

# CHRIST CHRONICLES

**Christ United Church of Christ, 1414 Ligonier Street  
Latrobe, Pennsylvania 15650**

*July 2020*



## **Worship Services for July**

**7/5, 7/12, 7/19, 7/26 - Sunday Morning Worship, 11:00 AM**  
**7/12, Holy Communion**

**No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey  
you are welcome here.**

## Concerns of the Congregation

Please pray for: **Henry Arelt, Marcie Baker, Donna and John Brajdic, Eleanor Bridge, Ruth Burns, Kristen Disciascio, Tim Farkas Family, Sandy Gregory, Viola Helmetzi, Helen Hoover, Ron King, Stacey Klug, Zoe Klug, Leanne Lehosky, Mick Mattern, Chuck McNerny, Ben and Jane Miedel, Ruby RaeLynn Moore, Joan Musick, Bob and Evelyn Neighly, Betty Newman, Richard Porembka, Joyce Puzak, Shirley Robb, Bailey Robinson, Carrie Rosebrock; Emily, Eva, and Graeme Sauter; Ken Sible, Judith Short, Laken Smith, Rick Stahl, Scott Thompson, Sara Young, Bob Zeiders**



Praying the roll: Everyone on the church roster will have a turn at experiencing the comfort and peace of intentional prayer. We are family . . . and families pray for one another! Please keep these families in your thoughts and prayers for the entire week.

Week of July 5 - Rev. David and Marsha Ackerman, David and Stephanie Albaugh, Richard Albaugh

Week of July 12 - Jami Altman; Lisa, Dwayne and Aaron Amoroso; Rich and Marcie Baker

Week of July 19 - Ann and Steve Baltich, Andrew Banocy, James Banocy

Week of July 26 - James G. and Joan Banocy, Steve and Ashley Batsa,

Janet and Richard Baumgardner

## Happy Birthday!

**July 3 Don Burd**

**July 8 Ken Yost**

**July 9 Sally Walker**

**July 12 Sandra Fircetz**

**July 12 Kenny Repko**

**July 13 Marsha Ackerman**

**July 14 Peyton Thomas**

**July 15 Dean Grasmick**

**July 18 Dana Silvis**

**July 20 Karen Lihan**

**July 26 Catherine King**

## Happy Anniversary!

**July 21 Dick and Mary Crawford**

**July 23 Steve and Ann Baltich**

**July 28 Ken and Shirley Vogt**



**CALLING ALL GRADUATES!** Do you have a family member who was a 2020 graduate? If so, please let us know so that we may honor him/her in the August newsletter. Send a little note with the name, where they graduated from and what they plan to do after graduation to Loretta Staruk at:

cocoakitty2001@gmail.com

If you have a photograph you can email that also and we will include that in the write-up.

## **Dear Christ Church Congregation:**

As I am sure you are all aware, Christ Church has been closed for in-person worship and other activities during the COVID-19 pandemic, a virus that still remains with us despite the gradual re-opening of our economy and other social activities the past few weeks. In response to this, a group of volunteers - the Christ Church Re-Opening Task Force - came together to provide guidance as to how and when we might safely re-open our church for the conduct of services and other in-person events as well.

**I am pleased to announce that regular services in our sanctuary will resume on Sunday, July 5! This first service will take place at its regular time, 11AM. Though July 5 is the first Sunday in July, Communion will be delayed until the following week on July 12.**

I am sure that you are all as pleased and relieved as I am that we will finally be able to come together again as a Congregation to worship the Lord, our Savior.

Of course, safely conducting services will require any number of changes to the format of our services, entry and exit from our church, and to the service itself.

These changes are detailed in the guidelines proposed by the Task Force that have also been submitted to Consistory for their advice and consent, which has been provided. These guidelines follow this announcement and you should study them carefully.

