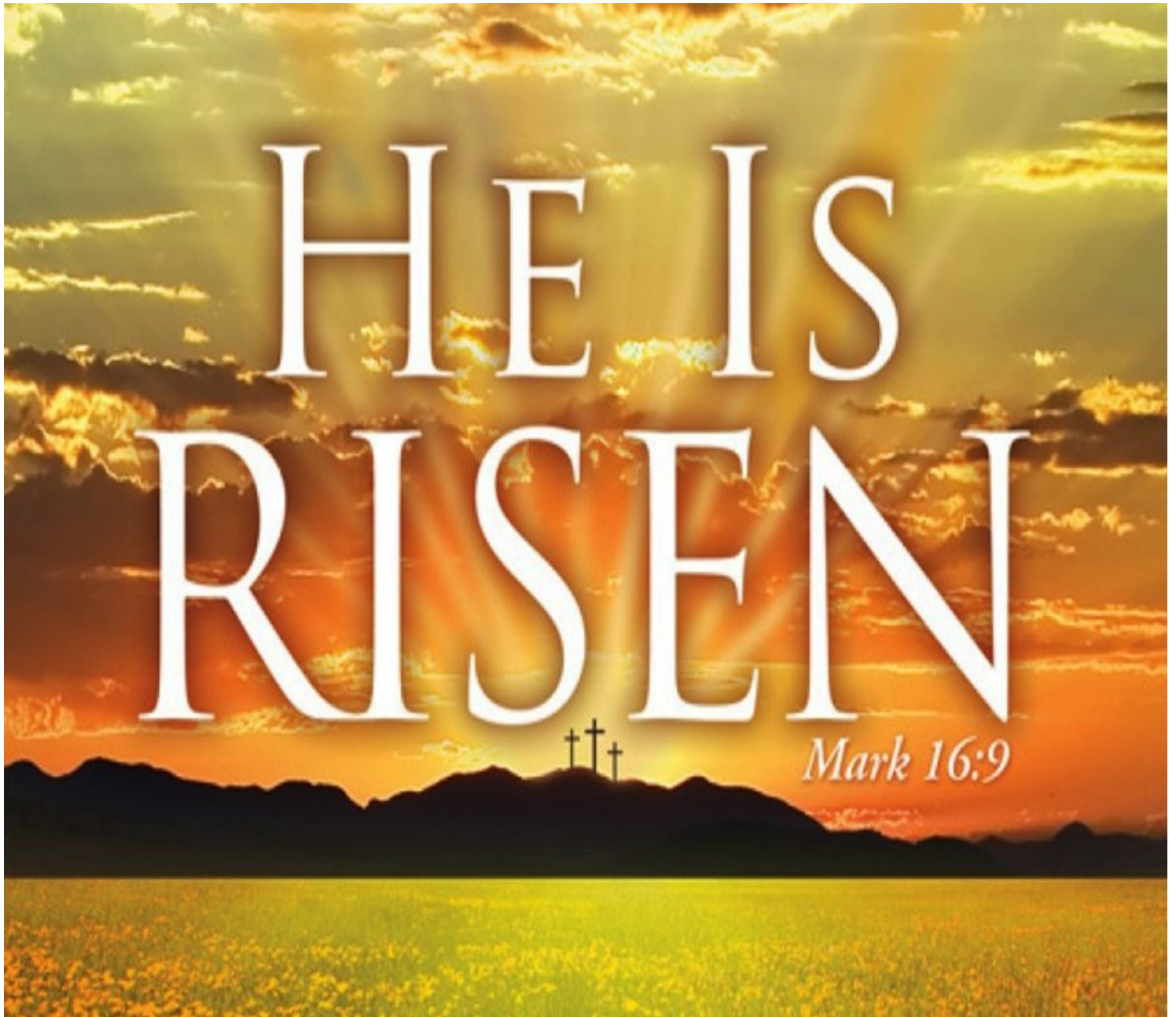


***Fellowship
Presbyterian Church, ECO
April/May 2020***



**Our soul waits for the Lord; He is our help and our shield.
For our heart is glad in Him,
because we trust in His Holy Name.
Psalm 33:20,21**

The Pastor's Corner - April/May 2020



Pastor Ben Laughlin

COVID 19

Greetings to the members and friends of Fellowship Church. Have you gotten used to "Sheltering-in-Place"? I have not! Remember, it all started about mid-February this year. We heard for the first time about the Coronavirus (Covid19) that had started in China. What's the big deal, I thought? Sounds like another version of the flu.

