



May 1, 2020

Dear FUMC Orange Family,

Your Church Board has been meeting weekly via video conferencing since the beginning of our time of social distancing to make decisions about our congregation and the current pandemic. This group, with the support of our staff, has been charged with overseeing First UMC's daily operations and monitoring events as they unfold to ensure the safety and health of our church.

With Governor Abbott releasing the details of his plans for reopening businesses in Texas, we felt compelled to update you on our plans regarding public worship.

In conjunction with the recommendations from Bishop Scott Jones and the Texas Annual Conference, we are committed to not resuming corporate gatherings for in-person worship through (at least) the end of May. We recognize that the unpredictability of our current situation may require an extension into June or beyond. We will continue to consult with medical experts, denominational leadership, and community stakeholders to make the most informed decision possible. Until then, we will continue to create online worship each week for us to preserve social distance.

We know this is difficult, but please remember that this decision arises not out of fear but out of a deep love and concern for the people who make up our community. We have a social and moral responsibility to care for those around us – especially the vulnerable in our midst, and we strive to align ourselves with the practices we believe best protect community health.

We miss each of you dearly and look forward to being back in-person with you as soon as possible. Please continue to pray for each other, FUMC's leadership and our larger community.

Grace and Peace,

Lani Rousseau
Pastor

Greg Debrates
Board Chair

Psalm 46:1 - God is our refuge and strength, a help always near in times of great trouble.

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