



新加坡长老会伯特利堂
BETHEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
12 Jalan Latch Singapore 359110 | Tel 63835700 | Fax 63835708



4th July 2020, Saturday

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

Dear brothers and sisters,

Half of 2020 has gone by, what is your mid-term assessment? Job security is a major concern, as Ministry of Manpower states, “Retrenchments rose from 2,670 to 3,220 in the first quarter of 2020, largely due to sectoral downturns”.¹ In Jun 18, it was released that there will be no mid-year bonus for civil servants, and even a one-time pay cut for super-scale public officers.² Potentially, this signals or catalyses a number of businesses and companies to make similar moves, just for survival.

The economic carnage from Covid-19 has exposed the vulnerability of many. It is reported that the median firm in many countries would need public support equivalent to about six months of revenues to stay alive.³ This should not only terrify the profit making businesses, but also haunt non-profit organisations and charities alike. I cannot imagine the stress and burden these decision makers have to bear.

Now, looking at how the world and your life has changed, what is your inner soul telling you? Does it sound like Job, who had to deal with his bodily agony, emotional pain of lose and unrelenting shaming by his friends? You could almost hear Job cry, albeit weakly, “I loathe my very life; therefore, I will give free rein to my complaint and speak out in the bitterness of my soul.” (Job 10:1) During this General Election, I think there will be many Jobs complaining and speaking out. If you are not “Jobbing” around and still reading this letter, do give yourself a pat on your shoulder.

As the pandemic persists, your tank of patience begins to empty out. Are you questioning God, “My soul is in deep anguish. How long, Lord, how long?” (Psalm 6:3) Or on the contrary, your soul recognise the faithfulness of our Lord and exclaim, “I will be glad and rejoice in your love, for you saw my affliction and knew the

¹ <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/unemployment-jobless-highest-10-years-retrenchments-mom-12835166> , taken on 2nd Jul 2020, 5:06pm.

² <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/no-mid-year-payout-for-all-civil-servants-this-year-public-service-division> , taken on 1st Jul 2020, 12:40pm.

³ <https://www.straitstimes.com/opinion/economic-carnage-from-covid-19-laid-bare> , taken 1st Jul 2020, 12:50pm.



新加坡长老会伯特利堂
BETHEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
12 Jalan Latch Singapore 359110 | Tel 63835700 | Fax 63835708



anguish of my soul.” (Psalm 31:7) God knows your affliction and suffering. He sees you. And the knowledge of Him seeing you makes you glad and rejoice in His love.

Yes, we do not deny the cries of pain and yells of torment. They are real and genuine. They could be audibly heard, and the lamentations, certainly, can be found resounding, deep within the heart and soul. Like you, I am not immune to these trials and difficulties. My heart can be weighed down, and my soul downcast for as long as my soul wander unanchored. And yet, the author of the Book of Lamentations writes,

“3:19 I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall. 20 I well remember them, and my soul is downcast within me. 21 Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: 22 Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. 23 They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. 24 I say to myself, “The Lord is my portion; therefore, I will wait for him.” 25 The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him; 26 it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.”
(Lamentations 3:19-26)

I can only pray and ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you and I, that His great love will lead us through this extremely trying and uncertain time. Let us hope in Him.

Presently, we are coming to the end of 2nd week Phase 2 Safe Transition. Let us watch and pray there is no mark increase in the number of community cases. Any spike will suggest our community is less than compliant to the advisories, that could result in further restrictive consequences, rather than relaxing them. We need to comply responsibly in our community and nation, and act lovingly to our family and church.

Lastly, our eACM is making good progress, with more than 200 active communicant members returning your proxy instrument. S3P is serving a total of 12 stayers. Some final provisions are made for a few stayers to move into rental flats soon. Ps Carol will lead our Worship Taskforce to prepare the resumption of physical worship service, in coordination with live streaming and at the same time, ensuring adherence to MOH and MCCY advisories. We must stay current with the most recent developments, be agile in making changes and decisions, and be willing to adapt with new norms. This pause in physical worship service helps us to think what really matters, and resolve resourcefully. You will return to quite a different worship in Bethel, but worship we will.

The Lord bless you and keep you. Humbly yours, Rev Lim Tau Wei.