



June 19, 2020

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

It is both easy and hard to believe we have been dealing with the coronavirus pandemic for three months now. I thank you all very much for your patience and generosity. The church is in good shape financially, and we have a generous fund to help our friends and neighbors through this crisis.

The church's COVID-19 Task Force continues to monitor our community's status and our ability to minister safely. This week the task force recommended, and Session approved, that our campus remain closed except for essential activities through mid-August. It is recommended that funerals be 25 or less and must be outside with no indoor receptions. The closure includes the Weekday Preschool.

The finance staff remains working at the church and from their homes, Hot Dish & Hope is still being served as take-out on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and we continue to collect food for Urban Ministry on Wednesdays outside Redhead Hall (1,790 pounds so far!). Our housekeeping staff is keeping the campus clean, and we have bought most of the things we will need for a safe re-opening, such as touchless hand sanitizers, masks, and other special cleaning equipment.

Our members Dr. Wells Brabham and Anne Brown (both health professionals at Cone) advise us on local and state trends with the virus, which are still troubling and very dangerous. As of June 17, Guilford County had recorded 2,194 cases and 101 deaths. Very soon you will find on our website detailed information from Anne and Wells about the virus and their thoughts about our safety.

The COVID-19 Task Force continues to meet regularly, focusing on four areas: funerals; technical equipment to enhance live streaming; worship content and variety; and safety protocols for our campus and congregation. We are making good progress and will keep you posted as decisions are made.

Meanwhile, we continue to build our online ministry. Rev. Alexandra Mauney is coordinating a summer devotional that starts soon. Our youth lead prayers Tuesday & Thursday evenings. Donna Chase offers Summer Storytime for Families: Let's Talk About Race, including recommended resources for parents.

We are doing our best to adapt and apply wisdom to a changing situation. If something wonderful happens before the middle of August that allows us to change this decision, we will. I ask you to join me in being vigilant with a Godly mixture of hope, caution, and realism.

I wish you all God's great Peace and Strength.

*Neil*