The Task Force strongly recommends that you wear a mask to our services, and that you practice physical distancing at all times. Entry and exit to the church will only be allowed through the St. Clair St. door, where ushers will be available to greet you and answer any questions or concerns you might have. Hand sanitizer, as well as disposable masks and gloves will be available at the St. Clair St. entrance.

Just as services will resume on July 5, other in-person activities will also be permitted from that point on. This includes committee and Consistory meetings, as well as week-day Bible studies and discussion groups. All of these activities should be held in the downstairs fellowship hall, and not in the meeting room, in order to allow for safe physical distancing. Please wear masks as well.

Please join me in thanking the Re-Opening Task Force for their diligent work, as well as the church staff, who have worked very hard to keep our church going through these very trying times.

Please plan on attending our services on July 5 and thereafter. However, should you feel uncomfortable doing so, or should you feel in any way “under the weather”, please stay home. Our services will continue to be available online as they have been during the past couple of months.

Yours in Christ,

Jim O’Connor, Acting President  
Christ Church UCC Consistory

Members of the Christ Church Re-Opening Task Force:  
Art Dira, Rick Kunkle, Jim Sillaman, Carolyn Stutzman, Pastor John Cofield,  
Jim O’Connor, Chair

### ***Guidelines for Reopening Church***

*Dear Church Members and Guests,*

*In this time of Covid-19 illness, we are now living in a “new normal.” For better or worse, many things just cannot be the way they always were. For the comfort and safety of all, we must now adopt some new practices so that we may resume worshipping together in our church building. Some of you may question a few of the guidelines which follow, but we have developed them in general accordance with recommendations from the CDC, the Penn West Conference and the national UCC. Our intent is to try to ensure as much safety as possible for those who want to attend worship, many of whom are in high risk categories, either by age or because of personal or family medical conditions. **We respectfully ask for your cooperation in following these guidelines in consideration of others.***

**Please always enter and leave the church through the St. Clair Street entrance.**

The parking lot door will be locked from the inside. An usher will be stationed there to direct you to the St. Clair St. door, which is handicap accessible. Latex gloves as well as hand sanitizer will be available at the entrance way.

Do not gather in groups in the chapel before or after the service. This will minimize potential aerosol dispersion of the virus if someone is unknowingly infected.

**Masks should be worn at all times when in the building.** If you forget your mask, we will have a limited number available at the door. Ushers will hand out church bulletins and masks, if necessary.

If you cannot wear a mask for health or other reasons, we will ask you to sit in the chapel area of the church in order to minimize any aerosol spread of the virus that could occur if you are unknowingly infected.

**The ushers will be responsible for taking a “check off” roll as you enter church.** This is necessary in case someone who has attended church services is later found to be infected. We then must contact everyone who has attended the same service for contact tracing and, potentially, quarantining purposes.

We ask you not to attend church if you have any symptoms of illness or exposure to someone with Covid-19 infection within the past two weeks.

Also, please maintain your own personal records of church attendance and notify the church office if you are diagnosed with a recent Covid-19 infection.

**Seating arrangements will be different.** Alternate rows will be blocked off; please do not sit in those rows. On the “open” rows, there will be tape on the seat where you should not sit. Of course, you can sit by family, etc., but we again ask that you try to maintain 6 feet separation from others who have not accompanied you to church. If you have any questions about seating, please seek help from an usher.

**There will not be any choir or congregational singing.** Hymn music will be prerecorded and played at the appropriate time in the service. Hymnals (and Bibles) will not be available in the church, but you will be provided a printed sheet with the hymn music. This is for you to follow the words, but we ask you to **not** actually sing along. Unfortunately, information to date indicates that singing has a propensity to spread the virus farther than normal talking.

There will not be any touching of others during the “passing of the peace” nor will there be any passing of the offering baskets. You may deposit your offerings in baskets near the St. Clair St. door as you enter or leave church.

**There will not be any Sunday School for adults or children.** We will have a limited number of toys, etc. for children in the back of the church, but we strongly encourage parents to try to keep your children with you during the service.

