



**Advisory on the COVID-19 Outbreak 14/2020
(as of 4 August 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, so that you can be tested for COVID-19 if necessary.²
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.
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 <https://www.moh.gov.sg/news-highlights/details/enablers-to-support-safe-re-opening>.

11. Avoid going out except for essential matters, e.g. buying food & groceries, & urgent medical needs.³
12. Persons who are more than 60 years old and those with chronic diseases (see 23b.) should stay at home as far as possible. Avoid close contact with elderly and those with chronic diseases, especially if you are unwell.
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 onsite work is considered essential or permitted by the authorities.⁴ Students from all levels will return to school daily from 29 June 2020, while Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs) will progressively increase the number of students allowed back on campus at any one time for face-to-face learning.⁵
16. You are encouraged to download and use the government's TraceTogether app to support the nation in controlling the spread of COVID-19. Check-in and check-out of premises using SafeEntry wherever it is deployed.⁶
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>

Resumption of Onsite In-Person Worship Services

20. Onsite in-person worship services will begin in August 2020. A maximum of 50 worshippers (including children) are allowed at any time.⁷
21. The following are the eligibility criteria for attending such services, which follow closely the advisories of the relevant government authorities, and are meant for the safety and wellbeing of the worshippers.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ministry of Health Press Release "End of Circuit Breaker Phase Approach to Resuming Activities Safely", dated 19 May 2020.

⁵ <https://www.moe.gov.sg/news/press-releases/arrangements-for-schools-and-institutes-of-higher-learning-in-phase-two>

⁶ Ministry of Health Press Release "End of Circuit Breaker Phase Approach to Resuming Activities Safely", dated 19 May 2020.

⁷ <https://www.cpro.gov.sg/media/ResumptionofMoreReligiousActivitiesinPhase2.pdf>

22. Worshippers with any of the following are *not* permitted to enter the church premise:
- a. Recent travel abroad, close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 infection, or visited a foreign worker dormitory within the last fourteen days;⁸
 - b. Still serving Leave of Absence, Stay Home Notice, Quarantine Order or Medical Leave;
 - c. Feeling unwell (including but not limited to respiratory symptoms, e.g. flu, cough, sore throat, etc.); or
 - d. Temperature > 37.5°C.⁹
23. Worshippers with the following are *discouraged* from attending onsite in-person worship services, but instead encouraged to worship online, because they are more prone to severe COVID-19 infection and complications:
- a. Age > 60 years;¹⁰ or
 - b. Chronic diseases (e.g., obesity with BMI > 31, hypertension, diabetes, chronic heart & lung diseases, kidney diseases on dialysis, cancer, or blood clotting problems, etc.), or on treatments that cause immunosuppression (e.g., chemotherapy, long-term steroidal therapy, etc.)¹¹
24. Please comply with all safe management measures (e.g. wearing a mask, observing personal hygiene, being socially responsible, observing safe-distancing and no singing at all times; undergoing temperature screening, using of SafeEntry, etc.). Children twelve years and below, as well as persons who have health conditions that may result in breathing or other medical difficulties when a mask is worn for a prolonged period of time, may wear a face shield in lieu of a face mask.¹²
25. Photographs and/ or videos will be automatically captured by the thermal scanner for temperature monitoring purposes to protect worshippers and others. Photographs of worshippers will also be taken for contact tracing purposes. These photographs and videos will only be internally and securely stored in a local hard disc, and will be discarded after a period specified by the authorities.
26. Please adhere closely to the specific guidelines set out by your service for attending onsite in-person worship services, as this may differ across the services (e.g. some services may require pre-registration for attendance).
27. You may be turned away if you do not comply with any of the above safe management measures or guidelines.

Temporary Suspension of Other Church Ministries¹³

⁸ Please see <https://www.moh.gov.sg/covid-19/faqs> for more information.

⁹ Worshippers are advised to check your body temperature before coming to church. If it is >37.5°C, please do not come to church. See a doctor as soon as possible.

¹⁰ Please refer to the Ministry of Health's advisory on vulnerable groups at [https://www.moh.gov.sg/docs/librariesprovider5/advisories/advisory-on-vulnerable-group-\(moh\).pdf](https://www.moh.gov.sg/docs/librariesprovider5/advisories/advisory-on-vulnerable-group-(moh).pdf) dated 5 June 2020.

¹¹ *Ibid.* If unsure, please check with your doctor.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ 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.

