



March 30, 2020

Rio Texas Conference Delegates

After consultation with Bishop Robert Schnase, the Annual Conference Design Team, and the Uniting Table, (whose function it is to coordinate mission and ministry in the Rio Texas Conference) I have determined that it is wise to suspend registration for the 2020 Rio Texas Annual Conference. Through discussions with United Methodist leaders across the nation, the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the shelter in place orders in many local communities, the Annual Conference Design Team will continue to monitor the continuing and developing COVID-19 pandemic. We expect to make a final decision by May 1 concerning holding Annual Conference in June, 2020.

The staff of the Rio Texas Conference are working from their homes and are using internet platforms to stay in touch with each other and our congregational leaders. We continue to be informed on the complex situation presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. Our congregations are being creative in sustaining their members and community with The Word of God through Jesus Christ as they gather electronically for prayer, worship, Bible study and connection. The safety and well-being of our staff, our leaders, our congregants and the persons in our communities is at the forefront of our thoughts and prayers.

Bishop Schnase and the Annual Conference Design Team have been and will continue to be in dialogue with United Methodist leaders across the nation to discern appropriate and creative ways to accomplish the work that must be done in the Clergy Session and at Annual Conference. We have guidance from the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry and General Board of Finance and Administration on meeting the administrative and Disciplinary mandates for Annual Conference. We will make a final decision by May 1 concerning holding Annual Conference in June, 2020. Pray for our nation, our churches, our leaders and all of us as we seek to be sustained by our faith in Jesus Christ through this pandemic.

In Christ's service,

Mickey T. McCandless
Rio Texas Conference Secretary