



August 11, 2020

Hello Church Family,

I pray that you are safe and well during these unique times. I thank you for your commitment to Aldersgate UMC and the Kingdom of God. You continue to amaze me in the ways you maintain your baptismal covenant to support the church with your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. Aldersgate UMC is an incredible church, and I am blessed to serve with you.

I know many of you are waiting for a decision on in-person worship. As you already know, this is not an easy decision. Numbers continue to rise, both locally and nationally, and no one knows how returning to school will impact those numbers. Also, we must balance our desire for in-person worship with the safety of all, especially the most vulnerable among us. A guiding principle throughout this pandemic has been Wesley's "Three Simple Rules": First, do not harm. Second, do all the good you can. Third, stay in love with God.

With "First, do no harm" in mind, Church Council has decided the following: As a congregation, Aldersgate UMC will continue virtual worship indefinitely until guidance from Bishop Leeland, Governor Cooper, and the Center for Disease Control warrant otherwise.

Church leadership will continue monitoring the situation, and with God's guidance will make the best decision for this local body of Christ. Meanwhile, please know that ministry in the name of Christ will continue for us. Pastor Carrie and I have planned Bible studies for the fall. This will take place outside on campus, but can be offered virtually if necessary. Worship will continue on Facebook and You Tube on Sunday mornings, we will continue drive-by collections for various ministries, and drive-in Holy Communion will be offered once a month.

The Church has existed for two thousand years, and during that time she has seen many changes. The Church continues to move "Forward Through the Ages." The Church, and our local body of Christ, will withstand the new challenges presented by COVID-19, adapt as necessary, and emerge on the other side. As a bonus, we will find new and innovative ways to spread the good news of Jesus Christ.

Again, I thank you for your commitment to Aldersgate UMC and the Kingdom of God. Please keep the church, and the staff in your prayers.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Randy