By early March, a sense of urgency began to take hold. Covid19 was ten times more contagious, the government said. Then Governor Kemp announced the beginning of our state's "shelter-in-place" emergency response to Covid19. We could not have worship in our sanctuary the very next Sunday, March 15, 2020. I asked the Session to consider learning how to do Virtual Church. **The Session responded by forming the Technology Task Force (committee).** Mike Madden is the chair. Members include Kenneth Jones, Don Martin, and me (as ex officio member). With a lot of prayer and good old-fashioned hard work the Technology Task Force is learning how to do Virtual Church. I am too! Virtual Church is a new way to do evangelism. But it will never take the place of being in our sanctuary together as the Body of Christ worshipping together.

FPC Online had its debut on Sunday March 22, 2020 with our first ever online church event. In this case it was an information video to introduce the idea that we were going online. Why? Because we do not know how long the emergency declaration "Shelter-in-Place" would stay in effect. Now we are coming up on our sixth Sunday of "Shelter-in-Place." It looks like it may go to the end of May.

I believe that God is using this Coronavirus to build His church in a new way. Our Virtual Church will reach people seeking comfort that would normally not come to church. Why are people searching for comfort? Because they are fearful and need hope! They may well not know it, but they need Jesus Christ in their lives.

God is blessing our little church. Together we are answering the call of Jesus in Matthew 28:16-20 as Jesus says: v19 **"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I Have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."**

The Good News: Jesus is our hope! He is walking with each one of our church family during this time is our history. Trust in the Lord always and you will have a **Peace that goes beyond all understanding.**

Take care and God bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Ben".



50 DAYS OF EASTER

What are the 50 Days of Easter? It is a festival season in the Christian year that focuses on the celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. It runs from Easter day to Pentecost: 50 days. It is to be celebrated as a single joyful feast, sometimes referred to as the "Great Lord's Day." Each Sunday of the season is treated as a special Sunday of Easter. It is a time to reflect on the resurrection of our Lord and how it has affected our lives. It is a time to remember that Jesus was not in a rush to return to heaven. He still had work He wanted to do with his disciples. He was preparing them for Pentecost and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

During this time of COVID-19, while we are separated from each other and unable to worship together, how can we find joy? We can find joy by using some of the extra time we have been given in individual worship. Joy can be found in scripture, prayer, and music. In this article I am going to focus on the Word. Listed are the scriptures which show Jesus' appearances on earth after His resurrection and prior to His return to heaven. **Suggestion - if you decide to read all the scriptures listed, spread your reading out over the 50 days so you can take time and reflect on them.** What was Jesus purpose for a particular appearance, how does it apply today?

Jesus' Appearances After The Resurrection

The Empty Tomb - Matt. 28:1-10; Mark 16:1-8; Luke. 24: 1-12; John 20: 1-10

Mary Magdalene - Mark 16: 9-11; John 20:11-18

Road to Emmaus - Mark 16:12-13; Luke 24:13-35

Ten Disciples - Mark 16:14; Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-25

Eleven Disciples - John 20: 26-31

Sea of Galilee - John 21:1-25

Ascension - Matt. 28: 16-20; Mark 16: 19-20; Luke 24: 44-53

Pentecost - Acts 2: 1-47

In a world abundant with helplessness and purposelessness, the surprising unexpected joy of the resurrection is the antidote.

Chuck Allen, Worship Chairman



Congregational Care...

