



27th June 2020, Saturday

To: Pastors, EDC and worshippers of Bethel Presbyterian Church,

Dear brothers and sisters,

The global and local economies look bleak. From the man on the street to the high flying bankers, we are aware of this phenomenon. The question really is how long and how bad. Of course, we will be naïve to say the downturn does not impact Bethel at all. We do not have deep troves of reserves to last for years on end.

It is mandatory for firms with 10 or more staff to notify Ministry of Manpower (MOM) if they take cost-saving measures that affect employees' monthly salaries. MOM and the Tripartite Alliance for Fair and Progressive Employment Practices (Tafep) said in the joint statement that the top three cost-saving measures implemented were no-pay leave, adjustments to monthly salary components, and a shorter work week.¹

We can fathom when such painful measures are taken for the purpose to keep the charities, churches and business afloat. And yet, the leadership of Bethel endeavours to be prudent and fair. Under the leadership of our Human Resource Chairman Elder David Quek and Treasurer Deacon Joanne Tay, the EDC has firmly decided to keep to the existing remuneration and entitlements of our staff. The entire pastoral and staff team is sincerely grateful, and eternally grateful to our Provider Jehovah Jireh.

In our routine staff meeting, the pastors and staff meet to listen to God's Word and be constantly reminded of His love, grace and mercy for His people. The theme of this month is Communication. We discuss matters about the church, how situations are impacting us and how do we, as God's people, respond jointly, biblically and boldly. We just reported about S3P, placed an order for thermal scanner and making preparation for worship service resumption. Lately, eACM is the main event.

Just 3 days after our team sent out the email with the relevant eACM attachments, we were overjoyed to find out that 67 active communicant members replied with their proxies in good order! Many of our members are doing this for the first time. You have

¹ <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/manpower/mom-over-187000-workers-pay-affected-in-last-3-months>, taken on 25th Jun 2020, 1:04pm.



persevered despite the novelty to submit proxy. You have persisted regardless of your short exposure to technological tools. During the staff Zoom meeting, there was no shortage of accolades and applause.

Some of our administrators, Elders and Deacons went all their way out to help our members to understand and complete the proxy. Sharing here how some of them do it will be unfair to them, because I don't think it will be sustainable. Let us reserve this selfless service to those who really need it. With your cooperation and considerate understanding, we remain optimistic and will continue to press on.

Presently, most if not all of our active communicant members should have received email pertaining to our eACM. There are resolutions listed in the routine business and election for our Elders and Deacons. Come Monday 29th Jun, you will receive another email from Chinese Presbytery. It is about Pr Xie Weiguang standing election for Associate Minister. You should find the format and steps familiar.

The leadership of Bethel urges us to proceed voting with a discerning and yet caring heart. Utter a word of thanksgiving to God for His sovereignty over Bethel, for His providence to us and granting His ever present love and grace in us.

Paul says in Romans 13:1, "The authorities that exist have been established by God." Bethel loves Singapore, and will pray and support the leaders of our government. Now we are aware 10th July is our nation's General Election.² Our ears will be tuned to notices about where the rallies are held, in particular the manifesto of the parties and contents of the rally. We will be keen to find out how will the casting of votes be conducted; when and where; how precautions are taken; and possibly most grabbing, how will politicians face off each other. Much will seize our attention.

So it is sensible, our dear brothers and sisters, our message to you is, do complete your proxy and return it soon. Thereafter, we can focus on our local political interest. The Lord bless you and keep you.

Humbly yours, Rev Lim Tau Wei.

² <https://www.straitstimes.com/politics/ge2020-singaporeans-will-go-to-the-polls-on-july-10>, taken on 25th Jun 2020, 12:16pm.