



**Advisory on the COVID-19 Outbreak 10/2020
(as of 23 April 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 14 days 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 14 days and see a doctor if unwell.

Personal Hygiene and Social Responsibility

6. Wash your hands frequently with soap. Avoid touching your face unnecessarily.
7. See a doctor promptly if you feel unwell.
8. Cover your mouth with a tissue paper when coughing or sneezing if you are not wearing a mask, e.g. [when you are at home or exercising](#).
9. Be socially responsible, as it is critical in slowing the spread of the virus.²
10. While in public, [it is mandatory to wear a mask](#) even if you are well to protect yourself and others, avoid crowds, avoid physical contact with others and common touch points, avoid touching your face, and maintain a safe distance of at least 1m from others.

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

² Ministry of Health's Press Release: *Circuit Breaker to Minimise Further Spread of COVID-19*, dated 3 April 2020. See also <https://www.moh.gov.sg/news-highlights/details/strong-national-push-to-stem-spread-of-covid-19>, dated 21 April 2020.

11. Avoid going out except for essential matters, e.g. buying food & groceries, & urgent medical needs.³ [Unless otherwise stated, only one person per family is allowed to go out of the house at any one point in time.](#)⁴
12. Elderly 70 years old and above and those with chronic diseases⁵ should stay at home as far as possible. Avoid close contact with elderly and those with chronic diseases.
13. Those who have any close contact with anyone 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 and strictly comply with the orders.
14. Comply with precautionary measures given by the authorities.
15. Work from home unless your work is considered essential by the authorities, and do not go to school as dictated by the latest regulations.⁶
16. [You are encouraged to download and use the government's TraceTogether app to support the nation in controlling the spread of COVID-19.](#)
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>

Temporary Suspension of Worship Services and Other Church Ministries⁷

20. In view of the worsening COVID-19 pandemic globally and locally, all congregational worship and religious services will be *temporarily suspended* from 26 March 2020, 2359 hours to [1 June 2020](#) (inclusive).⁸ This may be extended if the situation does not improve.

³ Ibid.

⁴ <https://www.moh.gov.sg/news-highlights/details/strong-national-push-to-stem-spread-of-covid-19>, dated 21 April 2020.

⁵ Chronic diseases include but are not limited to diabetes, chronic heart, lung and kidney diseases, conditions that weaken the immune system, etc.

⁶ Ibid. Details of home-based school curriculum are in the latest MOE Press Release dated [21 April 2020](#) (<https://www.moe.gov.sg/news/press-releases>).

⁷ 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.

⁸ Bethel Presbyterian Church has previously issued an advisory (dated [5 April 2020](#)) to suspend all church services from 21 Mar to [4 May 2020](#).

21. All other church activities and ministries are also *temporarily suspended* from 24 March 2020 to [1 June 2020](#) (inclusive)⁹, and include but are not limited 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

- 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)

- e. Celebrations & Festivities
 - i. Weddings & Registration of Marriages¹⁰
 - ii. Festive activities like Moon Cake Festival, Thanksgiving events, etc.

22. Leaders and members are encouraged to use remote means (e.g. Zoom, FaceTime, etc.) to communicate and minister to one another. They are strongly advised not to hold religious gatherings in private settings, except with family members in the same household.¹¹

⁹ Bethel Presbyterian Church has previously issued an advisory (dated [5 April 2020](#)) to suspend all other church ministries (besides services) from 24 Mar to [4 May 2020](#).

¹⁰ MCCY's Advisory: Elevated Safe Distancing Measures for Religious Organisations, dated 4 April 2020.

¹¹ Ibid.

23. All church staff are required to work from home.¹² They are not supposed to go back to church during this period for any purpose.¹³

Funerals and Wakes

24. Funerals and wakes are still permitted but should involve not more than 10 persons at any one time (excluding religious and other supporting workers, which must be kept to a minimum).¹⁴
25. There must be strict adherence to precautionary measures, including registration of attendees to facilitate contact tracing, temperature screening and travel and health declaration. Unwell attendees, those who have travelled overseas in the last 14 days, or who are serving home quarantine or stay-home-notice must be turned away. There must be frequent cleaning and sanitisation of premises, including common areas and high-contact surfaces. Ventilation must be improved. Attendees must be reminded to observe personal hygiene and be socially responsible. There must also be strict observation of the authority's Density-Intensity-Duration guideline.¹⁵
26. **Density:** Density refers to the physical proximity between individuals. Safe-distancing of at least 1m between individuals and no physical contact must be adhered to at all times (including queuing), at all venues and during all rituals.
27. **Intensity:** Intensity refers to the degree of release of droplets and hence must be minimized. Since singing is deemed as a high-intensity activity by the authorities, it will be prohibited.¹⁶ Wear a mask at all venues and during all rituals. Social interaction between attendees at wakes must also be minimised.¹⁷
28. **Duration:** Duration refers to the period of time individuals are exposed to one another, which must be kept to the minimum necessary by simplifying and limiting to essential rites. Attendees of wakes must be advised to not linger and leave as soon as possible.¹⁸

Connectedness with God and One Another

29. All members are encouraged to regularly connect with God through prayer, reading and meditating His Word and worshipping Him with spiritual hymns and songs, [alone or with family members staying together, during this period.](#)

¹² Ibid.

¹³ <https://covid.gobusiness.gov.sg/faq/essentialworkers>. Only the owner of an organization not providing essential service can go back to the business location to take care of crucial tasks that cannot be done remotely or to retrieve necessary materials or documents. Bethel has appointed the Senior Pastor and Church Manger for this task currently.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ MCCY's Advisory for Religious Leaders: *COVID-19: Guidance for Religious Organizations on Enhanced Precautionary Measures for Religious Activities*, dated 21 Mar 2020.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

30. All members are also encouraged to connect with [other members](#) via text messages, phone calls and other remote ways.

Care and Concern for Others

31. 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 [and other frontline workers](#), [foreign workers](#), 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.

32. We should not discriminate or criticize baselessly. Instead we should do our part to support the fight against this outbreak, and be channels of God's blessing.

Evolving Nature of Outbreak and Update of Advisory

33. In view of the evolving nature of COVID-19 pandemic, the advisory will be updated as and when circumstances demand.

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