**On communion Sundays,** we will be using pre-made communion units which contain both elements of the Last Supper. These will be handed to you by the usher when you enter the church. At the end of the service, please deposit them in the garbage receptacle near the St. Clair St. door. We cannot assure that these are gluten free, so if you have gluten sensitivity we recommend that you bring your own elements.

When the service is over, we ask that you **leave church in an orderly fashion by rows**, as directed by the ushers. We will start with the last rows first, then move forward by rows. Again, please try to maintain 6 feet separation between your group and others as you leave.

**If you need to use a restroom**, please minimize contact with surfaces other than the light switches, toilet, and sink. Restrooms will be cleaned with disinfectant during the week after each service. Otherwise, please minimize physical (hand) contact with other surfaces in the church. We ask that you try to bring your own personal hand sanitizer, but we will have some available for you if necessary.

As mentioned above, if you have any symptoms of illness (for example, cough, upper respiratory infection, fever, or just feeling ill), please do not come to church. For any significant illness, you should strongly consider seeing your primary care physician and/or getting tested for Covid-19 infection.

*We are aware, too, that the restrictions we've been living with at home have left some of us feeling somewhat "disconnected" with our church family. Our pastor has done a lot of work setting up and ironing out the many technicalities of our "virtual" online services. But now we need to get back together physically and reconnect with each other and with our pastor – and he with us. We see him on the videos, but I think he may have forgotten how we look. For many of us, our "pre-covid" hairstyles, etc. don't appear the same as our new "post-covid" looks!*

*We understand that these guidelines might seem onerous or difficult, but if we all follow them we should be able to again be together for worship in as safe a manner as possible. We believe that after a week or two of following these new procedures we will become comfortable with them and, importantly, will find that they do not inhibit our ability to spiritually connect with God and each other.*

*If you have any questions or comments about any of this, you may contact any of the following members of our "task force," the group which has worked to compile these guidelines.*

Jim O'Connor: 724-238-2578    Jim Sillaman: 724-694-9907  
Carolyn Stutzman: 724-537-2647    Art Dira: 724-539-8095  
Rick Kunkle: 724-238-7420    Pastor John via church office

## A Message from Pastor John



I hear there's a rodent here in Pennsylvania who emerges from his hovel near the end of winter to see what's going on. That's fitting for our current situation. Sunday, July 5<sup>th</sup>, we will emerge from isolation and begin to gather in our sanctuary again.

A reminder, the building is "the meeting house." It is not the church. The church has not been closed. The "church," the body of Christ, has been gathered, yet scattered for these past couple of months. Hopefully, you have continued your walk with Christ while we were unable to meet.

Please wear a mask. Masks are not a political statement! They are a scientifically proven means to slow the spread of the virus. Despite popular preachers who may have another agenda, wearing a mask is What Jesus Would Do. If you can wear a mask, wear one! The "Reopening Committee" and the Consistory will make accommodations for those who cannot wear masks – see their communications.

Liturgically, worship will be different (it will be a while before liturgy returns to normal). There is significant evidence that singing and responsive reading and unison prayers can spread the virus. So, we will continue to record music that will be played during worship. Julie will play a prelude and postlude. Wearing a mask, you may sing softly. Likewise, the Lord's Prayer will be prayed softly, while wearing a mask. I will read the Psalms, which will not be prayed responsively.

I have not included a passing of the peace at St. John's, as we've begun to meet. I will ponder how to include a gesture for passing the peace and what that will be. Of course, we cannot shake hands as we once did. While we have no practice bowing to each other, it is a greeting in the Orient that we could incorporate. Bowing to one another acknowledges our common humanity.

While communion will not be celebrated on the first Sunday, July 5<sup>th</sup>, it will be celebrated the next Sunday, July 12<sup>th</sup>. Prepackaged communion sets, having both wafer and grape juice together, are on order. While these are scheduled to arrive on time, if they don't, our first communion will be BYOE, bring your own elements. Stay tuned.

