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A Pastoral Letter: Sunday Morning Schedule & Modern Worship

January 30, 2023

Dear Cumming First United Methodist Church,

I give thanks to God for you and for your faithful prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness in support of Cumming First United Methodist Church. I am especially thankful for your spirit of kindness, cooperation, and participation during this time of reconstruction of the sanctuary and Family Life Center after our Christmas flood.

Our plans were to begin a new Sunday morning schedule the first Sunday in Lent, February 26. Those plans have been postponed until we are permitted into both the Family Life Center and sanctuary simultaneously. At present, it appears we will be out of the Family Life Center until the end of March or maybe after Easter. It is to be determined if we can stay in the sanctuary during the reconstruction set to begin after Easter. It could be as late as this summer before we are back to multiple services. For now, we continue to have Sunday School and small groups for all ages at 9:30 and worship at 10:30.

As we worship together at 10:30, the desire is to have elements from all three services. With this goal in mind, we are needing help with providing music in the modern worship service. Currently music in the modern worship service is provided by volunteers. We are seeking to fill the part-time modern worship music leader position. However, this has proven difficult given other churches offer this as a full-time position at four to six times the salary. There are ways you may be able to help us with the modern worship music:

1. If you have skills to sing or play an instrument in the modern worship team, your talents and time are needed.
2. If you can help financially fund the modern worship music leader position, your funding is needed.
3. If you know of anyone who might be interested in singing, playing an instrument, or being employed as the modern worship music leader; please have them contact us.

Until a more permanent solution to the modern worship music team is available, current volunteers have offered their time and talents to provide modern music once or twice each month. One service at 10:30 provides us some time to find the people needed to build this ministry before we return to multiple services.

Whenever we return to multiple services, the plan is to have simultaneous services with the modern worship service in the Family Life Center and the traditional service in the sanctuary. The anticipated Sunday morning schedule would be:

8:45	Worship in the sanctuary
9:45	Sunday School & small groups for all ages
11:00	Modern worship in the Family Life Center & Traditional worship in the sanctuary

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Simultaneous services was a solution formed by focus groups in the congregation and was approved by the Church Council. This will allow all persons, regardless of age or worship service they attend, to benefit from the faith development opportunities offered.

Again, I am thankful for your faithful prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness in support of Cumming First United Methodist Church. Together we will be a cooperative congregation trusting God to use all we offer for God's glory. May we always extravagantly offer ourselves and gifts to God in proportion to God's giving to us. When we do, we will experience and reflect the joy God experiences in giving to us.

May the love, joy, peace, and hope of Christ always be with you.

The Reverend Dr. Matthew D. Stewart