



Creating Opportunities for Better Lives Through Christ-Centered Service

A Mission Agency of the United Methodist Church
within the Red Bird Missionary Conference
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Henderson Settlement will continue to be open and operating pending a significant shift in the health environment within our community. We will continue to monitor, and comply with decisions made by the United Methodist Church, as well as the Federal and State governments. At this time, continued operation with some adjustments is compliant with the decisions of these groups.

Our organization has developed a plan including operational adjustments to increase our already high sanitation standards, and including plans to handle the unfortunate possibility that someone should become ill while visiting the campus or participating in programs with us on-campus. More details of this plan can be found on our website www.hendersonsettlement.com. Staff and community members are clear that they are not to come to the Settlement if they are sick ... even if the sickness is thought just to be a head cold. We have the same expectation of volunteer visitors coming from outside the community.

To join us in the logic of this decision, it is necessary to understand the context within which we operate. When we shut down, there are folks that go without food. Our working community members are without child care options to react to the 3 or 4 week (or potentially longer) school closures. Some members of our community are dependent upon the Settlement for transportation to access medical assistance and to purchase the daily necessities of life. Our community youth will be largely idle for a month or more, lacking the diversions that are common and available in most American homes and communities. We can make the seemingly "safe" decision to protect our community members right into further hardship.

We have prayed for God's direction, and He has answered our prayer. The first sign was peace with the decision. The second sign was the provision, at just the right time, of the devotion you can read at the bottom of this message. Please take the time to do so, it is particularly pertinent to this period in our Christian lives. The third sign was alignment from the Red Bird Missionary Conference to support whatever decision the Leadership Team should make.

We expect that then next three months, or more, will be particularly difficult for our community and our organization. No, not largely because of illness. The hardship will result from the impacts of fear. The temptation when we are afraid is for us to focus inwardly..."How can I protect myself? How can I keep my family safe? How can we prevent contributing to the spread of illness within our congregation?"

An alternative is to focus on the impact that others around us may experience as the result of this situation and the panic surrounding it. Charitable support can decline over-night as churches and families feel less financially secure. Access to food, medical, and other forms of support systems can instantly vanish as these systems are shut down. Those among us with the least resources to weather a storm are typically the most dramatically impacted by it.

We ask that you continue to support us in the following ways:

1. If you have scheduled to participate in Work Camp this year, but now need to cancel, please consider making a donation to the Settlement of all, or some portion of the money you would have invested in your mission trip. We will continue to pay our staff and meet urgent needs within the community with these resources.
2. Please continue gathering material goods to support our Thrift Store operation. If you no longer have a volunteer willing to transport the items, please contact us at 606-337-3613 and we will search for alternatives.
3. Please also continue your faithful financial support of our ministry. The Spring is typically the period of increasing financial support. The measures to control spread of the virus have resulted in Work Camp cancellations and temporary church closures. As we have recently communicated, we entered Spring, 2020 with a low operating cash balance. Your financial support is important to help us sustain operations and recover during this volatile period.

Regardless of all else that takes place, please join us as we honor God with our decisions and actions, and as we bring Glory to His name in continued service as He has commanded.

For the Leadership Team,

James L. Knight

Executive Director

Henderson Settlement