



THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

North Texas Annual Conference
P.O. Box 866188
Plano, Texas 75086-6188
Telephone: 972-526-5015 ~ Fax: 972-526-5014

MICHAEL MCKEE
Resident Bishop

JOELL STANISLAUS
Executive Assistant

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It has been almost one full year since areas of the North Texas Conference first were impacted by limitations on public gatherings and, later, other restrictions necessitated by COVID-19. Since that day in March 2020, John Wesley's mantra of "do no harm" – to both our pastors and to the communities in which we serve – has been the guidepost for our decisions and actions, in concert with recommendations from national, state and local health officials.

On Tuesday, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott issued Executive Order GA 34, which rescinded a statewide mask mandate and opened businesses to full capacity, effective March 10. In his decree, Gov. Abbott also said that "individuals are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings over the nose and mouth wherever it is not feasible to maintain six feet of social distancing from another person not in the same household." Furthermore, "every person (including individuals, businesses, and other legal entities) is strongly encouraged to use good-faith efforts and available resources to follow the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) health recommendations, found at www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus."

While we celebrate the strides that have been made in beginning to contain the spread of COVID-19, the virus is still very much a threat to many of our church members and those in the communities we serve.

Our ultimate goal is the resumption of in-person worship activities without restrictions, but the safety and health of those around us are paramount. The steps North Texas Conference churches and their lay leadership have taken have been effective, and I ask that you – for the time being – continue doing what you have been doing as we all remain committed to "do no harm."

Thank you for your tireless and innovative work in being the Church during these challenging times. I pray that God will continue to protect and guide us all in our pursuit of doing His work.

Peace,

Michael McKee