



## Advisory on the COVID-19 Outbreak 3/2021 (as at 12 May 2021)

### Onsite In-Person Congregational Worship Services

1. From 8 May 2021, in Phase 3 – Heightened Alert, Bethel has reduced its onsite in-person worship service's capacity from 250 to **100** worshippers at any one time<sup>1</sup>, with the required safe management measures in place.<sup>2</sup>
2. TraceTogether (TT) App or TT Token check-in mode for SafeEntry into church will be mandated from 17 May 2021.<sup>3</sup> Identity card barcode scanning will still be available until 31 May 2021.
3. Bethel has implemented the SEGW at its premise wef 10 April 2021. See Use of SEGW App / Box (Figure 1) and location of SEGW Boxes in Bethel (Figure 2). Previous modes of SafeEntry, such as QR or barcode scanning are still available.

## Check-in Only

Using:

- SEGW App or
- SEGW Box
- SEGW does not work with the SingPass Mobile app, it only detects the TT Token or App

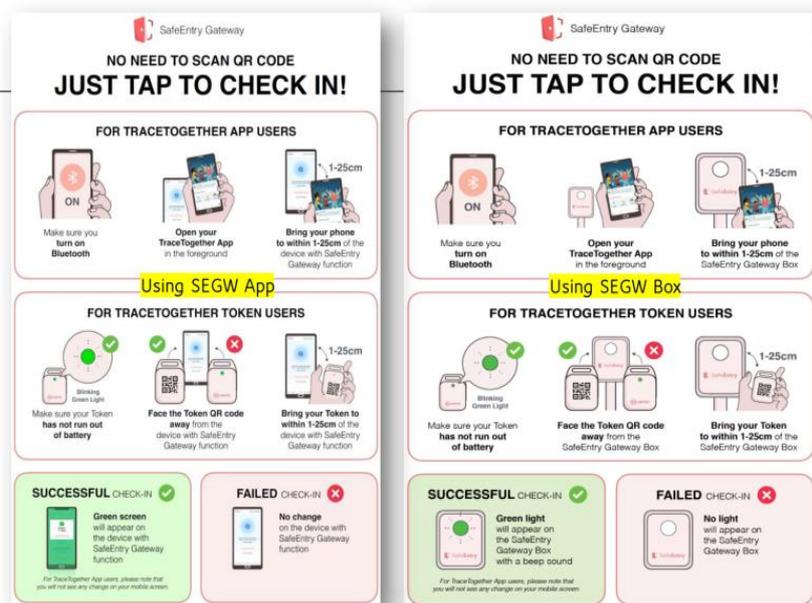


Figure 1: Use of SEGW App / Box

- <sup>1</sup> Bethel PC began onsite worship service in August 2020, with a maximum of 50 worshippers (including children) allowed at any one time. From 3 Oct 2020, the authorities allowed places of worship to conduct congregational and other worship services with up to 100 persons at a time, but Bethel decided to increase the capacity of onsite services to 80 due to various constraints. The maximum capacity for onsite worship services was increased by the authorities from 100 worshippers to 250 from 28 Dec 2020. Bethel began onsite worship services with up to 250 worshippers from 3 Jan 2021 with the required safe management measures in place.
- <sup>2</sup> MCCY's "Phase Three – Heightened Alert Enhanced Precautionary Measures for Religious Activities" issued on 5 May 2020 (cpro.gov.sg).
- <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* From 19 Apr 2021, all congregational and other worship services having more than 100 persons will be required to deploy the SafeEntry Gateway (SEGW) at their main entrances as an additional check-in mode. The SEGW provides quicker and more seamless check-in using the TraceTogether (TT) App or Token.

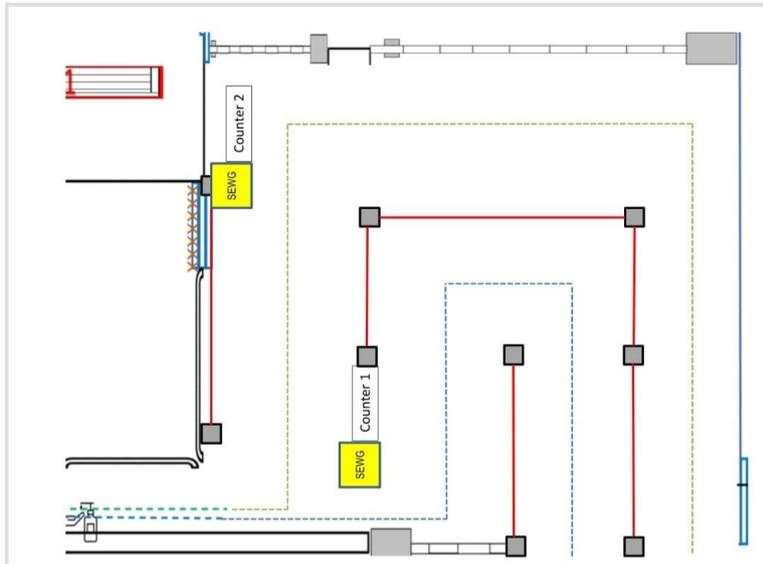


Figure 2: Location of SEGW Boxes (highlighted above in **Yellow**)

