



WHAT'S UP

- Cong'l Life.....4-5
- Birthdays.....4
- Prayer Concerns..6
- Household Prayers.....7
- Calendar.....8

“Nothing is outside of the realm of sanctity for the world is infused with God’s presence.” Fr. Greg Boyle (Homeboys Industries)

Praying the News

We live in a time where chaos, disorder, and uncertainty have been the order of the day. As the US death toll from Covid-19 is over 170,000 people, and devastations from tornados, hurricanes, floods and fire, racial violence, rampant unemployment and a myriad of other concerns flood the news and social media, our perceptions of the world can be downright distressing. We are tempted to tune out and turn off.

While I think establishing balance and setting boundaries around how much distressing news we consume in a given day or week is healthy, we also must not close ourselves off completely from the suffering, injustice, and the truths that are coming to light no matter how ugly and painful.

The United States, and perhaps it is fair to say the world as a whole, is in a state of disorder. Father Richard Rohr, in his recent daily meditations writes about the universal patter of “*order, disorder, and reordering*”. *I find this observation comforting and helpful to see the current disorder as part of a larger pattern.* Rohr writes: *“The universal pattern of transformation I’m writing about ...is not limited to religious or spiritual growth. Nor is it only individuals that are invited to make the journey. Whole churches and even cultures experience times of disorder and disruption. In the United States, many of us are discovering that a large number of things we believed to be true—about our nation and ourselves—are not entirely true. I believe this is a necessary step that we must take for the sake of healing and justice in our nation and our world—no matter how “disordering” and even disorienting it may be.”*

He goes on to say that we must remain present for the entire process to experience the reordering and new life. *“Mary Magdalene and the other women were the first witnesses to the resurrection because they remained present for the entire process, from death unto new life;(this is) exactly what is necessary to witness resurrections in our own lives as well.*

I thought it would be good to share a prayer tool to help manage fears, anxieties, grief and despair of the present day and move one to a place of peace and hope – resurrection hope.

In an article entitled “Modern Spiritual Practice: Praying through the News (Tragedy, Violence, Crisis, Injustice)” (September 2019) Cameron Bellm developed a six movement meditation/prayer inspired by Ignatian principles. Please set aside time to engage this helpful and faithful spiritual practice.

First Movement: Begin by acknowledging the presence of God, who created the heavens and earth, and who cares deeply and intimately about each and every

(continued on page 2)

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human being, all of whom bears the image of God in the world. Ask Jesus to open your heart and your mind as you read or watch, and for Christ to lead you to articles that spur your participation in the great redemptive work of God. Before you begin, dwell for a moment on your privilege of being removed from the situation about which you are reading. Ask God to illuminate ways in which you can use your privilege for the benefit of others.

Second Movement: Read the article. St. Ignatius teaches us that God speaks to us through our emotions, so pay attention to the places where your heart feels most engaged, whether it is a quote, a detail, an image, a person's name. Ask God to keep these moments aflame in your heart.

Third Movement: Adopting a posture of prayer, begin by saying the names of each person mentioned in the article, for God knows all of their names and cherishes each one. Pray, too, for those whose names are not given. It is so easy to feel disconnected from large numbers of victims reported in the news. To feel a deeper connection, I like to kneel down, place my palms on the floor, and just sit with the number for a little while. Repeat it, meditate on it. Pray, as best you can, for each of these souls. For those who have died, pray for the peaceful repose of their souls. Ask that those who have been left behind will be held and comforted in the arms of God and of their communities. For those injured, pray for their healing and for God's tender embrace. For those enduring unspeakable suffering (this is horrifically almost always the case), pray for relief, for comfort, for fortitude. Pray that God will place at least one person in their path to speak a word of tenderness, of humanization to them. Pray for an end to their suffering. Throughout the day, ask God to remind you to offer your suffering as a prayer for the alleviation of theirs.

Fourth Movement: Even though the news is often enraging, ask God to help you do something productive with your anger. Jesus tells us, no matter how angry we may be, to pray for our enemies. And Servant of God Dorothy Day reminds us that we really only love God as much as the person we love the least. Yikes. Let's get praying. Pray for those who inflict suffering to have a change of heart. Pray for inhumane policies to be changed. Pray for prophets and saints to be raised up during these dark days. As repugnant as we find the evil that takes place in our world, let us remember that we ourselves are not without sin. Ask God to illuminate the places in your own heart and life where similar sins lurk. Ask God's forgiveness. Praise God that no human being, including ourselves, is beyond repentance and redemption.

