



ANG MO KIO METHODIST CHURCH

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## Fourth Pastoral Letter to the Ang Mo Kio Methodist Church Family on the Covid-19 Situation (27 Mar 2020)

Dear Family and Friends of AMKMC (TRAC),

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ!

By now you should have heard that all worship services are suspended until 30 April. Admittedly, Holy Week this year will be vastly different from what we have been used to. While some may see these circumstances as tragic, I believe God is allowing this Covid-19 situation to radically renew our minds on what church is about and where true discipleship happens.

Years ago, Ps Collin See and I preached a sermon entitled “Don’t go to church.” I commend this audio sermon once again for you this season.<sup>1</sup> As many have said, the church of Jesus Christ is not a building. Church is not merely about attending worship services on Sundays. No, **the Church is made of the people of God, and wherever we are – we become the Church of Jesus Christ to the world.** More importantly, this is the opportune season to BE the church!

First, for us here at AMKMC (TRAC), our cell groups have always been the pillar of discipleship and now is the perfect time to reinforce that. Precisely because most of you will not see the pastors except through online means, cells are the best way for discipleship to continue. Therefore, **cells must not give up connecting in this season.** However, in line with the government’s efforts to reduce physical gatherings, **we strongly recommend that you connect online only until 30 April** and that you share with each other innovative and effective ways you have stayed connected as a CG in these trying times.

Second, **discipleship is a parent’s responsibility** before it becomes our communal responsibility. To this end, our children and youth ministry teams will provide age appropriate weekly resources to parents for you to guide your children. Parents of children aged 1-10 years old, please sign up for our dedicated telegram broadcast to receive these weekly resources. Parents of youth (11-21 years old), please encourage your youth to stay connected to their Family Groups, where we will partner with you to disciple them. These details and additional resources for you and your family to deepen your walk with the Lord personally and collectively are in the appendix attached.

Third, in line with our church theme this year, which is to be a **Home with a Heart**, not only will (1) we continue to provide pastoral support to those on Quarantine Home Orders, Stay Home Notice, and Leave of Absence; (2) we are also looking into ways to **provide pastoral and financial support** to members who are adversely affected by Covid-19; and (3) identifying any church members who need **digital support** to stay connected with our church and their cell groups. Details have already been communicated to cell leaders separately.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.amkmc.org.sg/sermons/dont-go-to-church/](http://www.amkmc.org.sg/sermons/dont-go-to-church/)

Finally, let me return to what I believe is God's clarion call – **let us be the church, arise, and shine** (cf. Isa 60:1)! For too long we have depended on the church to organize programs and activities, whether it be the worship service, or social and outreach concerns project, or witness and evangelism. Yes, there is a place for "organized religion" but now is the opportune season for every Christian to rise up, take your own discipleship seriously, learn how to witness and evangelise to your own family, friends, and colleagues, disciple them one-on-one, love your neighbour, minister to strangers etc. **Don't wait for the church to organize something if you see a need. Wherever you are, whenever you see a need, step out in love and do something within your power.** As Mother Theresa wisely said, "Not all of us can do great things, but we can do small things with great love."

Let me close with what the Lord impressed upon my heart for you. This is my prayer for you as your pastor. It's taken from Ephesians 6 (NIV):

<sup>10</sup> Finally, **be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.** <sup>11</sup> Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. <sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. <sup>13</sup> Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. <sup>14</sup> Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, <sup>15</sup> and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup> In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. <sup>17</sup> Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

<sup>18</sup> And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. <sup>19</sup> Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, <sup>20</sup> for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

Yours Faithfully,



Rev Anthony Lee