



First Church Friends,

The First Church Task Force continues to meet and consider all of the complex issues related to the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic on our church membership and life together. We are watching with great care the federal, state, and Great Plains Conference guidelines on staying safe, caring for our facilities, and avoiding any steps that would harm our people and our community. As you know, some government and business functions have resumed activity.

However, the Task Force has determined that we must continue to monitor the evolving public health situation and learn from the experience of the next few weeks. So much is still unknown! **Thus, our buildings will remain closed except for a few personnel that are vital to worship and our ongoing operations. We will revisit the status of the use of the buildings in early to mid-July and take another scan of the landscape at that time to determine if we can set a date certain for resumption of some in-person and facilities-based activities.**

Small groups that are affiliated with FUMC will now be allowed limited use of the outdoor space at the West Campus. Groups must be limited to 45 people or less and maintain the required distancing of 6 feet between people. The use of masks is encouraged. A portable restroom and outdoor handwashing station have been provided. Groups should bring their own hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes for clean up. Any food must be brought in and taken away by the members of the group and there should be no shared food. All church property used by the group must be washed and disinfected before and after use. Groups wishing to use this beautiful outdoor space should reserve the time and date with the church office.

The best news is that the activity of First Church never stopped!

Online worship is extremely popular and actually drawing more participants than normally attend in person. Lots of small groups are at work in mission and ministry both in person and online. Most of our mission commitments continue with great vitality. You have been faithful stewards with your online giving. It has been so heartening to see that we can BE THE CHURCH even without the use of our facilities for a while and with all of our members socially distanced.

In the meantime, we said our farewells to Tom, and will welcome Rev. Kay Scarbrough who most of us will have to meet virtually for the first few Sundays. The Transition Team and Congregational Care Team will be reaching out to you to discern how you are doing and what your views are on the many issues related to reopening our facilities and resuming more normal activities.

When we do begin to "reopen" one of our first priorities besides the safety of the congregation will be resumption of several of the mission outreaches that are so central to our work in the community and the world. Thanks to talented ministers, musicians, technicians, and volunteers, we are providing a very meaningful worship experience, but, at this time in our world, it has never been more important to BE THE CHURCH FOR ALL OF GOD'S CHILDREN who are hurting, in need, and hungry for the comfort of the Gospel message lived out in every way we can.

As always, please feel free to reach out to any member of the Task Force with any questions, concerns, suggestions, or thoughts. Their names and contact information are below:

First Church Task Force

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