Fifth Movement: Pray in your own words for justice, or pray the following: *Lord Jesus, this world is so very far from the Kingdom you preached. Though we are tempted to give up hope, fill us with the strength to persevere in prayer. We long for the days when justice will roll down like the waters, And righteousness like a mighty stream. We grieve deeply for the suffering of our brothers and sisters, Even as we remember that You have promised to wipe every tear from every eye. Give us the courage, Lord, to believe in the things unseen that are eternal, And the fortitude to dedicate ourselves to bringing those things about here on earth. Your Kingdom come, Your will be done. If we are but pencils in the hand of God, Let us write only one word: Love, love, love. Amen.* (Take comfort, even for just a moment, in the knowledge that countless others are also praying for these people, this country, this situation, with their words and their hearts and their very lives. Take comfort, too, in the knowledge that we may take our broken hearts and place them right within the very heart of God.) Join your voice with the millions of people of faith who have prayed these words for thousands of years:

Psalm 46

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change; though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns. The nations rage, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts. The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Come, behold the works of the Lord, how he has wrought desolations in the earth. He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear, he burns the chariots with fire! "Be still, and know that I am God. I am exalted among the nations, I am exalted in the earth!" The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Amen.

Sixth Movement: "When you pray, move your feet." -African proverb

Remember that we are called, through our prayers, actions, and sufferings offered up, to be part of the

(continued on page 3)

redemption of all creation. Get googling to find ways you can help, whether it is a donation of time or finances, a phone call to your representatives, or a committee you can join. Who are the modern-day prophets of the injustice about which you read? Make it a point to seek them out and listen to them. And, of course, unite your daily sufferings with those of Jesus and offer them for those about whom you've read. The beautiful thing about the Kingdom of God is that it is all around us: join the work begun by others, or, if there is a need not being met, begin your own. Ask God to direct you to the place where you may love the best, the most, the deepest.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Anne

Lectionary for September

<p>Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost</p> <p>September 6, 2020</p> <p>Begin Outside Worship 9:30 a.m.</p>	<p>Exodus 12:1-14</p> <p>Psalm 149</p>	<p>Ezekiel 33:7-11</p> <p>Psalm 119:33-40</p>	<p>Romans 13:8-14</p>	<p>Matthew 18:15-20</p>
<p>Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost</p> <p>September 13, 2020</p> <p>Communion Service</p>	<p>Exodus 14:19-31</p> <p>Psalm 114 <i>or</i> <i>Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21</i></p>	<p>Genesis 50:15-21</p> <p>Psalm 103:(1-7), 8-13</p>	<p>Romans 14:1-12</p>	<p>Matthew 18:21-35</p>
<p>Holy Cross September 14, 2020</p>	<p>Numbers 21:4b-9</p> <p>Psalm 98:1-5 <i>or</i> <i>Psalm 78:1-2, 34-38</i></p>		<p>1 Corinthians 1:18-24</p>	<p>John 3:13-17</p>
<p>Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost</p> <p>September 20, 2020</p>	<p>Exodus 16:2-15</p> <p>Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45</p>	<p>Jonah 3:10-4:11</p> <p>Psalm 145:1-8</p>	<p>Philippians 1:21-30</p>	<p>Matthew 20:1-16</p>
<p>Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost</p> <p>September 27, 2020 Rev. David Akers</p>	<p>Exodus 17:1-7</p> <p>Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16</p>	<p>Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32</p> <p>Psalm 25:1-9</p>	<p>Philippians 2:1-13</p>	<p>Matthew 21:23-32</p>

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

CONSISTORY MEETING NOTES

August, 2020

The August 14th. meeting of the St. James UCC Consistory was opened with devotions and prayer led by Pastor Anne. The July minutes and financial reports were reviewed and accepted, along with an overview of the first seven months of 2020, which shows we are behind in our budget at this time.

In her Pastor's report, Pastor Anne floated the possibility of resuming in-person worship but to hold it outside in the pavilion beginning in September while continuing Zoom worship. To accommodate both services, new worship times were suggested. Outside worship will be 9:30 to 10:15am a.m. and Zoom worship will move to 10:30 to 11:15 a.m. Pastor Anne will be sending a letter to all members to communicate the times and guidelines for all St. James UCC worship options.

- A special Zoom meeting of the PSEC will be held on Saturday, August 15th. from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. to gather in fellowship and worship and conduct important PSEC business.

Old Business:

- An addendum to the rental agreement reflecting the reduced rental fee, until full-time use of building is possible, was prepared and forwarded to G&PPC and we await receipt of the signed copy.
- During the past month, as we have moved into the Green Phase where some CDC restrictions have been lifted, permission was granted to both the AA group and G&P's women's group to use the pavilion for a small group meeting.
- In June, the AC system in Fellowship Hall was repaired, however, it appears that one of the circulating fans is not functioning fully as well as one of the outside units for the sanctuary. In addition, a suggestion was made to consider the installing two WIFI remote controlled thermostats to help regulate temperature in the sanctuary and Fellowship Hall.

