

Eighth Pastoral Letter to the Wesley Church Family on the Covid-19 Situation (26 Jun 2020)

(By Rev Stanley Chua, Pastor-in-Charge)



Dear Friends and Members of the Wesley family,

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. It has been a while since I last wrote to you. I trust that all of you are keeping well and safe. We have now entered Phase 2 of our Covid-19 Safe Transition. Initially, the authorities were still prohibiting places of worship to resume their usual activities but last Thursday (18 June 2020) we received news from the authorities that places of worship are now able to gradually resume more religious activities with the necessary precautions to safeguard public health. As a result of this new advisory for the resumption of religious activities in places of worship, our pastors and leaders have made the following decisions:

A. Online Worship Services to Continue with On-site Limited and Short Worship Services, starting on the third Sunday of July (19 July 2020)

For you to appreciate this limited and short worship service that we are conducting, we are providing a summary of the required safe management measures that the authorities have spelt out for religious organisations.

1. Worship service will be capped at a maximum of 50 worshippers (excluding the religious and supporting workers) at any one time.
2. Worshippers are to observe all safe distancing and safe management measures.
3. Worship service to be kept as short a duration as possible.
4. Worshippers should leave immediately after the worship service. There should be no reception or mingling between worshippers before, during or after each worship service.
5. All present must wear a face mask at all times.
6. All singing and live performances are not permitted.

In view of the above restrictions, it will be very challenging for us to conduct our usual traditional as well as contemporary worship services in church. Thus, we will continue to offer our online worship services and our pastors and leaders **strongly encourage all Wesleyans to continue to worship together through our online weekend worship services.** The reason is that we still want all Wesleyans to see online worship services as the primary mode of worship for this season.

However, we are aware that there are those who really miss worshipping at our Church premises. Thus, out of compassion for this group of our congregation members, **our pastors and leaders have decided to open our Church for limited and short worship services.** Here are some of the details of the modified worship service that we intend to conduct.

1. Limited and short worship services will begin on the **third Sunday of July (19 July 2020).**
2. Our usual 4 worship service timings will be offered on Sundays only and this will be conducted at our Sanctuary: 7.30am, 9.30am, 11.30am & 5.00pm.
3. Duration of each worship service will be 30 minutes so as to adhere to safe management measures as well as to allow sufficient time for disinfecting the Sanctuary after each worship service.

4. No walk-ins will be permitted. Anyone wishing to attend our on-site worship services will have to make telephone reservations on a first-come-first-served basis.
5. Each person will be allowed to book for a maximum of 5 persons (inclusive of the caller).
6. Only one type of worship service will be conducted, namely, traditional worship due to the cap of 50 worshippers at any one time.
7. There will be no singing and no live performances permitted.
8. Short homilies will be given instead of the usual half-an-hour sermon.

In the coming weeks, we will provide more details of the limited and short worship services and especially on how to make your telephone reservations to attend these worship services. Should there be a demand for the on-site worship services, we may consider having these limited and short worship services on weekdays as well. However, **our pastors and leaders still encourage all Wesleyans to join us in our current online worship services,** the reason being that we would like all Wesleyans to see online worship services as the primary mode of worship for this season.

B. Continued Suspension of all Physical Meetings

Although the current advisory permits groups of 5 persons to gather for meetings in places of worship, with appropriate safe distancing measures, our pastors and leaders have decided that we will not open this option for Church members to meet in Church for the time being. We are also not encouraging our Small Groups and Bible Study Groups to conduct any physical meetings at their homes at this point. The rationale is, we do not wish to create any polarisation within our small groups and ministry groups due to possible conflicts as a result of members forced to make a decision to meet physically as some may still not be comfortable with physical meetings.

Until further easing measures are announced, and larger groups of congregants are allowed, we will continue to suspend all physical meetings in Church, our other venues as well as homes.

C. Holy Communion

The current advisory makes provision for the Church to conduct Holy Communion. However, we will need to submit a safe management plan, which explains how this sacrament can safely resume, to MCCY (Ministry of Culture, Community & Youth) for approval. Until such approval is given, we cannot resume Holy Communion in our Church. We are now in the process of working out the safe management plan and will be submitting to the authorities shortly. We will let you know how we will be resuming Holy Communion as soon as we received the approval from MCCY.

D. Pastoral Concerns

Before I end this pastoral letter, I wish to address some pastoral concerns. **First**, all of us are aware that our country and the world are facing difficult times ahead. We are not only having to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic, but we are also facing an economic recession. Many of you will be facing challenging days ahead as companies and businesses freeze, or cut salaries, and possibly conduct retrenchments. Amid this gloom and doom, with many factors beyond human control, what can we do as a community of faith? Well, the only and best thing that we can do in such a time as this, is to continue to pray to our Almighty God for His help, intervention, and provision. Thus, I wish to encourage all of you to join us in our 40 Days of Prayer and Fasting starting on 1 July 2020. This year, we will be joining our fellow brothers and sisters-in-Christ from other Churches in our nation through the Love Singapore movement to intercede for our nation and our world. We are reminded

from the scriptures in **2 Chronicles 7:14 (NIV)**: “...if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

So please join us in daily prayer and meditation using the Love Singapore prayer guide as well as join us in our upcoming online Wesley Prayer Service on Wednesday, 1 July 2020 from 8pm-9pm. Thereafter we will continue with our weekly Wednesday Church-Wide Synchronised Prayer from 8.30pm-9pm. We will culminate this 40 Days of Prayer and Fasting with the Wesley Day of Prayer on 8 August 2020 from 2pm-3pm. For more details, please read our Wesley Weekly.

Second, if you need any pastoral assistance, please do not hesitate to call any of our Pastors or Pastoral Team Members (PTMs). We wish to assure all Wesleyans that our Pastors and PTMs are always ready to provide pastoral support, prayers, and counselling to all who are in need. You can reach us through our Church Office at 6336 1433. Alternatively, you can contact our Pastors directly on their phone numbers as listed in the digital version of our Wesley Weekly.

Finally, as I end this letter, I wish to encourage all of us with these words from our Lord Jesus in **Matthew 6:31-33 (NIV)**: “So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

Until then, take care and stay safe. Thank you.

To God be the glory! Amen!

Yours-in-Christ,



Rev Stanley Chua

Contact / For Enquiries

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