



基督教新加坡长老会

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN SINGAPORE

UEN No.: S61SS0155A

132 Sophia Road, Singapore 228186

Tel: 63385837 Email: office@presbysing.org.sg

4 April 2020

Dear Senior Ministers and EDC/Session Clerks,

Re: COVID-19 - Synod's Advisory No. 7 to Member Churches

Shalom in the Lord.

1. Subsequent to PM Lee Hsien Loong's speech on TV yesterday on the stricter measures to combat the spread of the corona virus (COVID-19), the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY) has issued their advisory very late tonight on the implications to Religious Organizations. **The "Elevated Safe Distancing Measures" will be implemented from 7 April to 4 May 2020.** The Synod Office, just like all non-essential workplaces will be closed during that period.
2. As advised in the **Synod Advisory No. 6 dated 26 March 2020**, all member churches were to suspend all congregational worship and church activities from 26 March 2020, while churches could remain open for private worship and some rites (e.g. weddings, funerals and wakes) for not more than 10 persons at any one time.
3. **From 7 Apr 2020 to 4 May 2020 (inclusive), member churches are to implement additional safe distancing measures:**
 - a. **All worship services will remain suspended and the church premises will be closed to the public.**
 - b. Columbarium in places of worship will be closed to visitors. Families may continue to install niches for their loved ones in private ceremonies involving not more than 10 persons and with the precautionary measures listed in the Annex of MCCY's advisory.
 - c. Where necessary, member churches may continue to conduct funeral rites. Funerals and wakes should involve no more than 10 persons at any one time (excluding the officiating pastor and other supporting workers, **which must be kept to a minimum**) and comply with the precautionary measures listed in the Annex of MCCY's advisory. However, wedding ceremony is now suspended during this period.
 - d. All other church activities (e.g. Bible studies, Cell Group meetings and Prayer meetings) that were previously subject to no more than 10 persons, **will now be fully suspended.**
 - e. Activities at church premises should also be suspended. Member churches must have their pastoral and office staff to work from home (i.e. telecommute), if they wish to continue their operations.

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书记 : 陈光辉牧师
财政 : 江春斌长老

Moderator : Rt Rev Keith Lai Chee Kheong
Stated Clerk : Rev Darryl Chan Kong Fai
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4. For those member churches doing live streaming, podcasts and video recording, the activities and the people involved in implementing these alternatives must be kept to only what is essential (e.g. filming a sermon by a pastor only, without a worship team or band), and for as short a duration as possible. Precautionary measures must also be taken as per the Annex of MCCY advisory.
5. During this period, member churches are to strongly advise their members not to hold religious gatherings (e.g. Cell Group meetings, private prayer meetings) in private settings, except with family members in the same household. This is to minimize movement and interactions of people in public and private places, and for people to stay home as much as possible.
6. **Member churches are to fully implement these safe distancing measures as soon as possible and no later than 7 April 2020.** Any non-compliance will face stiff penalties under the Infectious Diseases Act.¹
7. These additional measures can be disruptive to our spiritual life but they are necessary to slow the spread of COVID-19, and protect Singaporeans. We are advised **Stay Home (to) Stay Safe**, during this critical period. Go out only to do essential things, such as to buy food or take-aways from restaurants/hawker centres. Even so, you are to wear a surgical mask and maintain safe distancing at all times.

We come together as a denomination of the Presbyterian Churches to show our Social Responsibility. This is our collective effort to support the Government efforts to stamp the spread of the virus.

May the Lord grant us wisdom and protection as we seek to be a responsible witness to our community, as well as protect our members.

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Blessings

Rt Rev Keith Lai
Synod Moderator
45th & 46th Session
Synod Executive Committee

Rev Darryl Chan
Synod Stated Clerk
45th & 46th Session
Synod Executive Committee

¹Offenders will face a fine of less than \$10,000 or imprisonment of less than 6 months or both. In addition, existing levers under the Infectious Diseases Act, including the temporary suspension of operations, may be used against errant persons and operators.

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