

Letter from the Pastor

Greetings members of Westside,

Many of you have been wondering about church services and mid-week activities at Westside. Leadership began to discuss and evaluate the appropriate path forward starting last Thursday and reached a final decision this morning. We will be postponing in-person worship for the next two Sundays, March 15th and 22nd and suspending Wednesday night programming until school starts back again. We will live stream a sermon and prayer on the church's Facebook at 11:00 a.m. each Sunday. I encourage everyone to join in and offer prayers and words of encouragement via the comment section. We have also recently enabled electronic giving. Our plan had been to roll it out in service this weekend. God knew we would need this and it is ready to go. There is a donate button on our church web page or you can download the Church Center app, choose Westside as your church and then enable giving via debit card, ACH draft or even text. Unfortunately, pausing worship doesn't pause our bills so please continue to tithe electronically or mail your check to the church.

The leadership team has really wrestled with this issue. It started with the governor's request for churches to cancel this Sunday and continued when our Bishop made the request last night for us to suspend for the next two weeks. The idea of not gathering in person as the people of God grieves us all, but we recognize the importance of being part of the community solution to protect our vulnerable population and combat this virus. A majority of our families at Westside are either vulnerable themselves or have daily contact with someone who is vulnerable. We need to take these steps for protection.

Many have expressed concern that by suspending worship we are failing to stand in faith and trust in God, but I would point us to Romans chapter 13, where Paul reminds us that it is God himself who installed our public and governmental authorities, and that out of our trust in God we should cooperate with our secular leadership. As counterintuitive as it may seem, suspending in-person worship can be an expression of our faith. Thank you all for your faithfulness, support and generosity toward WCUMC. Hopefully we will see you in person two weeks from tomorrow.

Your Brother in Christ,

Pastor Faron