



**Riverside UMC**  
Connect. Grow. Serve.

# January 2021 Newsletter

Well, our Governor has moved our region into Tier 2 mitigation. The Covid-19 vaccines are being slowly distributed. However, we are still being asked to wear masks, wash hands, and social distance.

Bishop Frank Beard has also posted notice that churches in our area can meet for worship with only 25 people congregating and following all the previous protocols. We have said previously that we would revisit our worship plans in Mid-January.

Given we are still not clear of the virus or the amount of deaths and infections that are still happening, we will continue with worshipping online only. Traveling during our winter weather and the ongoing need to protect our most vulnerable members of the community from infection make it necessary to continue to suspend our in-person worship.

When we opened last fall, our attendance was about one third of our normal attendance. If we open now we would be under the same restrictions that meant no singing, no recitation, wearing mask, limited accessibility, and social distancing, which limited fellowship. In short, our worship was so different and limited, the experience was less than desired.

When we open again, and we will open again to in-person worship, we really want it to be open to a much more enjoyable, inspiring, and inclusive experience. Therefore, for the 8:00 and 11:00 worship services we will continue with suspended worship until further notice.

Our Hispanic ministry will begin in-person worship in the sanctuary at 9:30 with certain limits and proper COVID-19 protocols observed.

Again, COVID-19 and other restrictions do not mean that the church shuts down. It actually means we are learning new ways to mobilize God's mission and discover new methods of sharing God's love. We need you all now more than ever! God is doing a new thing. Let us join God in making straight the pathways of God.

Stay safe and stay well!

God bless,

Pastor Bill