



Friday 15 May, 2020

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

Greetings in Christ's name! As many of you will be aware, COVID restrictions in our state have now been slightly relaxed. As far as worship services are concerned, we are now permitted to restart our services, although with a limit of 10 people in attendance (in addition to those required to facilitate the service). On a more personal level, we are also now permitted to host up to 5 extra people in our homes.

Session has been considering our response in this new situation. In particular we are currently considering when and how we might begin restarting our worship services, given the small permitted gathering size. It is possible that we may introduce live streaming of such 'minimalist' services, but there are a number of technical and logistic questions to be resolved before we could do so. We will stay in touch with you as this unfolds, and please be in prayer for us as we seek to do this wisely. **In the immediate future, we will continue to provide service recordings for you to use in your homes in lieu of Sunday Worship.**

Under the new guidelines you are free to invite up to five other people into your home, and we encourage you to take full advantage of this opportunity. Noting the need to observe social distancing and good hygiene, Session encourages you to invite others to join you for worship on Sunday, Prayer Meeting every second Wednesday, and potentially for Bible Study gatherings as well.

However, if you are not comfortable either hosting or visiting, please don't feel pressured to do so. We recognize that some people will not want contact such as this, because of personal vulnerabilities or potential work-place exposures, and we are fully supportive of that concern.

If you have any signs of sickness, you should stay home in accordance with the instructions of the State Government. If you are vulnerable, we would also encourage you to stay home. Nonetheless, this is a matter of personal judgment, and so if you are vulnerable but still wish to join others in fellowship in their homes, you should be free to do that and welcomed as well by those who are willing to host.

Although Session encourages you to join together in your homes, we realise that for us to coordinate this across the whole of church level would be complicated and invasive. So it's important to recognize that it would be

you/your family that would be hosting guests, rather than the church (as is normally the case in regular worship services!).

For this to happen, it will thus be up to you to take the initiative in inviting each other, and for others not hosting to join in with other homes. To help ensure that no one is left out, however, we would also **invite those seeking to join others to reach out to a member of Session if needed.** If you don't have a place to go, we will happily connect you with a household willing to host if possible. Conversely, **if you are open to hosting others in your home, and don't already have your maximum quota of 5 guests, please pass on your details to Session so that we can have a list of potential homes to which we may direct "seekers."** Ideally, we would all be diligent amongst ourselves to invite one another into our homes so that there isn't any need for too much co-ordination.

As a further safety measure, Session also would encourage you to stay consistently with one group of people if possible. We believe this to be wise as it will limit possible exposure of any sickness. Connecting with members in your local area may also prove convenient. You may even like to invite neighbours to join you!

Once again, please do not feel pressured to join or host, as we must respect one another's convictions and concerns on this matter. With this in mind, Session asks you to exercise humility, patience, and grace toward one another. If anyone declines to either host or attend, we must not take offence, but recognize the difficulty with sensitivity and compassion as each person does what they believe to be best in this situation.

If you invite others to join you for worship in your home, please recognise that it is you/your family, rather than the church, that will be the host. To help you to be good hosts, attached are some guidelines on good hygiene practices and social distancing measures. Please make good use of these guidelines if you are hosting, and so love and take care of one another.

Yours in Christ,  
Ken, Albert G, Isaac, Henry, & Willem.

## **Health & Safety Guidelines for Home-worship Hosts.**

### **Pre-arrival:**

- Prior to receiving guests, please sanitise all surfaces in areas to be used for hosting guests (e.g. bathroom, living room).
- In the living area where you will worship together, please ensure spacing allows for 1.5 metres of distance between members of separate households (members of the same household may sit closely together).
- If possible, please provide fresh tissues and anti-bacterial wipes for guest use in the area used for hosting guests.
- Please ensure a tidy and clean bathroom for the use of guests, with soap for washing hands, preferably paper towel for drying, and a fresh bin with bag for disposal of paper towel.
- If no paper towel is available, please ensure that you have multiple fresh hand towels for use so that guests will not need to use the same hand towel.
- If anyone in your family shows signs of sickness at any point prior to arrival, please cancel and do not host others in your home. Please ask your guests to show the same courtesy and refrain from coming if they show signs of sickness.
- If possible, please provide hand-sanitizer at the door for the use of guests.
- If no sanitizer is available, please direct guests to wash their hands in the bathroom upon entering your home.
- If providing morning tea for your guests, please be extremely diligent in using best hygiene practices. Sanitise your kitchen area prior to any food preparation, ensure your hands are clean when preparing and handling food, handle any food as little as possible, and ensure that clean dishes are provided for your guests. Please don't be offended if guests decline 😊
- A suggested guideline for guests is available on the next page. You may wish to print a copy out and stick it on your front door, or send it electronically to guests in advance.

### **After hosting:**

- Please sanitise all surfaces in areas where guests were hosted.
- In the event of symptoms in the days following the visit, please notify those who were in your home immediately so that they can isolate themselves (and ask your guests to do the same).
- Keep a diary record of the names of people who were at your home for the service. This is needed to facilitate follow-up and testing of everyone present in case anyone tests positive for COVID-19 in the following three weeks.

## **WELCOME! Please read before entering our home 😊**

**We're so glad to welcome you into our home to worship with us! Before coming in, please be sure to read the following guidelines to help us all to take care of one another!**

- **If you feel unwell, or have any symptoms of sickness, please don't come. It's important that we take care of each other by not spreading sickness!**
- **You're very welcome in our home, but we kindly ask that you would wash or sanitise your hands upon entry.**
- **If you need to use the bathroom, please note that we have provided paper towel or fresh hand towels for you to use. Please dispose of paper towel in the bin provided, or place used hand towels in the basket/bin provided for washing later.**
- **To help decrease any risk of germs, we kindly ask that you seek to avoid touching surfaces in our house where possible.**
- **Our state government asks that we maintain 1.5 metres of distance between members of different households. Please diligently observe it.**
- **If you need to cough or sneeze, please do so into your elbow, handkerchief, or tissues provided.**
- **Please note that we have sanitized all surfaces prior to your arrival to keep you safe as well!**
- **If you show signs of illness in the days following your visit, please be sure to let us know so that we can inform all guests and self-isolate if necessary.**
- **Let's rejoice in the Lord together, and encourage one another in Christ!**