How should I say this? Please don't be demanding that things return to the way they were. They can't. We don't have a playbook. No one has been through this before. So, please be patient.

Our first few services will be a learning experience. This is a different way of doing church. We're all "feeling it out as we go along." Please be patient, with everyone – the pastor, your brothers and sisters in Christ, the Reopening Committee, the Consistory, Caryn, and everyone else.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor John



## *A Note from Julie*



**Praise God! We are going to be back together for worship starting on Sunday, July 5th.**

It has been 16 weeks since we last gathered for worship in the sanctuary.

Yes, there are going to be restrictions, and you can read about them in this newsletter, but let's be happy in the thought that we can come together as a church family and pray.

I will be at the organ for the prelude and postlude.

Ellen and Wayne Sautter and I have been recording the hymns for the online service and we will continue to do that until the singing restriction of using live voices during the service are lifted. That is the hardest part for me.....not being able to have "live singing" during the service, but we are a family and we can get through the restrictions together.

Ellen and I have discussed using the Hand Bell Choir to fill in with some special music. We can social distance when we play because we work independently. We wear gloves and will wear masks.

I will make every effort to choose hymns that are familiar and well liked so that as you are listening to them during the worship, you will hopefully feel like you're visiting an old friend. **" We are God's people, the chosen of the Lord, born of the Spirit, established by the Word. Our Cornerstone is Christ alone, and strong in Christ we stand; O let us live transparently and walk heart to heart and hand in hand!" B.J. Leech**

**Looking forward to seeing as many of you that are comfortable coming to worship!**

In Christ's Love,

*Julie*

## **Three New Members Needed on Consistory Are You Willing to Serve?**

Three new members will be needed to serve on the Consistory in the coming year to replace those who terms are expiring. We will need one elder and two deacons to serve three-year terms each. If you are willing to serve or would like more information, please talk to a Consistory member. Thank you.

## Christian Education Committee Update

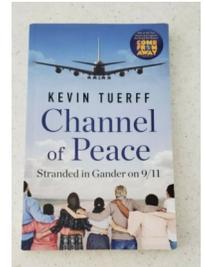
Sunday School for Children and the Adult Sunday School Class will resume as soon as possible.

Wednesday morning bible study will resume on **Wednesday, July 8 at 10:00 a.m in Fellowship Hall.**



## Book Discussion Group

The group plans to resume meeting on **Tuesday, July 14, 2020 at 11:00 am in Fellowship Hall.** We will discuss *Channel of Peace* by Kevin Tuerff - a first-hand account of a 9/11 story and *Little House in the Big Woods* - a story based on Laura Ingalls Wilder's life in pioneer days or other title by Laura Ingalls Wilder. All are welcome.



**A GREAT BIG THANK YOU** to the Greater Latrobe Community Choir for their donation of a portable PA system to Christ Church as a way of saying thank you for allowing them to practice in the church building. This is being stored in the music office.

**SENIOR FOOD DISTRIBUTION is scheduled for Tuesday, July 14. Volunteers will be needed that day at 8:30 A.M.** Thanks so much for your help as always.



## MINISTERIUM FOOD ITEMS FOR JULY AND AUGUST



The Greater Latrobe Ministerium asks churches to donate items for the Food Pantry distributions each month. The needed item for July and August is shampoo. Thank you so much for your generosity. A box is in the sanctuary to collect these items.

## Confessions of the White Church

On Saturday morning Ellen and I attended a religious rally at the courthouse in Greensburg for racial justice. There was NO representation from mainline Protestant churches! The pastors who spoke were inspiring and articulate, but as I reflected on their words and the Biblical passages they quoted, I felt something was missing. Hence, this opinion.

It is an accepted understanding in psychological counseling that you cannot really look forward unless you are willing to look back. In the Christian faith we call this process confession and repentance. How many times has the issue of racism been raised, and yet little changes in the white church?