4. Live-singing by worshippers during onsite worship service, even while wearing masks, has been **prohibited** since 8 May 2021.<sup>4</sup> Worshippers are to wear their masks at all times.
5. Children 12 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.<sup>5</sup>

### Eligibility Criteria & Rules for Attending Onsite Congregational Worship Services

6. 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.
7. Worshippers with any of the following are *not* permitted to enter the church premise:
  - a. Recent travel abroad or close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 infection within the last 14-21 days;<sup>6</sup>
  - b. Still serving Leave of Absence, Stay Home Notice, Quarantine Order, Medical Leave, or **within the period instructed by the authorities to monitor for COVID19-related symptoms**;
  - c. Feeling unwell (including but not limited to respiratory symptoms, e.g. flu, cough, sore throat, etc.); or
  - d. Temperature > 37.5°C.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* From 5 April 2021, live-singing by worshippers is permitted during congregational worship services, with masks worn properly at all times. Bethel started permitting worshippers to sing live with masks worn properly during congregational worship services from 10 April 2021, but has since 8 May 2021, prohibited this practice due to the new regulations.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Please see <https://www.moh.gov.sg/covid-19/faqs> for more information.

<sup>7</sup> 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.

8. 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;<sup>8</sup> 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.)<sup>9</sup>
  
9. Photographs and/ or videos will be automatically captured by the thermal scanner for temperature monitoring purposes to protect worshippers and others. These photographs and videos will only be internally and securely stored in a local hard disk, and will be discarded after a period specified by the authorities.
  
10. To adhere to MCCY's ruling<sup>10</sup> (for congregational services exceeding 50 persons), different services have segregated their onsite worship into different zones, with each zone holding no more than 50 persons and implementation of undermentioned practices. Please refer to your own services' practice.
  - a. To prevent members from mingling with others from different zones, each zone is 3m apart and demarcated via the use of physical barriers.
  - b. Members must not cross the physical barrier (where applicable) or enter another zone that they are not assigned to.
  - c. There is also a separate ingress/egress for each zone or staggered entrance/exit timings so that worshippers from different zones do not mix with one another during entry/exit.
  - d. Toilets have also been marked and members should only use their designated zone toilets.
  - e. Members should not deliberately mingle before, during or after each worship service.
  - f. Wipe-down to be conducted at the end of each worship services.
  - g. Avoid sharing of equipment (e.g. musical instruments, microphones, props).
  - h. Worshippers are to worship in groups of **not more than 5 persons**. Groups of 5 must be at least 1 metre away from one another.<sup>11</sup>
  - i. Offering bags will no longer be passed around but for members to instead drop their offerings into boxes at designated locations.
  - j. Elders to use hand sanitisers or wear gloves prior to serving their members with pre-packed 2-in-1 holy communion elements.
  
11. You may be turned away if you do not comply with any of the above safe management measures or guidelines.

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<sup>8</sup> 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.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* If unsure, please check with your doctor.

<sup>10</sup> MCCY's "Phase Three – Heightened Alert Enhanced Precautionary Measures for Religious Activities" issued on 5 May 2020 (cpro.gov.sg).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

## Conduct of Onsite Live Worship Service, Recording and Broadcast of Religious Services and Prayers

12. Recording and broadcast of religious services and prayers will be continued to support members who are unable to attend onsite services. The time spent on-location for this activity should be kept as short as possible.
13. From 28 Dec 2020, live performance elements have been permitted during the worship service at places of worship, with the necessary safe management measures in place
  - a. A maximum of 30 persons are allowed to be involved in/support the conduct of the worship service. This includes persons on-stage, backstage or off-stage.
  - b. Up to 10 persons who are involved in the conduct of the worship service are allowed to unmask at any given time, of which up to 5 persons can be unmasked for singing. [Personnel singing must keep a minimum 2-metre safe distance from others on stage](#). Persons should only unmask when required to perform their duties.
  - c. [From 8 May 2021, besides personnel mentioned in point 13b., the other persons involved in/supporting the conduct of the worship service will \*not\* be allowed to sing, even while masked.](#)<sup>12</sup>
  - d. There must be at least a 3-metre setback between persons involved in the conduct of live performance elements and worshippers.
14. The production team must also put in place safe management measures, including no-cross deployment between locations (where practicable), and thorough cleaning of technical equipment.

