



## Mountain Sky Area of The United Methodist Church Mountain Sky Conference

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To the People Called United Methodist of the Mountain Sky Conference,

Jesus, following the resurrection, directed Simon Peter to “feed my lambs, tend my sheep.” (John 21: 15-19). Here, Jesus entrusts his disciples to care for the ones Jesus loved: the lost, the least, the lonely.

Jesus asks the same of you and me. We are to care for the spiritual, physical, and emotional well-being of those whom Jesus loves.

This takes on a responsibility of epic proportions in these COVID-19 days we are living. How do we gather as the Body of Christ and keep one another safe from infection? What guidelines must we follow if we are to move from online ministry to in-person worship and small groups? How do we prepare our people so that the most vulnerable in our midst will be kept safe?

COVID-19 is far from over. While our physical distancing has helped flatten the curve, infections (and deaths) are still occurring. The most vulnerable population to COVID-19 (those over 65) are the majority in our congregations. As disciples of Jesus, we have a serious responsibility to organize and build up ministry in ways that are accessible to all, beginning with the most vulnerable.

Since March, the Mountain Sky Conference COVID-19 Crisis team has been meeting to guide the MSC response, communications, and programming through the pandemic. Team members include:

Margaret Hotze  
Bruce Berger  
Patti Agnew  
Janet Mulroy  
Angela Thomas  
Michael Smith

Gayla Jo Slauson  
AJ Bush  
Angie Kotzmoyer  
Dawn Skerritt  
Jeff Rainwater  
Bishop Karen Oliveto

Don McCammon  
Gary Haddock  
Zach Bechtold  
Charmaine Robledo  
Annie Arnoldy

Before considering a return to in-person worship and meetings, all congregations are asked to create a team to work through this guidebook. You will find both concrete steps for safety and health, as well as critical questions to help you consider what ministry in the next phase of COVID-19 will look like.

**I do not want one single case of COVID-19 traced to one of our churches because we did not care for those whom Jesus loves.**

I hope you will find this guidebook helpful as you (re)Launch your ministries.

May God continue to bless you and your ministries,

Bishop Karen P. Oliveto