We need to look back and confess the terrible role that White Christianity has played in promoting and even celebrating racism. When the first slaves began to believe in Christianity, finding comfort in the Exodus story, they were forbidden to have their own church gatherings. They were forced to meet late at night, when they turned over one of the huge kettles found on the plantation, gathered around it and sang softly and spoke quietly under the kettle to muffle their voices.

When the White Church finally let them in, they had to sit in the balcony of the church and were told not to participate in the worship. The White church applauded their openness at letting the savages experience the faith. Many of these same pastors offered opening and closing prayers at the lynchings of blacks, and were chaplains of the numerous chapters of the Ku Klux Klan. Some of this is still true today. When I was a pastor in Rockwood, there was an active Ku Klux Klan in the county and there was a local pastor as chaplain.

We like to say, "Yes, but that was then and this is now." Is it? How many white churches like to brag that they have a black family, as if they won a prize on *The Price Is Right*? I have asked a number of such families over the years what their experience was like. The response was that most felt an almost unconscious pressure to "whiten-up". You are welcome if you are like us. None of that "Amen" stuff or standing up to testify!

In addition, how many white churches, when trying to find a new pastor, refuse to interview candidates of color? The usual excuse is, "*While we wouldn't mind, our people wouldn't accept it.*" *Whatever happened to leadership?*

Let's face the cold, hard truth. We can quote all the passages of the Bible about equality until Jesus comes again, but unless we are willing to acknowledge the racism that is still prevalent in the White Church, our feet remain stuck in the slime of past racism!

Where do we go from here? Do we just pray, or do we act? Maybe God is a little tired of our prayers and would prefer to see some action! What can Christ Church do? We could be an active, continuing witness to the community by holding events with nearby African-American churches. We could stand up against racial jokes and comments as a part of our faith witness.

When Christ Church again seeks new leadership in the future, we could be deliberate about a candidate of color. We could actively invite African-American folks to worship with us without expecting them to "whiten-up" or use them for bragging rights about how "open" we are. Our leadership could offer to witness to civic groups where they are members about the issue of racism from a faith perspective. What could you add to the list? Let the Consistory know, and how you are willing to help!

Wayne Sautter, Pastor Emeritus

## LAY LIFE AND MISSION COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Lay Life and Mission Committee has chosen the Blackburn Center as the mission for July and August. *The following page of this newsletter contains a complete list of needed items.* Thanks for your support as always.

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We are still receiving donations for LifeWay Pregnancy Center through their "baby bottle" campaign. If you have not returned your baby bottle to the church, you may still do so. Once all the baby bottles are returned to the church they will be given to LifeWay. Thank you for remembering this vital outreach.



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## First Annual Union Mission Golf Outing

Attention Christ Church golfers! The Union Mission in Latrobe will be holding its first annual golf outing at Glengarry Golf Links on Monday, July 27. There will be a 12 noon shotgun start, followed by dinner at 5PM. It will be a scramble format with skill prizes, a putting contest, raffles, and items for auction.

For registration and sponsorship information, please contact Karen O'Connor at 724-238-2578 or Dan Carney, Union Mission Executive Director, at 724-539-3550. If you love to golf, please participate and show our church's continuing support for the Union Mission.

## "C" Dollar Bills for the Union Mission

At the April Supper Club in 2019, a suggestion was made to save one-dollar bills with a "C" in the Federal Reserve Bank seal. The "C" represents the Philadelphia bank, but for our purpose the "C" signifies Christ Church. The purpose was to accumulate the dollar bills and donate them to a local mission. A follow-up suggestion was made to donate the proceeds to the Union Mission, the only homeless shelter for men in Westmoreland County.

To date, we have donated \$300 to the Union Mission. Thank you, and continue to save your "C" dollar bills. It is an almost painless way to support this local mission. The donation jar for the Union Mission is located on the table in the Chapel area at Christ Church.