New Business:

- * A motion was approved for St. James UCC to be a polling place for the General Election, as in previous years with the following preparations: placing Physical distancing reminder signs and

- * spacing indicators in the church; restrooms will be limited to one person at a time with windows; the church will be closed to everyone for three days following the election and then cleaned and sanitized.
- Pastor Anne received a request from Scout Michael Tuffillero, asking for ideas for his upcoming Eagle Scout Project. We are suggesting a nature trail in a township park and raised garden beds for a community garden at the church.
- Because of no or limited technology, several members of the congregation are not able to connect to our Zoom worship. Pastor Anne suggested the purchase of electronic tablets that could be loaded with multiple week of recorded worship services and disseminated to those in need. The idea was accepted by all and tablets will be purchased.
- After a brief discussion, it was unanimously agreed that St. James UCC will contribute \$500 for the victims of the Ashland Apartment fire that displaced multiple families. The money will be taken from generous \$1,000 gift received from PSEC.

The Consistory meeting adjourned and closed with the Lord's Prayer.

***ALL ACTIVITES ARE
SUBJECT TO CHANGE***

September

Birthdays

- 1....Peter Cibulsky
- 2....Kenneth Raspen, Sr.
- 10....Millie Alderfer
- 14....Ellie Wellman
- 15....Arthur Gelwicks
- 16....Nona Alderfer
- 19....Joyce Clarke
- 20....Tony Nuccitelli
- 23....Jennifer Clarke
- 23....Betty Lou Wilson
- 26....Donna Serina



Congratulations and best wishes from your church family!

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE CON'T

The latest pandemic problem in Pennsylvania: Scammers are posing as contact tracers. Here's how to know if the caller is authentic:

By [Kara Seymour, Patch Staff](#)

HARRISBURG, PA — Officials in Pennsylvania are warning of the latest coronavirus pandemic problem: contact tracing scams. Contact tracing is the process of identifying people who have come into contact with someone who has tested positive for the COVID-19 virus so they can quarantine and monitor for symptoms. But in Pennsylvania, officials say scammers are attempting to take advantage of how this process works by posing as contact tracers in attempt to get personal information. Scams might include a caller asking for someone's Social Security number or payment for tracing services — neither of which is ever a component of a contact tracing inquiry, officials said. "Contact tracing is vital in the state's efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19, and we want Pennsylvanians to be confident that if they receive a call from a contact-tracer that the call is legitimate," Secretary of Health Rachel Levine said.

Pennsylvania has a goal that within 24 hours of receiving the positive result reported into the National Electronic Disease Surveillance System, its trained public health staff will conduct an interview for a case investigation. The person with the newly confirmed COVID-19 infection is first contacted to obtain a list of close contacts they had while infectious. Then contact tracers reach out to those close contacts to "educate, inform and offer support." After an initial phone call, the contact tracer may follow up with more calls, or may text or email. Here are some examples of questions a contact tracer may ask:

- Verification of your date of birth, address and any other phone numbers you may have.
- If you have already tested positive for COVID-19, they may also ask for the date and location of where you were tested.

A contact tracer will NOT ask for:

- Your Social Security number, financial or bank account information, or personal details unrelated to your potential exposure to someone with COVID-19.
- Personal information through SMS/text message or send you to any website link asking for personal information.
- Photographs or videos of any kind.
- Passwords.
- Money or a payment.

Older adults are at particular risk of being victims of this insidious type of scam, said Pennsylvania Secretary of Aging Robert Torres.

"Scammers prefer to prey on individuals who may be more trusting, are alone, or may respond out of confusion or fear," Torres said. "COVID-19 has isolated many older adults from family and other supports. Therefore, it's understandable that an older adult, hearing that they may have been exposed, would want to cooperate with any effort to protect themselves or a loved one. However, it's important that they stay alert about any contact from anyone identifying themselves as a contact tracer and do not provide personal information until they are sure the individual and information are legitimate."

If you are contacted by a tracer and unsure if they're authentic, call the Pennsylvania Department of Health at 877-PA HEALTH (877-724-3258) to verify.

