



**Advisory on the COVID-19 Outbreak 7/2020
(as of 23 Mar 2020)**

Travel

1. Defer [all travel](#) to reduce the risk of contracting COVID-19 infection while overseas. Exercise caution when need to travel.
2. Comply strictly with the Leave-of-Absence, Stay-Home Notice [or Quarantine Order](#) issued when you return from overseas.
3. If you are travelling overseas, do not go near live animals, including poultry and birds; do not eat raw and undercooked meats; and do not be in crowded places and around people who are unwell.
4. Upon return to Singapore from any country, monitor your health closely for two weeks and see a doctor if unwell¹. Inform your doctor your travel history. If you have a fever or respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath), wear a mask and call the clinic ahead of the visit. Do not doctor-hop.
5. Members with known close contact with those returning to Singapore from any country must monitor their health closely for two weeks and see a doctor if unwell.

Personal Hygiene and Responsibility

6. Wash your hands frequently with soap. [Avoid touching your face unnecessarily.](#)
7. Wear a mask if you have a cough or runny nose.
8. Cover your mouth with a tissue paper when coughing or sneezing.
9. Those who have any close contact with anybody who is a confirmed COVID-19 patient or a suspect case, or who are on Leave of Absence (LOA), Stay-Home-Notice (SHN) or received Quarantine Order (QO) are to inform the church office promptly, comply with the orders and are not to come to church during the LOA, SHN or QO period.

¹ Unwell symptoms include but are not limited to fever, headache, cough, shortness of breath, runny nose, sore throat, abdominal pain, diarrhoea.

10. See a doctor promptly if you feel unwell.
11. Avoid coming to church if unwell, or if you have any risk factor that may make you more vulnerable to COVID-19 infection, e.g. age 70 years and above, chronic diseases (such as heart problems, diabetes, lung diseases, immune-compromised conditions, etc.).
12. Be socially responsible.
13. Avoid crowded places.
14. Comply with precautionary measures in church and other places.
15. Keep a safe distance of at least 1m between individuals² & avoid unnecessary bodily contact in public or in church.
16. Leaders and members are to adhere to precautionary measures and observe proper hygiene while on duty in church.
17. Stay calm, do not over-react. Be vigilant.
18. Do not trust or disseminate fake news.
19. Follow updates by proper authorities. The following are some recommended sources:
<https://www.moh.gov.sg/covid-19>
<https://go.gov.sg/whatsapp>

Worship Service

20. There must be strict adherence to *current guidelines* set by the authorities if onsite worship services are held.
21. **Do not church-hop or service-hop.**³
22. Besides the precautionary measures of screening worshippers and cleaning of the premise before and after use, the *Density-Intensity-Duration* guideline must also be followed closely.⁴
23. **Density** refers to the physical proximity between individuals. The total number of worshippers at any one time within the church premise must be limited to 250 or less from 31 March to 30 June. In addition, ventilation must be improved and

² COVID-19: *Guidance for Religious Organizations on Enhanced Precautionary Measures for Religious Activities*, Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth, dated 21 March 2020.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

crowding of participants must be reduced with an adequate distance of at least 1m maintained between individuals.⁵

24. **Intensity** refers to the degree of release of droplets, and since singing is deemed as a high-intensity activity by the authority, it will be suspended during worship service.⁶

25. **Duration** of service will be shortened by shortening of sermons and prayers, and limiting to essential rituals, etc.⁷

Temporary Suspension of Worship Services and Other Church Ministries⁸

26. In view of the worsening COVID-19 pandemic globally and locally, all worship services have been *temporarily suspended* from 21 March 2020 to 10 April 2020.

27. **Do not go to another church to worship.** Otherwise it may defeat the purpose of suspension of worship services.

28. In tandem with the above suspension, all other church ministries, onsite and offsite, on weekdays and weekends, will also be *temporarily suspended* from 24 March 2020 to 10 April 2020. These ministries include but are not restricted to the following:

- a. Gatherings
 - i. Cell groups
 - ii. Fellowships (e.g. seniors, youths, young adults, ladies, men, etc.)
 - iii. Others (e.g. interest groups, refreshment time, etc.)
 - iv. Vision 2A activities
 - v. Corporate Prayer Meetings

- b. Equipping
 - i. Sunday schools
 - ii. Bible study
 - iii. Discipleship classes
 - iv. Talks, forums, seminars, conferences and similar events
 - v. Membership/ baptism classes
 - vi. Pre-marital & other counselling

- c. Worship-Related Activities
 - i. Choir/ praise team practices and presentations
 - ii. Worship rehearsals
 - iii. Media/ audio-visual rehearsals

⁵ Ibid. Families may sit together but >1m apart from other groups.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Other church ministries exclude Bethel Day Care and Preschool, which is under the purview of the childcare committee and Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA); All Saints Memorial Chapel & All Saints Home which are under the purview of their respective Boards and the relevant authorities.

d. Meetings

- i. Elders & Deacons Court (EDC)
- ii. Service Working Committees
- iii. Other EDC Working Committees (e.g. Finance, Facilities, Mission, Social Concern, Human Resource, etc.)
- iv. Other committee meetings
- v. Annual Congregational Meeting
- vi. Chinese Presbytery Meeting held in Bethel Presbyterian Church (e.g. election & ordination of Ministers)

29. Leaders and members are encouraged to use remote means (e.g. Zoom, FaceTime, etc.) to communicate and minister to one another.

Special Concession

30. Special concession will be made on a *case-by-case basis* for events such as funerals, wakes, weddings and critical meetings⁹ (e.g. crisis meeting, Anti-COVID-19 Taskforce meeting, etc.). There must be strict adherence to precautionary measures and guidelines as mandated by the authorities and the church, as mentioned in points 22-25.

31. Weddings: the church strongly advises couples to reduce the number of participants, shorten the wedding service (to not more than an hour, including reception), avoid sharing of food (bento preferred to buffet). Couples may want to consider just proceeding with the registration of marriage witnessed by a small number of people (e.g. family members and closed relatives and friends) and postponing the celebration (e.g. banquet) and overseas honeymoon.

32. Funerals and Wakes¹⁰: the church strongly advises reducing the participants of funerals and wakes, limiting to family members only, and not to go beyond close relatives and friends if possible. Adherence to precautionary measures and guidelines at all times and venues (e.g. wake venue, cremation hall, etc.), and during all rituals (e.g. receiving of body, memorial, cremation, ash collection, niche installation, etc.) is strongly advised.

Connectedness with God and One Another

33. All members are encouraged to regularly connect with God through prayer, reading and meditating His Word and worshipping Him with spiritual hymns and songs

⁹ The Senior Pastor, with the assistance of the Anti-COVID-19 Taskforce, will assess and permit or prohibit such events or meetings.

¹⁰ The funeral proper of someone who died from COVID-19 infection will follow latest guidelines from the authorities.

(except when in a group, where singing is not allowed), whether onsite services are suspended or not.

34. All members are also encouraged to connect with one another via text messages, phone calls and other remote ways.

Care and Concern for Others

35. As Christians, we are called to show care and concern for our neighbours. We can do so by praying for COVID19-infected patients, their family members, healthcare professionals, government authorities, the nation and the world. We can also contribute to the church's love offering to assist those in need, and in other ways.

36. We should not discriminate or criticize baselessly. Instead we should be channels of God's blessing.

Evolving Nature of Outbreak and Update of Advisory

37. In view of the fluidity of the situation due to the evolving nature of COVID-19 pandemic, the advisory will be updated as and when circumstances demand.

**Issued by Bethel Presbyterian Church
23 Mar 2020, 4pm**