



ANG MO KIO METHODIST CHURCH

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Second Pastoral Letter to the Ang Mo Kio Methodist Church Family on the Covid-19 Situation (18 Mar 2020)

(By Rev Anthony Lee, Pastor-in-Charge)

Dear Family and Friends of AMKMC (TRAC),

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

I wrote my first pastoral letter to you exactly one month ago, when Covid-19 first emerged among churches in Singapore. Since then, a lot has happened, with Covid-19 being declared a global pandemic and our nearest neighbour Malaysia issuing a national lockdown from 18-31 March 2020.

For Singapore, on 13 March 2020, the Ministry of Health issued an advisory¹ for religious services to:

- a. Be kept to below 250 participants *where possible*
- b. Practise social distancing of participants
- c. Put in place temperature and health screening measures, as well as turn away persons who are unwell
- d. Put in place measures to facilitate contact tracing if needed, such as obtaining contact details of participants.

In addition, 14-day Stay Home Notices (SHN)² will be issued for travellers to China, France, Germany, Italy, Iran, Republic of Korea, Spain, ASEAN countries (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam), Japan, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom from 16 March 2020 2359H onwards.

In light of these measures, we seek your kind cooperation to please:

- a. avoid non-essential travel to keep yourself, your family, and our faith community safe
- b. comply with the authorities if you are issued HQO, SHN, or LOA and stay away from church
- c. be honest when it comes to declarations and stay away if you have travelled to these countries in the past 14 days
- d. practise social responsibility – please monitor your own health condition closely and avoid attending worship services and events if you feel unwell, even remotely unwell
- e. be willing to put on a mask when issued one by church staff and volunteers
- f. space yourselves out (at least a metre apart from one another) wherever possible
- g. move to an alternative venue for worship (e.g. Amstutz Hall, AMK HUB Hall 4) when directed

¹ See www.moh.gov.sg/news-highlights/details/additional-precautionary-measures-to-prevent-further-importation-and-spread-of-covid-19-cases

² See www.moh.gov.sg/covid-19/health-clearance

I know these measures are not the most comfortable and can be disruptive, but I strongly urge us to cooperate as we comply with the authorities and do not try to beat the system. After all, Scripture teaches us in Romans 13:5 **“Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of conscience.”**

Let us all do our part to beat Covid-19 together, both as a church and as a nation!

In general, cell groups and small-scale ministry events should continue unless otherwise advised by pastors’ office. However, we should be mindful of those among us with pre-existing conditions that make them more vulnerable, to either excuse these brethren or provide alternative means of connection via digital means.

To this end, and in order to facilitate worship services with social distancing, we have provided live streaming of all our worship services at 8am, 1030am, and 5pm. Please visit www.amkmc.org.sg/live on Sundays. Our e-bulletin can be found on www.amkmc.org.sg/bulletin. In fact, wherever possible, I wish to encourage us to join the live streaming together as a cell group and then immediately move into sharing and discussion. This may be a new and vibrant way for worship this season while making sure we protect the vulnerable.

To facilitate ease of accurate and timely information by our church, we urge you to subscribe to our AMKMC Whatsapp Broadcast at www.amkmc.org.sg/whatsapp/. Do note, however, that AMKMC Whatsapp is a one-way broadcast. If you have any questions or feedback, please contact us at admin@amkmc.org.sg.

Finally, I should also let you know in advance that if the government and/or Methodist Church in Singapore decide to suspend worship services, our plan is to have only one worship service streamed ‘live’ at 8am. Thereafter, the recording of the worship service will be made available on our church website for 24 hours. We will monitor the situation closely and update you all as soon as we can through our website and Whatsapp broadcast.

For those of us whose faith may be shaken by these happenings, let me remind us that the Church of Jesus Christ has survived persecutions and plagues for two thousand years. We will once again triumph through these trials too. Only let us, as 1 Thessalonians 5:17–18 exhorts us, **“pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”**

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Anthony Lee', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rev Anthony Lee