PRAYER CONCERNS

For our friends Betty Wines, Heather Yates, Melissa Moore, Ellie Donofrio, Frank Miller *and others who are in long term care or unable to leave their homes. We pray for comfort, peace, healing and companionship for each of them.*



For our friends Taylor, Lani, Heather, Baby Franklin, Rebecka, Terry, Beth, Diane M, Joanne L *and others with ongoing health concerns and challenging life of God's presence through the support of our congregation.*

For our friends Tabby, Katie, Peggy M, Jeanene, Ed, Sue, Debbie H, Ryan, Monica, Pat, Joan D, Margaret, Dottie, Gina, Michelle, Barb G, Margaret, Dottie, Peter, Joan D, Carl H, Michelle, Ed, Ginny, Carmen, Tiffany, Sandi, Danny, Jessica, Sandy K, James V, Helen M, Susan B, Helen E, Bob L, Chris C, Carol M, Helen M, Susan B, Garret W, Bonnie B, Tiffany, Joan D, Tom D, Irene S, Betty M, Jay P, Lynn P, Carl, Jean S, Van S, DJ, Bev B, Lydia, Michelle, Ken, Mary Barnaik *and all cancer survivors, we pray for treatment where it is possible and release from suffering where it is needed.*

Prayers for all veterans that are still suffering from PTSD and all other side effects from their service in the military.

For the friends and family of Louie Carbajal *and for all who grieve at the deaths of those they deeply love and dearly miss, we ask that they might know the comfort God offers through the community of faith as we surround them with our prayers.*

Lord, we thank you for hearing our prayers for healing for the people we have prayed for. There are still many that struggle with illness and the loss of loved ones. We ask your continued healing and peace and comfort for those that are still struggling. We pray for our world and our country as we still face difficulties with job loss, fear of losing their homes, and struggle to feed their family. This virus has taken a toll on so many especially those in nursing homes and those that live alone. Help us to deal with our situations and look at ways to help others. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Please note that we will remove names on the prayer list after one month, except for homebound and hospitalized members. Let us know if you would like to add or renew a request by office phone or email.

PRAYING FOR ST. JAMES MEMBERS

Initiated by St. James Prayer Team, each Sunday two church families are being included in the Sunday worship prayer time. You are invited to include these members and their families in your prayers throughout that week.

September

- 6 Sandie Fetterman
Richard and Charlotte Fiedler
- 13 Kristen, Emily, Jack Focht
James, Amy, Celeste, Amanda
Friemann
- 20 Arthur, Melissa, Katelyn, Kyleigh,
Ian Gelwicks
- 27 Charles Grisdale
Donald Grisdale

DAILY PRAYERS FOR THE MONTH

MORNING PRAYER

Loving God, thank you for the gift of this new day. You have blessed me in so many ways in days that have come before. Today I will look and listen for signs of your joy and gladness present in my life, in the lives of others, and in the beautiful world you garden. As I begin this day, I pray that you will strengthen my soul and that whatever your purpose for me will be fulfilled in faithfulness and love. In Christ's name I pray. Amen.

LIFE

Life is a book of volumes - THREE
 The past - the present - and the yet to be:
 The first is written and laid away
 The second we are writing day by day
 The next and the last of the volumes Three
 Is locked from sight - GOD holds the key.

Angels in Blue Gowns
 by Cameron Bellm
 Angels in blue gowns,
 They wear face masks instead of haloes.
 Their gloved holy hands administer to us
 Care we are too weak to provide for ourselves.
 Without sleep,
 Without hope of a day off,
 In the face of ever-dwindling supplies,
 They risk their lives at every moment
 In order to save ours.
 Blessed are the hands,
 Rubbed raw from washing,
 That connect us to ventilators.
 Blessed are the feet,
 Sore and swollen,
 That tread the ER floors.
 Blessed are the eyes
 That have stared down death
 Hundreds,
 Thousands of times,
 And yet look upon each desperately ill patient
 And refuse to give up hope.
 God Most Merciful,
 Preserve the health and safety
 Of those who work so hard to preserve ours.
 Amen.

EVENING PRAYER

God of my salvation, preserve anyone in danger this night; reach out to anyone who is in trouble. Give us the quiet rest that comes from knowing you are above everything, watching over us with steadfast love. I pray that today, in some word I spoke, in some act of care I offered, Christ was lifted up as Lord and Savior. Continue to transform me so that I may discern what you find good and acceptable and perfect. Help me to dream always your own vision of a world in full bloom, lush with joy and gladness, teeming with thanksgiving and justice. At the close of this day, I entrust myself, and all those I love, to your care and keeping. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Prayer for a Pandemic By Cameron Bellm

May we who are merely inconvenienced
 Remember those whose lives are at stake.
 May we who have no risk factors
 Remember those most vulnerable.
 May we who have the luxury of working from home
 Remember those who must choose between preserving their
 health or making their rent.
 May we who have the flexibility to care for our children when
 their schools close
 Remember those who have no options.
 May we who have to cancel our trips
 Remember those that have no safe place to go.
 May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of the
 economic market
 Remember those who have no margin at all.
 May we who settle in for a quarantine at home
 Remember those who have no home.
 As fear grips our country,
 let us choose love.
 During this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms
 around each other,
 Let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace of God to our
 neighbors.
 Amen.