Love Over All



Every month of 2020, *DaySpring* devotional will feature the **Love Over All** theme and scripture that shows what it means to love God and love others in so many different ways. January was Love Unites, February was Love Loves, **March's theme was Love Listens** and April is Love Sacrifices.

During this time of sheltering in place I thought that **Love Listens** was the one speaking to me. I am definitely still working on this! The art of listening for me is learning to keep certain names and events and even catch phrases straight with each individual. I love when I can ask how someone's family member's move went, or about another's pet, and I get it right! But, then there is the time when just being silent can help. I pray you get something out of this article and will join me in enjoying the rest of the series. It can be delivered to your email inbox daily.

As a kid, did you ever hear the phrase, "There's a reason you have two ears and only one mouth!"? Or perhaps, as an adult you've heard (or said), "Measure twice, cut once?"

If you have, consciously or not, the deliverer of that message was speaking the truth of James 1:19... My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

For some of us, this is nearly impossible. Quick to listen, slow to speak. Measure twice, cut once. **But love listens because love first seeks to understand.** At its core, that's what listening really is: caring enough to try to understand before responding.

This month, may we be committed to the art of listening *well* (not just hearing). For those who are quick to listen, have patience with the talkers. Measuring twice is hard for some of us, and it takes practice.

Thank you for modeling well the heart of *Love Listens*; we promise, people see you and people see God's love in you. For the talkers: breathe. Let others speak until they're finished, jot down what you want to say, then wait to say it. Intentionally let someone else speak first. And as for the slow-to-anger part of these verses in James . . . that's much easier to do when we are first quick to listen and subsequently slow to speak.

Love listens to understand. Love listens to grow. Love listens to strengthen.

Pam Coble, Congregational Care Elder

Comfort in Times of Trouble

Question 1. What is thy only comfort in life and death?

Answer. That I with body and soul, both in life and death, am not my own, but belong unto my faithful Savior Jesus Christ, who, with his precious blood, hath fully satisfied for all my sins, and delivered me from all the power of the devil; and so preserves me that, without the will of my heavenly Father, not a hair can fall from my head; yea, that all things must be subservient to my salvation: and therefore, by his Holy Spirit, he also assures me of eternal life, and makes me sincerely willing and ready henceforth to live unto him.

From the Heidelberg Catechism

Past, Present, and Future: Youth Group in Action

In February, the Youth Group spent an engrossing evening with Mr. Paul Corkill, listening to his reminiscences about his service in World War II. They were fascinated to hear history come to life as he spoke! His descriptions of training for bomber service and the missions he flew were only half of the picture of his wartime experience. The photos he shared of his tent in Italy and his stories about interacting with the Italian citizens were particularly memorable. Their gratitude for a simple cake of soap, which they could not get themselves, seems particularly relevant given the current coronavirus outbreak and temporary shortages.

Paul's talk was also a great run-up to our announcement of our Military Care Package project, our present service project focus. Since we've all been staying home more and seeing less of our friends and family face-to-face, we have a better sense of the isolation our deployed troops can feel.

We hope everyone will continue to support this project when our social distancing efforts come to a welcome end! We still have lists of suggested items attached to the donation box in the Fellowship Hall.

This month, the Youth Group also made over one section of the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall under the theme of "Heroes." The Bible is full of amazing stories about the way God works through His chosen people. We hope you find inspiration in the lessons we've learned from great Biblical figures of faith!

In future news, Youth Sunday is rapidly approaching! On Sunday, April 19th, the Youth are scheduled for their annual chance to participate in guiding our worship. The youth will be spending the sermon time taking turns in speaking from their hearts about what God has meant in their lives. Please join us for a very special time communing with God and one another!

Youth Leaders - Wendy Finney, Connie Kirk, Connie Nelson, & Linda Head



The Youth Group with Paul Corkill



Creating the "Heroes" Bulletin Board

Missions and Evangelism ...

Many of the important ministries of Missions and Evangelism have been negatively impacted by the Coronavirus and the restrictions imposed to retard the spread of the pandemic.