Thank you, Bob Stutzman

## COUPON-TAB BOOK \*FUND RAISER

Sherry Heining and the Fund-Raising Committee are still selling coupon-tab books for the Latrobe area. *The books have been discounted to \$2.50 each* and will benefit the Christ Church Repair Fund. The books are good through 12/31/2020. The remaining books are in the church office for purchase. Contact Sherry Heining or Gerry Boring for information.

## Lay Life and Mission Committee

The Lay Life Committee has chosen Blackburn Center as our mission for July, August and September, 2020. In 1975, a task force of the National Organization for Women met to address rape and sexual assault issues in Westmoreland County. The result was Westmoreland Alliance Against Rape whose hotline answered its first call on December 6, 1976. Since then, what is now Blackburn Center, has grown to a staff of more than 30, with an active team of volunteers. Through this growth, they have developed an array of services for adult and child victims of sexual assault and domestic violence as well as comprehensive community education and professional in-service training programs. Blackburn Center will support victims with their shelter, counseling, and advocacy services as long as there are victims who need them. Items are needed to sustain the shelter, donations of the following items will be welcomed during these months (please put the items that are in bold at the top of your shopping list):

### **Kitchen**

#### **Dish drying racks**

Glass baking dishes

Kitchen utensils

Measuring cups & spoons

Paper towels

**Plastic pitchers**

**Pots & saucepans**

**Skillets**

**Zip-lock bags:** 1 gallon, 2 gallon & **2.5 gallon**

Oils – coconut & olive

**Small appliances: electric can openers, coffee makers, toasters, mixers, blenders, etc.**

Food items: any canned food, other non-perishables, etc.\*

\*Food items we especially need include: canned or bottled juices.

### **Bedroom**

**Air mattresses w/pumps – any size**

Bath robes (Women's – all sizes)

**Bed-in-a-bag sets (twin & full)**

**Blankets – cotton (twin & full)**

**Comforters (twin & full)**

**Sheet sets (full)**

**Sport's bras – all sizes**

**Pillows**

**Underwear: Women's sizes 5 – 12 of greatest need are sizes 5 & 9-10**

### **Bathroom**

Hair care products for women of color, especially serums

Hair dryers

Shower caddy baskets

Shower curtains & liners

Toilet paper

**Towels - bath**

Not needed at this time: shampoo, conditioner, travel-size toiletries & adult toothpaste

### **Baby & Child Items**

Baby monitors

Baby wipes

**Infant carriers/wraps/slings**

Infant formula

**Pajamas: Children's – sizes 10-12 & 14-16**

Umbrella strollers

### **Miscellaneous**

**Brooms & dust pans**

**Collapsible/pop-up hampers**

Duffel bags

Extension cords

**Gasoline cards (Sunoco)**

**Gift cards (Giant Eagle, Wal-Mart, Shop 'N Save & Target)**

**Long distance calling cards**

**Mops**

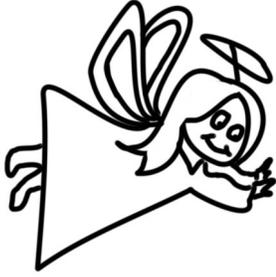
Mr. Clean Magic Erasers

**Square Sterlite laundry baskets**

**Tool kits**

**TracFones & Cards**

## ***WHAT HAPPENS IN HEAVEN WHEN WE PRAY?***



I dreamed that I went to Heaven and an angel was showing me around. We walked side-by-side inside a large workroom filled with angels. My angel guide stopped in front of the first section and said, "This is the Receiving Section. Here, all petitions to God said in prayer are received."

I looked around in this area, and it was terribly busy with so many angels sorting out petitions written on voluminous paper sheets and scraps from people all over the world.

Then we moved on down a long corridor until we reached the second section. The angel then said to me, "This is the Packaging and Delivery Section. Here, the graces and blessings the people asked for are processed and delivered to the living persons who asked for them." I noticed again how busy it was there. There were many angels working hard at that station, since so many blessings had been requested and were being packaged for delivery to Earth.

