



First Baptist Church
NORTH AUGUSTA
Disciples Making Disciples



July 2, 2020

Church Family,

I want you to hear directly from me that **I have decided to reschedule the target date for our on-campus gathering.** As I promised you, there are several things that we have been watching closely and locally. It has come to my attention that there has been a concerning increase in COVID-19 numbers over the past week in the counties of the CSRA.

Wednesday night, I held a meeting to revisit our original target date of July 12 with Rod Greenway (Deacon Chair), Cecelia Hewett (Personnel Chair), and Steve Johnston (finance chair).

Dr. Robert West, who has served faithfully as the head of our COVID-19 task force, shared his recommendations and concerns. Based on his input, and the support of your elected representatives, I believe rescheduling our target date is both wise and necessary.

Further, we do not plan to consider any other dates in July as options for gathering on campus. **I will make it my goal to give you a new target date as soon as possible.**

Please know that I love you, and, as your pastor, I make all my decisions with your safety and best interest in mind. Our decision making will prioritize minimization of harm to our people, which will cause us to be more cautious than some would like. As your pastor, I will never ask or expect you to take an unnecessary risk. I will not be rushed, and I will not be hurried.

I can assure you that we will reopen our building at the right time.

With all the uncertainty and instability you are dealing with at this moment, let me remind you that our God is in control! Your church is not closed, the building is. You are the church, you are my church family, and **I am fully committed to seeing our church family through this.**

The distance has not caused me to lose my heart for you or the calling God has on my life to lead you through this.

Thank you for your patience, support, and encouragement to me. Although less than 10% of our active attendees RSVP'd for our previous target date, I know we all look forward to gathering on campus as soon as possible. One day soon, we will look back together as a church family and share memories of COVID-19 as a pivotal moment in our church's history. Our best days are ahead. Your best days are ahead. **I am praying for you, and I look forward to seeing how God continues to unite our church online as we move through this together.**

Your Pastor,

Pastor Stephen