

Dear Charisians,

The COVID-19 virus and the efforts to contain it has been in the spotlight since the beginning of 2020. As such, the government has declared **DORSCON Orange**.

But what does that mean? And more specifically, what does that mean for Charis?

COVID-19 and DORSCON Orange

According to MOH guidelines, DORSCON Orange means the Nature of Disease is severe and spreads easily from person to person, but disease has not spread widely in Singapore and is being contained. The previous time DORSCON Orange was activated was for H1N1 in 2009. The measures to be implemented will have moderate disruption e.g. quarantine, temperature screening, visitor restrictions at healthcare institutions.

As DORSCON Orange was activated on 7 Feb 2020, the church has introduced additional precautionary measures since Sunday, 9 Feb 2020.

Guiding Principles for the Church

The leaders and pastoral staff of Charis want the ministry of the Church to continue in accordance to our values as a church, while taking steps to protect the health and safety of our members and worshipers.

Charis Methodist Church values: -

- **Worshipping** as a community
- Coming together to hear God's **Word**
- Being a **Witness** to a world that lives in fear
- **Working** out and expressing our faith when we meet.

It is natural for us to feel concerned for ourselves and our families, but let us work together to choose faith over fear. **God is sovereign**, so we have good reason to choose faith. Therefore, we choose to put our hope in Christ and seek God's wisdom as we respond in compliance with the authorities' guidelines to be socially responsible.

We understand if some worshippers prefer to stay away for a time. This is not a measure of faith, and will not be judged as such. We will extend love, prayer and ministry to all.

What is the Church doing?

In line with MOH advisories and instructions from MCS/CAC, the church task force for COVID-19 has met and worked out the following additional measures that are now being implemented:

Temperature screening

- Everyone coming to Charis worship services or church office will have their temperature taken
- People with the following conditions **will not be allowed to attend service**:
 1. Fever of over 37.5°C;
 2. Flu-like symptoms (such as sore throat, cough, running nose, or shortness of breath);
 3. Diarrhoea.

Contact Tracing

- Every single worshipper (including guests and children) will be required to complete a Travel & Health Declaration Form.
- *To facilitate and reduce the queue at the registration counter, we will be implementing a QR Code Contact Tracing system starting 1 Mar 2020.*
- We will ask persons who meet the following criteria to excuse themselves from service and church activities for 14 days starting from the day AFTER your return or contact:
 1. Have returned from *Mainland China, Macau, Hong Kong, Republic of Korea, Northern Italy[1] or Iran* in the past 14 days;
 2. Have been in close contact with any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19;
 3. Live in the same house as someone on Home Quarantine Orders (HQO) or Stay Home Notice;
 4. Have been placed on Leave of Absence; or
 5. Have been in any of the known local clusters in the past 14 days.

Healthcare workers who have been adequately protected whilst working on the front lines and in treatment centres are NOT considered 'close contacts'.

- The church will **provide you with a mask to wear in service** if you:
 1. Have come in close contact with any traveler who has recently returned from *Mainland China, Macau, Hong Kong, Republic of Korea, Northern Italy[1] or Iran*;

[1] For clarity, Northern Italy refers to eight administrative regions: Aosta Valley, Piedmont, Liguria, Lombardy, Emilia-Romagna, Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia and Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol. The cities of Milan and Venice are in Northern Italy.

2. Have come in close contact with anyone who is on Leave of Absence;
3. or Are recovering from sickness.

Minimising Risk of Community Transmission

- **Pre-packed biscuits** will be provided and **disposable foam cups** will be used at the fellowship counter..
- Bulletins will be left on tables for self-collection. Members are encouraged to use the **e-bulletin**.
- Worship Leaders will **remind worshippers** to
 1. Maintain some distance between themselves and their neighbour;
 2. Use their own Bibles to avoid touching Bibles and Hymnals in the pews
- Praise Leaders have been asked to be concise when leading praise and worship.
- Offering bags will NOT be passed around during offering time. We strongly encourage members to use **e-offering**. The General Tithing QR Code will be flashed for you to use. During Holy Communion service, we will also flash the Church Redevelopment QR Code. Alternatively, worshippers can place their offerings in the offering boxes provided in the sanctuary.
- Holy Communion will continue to be celebrated, with appropriate precautionary measures for stewards and helpers.
- Baptisms will continue, but as baptism by immersion carries the highest risk of transmission, Charis will only conduct baptism by sprinkling. Pastors will take the appropriate precautionary measures before and during the rite.
- Prayer and laying of hands may continue. Persons involved should practice good hygiene – washing hands with soap, and not touching the face.
- **Hand sanitisers** will be made available at the entrances of the Sanctuary, Chapel and Sunday School rooms. Spaces will be well-ventilated as much as possible. The frequency of cleaning and disinfecting of Charis office and LHMC premises will be increased.
- Anyone who develops symptoms during the service will be asked to leave immediately and seek medical attention.