## Suspension of All Other Onsite/In-Person Church Ministries (besides congregational worship services)<sup>13</sup>

15. [All other onsite/in-person church ministries \(unless otherwise stated\), e.g., pastoral visitations, cell groups, youth and young adult fellowships, Sunday school, English classes, Elders & Deacons Court meeting, and various committee meetings, etc., have been suspended from \*\*8-30 May 2021\*\*.](#)<sup>14</sup>
16. 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.

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<sup>12</sup> From 5 Apr 2021, persons involved in/supporting the conduct of the worship service will be allowed to sing while masked, within the prevailing cap of 30 persons. This has been prohibited since 8 May.

<sup>13</sup> 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.

<sup>14</sup> MCCY's "Phase Three – Heightened Alert Enhanced Precautionary Measures for Religious Activities" issued on 5 May 2020 (cpro.gov.sg).

## Funerals and Wakes

17. From 8 May 2021, funerals, wakes, installation of niches and post-funeral rites at places of worship can involve not more than 30 attendees at any time, including the day of burial/cremation and in groups of no more than 5 persons (excluding religious and supporting workers, whose numbers should be kept to a minimum), subject to safe management measures and the safe capacity of the premises.<sup>15</sup>
18. Live instrumental music (non-wind) is permitted but **strongly discouraged from 8 May 2021** with the safe management measures in place.<sup>16</sup> Persons involved in/supporting the live instrumental music segment should be kept to the minimum. No other performances (e.g. singing, dance, variety act) are allowed.
19. Visits to columbaria at places of worship should be kept as short as possible, with no mingling between groups.
20. There must not be any reception with food and drinks.

## Marriage Solemnizations<sup>17</sup>

21. From 8 May 2021, solemnizations involving *up to 50 attendees will not require pre-event testing (PET) for COVID19. 51 to 250 attendees will be permitted if the wedding couple undergoes PET, or have completed their COVID19 two-dose vaccination at least two weeks before the solemnization.* [Refer to the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI)'s website for further details on PET requirements.]. The 50/250-persons limit includes the bride and groom, the two witnesses and any other guests. The solemnizer and religious workers involved are excluded from the 50/250-persons limit.
22. If the total number of attendees is more than 48 (excluding the wedding couple), they must still be segregated into zones of up to 50 persons each. An individual attending the solemnization must remain within his or her respective assigned zone and must not enter an unassigned zone.
23. Attendees must maintain a 1-metre safe distance between groups except a core "wedding party"<sup>18</sup>, which is allowed to comprise up to 20 persons (including the couple and their two witnesses). There should be no intermingling or mixing between groups nor between the "wedding party" and these other groups.
24. **Live instrumental music (non-wind) is permitted but strongly discouraged from 8 May 2021**, with the safe management measures in place.<sup>19</sup> Persons involved in / supporting

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Besides the couple and their two witnesses, the core wedding party can comprise a group of close family and/or friends who are required or expected to interact with one another during the course of the solemnization.

<sup>19</sup> MCCY's "Moving into Phase Three of Re-Opening for Religious activities" issued 26 Dec 2020, updated 31 Mar 2021.

the live instrumental music segment should be kept to the minimum. No other performances (e.g. singing, dance, variety act) are allowed.

25. Safe management measures 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.
26. There must not be any reception with food and drinks, or wedding celebrations that are not essential religious rites.
27. The solemnization should be kept short.
28. 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.

### **Regulations for Church Staff**

29. From 5 Apr 2021, Ministry of Manpower (MOM)<sup>20</sup> has approved for organisations to allow up to 75% of their staff to return to the workplace. However, Bethel will allow only up to 50% of staff to work in the office at any one time, in consideration of need and safety. Safe management measures must be strictly complied with while working in the office.<sup>21</sup>

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

30. 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.
31. All members are also encouraged to connect with other members via text messages, phone calls and other remote ways.
32. 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.
33. 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.

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<sup>20</sup> [Requirements for Safe Management Measures at the workplace \(mom.gov.sg\)](https://www.mom.gov.sg)

<sup>21</sup> Refer to Guidelines on Safe Management Measures for Bethel Presbyterian Church version 05/2020 dated 30 December 2020.

## **Evolving Nature of Outbreak and Update of Advisory**

34. 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**

**12 May 2021, 5pm**