Our weekly **Bread Delivery** has been suspended during the virus emergency, both for the protection of our volunteers and for those we come in contact with at the various agencies. Each agency was contacted and all were very understanding and appreciative. We continue to contact each of these agencies on a weekly basis by phone or email to stay in touch. We have offered to help as much as possible with any critical needs they might have.

The **Promise Land** March highlight was postponed due to the virus situation. The planned brunch and speaker will be rescheduled when we have returned to normal operations.

The **Timothy House** is concerned that they may lose a significant portion of their grant money due to the temporary closing of the Thrift Store during the Coronavirus emergency. They also indicated supplies may be tight in regard to canned foods. This week Missions donated additional funds to help with their food. If you would like to provide additional assistance, please write Timothy House in the Memo section of your check or in the memo line of your online gift.

Regina's **Mask Project** is going strong. Please see article in this newsletter for more information.

We continue the **One Cross to One Person** program. Crosses are available outside under the portico for anyone who wishes to have one. The crosses and a verse are in individual plastic bags. As always, we encourage all members of our congregation to (safely) hand out crosses and the brochures to family, friends, neighbors or anyone you meet in need of prayer, hope, encouragement and love. Please see Anna Griffen's article in this newsletter for more information

The **Joy House** Banquet has been postponed to a later date.

The **Pastor's Pot** has been postponed to an unspecified date. **CARES** has recently begun a **"TOGETHER WE RISE"** campaign. Please see article in this newsletter for more information.

Dave Snider – Missions Elder

2 Corinthians 1:4 *"...who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God."*



CARES Launches “Together We Rise”

The Coronavirus pandemic has created two very difficult problems for CARES, a ministry that provides food and other help for impoverished people in Pickens County. The pandemic has not only caused record numbers of people to be unemployed but has also forced CARES to postpone one of their principal fundraising events, the Pastors Pot. To raise funds in this time of particular need and to encourage hope in those that need it most, they have launched the “Together We Rise” campaign.

CARES will be selling “Together We Rise” signs for front yards for \$10 (or more) donations. The signs may be obtained at CARES, Rooster’s Market, Pickens County Chamber of Commerce, or Callahan State Farm Insurance Office. To maintain social distancing, CARES will be offering curbside sign distribution on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday between 9 AM and Noon in the parking lot behind the Thrift Store. The Session has approved a resolution encouraging members to support this very needed program.

Dave Snider, Missions Elder



Mask Making Volunteers Needed!

Widespread groups of enthusiastic volunteers are making masks to help provide protection to healthcare workers in Pickens County and elsewhere in North Georgia. The effort began when Don Martin, a district governor in Rotary, was asked if Rotary could provide masks for Healthcare workers. Don enlisted the help of his wife, Regina (shown working on a mask), who contacted numerous quilting groups. Regina also requested the help of Connie Kirk and Catherine Pichon. As of April 2, 342 masks had been but many more are needed. If you would like to help or make a donation to this effort, please call Regina Martin at 404-226-0982.



Regina Martin working on some of the many masks that she and others made to support our Healthcare workers.



Doctors Robert and Jessie Ford and some of their staff at Primary Pediatrics in Warner Robbins, Georgia, wearing some of the masks made by Regina and fellow sewers. Others were given to The Children’s Hospital in Macon, GA.

ONE CROSS TO ONE PERSON

"LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE." Matthew 5:16

The United States, along with the world, is experiencing an unprecedented time in history as we are in the midst of the COVID-19 health crisis. No person knows what the future will bring but as Christians we know God is always with us, in the midst of everything, both the good and the bad.



