



## **TOGETHER**

**Worshipping God  
Growing Spiritually  
Serving Others**



**Indoor worship  
services Sundays  
at 10:30am**