28. Unless otherwise approved by the church, all other church activities and ministries that involve physically meeting one another will remain *temporarily suspended* until further notice.¹⁴, 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 activities¹⁵
 - 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

- 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. Festive activities like Moon Cake Festival, Thanksgiving events, etc.

29. Leaders and members are encouraged to continue to use remote means (e.g. Zoom, FaceTime, etc.) for the above ministries and meetings, and to communicate and minister to one another.

¹⁴ Bethel Presbyterian Church has previously issued an advisory (dated [21 June 2020](#)) to suspend all other church ministries (besides services) from 24 Mar to further notice. The Ministry of Culture, Community & Youths has permitted onsite religious activities and rites for groups of not more than 5 persons, and up to 10 groups at any one point in time, with safe management measures in place (<https://www.cpro.gov.sg/media/ResumptionofMoreReligiousActivitiesinPhase2.pdf>). However, the church has decided to delay the physical resumption of such ministries, so as to focus on the resumption of onsite worship services.

¹⁵ The Ministry of Social and Family Development has permitted the church to carry out the Safe, Sound, Sleeping Place ministry at its premise (S3P@Bethel). This is a part of the church's Vision 3.

30. Onsite tasks for recording or live-streaming of worship services, and for preparing the church premise for compliance with safe management measures are permitted; but no more than 10 persons are allowed to do so at any time and they must adhere to safe management measures. The duration must also be kept to the minimum.¹⁶
31. All church staff are required to work from home by default. They can go into office only when the church can demonstrate that it is necessary, such as to access specialized systems or equipment that cannot be accessed from home, or to complete a contract or transaction that is legally required to be completed in person and on site.¹⁷ Safe management measures must be strictly complied with.¹⁸

Funerals and Wakes

32. Funerals and wakes are permitted but should involve not more than 30 persons at any one time (excluding religious and other supporting workers, which must be kept to a minimum).¹⁹
33. There must be strict adherence to precautionary measures, including registration of attendees to facilitate contact tracing, temperature screening, travel and health declaration, and use of SafeEntry and TraceTogether Apps. 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.²⁰
34. **Density:** Density refers to the physical proximity between individuals. Safe-distancing of at least 1m between individuals, **or groups (with each group made up of no more than 5 persons)** and no physical contact must be adhered to at all times (including queuing), at all venues and during all rituals.
35. **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.²¹ Wear a mask at all venues and during all rituals. Social interaction between attendees at wakes must also be minimised.²²

¹⁶ <https://www.cpro.gov.sg/media/ResumptionofMoreReligiousActivitiesinPhase2.pdf>.

¹⁷ Ministry of Health Press Release "End of Circuit Breaker Phase Approach to Resuming Activities Safely", dated 19 May 2020.

¹⁸ Refer to Guidelines on Safe Management Measures for Bethel Presbyterian Church version 02/2020 dated 15 July 2020.

¹⁹ *MCCY's Advisory: Resumption of More Religious Activities in Phase Two*, issued on 18 Jun 2020, updated as of 2 Aug 2020.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

36. **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.²³

Marriage Solemnizations²⁴

37. From 4 August, in-person marriage solemnizations **at the church premise** can involve up to 50 persons. This includes the bride and groom, the two witnesses and any other guests. The solemnizer is excluded from the 50-persons limit.
38. Safe management measures mentioned in points 26-29 should also be in place at the solemnization venue. Masks can momentarily be removed for identification of witnesses, during key moments such as exchange of marriage vows, exchange of rings and when the groom kisses the bride. Guests can be allowed to remove their masks and be less than 1m apart for a quick group photo with the couple after the ceremony.
39. There should not be any post-solemnization reception or buffet.
40. The solemnization should be kept short.
41. Video-link solemnization will continue to be available as an option for eligible couples who prefer to do so during this COVID-19 period, until further advised.

Connectedness with God and One Another, Care and Concern for Others

42. 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.
43. All members are also encouraged to connect with other members via text messages, phone calls and other remote ways.
44. 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 and Safe Sound Sleeping Place (S3P@Bethel) ministry to assist those in need, and in other ways.
45. 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

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ *Ibid.* Registry of Marriages, Ministry of Social and Family Development's Guidelines on Marriage Solemnization issued 31 July 2020. https://www.rom.gov.sg/resources/pdf/Restrictions_for_Marriage_Solemnizations.pdf. Please refer to the church's Instructions on Marriage Solemnizations dated 4 Aug 2020 for more details.

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

Issued by Bethel Presbyterian Church
4 August 2020, 2pm