CALENDAR

September 2020

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2 Missions 7pm Prayer Shawl 6:30pm	3	4	5
6 Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost Worship Service 9:30am	7	8 Consistory 7pm	9	10	11	12 Men's Breakfast 8:30pm
13 Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost Worship Service 9:30am	14 Boy Scouts 7-8 pm Pavilion	15	16 Fellowship Dinner 5:30pm	17	18	19 PSEC Consist 8:30-1pm
20 Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost Worship Service 9:30am	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost Worship Service 9:30am	28 Boy Scouts 7-8 pm Pavilion	29	30			
Rev. David Akers						

CONFERENCE NEWS

Free children's book to help children process COVID-19

"We're Going to Be O.K." Dr. Leigh-Ann Webb and Ashleigh Corrin Webb live in Charlottesville Virginia. They wrote this award winning book for children and have released it to the world FREE!!! [Click here](#) and you can get your own ebook version with Print Me pages that allow children to reflect. (Available in English or Spanish.) I hope you will enjoy this gift that we have been given.



**Growing Our Spiritual Lives – 3 session course
September 26 @ 9:00 am - 11:00 am**

This course on Spiritual Life will meet for three sessions at Trinity United Church of Christ, Telford, Pa., on Saturday mornings from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. as follows:

- September 26 – Spiritual growth through congregational worship
- October 24 – Spiritual growth through personal disciplines
- November 14 – Spiritual growth through small groups.

The course will be led by Dr. Charles A. Maxfield, an ordained United Church of Christ minister with rich experience in lay ministry training. He will be assisted by Constance A. Lezenby, a spiritual director (M.A. in Spiritual Direction) recognized by her Friends' Meeting as a traveling minister.

The cost of this course is \$15.00 per person for the three sessions. The enrollment will be limited to 20 persons. Additional applicants will be placed on a waiting list. Please register by sending your name, e-mail address and check payable to Trinity United Church of Christ, to the following address is:

Trinity United Church of Christ, 101 S. Main St., Telford, Pa. 18969-1899
email: tucctelford@gmail.com

Play to Pray

August 24, 2020

Written by **Ellen O'Donnell**

When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. - 1 Corinthians 13:11 (NRSV)

As a young doctor, Stuart Brown was doing research into murderers who otherwise had no criminal history. He discovered something amazing, a common thread in 90% of their stories: as children, their play was severely restricted.

Play, Brown said, is any activity that is purposeless, dissolves ego boundaries, and ultimately brings joy. It's also an activity that delights God, who, after all, was the first one to play. What was the Creation, after all?

Dr. Brown spent many more decades studying play before he, an admitted workaholic, got the irony and started to play more himself.

It's easy to buy into this concept of play – but how do we enact it in our busy, overscheduled lives?

You already know the answer: We do less. We allow kids – and ourselves – to have more unstructured time. We allow some messes, keep cardboard boxes around, art carts, costume boxes. We give ourselves permission to stop what we are doing to kick the ball around, doodle and color, make robot noises.

If your eight-year-old is melting down because she is flying from swim team to karate to harp lessons, cut one (or all three) of those things out. Yes, you might be killing her chances of getting into Harvard. But you'll also be giving her a bigger life right now.

Madeleine L'Engle said, "Far too many people misunderstand what 'putting away childish things' means, and think that forgetting what it is like to think, feel, touch, smell, taste, see, and hear like a three-year-old or a thirteen-year-old means 'being grown up.' If this is what it means to be a grown-up, then I don't ever want to be one."

Prayer

God, prevent me from ever fully becoming a grownup. Slow me down, and send the joy of play.

St. James United Church of Christ
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September 2020 NEWSLETTER

Notes & Reminders

Materials for the October Newsletter are due on September 17th, 2020.



CROP Walk will be happening in some form on Oct. 18th in some virtual form. The need is even greater for the recipients from The Walk. Go to website www.crophungerwalk.org go to find your walk icon fill in Royersford/SpringCity. You can then [donate online](#) or sign up to walk and recruit sponsors.

PASTORAL CARE

If anyone is in need of pastoral care, please contact Pastor Anne directly at 484-529-3856.