How should each of us respond?

Maintain **good personal hygiene** to minimise community transmission. Wash your hands with soap before and after service and avoid touching the face. Cover your mouth with a handkerchief or tissue paper when you cough or sneeze. Avoid shaking hands, and adopt alternative greetings.

Be socially responsible. Please stay at home if:

1. You are experiencing any fever, flu-like symptoms (such as sore throat, cough, running nose, or shortness of breath), or diarrhoea – please see a doctor;
2. You have travelled to *Mainland China, Macau, Hong Kong, Republic of Korea, Northern Italy[1] or Iran* in the last 14 days;
3. You have been in close contact with any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19;
4. You live in the same house as someone on Home Quarantine Orders (HQO) *or Stay Home Notice*;
5. You have been asked to take a Leave of Absence; or
6. You have been in any of the known local clusters in the past 14 days.

Healthcare workers who have been adequately protected whilst working on the front lines and in treatment centres are NOT considered 'close contacts'.

Personal responsibility is part of being a caring community. This means respectfully avoiding non-critical meetings and declining social events. This does not stem from fear of contracting the disease but from putting the well-being of others first.

We also encourage Charisians to:

- Look out for health advisories and guidelines at <https://www.moh.gov.sg/covid-19> and <https://www.methodist.org.sg/covid-19>, and comply with precautionary measures introduced by the church
- Consider remaining at home during this period if you are **above 65 years of age, or have lower immunity** (such as infants, toddlers and others who may be immunocompromised due to a medical condition). On your part, do inform your small group leader if you have to miss church service. Your small group will want to pray with you. Sermons are recorded and put up on our Charis website for your access the following day. *We are currently testing "live boardcast of service over Internet.*
- Please **avoid coming to the church office** unless absolutely necessary. You are encouraged to interact with church office staff by phone or email. If you enter the church office, you are required to undergo temperature screening.

For more updates, visit <https://www.charismc.org.sg/advisory-covid19>

An appeal for help

There is a **shortage of masks and sanitisers** in the market and the church has difficulty procuring them. If you have stock at home, please contribute some to the church. Or if you know of suppliers who have stock, please inform the church office. This is an urgent appeal as our stock is running low.

How is our Ministry affected?

Pastoral Visitations

These will continue to the critically ill and elderly who are not able to turn up for Holy Communion. Visitation teams may be masked during the visit, whilst maintaining strict personal hygiene.

Ministries

English and Mandarin services, Sunday School, JXS and XS will continue (with modifications). Large gatherings and camps will be limited, postponed or cancelled.

WenXin Fellowship, Mandarin Worship's English Class and Joo Chiat Ministry are some of our outreach activities that have been suspended. MWS on the advice of MOH has directed all SACs including our **MWS-Charis ACE** to stop all activities and to remain closed (from Feb 10th) until further notice.

Other ministries can continue at the discretion of the ministry leaders provided they comply with these guidelines:

For groups LESS than 30 (e.g. small group meetings, ministry meetings, worship practices, baptism classes and leaders' meetings)

- Members are to practice good personal hygiene and take their own temperature before coming for meetings. Stay at home if feeling unwell. Leaders will be asked to take attendance.

For groups of 30 or MORE (e.g. Combined Cells, Choir, CVL and YAM group events)

- These groups are encouraged to cut down meeting frequencies or postpone them.
- IF such group meetings are proceeding, we ask the ministry leaders to:
 1. Inform the Church Office before the meeting,
 2. Ensure hand washing, sanitising, temperature screening and attendance taking,
AND
 3. Send contact information to church office.

What is happening at the Church Office?

Office staff are taking their temperatures twice daily. There is now a business continuity plan. Charis pastoral, lay ministry and admin staff have been divided into two teams. If required, all staff will work off-site.

What may happen if situation gets worse?