It is normal during this time to be experiencing concern and worry...for ourselves, our families, our friends, our church family and for people all over the world. As a church family, although we may be physically separated right now, we can still be there for each other and for others. Many people are in desperate need of hope and comfort. Sometimes simple random acts of kindness make a difference, helping people experience the power of God's love and light and knowing someone cares and is praying for him or her. During this time, as the body of Christ, we have a unique opportunity and challenge to follow Christ, to share the message of hope in God and to "Let Your Light Shine." Matthew 5:16

We believe the One Cross to One Person ministry has the potential to share hope to individuals during this time filled with uncertainty and anxiety. At FPC a tote bag, filled with individual crosses, has been placed in the portico area of our church. A cross, along with a Bible verse, may be picked up by any person who would like to give another person a cross. For health and safety purposes, each cross has been individually sealed in a zip lock bag. A person may give (or mail) a cross to whatever individual your heart speaks for you to give it to. It might be a family member, relative, neighbor, medical worker, child, grocery store employee, or random stranger. If you feel led to, ask the person if he or she has a prayer request. In a time of social distancing and isolation, this is a simple yet powerful way to reach out in a safe way, to another person. We are all in this together...and we are and will remain the body of Christ.

Peace and Blessings,
FPC Missions and Evangelism Committee

* Please contact Thomas or Anna Griffen if you have questions. We also encourage every member to take a look at FPC's website and click onto the Evangelism link. It shares details and a video about the One Cross to One Person ministry..

BUILDING AND GROUNDS...

News from Building and Grounds During the Coronavirus

While the Spring Clean-up was cancelled, we at B&G are trying to keep the grounds clean and beautiful. With the help of Joe and Angie (our mower and assistant), Kelly Lohman and I have completed most of the spring tasks. The lawn has been cut, seed and fertilizer have been spread, sticks and leaves have been removed, sidewalks have been edged, shrubs have been trimmed, flower beds have been weeded, and flowers are being planted. The grounds will be maintained during this time of crisis to provide a beautiful appearance to the thousands who pass by our church during each month.

Gene Berry, Building and Grounds Elder

Join us Online!



Fellowship Church has gone Virtual...

Many members have commented on how much they appreciate the pre-recorded Worship Services that have been made available through the internet. Recording and putting these Worship Services online has required the hard work and dedication of Pastor Ben and a small group of members. Don Martin has spearheaded the video recording, editing, and uploading of the videos. Ken Jones has helped Don and set up for audio recording. Thelma Cagle has played the piano and led ensembles of volunteers to provide music for the services. All of this has been done while carefully following CDC guidance on social distancing as the photos on this page indicate. The link required to access the videos are emailed out to members along with a viewing guide. Videos are also available at the Church's website (www.fellowshippc-jasper.com) by clicking on the Watch link either on the pull down menu or in the upper righthand corner of page.



Virtual Sunday School Classes

Two Sunday School classes have been meeting through the pandemic using the Zoom program that allows groups to meet over the internet. Contact teacher to join.



Faith Quest Class

Studying *Christian Doctrine* by Shirley Guthrie
Teacher – Mike Madden (706-253-1324)



Corinthians Class

Studying *Praying the Bible* by Donald Whitney
Teacher – Connie Kirk (706-455-8447)

