

March 14, 2020 7:41 PM

Dear Church,

Your pastors and elders made a hard and prayerful decision at 6 pm on Saturday, March 14, after meeting with the Henry County Health Department from 4-5 pm in a special meeting for church leaders.

We are cancelling all church activities, meetings, and programs from SUNDAY March 15 through SATURDAY March 28 to help assist in the potential of spread of the COVID-19 that would overwhelm our current medical infrastructure.

This is a 2-week closure to partner with the Henry County Health Department to stay ahead of this situation. We are doing this of our own free will, with faith and wisdom, to be partners with our community leaders and health organizations. This fully supports our church's vision statement in this unique moment in history: "we desire to see communities thriving to the glory of God." God is with us!

We will be conducting a full worship service on both Sundays, March 15 & 22, for the church family and friends to watch from home through our webpage at www.newcastlefbc.com/live/ or through our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/newcastle.firstbaptist/.

Please join us in worship ONLINE at 10:30 am on both Sundays, March 15 & 22.

The elders will meet on Monday, March 23 to make a decision about our Sunday services beyond these immediate two weeks, but at this time we are only comfortable making a decision regarding the next two weeks: March 15-28, 2020. In order to get this message out in a timely manner, I am keeping it short. I will be communicating again more thoroughly in the days to come. I stand by everything I have written in the previous 3 communications that went out on March 12 & 13. The situation is constantly changing and there is much more that we don't know than we do know. We are choosing prudence as we walk through God's providence with faith and wisdom.

All I know for certain is that God is with us and that we are not giving into fear by making this decision, but trusting God every step of the way in all of our decisions.

I wholeheartedly believe that this is the right faith decision. There will be naysayers no matter what decision we make, but I would rather be judged as being on the side of overreacting, than it being too late and being judged on the side of not acting sooner.

Ultimately, I come in agreement with these words stated by a community leader just yesterday, "In the end, it will be impossible to know if we overreacted or did too much, but it will be QUITE apparent if we under-reacted or did too little."

By making this decision, we are locking arms with our community and its leaders, instead of standing opposed to them. Please pray for us as we continue to make decisions and please pray for all of our community leaders and all who are being impacted by the COVID-19.

Once again, please join us live at 10:30 a.m. Sunday morning on our webpage at www.newcastlefb.com/live/ or on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/newcastle.firstbaptist/

REMAIN PRAYERFUL! And if you know someone who does not have access to email or Facebook, please pass along this information to them as soon as possible.

With faith, hope, and love,
Pastor Jerry Ingalls, Lead Pastor
Pastor Ken Durham, Associate Pastor