Finally, at the farthest end of the long corridor we stopped at the door of a very small station. To my great surprise, only one angel was seated there, idly doing nothing. "This is the Acknowledgment Section," my angel friend quietly admitted to me. He seemed embarrassed. "How is it that there is no work going on here?" I asked.

"So sad," the angel sighed. "After people receive the blessings that they asked for, very few send back acknowledgments."

"How does one acknowledge God's blessings?" I asked.

"Simple," the angel answered. Just say, "Thank you, Lord."

"What blessings should they acknowledge?" I asked.

"If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof overhead and a place to sleep, you are richer than 75% of this world. If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish, you are among the top 8% of the world's wealthy, and if you get this on your own computer, you are part of the 1% in the world who has that opportunity.

If you woke up this morning with more health than illness, you are more blessed than the many who will not even survive this day. If you have never experienced the fear in battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pangs of starvation you are ahead of 700 million people in the world. If you can attend a church without the fear of harassment, arrest, torture or death you are envied by, and more blessed than, three billion people in the world."

So, count your blessings and thank your Lord for all His gifts and blessings.

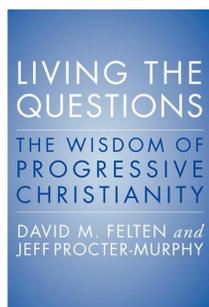
Submitted by Harvey Noel

**ARTICLES FOR THE AUGUST NEWSLETTER ARE DUE ON  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 15**

**Please send to [cocoakitty2001@gmail.com](mailto:cocoakitty2001@gmail.com) or give to Loretta Staruk**

## Book Review Living the Questions—the Wisdom of Progressive Christianity

by Jim Sillaman



If you are very comfortable in your faith and rarely, if ever, have any questions about it or the texts of the Bible, then “**Living the Questions – The Wisdom of Progressive Christianity**” is probably not a book you would enjoy. Although it's not a large book, it is packed with much to think about. Written by two teachers of theology, David M. Felton and Jeff Procter-Murphy, it is divided into three sections – Journey, Reconciliation and Transformation – and a number of small chapters. It was intended, they say, as an integral part of a “Living the Questions” curriculum, which implies some sort of group study or involvement. There are a series of provocative questions for each chapter at the end of the book. However, it can certainly be read and studied individually.

In the course of my education and reading over the years, and almost certainly because my medical career required it, I have come to depend, as much as possible, on information derived from scientific studies. While there is still much about human health and well being that is not fully known, modern medicine and many other science-based endeavors rely on acquiring valid data and then making and testing conclusions to make improvements. Even then, progress is not always a straight line upward. But, it's the *process* that's important and which, to a large extent, has become my way of viewing the world. I find that I must look skeptically at phenomena which are not likely to be rationally explained or reproduced. I'm thinking, of course, of *miracles* – not the kind that happen which we can't yet explain (such as an unexpected recovery from an illness or an accident that was fortuitously avoided) but the kind that require a complete suspension of rational belief (such as the sun stopping its motion in the sky or every animal in the world making it onto an ark in pairs).

Besides my scientific propensities, I also like to read history. Even though most of my readings in this area have been about people and events in Western culture, it soon became evident to me that our concepts of the world and the cosmos have changed dramatically since the time of Christ. Ideas and beliefs that were once widely and deeply held are no longer considered correct or useful. Very few among us truly believe that the earth is flat or that the sun revolves around it. While we can accept that our modern understandings in many areas are different from those of ancient peoples, we are reluctant to consider whether our *beliefs* about Jesus and what He means for us have changed over 2000 years. I think we begin to unconsciously assume that we have inherited a correct and, now, unchangeable understanding of Jesus the Christ. We become comfortable with what we have come to believe and how we worship and see little reason to raise questions.