Scenario 1: In the event that we are not able to worship in the LHMC building e.g. LHMC building needs to undergo deep cleaning or the authorities issue a directive, our worship service will be decentralized to small groups.

- Small group leaders will be given a worship-service-order pack to conduct. Sermons will be pre-recorded and are to be played at the small group meeting. Offering will be done electronically.
- For those who do not belong to any small group, now is the time to get connected. Listen out for announcements later on how to do so.
- The worship-service-order pack can be made available to those who are unwell and not able to join any small groups for worship.

Mandarin Worship may meet temporarily at Charis Social Hall, Koon Seng Road as the group is smaller and they do not have small groups.

Scenario 2: If we are not able to meet, even in small groups, e.g. many of us are on Leave Of Absence, our worship service will be further decentralized to our own homes, whether individually or as a family.

- Each household will be given access to the worship-service-order pack which will also include instructions on how to conduct worship at home.

Conclusion

The above measures are in operation and will be fine-tuned. Let us be vigilant, be connected to one another, and be found praying for God's mercy, grace and peace to be upon all. **Be that neighbor to those who are affected and in need. Let us be the light of the world and the salt of the earth.** Let Charis show forth how she can be an attractive community, one that displays real love and real change by allowing Christ to transform us even as we respond with faith, hope and love.

*Rev Lui Yuan Tze, Pastor-in-Charge
Too Shiun Jye, LC&C Chairman*



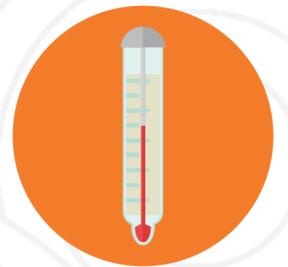
PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES

YOUR SAFETY IS OUR PRIORITY

A. TEMPERATURE CHECKS & HEALTH CHECKS

Everyone coming to Charis worship services will have their temperature taken. Please note you will not be allowed to enter the service if you have:

- Fever of over 37.5°C;
- Flu-like symptoms (such as sore throat, cough, running nose, or shortness of breath);
- Diarrhoea.



Do approach any usher for a mask if you:

- Have come in close contact with any traveler who has recently returned from *Mainland China, Macau, Hong Kong, Republic of Korea, Northern Italy[1] or Iran*;
- Have come in close contact with anyone who is on Leave of Absence;
- Are recovering from sickness.



B. CONTACT TRACING

Every single worshipper (including guests and children) will be required to complete a Travel & Health Declaration Form. *To facilitate and reduce the queue at the registration counter, we have implemented a QR Code Contact Tracing system starting 1 Mar 2020.*

C. ENHANCED HYGIENE & SAFETY MEASURES

- Hand sanitisers will be made available at the entrances of the Sanctuary, Chapel and Sunday School rooms.
- Spaces will be well-ventilated as much as possible. The frequency of cleaning and disinfecting of Charis office and LHMC premises will be increased.
- Please remember to wash your hands with soap before and after service and avoid touching the face.



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卫理公会
颂恩堂

CHARIS
METHODIST CHURCH

PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES

YOUR COOPERATION IS THE BEST PREVENTION

1. DO NOT ATTEND WORSHIP SERVICES OR CHURCH ACTIVITIES FOR 14 DAYS IF YOU



- are experiencing any fever, flu-like symptoms (such as sore throat, cough, running nose, or shortness of breath), or diarrhoea – please see a doctor;
- have travelled to *Mainland China, Macau, Hong Kong, Republic of Korea, Northern Italy*[1] or *Iran* in the last 14 days;
- have been in close contact with any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19;
- live in the same house as someone on Home Quarantine Orders (HQO) or Stay Home Notice;
- have been asked to take a Leave of Absence; or
- have been in any of the known local clusters in the past 14 days.

Advice :

- The 14 days absence should start the day after your return/contact.
- Healthcare workers who have been adequately protected whilst working on the front lines and in treatment centres are NOT considered 'close contacts'.

2. SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION & REST AT HOME IF

You are experiencing any fever, flu-like symptoms (such as sore throat, cough, running nose, or shortness of breath), or diarrhoea.



3. OBSERVE GOOD PERSONAL HYGIENE

Observing good hygiene is still the best way to keep the virus away. MOH advises frequent hand-washing with soap and not touching your face, nose, eyes or mouth as the best ways to prevent infection.



4. COME EARLY

We encourage you to come at least 30 minutes early for worships services. This will facilitate and reduce the queue at the registration counter.

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