



Dear Falcon Families,

April 26, 2020

I hope and pray that you all enjoyed the time out of school with your family over Spring Break and that you are all healthy! We remain in an unprecedented and unsettling time for our communities, our country, and our world. We have new terms that we use regularly now: social distancing, shelter in place, COVID-19, PPE and school closure. Our days have become very different and our challenges unique to this time. Yet we serve a God who is not surprised or taken off guard by what has happened. He remains in control as He always has been. I believe that what truly has us unsettled is the realization that, despite all of our planning and "doing the right thing," we are not in control! Yet God never meant for us to take on the burden of control in our lives. One of the many ways He may be bringing good out of these circumstances is to make us fully aware that it is only God, Himself, that is in control and that we all need Him. I encourage you to reach out to family and neighbors and share the security and peace that you have found in Christ with them. People are open to hearing the Gospel and experiencing the love of God now, more than ever!

Along those lines, we hope that you have been enjoying the Chapel messages provided every Wednesday by Miss Rola, and the special guest speaker this week, Mrs. Hoag! If you've missed any, they are in your email with the Wednesday morning announcements and you can go back and view them any time!

#### **Information You Need to Know**

Thursday afternoon, as many of you know, NC Governor Cooper issued Executive Order 135 that extended the **"Stay at Home" orders and restrictions on "mass gatherings" through May 8<sup>th</sup>** and then, Friday afternoon, **extended the closure of public school buildings through the end of the school year in June**. These orders **will extend our teacher-led online distance learning through at least May 15, 2020. In addition, our athletic association, the NCISAA, officially canceled the 2020 Spring Season effective Friday.**

What do these changes in the NC "Stay at Home" Orders/"Social Distancing" Guidelines mean for you? For most of us, if you have been following the current hygiene and social distancing recommendations and wearing a mask in public, the only real change is the length of time that we will be under these guidelines or orders. In addition, in Mecklenburg County, churches will be allowed to have drive-in services but not drive-in communion, beginning today. In South Carolina, some retail establishments have reopened under restricted access and public beaches and waterways have been reopened. It is encouraging that the cases of COVID-19 in Mecklenburg County have been leveling, although they are not yet declining. Public health officials are projecting that the number of cases will begin to drop and that this will allow for relaxation of restrictions later in May. NC is considering this Phase 1 of Reopening as outlined by the *White House Coronavirus Task Force*.

Here are the links for the actual text of the order and its FAQ's for NC and Mecklenburg County:

**NC Executive Order 135:** [EO135 NC Stay at Home Order Extensions](#)

**Mecklenburg County Order:** [Mecklenburg County Stay at Home Order](#)

**Mecklenburg County Update:** [Mecklenburg County Coronavirus Update](#)

Please continue to follow pandemic information from reliable sources: [CDC Coronavirus Guidelines](#), the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#), and state and local health departments. If you or any member of your household tests positive for COVID-19, please immediately inform us via [Mrs. Carthen](#). Likewise, please let us know if you or a family member travels outside the immediate area by completing our Travel Update Form (click [here](#)).

#### **Spring Activities**

For school at United Faith, my hope remains that we will be able to return to campus to finish our school year together even if only for one day, but this will only occur if we find that the conditions are safe to do so. In the meantime, we will continue teacher-led distance learning with your children and teachers will still be available via email, telephone, or Zoom/Google Hangouts for help or questions.

**We will keep you informed of any changes to our current schedule as we get closer to May 15, 2020.** Should we not be able to complete the school year in person, we will be sending you instructions on how the school year will end including: graduation, promotion ceremonies, return of books, return of laptops, exams, etc. If needed, we will schedule times for each family to return their books and laptops in a similar drive-through manner as we did with picking up supplies back in March. **Plans for Graduation, Promotion Ceremonies, End of Year Lower School Activities, Spring Showcase, Athletic Banquet, Yearbook Distribution, and Exams are still in development at this time.**

### **We Hear You!**

Your Falcon Team at United Faith is always committed to enhancing academics at our school, and this is true even during a pandemic! We have learned from your feedback and have made changes to our distance learning program over the past month.

- **Preschool** families requested more than the online and hands-on learning resources that they were receiving from their teachers and we responded by developing interactive sessions with their teachers, despite our initial concern that this might be too challenging for our youngest Falcons! They are enjoying seeing their friends and beloved teachers throughout the week.
- **Lower School** students were so excited to get started that they got their teachers to start their distance learning a day early! We have responded to concerns of not enough or too much interactive time with the teachers have worked with parents to find a balance for each grade that works for that level.
- **Upper School** students have Core Classes 3 days per week and Electives 2 days per week, from 9am-3pm. With this schedule we heard that students were struggling to fit in lunch on the 3 days per week that they had core classes, so we pushed back our afternoon start time to provide an additional 30 minutes for lunch.
  - **Middle School** parents let us know that their students needed clearer guidelines on when they did their work, so we adjusted the time of day that assignments were due. In addition, we heard that they needed a simpler schedule of days that assignments were due so we put that in place as well.
  - **High School** has adapted well to the teacher-led online learning environment. We have responded to parental input regarding too much or not enough rigor and the teachers have adjusted the rigor of assignments to better fit the new schedule.

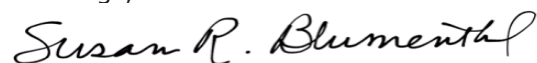
Please remind your students that all aspects of the Code of Conduct remain in effect, even during distance learning. This means that the consequences for cheating, plagiarism, inappropriate online viewing and conduct apply. It may also be important for your students to know that all UFCA-owned devices contain firewall software that tracks the sites your students visit each day, and this is logged and reported.

### **Ongoing Activities**

- Parents in Prayer continues to meet each Thursday from 11am-12pm via Zoom (<https://zoom.us/j/2023480960>)
- The Main Office remains open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00-12:00 for emergencies and for staff access to supplies and resources only.
- Campus remains closed to all other persons including families and visitors. Please use email or reach out to us by telephone, leaving a voicemail at 704-541-1742, extension 200, should you need to contact us.
- All other events and activities remain postponed or cancelled.

I pray that each of you remains healthy and, above that, are resting in the peace that you are His and are covered by His love and the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ.  
Please continue to join with me in prayer for a rapid resolution to this pandemic!

Blessings,

  
Susan R. Blumenthal, PhD, Head of School

"For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you...for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control" 2 Timothy 1:6-7 ESV