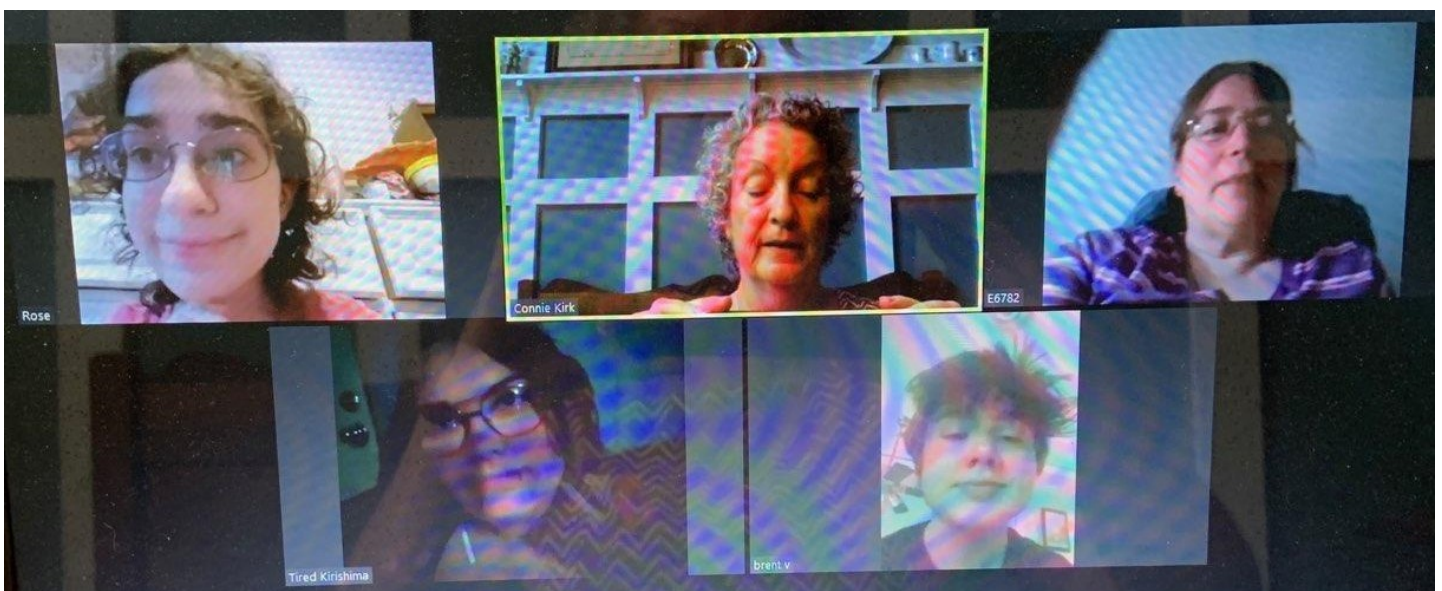
Other Virtual Activities at FPC

Connie Kirk has shown her ingenuity in keeping activities that she leads going via Zoom meetings. As the screen shots below illustrate, both Dancercise classes and the Youth Group have continued to meet during the pandemic.

Dancercising Virtually



Youth Group keeps in touch with Zoom.



Giving to the Virtual Church

Since we are not present on Sunday morning, it is impossible to put our tithes and offerings in the collection plate, so you may wonder how best to contribute to the church that needs your continued support. There are a number of ways to contribute:

Mail your checks to the church. The church's mailbox is checked on a daily basis so your check should be safe. This is probably the simplest way to contribute.

Consult your bank on how to set up online Bill Pay program. You can avoid going out to mail checks because the bank will send the checks you specify in the Bill Pay program to the church. This is probably the simplest way if you are already using online Bill Pay to pay your other bills.

Consult your bank on how to set up a periodic electronic funds transfer from your account to the church's account. If you decide to do this, you may need to contact Cindy Dunning or Sara Corkill for information on the church's account.

You may give online through an online service accessible from the Church's website (www.fellowshippc-jasper.com) that will bill a credit card account that you specify. The downside is that the online service charges 2.9% plus \$0.30 per transaction although you may choose to pay that fee so that the church receives the amount you desire. The process for online giving is outlined below.

Please remember that the church needs your support through this crisis!

To use online payment with credit card, go to the church's website www.fellowshippc-jasper.com. Select Online giving either in upper righthand corner or from the pull down menu on phone or tablet. An online giving form will appear. Fill out the information including credit card requested on the form. Note that your credit card information is never held by the church or the church's web host but by a company that specializes in protecting credit card information and must meet tight security and auditing requirements. Some important points:

All gifts go to the same church bank account labeled General Fund. If you want to specify that the gift go to a specific ministry, please note the ministry in the memo box on the form.

Please consider covering the cost of processing by marking the "Cover Fees" box on the form. The church will receive the intended amount while your credit card will be charged a slightly higher amount.

You may specify that the amount be given automatically on a periodic basis. If you select this option, you will be prompted to specify the frequency and day of the gift.

You will receive an email acknowledging your gift after you complete the transaction by selecting donate.