Perhaps unfortunately for me, I often have questions. But, like most others, I also like to have answers, ones that fit with my understanding of the world. I have slowly, almost continuously, formulated my own personal theology of Jesus and his meaning in my life. In most respects I have made it fit into the forms and customs of our time and culture. “Living the Questions” has helped me explicitly explore many of the thoughts, ideas and conclusions I've had over the years. I won't say that it is a “must read” for everyone, far from it. It may take people down some uncomfortable paths, but it should never lead one to abandon Christian faith. Rather, I think it addresses questions that some Christians and *many “unchurched” people* may have, and it points to answers that, I believe, can help people understand who Jesus was and how His life so long ago has relevance and great importance in our lives today.

Jim Sillaman

# July 2020 Prayer Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Lord, you are to be blessed and praised; all good things come from you: you are in our words and in our thoughts, and in all that we do. Amen.</p> <p>--St. Teresa of Avila (1515-1582)</p>						
			<b>1</b> Thank God for the knowledge of doctors and specialists.	<b>2</b> Thank God for health technicians and radiologists.	<b>3</b> Thank God for chemists, pharmacists and the healing power of medicines.	<b>4</b> <b>Independence Day</b> Give thanks for your freedom.
<b>5</b> Thank God for ambulance drivers and EMTs.	<b>6</b> Thank God for the skill and caring of nurses.	<b>7</b> Thank God for the skills of surgeons and anesthetists	<b>8</b> Thank God for physiotherapists and occupational therapists.	<b>9</b> Give thanks for those who donate blood.	<b>10</b> Pray for all those in need of blood.	<b>11</b> Pray for staff, volunteers and residents of the Union Mission.
<b>12</b> Praise God for summer showers.	<b>13</b> Pray for those with chronic diseases.	<b>14</b> Thank God for hospital chaplains.	<b>15</b> Thank God for hospital administrative staff, orderlies and porters.	<b>16</b> Thank God for hospital social workers.	<b>17</b> Pray for those with poor housing.	<b>18</b> Pray for those who suffer with disabilities.
<b>19</b> Pray for our country and our leaders.	<b>20</b> Pray for God's blessing on hospices and hospice workers.	<b>21</b> Pray for people with autoimmune diseases.	<b>22</b> Pray for those who have suffered deep loss.	<b>23</b> Pray for those who face lifelong pain or disease.	<b>24</b> Pray for those who are nursing a sick parent, partner or child.	<b>25</b> Pray for search and rescue workers.
<b>26</b> Pray for those with anxiety disorders.	<b>27</b> Pray for new believers.	<b>28</b> Pray for those who are hungry.	<b>29</b> Praise God for birds that sing.	<b>30</b> Pray for members of the armed forces and their families.	<b>31</b> Pray for those suffering memory loss.	
<p>O God, let me not interrupt you with my chatter. Let me listen, rather, to your still, small voice.</p>						

### *Christ Church Consistory*

Geraldine Boring  
Art Dira  
Rick Kunkle

Michelle Kutzer  
Harvey Noel  
Jim O'Connor, Acting President

Kenny Repko  
Loretta Staruk, Secretary

## JULY 2020 CHURCH CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5  11:00 AM Worship  <i>Reopening</i>	6  Church Office Closed 4 <sup>th</sup> of July	7	8  10:00 AM Bible Study	9  6:30 PM Bells	10	11
12  11:00 AM Worship  <i>Holy Communion</i>	13  6:30 PM Consistory	14  8:30 AM Senior Food Distribution  11:00 AM Book Discussion Group	15  10:00 AM Bible Study  Deadline for August Newsletter	16  6:30 PM Bells	17	18
19  11:00 AM Worship	20	21	22  10:00 AM Bible Study	23  6:30 PM Bells	24	25
26  11:00 AM Worship  Repair Fund Collection	27	28	29  10:00 AM Bible Study	30  6:30 PM Bells	31	

### PLEASE NOTE \*\*\* IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT:

Unfortunately, because of COVID 19, events for the remainder of 2020 are cancelled. This includes the August Flea Market and Book Sale, and October Salad Bar. We look forward to enjoying these events again in 2021.

### CONTACT US

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