

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CONFERENCE (SINGAPORE)

FAQ on COVID-19

20 March 2020

1. **What does the world expect of the Christian church to do amid this pandemic?**

Much of the secular world's responses to the situation has been inward-looking and driven mainly by fear. However, the church can be the beacon of light and hope to non-believers. We can offer prayers and tangible support to those whose businesses and health have been adversely affected by this sudden disruption. Refrain from any discriminatory remarks against any nationals. When all the headlines are bad news, the church (you and I) can offer the good news of Jesus Christ where the world needs a Saviour. We can choose to be the extended loving arms of Jesus.

2. **What measures has the church taken to minimize the risk of community infection?**

We have followed recommendations by the relevant authorities such as:

- encouraging members to practice good personal hygiene
- regularly cleaning and disinfecting our premises, especially common areas
- conducting temperature and health checks
- minimizing physical contact and maintaining social distancing
- providing surgical masks and hand sanitizers to those who need it

Also, we have cancelled all inter-church gatherings, combined training and events. All meetings, including staff meetings, have been scaled down or moved online.

No measure is virus-proof but the church is doing what it can to minimize the possible risk of infection.

3. **There are churches in Singapore and Adventist churches overseas that have suspended their worship services. Why are we not doing that?**

Currently, the churches which have suspended their services are the Catholic churches, some megachurches and those with unfortunate cases of infection among their members. This is mainly because of their sheer size and impact to their community. On the other hand, many Christian denominations and independent churches are still conducting worship regularly, physically and online, notwithstanding taking all the necessary health precautions to mitigate the impact.

You will notice that the Adventist churches overseas have suspended their church services because of the current and foreseeable spread of the virus in their communities. To reduce the risk of infection cases, these governments have mandated the total lockdown in these cities, including the suspension of church services as part of their health measures.

At this point, the Singapore government has further implemented new measures to control the spread of the virus. It believes the community spread is low and manageable. That's why it has not suspended schools, childcare centres, workplaces, etc, unlike other countries which have chosen to enforce a total lockdown.

Considering all the current local governmental directives and the current trend of infections being mainly imported cases, we are following the Singapore government's recommendation to continue with worship services, along with implemented precautionary measures.

4. What guidelines is SAC following in terms of COVID-19?

So far, we have abided with the instructions and public information from relevant authorities which include Ministry of Health (MOH); Ministry of Manpower (MOM); Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY); Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA); Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA); Ministry of Education (MOE); etc and healthcare professionals.

If there are new measures to be taken, we will follow accordingly, including the suspension of church services. On top of that, we take reference with the National Council of Churches of Singapore (NCCS) where the government communicates with them frequently about new advisories and practices.

5. What if one of our worshippers is tested with COVID-19, what will we do?

Despite all the precautionary health measures, the risk of infection is still possible. We pray it will not but if it does, we will cooperate with the relevant authorities to suspend worship services for the purposes of disinfecting the premises, contact tracing and all other expected necessary measures until the situation is stabilized.

6. I am unable to come to church; how can I continue to participate in the worship service?

If you are unwell, please see a doctor and remain at home to rest.

As most of our churches have live-streaming services, you can join in the worship via Facebook or other streaming platforms.

Visit: <https://www.facebook.com/adventistsg/> or <https://adventist.org.sg/watch/> .

If you need help connecting to the online service, please contact your pastor or church PA crew.

If you would like a home visitation, let your pastor know so that the necessary arrangements can be made. Please bear in mind that the health of our workers are important too, so precautions will be taken and some visitation requests may not be accepted.

7. I have travelled overseas in the past 14 days (7 March 2020 – 20 March 2020). Can I attend church services?

With the recent surge of imported cases of infection, if you have travelled out of Singapore in the past 14 days, we request for you to exercise social responsibility by remaining at home. Join us online via the live streaming of the worship services!

You are welcome to attend the worship services after 14 days from the date of your return to Singapore. E.g. If you returned to Singapore on 13 March 2020, you may attend church services after 27 March 2020.

If there is a dire need for you to be in church for worship, you will be issued and required to wear a face mask at all times when you're in the church premises.

8. I work in a place with frequent contact with people who are unwell (e.g. hospital/clinic/elderly care home). Can I still attend church services?

You may attend church services. However, if you are feeling unwell, please see a doctor and remain at home.

If you feel that others might feel uncomfortable around you, and you would like to exercise social responsibility, please join our online worship services instead.

9. I am living with someone who is issued a Stay-Home-Notice (SHN), but I am feeling fine. Can I attend church services?

You may attend church services. However, if you are feeling unwell, please see a doctor and remain at home.

If you feel that others might feel uncomfortable around you, and you would like to exercise social responsibility, please join our online worship services instead.

10. I am still worried and anxious. What can I do?

God can understand your concerns and fears. Surrender all your anxieties to God. Ask God to bless you with the presence of the Holy Spirit. Claim the promises of Philippians 4:6-8 and direct your heart and mind to Him.

Remember, God is in control of every situation. Ask Him to grant you peace and calmness and not to succumb to irrational fear and panic.

You can also gather with other church members in small groups, or do it online, to encourage and pray for one another and submit all your petitions to God. Continue to live healthily by practicing good hygiene habits, staying hydrated, exercise and getting sufficient rest to boost your immunity.

We are living in end times. Just two months ago, the world could not imagine where it is today. This is a spiritual message for all of us. Through this pandemic, we witnessed one crucial truth: all the things of this world are transient and temporary. Only our eternal faith in the almighty God is everlasting. We need God now, more than ever before in our lives. And we can be a testimony to all.